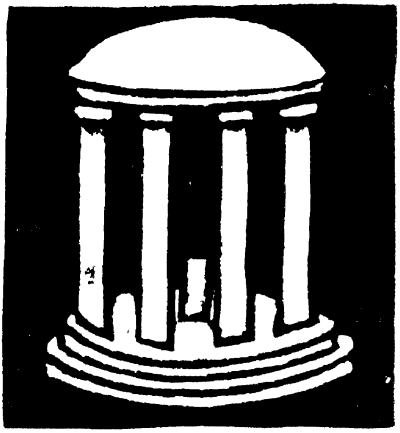
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A COMPLETE College Reader

Edited by John Holmes TUFTS COLLEGE AND Carroll S. Towle THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In Consultation with William H. Hildreth OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY



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Contents

Foreword: From the Huge Library of the World xiii

Non-Fiction: *The Range of Human Interest* 1

1. Personal History 5

Home	*Henry Seidel Canby*	6
Growing Up in Oklahoma	*Marquis James*	10
On Going to Philadelphia	*Benjamin Franklin*	19
University Days	*James Thurber*	21
By Walden Pond	*Henry David Thoreau*	25
Autobiography	*Thomas Henry Huxley*	32
A Writer, God Forbid!	*Maxwell Goldberg*	37
Self-Portrait	*Archibald MacLeish*	43
California—A South-Easter	*Richard Henry Dana*	45

2. People and Places 50

Tin Lizzie	*John Dos Passos*	51
Miss Opal Whiteley	*Elbert Bede*	56
Singer in Light—Charles J. Connick	*Rollo Walter Brown*	61
Carter Harrison	*Ernest Poole*	65
Customs of the Germans	*Cornelius Tacitus*	73
The Spouter-Inn	*Herman Melville*	77
Walden	*E B White*	81
Mister Roberts: Introduction	*Thomas Heggen*	85
Kennebec Crystals	*Robert P Tristram Coffin*	89

3. Language and Thinking 93

Eggys or Eyren?	*William Caxton*	95
Idols of the Mind	*Sir Francis Bacon*	96
The Conventional Character of Language	*J. B. Greenough and G L. Kittredge*	101
How We Know What We Know	*S. I. Hayakawa*	107
Four Kinds of Thinking	*James Harvey Robinson*	114
What Are Facts?	*Harold A. Larrabee*	120
Habits of Thought	*Robert H. Thouless*	127
"Government" vs "Business"	*Stuart Chase*	132
Emotional Meanings	*Robert H. Thouless*	138

CONTENTS

4. MAKING MATTERS CLEAR		143
The Rope Trick Explained	*Robert Benchley*	146
Democracy	*Carl L. Becker*	147
Humor	*John Erskine*	148
Two Kinds of Whales	*Herman Melville*	153
The United States of America	*Avery O Craven and Walter Johnson*	157
Can Science be Explained?	*Rudolph Flesch*	164
Tenants of the Soil	*Lorus J. Milne and Margery J Milne*	167
On Being the Right Size	*J B. S. Haldane*	174
Storm	*George R Stewart*	177
5. SCIENCE AND SCIENTIFIC METHOD		184
Old and New Knowledge	*Sir Francis Bacon*	186
Proof that the Earth Moves	*Galileo Galilei*	189
Discoveries	*Sir Isaac Newton*	191
The Method of Scientific Investigation	*Thomas Henry Huxley*	194
Science	*Bertrand Russell*	198
Mathematics and the Good	*A. N. Whitehead*	208
The Solar System and Its Origin	*Fred L. Whipple*	216
The Scientific Meaning of Chance	*Gilbert N Lewis*	223
6. LITERATURE AND THE ARTS		226
On Literary Taste	*Arnold Bennett*	228
The Patron and the Crocus	*Virginia Woolf*	236
The Personal History of *Strange Fruit*	*Lillian Smith*	238
Boston Mobs *Strange Fruit*	*Bernard DeVoto*	241
Farewell to Arms, A Review	*Henry Seidel Canby*	244
A Drama in Verse	*Joseph Wood Krutch*	248
Willa Cather's Novels of the Frontier: A Study in Thematic Symbolism	*Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D Bloom*	249
Amphion's Lyre	*Lucien Price*	263
An American Portrait	*Thomas Hart Benton*	271
The Imperial Façade	*Lewis Mumford*	278
7. MEETING THE OCCASION		286
The Declaration of Independence		288
The Apology of Socrates	*Plato*	290

The American Scholar	*Ralph Waldo Emerson*	293
On the Murder of Lovejoy	*Wendell Phillips*	304
Letter to Alice Stone Blackwell	*Bartolomeo Vanzetti*	307
Address at the Opening of the Atlanta Exposition	*Booker T. Washington*	309
Letter to Lucy Christie Drage	*Alexander Woolcott*	311
Mary White	*William Allen White*	313
First Inaugural Address	*Franklin D. Roosevelt*	316
Thanksgiving Proclamation	*Governor Wilbur L. Cross*	318
8. Making History Alive		319
Every Man His Own Historian	*Carl L. Becker*	321
You Are Not Forgotten	*John Holmes*	330
Wonderful Words of Life	*Earnest Elmo Calkins*	336
The Great Fire of London	*Samuel Pepys*	342
The Execution of Queen Mary	*James Anthony Froude*	347
The Heights of Abraham	*Francis Parkman*	350
The Boston Massacre	*Esther Forbes*	361
The Pilgrim Ship	*Archie Binns*	365
The Run	*Marquis James*	372
Hurry, Honyocker!	*Joseph Kinsey Howard*	377
Last Page Out of Homer	*Robert P. Tristram Coffin*	383
9. Opinion and Points of View		386
What is Opinion?	*Randolph Bourne*	388
What Christians Believe	*C. S. Lewis*	390
A Plan for Education	*Thomas Jefferson*	396
The Attractions of Stupidity	*Howard Mumford Jones*	398
Of the Old and New Systems of Government	*Thomas Paine*	401
Bosses and Machines	*Edward J. Flynn*	408
Good Newspapers and Bad	*William Allen White*	417
Moronia	*Eleanor Rowland Wembridge*	422
Who is Loyal to America?	*Henry Steele Commager*	428
The Insane Root	*Rebecca West*	434
10. Problems and the Future		444
From *Ecclesiastes*		445
The Idea of Progress	***William Ralph Inge***	449
Wither Mankind?	***Charles A. Beard***	462

The Future of Man as an Inhabitant of the Earth	*Kirtley F. Mather*	472
Salamedes	*Alexander Weinstein*	482
The Real Problem is in the Hearts of Men	*Albert Einstein*	497
Hiroshima	*John Hersey*	500

The Drama: *Curtain Time, Eight-Thirty* 543

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE	*Henrik Ibsen*	546
AH, WILDERNESS!	*Eugene O'Neill*	593
WINTERSET	*Maxwell Anderson*	646

The Short Story: *Illusion and Design* 691

Birthday Party	*Katharine Brush*	694
Mole-Bane	*James Still*	695
A Fishing Excursion	*Guy deMaupassant*	697
The Revolt of Mother	*Mary Wilkins Freeman*	700
Windwagon Smith	*Wilbur Schramm*	708
The Captain's Palm	*Thomas Heggen*	717
The Egg	*Sherwood Anderson*	723
The Pomegranate Trees	*William Saroyan*	729
Night Flight	*Josephine Johnson*	735
Livvie	*Eudora Welty*	738
Turn About	*William Faulkner*	746
Gunner's Passage	*Irwin Shaw*	762
Ex-Champion Nailer	*Wessel Hyatt Smitter*	771
Sailor! Sailor!	*Wilbur Daniel Steele*	780
Sex Education	*Dorothy Canfield*	787
The Lottery	*Shirley Jackson*	794
The Wind and Snow of Winter	*Walter VanTilburg Clark*	799
Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe	*Nathaniel Hawthorne*	806
The Real Thing	*Henry James*	812

Poetry: *Eye, Ear, Mind* 827

1. The Narrative Poem 827

At Midnight on the Thirty-first of March — *Josephine Young Case* — 828

The Language of Poetry 875

2. The Shape of the Thought 880

The Silken Tent — *Robert Frost* — 880
Fear No More — *William Shakespeare* — 880
In Memory of W. B. Yeats — *W. H. Auden* — 881
Ulysses — *Alfred Lord Tennyson* — 882
Ode to Himself — *Ben Jonson* — 883
Death Be Not Proud — *John Donne* — 884
Home-Thoughts, From Abroad — *Robert Browning* — 884
A Passer-By — *Robert Bridges* — 884
Poetry — *Marianne Moore* — 885

3. The Dominant Image 886

Dover Beach — *Matthew Arnold* — 886
Dover Beach—A Note to that Poem — *Archibald MacLeish* — 887
Ode on a Grecian Urn — *John Keats* — 887
The Windhover — *Gerard Manley Hopkins* — 888
Sand-Quarry With Moving Figures — *Muriel Rukeyser* — 888
The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner — *Randall Jarrell* — 889
The Wind-Struck Music — *Robinson Jeffers* — 889
The World — *Henry Vaughan* — 889
The Relic — *John Donne* — 890
Tree at My Window — *Robert Frost* — 891

4. Multiple Images 891

The Barge She Sat In — *William Shakespeare* — 891
From Air Raid — *Archibald MacLeish* — 892
Days — *Ralph Waldo Emerson* — 893
Go and Catch a Falling Star — *John Donne* — 894
V-J Day — *John Ciardi* — 894
The Dawn Stone — *David McCord* — 894

5. Sound Remembered 897

Eve	*Ralph Hodgson*	898
Flow Gently, Sweet Afton	*Robert Burns*	898
Gay Go Up	*Anonymous*	899
Peter Quince at the Clavier	*Wallace Stevens*	899
Binsey Poplars	*Gerard Manley Hopkins*	900
This Train	*Anonymous*	901
The Garden of Proserpine	*Algernon Charles Swinburne*	901
Lady Greensleeves	*Anonymous*	902
Tom o'Bedlam	*Anonymous*	902
Thanne Longen Folk	*Geoffrey Chaucer*	902
A Sea Dirge	*William Shakespeare*	902
Requiem	*Robert Louis Stevenson*	903
Pippa's Song	*Robert Browning*	903
I To My Perils	*A. E. Housman*	903
Western Wind	*Anonymous*	903
Inversnaid	*Gerard Manley Hopkins*	903

6. Theme Sets the Tone 904

Fine Morning	*Winfield Townley Scott*	904
Tract	*William Carlos Williams*	905
Gerontion	*T. S. Eliot*	906
On the Late Massacre in Piedmont	*John Milton*	907
Ozymandias	*Percy Bysshe Shelley*	907
The World Is Too Much With Us	*William Wordsworth*	907
The Sun Rising	*John Donne*	907
Hame, Hame, Hame	*Allan Cunningham*	908
Song	*John Webster*	908
Come In	*Robert Frost*	909
That Time of Year	*William Shakespeare*	909

7. Image Serves the Idea 909

The Hammer-Throw	*Reuel Denney*	910
Ars Poetica	*Archibald MacLeish*	911
Swedish Angel	*Winfield Townley Scott*	911
The Second Wonder	*John Holmes*	912
Ode on Melancholy	*John Keats*	912
The Good Swimmer	*Rolfe Humphries*	913

As Kingfishers Catch Fire	*Gerard Manley Hopkins*	913
Two Tramps in Mud Time	*Robert Frost*	913
Jerusalem	*William Blake*	914
8. Images for Great Themes		915
To an Athlete Dying Young	*A. E. Housman*	915
The Cool Web	*Robert Graves*	916
To His Coy Mistress	*Andrew Marvell*	916
Prelude LVII	*Conrad Aiken*	916
The Groundhog	*Richard Eberhart*	917
To Daffodils	*Robert Herrick*	917
To the Stone-Cutters	*Robinson Jeffers*	918
Discipline	*George Herbert*	918
Peace	*Henry Vaughan*	918
9. Satire and Humor		919
Shall I, Wasting in Despair?	*George Wither*	919
A Classic Waits for Me	*E. B. White*	920
From Spectator ab Extra	*Arthur Hugh Clough*	921
Ozymandias Revisited	*Morris Bishop*	921
Reservation	*David McCord*	921
Survey of Literature	*John Crowe Ransom*	922
Jabberwocky	*Lewis Carroll*	922
As I was Laying on the Green	*Anonymous*	922
Edgar A. Guest Considers	*Louis Untermeyer*	923
I Was a Bustle-Maker Once, Girls	*Patrick Barrington*	923
10. In the Classroom		924
One Who Dropped the Course	*Donald Babcock*	924
Philosophy Class Dismissed	*Donald Babcock*	924
The Old Professor	*John Holmes*	925
In the Dean's Office	*John Holmes*	925
Teaching Program	*John Holmes*	925
Heresy for a Classroom	*Rolfe Humphries*	926
Cryptogram for My Students	*John Ciardi*	926
An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum	*Stephen Spender*	926
Academic Roll Call	*Helen Bevington*	927
The Flowering Tree	*Helen Bevington*	928

11. OFFERED WITHOUT COMMENT 928

Terence, This is Stupid Stuff	*A. E. Housman*	928
I Wake and Feel the Fell of Dark	*Gerard Manley Hopkins*	929
Was It the Proud Full Sail?	*William Shakespeare*	929
Since There's No Help	*Michael Drayton*	930
Our Revels Now are Ended	*William Shakespeare*	930
Petition	*W. H. Auden*	930
A Peck of Gold	*Robert Frost*	930
The March Into Virginia	*Herman Melville*	930
Insensibility	*Wilfred Owen*	931
'Not Marble nor the Gilded Monuments'	*Archibald MacLeish*	932
To the Muses	*William Blake*	932
The Key of the Kingdom	*Anonymous*	932

THE FIGURE A POEM MAKES — *Robert Frost* — 933

The Novel: *Character in Action* 935

MY ÁNTONIA — *Willa Cather* — 940

About the Authors in This Book 1049

Foreword

From the Huge Library of the World

I

TEN THOUSAND BOOKS are published in this country every year. Millions of words fill magazines and newspapers. Thousands of manuscripts are written that will never see the light of print. One sits down to read a poem, a story, an essay, but he will never catch up with all the words being written even as he reads. Last year, and for ten years, and for hundreds of years men have written more than man can read. Thus limited, one may only browse in the huge library of the world, content with the chance of a fresh and exciting discovery. Eager to know the great past and the living present, yet fearful of wasting time and strength, one may seek the help of readers who have read and discarded, read and praised, read and found themselves moved, informed, awakened. This book provides that help, and saves that waste. It contains something of everything, from past and present. That is why we have called it *A Complete College Reader.*

The complete college reader is also a human being, the undergraduate or his instructor, turning these pages. He is not, as the dictionary says, "entire, full, whole, finished, ended, concluded, and without defect." But he can, if he has curiosity and energy, move toward the completeness no one ever reaches or really wishes to reach, that ideal of well-rounded knowledge all desire. The everlasting journey is happier than the impossible arrival could ever be. The complete college reader is the experienced traveler. He or she knows the sort of thing the informative essay tells, the new life the short story sets forth, the many emotions poetry remembers. He has had both the world as in his time, as Chaucer said, and everything of its own kind good. This reader knows the difference between the reach and purpose of a novel, like *My Ántonia,* and the reach and purpose of Clark's western winter story, Housman's poem, "Terence, this is stupid stuff," on the tragic view of life, or Benchley's "Rope Trick." The mind of the complete college reader stretches to contain Tacitus, Haldane, Galileo, and Herman Melville. This reader is a happy reader, as well as a shrewd one. He has taken down from the endless shelves of the world's good writing the best of its biography, its natural and political history, its human character in action, its humor, lyric verse, and drama.

When Isaac Walton wrote *The Compleat Angler,* he did not think that he had included each and every rule, trick, and fundamental law for the fisherman. He simply meant that here in one book was God's plenty of instances of what might happen on the stream, given a line, a hook, and the possibility of fish. We learn by instance and by implication, not by the rule-book. Angling is an ancient skill, at its best always personal and beyond code or demonstration. Reading is likewise a solitary pleasure, to be learned by search, with the guidance of an Isaac Walton, or, in this case, the compilers of this book. Those who have fished the world's streams have useful hints to offer, though no one can be told how good reading must be enjoyed, or where the good reading is for sure, and at what season. It might be the seventeenth century, or it might be the theater. It might be a short story about the American south, or it might be a scientist's mind. We had better refrain from making too much of this metaphor. It can lead only to such suggestions as long casts and bright flies to catch poets, tough line and heavy sinkers for the philosophic statesmen. Perhaps this had better be left to the sportsmen among our readers.

The word "reader," then, has a double sense. It is the one who reads, and it is the book. The book is "complete" insofar as it represents all the types of writing, all the forms and lengths and modes. It is complete in that it includes an American novel of the later pioneer days, a long narrative and allegorical poem; a rich range of non-fiction, from personal history on through exposition and occasional writing to probings of the future, short stories, a varied store; a choice of English and American poetry shaped to its understanding; and three carefully differentiated plays.

II

More than anything else we may accomplish with this book, we wish to open the life of heart and mind, of history and reason and poetry, of story and will and science, to new readers. All readers are new readers, and all minds and hearts can be opened wider. True, there are other ways worth following. Matthew Arnold wished to discover and promote the reading of "the best that has been thought and said in the world." And others, to avoid this limitation to the historically important, or representative, have offered what they like, and still like after much re-reading. One looks toward the past, the other inward, on himself. Our view is out, toward you, the reader of this book.

But in any book of selections, the readings must be both respected and enjoyed. They must, first of all, have something to say, out of experience, knowledge, feeling, or observation great enough, or strong and fresh enough to make us wish to follow where they lead. The writers must be, in their way, like Henry James's ideal, on whom "nothing is lost;" they must have been alive in the world. Or they should be like Wordsworth's poet, who was "a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him." People attract and hold listeners and readers when they are moved by the spirit of the true amateur, the man deeply and joyfully alive; this is one bond between writer and reader. Editors and critics at their best are on the watch for the amateur, the writer moved by this spirit of freshness.

It is additional satisfaction to find in the writer a literate ease, to know that he does not depend on the heat of his emotion or the novelty of his experience alone. He is a doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief, explorer, sociologist, or

physical scientist. He orders, selects, and words his thoughts with the skill that hides all art. He echoes no one. He is not "literary." He simply writes well, and is his eloquent self – Jefferson or Thoreau, Marquis James or Bertrand Russell. Much can be learned of how these things are done, and the wise reader will seek to know all that he can.

The reader may expect, then, to encounter man alive, man speaking, representing himself in his philosophy, his vocabulary, and in his very rhythms. His explanation, or his story, is a singleness of thought and language, it cannot but be single, dictated as it is from within. This is the man the editor has sought out wherever he is in the huge library of the world.

III

Within the larger parts of *A Complete College Reader* are to be found variations that explore in all directions. The English novelist, Ford Madox Ford, has defined prose style as a "constant succession of tiny surprises." And William Blake says, "The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life, is this – That the more distinct, sharp, and wiry the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art." Our book has its sharply defined boundaries – for instance, the sections into which we have divided the non-fiction: "People and Places", "Language and Thinking", "Meeting the Occasion", "Problems and the Future," and others Within those bounding lines the reader discovers a succession of surprises. There is style in compilation, as surely as in writing This style should have the same rhythms, modulations, and developed melodies that good prose style has, though here the units are not words but essays or stories, whole poems, whole plays.

Benjamin Franklin's famous account of his arrival in Philadelphia, in the opening section of the book, is suddenly turned and seen in the light of Thoreau's days at Walden Pond. Then in a wholly different manner, Archibald MacLeish writes his autobiography, a poet and public man in modern times; then we listen far back to Richard Henry Dana describing a south-easter off the California coast. Playing over all these passages is the light of the human spirit, keyed in this particular group to a note of direct, simple, individual expression We feel a happy achievement of wholeness, a successful composition, in the items in "Meeting the Occasion." The headnote sounds the theme that now and then in life a man is unexpectedly called on to write or say something for which all his life has prepared him. Who ever knows when or how this occasion will come? Socrates met the occasion, as did Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the drafters of the Declaration of Independence. The great spirit and the great occasion come together, and the result is memorable. These and the other pieces in this section of the book demonstrate, and set boundaries, and lift surprises from page to page for the "complete reader."

Plays should be read only with the full understanding that plays should be seen. With this in mind, and with the compiler's sense of style at work, what three plays can best be gathered to work toward that completeness desirable and always almost obtainable? Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* is conventional in form, and represents the function of the play at a point in time, about two generations ago – to set forth a social controversy. O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness!* puts this great contemporary playwright into our record, and he records for us American life of a generation ago. *Winterset* plays variations, because it is partly in verse, because it deals with a famous social-political issue, and because it is, like the others, a classic of its kind.

Rather than introduce poetry with the usual early ballads, on the assumption that these represent the earliest and therefore the best beginnings of poetry, the narrative poem we offer is an extraordinary account of a kind of cosmic April Fool's Day joke. This long story-poem tells what the people of a village in the northern part of our country did for a year when it was utterly cut off. The other poetry sections have been "composed" with an eye to that same style – bounded, and full of surprises.

This book is made of many books, and of the best. Ample as it is, ranging as it does through time, and mind, and history, and place, and the human spirit, it completes the man reading. The poet Hopkins said, "Complete Thy creature dear O where it fails."

IV

Some of the surprises in this book are those that cut across the bounding lines. There are links, cross-ties, comparisons. Though there is an introduction for the novel as a form of writing, and for Willa Cather's *My Ántonia* in particular, there will be found Edward A. and Lillian D. Bloom's paper "Willa Cather's Novels of the Frontier," a broader view of her work, in the section we call "Literature and the Arts." Thoreau's account of his days at Walden Pond strike an echo of curious modern interest in E. B. White's "Walden," a diary kind of report we have put into "People and Places." MacLeish writes his life in prose, and appears again as a poet. *Winterset* is obviously based on the Sacco-Vanzetti case, the reader completes himself by having read a letter of Vanzetti's written from prison. Melville appears as the author of *Moby Dick*, and again as a little-known but powerful poet. One knows more about William Allen White, reading first about "Good Newspapers and Bad," out of his life's work on the *Emporia Gazette*, and then from the small classic he wrote when his daughter Mary was killed. Innumerable parallels suggest themselves: Caxton's two words for eggs and Chase and Hayakawa's words and meanings; progress as seen by Weinstein and Dean Inge. Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" is followed by MacLeish's "Dover Beach – A Note to That Poem," making a neat comment on the dominant image, both bounded, brought together. John Crowe Ransom in his poem, "Survey of Literature," pins a number of our poets onto a sort of menu of literary criticism; and as our poets deal with the great themes of time and death, so do many of our prose-makers.

Like a bright web of many-colored strands crossed and inter-crossed, the American scene runs in and out of the pattern. David McCord's long poem, "The Dawn Stone," imagines those mountains in this country where the sun first strikes. Or we trace vivid and quite different colors in Marquis James's memory of growing up in Oklahoma, or the life-story of Charles Connick, or Esther Forbes on the Boston Massacre. The strands run under and behind the whole book's pattern – Wilbur Cross's proclamation of Thanksgiving is woven with Ernest Elmo Calkins' "Wonderful Words of Life" – the words of hymns – and with Tom Paine on government, and Willa Cather's chapters on pioneer life in Nebraska. The succession of surprises within the bounding lines works more and more at the reader's imagination the more he traces the woven structure of the whole book.

V

An important part of the structure is the biographies printed at the end of the book, beams of light aimed at the scores of authors here assembled, playing across their lives to identify and differentiate them. Necessity reduces each sketch to six or eight lines. Shakespeare gets little more in space and words than, let us say, the author of *Mr. Roberts*, or the compilers of this book, Plato, Dos Passos, Newton, and DeVoto face the light of attention equally. Even that prolific and dateless writer, Anonymous, is spotted and saluted, as the light swings on to Beard, Donne, Emerson, Keats, and Pepys.

The study of good writing is the study of the human spirit. The reader needs the sense of time and place around and behind each figure whose words he adds to his own long store. These notes are a final element of the compilers' style, a weaving tighter still of the multiple strands of life. They link back and forth with the other ties suggested. They tell the reader what he may or may not expect of any author, and best of all, they lead him to more reading.

A complete college reader makes a beginning in his college years. A lifetime is not long enough to finish the house for which he then lays the foundations and puts up corner timbers. Yet it is in the college years that he makes the plans and squares the corners. This reader – this book – plots the area within which a great and rewarding framework of thinking, experience, and imagination may be erected. On it may be laid walls, and roof, and the windows that open toward time past and to come. In this sense, this book is complete. it is a handbook for the apprentice carpenter, who puts up the shelves, year by year, that will hold for him the huge library of the world.

JOHN HOLMES
CARROLL S. TOWLE

Acknowledgments

The making of such a book as this one is largely memory and labor on the part of the compilers: the memory of cherished reading, and the labor of gathering the actual texts, and obtaining permission to use copyright material. For this we take full responsibility, and make a simultaneous bow from the campus at Durham, New Hampshire, to the campus at Medford, Massachusetts. Our own college libraries have been of great help in locating books and answering queries.

Among the writers, we are especially indebted to Archibald MacLeish for adding new material to his "Self-Portrait," which appears here for the first time, to Prof. Paul Flint, of Tufts College, for offering Caxton's "Egges and Eyren," to Josephine Young Case, for reading the preface to her long poem, and making important corrections in fact and punctuation, so that our version is exactly as the author desires it, to Prof. Maxwell Goldberg, of the University of Massachusetts, for proffering his autobiographical "A Writer, God Forbid," which we would not otherwise have found, to David McCord, for assistance in locating the origins of some of the light verse, and more particularly for giving us his long poem, "Dawn Stone," which appears here for the first time in any book; to Lucien Price, for arranging for the inclusion of "Amphion's Lyre;" to Dr. Marston Balch, of Tufts College, for suggestions that shaped the writing of the drama introduction, "Curtain-Time, Eight-Thirty," to Arthur Harris, Max and Fredelle Maynard, for story suggestions, and to the estate of Willa Cather, which generously made possible the first use of any one of her novels in any anthology, an achievement of which we are understandably proud. We are grateful, too, for the timely discovery of the Blooms' paper on Miss Cather's pioneer novels, without which our book would have been incomplete.

All formal acknowledgments of permission to use copyright material are made elsewhere in this book. But at the completion of the work, the editors have a natural gratitude to Shakespeare, Ibsen, Melville, Franklin, James, Donne, Hopkins, and Anonymous, without whom our book could not be what it is. Our students listened to our preliminary drafts of the several prefaces, and their reactions guided us in revision. We cannot help feeling that this year's students in our respective colleges have learned something about the making of an anthology, and we are thankful for their patience with our enthusiasm. Richard Butwell, Loftin Elwey, Raymond Fremmer, Thomas Macy, and Donald Simonds, undergraduates at Tufts College, did valuable research for the biographical notes. Dorothy Towle and Doris Holmes read proof expertly and tirelessly. And all anthologists know how very much of the success of any book is owed to their publishers, from the editor immediately responsible, and his staff, to the designer and compositor. To these, and the host of people who have helped us in all ways, we feel and give our gratitude. We are ready now to face our readers.

JOHN HOLMES

CARROLL S. TOWLE

A COMPLETE

College Reader

Non-Fiction

The Range of Human Interest

PEOPLE have always liked to tell stories. They have loved to make up new versions of old tales and have created dreams of men and happenings that might have been. They have enjoyed the making of verse, too—patterns of sound and images and rhythm. And in some of our greatest literature fiction and verse have been powerfully united to express some of man's highest thoughts and deepest feelings.

Yet much that has endured and is properly read and studied as good writing and as literature is neither fiction nor verse. Consider Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*, Lamb's "Dream Children," John Locke's *Concerning Human Understanding*, Thomas DeQuincey's "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth," and Emerson's "The American Scholar."

For men have many things to say that must be said in other ways than verse or story. These utterances may be called literature or they may not. That question would have mattered little to Bacon, writing on adversity, or Huxley, explaining the vast history in a piece of chalk. What matters more is that the style serve as an instrument for just those things the author has to say. These may be almost anything, for the uses of non-fiction prose are myriad.

This book shows a number of these uses. Dean Inge examines the concept of progress, and finds it a false guide in our ideas of ourselves and our world. Harold A. Larrabee attempts to lay a sound foundation for knowledge by showing us what a fact is. Others define democracy or humor, distinguish idle from constructive thinking, show how our words mislead our judgments and our acts. Still others are concerned with politics, religion, youth, the under-privileged; with science, literature, their own lives and the lives of others, past and present. Definition and judgment, explanation and satire, personal history, biography, argument, prophecy, the expression of a mood—many are the needs of men for good non-fiction prose.

And what of the reader? What is his pleasure and his task? Two main things

are asked of him: first, that he be curious and willing to respond with an energy equal to that of the writer. Even the unwilling listener can be forced to hear, at least to hear something. But the writer's words are silent on a page until the reader comes to them. He can be won, often; and if the writer is to succeed, he must be. If, to begin with, the reader goes half way, something may come of it. And on rereading, something more.

Beyond this, the reader must come with an open mind, with no preconceived notions about what the writer is going to do or how he should go about his task. Hard and fast notions about what a writer "ought to be doing" get in the way of what he does, and lessen its impact. The passion to classify and the wish to be "scientific" too often blind us, and we feel it is our business to decide whether a work is an *essay* or an *article*. Could it, because it was printed on a certain page in a newspaper, be called an *editorial*? Read a few issues of any large daily and see how varied is the nature of "editorials." The old term *essay* has been so modified that we wonder why John Locke called his long treatise an *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*—and for that matter why Charles Lamb called his charming little "essay" a *Dissertation on Roast Pig*. We speak of "creative" writing, hardly knowing what we mean (is it drama, fiction, and verse?) or whether the rest should be "recreative" or "non-creative." The old division into exposition, argument, description, and narration seems better at first glance, though description is a criminal at large that no one can describe. And is the compartment known as "exposition" anything but an arrangement of sliding doors, to enlarge, admit, or shut out impulsively? The old act of convenience by which all prose was divided into four parts could not be "scientific." Why did we act as though it was? Or as though it mattered?

One should read not to classify but to understand. One should ask, "What is this author saying? Is it true? Is it worth saying? Does he say it well? It is far more scientific to carry with us, not a nest of pigeon-holes, but an understanding of what all kinds of writing have in common. Prose or verse, we have to take another's words as they come to us, word after word, building up sentences and paragraphs in a time sequence. For language, like music, works in the medium of time, as painting and scultpure work in space, and theatre in time and space together. So, speaking with scientific baldness, a piece of writing is a time sequence of language units properly or improperly arranged to create a desired effect.

One test of this sequence comes through reading aloud, or silently with the mind's ear, to hear the sound and rhythm of the words. Good writing will always meet this test and will have the ring of speech. Another important test is clarity. For words are not merely effects of sound and rhythm but stimuli for ideas. They are helpful stimuli only when we know them and get from them what the writer meant us to get. Almost impatiently we insist that the reference of each word be as clear, as precise as language can make it. We will not be misled, or left at sea. We must participate, and we must keep in touch. A third test, allied to this, is order. We like to feel that we have come in at the proper beginning, that the writer is doing the only right thing in taking up these points in just this order. We always want to know exactly where we are along our journey; we should never feel "lost." And finally looking back, as from a high hill, we should feel that we

have arrived and that we clearly see the wisdom of taking the path we have been asked to follow.

All this is a hard task for a writer, even when he is dealing with the commonplace. But like Pope's "sure return of oft-expected rhyme," mere statement of the obvious, suggested by the words as they occur, in easy grammar and expected —this cannot be enough, in any kind of writing. The reader wants something to happen. He wants something to happen *to him.* When he has finished reading—when the author has finished with him—he will not, ideally, be as he was before. He will be greater in knowledge, in wisdom, in stature. It may be that what he thought was comic is really tragic, or at least pathetic. It may be that he has deeper insight into the illogical behavior of nations, of men, and of himself. He may be seeing the problems of others—of statesmen, teachers, parents, students—as he has never seen them. Perhaps he gets no more than the pleasure of "what oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed." Whatever the thing that has happened, in some way great or small a change has been wrought in the reader. His horizon has expanded, his perspective changed, or perhaps his curiosity has been aroused. Otherwise for him the writing is not good. A definition in a dictionary may not be as exciting or revealing as Bertrand Russell's concept of the place of science in the life of man, but it does add something to the reader's knowledge. That excellent historian and wielder of words, Carl L. Becker, has by his definition of democracy clarified many a reader's thinking. To do so was his only aim, and all his skill in ordering his thoughts and phrasing them was bent upon it. Call the piece exposition, argument, or even description—what does it matter? The point is that it leaves the reader somehow changed. It is good writing. In a high sense it has achieved a useful purpose.

The pattern of words and sentences and larger units, obedient to the general sequence in time, will take the reader on one of two kinds of journey. One is through events in time and space, an illusion of actual happenings. So Robert P. Tristram Coffin lets us experience the launching of a wooden ship. George Stewart, in "Storm," gives us an almost cosmic view of weather across a continent. And James Anthony Froude makes us live through the last hours of Mary Queen of Scots. These writers, and many, many more, expand the poor sequence of our lives into a larger dimension. The second kind of journey is not through time and space but into a world of thought, where events are ruled not by chronology but by the more difficult laws of reason. James Harvey Robinson takes up four kinds of thinking each in order, going from the most primitive to the most advanced. Rudolph Flesch asks, "Can Science Be Explained?" and tells in detail the kinds of explanations possible, beginning with the simplest. J. B. S. Haldane shows us why some creatures are small and others large: because their skeletons, hearts, lungs, and other organs each function in a body of such and such a size. One can imagine each of these pieces we have mentioned written by the other method. But it wasn't. Each subject was alive and interesting to the writer just as it now appears. Each piece grew from an inner compulsion, and the journey for the reader was pre-determined in its nature by the imaginative and intellectual experience of the author's search for the right way.

The test of the journey through time and space lies in what happens to the reader. If he merely has the feeling of "and then" or "one thing after another,"

and if he comes out feeling "so what?" at the end of "Storm," then George Stewart has failed with him. Except in writing which aims merely to pass the time, narrative is hardly an end in itself. Nor has Froude succeeded unless he has brought the reader to feel the irony of Queen Mary's magnificent attempt to brave out death itself.

Likewise, the journey into thought is good if it opens steadily toward a destination worth reaching. If facts are jumbled or the argument has gaps, if points are added to points like simple *a-b-c,* and there is a sense of addition only but of no conclusion to emerge, the journey fails. No grace of language or fluidity of style can take the place of this sure unfolding of a complex meaning. Flesch might have said, "Can science be explained? Why, yes and no. Two kinds of explanation can be made, for readers on different levels of understanding." But if he succeeds in what he actually wrote, the reader feels this conclusion steadily growing within himself, and at each step he sees just why it must be so, how he came here, and just which way this path of thought must lead him next. This is the reader's journey and what happens in him, though nothing "happens" in the usual story sense.

Whatever the writer's method, phrase follows phrase, sentences and paragraphs lead into one another with one intent: to bring the reader to a certain end. The writer has already made this journey, perhaps many times, before he writes a word. It is a good journey, and has left him with something he *must* say. And so he summons all his skill in thought and language to translate without loss of power his fascination with the journey and the outcome. The basis is always sincerity, a firm belief in what he has to say, and a sincerity of mood maintained from first to last. For one false note may mar the whole. If he has taken a journey of reasoning, the writer imitates the course of his own reasoning with no fundamental change but with all the economy of art.

Finally, good writing conveys a feeling of maturity, which comes out somewhat like this. When we like something we read, we feel that it is right—that there may have been other ways of putting it but not better ways, and we are satisfied. When this happens, we must have felt somehow that the author had challenged his mood, his reasoning, and the very idea itself. If we like "Storm," or "Mr. Roberts," or "Growing Up in Oklahoma," we feel that the author has challenged his understanding of weather, war, or boyhood and found that it stood the test. And we feel that he must have challenged and tested his way of presenting his subject, too, and found that the ordinary "class theme" way, or any other way than the one he chose, was wrong for the thoughts and facts and mood he wanted to express. Stewart must have asked himself the worth of his fascinated preoccupation with the weather, and Heggen must have tried and tried again for just the phrase to carry all the boredom of his war—until he hit upon the *U.S.S. Reluctant.* For these pieces, and for a host of others, sincerity proves the enterprise worth while before a single word is written. As it comes to the reader, it is a matured sincerity, which has come through the testing and still lives in written words.

Sometimes, of course, the writer's considered judgment on method, and content, and even his very purpose, will not be the reader's. There may seem better ways; or worse than this, the reading may seem to have been wasted time. The journey

may have seemed an old one, or a silly one ending in a maze of briars or maybe at the starting point again. If so, there are regrets all round, including the editors', naturally. But try it again some time. Sometimes one is not quite "ready" for a piece of writing. Meanwhile there is always something else to read, and of course it doesn't have to be a story in order to be creative and good. Non-fiction prose can transcend the special interest and the merely utilitarian purpose even as it serves this purpose, and so may take its honored place beside the poem and the story.

1

Personal History

This is *my* life, says the writer. This is what happened to *me*. It is not hard to understand the interest in self, for it is paramount much of the time in all of us. But to enlist and hold the sympathies of another is not easy. We love to talk about ourselves, but who will listen, and why? Yet a great deal of personal history gets told, we do like to read it, and we read it with no great effort. Even the use of "I" is not too great an obstacle to live participation, though some autobiographers have thought so and have talked about themselves in the third person.

The personal history we enjoy comes generally from good storytellers, not dull and merely informative chroniclers. Out of his life the writer picks those things to tell which shed most light upon him as he sees himself: he *selects* his material wisely, perhaps in the light of a theme. Often, like James Thurber, he writes with humor or with wit, showing detached amusement at himself. Thoreau, in the livelier portions of *Walden*, defends a thesis which modifies the account of his life by the pond. Henry Seidel Canby keeps his own and our attention steadily on the home that was, and on its felt rhythms, which he imitates. The point of view of the boy is there, but tempered by the interest in what the author calls "a contribution to history."

Aside from the give and take of human drama, perhaps the finest fruit of personal history is the sense it gives of period and environment. Marquis James's "Growing Up in Oklahoma" is the vivid portrayal of one boy's growing, even to the youthful idiom of words like "scrumptious." But well to the foreground is the story of his home town Enid, itself growing up in the age of icehouses, bicycles, *The Youth's Companion*, and the new gas-driven buggies. Through the imperturbable straight narrative of his life-adventure, Ben Franklin becomes a representative American, moving through the mores of the young country to fame and fortune. Maxwell Goldberg's fine story of himself as the young writer is rich with the implications of immigrant philosophy and endeavor in the same America two centuries later. Such are the more than incidental aspects of personal history sincerely told, without apology or vanity. One hardly knows how much these writers are aware of

this broad canvas larger than themselves. But it is there, sketched in around the best of them. At its best, perhaps, the outstanding qualities of personal history are vividness and a sense of intimacy.

Home[1]

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

GOD BLESS our home," which I can just emember in worsted tapestry, framed in jig-aw walnut, and hung on a spare-room wall, ever meant "God make our home a happy me." The blessing was asked upon virtues vhich were often more conducive to moral onduct and material success than happiness. nd indeed it was not a superior quality of appiness that distinguished the pre-Ford, re-radio, pre-boarding school home from ur perches between migrations. Those who ead their social history in fiction will re-ember how many nineteenth century novels eal with unhappy homes—tyrannical or tuffy homes, homes that were prisons or sylums for the suppressed and inhibited. oward the end of the century parents, like ehovah as the churches preached him, began o soften. Homes were happier then, I be-eve, than in the previous generation, for the radual democratizing of life had worked it-elf indoors and was subtly changing the tmosphere of both sitting room and kitchen. here was more give and take between par-nts and children, more liberty, and more heerfulness.

It was confidence, however, not happiness, at made the great difference between then nd now, a confidence that reached down elow comfort or pleasure into stability itself. fy cousins, who tiptoed around the chair of n old-fashioned, self-willed father, never new from day to day what his authority ight require of them. Their manners and eir careers were both whipped into them. et they had this same confidence, and would e sure as I, with a memory of a happy and easy-going home, that something solid and valuable has been lost by our children.

In our town, and I think in the American nineties generally, home was the most impressive experience in life. Our most sensitive and our most relaxed hours were spent in it. We left home or its immediate environment chiefly to work, and neither radio nor phonograph brought the outer world into its precincts. Time moved more slowly there, as it always does when there is a familiar routine with a deep background of memory. Evening seemed spacious then, with hour upon hour in which innumerable intimate details of picture, carpet, wall paper, or well-known pointing shadow were printed upon consciousness. When bicycles came in and flocks of young people wheeled through twilight streets past and past again the porches where the elders were sitting, it was the first breakaway from home, a warning of the new age, but then more like a flight of May flies round and round their hatching place.

The home came first in our consciousness and thus in our culture, clubs, civic life, business, schools, society being secondary, and success there, except in money making, a work of supererogatory virtue. The woman who could not make a home, like the man who could not support one, was condemned, and not tacitly. Not size, nor luxury, nor cheerfulness, nor hospitality made a home. The ideal was subtler. It must be a house where the family wished to live even when they disliked each other, it must take on a kind of corporate life and become a suitable environment for its diverse inhabitants. Hence a common tragedy in our town, often noted, though seldom traced to its causes, was the slow crushing of a family by its

[1] From *The Age of Confidence*, by Henry Seidel anby, published by Farrar and Rinehart, and re-inted by the kind permission of the author.

home. The sprawling house, such as they built in the early eighties, grew and grew until parents, aunts, grandparents, children all had their districts and retiring places in its wings and stories. Though the family might quarrel and nag the home held them all, protecting them against the outside world and each other. Deaths came, children migrated, taxes went up, repairs became numerous, yet still the shrinking remnant of the family held on from use and wont, or deep affection, until in a final scene of depleted capital or broken health, the hollow shell of the home collapsed on a ruined estate and fiercely quarreling heirs.

So often tragedy at the end, the home of the nineties was quite as often idyllic, if not ideal, in its best years. It had a quality which we have lost. We complain today of the routine of mechanical processes, yet routine in itself is very persuasive to the spirit, and has attributes of both a tonic and a drug. There was a rhythm in the pre-automobile home that is entirely broken now, and whose loss is perhaps the exactest index of the decline of confidence in our environment. Life seems to be sustained by rhythm, upset by its changes, weakened by its loss. An apartment house with a car at the door, though comfort summarized, has no rhythm, except for a broken, excited syncopation, or the spondaic movement of boredom.

Our houses moved with felt rhythms, not set, not identical, yet so sensible that what one felt first in a strange home was the tempo of life there. We were away for brief intervals only, at home long enough to be harmonized, and even the heads of families, whose working hours were incredible in their length, seemed never to lose their conditioning by the home. If business and the home lived by different ethical standards, as was commonly said, it may be because the worker was a different man outside the rhythm of the house. And women lived almost exclusively within.

It was this familiar movement, this routine with a certainty of repetition, that inspired a confidence in a patterned universe missing today. (Our love of nature helped too—more of this in a later chapter.) The European peasant got it from the cycles of the soil, and this also made him a different creature from the artifacts of industrialism. There was a slur upon boarders in our town and upon the strays who lived in hotel suites or the transients who moved from rent to rent. They were not quite like us, even though sometimes more cheerful; they had no home. We could have said, with equal truth, that they lacked something of confidence in tomorrow and in circumstance, which, in spite of the common incidence of misfortune or disaster, we held with a tenacity not easily explained by religion or philosophy.

Most of us in the late eighties and the nineties still lived in squarish houses of red or painted brick, heavily corniced with wood at the top, or mansarded, with porches at front and back, and painted iron fences between the lawns and the brick sidewalks with their rows of buttonwoods or Norway maples. There were a few old houses of lovelier lines, and many bizarrities of Italian, Greek, Queen Anne, and Egyptian inspiration, or of bastard Gothic pointed with gray slate. All, except the very oldest, had spacious, high-ceilinged rooms, hung with chandeliers recently converted to electricity, and trimmed with dark, polished walnut which also spiralled down giant stairways, and were upholstered wherever possible. Golden oak in the very latest houses relieved the gloom by substituting the frivolous for the dignified.

It is possible to describe what that generation would have called, say about 1890, an ideal home. The hall was broad and deep, a waiting place hung with steel prints and furnished with benches, stiff chairs, and a hat rack. It was Main Street, meant for traffic. On the right the parlor, on the left the sitting room. The parlor was for decorum. It was the largest room in the house, and the least used, with the most massive tables, the biggest pictures, and the showiest chairs. Mirrors at each end gave it an illusion of still greater spaciousness, and between them the piano which, when used for practising, admitted the only disorder allowed in that room. On the center table were the more pretentious gift books, for show, not reading. Indeed there is a whole literature of gift

books, all illustrated and bound in stamped leather, the only reason for whose existence was the parlor table. They came in and went out with it and many a childish knuckle has been rapped for opening them with smutty fingers. It was a sign of change in the times when in thousands of homes parlors were made over into "living rooms." The date, which was the late nineties, is more significant than many better remembered.

Across the hall was the sitting room, smaller, cosier, with easier chairs, bookcases, a tall brass lamp, a gas stove in the corner (fireplaces had not yet come back except as tiled ornaments for the hall where of course no one ever used them), and an air of comfort and usability. Here the family sat and friends were entertained (company went into the parlor). Here were the magazines, the books to be read, the cat, the dog, and the children studying after supper. This was the heart of the home.

The dining room, again, was formal, family portraits on the wall, a china cupboard out of which glinted what never was used even on the grandest occasion. Morning sun in the dining room was one of the specifications, as important as the sideboard and the serving table. The pantry was built up to the high ceilings in tiers of shelves and closets on and in which were kept that incredible clutter of household china and glass which every family seemed to accumulate. There was a drawer labelled "cake," another "bread," and a lead-lined sink with cockroach poison on the edges. The kitchens sprawled – coal stoves, laundry tubs, tables for baskets, tables for rolling dough, hooks and closets for a forest of tinware, and so on out into the shed with its tables and bins and closets. And in the cellar more bins, more shelves, a cold room, and a bricked in furnace as big as a funeral vault.

The main stairs followed a curving serpent of black walnut to a long upstairs hall off which opened vast bedrooms. The bath room was here (often the only one) with doors in at least two directions, accessible to all. The parents' room would be an upstairs sitting room also, with a desk somewhere spilling with small change and account books, and at the further end a vast walnut bed whose back rose to the ceiling, a cliff of polished veneer topped by a meaningless escutcheon. Other monumental pieces of black walnut flanked it at either side, and at the foot was a crib for the smallest child, or a green plush sofa for naps.

Across the hall would be the spare rooms, usually "blue" and "red," as in the White House, very bleak and usually shrouded in sheets. On their walls the outmoded pictures collected: "Old Swedes' Church," by Robert C., "Scenes on the Brandywine," "Pauline" on glass. Guests in those days usually went home at night.

The stair banister to the third floor was scratched by children's slidings. This was where freedom began. There was the boy's room and the girl's room, indistinguishable in furnishing (cast-offs mostly) but differing in the kind of disorder, and an alcove at the end of the hall for doll houses, and mineral or birds' eggs collections. On the other side of the hall, last relic of the self-contained age of our grandparents, a "lumber room," with its bench, tools, oddments for repairs and plumbing, the rest of the floor space carrying a *massif* of family trunks piled up on each other in buttes and mesas. Last of all a cubicle where the visiting sempstress slept and some drawers for her scanty clothes. (She came of the *good* "plain people," and kept up her tiny remnant of gentry by gifts of big red apples to the children.) Here freedom ended, since the next door led to the servants' quarters (white only, the black slept outside) and no one, not even a parent, was supposed to trespass there except on monthly inspections of the sanitation.

Such was the house, which lived by a rhythm in which all these familiar backgrounds had their part. Morning was early, in the winter dark and cold, with faint gurglings from the radiators and faint breaths of warmth from the registers, too late for comfortable dressing. Earlier, in bed, one heard the slender rattle of chains on the heavy storm door, the distant whisk-whisk as Isaac, the waiter, swept the front porch – or, if it were an old-fashioned Quaker house, the soft slop-slush of wet cloths over the marble

steps which had to be polished each morning. The faint joyous barks of the dog released, the first street cars banging down the hill – then, through the open window, sunlight pale on the far away river, then bright on the carpet – the double gong ringing stridently – seven struck high and clear on the old clock far below–and a rush downstairs for breakfast.

A meal that, no snack. No fruit then, until strawberries, cantaloupes, or peaches were ripe, then in vast platters – but oatmeal and milk that was still foamy from the milkman's crook-necked cans, hot rolls or beaten biscuit, chops or scrapple or sausages with hashed potatoes, eggs as a side dish, waffles three times a week. A Quaker blessing first, heads down but no word spoken. A full meal to all, then a scurry of children for coats and hats, the buggy at the door for father, hard-tired bicycles bumping down the pavement, green bags of school books swung against the trees.

Quiet in the home when the mother left with her basket to join the housewives of all the first families shopping down the long row of wagon tilts backed against the curb of the street market, and spilling with greens, vegetables, ducks, chickens, and bunches of wild flowers. When she had gone the child left behind heard the faint moaning spirituals of Isaac in the pantry polishing the silver, "O Lo - ad, O my Lo - ad," more distant and fainter the creak of the cook's laughter. The house was a personality, inscrutable, like God. It was the other half of ego, without which the ego was only a sense of existence, it was external reality familiarly incarnate. It was something so embracing yet so intimate that a word could name it only by indirection and overtones. It was home.

And while the slow synthetic beat of the house pulsed in a tempo so well known that the senses responded subconsciously, knowing the hours of the day or night, the dawn hours being different appreciably from those near midnight or in the sleepiest afternoon, many subsidiary rhythms joined or separated their quicker or slower motions. In the yard at afternoon the children had their moments of idle wandering or dreamy meditation, or sudden impulses to frenzied play, or hours of quiet industry in the sand pile or on the bending branches of the cherry trees. Sounds from within sank to the squeak of a cleaning cloth or the polite laugh of a guest in the parlor, then rose, crescendo, until by supper at six the whole house was again alive with activity. As night deepened the tempo gently slackened. Children's feet dragged upward to bed, the street noises sank to quiet, murmurs above stairs drowsed down until the clocks rang the hour through a silent house, and the head of the household, bolting the shutters, chaining the storm door, locking the front door, side door, back door, climbed the stairs, and set the silver basket on its shelf with the revolver and the watchman's rattle, a ritual act (since burglaries were most rare) celebrating the inviolability of the home.

I once rose at dawn and tiptoeing out into the silent street, saw those familiar houses relaxed and off their guard. There was no human life about, no dogs even were stirring; it was still dusky but clear. The slant light from the brightening East shone on the brick façades and overhanging cornices as upon faces, glinting with windows like eyes. And each one of those houses became the individual it was, an organism, hunched and humorous, or with open arms and serene forehead, a personality which recalled the family it sheltered and yet seemed to have its own life, dominating theirs. I was seeing, with that irrational and fleeting clairvoyance peculiar to youth, an environment incarnate in contorted brick and mortar, feeling in those crouching house people a grudging security offered to inmates who shaped their spirits accordingly. And in that moment the insipid smile of the Judge's mansard across the way, the reticent severity of the doctor's wooden mansion behind its trees, the brutal simplicity of the brick cube that housed the iron master and his brother, the coquettish insincerity of the minister's turrets of *fin de siècle*, and the toothy grin of the talkative widow's cornice, seemed more real than the sleeping inmates, so real that they mocked those that they sheltered, and were indeed grotesque symbols of the power of Things protecting and coercing the impressionable

spirit of Life. Then the sun rose, looking up at our own house, bland, familiar, welcoming, surcharged with secret comforts. I shrugged away philosophy.

That feeling of a daily rhythm, in which each hour had its characteristic part, in a house where change came slowly and which was always home, nourished, if did not create, the expectancy of our generation that the norm of life was repetition and therefore security. Our house, with the tall two-hundred year old clock ticking at its heart, sank into the subconsciousness and became a sense of stability and permanence. It was a proof of a friendly universe, to which memory could always return. When a home was closed on our street, its shutters flapping, its blinds pulled awry to show empty floors and bare walls, we pitied the family that had lost their external self. The homeless, like the landless men of the Middle Ages, seemed to have no country.

The family made the home, yet the home, when it was made, had its own laws. Thus while the relaxing of family ties in the present era has had its powerful effect upon the home, the auto, the radio, commuting, boarding school, and apartment life have struck direct at the laws which made the laws of the home and on through to the family. It is the latter cause which seems more fundamental. Confidence is a habit which must be acquired young and from an environment that is constant and rhythmically continuous. The kaleidoscopic patterns of life today are more exciting and probably liberate the intelligence when there is an intelligence to be liberated; but the pattern they make is seldom realized by youth which turns and twists and darts in an environment which to its seeing never once makes a whole. Home life in the nineties could be very sweet, and often profoundly dull, and sometimes an oppressive weight of routine inescapable; security was often bought at a ruinous price; yet what conditioned reflexes it set up! The peace movement of the early nineteen hundreds, naively confident amidst a world in arms, was an attempt to make that world our home, our American home. Nor was heaven exempt from the home-making activities of the American family. We sang lustily in church —

> There we shall rest,
> There we shall rest,
> In our Father's House,
> In our Father's House.

The Age of Confidence got the habit of security in its homes.

Growing Up in Oklahoma[1]

MARQUIS JAMES

ONE DAY it turned out that we were rich. Papa had won a big case. He bought a new buggy and new harness for Tom and there were five hundred dollars left over. With outlaws getting scarcer, that was a lot of money for a lawyer to have all at once. Much of his pay would come in the shape of a town lot or a cow or a steer or a sow; groceries at Mr. Peter Bowers's, clothes at Meibergen & Godschalk's, or having a horse shod by Mr. Hackett the blacksmith. Nearly all our crops were put in and gathered by farmers working off fees. (Farmer, instead of settler, was getting to be the word.)

As with the gambler's dollar, the question was what to do with this money. Papa always had to do something with money; Mama said it burned holes in his pockets. Of course we could build the new front addition and have a stairway. But Mama was not for that. She wanted to "stock the farm"; buy brood mares and Guernsey cows and raise colts and calves. The front addi-

[1] From *The Cherokee Strip* by Marquis James. Copyright 1945 by Marquis James. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

tion could wait. Here was a chance to start a stock farm, like her father's in Missouri. And, yes, I could have my pony and saddle.

The prospect of a pony won me to Mama's side. Otherwise I'd have been for the new front addition – in order to get the stairs. I had been very disappointed over what happened to the rock quarry, which had represented Papa's latest attempt to provide the addition. The rock quarry was opened in the ravine which he had crossed on horseback in the Run. Papa thought that the red stone beneath the gravel would be capital for building. It was fun to watch the blasters drill holes and fill them with dynamite, and the stonecutters with chisels and mauls work the rough masses into smooth, regular shapes. The first stones were taken in low, broad-tired small-wheeled wagons to Enid where they were putting up a new building on the Square. But Papa's stone never went into that building. There came a rain and a terrible freeze and some of those red rocks cracked, just sitting there in the street.

As it happened I did not get my pony because Papa decided to use the money to build the icehouse. Mama was simply thunderstruck. She said it didn't freeze hard enough in the Strip. Papa said it froze hard enough to crack rock. He went on to say how much money was spent in Enid in one summer to buy ice which was shipped all the way from Wichita. It was enough to get all the stock anybody should ever want.

What Papa did he did fast. Work on the icehouse started right away. The grandeur of the undertaking enthralled me. Half a dozen mule teams and two-wheel scrapers began widening and throwing a dam across Boggy Creek. The driver of a two-wheel scraper can be a lordly personage. Coat off and cuffs turned back, Papa was in their midst, directing. His quiet tones formed a contrast to the "Gees!" and "Haws!" and "Git-along-thars!" of the mule skinners. The result of this labor was the largest body of water I had ever seen. On the bank rose the icehouse, with double walls filled with cinders. It was as high as the Rex Hotel, and in an unfinished state a marvelous thing to climb.

As if this was not enough excitement for one summer, the East Bottom was planted in cotton. The Negro family that had charge of it lived in the boys' house and did their cooking in the back yard. This tribe took in all ages from a gray-wooled "uncle" to a pickaninny playing in the dust between the rows. I shall never forget the bright hues of the garments or the bright laughter of those colored people. Or their singing in the evenings. There was a boy and a girl about my age. During cotton-picking time I worked with them because I enjoyed their company. When the cotton was hauled away, with the last of the family perched on the last wagonload, our place seemed silent and empty.

And there stood the icehouse: empty, and also silent – after a summer of hammering and sawing and bustle of building. We waited for ice. It happened, though, that there was no ice that winter – only a twister that took a corner of the roof off the icehouse. So ended a year worthy of note. A man more given to boasts than my father might have made something of it: not only was he the sole person to raise cotton or to cut ice in Garfield County, but he tried both at practically the same time.

The icehouse roof was repaired, though I did not pay much attention to it, for that was the summer I herded cattle, or at any rate cows – milch cows from town. Of a summer, townfolks pastured their cows in the country and boys found employment driving the herds to and fro, morning and evening. There were several herds in the pasture. My schoolmate Jay Radcliffe drove one. Leonard Bacon drove another. Leonard's father was a preacher who ran a dairy. He had two thumbs on one of his hands.

As the pasture was fenced, all I had to do was to keep an eye on the bull. Often a town boy or two would spend the day with me to save himself a trip. We would practice riding tricks and throwing lariats. In the evening when the other boys returned, some mounted and some afoot, all the town cows would be rounded up and the different herds cut out and started on the road with some distance between herds to keep them from

mixing together again. For this work a pony would have been a handy thing. All I had was Billy. The experience should have made me quite a rider for a kid, but it didn't. Billy had the hardest gait of any horse I have ever been on. He trotted at nearly any pace, indicating an early training which his disreputable looks belied. A sustained trot is an unnatural gait for a horse, and one that must be taught. Your western cow pony trotted a few steps and broke into an easy lope (it differs from the eastern canter) that was like sitting in a rocking chair.

The next winter it froze and froze good. Papa took no chances. At the first cold snap he put men on the pond with pumps to keep water on the surface of the ice so that the freezing weather would thicken it faster. In that way we got ten-inch ice. The cutters worked night and day, fearing a thaw. It was a spectacle people drove from town to see. Every now and then a cutter would fall in and then dry out by the crackling fire on the bank. The icehouse was filled to the rafters.

That was not all that happened that winter. The Wichita people who had been selling ice in Enid at fancy prices began to build a branch plant in town. When Mama heard of that, she started to set hens on a scale she had never attempted before. Some lumber left over from repairing the icehouse roof was used to make a great shed for the brooders.

We bought an ice wagon and a team of horses as big and sleek as brewery-truck horses. The wagon was the most gaily painted apparition I had seen on wheels outside a circus. We also bought a second team and a smaller wagon, but this was merely a farm wagon made over. My first trips in the big wagon were made on Saturdays. By the time school let out for the summer I was able to drive the team anywhere except downhill: I was not strong enough to set the brake. As there were only two hills in Enid, East Hill and South Hill, I took to driving fairly regularly, leaving the man to ride the back step and carry ice into the houses.

This occupation gave me a feeling of importance I had not known before. On my high seat, handling the reins that lay on the flat backs of the team, I felt superior to the run of other boys for the first time in my life. There were usually boys following the wagon for a piece of ice to suck. I do not believe the note of respect in their tones was altogether a fancy of mine, for until now ice in summer was a thing few people saw in Enid. Not that my powers of fancy had been entirely overcome by the magnificence of reality. My imagination would change the ice wagon into a stagecoach.

Leaving Enid and turning into the quarter-line road between the Utsler and the old Howell claims, you made your way along a ledge – wall of a canyon on one side, foaming river on the other. Prime place for a holdup or ambush, specially this trip with all that gold dust aboard. On the straight stretch just before Horseshoe Bend the nigh leader r'ars. Arrow in his rump. Injuns! I cracks my whip an' we hits the Bend at a dead run, two wheels in the air. . . .

My self-esteem does not seem to have suffered from the fact that there was an ice wagon other than ours on Enid's hot and dusty streets: the wagon of the "artificial" ice company. That wagon was driven by a man. The artificial wagon driver spread lies about our ice. He said it came from dirty creek water with wigglers in it. The men on our wagons told people the artificial ice was slow poison. You just had to go to the plant and smell the stinking stuff they made it of.

There was a good deal of argument as to whose ice was colder, and therefore would last longer. It stood to reason that ours was colder, having been frozen in practically zero weather. Still, some people wouldn't believe it until Mr. John Reilly made his experiment. Mr. Reilly bought a hundred-pound cake of our ice and a hundred-pound cake of the artificial ice and put them side by side on the walk in front of his Kentucky Whiskey House. All afternoon long people stood around and watched the melting cakes. Bets were made as to which would go first. When night came it looked like a dead heat. But the test wasn't over yet. Next morning our cake was twice the size of the artificial cake, which proved that there was something

about man-made ice that couldn't stand the night air. We were officially declared the winner and wagers were paid on that basis. Several years later I heard Mr. Sam Evans, the druggist, tell what it was about the night air that affected the artificial ice. Some of Papa's friends had poured a kettle of boiling water on it.

As this wasn't publicly known at the time, the artificial-ice people cut the price of their ice. We cut the price of ours. They cut again and we cut again.

We sold all our ice, but at such low prices there was no money to put ice in the ice-house during the coming winter should it freeze hard enough to make any. So Papa retired from the ice business.

But while Papa had been selling ice at a loss, Mama sold poultry and eggs at a profit. She had always done this to make her pin money. That summer she went into the business in earnest and sold a thousand chickens, turkeys, and ducks. They brought in a good deal; but it was not enough. The icehouse took our claim and the best of the town lots. When told that we were moving to Enid I am not so sure but that I was more glad than sorry. The summer on the ice wagon had sharpened my taste for metropolitan life.

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One of the first things I noticed about town life was the need for money. As a country boy I had been accustomed to spend money whenever in town. As I did not go too often, my funds were usually equal to the demands on them. But being in town every day I soon ran out of cash.

The second floor of the Cogdal-McKee building solved this problem. Tenants saw to the sweeping of their rooms, but Mr. Cogdal kept the hall and the front stairs swept. For twenty-five cents a week I swept them every few days, and the only person who complained that they were not clean enough was Mama. Papa paid me a quarter a week for sweeping his office and cleaning his spittoons. Mr. Charlie swept the office of Moore & Moore, but I cleaned the spittoons at the pump in back for five cents each. Mr. Sturgis slept in his office and swept it. Judge Roach paid two-and-a-half cents apiece for cleaning the spittoons in the Police Court room. I could not complain over the reduced rate because there were so many of them and I cleaned them so often.

The Western Union office was almost as fascinating as Police Court, and our building was never shut of the clack of the instruments. The telephone had seemed marvelous enough when they put one on the wall of Papa's office and I could talk to Jay Radcliffe clear out on East Hill. But one who understood the code could talk on the telegraph to Fort Worth or Kansas City. Mr. Seward, the manager, said that the company gave him no money for cleaning spittoons. I offered to clean them for nothing if he would teach me the Morse code. He said he would see about it. I began cleaning the Western Union spittoons and sure enough one day Mr. Seward wrote out the alphabet with a Morse sign after each letter. Had it been a guide to buried treasure I don't think I could have taken better care of that piece of yellow paper.

Another place I made myself handy was Parker's bookstore. Mr. Parker would let me sit on the back stoop and read secondhand books from his shelves: Oliver Optic, A. G. Henty, *The Prince and the Pauper,* the endless *Elsie Dinsmore* series, *Black Beauty, Beautiful Joe* and *The Great Northfield Bank Robbery & Other Daring Deeds of Jesse James;* also old copies of the comic magazines *Life* and *Puck* and *Judge* and of the funny papers with the doings of Happy Hooligan, Foxy Grandpa, and Buster Brown.

There was more to Enid, of course, than the Cogdal-McKee block. I had driven the ice wagon all over Jonesville (as they called the part of town that rightly belonged to Walter Cook) and the Kenwood and Weatherly additions on the West Side. But it was funny the things you *didn't* see from the ice wagon. I suppose that was because the wagon stuck to the streets, mostly. Alleys were the place to see things. You looked in the back doors.

Take the front door of Mr. Fred Luft's harness shop on Broadway, as they called E Street now. Well, on the sidewalk was a rather life-like dummy of a dappled-gray

gelding. Sometimes Mr. Luft would have a nice set of single harness on it, sometimes a saddle and bridle. This was all very well to see once or twice, but the novelty wore off. The same with Mr. Luft's show windows: just harness and saddles and the gear that went with them. But look in Mr. Luft's back door from the alley and you could see him and Mr. Daniels working on a set of harness or a saddle. You saw them cut and punch and rivet and shape and stitch the leather. A thing took form under your eyes. You went back in a day or so and what had been just a saddletree was half a saddle. You went back later and there it was, done; and a beauty.

That was it. From the back doors you could see people make things. You could see Uncle John Dollar making a pair of boots or Mr. Divers mixing his colors and painting a sign. At the Model Carriage Works you could see them fashion spokes and assemble a wheel. Jack McCutcheon, the tinker, soldered pots and pans and fixed umbrellas, guns, and bicycles. It was something to see him take a Colt apart, cut a new spring and put the parts together again, and snap the trigger to show that the Colt worked.

Looking in the back door of the Enid Bakery you could see Mrs. Oligschleger bake bread, taking loaves by the dozen from an oven you could have shoved a barn door in. Mrs. Oligschleger and her husband spoke German to each other. It was the first I knew that anyone except Indians and Mexicans spoke a language different from ours. I asked Mr. Oligschleger to teach me German.

"I got other things to do," he said, though his wife did most of the work.

Mrs. Oligschleger taught me to count to ten and to ask for bread or cake in German. When her husband was around she would make signs for me to go away. When he wasn't around she would tell me about life in Germany when she was a girl and sometimes give me a cooky.

On reading of a man who spoke sixteen languages I, too, resolved to become a great linguist. Having at my command a few words of Cherokee, Osage, Comanche, Spanish and German, I imagined the rest should be easy. I got to telling boys that, counting English, I spoke seven languages already. The seventh was what I called the "deef-and-dumb language." You talked it with your fingers. The accomplishment I had learned from Deefy, a smelly old deaf-mute who lived in a hovel near the Old Government Springs and read all the time. He would read anything straight through — a seed catalogue or anything else.

In the back of Bumstead's ice-cream parlor they made ice cream in the biggest freezer you ever saw. It took two boys my size to turn the handle. Sometimes I would be one of those boys, and we'd each get a dish of ice cream for doing it.

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That summer Mama and I went to Chicago to visit my sisters. The pictures in *Scribner's Monthly* had been no hoax, no glorified left-handed monkey-wrench proposition to fool a country boy. There they were in breath-taking reality: the elevated railway; theaters; the Masonic Temple, which was the highest building in the world (we went on the roof and looked down); Marshall Field's; Lake Michigan and the ships (we took a trip to Milwaukee on one named *Christopher Columbus*); the menagerie in Lincoln Park; the Field Museum. Some of the most vivid impressions of a city that I possess at this day were acquired in Chicago in 1901.

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Another source of reading matter was the Enid Public Library, which occupied a second-floor room on the south side of the Square. Jay Radcliffe and I would go there together on our bikes, returning books or calling for them for our mothers. Miss Jennie Kelso, the librarian, would suggest books which she thought might interest us personally. There were not many chairs in the library so usually we boys would sit on the floor and go over the books Miss Jennie had recommended. I don't know whether it was she or Mama who put me on the track of Froissart's *Chronicles* which did much to further my interest in history. My mother's favorite reading was history, historical novels,

memoirs and biography. She would often tell me stories from what she read. In that way I had learned something of presidents other than James A. Garfield. My favorites were George Washington (though he seemed a little too good to be true, never having told a lie), Andrew Jackson (for his refusal to clean the British officer's boots), Abraham Lincoln (he was such a good wrestler), and Andrew Johnson (the runaway apprentice).

Abraham Lincoln was brought a little closer than the others because Mama had met him. Mr. Lincoln had not been elected President, though folks were talking about it. Mama's class at school got up a tableau in which girls took the part of the different states. When they got ready to give the tableau, who should happen along but Abraham Lincoln in the tow of Congressman Shanks, whose daughter was Mama's closest friend in the class. Later they roomed together at college. After the tableau each little girl was presented to Mr. Lincoln. Mama said she would have forgotten all about it except that Mr. Lincoln went to the White House. During the Civil War the family used to speak of the time Rachel had shaken hands with President Lincoln.

I was anxious to get to the seventh grade in school so I could study Barnes's history of America, which began with Columbus. You used the same book in the eighth grade. There you began with the Revolutionary War. By the time I was in the fifth or sixth grade I had got hold of a very ragged copy of Barnes and read it all through. In high school they studied three Barnes's histories, as I recall. One was an ancient history, beginning with the Egyptians and ending with the Romans; another a European history; and the third an advance history of the United States. I got copies of these from Harold Houston, who went to high school, and read the most interesting parts.

On a Fourth of July, Mr. Henry Sturgis came by in a carriage to take my parents and me to a barbecue in the country where Mr. Sturgis was going to deliver the oration of the day. While driving along, Papa and Mr. Sturgis got to discussing the battle of Waterloo. I spoke up to say that Napoleon would have won had not Blücher shown up.

"What was that, Marquis?" asked Mr. Sturgis.

I repeated what I had said and he corrected my pronunciation of Blücher's name. I thought that was all he wanted. In reading I ran on to so many names you seldom heard in ordinary talk and I was unsure of how to say many of them. Mr. Sturgis asked other questions about the battle and about Napoleon, some of which it seems that I was able to answer, Napoleon being a favorite of mine.

"How old are you, Marquis?" Mr. Sturgis asked.

"Nearly twelve," I said.

"Judge," Mr. Sturgis said to Papa, "not many twelve-year-olds could answer those questions."

It was pleasant to know that my reading of history constituted something out of the ordinary. Thereafter at the post office and about the lawyers' offices I would make a point of showing off my learning. On my twelfth birthday Papa gave me an eight-volume history of the United States by Edward S. Ellis, and, on the following Christmas, Ridpath's *History of the World* in nine volumes. I read Ellis all through, skipping only the dry parts about the tariff and such. In Ridpath I bogged down and wound up by using the pictures as guides to the good parts like the Gunpowder Plot, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the voyages of Sir Francis Drake, and the gorier incidents of the French Revolution.

Mr. Temple Houston never came from Woodward without dropping in at Papa's office. Mr. Houston still wore his hair long and he wore high-heeled boots with his pants over them. You could see the bulge his gun made under his coat. Lawyers didn't usually carry guns any more. I was trying out my history on Mr. Temple Houston when Papa asked what I knew about General Sam Houston of Texas.

This must have been before I had finished Ellis, for, beyond the fact that Mr. Howell had spoken of him favorably, I couldn't think of a thing about General Sam Houston of Texas.

"Temple, had you known our Mr. Howell, you'd esteem that as a compliment to your father," Papa said.

Pretty soon I got hold of a book that told about General Sam Houston of Texas; also Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, James Bowie and others—all in the one book.

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When I was in the sixth grade Enid's schools were given an overhauling. Extra bright kids were advanced a grade and extra dumb ones put back. Grades were divided into A and B classes—A for the smart kids and B for the "retarded" pupils. I went in class B.

News of this degradation was withheld from my parents until the next monthly report card made further concealment impossible. Mama gave me a sure-enough scolding, rattling on at a great rate. I was really more pained by the way Papa took it He just said, in his slow way, that he was "disappointed."

The trouble was arithmetic and grammar. My thick skull for mathematics was a source of humiliation. For a year or two I slaved over the subject. As a spur I announced my intention of becoming a civil engineer. The results of these efforts were peculiar. Occasionally I would come up with the solution of a complicated problem—and then miss a string of simple ones. This created suspicions that I had been helped with the hard problem. So, in the end, I just gave up mathematics.

Grammar I wasn't obliged to give up, not having paid it any mind to begin with. I had no intention of doing so now. My position on grammar was that it served no useful purpose. This business of learning which words were verbs and which words nouns; what was the subject of a sentence and what the predicate; and that mumbo-jumbo about moods and tenses—there seemed no more sense to it than learning the alphabet backward (which one teacher required her kids to do). My teachers and my parents said grammar was necessary, to know how to speak and write properly. *Bushwa.* As often as any other kid I was asked to read my compositions before the class.

So I decided to haul off and be a poet. I wrote a poem and dropped it into the slot in the door of the Democrat office. At the end of the week when the paper came out there was my poem—printed!—with my name in caps and small caps at the bottom. How very kind of old Mr. Moore to have taken the extra trouble to reach into the upper case to set my name. I tried to repay him by going around and distributing a couple of sticks of type.

I watched Mr. Moore distribute the type in which my first published lines had been set. I cannot quite get into language my feeling on seeing my poem thus physically dispersed into its elements. There they lay in the case, the letters of lead which had spelled the words that had made my poem—their identities lost, their association in *my* poem gone the way of earthly things. Ah, but the letters were still there. Along with all the other 8 point in the whole *Democrat* office they awaited an opportunity to display to the world the very next thing I should write.

After I had reached the seventh grade, one evening my teacher, Miss Allen, asked if she could see me after school. This was a common enough occurrence. Usually it meant trouble.

This time Miss Allen began to speak of my verses. She said I had talent—a perception of the obvious I thought remarkable only because it came from a schoolteacher.

"On Monday morning," continued Miss Allen, "you may move your seat over into the A class."

Seven A! Gee!

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"February 16 [1905] Bright and fair. I read 'Ralph Raymond's Heir' and finished 'Cap Baileys Heir.' I wrote a fine poem about Harry. I was invited to attend a Surprise party for tomorrow evening. I don't think I will go. I want to read."

The implication that I preferred staying home and reading to going to any old party indicates that I was still under the spell of a bluff I had thrown for the benefit of Eva Britton. I wanted her to think me different from the run of boys who were crazy to go to parties. Eva Britton was the prettiest and the most popular girl in the seventh grade.

Her father was one of the first early settlers to prosper sufficiently to move to town and give his children "advantages." The Brittons lived on Maine Street, a couple of blocks from us, in the house Banker Fleming had vacated to go to the West Side. Their porch had more scroll work on it than any other porch in Enid.

Naturally, I went to the party, which was at Maud Luther's. "Dan, Jay, Eugene, Wilk and I met down at the bridge. Then came the girls. We took them to Luther's house. We started to play Clap In and Clap Out and after we had played a while Mrs. Luther told us to come in the back parlor and there she gave each of us an orange and a piece of cake and a popcorn ball. When we finished eating we played Wink on the Sly. Eva would always wink at me and I would always wink at her. When the party broke up Dan and I and Eugene took the girls home. We took Ruby home and then we were going to take some of the rest of the girls home and we met Mr. Britton and he made Eva go home with him. What a shame."

When I wrote that we "took" the girls to Luther's and "took" them home, I was making conscious use of a word high-school boys employed in connection with their social activities. We Central kids discharged our functions as escorts in this manner. Bound for a mixed gathering, the boys would meet at some convenient spot, such as the Broadway bridge, which the girls would have to pass. The girls would get together somewhere else and all in a bunch approach our rendezvous, as if by accident. Then we would proceed together—the girls in one bunch walking ahead giggling mysteriously and the boys walking just behind shoving each other and saying things for the girls to overhear. In the same way we "took" girls home, the boys keeping together until the last girl had been trailed to her front gate.

Maud Luther's party touched off a stimulating social season, with a party about every other Saturday night. Never before had a Sunday suit of mine seen such service in Enid, and on party nights I would black my shoes and comb my hair without being told. I bought a high-standing celluloid collar, acknowledged the last word in elegance. The only trouble was I could hardly turn my head around. If my diary is reliable it was at Enos Shaw's that we first played post office. The girls shrieked and some of the older boys snickered knowingly at the mention of the name. Pretty soon I found out why. It was a kissing game. Well, it was neither as bad as you might think nor so wonderful as I'd heard it cracked up to be —this kissing a girl.

Not only did I grace these worldy affairs with my presence (and my celluloid collar), I took a hand in the promotion and the management of some of them. This was a devious and underhand business, with the particular object of keeping the company congenial by the exclusion of rivals. To this end old alliances were broken and fresh attachments formed for nearly every party. Sometimes I came out on top as a result of these manipulations, sometimes I fell the victim of another manager's artful schemes.

When Eugene Dwelle began talking of giving a party a problem of transportation arose, for Gene lived in the country. We found a hayrack that we could use. Now we needed two horses. Papa said he would pay for the hire of one if I could scare up the other. My deadly rival for Eva Britton's favor, Taylor Lyons, came forward with an offer of a second horse. This I considered an act of inexcusable presumption. Gene hadn't even sent out his invitations, and he had promised that should I get a second horse there would be no invitation for Taylor Lyons. But as I couldn't raise the extra horse Gene had to invite Taylor.

Then things took an unpredicted turn. Eva accepted the invitation of another boy to go to a church social on the night of Gene's party. That, I said to myself, sure leaves old Taylor in the soup. But it didn't leave me in the soup because my fancy had been caught by a new girl in our class whom I shall call Mary. I told my diary that Eve was just too fickle for any use.

On the ride out to Gene's I drove and Mary sat beside me. She asked if I could drive with one hand. "Why, sure," I said, thinking that a funny question. Mary took

my free hand in hers. Playing pleased-and-displeased at the party Mary kissed me in a way that left no room for doubt that there were things about kissing I had undervalued until then. Not long before the party broke up Gene took some of us boys to the barn to look at a new colt. Going back to the house we passed Taylor Lyons and Mary under the grape arbor. "Oh, take that lantern away," she said. "The light hurts my eyes." On the way to town it was Taylor's turn to drive. Mary sat with him.

"Well, I don't care," concludes my diary's account of the evening's events. "Taylor is going away next month. Tanned my cat hide today. Tattoed my name on my arm and my initials on my thumb."

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A salutary result of the association with Karl Green was the improvement of my pool game. The practice I got on his table made me a winner at Waumpie Washburn's. The time was when I had had no more ambition to become a pool shark than I had to become a saloon loafer. When the saloons went with the coming of statehood, the church people continued to agitate for the closing of the pool halls. I had been brought up with the notion that a pool hall was a sinkhole of sin. After prohibition some of them became blind tigers. But there were at least two pool halls in Enid that were neither blind tigers nor, so far as I could see, sinkholes of sin.

One was the Salty Dog, owned by Bill Kimmell who also managed the Railroaders, Enid's professional baseball club. The ball players who hung out there were, of course, drawing cards for the Salty Dog. Scores of all the games in the Western Association were posted by innings. The last summer that Papa was alive I got to going there to watch the score board. One afternoon Papa came in. He sat down beside me and asked how the games were going. He didn't say a thing about finding me in a pool hall. A few afternoons later I was at his office. Pushing aside the papers on his desk he removed his spectacles and said: "Boy, let's walk over to the Salty Dog, have a Doctor Pepper and watch the games for a while."

Another pool hall where you couldn't buy whiskey was Waumpie Washburn's, the hangout of the high-school boys. A stock greeting to the proprietor was, "Anything for me, Waumpie?" for Mr. Washburn served as a medium of communication, always carrying in his head half a dozen messages: Kendrick wants Francisco to leave the catcher's mitt; Harp wants his Cicero pony back from whoever took it; Counts wants to know if Goltry can get the auto for the Congenial dance.

The *Quill* was practically edited at Waumpie Washburn's. Dates were made over his telephone. We rolled poker dice for boxes of candy for our girls, to see whether we paid double or nothing. Suppose a fellow'd been stung three or four times running. Waumpie'd slide a box of chocolates across the top of the glass case. "On the house," he'd say. Days before an important dance we'd carry our girls' programs to Waumpie's and swap them around and fill them out.

Now and then something outside the orbits of our personal concerns would be worthy of attention—as when Claude, who played for the house, was taking on an out-of-town shark or maybe some home product who played a good-enough game of pool to make it interesting. Claude had the most desirable wardrobe of any person of my immediate acquaintance: three or four Klassy Kut suits and a different fancy vest with pearl buttons for every day in the week. Claude took his opposition over more often than it took him over. One night a member of the Dirty Dozen from a bootlegging hall down the street took Claude over, though. Waumpie was sore—not because Claude'd lost but because Waumpie's orders were that you couldn't play a Dirty Dozener in his hall. Several of us remonstrated. Claude ought to have a chance to get even.

"Nope," said Waumpie. "I run a decent joint. Haven't had a kick from any of you boys' folks yet." He knocked wood. "But I will have if the Dozen gets to flocking here."

Waumpie wouldn't let Claude play any of us kids for money: only practice, loser paying for the game. Claude would take endless pains demonstrating complicated

shots. The last time I saw one of our old crowd he was playing for the house in a hall on Olive Street in St. Louis.

A good many of us aspired to a wardrobe like Claude's, but Horace Copple was the only one who realized that aspiration. This was because Copple's father took out in trade the cost of a good deal of advertising in his throw-away newspaper, the *Square Deal.* I can recall no other year of my life when clothes filled so prominent a niche in the scheme of things. Originating in the colleges, if my memory serves, the overnight transformation of young men's suits was like that from grub to butterfly. What had been coat, pants and vest, undeserving of more detailed mention, blossomed into a gorgeous ensemble. The pants were peg top: they stood out from the hip on either side as if you had a couple of summer squash, small ends down, in your pockets. From this extensive circumference the legs tapered to three-inch cuffs worn high enough to show about two inches of socks. The cuffs were so snug that you had to put your pants on before your box-toed shoes. The coats were more intricate works of art: long and dipped in front almost to the knees. Pockets had ornamental flaps, and there were other trimmings. And if you could set this off with a fancy vest—

Boys who had never given a clothing-store window a second glance would hang out in front of Meibergen and Godschalk's and Harry B. Woolf's discussing the relative merits of Hart, Schaffner and Marx, Kuppenheimer Clothes, and Society Brand. It was generally conceded, however, that the epitome of refinement was achieved by Klassy Kut alone.

Luck was with me or the financial stringency at home would have made it impossible to keep up with the real swell dressers. In the first place Sister Zoe sent me a suit from Chicago—a Society Brand costing more than most Enid boys' suits cost. It offered in richness what Klassy Kut had in style. Along in the spring I needed another suit, and calculated my chances to acquire a Klassy Kut. They were twenty fish and up. All I could scrape together was nine dollars, for which I managed, in a little store off the Square, to bag a pretty fair imitation, the merchant taking my overcoat in trade. That handsome garment had been purchased from Jay Radcliffe for five dollars. As his brother Earle had worn it for four years at the University of Oklahoma, you can see that it was saturated in campus tradition. In my day a young fellow with a healthy circulation didn't have much use for an overcoat in Oklahoma.

One did come in handy, though, when you took a spin in an automobile. That old plains wind would sure go through you. A lap robe over your knees wasn't enough. The important thing, naturally, was to see that none of the girls got a chill. Yes, the motor car was sure changing things; it was going to change our whole civilization, Herschel Goltry said oracularly. . . .

On Going to Philadelphia[1]

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

IT RAIN'D very hard all the day, I was thoroughly soak'd, and by noon a good deal tired; so I stopt at a poor inn, where I staid all night, beginning now to wish that I had never left home. I cut so miserable a figure, too, that I found, by the questions ask'd me, I was suspected to be some runaway servant, and in danger of being taken up on that suspicion. However, I proceeded the next day, and got in the evening to an inn, within eight or ten miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown. He entered into conversation with me while I took some refreshment, and, finding I had read a little, became

[1] From *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin.*

very sociable and friendly. Our acquaintance continu'd as long as he liv'd. He had been, I imagine, an itinerant doctor, for there was no town in England, or country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular account. He had some letters, and was ingenious, but much of an unbeliever, and wickedly undertook, some years after, to travestie the Bible in doggrel verse, as Cotton had done Virgil. By this means he set many facts in a very ridiculous light, and might have hurt weak minds if his work had been published; but it never was.

At his house I lay that night, and the next morning reach'd Burlington, but had the mortification to find that the regular boats were gone a little before my coming, and no other expected to go before Tuesday, this being Saturday; wherefore I returned to an old woman in the town, of whom I had bought gingerbread to eat on the water, and ask'd her advice. She invited me to lodge at her house till a passage by water should offer; and being tired with my foot travelling, I accepted the invitation. She, understanding I was a printer, would have had me stay at that town and follow my business, being ignorant of the stock necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a dinner of ox-cheek with great good will, accepting only of a pot of ale in return; and I thought myself fixed till Tuesday should come. However, walking in the evening by the side of the river, a boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several people in her. They took me in, and, as there was no wind, we row'd all the way; and about midnight, not having yet seen the city, some of the company were confident we must have passed it, and would row no farther; the others knew not where we were; so we put toward the shore, got into a creek, landed near an old fence, with the rails of which we made a fire, the night being cold, in October, and there we remained till daylight. Then one of the company knew the place to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the creek, and arriv'd there about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market Street wharf.

I have been the more particular in this description of my journey, and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working dress, my best cloaths being to come round by sea. I was dirty from my journey; my pockets were stuff'd out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with travelling, rowing and want of rest, I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refus'd it, on account of my rowing; but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps thro' fear of being thought to have but little.

Then I walked up the street, gazing about till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal of bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second Street, and ask'd for bisket, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I bade him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surpriz'd at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walk'd off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street as far as Fourth Street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut Street and part of Walnut Street, eating my roll all the way, and, coming round, found myself at Market Street wharf, near the boat I came

in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

Thus refresh'd, I walk'd again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy thro' labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continu'd so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.

Walking again down toward the river, and, looking in the faces of people, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance I lik'd, and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three Mariners. "Here," says he, "is one place that entertains strangers, but it is not a reputable house; if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better." He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water Street. Here I got a dinner; and, while I was eating it, several sly questions were asked me, as it seemed to be suspected from my youth and appearance, that I might be some runaway.

After dinner, my sleepiness return'd, and being shown to a bed, I lay down without undressing, and slept until six in the evening, was call'd to supper, went to bed again very early, and slept soundly till next morning. Then I made myself as tidy as I could, and went down to Andrew Bradford the printer's. I found in the shop the old man his father, whom I had seen at New York, and who, travelling on horseback, had got to Philadelphia before me. He introduc'd me to his son, who receiv'd me civilly, gave me a breakfast, but told me he did not at present want a hand, being lately supply'd with one; but there was another printer in town, lately set up, one Keimer, who, perhaps, might employ me; if not, I should be welcome to lodge at his house, and he would give me a little work to do now and then till fuller business should offer.

University Days[1]

JAMES THURBER

I PASSED all the other courses that I took at my University, but I could never pass botany. This was because all botany students had to spend several hours a week in a laboratory looking through a microscope at plant cells, and I could never see through a microscope. I never once saw a cell through a microscope. This used to enrage my instructor. He would wander around the laboratory pleased with the progress all the students were making in drawing the involved and, so I am told, interesting structure of flower cells, until he came to me. I would just be standing there. "I can't see anything," I would say. He would begin patiently enough, explaining how anybody can see through a microscope, but would always end up in a fury, claiming that I could *too* see through a microscope but just pretended that I couldn't. "It takes away from the beauty of flowers anyway," I used to tell him. "We are not concerned with beauty in this course," he would say. "We are concerned solely with what I may call the *mechanics* of flars." "Well," I'd say, "I can't see anything." "Try it just once again," he'd say, and I would put my eye to the microscope and see nothing at all, except now

[1] Reprinted from *The New Yorker* by permission of the author. Copyright 1933 by James Thurber.

and again a nebulous milky substance—a phenomenon of maladjustment. You were supposed to see a vivid, restless clockwork of sharply defined plant cells. "I see what looks like a lot of milk," I would tell him. This, he claimed, was the result of my not having adjusted the microscope properly, so he would readjust it for me, or rather, for himself. And I would look again and see milk.

I finally took a deferred pass, as they called it, and waited a year and tried-again. (You had to pass one of the biological sciences or you couldn't graduate.) The professor had come back from vacation brown as a berry, bright-eyed, and eager to explain cell-structure again to his classes. "Well," he said to me, cheerily, when we met in the first laboratory hour of the semester, "we're going to see cells this time, aren't we?" "Yes, sir," I said. Students to right of me and to left of me and in front of me were seeing cells; what's more, they were quietly drawing pictures of them in their notebooks. Of course, I didn't see anything.

"We'll try it," the professor said to me, grimly, "with every adjustment of the microscope known to man. As God is my witness, I'll arrange this glass so that you see cells through it or I'll give up teaching. In twenty-two years of botany, I—" He cut off abruptly for he was beginning to quiver all over, like Lionel Barrymore, and he genuinely wished to hold onto his temper; his scenes with me had taken a great deal out of him.

So we tried it with every adjustment of the microscope known to man. With only one of them did I see anything but blackness or the familiar lacteal opacity, and that time I saw, to my pleasure and amazement, a variegated constellation of flecks, specks, and dots. These I hastily drew. The instructor, noting my activity, came back from an adjoining desk, a smile on his lips and his eyebrows high in hope. He looked at my cell drawing. "What's that?" he demanded, with a hint of a squeal in his voice. "That's what I saw," I said. "You didn't, you didn't, you *didn't*!" he screamed, losing control of his temper instantly, and he bent over and squinted into the microscope. His head snapped up. "That's your eye!" he shouted. "You've fixed the lens so that it reflects! You've drawn your eye!"

Another course that I didn't like, but somehow managed to pass, was economics. I went to that class straight from the botany class, which didn't help me any in understanding either subject. I used to get them mixed up. But not as mixed up as another student in my economics class who came there direct from a physics laboratory. He was a tackle on the football team, named Bolenciecwcz. At that time Ohio State University had one of the best football teams in the country, and Bolenciecwcz was one of its outstanding stars. In order to be eligible to play it was necessary for him to keep up in his studies, a very difficult matter, for while he was not dumber than an ox he was not any smarter. Most of his professors were lenient and helped him along. None gave him more hints, in answering questions, or asked him simpler ones than the economics professor, a thin, timid man named Bassum. One day when we were on the subject of transportation and distribution, it came Bolenciecwcz's turn to answer a question. "Name one means of transportation," the professor said to him. No light came into the big tackle's eyes. "Just any means of transportation," said the professor. Bolenciecwcz sat staring at him. "That is," pursued the professor, "any medium, agency, or method of going from one place to another." Bolenciecwcz had the look of a man who is being led into a trap. "You may choose among steam, horse-drawn, or electrically propelled vehicles," said the instructor. "I might suggest the one which we commonly take in making long journeys across land." There was a profound silence in which everybody stirred uneasily, including Bolenciecwcz and Mr. Bassum. Mr. Bassum abruptly broke this silence in an amazing manner. "Choo-choo-choo," he said, in a low voice, and turned instantly scarlet. He glanced appealingly around the room. All of us, of course, shared Mr. Bassum's desire that Bolenciecwcz should stay abreast of the class in economics, for the Illinois game, one of the hardest and most important of the season, was only a week off. "Toot, toot, tootooooooot!" some student with a deep voice

moaned, and we all looked encouragingly at Bolenciecwcz. Somebody else gave a fine imitation of a locomotive letting off steam. Mr. Bassum himself rounded off the little show. "Ding, dong, ding, dong," he said hopefully. Bolenciecwcz was staring at the floor now, trying to think his great brow furrowed, his huge hands rubbing together, his face red.

"How did you come to college this year, Mr. Bolenciecwcz?" asked the professor. "*Chuf* fa Chuffa, *Chuf* fa chuffa."

"M'father sent me," said the football player.

"What on?" asked Bassum.

"I git an 'lowance," said the tackle, in a low, husky voice, obviously embarrassed.

"No, no," said Bassum. "Name a means of transportation. What did you *ride* here on?"

"Train," said Bolenciecwcz.

"Quite right," said the professor. "Now, Mr. Nugent, will you tell us—"

If I went through anguish in botany and economics—for different reasons—gymnasium work was even worse. I don't even like to think about it. They wouldn't let you play games or join in the exercises with your glasses on and I couldn't see with mine off. I bumped into professors, horizontal bars, agricultural students, and swinging iron rings. Not being able to see, I could take it but I couldn't dish it out. Also, in order to pass gymnasium (and you had to pass it to graduate) you had to learn to swim if you didn't know how. I didn't like the swimming pool, I didn't like swimming, and I didn't like the swimming instructor, and after all these years I still don't. I never swam but I passed my gym work anyway, by having another student give my gymnasium number (978) and swim across the pool in my place. He was a quiet, amiable blonde youth, number 473, and he would have seen through a microscope for me if we could have got away with it, but we couldn't get away with it. Another thing I didn't like about gymnasium work was that they made you strip the day you registered. It is impossible for me to be happy when I am stripped and being asked a lot of questions. Still, I did better than a lanky agricultural student who was cross-examined just before I was. They asked each student what college he was in—that is, whether Arts, Engineering, Commerce, or Agriculture. "What college are you in?" the instructor snapped at the youth in front of me. "Ohio State University," he said promptly.

It wasn't that agricultural student but it was another a whole lot like him who decided to take up journalism, possibly on the ground that when farming went to hell he could fall back on newspaper work. He didn't realize, of course, that that would be very much like falling back full-length on a kit of carpenter's tools. Haskins didn't seem cut out for journalism, being too embarrassed to talk to anybody and unable to use a typewriter, but the editor of the college paper assigned him to the cow barns, the sheep house, the horse pavilion, and the animal husbandry department generally. This was a genuinely big "beat," for it took up five times as much ground and got ten times as great a legislative appropriation as the College of Liberal Arts. The agricultural student knew animals, but nevertheless his stories were dull and colorlessly written. He took all afternoon on each of them, on account of having to hunt for each letter on the typewriter. Once in a while he had to ask somebody to help him hunt. "C" and "L," in particular, were hard letters for him to find. His editor finally got pretty much annoyed at the farmer-journalist because his pieces were so uninteresting. "See here, Haskins," he snapped at him one day. "Why is it we never have anything hot from you on the horse pavilion? Here we have two hundred head of horses on this campus—more than any other university in the Western Conference except Purdue—and yet you never get any real low-down on them. Now shoot over to the horse barns and dig up something lively." Haskins shambled out and came back in about an hour; he said he had something. "Well, start it off snappily," said the editor. "Something people will read." Haskins set to work and in a couple of hours brought a sheet of typewritten paper to the desk; it was a two-hundred-word story about some disease that had broken out among the horses. Its opening sentence was simple but arresting. It

read: "Who has noticed the sores on the tops of the horses in the animal husbandry building?"

Ohio State was a land grant university and therefore two years of military drill was compulsory. We drilled with old Springfield rifles and studied the tactics of the Civil War even though the World War was going on at the time. At 11 o'clock each morning thousands of freshmen and sophomores used to deploy over the campus, moodily creeping up on the old chemistry building. It was good training for the kind of warfare that was waged at Shiloh but it had no connection with what was going on in Europe. Some people used to think there was German money behind it, but they didn't dare say so or they would have been thrown in jail as German spies. It was a period of muddy thought and marked, I believe, the decline of higher education in the Middle West.

As a soldier I was never any good at all. Most of the cadets were glumly indifferent soldiers, but I was no good at all. Once General Littlefield, who was commandant of the cadet corps, popped up in front of me during regimental drill and snapped, "You are the main trouble with this university!" I think he meant that my type was the main trouble with the university but he may have meant me individually. I was mediocre at drill, certainly—that is, until my senior year. By that time I had drilled longer than anybody else in the Western Conference, having failed at military at the end of each preceding year so that I had to do it all over again. I was the only senior still in uniform. The uniform which, when new, had made me look like an interurban railway conductor, now that it had become faded and too tight, made me look like Bert Williams in his bellboy act. This had a definitely bad effect on my morale. Even so, I had become by sheer practise little short of wonderful at squad manoeuvres.

One day General Littlefield picked our company out of the whole regiment and tried to get it mixed up by putting it through one movement after another as fast as we could execute them: squads right, squads left, squads on right into line, squads right about, squads left front into line, etc. In about three minutes one hundred and nine men were marching in one direction and I was marching away from them at an angle of forty degrees, all alone. "Company, halt!" shouted General Littlefield, "That man is the only man who has it right!" I was made a corporal for my achievement.

The next day General Littlefield summoned me to his office. He was swatting flies when I went in. I was silent and he was silent too, for a long time. I don't think he remembered me or why he had sent for me, but he didn't want to admit it. He swatted some more flies, keeping his eyes on them narrowly before he let go with the swatter. "Button up your coat!" he snapped. Looking back on it now I can see that he meant me although he was looking at a fly, but I just stood there. Another fly came to rest on a paper in front of the general and began rubbing its hind legs together. The general lifted the swatter cautiously. I moved restlessly and the fly flew away. "You startled him!" barked General Littlefield, looking at me severely. I said I was sorry. "That won't help the situation!" snapped the General, with cold military logic. I didn't see what I could do except offer to chase some more flies toward his desk, but I didn't say anything. He stared out the window at the faraway figures of co-eds crossing the campus toward the library. Finally, he told me I could go. So I went. He either didn't know which cadet I was or else he forgot what he wanted to see me about. It may have been that he wished to apologize for having called me the main trouble with the university; or maybe he had decided to compliment me on my brilliant drilling of the day before and then at the last minute decided not to. I don't know. I don't think about it much any more.

By Walden Pond[1]

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

WHEN I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again.

. . . . .

I see young men, by townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of. Better if they had been born in the open pasture and suckled by a wolf, that they might have seen with clearer eyes what field they were called to labor in. Who made them serfs of the soil? Why should they eat their sixty acres, when man is condemned to eat only his peck of dirt? Why should they begin digging their graves as soon as they are born. They have got to live a man's life, pushing all these things before them, and get on as well as they can. How many a poor immortal soul have I met well-nigh crushed and smothered under its load, creeping down the road of life, pushing before it a barn seventy-five feet by forty, its Augean stables never cleansed, and one hundred acres of land, tillage, mowing, pasture, and wood-lot! The portionless, who struggle with no such unnecessary inherited encumbrances, find it labor enough to subdue and cultivate a few cubic feet of flesh.

But men labor under a mistake. The better part of the man is soon plowed into the soil for compost. By a seeming fate, commonly called necessity, they are employed, as it says in an old book, laying up treasures which moth and rust will corrupt and thieves break through and steal. It is a fool's life, as they will find when they get to the end of it if not before.

[1] From *Walden.*

Finding that my fellow-citizens were not likely to offer me any room in the court house, or any curacy or living anywhere else, but I must shift for myself, I turned my face more exclusively than ever to the woods, where I was better known. I determined to go into business at once, and not wait to acquire the usual capital, using such slender means as I had already got. My purpose in going to Walden Pond was not to live cheaply nor to live dearly there, but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles; to be hindered from accomplishing which for want of a little common sense, a little enterprise and business talent, appeared not so sad as foolish.

. . . . .

Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond, nearest to where I intended to build my house, and began to cut down some tall, arrowy white pines, still in their youth, for timber. It is difficult to begin without borrowing, but perhaps it is the most generous course thus to permit your fellowmen to have an interest in your enterprise. The owner of the axe, as he released his hold on it, said that it was the apple of his eye; but I returned it sharper than I received it. It was a pleasant hillside where I worked, covered with pine woods, through which I looked out on the pond, and a small open field in the woods where pines and hickories were springing up. The ice in the pond was not yet dissolved, though there were some open spaces, and it was all dark-colored and saturated with water. There were some slight flurries of snow during the days that I worked there; but for the most part when I came out on to the railroad, on my way home, its yellow sand-heap stretched away gleaming in the hazy atmosphere, and the rails shone in the spring sun, and I heard the lark and peewee and other birds already come to commence another year with us.

They were pleasant spring days, in which the winter of man's discontent was thawing as well as the earth, and the life that had lain torpid began to stretch itself. One day, when my axe had come off and I had cut a green hickory for a wedge, driving it with a stone, and had placed the whole to soak in a pond-hole in order to swell the wood, I saw a striped snake run into the water, and he lay on the bottom, apparently without inconvenience, as long as I stayed there, or more than a quarter of an hour; perhaps because he had not yet fairly come out of the torpid state. It appeared to me that for a like reason men remained in their present low and primitive condition; but if they should feel the influence of the spring of springs arousing them, they would of necessity rise to a higher and more ethereal life. I had previously seen the snakes in frosty mornings in my path with portions of their bodies still numb and inflexible, waiting for the sun to thaw them. On the 1st of April it rained and melted the ice, and in the early part of the day, which was very foggy, I heard a stray goose groping about over the pond and cackling as if lost, or like the spirit of the fog.

So I went on for some days cutting and hewing timber, and also studs and rafters, all with my narrow axe, not having many communicable or scholar-like thoughts, singing to myself,—

> Men say they know many things;
> But lo! they have taken wings,—
> The arts and sciences,
> And a thousand appliances:
> The wind that blows
> Is all that anybody knows.

. . . . .

Before winter I built a chimney, and shingled the sides of my house, which were already impervious to rain, with imperfect and sappy shingles made of the first slice of the log, whose edges I was obliged to straighten with a plane.

I have thus a tight shingled and plastered house, ten feet wide by fifteen long, and eight-feet posts, with a garret and a closet, a large window on each side, two trap-doors, one door at the end, and a brick fireplace opposite. The exact cost of my house, paying the usual price for such materials as I used, but not counting the work, all of which was done by myself, was as follows; and I give the details because very few are able to tell exactly what their houses cost, and fewer still, if any, the separate cost of the various materials which compose them:—

Boards	$8.03½,	mostly shanty boards
Refuse shingles for roof and sides	4.00	
Laths	1.25	
Two second-hand windows with glass	2.43	
One thousand old bricks	4.00	
Two casks of lime	2.40	That was high
Hair	0.31	More than I needed
Mantle-tree iron	0.15	
Nails	3.90	
Hinges and screws	0.14	
Latch	0.10	
Chalk	0.01	
Transportation	1.40	I carried a good part on my back.
In all	$28.12½	

These are all the materials, excepting the timber, stones, and sand, which I claimed by squatter's right. I have also a small woodshed adjoining, made chiefly of the stuff which was left after building the house.

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By surveying, carpentry, and day-labor of various other kinds in the village in the meanwhile, for I have as many trades as fingers, I had earned $13.34. The expense of food for eight months, namely, from July 4th to March 1st, the time when these estimates were made, though I lived there more than two years,—not counting potatoes, a little green corn, and some peas, which I had raised, nor considering the value of what was on hand at the last date,—was

Rice	$1.73¾	
Molasses	1.73	Cheapest form of the saccharine
Rye meal	1.04¾	
Indian meal	0.99¾	Cheaper than rye
Pork	0.22	

Flour	0.88	Costs more than Indian meal, both money and trouble.
Sugar	0.80	
Lard	0.65	
Apples	0.25	
Dried apple	0.22	
Sweet potatoes	0.10	
One pumpkin	0.06	
One watermelon	0.02	
Salt	0.03	

All experiments which failed

Yes, I did eat $8.74, all told; but I should not thus unblushingly publish my guilt, if I did not know that most of my readers were equally guilty with myself, and that their deeds would look no better in print. The next year I sometimes caught a mess of fish for my dinner, and once I went so far as to slaughter a woodchuck which ravaged my bean-field,—effect his transmigration, as a Tartar would say,—and devour him, partly for experiment's sake; but though it afforded me a momentary enjoyment, notwithstanding a musky flavor, I saw that the longest use would not make that a good practice, however it might seem to have your woodchucks ready dressed by the village butcher.

Clothing and some incidental expenses within the same dates, though little can be inferred from this item, amounted to

	$8.40¾
Oil and some necessary utensils	2.00

So that all the pecuniary outgoes, excepting for washing and mending, which for the most part were done out of the house, and their bills have not yet been received,—and these are all and more than all the ways by which money necessarily goes out in this part of the world,—were

House	$28.12½
Farm one year	14.72½
Food eight months	8.74
Clothing, etc., eight months	8.40¾
Oil, etc., eight months	2.00
In all	$61.99¾

I address myself now to those of my readers who have a living to get. And to meet this I have for farm produce sold

	$23.44
Earned by day-labor	13.34
In all	$36.78,

which subtracted from the sum of the outgoes leaves a balance of $25.21¾ on the one side,—this being very nearly the means with which I started, and the measure of expenses to be incurred,—and on the other, beside the leisure and independence and health thus secured, a comfortable house for me as long as I choose to occupy it.

These statistics, however accidental and therefore uninstructive they may appear, as they have a certain completeness, have a certain value also. Nothing was given me of which I have not rendered some account. It appears from the above estimate, that my food alone cost me in money about twenty-seven cents a week. It was, for nearly two years after this, rye and Indian meal without yeast, potatoes, rice, a very little salt pork, molasses, and salt; and my drink, water. It was fit that I should live on rice, mainly, who loved so well the philosophy of India. To meet the objections of some inveterate cavillers, I may as well state, that if I dined out occasionally, as I always had done, and I trust shall have opportunities to do again, it was frequently to the detriment of my domestic arrangements. But the dining out, being, as I have stated, a constant element, does not in the least affect a comparative statement like this.

I learned from my two years' experience that it would cost incredibly little trouble to obtain one's necessary food, even in this latitude; that a man may use as simple a diet as the animals, and yet retain health and strength. I have made a satisfactory dinner, satisfactory on several accounts, simply off a dish of purslane (Portulaca oleracea) which I gathered in my cornfield, boiled and salted. I give the Latin on account of the savoriness of the trivial name. And pray what more can a reasonable man desire, in peaceful times, in ordinary noons, than a sufficient number of ears of green sweet corn boiled, with the addition of salt? Even the little variety which I used was a yielding to the demands of appetite, and not of health. Yet men have

come to such a pass that they frequently starve, not for want of necessaries, but for want of luxuries; and I know a good woman who thinks that her son lost his life because he took to drinking water only.

The reader will perceive that I am treating the subject rather from an economic than a dietetic point of view, and he will not venture to put my abstemiousness to the test unless he has a well-stocked larder.

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I made a study of the ancient and indispensable art of breadmaking, consulting such authorities as offered, going back to the primitive days and first invention of the unleavened kind, when from the wildness of nuts and meats men first reached the mildness and refinement of this diet, and travelling gradually down in my studies through that accidental souring of the dough which, it is supposed, taught the leavening process, and through the various fermentations thereafter, till I came to "good, sweet, wholesome bread, the staff of life."

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Thus I could avoid all trade and barter, so far as my food was concerned, and having a shelter already, it would only remain to get clothing and fuel. The pantaloons which I now wear were woven in a farmer's family,—thank Heaven there is so much virtue still in man; for I think the fall from the farmer to the operative as great and memorable as that from the man to the farmer;—and in a new country, fuel is an encumbrance. As for a habitat, if I were not permitted still to squat, I might purchase one acre at the price for which the land I cultivated was sold —namely, eight dollars and eight cents. But as it was, I considered that I enhanced the value of the land by squatting on it.

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For more than five years I maintained myself thus solely by the labor of my hands, and I found that, by working about six weeks in a year, I could meet all the expenses of living. The whole of my winters, as well as most of my summers, I had free and clear for study. I have thoroughly tried school-keeping, and found that my expenses were in proportion, or rather out of proportion, to my income, for I was obliged to dress and train, not to say think and believe, accordingly, and I lost my time into the bargain. As I did not teach for the good of my fellow-men, but simply for a livelihood, this was a failure. I have tried trade; but I found that it would take ten years to get under way in that, and that then I should probably be on my way to the devil. I was actually afraid that I might by that time be doing what is called a good business. When formerly I was looking about to see what I could do for a living, some sad experience in conforming to the wishes of friends being fresh in my mind to tax my ingenuity, I thought often and seriously of picking huckleberries; that surely I could do, and its small profits might suffice, —for my greatest skill had been to want but little,—so little capital it required, so little distraction from my wonted moods, I foolishly thought. While my acquaintances went unhesitatingly into trade or the professions, I contemplated this occupation as most like theirs; ranging the hills all summer to pick the berries which came in my way, and thereafter carelessly dispose of them; so to keep the flocks of Admetus. I also dreamed that I might gather the wild herbs, or carry evergreens to such villagers as loved to be reminded of the woods, even to the city, by hay-cart loads. But I have since learned that trade curses everything it handles; and though you trade in messages from heaven, the whole curse of trade attaches to the business.

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In short, I am convinced, both by faith and experience, that to maintain one's self on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if we will live simply and wisely; as the pursuits of the simpler nations are still the sports of the more artificial. It is not necessary that a man should earn his living by the sweat of his brow, unless he sweats easier than I do.

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When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was

on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright whitehewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less in this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited a year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within-doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says, "An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager,—the wood thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field sparrow, the whip-poor-will, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground, but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

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Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such

was that part of creation where I had squatted:—

"There was a shepherd that did live
And held his thoughts as high
As were the mounts whereon his flocks
Did hourly feed him by."

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour.

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I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail.

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What is a course of history or philosophy, or poetry, no matter how well selected, or the best society, or the most admirable routine of life, compared with the discipline of looking always at what is to be seen? Will you be a reader, a student merely, or a seer? Read your fate, see what is before you, and walk on into futurity.

I did not read books the first summer; I hoed beans. Nay, I often did better than this. There were times when I could not afford to sacrifice the bloom of the present moment to any work, whether of the head or hands. I love a broad margin to my life. Sometimes, in a summer morning, having taken my accustomed bath, I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, rapt in a revery, amidst the pines and hickories and sumachs, in undisturbed solitude and stillness, while the birds sang around or flitted noiseless through the house, until by the sun falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveller's wagon on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time. I grew in those seasons like corn in the night, and they were far better than any work of the hands would have been. They were not time subtracted from my life, but so much over and above my usual allowance.

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My house was on the side of a hill, immediately on the edge of the larger wood, in the midst of a young forest of pitch pines

and hickories, and half a dozen rods from the pond, to which a narrow footpath led down the hill. In my front yard grew the strawberry, blackberry, and life-everlasting, johnswort and goldenrod, shrub oaks and sand cherry, blueberry and groundnut. Near the end of May, the sand cherry (*Cerasus pumila*) adorned the sides of the path with its delicate flowers arranged in umbels cylindrically about its short stems, which last, in the fall, weighed down with good-sized and handsome cherries, fell over in wreaths like rays on every side. I tasted them out of compliment to Nature, though they were scarcely palatable. The sumach (*Rhus glabra*) grew luxuriantly about the house, pushing up through the embankment which I had made, and growing five or six feet the first season. Its broad pinnate tropical leaf was pleasant though strange to look on. The large buds, suddenly pushing out late in the spring from dry sticks which had seemed to be dead, developed themselves as by magic into graceful green and tender boughs, an inch in diameter; and sometimes, as I sat at my window, so heedlessly did they grow and tax their weak joints, I heard a fresh and tender bough suddenly fall like a fan to the ground, when there was not a breath of air stirring, broken off by its own weight. In August, the large masses of berries, which, when in flower, had attracted many wild bees, gradually assumed their bright velvety crimson hues, and by their weight again bent down and broke the tender limbs.

As I sit at my window this summer afternoon, hawks are circling about my clearing; the tantivy of wild pigeons, flying by twos and threes athwart my view, or perching restless on the white pine boughs behind my house, gives a voice to the air; a fish hawk dimples the glassy surface of the pond and brings up a fish; a mink steals out of the marsh before my door and seizes a frog by the shore; the sedge is bending under the weight of the reed-birds flitting hither and thither; and for the last half-hour I have heard the rattle of railroad cars, now dying away and the reviving like the beat of a partridge, conveying travellers from Boston to the country.

Now that the cars are gone by and all the restless world with them, and the fishes in the pond no longer feel their rumbling, I am more alone than ever. For the rest of the long afternoon, perhaps, my meditations are interrupted only by the faint rattle of a carriage or team along the distant highway.

Sometimes, on Sundays, I heard the bells, the Lincoln, Acton, Bedford, or Concord bell, when the wind was favorable, a faint, sweet, and, as it were, natural melody, worth importing into the wilderness. At a sufficient distance over the woods this sound acquires a certain vibratory hum, as if the pine needles in the horizon were the strings of a harp which it swept. All sound heard at the greatest possible distance produces one and the same effect, a vibration of the universal lyre, just as the intervening atmosphere makes a distant ridge of earth interesting to our eyes by the azure tint it imparts to it. There came to me in this case a melody which the air had strained, and which had conversed with every leaf and needle of the wood, that portion of the sound which the elements had taken up and modulated and echoed from vale to vale. The echo is, to some extent, an original sound, and therein is the magic and charm of it. It is not merely a repetition of what was worth repeating in the bell, but partly the voice of the wood; the same trivial words and notes sung by a wood-nymph.

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Late in the evening I heard the distant rumbling of wagons over bridges,—a sound heard farther than almost any other at night,—the baying of dogs, and sometimes again the lowing of some disconsolate cow in a distant barn-yard. In the meanwhile all the shore rang with the trump of bullfrogs, the sturdy spirits of ancient wine-bibbers and wassailers, still unrepentant, trying to sing a catch in their Stygian lake,—if the Walden nymphs will pardon the comparison, for though there are almost no weeds, there are frogs there,—who would fain keep up the hilarious rules of their old festal tables, though their voices have waxed hoarse and solemnly grave, mocking at mirth, and the wine has lost its flavor, and become only

liquor to distend their paunches, and sweet intoxication never comes to drown the memory of the past, but mere saturation and waterloggedness and distention. The most aldermanic, with his chin upon a heart-leaf, which serves for a napkin to his drooling chaps, under this northern shore quaffs a deep draught of the once scorned water, and passes round the cup with the ejaculation *tr-r-r-oonk, tr-r-roonk, tr-r-r-oonk!* and straightway comes over the water from some distant cove the same password repeated, where the next in seniority and girth has gulped down to his mark; and when this observance has made the circuit of the shores, then ejaculates the master of the ceremonies, with satisfaction, *tr-r-r-oonk!* and each in his turn repeats the same down to the least distended, leakiest, and flabbiest paunched, that there be no mistake; and then the bowl goes round again and again, until the sun disperses the morning mist, and only the patriarch is not under the pond, but vainly bellowing *troonk* from time to time, and pausing for a reply.

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This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. As I walk along the stony shore of the pond in my shirt-sleeves, though it is cool as well as cloudy and windy, and I see nothing speial to attract me, all the elements are unusually congenial to me. The bullfrogs trump to usher in the night, and the note of the whip-poor-will is borne on the rippling wind from over the water. Sympathy with the fluttering alder and poplar leaves almost takes away my breath; yet, like the lake, my serenity is rippled but not ruffled. These small waves raised by the evening wind are as remote from storm as the smooth reflecting surface. Though it is now dark, the wind still blows and roars in the wood, the waves still dash, and some creatures lull the rest with their notes. The repose is never complete. The wildest animals do not repose, but seek their prey now, the fox, and skunk, and rabbit, now roam the fields and woods without fear. They are Nature's watchmen,—links which connect the days of animated life

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The indescribable innocence and beneficence of Nature,—of sun and wind and rain, of summer and winter,—such health, such cheer, they afford forever! and such sympathy have they ever with our race, that all Nature would be affected, and the sun's brightness fade, and the winds would sigh humanely, and the clouds rain tears, and the woods shed their leaves and put on mourning in midsummer, if any man should ever for a just cause grieve. Should I not have intelligence with the earth? Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mould myself?

Autobiography[1]

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

I WAS BORN about eight o'clock in the morning on the 4th of May, 1825, at Ealing, which was, at that time, as quiet a little country village as could be found within half-a-dozen miles of Hyde Park Corner. Now it is a suburb of London with, I believe, 30,000 inhabitants. My father was one of the masters in a large semi-public school which at one time had a high reputation. I am not aware that any portents preceded my arrival in this world, but, in my childhood, I remember hearing a traditional account of the manner in which I lost the chance of an endowment of great practical value. The windows of my mother's room were open, in con-

[1] From *Autobiography* by Thomas Henry Huxley, published by Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

sequence of the unusual warmth of the weather. For the same reason, probably, a neighboring beehive had swarmed, and the new colony, pitching on the window-sill, was making its way into the room when the horrified nurse shut down the sash. If that well-meaning woman had only abstained from her ill-timed interference, the swarm might have settled on my lips, and I should have been endowed with that mellifluous eloquence which, in this country, leads far more surely than worth, capacity, or honest work, to the highest places in Church and State. But the opportunity was lost, and I have been obliged to content myself through life with saying what I mean in the plainest of plain language, than which, I suppose, there is no habit more ruinous to a man's prospects of advancement.

Why I was christened Thomas Henry I do not know; but it is a curious chance that my parents should have fixed for my usual denomination upon the name of that particular Apostle with whom I have always felt most sympathy. Physically and mentally I am the son of my mother so completely—even down to peculiar movements of the hands, which made their appearance in me as I reached the age she had when I noticed them —that I can hardly find any trace of my father in myself, except an inborn faculty for drawing, which unfortunately, in my case, has never been cultivated, a hot temper, and that amount of tenacity of purpose which unfriendly observers sometimes call obstinacy.

My mother was a slender brunette, of an emotional and energetic temperament, and possessed of the most piercing black eyes I ever saw in a woman's head. With no more education than other women of the middle classes in her day, she had an excellent mental capacity. Her most distinguishing characteristic, however, was rapidity of thought. If one ventured to suggest she had not taken much time to arrive at any conclusion, she would say, "I cannot help it: things flash across me." That peculiarity has been passed on to me in full strength; it has often stood me in good stead; it has sometimes played me sad tricks, and it has always been a danger. But, after all, if my time were to come over again, there is nothing I would less willingly part with than my inheritance of mother wit.

I have next to nothing to say about my childhood. In later years my mother, looking at me almost reproachfully, would sometimes say, "Ah! you were such a pretty boy!" whence I had no difficulty in concluding that I had not fulfilled my early promise in the matter of looks. In fact, I have a distinct recollection of certain curls of which I was vain, and of a conviction that I closely resembled that handsome, courtly gentleman, Sir Herbert Oakley, who was vicar of our parish, and who was as a god to us country folk, because he was occasionally visited by the then Prince George of Cambridge I remember turning my pinafore wrong side forwards in order to represent a surplice, and preaching to my mother's maids in the kitchen as nearly as possible in Sir Herbert's manner, one Sunday morning when the rest of the family were at church. That is the earliest indication I can call to mind of the strong clerical affinities which my friend Mr. Herbert Spencer has always ascribed to me, though I fancy they have for the most part remained in a latent state.

My regular school training was of the briefest, perhaps fortunately, for though my way of life has made me acquainted with all sorts and conditions of men, from the highest to the lowest, I deliberately affirm that the society I fell into at school was the worst I have ever known. We boys were average lads, with much the same inherent capacity for good and evil as any others; but the people who were set over us cared about as much for our intellectual and moral welfare as if they were baby-farmers. We were left to the operation of the struggle for existence among ourselves, and bullying was the least of the ill practices current among us. Almost the only cheerful reminiscence in connection with the place which arises in my mind is that of a battle I had with one of my classmates who had bullied me until I could stand it no longer. I was a very slight lad, but there was a wild-cat element in me which, when roused, made up for lack of weight, and I licked my adversary effectually.

However, one of my first experiences of the extremely rough-and-ready nature of justice, as exhibited by the course of things in general, arose out of the fact that I—the victor—had a black eye, while he—the vanquished—had none, so that I got into disgrace and he did not. We made it up, and thereafter I was unmolested. One of the greatest shocks I ever received in my life was to be told a dozen years afterwards by the groom who brought me my horse in a stable-yard in Sydney that he was my quondam antagonist. He had a long story of family misfortune to account for his position, but at that time it was necessary to deal very cautiously with mysterious strangers in New South Wales, and on inquiry I found that the unfortunate young man had not only been "sent out," but had undergone more than one colonial conviction.

As I grew older, my great desire was to be a mechanical engineer, but the fates were against this and, while very young, I commenced the study of medicine under a medical brother-in-law. But, though the Institute of Mechanical Engineers would certainly not own me, I am not sure that I have not all along been a sort of mechanical engineer *in partibus infidelium.* I am now occasionally horrified to think how very little I ever knew or cared about medicine as the art of healing. The only part of my professional course which really and deeply interested me was physiology, which is the mechanical engineering of living machines; and, notwithstanding that natural science has been my proper business, I am afraid there is very little of the genuine naturalist in me. I never collected anything, and species work was always a burden to me; what I cared for was the architectural and engineering part of the business, the working out of the wonderful unity of plan in the thousands and thousands of diverse living constructions, and the modifications of similar apparatuses to serve diverse ends. The extraordinary attraction I felt towards the study of the intricacies of living structure nearly proved fatal to me at the outset. I was a mere boy—I think between thirteen and fourteen years of age—when I was taken by some older student friends of mine to the first *post mortem* examination I ever attended. All my life I have been most unfortunately sensitive to the disagreeables which attend anatomical pursuits, but on this occasion my curiosity overpowered all other feelings, and I spent two or three hours in gratifying it. I did not cut myself, and none of the ordinary symptoms of dissection-poison supervened, but poisoned I was somehow, and I remember sinking into a strange state of apathy. By way of a last chance, I was sent to the care of some good, kind people, friends of my father's, who lived in a farmhouse in the heart of Warwickshire. I remember staggering from my bed to the window on the bright spring morning after my arrival, and throwing open the casement. Life seemed to come back on the wings of the breeze, and to this day the faint odor of wood-smoke, like that which floated across the farm-yard in the early morning, is as good to me as the "sweet south upon a bed of violets." I soon recovered, but for years I suffered from occasional paroxysms of internal pain, and from that time my constant friend, hypochondriacal dyspepsia, commenced his half century of co-tenancy of my fleshly tabernacle.

Looking back on my *Lehrjahre,* I am sorry to say that I do not think that any account of my doings as a student would tend to edification. In fact, I should distinctly warn ingenuous youth to avoid imitating my example. I worked extremely hard when it pleased me, and when it did not—which was a very frequent case—I was extremely idle (unless making caricatures of one's pastors and masters is to be called a branch of industry), or else wasted my energies in wrong directions. I read everything I could lay hands upon, including novels, and took up all sorts of pursuits to drop them again quite as speedily. No doubt it was very largely my own fault, but the only instruction from which I ever obtained the proper effect of education was that which I received from Mr. Wharton Jones, who was the lecturer on physiology at the Charing Cross School of Medicine. The extent and precision of his knowledge impressed me greatly, and the severe exactness of his method of lecturing

was quite to my taste. I do not know that I have ever felt so much respect for anybody as a teacher before or since. I worked hard to obtain his approbation, and he was extremely kind and helpful to the youngster who, I am afraid, took up more of his time than he had any right to do. It was he who suggested the publication of my first scientific paper—a very little one—in the *Medical Gazette* of 1845, and most kindly corrected the literary faults which abounded in it, short as it was; for at that time, and for many years afterwards, I detested the trouble of writing, and would take no pains over it.

It was in the early spring of 1846 that, having finished my obligatory medical studies and passed the first M.D. examination at the London University,—though I was still too young to qualify at the College of Surgeons,—I was talking to a fellow-student (the present eminent physician, Sir Joseph Fayrer), and wondering what I should do to meet the imperative necessity for earning my own bread, when my friend suggested that I should write to Sir William Burnett, at that time Director-General for the Medical Service of the Navy, for an appointment. I thought this rather a strong thing to do, as Sir William was personally unknown to me, but my cheery friend would not listen to my scruples, so I went to my lodgings and wrote the best letter I could devise. A few days afterwards I received the usual official circular acknowledgement, but at the bottom there was written an instruction to call at Somerset House on such a day. I thought that looked like business, so at the appointed time I called and sent in my card, while I waited in Sir William's ante-room. He was a tall, shrewd-looking old gentleman, with a broad Scotch accent—and I think I see him now as he entered with my card in his hand. The first thing he did was to return it, with the frugal reminder that I should probably find it useful on some other occasion. The second was to ask whether I was an Irishman. I suppose the air of modesty about my appeal must have struck him. I satisfied the Director-General that I was English to the backbone, and he made some inquiries as to my student career, finally desiring me to hold myself ready for examination. Having passed this, I was in Her Majesty's Service, and entered on the books of Nelson's old ship, the *Victory*, for duty at Haslar Hospital, about a couple of months after I made my application.

My official chief at Haslar was a very remarkable person, the late Sir John Richardson, an excellent naturalist, and far-famed as an indomitable Arctic traveler. He was a silent, reserved man, outside the circle of his family and intimates; and, having a full share of youthful vanity, I was extremely disgusted to find that "Old John," as we irreverent youngsters called him, took not the slightest notice of my worshipful self either the first time I attended him, as it was my duty to do, or for some weeks afterwards. I am afraid to think of the lengths to which my tongue may have run on the subject of the churlishness of the chief, who was, in truth, one of the kindest-hearted and most considerate of men. But one day, as I was crossing the hospital square, Sir John stopped me, and heaped coals of fire on my head by telling me that he had tried to get me one of the resident appointments, much coveted by the assistant surgeons, but that the Admiralty had put in another man. "However," said he, "I mean to keep you here till I can get you something you will like," and turned upon his heel without waiting for the thanks I stammered out. That explained how it was I had not been packed off to the west coast of Africa, like some of my juniors, and why eventually, I remained altogether seven months at Haslar.

After a long interval, during which "Old John" ignored my existence almost as completely as before, he stopped me again as we met in a casual way, and, describing the service on which the *Rattlesnake* was likely to be employed, said that Captain Owen Stanley, who was to command the ship, had asked him to recommend an assistant surgeon who knew something of science; would I like that? Of course I jumped at the offer. "Very well, I give you leave; go to London at once and see Captain Stanley." I went, saw my future commander, who was very civil to me, and promised to ask that I should be appointed to his ship, as in due time I was. It

is a singular thing that, during the few months of my stay at Haslar, I had among my messmates two future Directors-General of the Medical Service of the Navy (Sir Alexander Armstrong and Sir John Watt-Reid), with the present President of the College of Physicians and my kindest of doctors, Sir Andrew Clark.

Life on board Her Majesty's ship in those days was a very different affair from what it is now, and ours was exceptionally rough, as we were often many months without receiving letters or seeing any civilized people but ourselves. In exchange, we had the interest of being about the last voyagers, I suppose, to whom it could be possible to meet with people who knew nothing of firearms—as we did on the south coast of New Guinea—and of making acquaintance with a variety of interesting savage and semi-civilized people. But apart from experience of this kind and the opportunities offered for scientific work, to me, personally, the cruise was extremely valuable. It was good for me to live under sharp discipline; to be down on the realities of existence by living on bare necessaries, to find out how extremely well worth living life seemed to be when one woke up from a night's rest on a soft plank, with the sky for canopy and cocoa and weevily biscuit the sole prospect for breakfast; and, more especially, to learn to work for the sake of what I got for myself out of it, even if it all went to the bottom and I along with it. My brother officers were as good fellows as sailors ought to be and generally are, but, naturally, they neither knew nor cared anything about my pursuits, nor understood why I should be so zealous in pursuit of the objects which my friends, the middies, christened "Buffons," after the title conspicuous on a volume of the *Suites à Buffon,* which stood on my shelf in the chart room.

During the four years of our absence, I sent home communication after communication to the "Linnean Society," with the same result as that obtained by Noah when he sent the raven out of his ark. Tired at last of hearing nothing about them, I determined to do or die, and in 1849 I drew up a more elaborate paper and forwarded it to the Royal Society. This was my dove, if I had only known it. But owing to the movements of the ship, I heard nothing of that either until my return to England in the latter end of the year 1850, when I found that it was printed and published, and that a huge packet of separate copies awaited me. When I hear some of my young friends complain of want of sympathy and encouragement, I am inclined to think that my naval life was not the least valuable part of my education.

Three years after my return were occupied by a battle between my scientific friends on the one hand and the Admiralty on the other, as to whether the latter ought, or ought not to act up to the spirit of a pledge they had given to encourage officers who had done scientific work by contributing to the expense of publishing mine. At last the Admiralty, getting tired, I suppose, cut short the discussion by ordering me to join a ship, which thing I declined to do, and as Rastignac, in the *Père Goriot* says to Paris, I said to London, *à nous deux.* I desired to obtain a Professorship of either Physiology or Comparative Anatomy, and as vacancies occurred I applied, but in vain. My friend, Professor Tyndall, and I were candidates at the same time, he for the Chair of Physics, and I for that of Natural History in the University of Toronto, which, fortunately, as it turned out, would not look at either of us. I say fortunately, not from any lack of respect for Toronto, but because I soon made up my mind that London was the place for me, and hence I have steadily declined the inducements to leave it, which have at various times been offered. At last, in 1854, on the translation of my warm friend Edward Forbes, to Edinburgh, Sir Henry de la Beche, the Director-General of the Geological Survey, offered me the post Forbes had vacated of Paleontologist and Lecturer on Natural History. I refused the former point blank, and accepted the latter only provisionally, telling Sir Henry that I did not care for fossils, and that I should give up Natural History as soon as I could get a physiological post. But I held the office for thirty-one years, and a large part of my work has been paleontological.

At that time I disliked public speaking, and had a firm conviction that I should break down every time I opened my mouth. I believe I had every fault a speaker could have (except talking at random or indulging in rhetoric), when I spoke to the first important audience I ever addressed, on a Friday evening at the Royal Institution, in 1852. Yet, I must confess to having been guilty, *malgré moi*, of as much public speaking as most of my contemporaries, and for the last ten years it ceased to be so much of a bugbear to me. I used to pity myself for having to go through this training, but I am now more disposed to compassionate the unfortunate audiences, especially my ever-friendly hearers at the Royal Institution, who were the subjects of my oratorical experiments.

The last thing that it would be proper for me to do would be to speak of the work of my life, or to say at the end of the day whether I think I have earned my wages or not. Men are said to be partial judges of themselves. Young men may be, I doubt if old men are. Life seems terribly foreshortened as they look back, and the mountain they set themselves to climb in youth turns out to be a mere spur of immeasurably higher ranges when, by failing breath, they reach the top. But if I may speak of the objects I have had more or less definitely in view since I began the ascent of my hillock, they are briefly these: To promote the increase of natural knowledge and to forward the application of scientific methods of investigation to all the problems of life to the best of my ability, in the conviction which has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength, that there is no alleviation for the sufferings of mankind except veracity of thought and of action, and the resolute facing of the world as it is when the garment of make-believe by which pious hands have hidden its uglier features is stripped off.

It is with this intent that I have subordinated any reasonable, or unreasonable, ambition for scientific fame which I may have permitted myself to entertain to other ends, to the popularization of science; to the development and organization of scientific education; to the endless series of battles and skirmishes over evolution; and to untiring opposition to that ecclesiastical spirit, that clericalism, which in England, as everywhere else, and to whatever denomination it may belong, is the deadly enemy of science.

In striving for the attainment of these objects, I have been but one among many, and I shall be well content to be remembered, or even not remembered, as such. Circumstances, among which I am proud to reckon the devoted kindness of many friends, have led to my occupation of various prominent positions, among which the Presidency of the Royal Society is the highest. It would be mock modesty on my part, with these and other scientific honors which have been bestowed upon me, to pretend that I have not succeeded in the career which I have followed, rather because I was driven into it than of my own free will; but I am afraid I should not count even these things as marks of success if I could not hope that I had somewhat helped that movement of opinion which has been called the New Reformation.

A Writer, God Forbid![1]

MAXWELL H. GOLDBERG

I SHALL never forget my mother's consternation when she discovered that I had the itch to write.

For years much of the burden of the family support fell to my mother. Though troubled by sickness, she tackled hard jobs to make both ends meet—or at least prevent them from getting too far apart. She kept store. She ran a boarding house for workers

[1] Reprinted from *The Menorah Journal* by the kind permission of Henry Hurwitz, Editor, and of the author.

in shoe factories and textile mills; and for itinerant ice harvesters with their huge appetites, broad stories, coarse laughter, and hob-nailed boots that pock-marked the floors. She was a midwife and practical nurse; and a foster-mother to delinquent children picked up by the police on city streets and turned over to welfare agencies. She ran a convalescent home for charity patients newly discharged from hospitals. On the side, she helped grow a large garden, milked a cow, and did many other jobs far beyond her strength and health.

And why? Partly because she and my father were caught in the predicament that troubled millions of other immigrants—poor, handicapped by a strange language and strange ways, trying to make a go of it in an indifferent, often hostile land. Partly because of my father's frail health: an engraver and watchmaker, he suffered recurrent illness which impaired his sight and sometimes made him give up his work. But greatly, as my mother saw it, because of my father's preoccupation with impractical writing, much of it Yiddish verse.

So my mother early determined that the future wife of her son would be spared her own hardships: if she could prevent it, her son would not become, God forbid, a man of mere books or words.

Oddly enough, my father agreed. At any rate, he did not protest. For one thing, he himself had early known and nominally accepted parental condemnation of verse-making. The rabbi of his native Russian village had written a poem in honor of my paternal grandfather's birthday. It was in Hebrew, the language of God and of the learned in Israel, and much had been made of it by the flattered recipient. My father, then a youngster, was duly impressed. He would follow suit. The next year he himself wrote a birthday poem for his father and put it on the table by his father's plate. At mealtime he waited expectantly. His father glanced at the poem and tossed it aside with the curt comment: "Don't be a *badchen.*"

A *badchen* was like the gleeman of old English times—a jester and a singer of songs at festive occasions. Sometimes he was an original wit and creator of folk poetry and song. Usually he just warmed up stale jokes, trying to give them local point, and sang songs that others had composed. He stood low on the social scale, was looked down upon by the solid members of the community.

Unlike the rabbi's verses, my father's birthday greetings were written in Yiddish, the vulgar tongue, the idiom of the ballad-monger and clown. Hence the harsh treatment accorded their young author. This rebuke cast a permanent shadow upon my father's poetic aspirations. He could not shake off his own father's derogation of verse-making as frivolous and vulgar.

My father had himself rejected a career as scholar. His boyhood skill in Hebrew learning had once been tested by his mother's cousin, a rabbi and noted theologian. The judgment was: *this lad will be a sage in Israel.* So the parents decided that their delicate, nimble-minded darling would be trained for the rabbinate. With that in view they sent him to another relative, a lesser but competent scholar, who was to prepare him for the rabbinical studies.

A few weeks of that student life were enough. Not having sufficient food at home, the teacher, in accordance with ancient custom, arranged to have the pupil eat his meals, gratis, with a different family each day, the cycle to be repeated weekly. The fare was coarse and scant: in some of the poverty-stricken homes the lad was fed little more than watery soup and bread crusts. At night he slept on a hard bench in the same bare, ill-ventilated room which, by day, served as the study center. At the end of a few weeks, without so much as a good-bye to his relative and teacher—a double breach of decorum—he left the place and returned home.

His parents were chagrined. Their favorite son, upon whom they had counted to carry on the family rabbinical tradition, had betrayed their hopes. What to do with him now? They were in a quandary.

Not so my father. He had definite ideas. He had seen the poverty of Jewish scholars —even those with wide reputations—their

lives of dependence upon the uncertain charity of others. He had seen them patronized and humiliated by the well-to-do; he himself had eaten the table scraps thrown to them by the resentful poor. He had seen a sensitive, learned, high-minded young rabbi broken on the wheel of village prurience. He would have none of this. Had not the Sages themselves said: "Shun clerics; love works!" He would live that precept. He would become independent by work—with his own hands.

All right, his parents said. They would give him his fill—and more—of work, their *poyer* of a son. They apprenticed him to a blacksmith.

The young rebel soon found he had struck a poor bargain. It was one thing to dream of independence and joy through work. It was quite another actually to live the role. The work was dull and exhausting. So he became a bungler, neglecting the bellows when he was supposed to blow them hard; puffing the fires up into a hot blaze when they should be banked. The blacksmith, furious, told him to get the devil out of his shop and stay out.

When the prodigal came back home again, his parents were gratified. He had had a taste of earning his bread by the sweat of his brow; now he should be eager to return to the fold. He would go back to his studies.

But they were disillusioned soon enough. They had underestimated the force of their black sheep's revolt. He refused to return to his Hebrew teacher. He still wanted his freedom, and to maintain it by the work of his own two hands.

He proposed another apprenticeship—this time to an engraver. In the engraver's craft he saw a means at once of satisfying his artistic impulse and of working with his hands. It would not overtax his strength. It would eventuate not in words but in things. Besides, if he became master at his craft, he could travel into parts of the Russian Empire where Jews ordinarily were barred; thus he would escape the stifling confines of the ghetto.

He did not give his parents all these reasons; but he gave them enough so that they approved and arranged for his apprenticeship to an engraver. This time my father did not quit. He realized his hope of becoming a master engraver; he was permitted to travel widely in the practice of his art. Thus, new cultural as well as geographic vistas were open to him, and he felt himself a man of the world.

But it was not the travel alone that made my father feel thus. During his apprenticeship he had continued to explore an exciting route—surreptitiously ventured upon in his student days—of escape from rigid customs, restricted horizons and boredom. This road to freedom was the Enlightenment, the *Haskalah,* which had been moving eastward across the Russian Pale. Along its path fresh intellectual and social winds were blowing; and my father was one of the young ghetto-bound Jews who breathed these fresh winds and found them intoxicating. So late would he stay up reading secular literature—English, German, French, in translation; the stirring Russian literature in the original—that the frugal man under whom he was serving his apprenticeship, mindful of his oil as much as of my father's eyes, would put out the lamp and order him to bed.

The more my father read, the more convinced he was of the soundness of his flight from Hebrew studies—from what seemed to him sterile memorizing and anatomizing of Holy Writ and its endless exegesis, and the equally sterile hairsplitting of the talmudic dialectic. Enough of this futile verbalism and casuistry, this intellectual acrobatics in a vacuum. Enough of this bondage to ancient books and the doctrines of men and epochs long dead. Of what use all this febrile effort and tortured ingenuity? Why force outworn precepts—hardened in social molds long since crumbled—to serve as guides in a dynamic present with which they no longer had living relationship? Thus was he confirmed in his refusal to follow the course marked out by his parents.

Yet the habit of traditional Hebraic lore was far stronger within him than he realized. The memorized texts of Scripture, especially the Prophets—to his last day remembered verbatim, and the more precious to him since

he became almost blind—the learned and ingenious commentaries, the talmudic cruxes so hotly disputed around the seminar table in his student days—these often came back to fill him with nostalgia for the confined but ardent life of the traditional student.

At such times, even many years after he left the Old World and had become a citizen of the United States, he was likely to forget his engraving and watch repairing, his storekeeping, his practical responsibilities to wife and children, and lose himself among his sacred books. Or, becoming absorbed in a poetic vision, he would forget business and household chores until he had put the vision into verse.

Yet—officially, so to speak—my father continued to regard the seductive charms of study and verse-writing as a serious drawback to successful life, particularly in America with its worship of hustle and the goddess of getting on. So he concurred in my mother's decision that I was to be brought up a practical and efficient citizen, undistracted by the siren song of divine philosophy and the poetic muse.

A decision easier made than applied! Ever since early boyhood, literature to me had been "an appetite, a feeling, and a love." The same about learning. I had a hunger for it.

Had I been born and bred in the Old Country, as my father was, I should have wished, no doubt, to devote my life to Russian literature. That is what, at times, my father thought of doing and what he might have done had he not emigrated to America. Or were Yiddish as a literary medium intimate for me as it was for my father—who in his eighties still continued to write philosophic dialogues in Yiddish and even lyrical poems celebrating spring and youthful love—I should probably have sought my literary development and self-fulfillment in that language.

In any case, I came by my love of learning and literature quite naturally—quite traditionally. It was part of my heritage; and it was pervasive in the atmosphere of my superficially humdrum, workaday home. It was so in spite of my mother's watchful resistance to it—when, much to her dismay, she discovered it.

The manner of her discovery was this She had bought me a pair of garters to hold up my long black stockings, then the fashion for boys; and with them had come a tablet of writing paper—about five inches wide by seven long, with sheets of several different colors.

Shortly after I got this treasure, a certain event made a deep impression on me. A neighboring girl and I were digging tunnels in her sandpile. Suddenly we heard the hurried irregular beatings of a bird's wings, and frantic staccato chirps. Then we saw Topsey, my playmate's dark-grey cat, dash with a sparrow in her mouth toward a lair under the long back porch of the house. We chased the cat. We followed her under the porch and cornered her at the farther end. But by a swift flanking movement, she slipped past us, got out from under the porch and dashed into the cellar. We pursued her there, slamming the door behind us. One of us finally seized the cat, and the other got the bird away.

It was dead. Sadly we put it in a little box and arranged a funeral. We placed the box on a little cart and covered it with flowers. Slowly we pulled the cart from the cellarway through the grape arbor—cool, shady, somber—to the nearby garden. There, in a shallow grave between rows of dahlia plants, we buried the little sparrow, with a piece of shingle and flowers strewn over the freshturned earth to mark the place.

My playmate's mother, a devout Christian Scientist, had explained to me not long before that only what was of God was real, that God was love, all-powerful, and therefore pain and evil were not real. That is how I understood what she had tried to tell me. But her teaching did not seem to jibe with the bloody episode of the cat and the bird. I asked my playmate how, if God was love and if God was all-powerful, the cat had been permitted to kill the bird. Did not God's love extend to the little sparrow? And, if it did, how could He have let it suffer and die? I got no satisfactory answer.

It was this exciting and disturbing experience of Nature red in tooth and claw, giving as it seemed to me the lie to the doctrine of the omnipotence of divine Charity, that I chronicled in simple words on the sheets of my new block of writing paper, while I "tended" store for my father. Then I proudly showed my masterpiece to the family. My sisters were delighted. My father started to praise me but checked himself and became non-committal. My mother was troubled She saw me following in my father's footsteps; and she hated to have that happen.

She had me come to her, near enough to place a hand on my shoulder. She told me to look up into her eyes—dark, commanding—as she did whenever she wanted to make an indelible mark upon my mind. Then she said slowly, and with much suppressed agitation, in her plain, clear Litvak Yiddish "*Oi, mein Kind, kain Schreiber sollst du nit zein.* (O, my child, a writer you must not be.)"

Throughout my grade and high school years, in spite of my mother's earnest interdiction, I showed a zest for writing. My teachers often praised me, though in the eighth grade one of my classmates objected strenuously to a descriptive paper I read aloud in class. I had taken the artistic liberty of picturing details of a scene which were not visible from the point where I was supposed to be standing.

From the "grades" of a small town school I went to a large preparatory school with a long distinguished tradition in the classics. It was the Boston Latin School where the Washington's Birthday Exercises were conducted in the language of Cicero, and where one might still occasionally hear from the public platform Cicero's denunciation of Catiline delivered by a student—and not in translation. I suspect my mother did not realize how much emphasis this school placed upon literature and upon written and oral expression. She had been told it was an excellent school to prepare a boy for college. That was enough for her. But to me it became a series of welcome opportunities to indulge my love of literature and self-expression.

As a competitor for a senior prize I wrote a paper on visits to Boston by Presidents of the United States. In gathering the material I spent much time at the public library poking through the bulky files of Boston newspapers of the 1700's and 1800's. I liked the musty smells of old paper and print; and I was fascinated by the close-up reports of living events which, heretofore, I had seen only in the remote perspective and cold finality of historic fact. I felt so much the more an American. Also, this taste of the pleasures of antiquarian study gave me an added incentive to a life of scholarship.

Competing for another senior prize, I made a verse translation of an ode of Horace, the one to Torquatus. Its theme of Death, the irresistible leveler, with its emphasis upon the transiency of life—these became haunting emotional and imaginative experiences. Less than three years later, when my mother died, they took on a personal poignance which I tried to express in a poem.

Meanwhile I had become enamored of the German language and literature. A chief cause may have been that it sounded a great deal like the Yiddish in which my parents expressed themselves with such vividness, tang, and pungency. The result was that in the summer after my graduation, I started to translate, in prose, Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*—stage directions, songs and all. Simultaneously, I worked on a narrative poem in which I wanted to tell a hair-raising, blood-curdling story based upon a dramatic episode in my mother's girlhood.

Her father was builder and owner of a brewery. He relied on his sons for assistance, especially in supervision of the night shifts. During one period when both sons were away, my mother, though only in her teens, tried to take their place. One such night a giant of a worker got drunk on high-powered raw liquor. It made him violent. He staggered toward my mother calling her a bitch of a Jew-murderer of Christ, and threatened to kill her. She dodged him and got away. This was the simple story I wanted to put into verse.

My mother herself had told it to me; she had made it gripping. For the fact was this: though most of her brothers and sisters were manufacturers, industrial chemists, engineers, physicians, and though she shared the family emphasis upon practical things, she also loved literature. She loved it more than she cared to admit; and, once started, she was an excellent storyteller, with a flair for sharp, often satiric, characterization which popped up in her casual talk. She applied animal names to people, and these names, usually derogatory, stuck. Sometimes it took years for the accuracy of her nicknames to be confirmed; yet confirmed they were. She also saw incidents in terms of dramatic conflict and so described them.

My mother could not help feeling proud of the scholastic and literary accomplishments of her boy. Indeed, a few weeks after my graduation something happened which encouraged the lively hope that now, at last, my mother would consent to a literary, or at least a scholarly, career for me.

It happened on a sultry afternoon I was in my attic retreat on the third floor of our house. Oblivious of the heat which, right under the roof, was heaviest at that time of day, I was toiling at one of my "works." (That is what in secret I half-jokingly, half-seriously called them. Who could tell? Wouldn't it be a joke on those who refused to take my writings seriously if they did turn out to have—genius!)

The front doorbell rang, and I heard my mother at the door exclaim, "Oi, such a guest—really a guest! And special on this hot day! Come in, Rachel, come in!"

"Thank you, Aunt Zelda, I will."

"Sure, come in, and I'll bring you a drink—cold lemonade, with cookies I just baked fresh. Tell me, what brings you to walk all the way here on such a muggy day?"

"Well, I haven't seen any of you for a long time; and I thought it is a shame that relatives should live so near each other and be so distant. Relatives shouldn't be strangers."

"Yeh, yeh. That is right. Blood should be thicker than water. But all of us, we are so tangled up in our worries. It is easy to understand why we go more and more apart."

"Besides, I didn't get to Maxie's graduation exercises, and I came to congratulate him."

That's just like Cousin Rachel, I thought. Always considerate. Always kindhearted. Not high-hat. Not like some of my other cousins. Some of them were snobs—at least to us they seemed so.

We were the poor relations—the latecomers, the greenhorns. In the Old Country, my parents both had cultural status. As for my sisters and me, we had all been born in or near Boston, regarded at least by New Englanders as the cultural hub of the United States. Yet we felt we were still considered foreign—ghetto Jews from Eastern Europe.

That is how we felt. We exaggerated. We were over-sensitive and imagined condescension where none was intended. But with Rachel we did not even imagine condescension. She never gave us cause. She acted old-world, *hamisch*, homelike. She was one of us. She felt as we did; and she spoke our language. Some of the others spoke in efficient businesslike tones, sharp, clear and metallic. She still spoke with warmth and melody. She spoke with a Yiddish cry in her voice—even when she was happy, as though her heart had been constricted and it hurt to be happy. She was a favorite with me.

So I hurried downstairs and joined my mother and Rachel in the living room. Mother left to get the cookies and lemonade. Cousin Rachel congratulated me on my graduation and my prizes and honors. Mother returned with the refreshments. Rachel spoke of my class poem and asked me to read it aloud. With ill-concealed eagerness, I took a copy of the poem, which was being displayed on the mantle, and read it. I read it with much feeling as though I were again in the large auditorium of the Latin School declaiming the poem before the audience.

When I finished, my cousin's eyes were moist. Her voice was soft but intense as she said, "It has such feeling! And so young—only fifteen. Just imagine!—Oh, Aunt Zelda, you must be very proud of your Max. I know I am. He's a credit to all of us! Class poet

in the oldest public school in America—older even than Harvard! And just think: when he has gone through college, when he is older, what he will write!"

I looked over to my mother. Her eyes, too, were moist and very bright. Her face glowed. She did not trust herself to words. She just nodded.

There was a pause. Mother broke it.

"Look, Rachel, the lemonade. You are forgetting it. And on such a hot day. Drink, my niece, drink."

As for me, I joyfully crammed a cookie into my mouth and chewed it fast. I washed it down with big swallows of the lemonade. I almost choked. But I didn't care. I was too happy.

Self-Portrait [1]

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

BORN MAY 7, 1892, in a wooden house with two round towers overlooking, from a clay bluff and a grove of oak trees, the waters of Lake Michigan.

Father a Scot, a Glasgow man, born a Presbyterian, ultimately a Baptist, always a devout Protestant; one of the early settlers of Chicago; fifty-four when I was born; a merchant: a tall, cold, rigorous man of very beautiful speech.

Mother a Connecticut woman, daughter of a Congregational minister, herself a graduate of Vassar and a teacher there; her family a seafaring family from the Connecticut coast about Norwich; very passionate people with some insanity among them; a very strong family resemblance from one generation to the next—small dark eyes and high cheek bones and similar voices; she was my father's third wife; intelligent and energetic and entirely selfless and beloved.

Four of us grew up—one to be killed flying over Belgium in the last weeks of the war. Public schools. Lake beach. Oak thickets.

Went to a fashionable Connecticut preparatory school for four years and hated it. Went to Yale. Regular undergraduate life: football team—swimming team—chairman of the literary magazine—Phi Beta Kappa—senior society. Began writing but learned little about it and had little life of my own. Went to Harvard Law School to avoid going to work; led my class in the last year; worked terribly hard because of the competition, but was never really good. Married Ada Hitchcock, who is a singer. This while I was in law school. Son born early in 1917. War; went abroad in a hospital unit so as to do the right thing but not be hurt. In France got shifted to the Field Artillery out of shame; few weeks at the front north of Meaux in June, July, 1918; sent home to take battery in new regiment of 155 G.P.F.'s: ended up a captain of F.A. at Camp Mead with no distinction but fact that my brother Kenneth had been a grand flier and had been killed. Taught for a year at Harvard to avoid (again) going to work. Wrote a little all the time, but it wasn't any good. One book of undergraduate verses published by the Yale Press while I was in France. Practiced law for three years in the office of Charles F. Choate, Jr., in Boston—trying cases mostly—and did pretty well, but couldn't write. Only one desire—to write the poems I wanted to write and not the poems I was writing. Winter of 1923, I decided to go to France anyway on what we had. Date the beginning of my more or less adult life from that year. Went in the fall of 1923 with two children. Lived in the Boulevard Saint-Michel and at St. Cloud and later in the rue du Bac. One summer in

[1] From *Portraits and Self Portraits*, collected and illustrated by Georges Schreiber. Copyright, 1936, by Georges Schreiber, and reprinted by his permission and that of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

Normandy. After that on the Mediterranean —cruising a great deal. Went one spring for five months to Persia, going down through the central cities to Bushire and west along the Persian Gulf to Mohamara and back through Shiraz and Ispahan to Teheran. All this time reading—mostly French poetry and chiefly La Forgue, Rimbaud, Leon Paul Fargue, St. J. Perse, Valery. Also Eliot and Pound. Began writing in 1923. Houghton Mifflin published "The Happy Marriage," "The Pot of Earth," "Streets in the Moon."

Came home in 1928 and lived on a farm Published "Hamlet of A. MacLeish," which was written in France, and "New Found Land," part of which was written in this country. Started work on a poem about the Spanish conquistadores in Mexico, and spent some time in 1929 traveling alone through the *monte* and up from the coast over the route of Cortez to the Valley of Mexico. Met the depression head on in the winter of 1929-30, and started to support myself writing for *Fortune*. Traveled a good bit as a journalist—England and France, and Japan, and the American West. In the intervals of this kind of work wrote and published "Conquistador," a series of American scenes called "Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City," a ballet of the building of the Union Pacific Railroad for the Monte Carlo Ballet Russe, a verse play of the bank panic of 1933, which succeeded or not in running for three nights, and a volume of short poems called "Public Speech."

(Editor's Note: Mr. MacLeish wrote this autobiographical sketch for "Portraits and Self-Portraits," in 1936. He did not say that "Conquistador" won him the Pulitzer prize for poetry in 1932. In 1949 he added the following paragraphs to bring the original material up to date.)

Lived through the nineteen-thirties like everybody else who knew what decade he was in. Part of the time you fought the enemy. Part of the time you wrangled with your fellow writers over who should do the fighting—writers or somebody else. Eventually you either resigned from your generation or got into the thing with both hands. First six or seven years pretty confused. Some were afraid to attack Franco, vicious as he was (is), because the Communists were attacking him too and a man might be (would be) "misunderstood." Some were afraid to speak out against the Communists because Franco's friends were hot after the Communists and no one wanted to wake up in that tumbled bed. Whole effort of both gangs was, as it still is, to make Americans choose between them. Have always believed myself there was a third choice considerably more decent than either—choice made on this Continent a hundred and fifty years ago and pretty well forgotten since. Tried to pound this out in a series of poems aimed against Franco's fascists (*Air Raid*, a verse play for radio and *The Spanish Lie*), Hitler's fascists (*The Fall of the City*, first verse play in this country), the betrayers of the American Alternative (*Panic*, the verse play about 1933 and *Land of the Free*, a book of photographs illustrated by a poem). Also tried to put the American Alternative in its own light in *America Was Promises*. As for the wrangling about the writer's responsibility in all this—put my two cents worth into an essay called *The Irresponsibles* aimed at the writers and artists and scholars who thought you could sit out a war one side of which was fascism.

By the end of the decade became pretty evident history wasn't going to wait for the books to be written. Feeling as I did, only natural I should get into Roosevelt's administration. Roosevelt had the right enemies and the right memories and it didn't much matter about his friends, though he had far and away the best selection of them, if you come down to it, since the first Presidents. What chiefly mattered was that he really believed in the cause which, as things turn out, was really the American cause—the revolution of the individual. Had it in his blood and had it in his head. And had the personal individuality of force and will and self-confidence to make it real. Reason Washington was alive under Roosevelt as it wasn't before and hasn't been since is that the lines weren't just being read; they were being acted. Arguing about Roosevelt's greatness is like arguing about a mountain. All you have to do is look.

My participation was pretty remote though I knew him and sometimes worked with him. Librarian of Congress in 1939. OFF. OWI. Assistant Secretary of State in 44. Winter flights to England during the war on one mission or another—the wind on the air field in Iceland—the Hebrides in the snow—London just as the fog closed once: almost too late—an American bomber station east of Cambridge: the departures before dawn, the belated return and always one or two or seven not returning—a secret broadcasting station in an English forest where the tongue was German—the Thames touched by the reflected flares—Westham and the devastated acres—the sleepers in the subways—the odor of terror and fatigue.

The Library of Congress was an administrative job—reorganization of the whole agency—enlivened by unexpected friendships and the shadow of immortal things. Among the half dozen greatest institutions of our world and one of the least known. Perse, exiled from France, found some measure of peace there—enough to begin again to write. Mann became a Fellow of the Library. Tate, Katherine Anne Porter, Robert Penn Warren, Louise Bogan, Willard Thorpe, Theodore Spencer became Fellows in American Letters. The Library began to touch its time and not in America alone but many countries.

OFF—the Office of Facts and Figures—was the first government-wide information agency. President instructed me to set it up fall of 41. No facts, no figures and no authority to get any, all OFF had was the best and most gallant staff of writers in the war—Henry Pringle, E. B. White, Charles Poore, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Malcolm Cowley, Philip Hamburger, MacGeorge Bundy. Merged in summer of 42 to form OWI but not before it had turned out the best pamphlets, bar none, which came out of the war.

OWI was another administrative job. Assistant Director in charge of the "domestic end." All this time still had responsibility for the Library. Fall of 44, however, resigned to become Assistant Secretary of State. Principal job there was preparation for San Francisco and work at the Conference. After the President's death resigned from the Government but went to London and Paris in 1945-6 and 7 to work on drafting of UNESCO Constitution and setting up of organization. Finally got free in summer of 47. *Actfive* published in the next year brought me back to my own work.

California — A South-Easter[1]

Richard Henry Dana

California extends along nearly the whole of the western coast of Mexico, between the gulf of California in the south and the bay of Sir Francis Drake on the north, or between the 22d and 38th degrees of north latitude. It is subdivided into two provinces—Lower or Old California, lying between the gulf and the 32d degree of latitude, or near it; (the division line running, I believe, between the bay of Todos Santos and the port of San Diego;) and New or Upper California, the southernmost port of which San Diego, in lat. 32° 39′, and the northernmost, San Francisco, situated in the large bay discovered by Sir Francis Drake, in lat. 37° 58′, and called after him by the English, though the Mexicans call it Yerba Buena. Upper California has the seat of its government at Monterey, where is also the custom-house, the only one on the coast, and at which every vessel intending to trade on the coast must enter its cargo before it can commence its traffic. We were to trade upon this coast exclusively, and

[1] Chapter 9 of *Two Years Before the Mast*, the journal of the author kept during his two years at sea, 1834-1836.

therefore expected to go to Monterey at first; but the captain's orders from home were to put in at Santa Barbara, which is the central port of the coast, and wait there for the agent who lives there, and transacts all the business for the firm to which our vessel belonged.

The bay, or, as it was commonly called, the *canal of* Santa Barbara, is very large, being formed by the main land on one side, (between Point Conception on the north and Point St. Buena Ventura on the south,) which here bends in like a crescent, and three large islands opposite to it and at the distance of twenty miles. This is just sufficient to give it the name of a bay, while at the same time it is so large and so much exposed to the south-east and north-west winds, that it is little better than an open roadstead; and the whole swell of the Pacific ocean rolls in here before a south-easter, and breaks with so heavy a surf in the shallow waters, that it is highly dangerous to lie near in to the shore during the south-easter season, that is, between the months of November and April.

This wind (the south-easter) is the bane of the coast of California. Between the months of November and April, (including a part of each,) which is the rainy season in this latitude, you are never safe from it, and accordingly, in the ports which are open to it, vessels are obliged, during these months, to lie at anchor at a distance of three miles from the shore, with slipropes on their cables, ready to slip and go to sea at a moment's warning. The only ports which are safe from this wind are San Francisco and Monterey in the north, and San Diego in the south.

As it was January when we arrived, and the middle of the south-easter season, we accordingly came to anchor at the distance of three miles from the shore, in eleven fathoms water, and bent a slip-rope and buoys to our cables, cast off the yard-arm gaskets from the sails, and stopped them all with rope-yarns. After we had done this, the boat went ashore with the captain, and returned with orders to the mate to send a boat ashore for him at sundown. I did not go in the first boat, and was glad to find that there was another going before night; for after so long a voyage as ours had been, a few hours is long to pass in sight and out of reach of land. We spent the day on board in the usual avocations; but as this was the first time we had been without the captain, we felt a little more freedom, and looked about us to see what sort of a country we had got into, and were to spend a year or two of our lives in.

In the first place, it was a beautiful day, and so warm that we had on straw hats, duck trowsers, and all the summer gear; and as this was mid-winter, it spoke well for the climate; and we afterwards found that the thermometer never fell to the freezing point throughout the winter, and that there was very little difference between the seasons, except that during a long period of rainy and south-easterly weather, thick clothes were not uncomfortable.

The large bay lay about us, nearly smooth, as there was hardly a breath of wind stirring, though the boat's crew who went ashore told us that the long ground swell broke into a heavy surf on the beach. There was only one vessel in the port—a long, sharp brig of about 300 tons, with raking masts and very square yards, and English colors at her peak. We afterwards learned that she was built at Guayaquil, and named the "Ayacucho," after the place where the battle was fought that gave Peru her independence, and was now owned by a Scotchman named Wilson, who commanded her, and was engaged in the trade between Callao, the Sandwich Islands, and California. She was a fast sailer, as we frequently afterwards perceived, and had a crew of Sandwich Islanders on board. Beside this vessel there was no object to break the surface of the bay. Two points ran out as the horns of the crescent, one of which—the one to the westward—was low and sandy, and is that to which vessels are obliged to give a wide berth when running out for a south-easter; the other is high, bold, and well wooded, and, we were told, has a mission upon it, called St. Buenaventura, from which the point is named. In the middle of this crescent, directly opposite the anchoring ground, lie the mission and town of Santa Barbara, on a low, flat plain, but little above the level of the sea, covered with grass.

though entirely without trees, and surrounded on three sides by an amphitheatre of mountains, which slant off to the distance of fifteen or twenty miles. The mission stands a little back of the town, and is a large building, or rather collection of buildings, in the center of which is a high tower, with a belfry of five bells; and the whole, being plastered, makes quite a show at a distance, and is the mark by which vessels come to anchor. The town lies a little nearer to the beach—about half a mile from it—and is composed of one-story houses built of brown clay—some of them plastered—with red tiles on the roofs. I should judge that there were about a hundred of them; and in the midst of them stands the Presidio, or fort, built of the same materials, and apparently but little stronger. The town is certainly finely situated, with a bay in front, and an amphitheatre of hills behind. The only thing which diminishes its beauty is, that the hills have no large trees upon them, they having been all burnt by a great fire which swept them off about a dozen years before, and they had not yet grown up again. The fire was described to me by an inhabitant, as having been a very terrible and magnificent sight. The air of the whole valley was so heated that the people were obliged to leave the town and take up their quarters for several days upon the beach.

Just before sun-down the mate ordered a boat's crew ashore, and I went as one of the number. We passed under the stern of the English brig, and had a long pull ashore. I shall never forget the impression which our first landing on the beach of California made upon me. The sun had just gone down; it was getting dusky; the damp night wind was beginning to blow, and the heavy swell of the Pacific was setting in, and breaking in loud and high "combers" upon the beach. We lay on our oars in the swell, just outside of the surf, waiting for a good chance to run in, when a boat, which had put off from the Ayacucho just after us, came alongside of us, with a crew of dusky Sandwich Islanders, talking and hallooing in their outlandish tongue. They knew that we were novices in this kind of boating, and waited to see us go in. The second mate, however, who steered our boat, determined to have the advantage of their experience, and would not go in first. Finding, at length, how matters stood, they gave a shout, and taking advantage of a great comber which came swelling in, rearing its head, and lifting up the stern of our boat nearly perpendicular, and again dropping it in the trough, they gave three or four long and strong pulls, and went in on top of the great wave, throwing their oars overboard, and as far from the boat as they could throw them, and jumping out the instant that the boat touched the beach, and then seizing hold of her and running her up high and dry upon the sand. We saw, at once, how it was to be done, and also the necessity of keeping the boat "stern on" to the sea; for the instant the sea should strike upon her broad-side or quarter, she would be driven up broad-side on, and capsized. We pulled strongly in, and as soon as we felt that the sea had got hold of us and was carrying us in with the speed of a race-horse, we threw the oars as far from the boat as we could, and took hold of the gunwale, ready to spring out and seize her when she struck, the officer using his utmost strength to keep her stern on. We were shot up upon the beach like an arrow from a bow, and seizing the boat, ran her up high and dry, and soon picked up our oars, and stood by her, ready for the captain to come down.

Finding that the captain did not come immediately, we put our oars in the boat, and leaving one to watch it, walked about the beach to see what we could, of the place. The beach is nearly a mile in length between the two points, and of smooth sand. We had taken the only good landing-place, which is in the middle; it being more stony toward the ends. It is about twenty yards in width from high-water mark to a slight bank at which the soil begins, and so hard that it is a favorite place for running horses. It was growing dark, so that we could just distinguish the dim outlines of the two vessels in the offing; and the great seas were rolling in, in regular lines, growing larger and larger as they approached the shore, and hanging over the beach upon which they were to break, when their tops would curl

over and turn white with foam, and, beginning at one extreme of the line, break rapidly to the other, as a long cardhouse falls when the children knock down the cards at one end. The Sandwich Islanders, in the meantime, had turned their boat round, and ran her down into the water, and were loading her with hides and tallow. As this was the work in which we were soon to be engaged, we looked on with some curiosity. They ran the boat into the water so far that every large sea might float her, and two of them, with their trowsers rolled up, stood by the bows, one on each side, keeping her in her right position. This was hard work; for beside the force they had to use upon the boat, the large seas nearly took them off their legs. The others were running from the boat to the bank, upon which, out of the reach of the water, was a pile of dry bullocks' hides, doubled lengthwise in the middle, and nearly as stiff as boards. These they took upon their heads, one or two at a time, and carried down to the boat, where one of their number stowed them away. They were obliged to carry them on their heads, to keep them out of the water, and we observed that they had on thick woolen caps. "Look here, Bill, and see what you're coming to!" said one of our men to another who stood by the boat. "Well, D—," said the second mate to me, "this does not look much like Cambridge college, does it? This is what I call *'head work.'* " To tell the truth it did not look very encouraging.

After they had got through with the hides, they laid hold of the bags of tallow, (the bags are made of hide, and are about the size of a common meal bag,) and lifting each upon the shoulders of two men, one at each, end, walked off with them to the boat, and prepared to go aboard. Here, too, was something for us to learn. The man who steered, shipped his oar and stood up in the stern, and those that pulled the after oars sat upon their benches, with their oars shipped, ready to strike out as soon as she was afloat. The two men at the bows kept their places; and when, at length, a large sea came in and floated her, seized hold of the gunwale, and ran out with her till they were up to their armpits, and then tumbled over the gunwale into the bows, dripping with water. The men at the oars struck out, but it wouldn't do; the sea swept back and left them nearly high and dry. The two fellows jumped out again; and the next time they succeeded better, and, with the help of a deal of outlandish hallooing and bawling, got her well off. We watched them till they were out of the breakers, and saw them steering for their vessel, which was now hidden in the darkness.

The sand of the beach began to be cold to our bare feet; the frogs set up their croaking in the marshes, and one solitary owl, from the end of the distant point, gave out his melancholy note, mellowed by the distance, and we began to think that it was high time for "the old man," as the captain is generally called, to come down. In a few minutes we heard something coming towards us. It was an man on horseback. He came up on the full gallop, reined up near us, addressed a few words to us, and receiving no answer, wheeled round and galloped off again. He was nearly as dark as an Indian, with a large Spanish hat, blanket cloak or surreppa, and leather leggins, with a long knife stuck in them. "This is the seventh city that ever I was in, and no Christian one neither," said Bill Brown. "Stand by!" said Tom, "you haven't seen the worst of it yet." In the midst of this conversation the captain appeared; and we winded the boat round, shoved her down, and prepared to go off. The captain, who had been on the coast before and "knew the ropes," took the steering oar, and we went off in the same way as the other boat. I, being the youngest, had the pleasure of standing at the bow, and getting wet through. We went off well, though the seas were high. Some of them lifted us up, and sliding from under us, seemed to let us drop through the air like a flat plank upon the body of the water. In a few minutes we were in the low, regular swell, and pulled for a light, which, as we came up, we found had been run up to our trysail gaff.

Coming aboard, we hoisted up all the boats, and diving down into the forecastle, changed our wet clothes, and got our supper. After supper the sailors lighted their pipes,

(cigars, those of us who had them,) and we had to tell all we had seen ashore. Then followed conjectures about the people ashore, the length of the voyage, carrying hides, etc., etc., until eight bells, when all hands were called aft, and the "anchor watch" set. We were to stand two in a watch, and as the nights were pretty long, two hours were to make a watch. The second mate was to keep the deck until eight o'clock, and all hands were to be called at daybreak, and the word was passed to keep a bright look-out, and to call the mate if it should come on to blow from the south-east. We had also orders to strike the bells every half hour through the night, as at sea. My watchmate was John, the Swedish sailor, and we stood from twelve to two, he walking the larboard side, and I the starboard. At daylight all hands were called, and we went through the usual process of washing down, swabbing, etc., and got breakfast at eight o'clock. In the course of the forenoon, a boat went aboard of the Ayacucho and brought off a quarter of beef, which made us a fresh bite for dinner. This we were glad enough to have, and the mate told us that we should live upon fresh beef while we were on the coast, as it was cheaper here than the salt. While at dinner, the cook called, "Sail ho!" and coming on deck, we saw two sails coming round the point. One was a large ship under top-gallant sails, and the other a small hermaphrodite brig. They both backed their top sails and sent boats aboard of us. The ship's colors had puzzled us, and we found that she was from Genoa, with an assorted cargo, and was trading on the coast. She filled away again, and stood out; being bound up the coast to San Francisco. The crew of the brig's boat were Sandwich Islanders, but one of them, who spoke a little English, told us that she was the Loriotte, Captain Nye, from Oahu, and was engaged in this trade. She was a lump of a thing—what the sailors call a butter-box. This vessel, as well as the Ayacucho, and others which we afterwards saw engaged in the same trade, have English or Americans for officers, and two or three before the mast to do the work upon the rigging, and to rely upon for seamanship, while the rest of the crew are Sandwich Islanders, who are active, and very useful in boating.

The three captains went ashore after dinner, and came off again at night. When in port, everything is attended to by the chief mate; the captain, unless he is also supercargo, has little to do, and is usually ashore much of his time. This we thought would be pleasanter for us, as the mate was a good-natured man and not very strict. So it was for a time, but we were worse off in the end; for wherever the captain is a severe, energetic man, and the mate is wanting in both these qualities, there will always be trouble. And trouble we had already begun to anticipate. The captain had several times found fault with the mate, in presence of the crew; and hints had been dropped that all was not right between them. When this is the case, and the captain suspects that his chief officer is too easy and familiar with the crew, then he begins to interfere in all the duties, and to draw the reins taughter, and the crew have to suffer.

2

People and Places

Fortunately, people do not remain interested solely in their own lives. There are others in the world besides themselves. So there are character sketches, thumbnail portraits, appreciations, and biographies short or voluminous. The "full dress" life may be a great compendium omitting nothing, heavily footnoted and dull. Or a biography can be—and many have been—scholarly and still the engrossing story of a life. It is trite to say that writing of this kind can "read like fiction"—but it is complimentary and often true. But how true should this be? There has been much argument about how far the biographer should go in selecting material and interpreting his subject. Lytton Strachey, one of the most provocative biographers of our time, has been called, by an adherent of the other school, "the man who ruined the art of biography."

The long life-story and the brief informative paragraph, such as the entries in encyclopedias, generally have fact as an objective and chronology for a guide. But there are memorable brief treatments clearly shaped by the imagination and even the bias of their writers. Such "lives" seek to disclose the significance of a career; they contain within themselves the answer to why the author wished to write them—certainly not merely to give information. "Tin Lizzie" is but one of many such "biographies" in John Dos Passos' *U.S.A.*, a trilogy of panoramic novels. Here no details or happenings are invented, but the chief element is the interpretation of Henry Ford as revealed in the pattern of emphasis and selection. Again, the story of Opal Whiteley is shaped and tempered by mild patronage and a keen sense of the girl's all but fantastic career. The American scene bred Carter Harrison, fabulous one-time mayor of Chicago, and Charles Connick, perhaps our greatest artist in stained glass. It also bred two men to do interpretations of their lives.

In all these pieces there are abundant details, no doubt authentic if one wished to challenge them. But with all the mass of fact, we are being steadily persuaded. And we are willing to be, for the interpretation seems to grow honestly out of the facts, at least as we are shown them; and the mood of each seems genuine. Yet of each piece one may say that the character appears not as he really was but as the author saw him. Is this bad or good? Who can show people as they "really" are? It will not happen through the arts. *Reality* and *objectivity* are comparative terms.

As it is with people, so with the places that men write about. First there is the matter of actual acquaintance. Tacitus saw Germany in the days of the Caesars and wrote from firsthand observation. Thomas Heggen lived on the *U.S.S. Reluctant* and with its officers and men. Melville no doubt saw many inns like *The Spouter*, and vividly, plausibly fused fact with his fiction. Robert Coffin lived his early life close to the ice-cutting on the Kennebec

River, and he writes a composite scene that has the ring of regional truth. People write best of what they know.

But sometimes people spend their lives in one locality and yet derive only a few languid generalities about it. How different from the zest of Robert Coffin! When the details and the whole report show that a place and its culture have not been what Henry James once called "felt life," the result must be a failure.

The presence or absence of human beings has always helped give a place its character. Often it is the key to the right coherence and emphasis. But the author must bring something with him beyond curiosity and zest. Often a whole complex being responds to the situation discovered. So with the man Tacitus, who could not be merely a note-taking observer because he was so actively aware of the culture he had brought with him to this strange Germany. E. B. White certainly spent a day and night at Concord and Walden Pond, but he was sharply aware of his own time as well as Thoreau's. And he had read Thoreau's *Walden*. Half-humorous and half-regretful, the sense of contrast between the old and new runs through White's whole commentary. What he saw and emphasized depended on his mood and knowledge and even his philosophy, as with Tacitus and many another too. A different visitor to Walden not so long ago found many of the same phenomena that White encountered. But *his* response was a letter to a New England paper complaining of the unsanitary conditions of the pond and the state park around it. He obviously was not thinking of Thoreau, and probably had not read his *Walden*.

As with Tacitus and White and the letter-writer, so with anyone who writes of people and places—he is the sum of all that he has met and known and done, of his tastes and aversions, his prejudices and his hopes. The past colors and shapes the present for such a writer, and each personal equation is different. The poet Keats believed the artist should have no character but be a kind of chameleon. Today we mean much the same thing when we speak of "detachment." The social scientist says detachment is impossible, and certainly its virtue is debatable. Meanwhile we see that Mr. White had been alert and curious long before that trip to Concord, and unlike the letter writer was not too insistent on what *ought* to be. And he had read Thoreau!

Tin Lizzie[1]

JOHN DOS PASSOS

"MR. FORD *the automobileer*," the feature-writer wrote in 1900.

"Mr. Ford the automobileer began by giving his steed three or four sharp jerks with the lever at the righthand side of the seat; that is, he pulled the lever up and down sharply in order, as he said, to mix air with gasoline and drive the charge into the exploding cylinder. . . . Mr. Ford slipped a small electric switch handle and there followed a puff, puff, puff. . . . The puffing of the machine assumed a higher key. She was flying along about eight miles an hour. The ruts in the road were deep, but the machine

[1] From *The Big Money* by John Dos Passos. Copyright 1936 by John Dos Passos, and reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers, and of the author.

certainly went with a dreamlike smoothness. There was none of the bumping common even to a streetcar. . . . By this time the boulevard had been reached, and the automobileer, letting a lever fall a little, let her out. Whiz! She picked up speed with infinite rapidity. As she ran on there was a clattering behind, the new noise of the automobile."

For twenty years or more,

ever since he'd left his father's farm when he was sixteen to get a job in a Detroit machineshop, Henry Ford had been nuts about machinery. First it was watches, then he designed a steamtractor, then he built a horseless carriage with an engine adapted from the Otto gasengine he'd read about in *The World of Science,* then a mechanical buggy with a onecylinder fourcycle motor, that would run forward but not back;

at last, in ninetyeight, he felt he was far enough along to risk throwing up his job with the Detroit Edison Company, where he'd worked his way up from night fireman to chief engineer, to put all his time into working on a new gasoline engine,

(in the late eighties he'd met Edison at a meeting of electriclight employees in Atlantic City. He'd gone up to Edison after Edison had delivered an address and asked him if he thought gasoline was practical as a motor fuel. Edison had said yes. If Edison said it, it was true. Edison was the great admiration of Henry Ford's life);

and in driving his mechanical buggy, sitting there at the lever jauntily dressed in a tightbuttoned jacket and a high collar and a derby hat, back and forth over the level illpaved streets of Detroit,

scaring the big brewery horses and the skinny trotting horses and the sleekrumped pacers with the motor's loud explosions,

looking for men scatterbrained enough to invest money in a factory for building automobiles.

He was the eldest son of an Irish immigrant who during the Civil War had married the daughter of a prosperous Pennsylvania Dutch farmer and settled down to farming near Dearborn in Wayne County, Michigan;

like plenty of other Americans, young Henry grew up hating the endless sogging through the mud about the chores, the hauling and pitching manure, the kerosene lamps to clean, the irk and sweat and solitude of the farm.

He was a slender, active youngster, a good skater, clever with his hands; what he liked was to tend the machinery and let the others do the heavy work. His mother had told him not to drink, smoke, gamble or go into debt, and he never did.

When he was in his early twenties his father tried to get him back from Detroit, where he was working as mechanic and repairman for the Drydock Engine Company that built engines for steamboats, by giving him forty acres of land.

Young Henry built himself an uptodate square white dwellinghouse with a false mansard roof and married and settled down on the farm,

but he let the hired men do the farming,

he bought himself a buzzsaw and rented a stationary engine and cut the timber off the woodlots.

He was a thrifty young man who never drank or smoked or gambled or coveted his neighbor's wife, but he couldn't stand living on the farm.

He moved to Detroit, and in the brick barn behind his house tinkered for years in his spare time with a mechanical buggy that would be light enough to run over the clayey wagonroads of Wayne County, Michigan.

By 1900 he had a practicable car to promote.

He was forty years old before the Ford Motor Company was started and production began to move.

Speed was the first thing the early automobile manufacturers went after. Races advertised the makes of cars.

Henry Ford himself hung up several records at the track at Grosse Pointe and on the ice on Lake St. Clair. In his 999 he did the mile in thirtynine and fourfifths seconds.

But it had always been his custom to hire others to do the heavy work. The speed he was busy with was speed in production, the

records records in efficient output. He hired Barney Oldfield, a stunt bicyclerider from Salt Lake City, to do the racing for him.

Henry Ford had ideas about other things than the designing of motors, carburetors, magnetos, jigs and fixtures, punches and dies; he had ideas about sales,

that the big money was in economical quantity production, quick turnover, cheap interchangeable easilyreplaced standardized parts;

it wasn't until 1909, after years of arguing with his partners, that Ford put out the first Model T.

Henry Ford was right.

That season he sold more than ten thousand tin lizzies, ten years later he was selling almost a million a year.

In these years the Taylor Plan was stirring up plantmanagers and manufacturers all over the country. Efficiency was the word. The same ingenuity that went into improving the performance of a machine could go into improving the performance of the workmen producing the machine.

In 1913 they established the assemblyline at Ford's. That season the profits were something like twentyfive million dollars, but they had trouble in keeping the men on the job, machinists didn't seem to like it at Ford's.

Henry Ford had ideas about other things than production.

He was the largest automobile manufacturer in the world; he paid high wages; maybe if the steady workers thought they were getting a cut (a very small cut) in the profits, it would give trained men an inducement to stick to their jobs.

wellpaid workers might save enough money to buy a tin lizzie; the first day Ford's announced that cleancut properlymarried American workers who wanted jobs had a chance to make five bucks a day (of course it turned out that there were strings to it; always there were strings to it)

such an enormous crowd waited outside the Highland Park plant

all through the zero January night

that there was a riot when the gates were opened; cops broke heads, jobhunters threw bricks; property, Henry Ford's own property, was destroyed. The company dicks had to turn on the firehose to beat back the crowd.

The American Plan; automotive prosperity seeping down from above; it turned out there were strings to it.

But that five dollars a day

paid to good, clean American workmen

who didn't drink or smoke cigarettes or read or think,

and who didn't commit adultery

and whose wives didn't take in boarders,

made America once more the Yukon of the sweated workers of the world;

made all the tin lizzies and the automotive age, and incidentally,

made Henry Ford the automobileer, the admirer of Edison, the birdlover,

the great American of his time.

But Henry Ford had ideas about other things besides assemblylines and the livinghabits of his employees. He was full of ideas. Instead of going to the city to make his fortune, here was a country boy who'd made his fortune by bringing the city out to the farm. The precepts he'd learned out of McGuffey's Reader, his mother's prejudices and preconceptions, he had preserved clean and unworn as freshprinted bills in the safe in a bank.

He wanted people to know about his ideas, so he bought the *Dearborn Independent* and started a campaign against cigarettesmoking.

When war broke out in Europe, he had ideas about that too. (Suspicion of armymen and soldiering were part of the midwest farm tradition, like thrift, stickativeness, temperance and sharp practice in money matters.) Any intelligent American mechanic could see that if the Europeans hadn't been a lot of ignorant underpaid foreigners who drank, smoked, were loose about women and wasteful in their methods of production, the war could never have happened.

When Rosika Schwimmer broke through the stockade of secretaries and servicemen

who surrounded Henry Ford and suggested to him that he could stop the war,

he said sure they'd hire a ship and go over and get the boys out of the trenches by Christmas.

He hired a steamboat, the *Oscar II*, and filled it up with pacifists and socialworkers,

to go over to explain to the princelings of Europe

that what they were doing was vicious and silly.

It wasn't his fault that Poor Richard's commonsense no longer rules the world and that most of the pacifists were nuts,

goofy with headlines.

When William Jennings Bryan went over to Hoboken to see him off, somebody handed William Jennings Bryan a squirrel in a cage, William Jennings Bryan made a speech with the squirrel under his arm. Henry Ford threw American Beauty roses to the crowd. The band played *I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier*. Practical jokers let loose more squirrels. An eloping couple was married by a platoon of ministers in the saloon, and Mr. Zero, the flophouse humanitarian, who reached the dock too late to sail,

dove into the North River and swam after the boat.

The *Oscar II* was described as a floating Chautauqua; Henry Ford said it felt like a middlewestern village, but by the time they reached Christiansand in Norway, the reporters had kidded him so that he had gotten cold feet and gone to bed. The world was too crazy outside of Wayne County, Michigan. Mrs. Ford and the management sent an Episcopal dean after him who brought him home under wraps,

and the pacifists had to speechify without him.

Two years later Ford's was manufacturing munitions, Eagle boats; Henry Ford was planning oneman tanks, and oneman submarines like the one tried out in the Revolutionary War. He announced to the press that he'd turn over his war profits to the government,

but there's no record that he ever did.

One thing he brought back from his trip was the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

He started a campaign to enlighten the world in the *Dearborn Independent;* the Jews were why the world wasn't like Wayne County, Michigan, in the old horse and buggy days;

the Jews had started the war, Bolshevism, Darwinism, Marxism, Nietzsche, short skirts and lipstick. They were behind Wall Street and the international bankers, and the white-slave traffic and the movies and the Supreme Court and ragtime and the illegal liquor business.

Henry Ford denounced the Jews and ran for senator and sued the *Chicago Tribune* for libel,

and was the laughingstock of the kept metropolitan press;

but when the metropolitan bankers tried to horn in on his business

he thoroughly outsmarted them.

In 1918 he had borrowed on notes to buy out his minority stockholders for the picayune sum of seventy-five million dollars.

In February, 1920, he needed cash to pay off some of these notes that were coming due. A banker is supposed to have called on him and offered him every facility if the bankers' representative could be made a member of the board of directors. Henry Ford handed the banker his hat,

and went about raising the money in his own way:

he shipped every car and part he had in his plant to his dealers and demanded immediate cash payment. Let the other fellow do the borrowing had always been a cardinal principle. He shut down production and canceled all orders from the supplyfirms. Many dealers were ruined, many supplyfirms failed, but when he reopened his plant,

he owned it absolutely,

the way a man owns an unmortgaged farm with the taxes paid up.

In 1922 there started the Ford boom for President (high wages, waterpower, industry scattered to the small towns) that was skillfully pricked behind the scenes

by another crackerbarrel philosopher,

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Calvin Coolidge;
but in 1922 Henry Ford sold one million three hundred and thirtytwo thousand two hundred and nine tin lizzies; he was the richest man in the world.

Good roads had followed the narrow ruts made in the mud by the Model T. The great automotive boom was on. At Ford's production was improving all the time; less waste, more spotters, strawbosses, stool-pigeons (fifteen minutes for lunch, three minutes to go to the toilet, the Taylorized speedup everywhere, reach under, adjust washer, screw down bolt, shove in cotterpin, reachunder adjustwasher, screwdown bolt, reachunderadjustscrewdownreachunderadjust until every ounce of life was sucked off into production and at night the workmen went home grey shaking husks).

Ford owned every detail of the process from the ore in the hills until the car rolled off the end of the assemblyline under its own power, the plants were rationalized to the last tenthousandth of an inch as measured by the Johansen scale;
in 1926 the production cycle was reduced to eightyone hours from the ore in the mine to the finished salable car proceeding under its own power,
but the Model T was obsolete.

New Era prosperity and the American Plan
(there were strings to it, always there were strings to it)
had killed Tin Lizzie.
Ford's was just one of many automobile plants.
When the stockmarket bubble burst,
Mr. Ford the crackerbarrel philosopher said jubilantly,
"I told you so.
Serves you right for gambling and getting in debt.
The country is sound."
But when the country on cracked shoes, in frayed trousers, belts tightened over hollow bellies,
idle hands cracked and chapped with the cold of that coldest March day of 1932, started marching from Detroit to Dearborn,
ng for work and the American Plan, all they could think of at Ford's was machineguns.
The country was sound, but they mowed the marchers down.
They shot four of them dead.

Henry Ford as an old man
is a passionate antiquarian,
(lives besieged on his father's farm embedded in an estate of thousands of millionaire acres, protected by an army of servicemen, secretaries, secret agents, dicks under orders of an English exprizefighter,
always afraid of the feet in broken shoes on the roads, afraid the gangs will kidnap his grandchildren,
that a crank will shoot him,
that Change and the idle hands out of work will break through the gates and the high fences,
protected by a private army against
the new America of starved children and hollow bellies and cracked shoes stamping on souplines,
that has swallowed up the old thrifty farmlands
of Wayne County, Michigan,
as if they had never been).
Henry Ford as an old man
is a passionate antiquarian.
He rebuilt his father's farmhouse and put it back exactly in the state he remembered it in as a boy. He built a village of museums for buggies, sleighs, coaches, old plows, waterwheels, obsolete models of motorcars. He scoured the country for fiddlers to play old-fashioned squaredances.

Even old taverns he bought and put back into their original shape, as well as Thomas Edison's early laboratories.

When he bought the Wayside Inn near Sudbury, Massachusetts, he had the new highway where the newmodel cars roared and slithered and hissed oilily past (*the new noise of the automobile*).
moved away from the door,
put back the old bad road,
so that everything might be
the way it used to be,
in the days of horses and buggies.

Miss Opal Whiteley[1]

ELBERT BEDE

ABOUT 20 YEARS AGO I was reporting a Junior Christian Endeavor convention in Cottage Grove and was astounded when informed that a 17-year-old girl from a nearby logging camp had been elected president. My newspaper instinct told me that here was to be found an unusual human interest story. I sought the girl. Her name was Opal Whiteley.

This was the olive-skinned, dark-haired, dark-eyed maid who, a few years later, as the author of *The Story of Opal: The Journal of an Understanding Heart,* published under the auspices of the *Atlantic Monthly,* staid beacon light of literature, was to precipitate the literary controversy of the century; was to present in that story a foster-parentage fantasy that drew into the controversy psychologists, scientists, astrologers, psychists, editors, ministers of the gospel, literary critics, and every person who had at any time known Opal; and that brought sorrow and embarrassment to many who believed themselves relatives of this fanciful and imaginative young woman. No other book, with an Oregon locale, no other Oregon author, has claimed so many hundreds of columns of gratuitous publicity.

The *Atlantic Monthly* had discovered something different, even though that magazine may have afterwards wished the job had been left to others.

A volume would hardly suffice to summarize the personality of the nature-tutored child who at the age of six, so her diary would have us believe, confided her most intimate heart secrets to Michael Angelo Sanzio Raphael (a fir tree), and whose associates, instead of people, were Lars Porsena of Clusium (a crow), Thomas Chatterton Jupiter Zeus (a most dear wood rat), Brave Horatius (a shepherd dog), Peter Paul Rubens (a pet pig) and other characters with equally classical appellations. My first impression of Opal was that of a vibrant, fluttery, exotic, whimsical person, informed strangely beyond her years, eager, deeply earnest and seriously religious. She later became to me an inexplicable enigma.

Opal told me her plans for the Junior Endeavor for the coming year, already well advanced while the convention was yet in session. She was going out among the children of the state to tell them of God. She was going to interest them in Endeavor work through stories of His fairy creatures that roam the fields and flutter in the air. She was going to give them messages whispered by the flowers and trees, the flowing streams, the rocks of the mountains, the fairies of the air, the shells of the seas.

"How did you get your plans laid so quickly?" I wanted to know.

"I've been preparing for this for years," she explained innocently, frankly.

In various of Opal's excursions into fame circumstances seem to have been made to order for her, but she was no mean performer in laying backgrounds for her fantasies. Sometimes it has seemed uncanny, supernatural almost, the way circumstances have suited themselves to her plans.

Other characteristics should be known for their bearing upon the literary efforts of this waif of the mountains and logging camps. Although usually she fluttered from one unfinished thing to something else, she was capable, under stress, of a prodigious amount of work. She could apply herself at nerve-racking effort 12 to 16 hours a day over a considerable period.

This little maid, though having a huge fund of information upon many subjects, seemed totally unfamiliar with the ways of the world, so that many things which would

[1] From *History of Oregon Literature* by Alfred H. Powers, 1935. Reprinted with the kind permission of Elbert Bede.

have seemed utterly impossible to others did not in the least daunt her.

Opal could walk as an unknown person into a gathering of notables and with a childish, naive charm interrupt whatever was going on to introduce herself to each of those present. This was not discourtesy nor lack of breeding—it was Opal.

These several traits had considerable bearing upon the preparation of the tattered and torn diary in the manner in which I believe it was prepared, upon the accidental request for it from *Atlantic Monthly* editor, and upon various things that happened during its publication.

Even Opal's name is peculiarly fitted to her character and personality. The stone is both transparent and opaque, and nothing better describes our Opal. The last definitely heard of her she had been accepted as a princess of India, through an alleged marriage of Henri d'Orléans, the angel father of the diary. The opal is believed by many to have magical qualities. How appropriate if Opal came out of India, land of magic and mystery, of glitter and glamor, a perfect setting for the fairy world in which this master of make-believe always lived.

Opal wrote *The Journal of an Understanding Heart,* but she never had an affair of the heart, probably because hers was an understanding one.

In her adolescent years Opal gathered geological specimens, and bugs and worms by the thousands, by the barrel. She garnered chrysalises by the bucketful and watched how God brought life to his fairies of the great outdoors. Somewhere, somehow, she gained a prodigious amount of knowledge about these things. Without having completed a high school course, this little maid of mystery presented herself at the University of Oregon, where entrance requirements were waived because of her knowledge of geology, astronomy and biology. She became an indifferent student.

Opal made friends quickly, but intimate association usually was short lived. However, she had an uncanny way of getting acquaintances to assist her financially.

After a year or two at college, during which she was the subject of many news stories, Opal decided to give her life to conducting nature classes for children and went to Los Angeles for that purpose. A woman she had met but once furnished the money for the trip.

The nature classes did not do so well. Opal therefore decided to become an author in a big way. Just as a starter, she decided upon a comprehensive volume, *The Fairyland Around Us.* It was to be profusely illustrated, to be bound in genuine leather and to sell for $10. She listed a number of volumes to follow.

Opal, though ill from an accident, undertook to finance the publication. All funds from her nature study classes, all that could be secured from admiring friends, went into the production of the book, but were not sufficient. Opal, so lacking in worldly wisdom, then solicited contributions from such persons as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller and actually got money from some of them. Still funds were not sufficient for the purchase of color plates. Somewhere, however, Opal secured picture cards of the desired subjects and laboriously pasted these into her books, copies of which are in a number of Oregon libraries. A leaflet advertising the book carried expressions of wondering admiration from such persons as Queen Elizabeth of Belgium, Theodore Roosevelt, Nicholas Murray Butler, Gene Stratton Porter and others of equal prominence. No worldly wise author ever dreamed of launching a first book under such auspices.

Sales were not sufficient to satisfy the ambitions of Opal, so she decided to offer the *Atlantic Monthly* the privilege of completing publication. A kind woman provided funds for the trip to Boston.

So far as I know no money borrowed has ever been returned.

Ellery Sedgwick, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly,* was not interested in *The Fairyland Around Us,* but—here again the unusual circumstances that fitted into Opal's plans—he was struck by the personality of the girl from the Oregon wildwood. Such a girl must have kept a diary that might make interesting reading. Certainly there was a diary, and it

was all that Sedgwick had expected and more, much more. Opal, with no thought of selling it to the *Atlantic,* had a background all prepared and plans all laid to make the impossible seem probable.

With the publication of the diary came the first intimation to relatives and friends that Opal claimed foster parentage.

Opal was born, according to the Whiteleys, at Colton, Washington, 22 years before the publication of the diary. Opal herself said, at the time of its publication, that she was born in a far land where she had roamed the fields with an angel mother and an angel father, that while the child of the Whiteleys was being taken to Wendling, Lane County, Oregon, the Opal we know was put in place of the Opal born to the Whiteleys. The Whiteley Opal, it was claimed, fell into water while the exchange was being made and the mother left with the foster child without knowing that her own had been saved. During the publication of the diary Opal wrote that the first Opal had been saved from the water and that trace had been secured of her, but nothing developed.

If the Opal we know is not a daughter of the Whiteleys, it was by a most remarkable combination of circumstances that the foster child, substituted without advance arrangements, bore such a strong resemblance to members of the Whiteley family that even the father, who had come on ahead, did not suspect the substitution. It is even more remarkable that the substituted Opal asked for a dog Ginger (not the Brave Horatius of the diary), a little red chair and other things that the original Opal had left at Colton.

Opal has often been spoken of as of lowly origin, but there was nothing about the Whiteley parentage to be renounced. They cared well for their children, and the mother, saved by death from the embarrassment of the diary, is spoken of by those who knew her as having been a woman of education and refinement.

Family pictures prove beyond reasonable doubt that Opal is a Whiteley, but in mental characteristics she fits more the place her supposed child fantasy gives her. However, at least one member of the Whiteley family has an imagination as lively as Opal's and once explained away the foster parentage claim with a story as fanciful as any of Opal's.

The diary which Sedgwick wanted, sent post haste from Los Angeles to Boston, was in 50 or 60 cardboard boxes, all of it supposed to have been written in Opal's younger years, and supposed to have been torn into shreds by a younger sister who didn't approve of Opal's love for nature and her conversations with trees, bees, pigs, bugs and other things.

Opal's family moved many times and Opal lived in various places besides home. According to Opal's own story, she guarded the diary carefully, but I have in years of effort found but three persons who ever saw any of it and they only saw one box. Surely a girl guarding 50 or 60 cardboard boxes would have attracted some attention. At the home where she was received in Los Angeles no such collection of boxes arrived, but after she had been in Los Angeles two years there was such a collection. At this home, where Opal lived six months, she spent long nights printing on paper. Reference books in that home and in the Los Angeles library—by another chain of circumstances probably—were well thumbed where appeared things that were also word for word in the diary. Possibly Opal was merely comparing her childish work with these books which, incidentally, contained much about, Henri d'Orléans, adopted by Opal for parentage.

After Opal had been with the *Atlantic Monthly* for some time, various relatives in Oregon received mysterious letters and valuable presents from Boston, purportedly from persons in the employ of Opal's real relatives. A long story could be written about these, but briefly the letters stated that the persons writing them had always been near Opal since the time of her substitution, to watch her and keep from her her parentage. The presents were rewards from Opal's estate to the Whiteleys for the care they had given her. The letters were written by some one intimately acquainted with persons and events in Cottage Grove, Oregon. They told an involved story of Opal's parentage that

gave a perfect background for the diary running in the *Atlantic* and for the cleverly concealed acrostics in French adroitly brought into the diary and discovered by accident after the diary had gone into book form. These acrostics pointed directly to Henri d'Orléans as the father of Opal. One of them is as follows:

"I did sing it *le chant de fleurs* that Angel Father did teach me to sing of Hiacinthe, Èclaire, Nenufar, Rose, Iris, et Dauphinelle et Oléandre, et Romarin, Lis, Eglantier, Anemone, Narcisse et Souci."

The first letters of the names of the flowers spell Henri d'Orléans. Wasn't that something for a seven-year-old? I am firmly convinced that Opal had aid in Los Angeles in preparing these acrostics.

It is significant that the angel mother, so tenderly referred to by Opal, is not pointed out in the acrostics, most likely because no biography shows that d'Orléans ever married. The acrostics also give much intimate information found in the will of d'Orléans, a copy of which—here is that odd chain of circumstances again—was in the Boston library. Also in this library were books by d'Orléans, whole sections of which must have been taught Opal by her father, for they appeared in what Opal claimed was written by her at the age of six or seven.

Information in my voluminous files shows that Opal was not only piecing together and transcribing the tattered and torn heart throbs on childhood—in itself a sufficient task, she not only was spending much time in the Boston library; but she also had a secret establishment in which were prepared the letters purporting to come from the mysterious persons who were guarding her. It was she who sent the presents. I have said that Opal was at times a prodigious worker.

During publication of the diary there came to me many strange letters—some of them weird almost—that laid a background for the foster-parentage fantasy of the diary. One of these was from Opal herself and a second letter accompanying it explained that the first letter was written soon after Opal went to Los Angeles, and had not been mailed because it had been mislaid in a box containing part of the diary. That it had been written years before was proved by the three-cent stamp it bore, that denomination having been out of use for several years. This incident proves that Opal was for some purpose poring over the diary in Los Angeles. Was she embellishing it with the foster-parentage fantasy and the acrostics?

Another mysterious letter, bearing the telltale three-cent stamp, contained pictures that purported to be of Opal's real father, of her real grandfather and of her real uncle. I was unable to find pictures of the d'Orléans family with which to compare them, but an expert, not knowing the history of the pictures, said that the one of the grandfather and the one of Opal were undoubtedly of persons of the same family. I have no doubt Opal contrived the mailing of these, but if they had been what they purported to be she certainly wouldn't have parted with them to send on a strange journey to me. Anyone else, wishing to aid Opal, certainly would have sent them to her instead of to me.

With all these plans so well laid long before the jaunt of Opal to Massachusetts' center of culture, I have often wondered what plans she had made to give the diary to the public. And then how Ellery Sedgwick should accidentally ask for this diary.

Yet this diary of childish romance and of an impossible foster-parentage fantasy was not all hoax and plagiarism, for it contains intimate details of things known to have happened at the time Opal was a child—the births of children who have been identified, a girl burned to death, a suicide, visits of various persons, persons identified by the intimate descriptions of them, things that could have been remembered in detail only by being recorded at the time they happened. Whole sections are the beautiful, innocent, sincere unveiling of the heart of a precocious tot in composition childishly expressive; fact and fancy so cleverly interwoven as to be almost inseparable; improbable and probable imagery told with the same naive charm, humor, tragedy, human interest; everything a story should contain for sustained interest. These were enough to have assured Opal a niche in the hall of fame, to have proclaimed

her a literary genius, to have brought her a welcome from the literati.

It is my belief that what was presented to Ellery Sedgwick—at least what he examined before he staked his own reputation and that of his magazine upon its genuiness—appeared to be the kind described in the preceding paragraph, the kind that would have been accepted under such auspices as the *Atlantic Monthly* for what it pretended to be.

As it is, many want to know how a child of six could have a nimble familiarity with French yet never use a word of that language in conversation or at any other time; they want to know why *The Fairyland Around Us* contained many of the odd references and classical names later found in the diary when pieced together; they want to know why Opal couldn't remember at any time in her life the name of her father when at six or seven she constructed involved acrostics that named her father and all his family; they want to know how she could remember trivial things that happened when she was three years of age, yet couldn't remember her own name; they want to know why a child of five, just come from a foreign land, spoke the language of other children of five whom she found here. They refused to believe that any mother could be so unnatural as to put her own daughter out of her life forever through a chance meeting with strangers and not stop to learn whether her own daughter was saved from water into which she had fallen. They want to know how a girl of six or seven became familiar with classical names given her pets, some of them based on the physical characteristics of the persons whose names were taken, peculiarities known to few scholars who had searched libraries of the world. For example, lambs were named for the personal characteristics of Diogenes.

I haven't the least doubt that a large part of Opal's diary is hoax and a large part plagiarism. I have presented facts that show the foster-parentage claim impossible, but—

Those who wish to believe in Opal will point out that Opal, who has never returned to the scenes so beautifully described as those of her childhood, embarked for Europe with a confidential document signed by our secretary of state and Sir Edward Grey of England, who become acquainted with Opal in this country through Ellery Sedgwick; they will point out that some way Opal was countenanced by the mother of d'Orléans, who probably financed Opal's trip to India; they will point out that there is strong evidence that Opal was accepted for at least a time as a relative of His Royal Highness, the Maharana of Adiapur, ruling Indian prince.

Opal would have been satisfied with nothing less. From an Oregon logging camp to a princess of India was the way our little home town girl made good.

They will point out that there was a chance for the alleged substitution—and combinations of circumstances always seemed to favor Opal; they will point out that d'Orléans lived and died at a time to fit Opal's story; they will point out that if d'Orléans did not marry he might have had a reason for sending a daughter to a foreign land, or heirs to an estate might have contrived something of the sort; they will point out that the odd heirlooms, given Opal by a grandmother who had never seen her, while none went to any other member of the family, have never been fully explained; they will point out that Opal was the only nature-loving member of the family, which fits the d'Orléans parentage.

Could Opal's story be true and did she cast doubt upon it by her pains to give it background—by embellishments that tested credulity?

Would Opal's story be more amazing as fact or as fiction?

If it be only romance, why has not Opal given us another Arabian Nights?

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Singer in Light — Charles J. Connick[1]

ROLLO WALTER BROWN

IF CHARLES J. CONNICK had not been an Irishman, he might have become one more American expatriate looking to a sympathetic Europe to mother him. For his activity reaches back to the time when it was the style to hurry away to find sanctuary east of the Atlantic, and he works in an art that in truth has been little thought about in the United States. But next to a good stained-glass window he liked nothing so much as a good fight. So he planted himself solidly in his own country, here to create windows worth seeing, and to make his fellow Americans look at them and like them.

Nearly a half-century ago when he was a cub cartoonist on the Pittsburgh Press a Philadelphian who made transoms and windows of colored glass in Pittsburgh confessed to him that he was lonely and invited him to come up. When the glassman struck a match to light the gas, there suddenly appeared a world of vibrating color in the loose pieces of glass lying everywhere about. Connick still grows eloquent about his speechlessness that evening at the magic which he saw. But the magic disappeared when the gas steadied down to an even burning and he was looking at completed windows. Why was it not in these windows when it had been in the loose glass? He meant to find out.

He worked for this glassman. But he could not learn what he wanted to know. He heard that a firm in Boston made windows—lots of them—and he went there. Soon he discovered, though, that the head of the firm was not interested in magic. His great concern was to give customers what they wanted —and no more.

He bothered Connick with questions. "Why are you working any longer over that? It is already good enough to please them."

"But I don't like it," the quiet-looking light-haired Irishman was sure to answer.

"Just who the hell cares whether you like it or not? You are not the one who has to like it."

"Oh!"

Connick has a disconcerting way of saying "Oh!" that even then was well developed. The head of the firm, known for his ability to substitute florid speech for precision of thought, declared him to be "the most conceited damned ass that ever walked the face of God's green earth."

Connick packed up one day and went back to Pittsburgh. But in Pittsburgh there was not enough interest in glass to provide him with so much as a good fight. "I nearly died," is all he ever says about those years; "I had to get out." So one day—one day in 1907—he walked into Tiffany's New York office with a great portfolio under his arm and asked if the firm were not looking for stained-glass designs of unquestioned originality.

"No, nobody here looking for designs," the man whose office he had invaded replied.

"But," the young titleholder in conceit assured him, "it will cost you nothing to look at them." And before there was time for protest, he had colored designs for windows leaning against anything in the room that would support them.

The man at the desk saw himself completely surrounded. "My God! What did you say—Pittsburgh? Are they doing things like that in glass out there? You're hired."

But he was not to stay long. He knew too much. Some of his fellow workers gave him a dinner after they were quite sure he was going.

Since plenty of places seemed worse, he tried Boston again. A suburban church needed a window, and he submitted a design.

[1] Reprinted by permission from the *University Review* (October, 1941), Quarterly Journal of the University of Kansas City, and from the author.

The architect and the rector wanted European crafsmanship. Connick told them that he could give them something better than they were likely to get from Europe. The representative of the donor believed him. A two-year battle followed. It ended when the man who held the money had his way. Connick is jumpy about donors and their influence on artists, but he was sure this one was right.

He took his earnings from the commission and hurried away to Europe to see just what could be learned about glass over there. He went wherever windows were to be seen.

He stayed long at Chartres. For in Chartres he quickly found the magic of that evening when the old glassman struck the match to light the gas—the magic of vibrating color. And in Chartres the magic had been multiplied a few million times. Connick marveled; he watched; he lingered to observe the effects of every kind of weather; he tried to record something of what he saw; he tried to understand what the early magicians had been at. They had done their best work, he was sure, when they were experimenting at something with the artist's flair. That was what he meant to do—to experiment, to produce magics of his own.

II

When he was back in Boston and established in his own workshop he was soon making discoveries of less agreeable kinds. Without much effort he saw that the real money in the United States was going into good-looking union stations and into skyscrapers tall enough to rend the clouds, rather than into churches—where the glassman logically expects to find most of his work. As recently as the Century of Progress he was still full of disgust at the discrepancy between Americans' religious professions and their neglect of thought about their churches. He sat back belligerently in his desk chair to say what it was like out at the Fair Grounds: "It was as if they had brought everything together for the fair that they could think of, and then when they looked it over somebody had said, 'Hell, we forgot religion! We had better get busy and try to scare some up'." In the 1930's the attitude only enraged him. But two or three decades before when he was a glassman of young repute and many debts, it was a major discouragement.

So, too, was opalescent pictorial window then in vogue. He had never before appreciated how complete its conquest of the United States had been. Church windows had ceased to be windows—presumably to let in some light—and had become only so many gloomy spaces in church walls where Grandmother and Uncle John were represented in caramel portrait likenesses—Uncle John with just the right familiar droop to his heavy black mustache. Or great muddy-looking angels with harps and with excessive wing spread filled the windows in such flocks that they completely shut out the light of the cheerful sun. In glass as well as in architecture the last decades of the nineteenth century stood as a completed fact. Connick could not have been born at any time since the twelfth century and found more in the churches everywhere about him to impose suffering upon anyone sensitive to the play of light and color. Just over on Copley Square, within three or four blocks of his workshop, was Trinity Church filled with so many cloudy windows that the light must come from a dynamo, and only a little farther down town in the Arlington Street Church the clear windows of an earlier day had given place to the same kind of gloom. He had to declare himself with emphasis. He had to proclaim the unwelcome news that ugliness in windows was not a question of a lost art but of a lost taste.

Among the many battles he had to fight with people immersed in the tradition of heavy opalescent picture windows was a famous one with the dean of the School of Theology in Boston University, who required a window for a new chapel. "Now this is what I want," he said. In pastoral words he sketched a green hilltop, and sheep, and people, and a commanding figure of the Good Shepherd, and something like "Feed my sheep."

"But that's a picture."

"That's what I want—a picture."

"But I don't make pictures. I make stained glass windows."

"Don't you make what people want?"

"When you preach, do you preach only what people want?"

"Oh—I have convictions, if that's what you mean."

"So have I. I make what I think people ought to have."

The dean marched out. But in a few days he was back "Now see here, let's get down to business. I want a window, and you make windows. There's no reason why you should be stubborn in the matter."

"Yes, there is. But you are too stubborn yourself to see it."

There was another abrupt exit. But there was also another early return. Soon the dean had become such a frequent figure in Harcourt Street that the studio force would call cheerily to each other: "Better tell the Big Boss to jump down the elevator shaft. Here comes his man again."

One day Connick sat back from his desk and said· "You are just wasting your time coming here. Go down to New York. Here, I'll give you the addresses of three or four firms that will be glad to make up what you want."

The dean took the addresses. But a few days later, while the office was still thinking of all the bills that could have been paid with the money from that commission, he reappeared.

"I have come to get you to make our window for us."

"But I've already told you that I don't make these damned picture windows. Why didn't you go to New York?"

"I did. That's just it."

He became very conciliatory. "Those fellows that I went to see down there are no good. They have no convictions. And I have come to ask you to make us the kind of window you think we ought to have."

But his greatest obstacle, perhaps, was in the Americans who traveled in western Europe and then came home and talked in tremulous voice about the lost art of stained glass. When he stood up and declared that it was not a lost art to him, they assumed that the best he could hope to do was to approximate the work that the medieval glassmen had done well. But hadn't he told them that he had no desire to be a copyist? The mediaeval glassmen had had a flair for trying out all sorts of new ways in design and symbol and color. He had the same flair, if anybody cared to know. Maybe there was something to be expressed in glass in the twentieth century that had never been expressed before—quite. That was what he meant to do some day if the chance came along.

The force of craftsmen that he brought together in preparation for such a day became almost as much a matter of comment as the windows that he and they together made. They were from England; they were from Germany; they were from Connick's own workshop, where they had perhaps answered an advertisement for "an errand boy with special talent in drawing." Visitors came. They began to learn something of the entire process of stained-glass windows: how the artist sketched the proposed window in colors; how another made a cartoon of it, section by section, in black and white, with lines to mark the boundaries of the different pieces of glass, how heavy paper was then cut into pieces to correspond to the pieces of glass in colors selected under the eye of the master himself, how the glass of all gradings of thicknesses and textures was cut; how it was all leaded and soldered into shape; how it was set up in a trial-gallery where it would have much the same light as in the building in which it was to be placed; how it was modified according to need; and how it was finally taken down, cemented and made waterproof before it was packed in sections and shipped away to where it was to be set up permanently. Visitors gained the impression that almost anybody from the girls in the front office to the gray old man who cemented the finished windows and pressed the leads down carefully would be competent to direct the work.

With such support, he had come in the late 1920's to be a busy man. One never knew

where to find him. He was on the road as his own representative; he was buried in the library, he was at his desk sketching a design while somebody talked to him; he was studying some noticeably brilliant window that had been set up in the gallery and saying just how anything with such wealth of color as that would have to be changed–if it required change; he was in the basement darkroom considering lantern slides by means of which he hoped to have all who would listen discover that the art of glass is not a lost art if only the artist has a chance; he was sitting before the upstairs library fireplace in his own house with some poet who understood glass because he understood poetry; he was dictating to his wife on his monumental but interesting book, *Adventures in Light and Color;* he was in pursuit of waterfalls and glaciers to sing about in gay watercolors; he was in the office again, sitting back in his chair with some stringy light hair down over one eye and his lips still tightened from battle, telling a friend about some committee chairman or strong-chinned donor who has just left, and in general what an artist in glass is up against; he was smiling over some letter that his secretary had brought in from some unwavering champion of his work; he was wishing that he could spend the main body of his time in doing work that he wanted to do, instead of using it up in fighting off people's cheap ideas; he was suddenly sitting erect in his chair, his face alight, as if he had never encountered a trouble in a life-time, telling of a great song in glass–or a symphony–that he hoped some day to make.

III

That was what he wanted to do–to sing, to express something of "the mighty singing which is America." In order to see how a singing became the dominant quality in his glass it is not necessary to go far from New York. It is in the Princeton University Chapel windows–in the great chancel window, in the four Epic Windows devoted to Dante, Milton, Malory, and Bunyan. More of it is in the East Window–not to mention the new West Rose Window–in St. Vincent Ferrer's in New York. "Oh, kids!" exclaimed one of four well-painted girls who sat mechanically saying their prayers in this church one Sunday afternoon when a bright sun crept from a clouded sky. "Look!" And they sat as if they were seeing some vision, and hearing voices from an unsuspected heaven. More of it still is in the Great Rose Window of St. John the Divine. One sees true yellow and warm reds and rich blues fused into a radiating messenger of the sun; not just a window in colors, but "a singing with bells and harps in the wind."

But he wanted to try an entire symphony in windows–or at least a symphonic poem. After waiting most of a lifetime, he had an opportunity without recent parallel in the modified French Gothic chapel designed by Charles Z. Klauder for the University of Pittsburgh. For there were twenty-three important windows in a building of compact unity, and four of these, the slender double lancets in the transepts, rose to such unexpected heights that they required of the glassman perfect imagination and perfect confidence.

Connick was sure he had what was required. The windows that resulted celebrate the questing spirit of free men–such lay saints as Bach and Schubert and Chaucer and William Harvey and Galileo and Isaac Newton and Louis Pasteur, and such American survivals as the Boone Family in Kentucky, and Abraham Lincoln, and Pere Marquette, and Francis Asbury, and Lewis and Clark, and Emily Dickinson, and Chief Cornplanter. He found it easy to treat figures who had placed high value on the spirit of discovery. In the swiftly changing sunset light of a clear day these windows do produce a symphony's effect. Youthfulness is in the world again, the universe is a living universe, the sun a glorifier of what man can do.

Not everyone across the street in Pittsburgh has found the way in to see what this glassman has done. And some of those who have ventured in have asked the wrong questions: "Were these windows Heinz's idea?"

"How many tons of glass are in a job like this?" But a vanguard of youth tells one what to expect. Boys and girls stop talking without being told as soon as they are inside, and whisper such questions as, "Did a man make it?" And certain adults not yet wholly unwilling to see a new thing come back day after day. They predict that a hundred years from now the stones at the entrance will be worn hollow—a hundred years from now.

And they may be right. "Say," Connick himself once remarked after a man had scoffed at glass in general as interesting only to a few aesthetes, "maybe the trouble with me is that I haven't been dead long enough." It might be interesting once to reverse the usual process of looking indignantly back to the time when somebody was not appreciated, and look forward to the time when somebody may be. Perhaps after the first or second hundred years, when intelligent people have come to regard light and color as important elements in their lives, candidates for the Ph. D.—if there are any left—will write theses about the most private details of Charles J. Connick's record, and prepare chronological tabulations of his work. They will list windows of his in Paris and New York and Boston and Pittsburgh and St. Paul and Minneapolis and Denver and San Francisco and Washington and all sorts of other places. It may even be possible to report that somebody accepted the fantastic Alice-in-Wonderland window that still exists only in design. And they will ask, "Did he start a new era in glass, or only happen to be there when the era came along?" They will be pleased in either event to record that he was a "cantankerous Irishman"—way back there in the dark ages of the twentieth century when Hitler strutted and raged—who had unharmful convictions, and clung to them until he was able to convert the light of the sun into new music. Something like that is what they may be saying you might have seen right "in the process of" if you had only been living—now.

Carter Harrison[1]

ERNEST POOLE

BUT CHICAGO all this time had not only worked but lived; and as it surged out on the prairie, with its frame and brick houses and flats, beer gardens, restaurants and saloons, theaters and burlesque shows, red-light houses, ring fights, gambling joints and race tracks, it had remained up into the eighties a wide-open frontier town. Old Cap Streeter had been right. The great masses of its people wanted it so and had fought all attempts to interfere with the freedom and tolerance they enjoyed. When as mayor tee-totaler Joe Medill in 1872 rushed through the Sunday closing of all beer gardens and saloons, from the Irish and the Germans and plenty of native Americans, too, rose such a howl of protest that soon the hated law was repealed. In vain the "praying women" crusaders marched by hundreds through the streets and knelt on the sawdust of barroom floors. The unregenerate drinkers laughed; and feeling quite itself again, the wide-open lusty city continued on its disorderly way. And this aspect of it can best be seen in the story of a Kentucky planter aristocrat, Carter Harrison, mayor of Chicago for five terms between '79 and '93, who in one of his speeches declared:

"Chicago is my bride! I love it as a young man loves his chosen one!"

As a boy I used to see him on his famous big bay mare, in riding clothes with a broad-brimmed hat on his massive bearded head, riding through our city streets and stopping to chat with all sorts and kinds. My father

[1] Chapter X of *Giants Gone*, copyright by Ernest Poole, 1943. Reprinted by permission of Willis Kingsley Wing.

knew him well, and from him and the printed records and in long talks with Harrison's son, himself a noted Chicago mayor, I gathered the material for this story of his career and this picture of its background—the politics and dissipations, genial sins and colorful joys of Chicago's turbulent mass life.

Born of old southern stock near Lexington, Kentucky, in 1825—after the early death of his father he grew up with his mother in the pioneer plantation life. Though they owned many slaves and much land, most of it was in timber still, and at first they lived in a small log cabin in a field of sugar cane. Later on he was to make political capital out of that.

"I was born in a canebrake and rocked to sleep in a sugar trough," he said.

But his mother managed the estate so ably that its value soon increased and poverty was left behind. She taught him at home till he was fifteen. Then he rode each morning to school in Lexington six miles away, and later he took his thoroughbred with him to Yale, where young Harrison was known for his eloquence in debate. On his return, he studied law and helped his mother to run the plantation. This tribute to her gives some idea of the luscious style that he could indulge in:

"I close my eyes and go far back to the time when I lay in a woman's lap. I look up into dark brown eyes and upon a face full of female beauty. My baby tongue can speak no word, but I coo in gentle murmurs: My beautiful mother!"

He wrote that in his middle age, and it helped his popularity, for in their softer moments not only Carter Harrison but Chicago, too, in those days, did love to feel themselves feel like that. Yet in spite of such devotion back there in his early years, restless for the glamour of the colorful world outside, he went to gay plantation dances where he was famed for his gallantry, made a trip down river to New Orleans; and when his mother married again, he went abroad. All over England he traveled on foot or horseback, visiting the Earl of Denbigh and picking up several prize bulls for the plantation back at home. With two comrades from the Old South he toured Germany and France and was in Paris in wild days and nights of insurrection following the revolution of '48. On coming back he found plantation life too tame, so finished his law course, married a young southern belle and with her went west to look for a home. He did not like Chicago at first, it was much too crude and new; but on his second visit he rode about the booming town and decided that it was to be the greatest city in the land. So he settled there in '55.

He kept out of public life at first; for in those years of arguing political factions before the war, his sympathies were half with the South. He opened a law office, but it soon became an agency where he dealt in city land not only for others but for himself. Later he doubled his fortune that way. Meanwhile, he built one house and then another and in 1866 joined a group of Kentucky families building homes near the open prairie. He bought on what is Ashland Avenue now, between Jackson and Van Buren streets. It was only a dirt road in those days with deep ditches at the sides. The Harrison home had been built by a friend. In the building, when workmen on the roof quit shingling before a storm, the owner called on Harrison and other friends to help him; and while they nailed on the last shingles just before a deluge of rain, they passed around an opera glass and took turns in watching the sheriff hang a horse thief three blocks away! When Harrison later bought the house, he bought with it the entire block, made a little plantation of the place and lived there for the rest of his life.

"He was strict with us boys," said his eldest son, "and yet he was great pals with us, too, and we had a mighty happy life. Our father had a passion for gardens. He had stables and outhouses for horses, cows, goats and pigs, chickens, turkeys, peacocks and even eagles and other pets. He would work in the gardens till tired and then lie with a book to read in a swinging seat under the trees. He read Dickens, Thackeray and Scott, histories and biographies in English, French and German. He was a moderate drinker of

wines and bourbon; he liked good cigars. At meals he never over-ate except when it came to watermelons and clabber. 'I can eat clabber till my eyes bulge out,' he used to say; and in season he ate melons at all three meals and again before going to bed.

"Though he went to a good tailor, I doubt if he ever had a suit pressed. He wore a broad-rimmed black hat and high knee boots of fine soft leather. When he rode out he liked to make friends. 'There is no person alive from whom you can't learn something,' he said. He did not care for the theater but loved the circus and minstrel shows. Often he told us: 'I like to laugh. That is why I keep healthy and strong. I go where there are people who laugh just as often as I can.' To meetings and later to City Hall he always rode his Kentucky mare. He could do his best thinking when in the saddle and going at a canter, he said. At City Hall he kept the mare in the fire station close by."

In 1875 he was elected to Congress and he made many speeches there. He fought for Chicago's lake front and for a canal to connect the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers and so bring his beloved South closer to the great Northwest. When some of his eastern opponents claimed that the project was not national, Harrison scornfully declared:

"Sir, the Mississippi and its feeders have a water line of nearly twelve thousand miles. They water soil capable of raising nearly every fruit and grain known to the world. The Lakes have a shore line of five thousand miles. Every foot of that shore except o Lake Superior is as rich as the valleys of Judea, the home of God's chosen people. The rugged shores of Superior are solid with minerals as pure as the product of the furnace. Mr. Speaker, all of this vast inland seaboard can be brought into union by a canal only thirty-six miles long, and yet our statesmen ask—is it national?"

Years later the project was put through. Chicago liked such speeches, so they sent him to Congress a second time; and on his coming home they made him mayor in 1879. Four times they reelected him. They were drawn to him by his honesty and his warm humanity and the splurge and color he threw into the city life. The people loved him. Businessmen liked him. Oh, their wives might smile at times at his dashing appearance on horseback, as two of them did when they told me about his gallant manners. But their husbands said he was good for business, a grand showman for this city he loved, that he ran it in ways that brought in trade and that, instead of hounding businessmen by ruinous rulings, he gave them a chance and played them along, and at the same time reduced their taxes by cutting down city expenses and graft.

There was plenty! Led by the Gray Wolves, the aldermen in City Hall had plunged the city so deep in debt that, when Harrison took office, there was $2,000,000 in city scrip in circulation in place of money. He struck at that. Promptly he ordered heavy cuts in police and fire departments. When Fire Marshal Mat Benner refused to reduce his force, Harrison dismissed him and in his place put Dennis Sweeney, to be known in the next twenty years as the best marshal the city had seen. The new mayor appointed a keen-eyed city controller, too, and set him to watching all accounts. As a real-estate man, Harrison knew how to get low prices for materials and see that building contractors did not skimp their work. So he built new waterworks and schools and a fine new city hall. He built new sidewalks and paved the downtown streets with blocks of stone instead of wood and forced the telegraph companies to run their disfiguring wires underground. All these and other improvements he made; and yet by the end of his third term he'd retired all the city scrip, and at the end of his fourth he left $2,665,000 in the treasury.

There was plenty he could not do, for the gang was still strong at City Hall. Through his power of appointment to fifteen thousand city jobs, he forced gang aldermen into line or rewarded others who had backed him in his fight against some grab. But in spite of that he had to close his eyes to a lot of skulduggery. With the Gray Wolves he lived in a state of armed neutrality. All pleasant enough on the surface, but they knew they couldn't push him too far, and he knew that

to get anything done he must play along with the machine. To put through his improvements he had to be reelected, and for that he needed the people behind him. He got them. He was no puritan but a big-hearted mixer, they said, with no high-falutin puritan talk about clamping down the lid on saloons. In all his political life, not even Harrison's enemies accused him of graft; but his years abroad had given him continental ideas about leaving the moralities of private lives to the people who led them. When he spoke at meetings, he often took along an old stuffed American eagle, set it up on a platform table and addressed to it his remarks on the right of every citizen to his personal liberty; and such eloquent outbursts brought loud cheers from voters who meant to keep their frontier city all wide open still.

"You can't legislate morality," said Harrison, "so leave it alone. Those who think that the morals of a great crowded city can be made pure by law are as much dreamers as the mad anarchists who imagine that crime can be destroyed by killing law."

So the haunts of vice remained; and for the plain people whom Harrison loved, theaters and variety shows, race tracks, beer gardens and saloons were allowed to keep open seven days and nights a week. The glittering palatial bars at the Palmer House and the Sherman House were crowded nearly all night long. I was only a small boy then, but years later not only Chicago's bars but its brothels and gambling joints were pictured to me by an old Chicago reporter, who back in the eighties and nineties had been a leading light in the festive group of journalists and politicians known as the White Chapel Club.

"When my father ran the Sherman House," he said, "all along the fifty-foot bar were pyramids of shining glasses, from high tumblers for milk punch to little stemmed thimbles for liqueurs. Decanters and bottles of various shapes and brilliant colors were reflected in the mirrors behind. Mr. Dooley, my old friend Pete Dunne, often dropped in there for a drink, and all over town were other bars that Pete and I used to know well. His favorite was McGarry's place, where McGarry supplied him with a lot of Mr. Dooley's philosophy. The Tremont House was a great place for north siders to stop in at for snifters on their way home. Most of the actors gathered there. Charlie Cavoroc from New Orleans ran a lovely little bar. Schlogel's on Wells Street had splendid wines, and Charlie Clayton's was famed for its bourbon. The hobos gathered at Hinky Dink's, with its bar nearly a hundred feet long. In the Black Winter of '94, six thousand saloons gave free lunches to sixty thousand jobless a day."

There were other attractions in town. Men and boys who loved the ring saw bloody battles of many rounds between champions from all over the land. On spring and summer afternoons thousands went out to the race tracks, made colorful by the four-horse coaches and tallyhos of the wealthy sporting men and their bustled ladies in picture hats under small pink parasols, in silks and laces and loaded with jewels, and with hampers of wine beneath the seats.

Back in the city every night men and boys poured into the gambling dives, with yellow gaslights blazing outside, on Gambler's Alley in Cullom Place and on that stretch on Randolph Street between State and Clark which ever since the sixties had been known as Hair-trigger Block. The "Senate" and other places there, where keno was the favorite game, had long been so popular that crowds had often blocked the streets to get in, to play and to watch the "black-leg" stars, the picturesque gamblers who by the war had been driven from the big river boats. Others now had taken their places at games that ran around the clock. In Harrison's time the richly decorated joint of Harry Varnell, with its two score of faro dealers and croupiers for roulette, ran all day long and all night. So did those of Ed Wagner, Curt Gunn and Billy Fagin's House of David, with its rich curtains and paintings of nudes, up over an innocent-looking hall, where a street sign announced a gospel service. To Fagin's place and that of Curt Gunn had often come in his early days Bet-a-million John W. Gates, for whom later Gunn arranged quiet little games of whist where $100,000 changed hands be-

tween Saturday night and Monday dawn.

Mike McDonald's big "palace" on Clark Street was the best known of them all. To old Mike, whose notoriety dated from the Civil War, was attributed the famous line: "A sucker is born every minute"—a line well supported by the flocks of young city clerks and farmer boys who lost everything but their shirts. Over Mike's big barroom were floor after floor where faro, roulette and all the table games were crowded day and night.

In vain reform mayors like Joe Medill had tried to close such places. Genial judges in gamblers' pay gave replevins and more than once issued warrants for the arrests of puritan raiders for breaking in. To hosannas from the gamblers the would-be reformers were grabbed by cops and triumphantly marched off to jail. Other raids by the puritans were met by gunmen and husky thugs who hurled them back onto the street. Some of the games were so openly run that on summer nights the whir of the wheel and droning voice of the croupier could be distinctly heard outside. A story is told of one corpulent cop standing under the open windows of one such place. A virtuous citizen asked him:

"What do you mean by standing out here when men are gambling right on your beat?"

"Gambling?" came the shocked reply. "Well! I must look into this!" And he strolled off up the street. By 1890 there were more than two thousand gambling joints, and gun fights were common there.

Many of the gambler kings had glamorous dames whom they drove in victorias through the town and set up as madams in houses of joy. From the late fifties, when Long John Wentworth had raided and burned the red-light shanties on The Sands on the north side, vice had moved and scattered west and south, as we have seen, to such regions as Conley's Patch and the tough sailor joint of the Bengal Tigress, and to Under the Willow, on Wells and Monroe, with its scarlet window shades and the question in gold—Why Not?—on each one. Since those days the trade had spread to more elegant places on Wells Street and the Levee, on State and Clark streets and Wabash Avenue farther south. Lou Harper's big house on Monroe Street had been one of the first of these; and on South Clark Street was Lizzie Allan, a most respectable-looking dame, who in the eighties was said to have cleared $250,000, in brilliantly lighted vivid rooms sumptuously furnished, with frescoed amoretti on the bedroom walls.

Nellie Costello, Victoria Shaw, Frankie Wright, French Em and Irene Woods ran other glamour palaces. One of the most notorious was Carrie Watson's gaudy house. Once a girl in Lou Harper's place, she had been set up in business by Al Smith, the gambler king, and now had sixty girls of her own and a bowling alley where gentleman patrons were supplied with freshly iced bottles of champagne for pins. Later, through the nineties and on into this century, on Dearborn Street near Twenty-second the two Everleigh sisters from the Old South, trained to the trade at Lizzie Allan's, ran their sumptuous house for Chicago's rich and kept it decorous and discreet. In their notorious Everleigh Club, the lady inmates in Paris gowns politely gossiped of music and books and the latest scandals in town, in the six reception rooms, each one named after a flower and decorated to match and scented by a fountain giving off the flower's perfume!

"You can't legislate morality," said Mayor Harrison, and he left such places alone. Many years later his son as mayor attempted a cleanup of the town. On the Levee, with big squads of detectives assisted by hundreds of volunteers smashing their way into brothels to the boom of Salvation Army drums, the owners and inmates were herded out into Black Marias and rushed to jails. But promptly the chiefs of the underworld proceeded to get them out by paying fines or giving bail, and ordered them all to put on their war paint and gaudiest togs and in the most respectable districts bang on doors and ask for lodgings. That afternoon a horde of such ladies, old and young, in silks and satins, some of them sober but more of them tight, paraded Michigan Avenue and other decorous thoroughfares, staggering up to bang on the doors of the rich and ask to be

taken in, because they'd been robbed of their homes by police!

"You can't legislate morality." No such spectacular battles with vice took place in Harrison Senior's time. Though decent citizens broke out now and then in clamor for reform, Chicago still roared on its way. Its people liked to read in the news the melodramatic stories from race tracks and gambling joints, red-light palaces and saloons. Though all men did not want 'such' places, there were plenty of them who did; and in the Irish, German, Swedish, Bohemian, Polish and Italian quarters, where two-thirds of the people lived, not only the men but their mothers and their sisters, daughters and wives wanted their beer gardens and cafés left open on Sundays, their one holiday.

And so they loved their tolerant mayor. On his rides to City Hall, he would go by roundabout routes, up and down streets and even through alleys, watching conditions, stopping to chat with the men and to ask the housewives if the city garbage carts were doing their job in the neighborhood. In that way he made countless friends, who would proudly tell their neighbors. "The mayor stopped and talked to me today." All this of course took a lot of his time, and to do it he had to start early, for he reached his office at nine and, except for a brief lunch, stayed working till five or six o'clock. He was in demand in the evenings, too, at public meetings all over the city. But Harrison loved it, he loved the whole job. Though a hunter and fisherman in the past, he had long ago given it up and rarely went away, for he said that Chicago was good enough for anyone the whole year 'round.

So he knew the whole town and the people knew him, not only at political rallies but at their celebrations and parties of all sorts and kinds. He carried with him two sets of cigars, the best in a pocket over his heart; the other he called campaign cigars. At meetings he enjoyed being heckled and was ready with quick replies. To Germans, French and Italians he could speak in their mother tongues; and before going to address Poles, Bohemians or Swedes, he'd memorize a line or two from some noted poem in their language and at the climax of his speech throw that at the crowd and get a big hand. Another little trick of his was to claim he had in his veins some blood of each race of listeners—and that went fine until one night he addressed a convention of Pullman porters, and their Republican chairman said to their guest, a Democrat:

"Your honor, the mayor, we hear you claim to have Irish blood and German and Italian and Swedish and Norwegian blood, so we hope you'll claim Negro blood tonight."

For a man from the Blue Grass that was a fast one, but Harrison did not bat an eye.

"My fellow citizens," he began, "I am sorry I cannot claim Negro blood, but at least I did the best I could to make up for what Nature had deprived me of. In my early infancy I nursed at the breast of my good colored mammy; and remembering how I loved her, I feel I am one with you tonight!"

He spoke to labor unions; and though not himself a radical, his attitude was tolerant. His paper the *Times* was tolerant, too, and so was young Victor Lawson's great new evening paper, the *News*. And the hard-pressed unions of those days loved both men on that account. Beginning in 1873, when hordes of jobless men had paraded Chicago's streets under banners inscribed Bread or Blood, natives had joined with foreign born in the Workingmen's Party and in such chaotic strikes that in one of them it took nearly ten thousand police and armed citizens to put down the rioting mobs. By the eighties when Harrison was mayor, the big employers, determined to keep wages low and set like granite against interference by labor in their one man shows, were using hundreds of hated "Pinks" to break the new unions and force down their clamor for an eight-hour day. Standing firm against such repression as dangerous and futile, Harrison told the unions they had a right to organize, and in strikes he refused police protection except when there was violence. Give men decent wages and hours and they'll be sensible, he said. Among their leaders were a few anarchists who in their speeches liked to speak of dynamite as a symbol of the people's power;

and when between '84 and '86 armies of men were thrown out of work and in riots and strikes dozens were shot by the "Pinks" and police, anarchists shouted to the crowds, and a little anarchist circular urged the workers:

"Rise, oh, Hercules, in your might! If you are men, destroy the hideous monster that seeks to destroy you! To arms! We call you to arms!"

The employers were quick to demand that such leaders be put in jail. But Carter Harrison still stood firm.

"I know the working people," he said, "and the masses will never follow such leaders. Let the idiots bluster on, as I've seen them do over in London in Hyde Park. Both there and in this country, freedom of speech never did any harm." To stop it and imprison such men would give a dangerous boom to their cause. They were only a handful now. And when in May, 1886, they called a mass meeting in the Haymarket for the purpose of launching a general strike, his view was supported by the fact that, in spite of all the newspaper warnings about "this call to revolution," only two thousand workingmen gathered there. Keeping his police reserves at a precinct station close by, Harrison went to the Haymarket and mingled in the crowd. While listening to the speeches, he kept striking matches in the dark in order to relight his cigar; and when warned by a friend to stop or he would be noticed, he replied:

"I want them to notice me. I want them to know their mayor is here."

In the speeches no violence was urged; and when a drizzling rain set in, the crowd began to melt away. He went to the police station close by and told the inspector that the meeting was a washout and that the reserves might as well be sent back. Then he himself went home to bed. But the inspector left in charge, who in the past had more than once been called on the mat for rash work in time of strikes, on hearing from one of his stool pigeons that the last anarchist speaker had urged that the law "be throttled, killed and stabbed," marched his two hundred cops to the Haymarket and there called upon the crowd to disperse. A few seconds later, as though in reply, the first bomb ever thrown in this country exploded in the dense ranks of police, killing one and wounding seventy-three. The other police in a panic opened fire blindly in the dark, wounding some more of their fellow cops and shooting sixty workers down.

In the hysterical uproar which followed in the next few days, with the well-to-do and respectables scared to death by this act of the mob, all radical centers were raided by police, who made hundreds of arrests. Eight anarchist leaders were brought to trial, and four were hanged as inciters to crime. In the pressure employed by the wealthy on the judge who conducted the trial and on the city government, a group of Chicago's leading magnates led by Marshall Field called on the mayor to demand that he now repress free speech. And when Harrison replied that he did not believe the anarchists had any real part in the bomb throwing and that he was still against such suppression of the peoples' rights, Marshall Field said sternly:

"Mr. Harrison, we represent great interests in Chicago."

"Mr. Field," replied the mayor, "any poor man owning a single small cottage as his sole possession has the same interest in Chicago as its richest citizen."

Good political capital? Yes. But also sound democracy.

And so the people loved their mayor, the rich Kentucky aristocrat; and even big business, when not in a panic, liked him for all he had done for their town. But next year he dropped out of public life and in 1887 made a grand tour of the world, through Europe out to the Far East. He pictured his trip in a colorful book which he called *A Race with the Sun* "I love to watch new people," he wrote. "I visit cities more to look at and into their peoples than into their buildings and their shows." And always he knew how to make friends. When riding in the mountains of northern India, he made a hit with the chief of a pass by drawing on a smooth boulder a rough chart and then making a tiny dot, and indicating by signs that the mountain chief was raja of all the region in the chart while he himself was raja only of the dot, Chicago.

Raja he certainly was at home in the last dramatic years of his life. For when in 1890 Congress was deciding where the Columbian Exposition should be, Harrison fought for the city he loved; and when it was chosen as the site, he was one of those who rallied all Chicago in support of the Fair. So once again the town made him mayor.

"C.H. is a grand showman," they said. "He'll give the whole show a color and dash and magnificence that will bring in business and make it a booming success."

So he did. All through the long rush of preparations he took the lead in staging immense mass meetings, a grand ball and glittering parades that made the Fair front-page news in newspapers all over the land; and upon the opening day in 1893 he rode in the procession of President Grover Cleveland and his cabinet, a duke and duchess and marquis from Spain, and a score of other notables. As the line of jingling carriages, on their way to the stately Court of Honor and the vast exhibit halls, passed through the boisterous Midway Plaisance, the fakirs, circus freaks and hootchy-kootchy dancers from the sideshows cheered, Africans yelled and tomtoms beat and lions were prodded to roar their applause. On they went to the greater show; and as Harrison waved his broad-brimmed hat to the half million people waiting there, it was one of the happiest days of his life.

Through the summer he was constantly there, speaking or presiding at meetings and going all about the grounds to see every exhibit and show. He fought down all efforts of puritans for Sunday closing of the Fair; and as he went about, he drew attention everywhere. "That's Carter Harrison," people said. His reputation had spread so far that people from all over the West, realtors, merchants, concessionaires, hotel keepers, showmen, gamblers, pickpockets and confidence men had come rushing to Chicago, each hungry for a share of the wealth to be gained with Carter Harrison running a wide-open Fair and a wide-open town. Chicago's noted writer Lloyd Lewis tells of a village storekeeper who said to his friend:

"If old Carter Harrison is to be mayor, I'll go to Chicago and the Fair, but I'm go'n' to wear nothin' but tights and carry a knife between my teeth and a pistol in each hand."

But though such visitors, no doubt, found plenty of such excitement in Chicago, they missed it at the Fair, for out in the "White City" Harrison kept a vigilant watch for any signs of disorder or graft. He had given strict orders to his police to clap the lid down tight on crime. Those orders were not quite obeyed, for years later I heard from an old ex-crook that the police inspector in charge sold to him and his pal the pickpocket monopoly. But even he held them strictly to only a paltry hundred dollars a day, a record of policing most remarkable when compared to that at other big fairs of the kind. And as crowds increased till this nation and Europe rang with praises of the show, Harrison's pride in his city grew and rose to a climax in the speech he made on American Cities Day in October near the close of the Fair. He spoke to a crowd of nearly a hundred thousand, but he reached them all, for his voice was grand for the open air.

"Look at it now!" he exclaimed. "These buildings looking like marble, this dream of poets of centuries, have sprung up in only two years from the marsh! . . . Genius is but audacity, and the audacity of the wild and woolly West and of Chicago has chosen a star, and has looked upward to it, and knows nothing that it will not attempt, and thus far has found nothing that it cannot achieve! . . . This World's Fair has been the greatest educator the world has known. It was the audacity of genius that imagined this thing. It was the pluck of our people, congregated here from all this Union and all nationalities of the earth, speaking all languages, drawing their inspiration from three thousand miles of territory from east to west and from yonder green lake on the north to the Gulf on the south—our people, who have never yet found failure! . . . When the Great Fire swept over our city and laid it in ashes in twenty-four hours, then the world said: 'Chicago and her boasting are gone forever!' But Chicago said: 'We will rebuild the city better than ever!' And she has done it. The World's Fair is a mighty object lesson; but my

friends, come out of this White City into our Black City. It was nothing but a swamp when I was born into the world. What is it now? The second city in America! . . . I intend to live for more than half a century still, and at the end of that time London will be trembling lest Chicago shall surpass her and New York will say: 'Let us go to the metropolis of America!' "

After this last outburst of that warm western eloquence, that impassioned Americanism and boundless local pride which he had embodied all his life, he left the Fair and went back to his home. He found his family still away. In the empty house the doorbell rang; and when the weary triumphant old mayor went to the door and opened it, a crazy lad named Prendergast, with a persecution mania, jumped inside and shot him down!

"When I heard the news and rushed home," said his son, "I found crowds already around our house trying to lynch the murderer. The police had got him safely away, but the crowds didn't know, and they grew and grew till we had to call more police, so wild was the grief and clamor for vengeance by people of every kind who loved my father like their own. For the greater part of two days and nights Chicago's people passed slowly by the bier where he lay at City Hall. In the funeral procession next day, behind the hearse walked Father's old mare, with stirrups crossed on her empty saddle. We kept her out on the farm after that, and nobody ever rode her again."

No mayor will ever ride again through the streets of the city day and night, making friends with the people all over town. For Carter Harrison belonged to a warm grandiloquent personal city, in an age that will never be seen any more.

Customs of the Germans[1]

CORNELIUS TACITUS

THE GERMANS, it is well known, have no regular cities; nor do they allow a continuity of houses. They dwell in separate habitations, dispersed up and down as a grove, a meadow, or a fountain happens to invite. They have villages, but not with a series of connected buildings. Every tenement stands detached, with a vacant piece of ground round it, either to prevent accidents by fire, or for want of skill in the art of building. They do not know the use of mortar or of tiles. They build with rude materials, regardless of beauty, order, and proportion. Particular parts are covered over with a kind of earth so smooth and shining that the natural veins have some resemblance to the lights and shades of painting. Besides these habitations they have a number of subterranean caves, dug by their own labor and carefully covered over with dung: in winter their retreat from cold and the repository of their corn. In those recesses they not only find a shelter from the rigor of the season, but in times of foreign invasion their effects are safely concealed. The enemy lays waste the open country, but the hidden treasure escapes the general ravage; safe in its obscurity, or because the search would be attended with too much trouble.

The clothing in use is a loose mantle, made fast with a clasp, or, when they cannot be had, with a thorn. With only this on they loiter away whole days by the fire-side. The rich wear a more pretentious garment, not however displayed and flowing like the Parthians or the people of Sarmatia, but drawn so tight that the form of the limbs is palpably expressed. The skins of wild animals are also much in use. Near the frontier, on the borders of the Rhine, the inhabitants wear them, but are wholly indifferent as to the choice. The people who live in the more remote regions near the northern seas, and who have

[1] From *Germania* as translated by Arthur Murphy.

not acquired by commerce a taste for new-fashioned apparel, are more careful in their selection. They choose particular beasts, and having stripped off the furs clothe themselves with the spoil, decorated with parti-colored spots, or fragments taken from the skins of fish that swim the ocean as yet unexplored by the Romans. In point of dress there is no distinction between the sexes, except that the garment of the women is frequently made of linen, adorned with purple spots, but without sleeves, leaving the arms and part of the bosom uncovered.

Marriage is considered as a strict and sacred institution. In the national character there is nothing so truly commendable. To be contented with one wife is peculiar to the Germans. They differ in this respect from all other savage nations. There are indeed a few instances of polygamy; not however the effect of loose desire, but occasioned by the ambition of various families, who court the alliance of a chief distinguished by the nobility of his rank and character. The bride brings no portion, but receives a dowry from her husband. In the presence of her parents and relations he makes a tender of part of his wealth; if accepted, the match is approved. In the choice of the presents female vanity is not consulted. There are no frivolous trinkets to adorn the future bride. The whole fortune consists of oxen, a caparisoned horse, a shield, a spear, and a sword. She in return delivers a present of arms, and by this exchange of gifts the marriage is concluded. This is the nuptial ceremony; this the bond of union; these their hymeneal gods. Lest the wife should think that her sex exempts her from the rigor of the severest virtue and the toils of war, she is informed of her duty by the marriage ceremony; and thence she learns that she is received by her husband to be his partner in toil and danger, to dare with him in war, and suffer with him in peace. The oxen yoked, the horse accoutred, and the arms given on the occasion inculcate this lesson; and thus she is prepared to live, and thus to die. These are the terms of their union: she receives her armor as a sacred treasure, to be preserved inviolate, and transmitted with honor to her sons, a portion for their wives, and from them going down to her grandchildren.

In consequence of these manners the married state is a life of affection and female constancy. The virtue of the woman is guarded from seduction: no public spectacles to seduce her, no banquets to inflame her passions, no baits of pleasure to disarm her virtue. The art of intriguing by clandestine letters is unknown to both sexes. Populous as the country is, adultery is rarely heard of; when detected, the punishment is instant, and inflicted by the husband. He cuts off the hair of his guilty wife, and having assembled her relations expels her naked from his house, pursuing her with stripes through the village. To public loss of honor no favor is shown. She may possess beauty, youth, and riches; but a husband she can never obtain. Vice is not treated by the Germans as a subject of raillery, nor is the profligacy of corrupting and being corrupted called the fashion of the age. By the practice of some states,[2] female virtue is advanced to still higher perfection: with them none but virgins marry. When the bride has fixed her choice, her hopes of matrimony are closed for life. With one husband, as with one life, one mind, one body, every woman is satisfied In him her happiness is centered, her desires find their limit, and the result is not only affection for the husband's person, but reverence for the married state. To set limits to population by rearing up only a certain number of children, and destroying the rest, is accounted a flagitious crime. Among the savages of Germany virtuous manners operate more than good laws in other countries.

In every family the children are reared in filth. They run about naked, and in time grow up to that strength and size of limb which we behold with wonder. The infant is nourished at the mother's breast, not turned over to nurses and to servants. No distinction is made between the future chieftain and the infant son of a common slave. On the same ground and mixed with the same cattle they pass their days, till the age of manhood draws the line of separation, and early valor shows

[2] I.e., German States.

the person of free birth. It is generally late before their young men come to manhood, nor are the virgins married too soon. Both parties wait to attain their full growth. In due time the match is made, and the children of the marriage have the constitution of their parents. The uncle by the mother's side regards his nephews with an affection not at all inferior to that of their father. With some the relation of the sister's children to their maternal uncle is held to be the strongest tie of consanguinity, so that in demanding hostages that line of kindred is preferred as the most endearing objects of the family and, consequently, the most tender pledges. The son is always heir to his father. Last wills and testaments are not in use. In case of failure of issue, the brothers of the deceased are next in succession, or else the paternal or maternal uncles. A numerous train of relations is the comfort and honor of old age. To live without raising heirs to yourself is no advantage in Germany.

To adopt the quarrels as well as the friendships of your parents and relations is held to be an indispensable duty. In their resentments, however, they are not implacable. Injuries are adjusted by a settled measure of compensation. Atonement is made for homicide by a certain number of cattle, and by that satisfaction the whole family is appeased; a happy regulation and conducive to the public interest, since it serves to curb that spirit of revenge which is the natural result of liberty in the excess. Hospitality and convivial pleasure are nowhere else so liberally enjoyed. To refuse admittance to a guest were an outrage against humanity. The master of the house welcomes every stranger, and regales him to the best of his ability. If his stock falls short, he becomes a visitor to his neighbor, and conducts his new acquaintance to a more plentiful table. They do not wait to be invited, nor is this of any consequence, since a cordial reception is always certain. Between an intimate and an entire stranger no distinction is made. The law of hospitality is the same. The departing guest receives as a present whatever he desires, and the host retaliates by asking with the same freedom. A German delights in the gifts which he receives, yet by bestowing he imputes nothing to you as a favor, and for what he receives he acknowledges no obligation.

In this manner the Germans pride themselves on their frankness and generosity. Their hours of rest are protracted to broad daylight. As soon as they rise, they bathe, generally, on account of the intense severity of the climate, in warm water. They then betake themselves of their meal, each on a separate seat and at his own table. Having finished their repast they proceed completely armed to the despatch of business, and frequently to a convivial meeting. To devote both day and night to deep drinking is a disgrace to no man. Disputes, as will be the case with people in liquor, frequently arise, and are seldom confined to opprobrious language. The quarrel generally ends in a scene of blood. Important subjects, such as the reconciliation of enemies, the forming of family alliances, the election of chiefs, and even peace and war, are generally canvassed in their carousing festivals. The convivial moment, according to their notion, is the true season for business, when the mind opens itself in plain simplicity, or grows warm with bold and noble ideas. Strangers to artifice and knowing no refinement, they tell their sentiments without disguise. The pleasure of the table expands their hearts and calls forth every secret. On the following day the subject of debate is again taken into consideration, and thus two different periods of time have their distinct uses: when warm, they debate; when cool, they decide.

Their beverage is a liquor drawn from barley or from wheat, and, like the juice of the grape, fermented to a spirit. The settlers on the banks of the Rhine provide themselves with wine. Their food is of the simplest kind: wild apples, the flesh of an animal recently killed, or coagulated milk. Without skill in cookery, or without seasoning to stimulate the palate, they eat to satisfy nature. But they do not drink merely to quench their thirst. Indulge their love of liquor to the excess which they require, and you need not employ the terror of your arms; their own vices will subdue them.

Their public spectacles boast of no variety. They have but one sort, and that they repeat at all their meetings. A band of young men make it their pastime to dance entirely naked amidst pointed swords and javelins. By constant exercise this kind of exhibition has become an art, and art has taught them to perform with grace and elegance. Their talents, however, are not let out for hire. Though some danger attends the practice, the pleasure of the spectator is their only recompense. In the character of a German there is nothing so remarkable as his passion for play. Without the excuse of liquor, strange as it may seem, in their cool and sober moments they have recourse to dice, as to a serious and regular business, with the most desperate spirit committing their whole substance to chance, and when they have lost their all, putting their liberty and even their persons on the last hazard of the die! The loser yields himself to slavery. Young, robust, and valiant, he submits to be chained, and even exposed to sale. Such is the effect of a ruinous and inveterate habit. They are victims to folly, and they call themselves men of honor. The winner is always in a hurry to barter away the slaves acquired by success at play; he is ashamed of his victory, and therefore puts away the remembrance of it as soon as possible.

The slaves in general are not arranged at their several employments in the household affairs, as is the practice at Rome. Each has his separate habitation, and his own establishment to manage. The master considers him as an agrarian dependent, who is obliged to furnish a certain quantity of grain, cattle, or wearing apparel. The slave obeys, and the state of servitude extends no further. All domestic affairs are managed by the master's wife and children. To punish a slave with stripes, to load him with chains or condemn him to hard labor is unusual. It is true that slaves are sometimes put to death, not under color of justice, or of any authority vested in the master, but in transport of passion, in a fit of rage, as is often the case in a sudden affray; but it is also true that this species of homicide passes with impunity. The freed men are not of much higher consideration than the actual slaves; they obtain no rank in the master's family, and, if we except the parts of Germany where monarchy is established, they never figure on the stage of public business. In despotic governments they rise above the men of ingenuous birth, and even eclipse the whole body of the nobles. In other states the subordination of the freedmen is a proof of public liberty.

The practice of placing money at interest and reaping the profits of usury is unknown in Germany; and that happy ignorance is a better preventive of the evil than a code of prohibitory laws. In cultivating the soil they do not settle on one spot, but shift from place to place. The state or community takes possession of a certain tract proportioned to its number of hands; allotments are afterwards made to individuals according to their rank and dignity. In so extensive a country, where there is no want of land, the partition is easily made. The ground tilled in one year lies fallow the next, and a sufficient quantity always remains, the labor of the people being by no means adequate to the extent or fertility of the soil. Nor have they the skill to make orchard plantations, to enclose the meadow grounds, or to lay out and water gardens. From the earth they demand nothing but grain. Hence their year is not, as with the Romans, divided into four seasons. They have distinct ideas of winter, spring, and summer, and their language has terms for each; but they neither know the blessings nor the name of autumn.

Their funerals have neither pomp nor vain ambition. When the bodies of illustrious men are to be burned, they choose a particular kind of wood for the purpose, and have no other attention. The funeral pile is neither strewed with garments nor enriched with fragrant spices. The arms of the deceased are committed to the flames, and sometimes his horse. A mound of turf is raised to his memory; and this, in their opinion, is a better sepulchre than those structures of labored grandeur which display the weakness of human vanity, and are at best a burden to the dead. Tears and lamentations are soon at an end, but their regret does not so easily wear away. To grieve for the departed is comely in the softer sex. The women weep for their friends; the men remember them.

The Spouter-Inn[1]

HERMAN MELVILLE

NOW HAVING a night, a day, and still another night, following before me in New Bedford, ere I could embark for my destined port, it became a matter of concernment where I was to eat and sleep meanwhile. It was a very dubious-looking, nay, a very dark and dismal night, bitingly cold and cheerless. I knew no one in the place. With anxious grapnels I had sounded my pockets, and only brought up a few pieces of silver. "So, wherever you go, Ishmael," said I to myself as I stood in the middle of a dreary street shouldering my bag, and comparing the gloom towards the north with the darkness towards the south—"wherever in your wisdom you may conclude to lodge for the night, my dear Ishmael, be sure to inquire the price, and don't be too particular."

With halting steps I paced the streets, and passed the sign of "The Crossed Harpoons" —but it looked too expensive and jolly there. Farther on, from the bright red windows of the "Sword-Fish Inn," there came such fervent rays, that it seemed to have melted the packed snow and ice from before the house, for everywhere else the congealed frost lay ten inches thick in a hard, asphaltic pavement,—rather weary for me, when I struck my foot against the flinty projections, because from hard, remorseless service the soles of my boots were in a most miserable plight. "Too expensive and jolly, again," thought I, pausing one moment to watch the broad glare in the street, and hear the sounds of the tinkling glasses within. "But go on, Ishmael," said I at last; "don't you hear? get away from before the door; your patched boots are stopping the way." So on I went. I now by instinct followed the streets that took me waterward, for there, doubtless, were the cheapest, if not the cheeriest inns.

Such dreary streets! blocks of blackness, not houses, on either hand, and here and there a candle, like a candle moving about in a tomb. At this hour of the night, of the last day of the week, that quarter of the town proved all but deserted. But presently I came to a smoky light proceeding from a low, wide building, the door of which stood invitingly open. It had a careless look, as if it were meant for the uses of the public; so, entering, the first thing I did was to stumble over an ashbox in the porch. "Ha!" thought I, "ha," as the flying particles almost choked me, "are these ashes from that destroyed city, Gomorrah? But 'The Crossed Harpoons,' and 'The Sword-Fish'?—this, then, must needs be the sign of 'The Trap.'" However, I picked myself up and hearing a loud voice within, pushed on and opened a second, interior door.

It seemed the great Black Parliament sitting in Tophet. A hundred black faces turned round in their rows to peer; and beyond, a black Angel of Doom was beating a book in a pulpit. It was a negro church; and the preacher's text was about the blackness of darkness, and the weeping and wailing and teeth-gnashing there. "Ha, Ishmael," muttered I, backing out, "wretched entertainment at the sign of 'The Trap'!"

Moving on, I at last came to a dim sort of outhanging light not far from the docks, and heard a forlorn creaking in the air, and looking up, saw a swinging sign over the door with a white painting upon it, faintly representing a tall straight jet of misty spray, and these words underneath—"The Spouter-Inn:—Peter Coffin."

"Coffin?—Spouter?—Rather ominous in that particular connection," thought I. "But it is a common name in Nantucket, they say, and I suppose this Peter here is an emigrant from there." As the light looked so dim, and the place, for the time, looked quiet enough, and the dilapidated little wooden house itself looked as if it might have been carted

[1] From *Moby Dick or The White Whale.*

here from the ruins of some burnt district, and as the swinging sign had a poverty-stricken sort of creak to it, I thought that here was the very spot for cheap lodgings, and the best of pea coffee.

It was a queer sort of place—a gable-ended old house, one side palsied as it were, and leaning over sadly. It stood on a sharp bleak corner, where that tempestuous wind Euroclydon kept up a worse howling than ever it did about St. Paul's tossed craft. Euroclydon, nevertheless, is a mighty pleasant zephyr to any one indoors, with his feet on the hob quietly toasting for bed. "In judging of that tempestuous wind called Euroclydon," says an old writer—of whose works I possess the only copy extant—"it maketh a marvellous difference, whether thou lookest out at it from a glass window where the frost is all on the outside, or whether thou observest it from that sashless window, where the frost is on both sides, and of which the wight Death is the only glazier." True enough, thought I, as this passage occurred to my mind—old black-letter, thou reasonest well. Yes, these eyes are windows, and this body of mine is the house. What a pity they didn't stop up the chinks and the crannies though, and thrust in a little lint here and there. But it's too late to make any improvements now. . . . What a fine frosty night; how Orion glitters; what northern lights! Let them talk of their oriental summer climes of everlasting conservatories; give me the privilege of making my own summer with my own coals.

. . . . .

Entering that gabled-ended Spouter-Inn, you found yourself in a wide, low, straggling entry with old-fashioned wainscots, reminding one of the bulwarks of some condemned old craft. On one side hung a very large oil-painting so thoroughly besmoked, and every way defaced, that in the unequal cross-lights by which you viewed it, it was only by diligent study and a series of systematic visits to it, and careful inquiry of the neighbours, that you could any way arrive at an understanding of its purpose. Such unaccountable masses of shades and shadows, that at first you almost thought some ambitious young artist in the time of the New England hags, had endeavoured to delineate chaos bewitched. But by dint of much and earnest contemplation, and oft repeated ponderings, and especially by throwing open the little window towards the back of the entry, you at last come to the conclusion that such an idea, however wild, might not be altogether unwarranted.

But what most puzzled and confounded you was a long, limber, portentous, black mass of something hovering in the centre of the picture over three blue, dim, perpendicular lines floating in a nameless yeast. A boggy, soggy, squitchy picture truly, enough to drive a nervous man distracted. Yet was there a sort of indefinite, half-attained, unimaginable sublimity about it that fairly froze you to it, till you involuntarily took an oath with yourself to find out what that marvellous painting meant. Ever and anon a bright, but, alas! deceptive idea would dart you through.—It's the Black Sea in a midnight gale.—It's the unnatural combat of the four primal elements.—It's a blasted heath.—It's a Hyperborean winter scene.—It's the breaking-up of the ice-bound stream of Time. But at least all these fancies yielded to that one portentous something in the picture's midst. *That* once found out, and all the rest were plain. But stop; does it not bear a faint resemblance to a gigantic fish? even the great leviathan himself?

In fact, the artist's design seemed this: a final theory of my own, partly based upon the aggregated opinions of many aged persons with whom I conversed upon the subject. The picture represents a Cape-Horner in a great hurricane; the half-foundered ship weltering there with its three dismantled masts alone visible; and an exasperated whale, purposing to spring clean over the craft, is in the enormous act of impaling himself upon the three mastheads.

The opposite wall of this entry was hung all over with a heathenish array of monstrous clubs and spears. Some were thickly set with glittering teeth resembling ivory saws; others were tufted with knots of human

hair; and one was sickle-shaped, with a vast handle sweeping round like the segment made in the new-mown grass by a long-armed mower. You shuddered as you gazed, and wondered what monstrous cannibal and savage could ever have gone a death-harvesting with such a hacking, horrifying implement. Mixed with these were rusty old whaling lances and harpoons all broken and deformed. Some were storied weapons. With this once long lance, now wildly elbowed, fifty years ago did Nathan Swain kill fifteen whales between a sunrise and a sunset. And that harpoon—so like a corkscrew now—was flung in Javan seas, and run away with by a whale, years afterwards slain off the Cape of Blanco. The original iron entered nigh the tail, and, like a restless needle sojourning in the body of a man, travelled full forty feet, and at last was found imbedded in the hump.

Crossing this dusky entry, and on through yon low-arched way—cut through what in old times must have been a great central chimney with fireplaces all round—you enter the public room. A still duskier place is this, with such low ponderous beams above, and such old wrinkled planks beneath, that you would almost fancy you trod some old craft's cockpits, especially of such a howling night, when this corner-anchored old ark rocked so furiously. On one side stood a long, low, shelf-like table covered with cracked glass-cases, filled with dusty rarities, gathered from this wide world's remotest nooks. Projecting from the farther angle of the room stands a dark-looking den—the bar—a rude attempt at a right whale's head. Be that how it may, there stands the vast arched bone of the whale's jaw, so wide, a coach might almost drive beneath it. Within are shabby shelves, ranged round with old decanters, bottles, flasks; and in those jaws of swift destruction, like another cursed Jonah (by which name indeed they call him) bustles a little withered old man, who, for their money, dearly sells the sailors deliriums and death.

Abominable are the tumblers into which he pours his poison. Though true cylinders without, within, the villainous green goggling glasses deceitfully tapered downwards to a cheating bottom. Parallel meridians rudely pecked into the glass, surround these foot-pads' goblets. Fill to *this* mark, and your charge is but a penny; to *this* a penny more; and so on to the full glass—the Cape Horn measure, which you may gulp down for a shilling.

Upon entering the place I found a number of young seamen gathered about a table, examining by a dim light divers specimens of *skrimshander*. I sought the landlord, and telling him I desired to be accommodated with a room, received for answer that his house was full—not a bed unoccupied. "But avast," he added, tapping his forehead, "you haint no objections to sharing a harpooneer's blanket, have ye? I s'pose you are goin' a-whalin', so you'd better get used to that sort of thing."

I told him that I never liked to sleep two in a bed; that if I should ever do so, it would depend upon who the harpooneer might be, and that if he (the landlord) really had no other place for me, and the harpooneer was not decidedly objectionable, why, rather than wander further about a strange town on so bitter a night, I would put up with the half of any decent man's blanket.

"I thought so. All right; take a seat. Supper?—you want supper? Supper'll be ready directly."

I sat down on an old wooden settle, carved all over like a bench on the Battery. At one end a ruminating tar was still further adorning it with his jack-knife, stooping over and diligently working away at the space between his legs. He was trying his hand at a ship under full sail, but he didn't make much headway, I thought.

At last some four or five of us were summoned to our meal in an adjoining room. It was cold as Iceland—no fire at all—the landlord said he couldn't afford it. Nothing but two dismal tallow candles, each in a winding-sheet. We were fain to button up our monkey-jackets, and hold to our lips cups of scalding tea with our half-frozen fingers. But the fare was of the most substantial kind—not only meat and potatoes, but dumplings; good heavens! dumplings for supper! One

young fellow in a green box coat, addressed himself to these dumplings in a most direful manner.

"My boy," said the landlord, "you'll have the nightmare to a dead sartainty."

"Landlord," I whispered, "that ain't the harpooneer, is it?"

"Oh, no," said he, looking a sort of diabolically funny, "the harpooneer is a dark-complexioned chap. He never eats dumplings, he don't—he eats nothing but steaks, and likes 'em rare."

"The devil he does," says I. "Where is that harpooneer? Is he here?"

"He'll be here afore long," was the answer.

I could not help it, but I began to feel suspicious of this "dark-complexioned" harpooneer. At any rate, I made up my mind that if it so turned out that we should sleep together, he must undress and get into bed before I did.

Supper over, the company went back to the bar-room, when, knowing not what else to do with myself, I resolved to spend the rest of the evening as a looker-on.

Presently a rioting noise was heard without. Starting up, the landlord cried, "That's the *Grampus's* crew. I seed her reported in the offing this morning; a three years' voyage, and a full ship. Hurrah, boys; now we'll have the latest news from the Feejees."

A tramping of sea boots was heard in the entry; the door was flung open, and in rolled a wild set of mariners enough. Enveloped in their shaggy watchcoats, and with their heads muffled in woollen comforters, all bedarned and ragged, and their beards stiff with icicles, they seemed an eruption of bears from Labrador. They had just landed from their boat, and this was the first house they entered. No wonder, then, that they made a straight wake for the whale's mouth—the bar—when the wrinkled little old Jonah, there officiating, soon poured them out brimmers all round. One complained of a bad cold in his head, upon which the old fellow mixed him a pitch-like potion of gin and molasses which he swore was a sovereign cure for all colds and catarrhs whatsoever, never mind of how long standing, or whether caught off the coast of Labrador, or on the weather side of an ice-island.

The liquor soon mounted into their heads, as it generally does even with the arrantest topers newly landed from sea, and they began capering about most obstreperously.

I observed, however, that one of them held somewhat aloof, and though he seemed desirous not to spoil the hilarity of his shipmates by his own sober face, yet upon the whole he refrained from making as much noise as the rest. This man interested me at once; and since the sea-gods had ordained that he should soon become my shipmate (though but a sleeping-partner one, so far as this narrative is concerned), I will here venture upon a little description of him. He stood full six feet in height, with noble shoulders, and a chest like a coffer-dam. I have seldom seen such brawn in a man. His face was deeply brown and burnt, making his white teeth dazzling by the contrast; while in the deep shadows of his eyes floated some reminiscences that did not seem to give him much joy. His voice at once announced that he was a Southerner, and from his fine stature, I thought he must be one of those tall mountaineers from the Alleghanian Ridge in Virginia. When the revelry of his companions had mounted to its height, this man slipped away unobserved, and I saw no more of him till he became my comrade on the sea. In a few minutes, however, he was missed by his shipmates, and being, it seems, for some reason a huge favourite with them, they raised a cry of "Bulkington! Bulkington! where's Bulkington?" and darted out of the house in pursuit of him.

Walden[1]

E. B. WHITE

MISS NIMS, take a letter to Henry David Thoreau. Dear Henry: I thought of you the other afternoon as I was approaching Concord doing fifty on Route 62. That is a high speed at which to hold a philosopher in one's mind, but in this century we are a nimble bunch.

On one of the lawns in the outskirts of the village a woman was cutting the grass with a motorized lawn mower. What made me think of you was that the machine had rather got away from her, although she was game enough, and in the brief glimpse I had of the scene it appeared to me that the lawn was mowing the lady. She kept a tight grip on the handles, which throbbed violently with every explosion of the one-cylinder motor, and as she sheered around bushes and lurched along at a reluctant trot behind her impetuous servant, she looked like a puppy who had grabbed something that was too much for him. Concord hasn't changed much, Henry, the farm implements and the animals still have the upper hand.

I may as well admit that I was journeying to Concord with the deliberate intention of visiting your woods, for although I have never knelt at the grave of a philosopher nor placed wreaths on moldy poets, and have often gone a mile out of my way to avoid some place of historical interest, I have always wanted to see Walden Pond. The account which you left of your sojourn there is, you will be amused to learn, a document of increasing pertinence, each year it seems to gain a little headway, as the world loses ground. We may all be transcendental yet, whether we like it or not. As our common complexities increase, any tale of individual simplicity (and yours is the best written and the cockiest) acquires a new fascination; as our goods accumulate, but not our well-being, your report of an existence without material adornment takes on a certain awkward credibilty.

My purpose in going to Walden Pond, like yours, was not to live cheaply or to live dearly there, but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles. Approaching Concord, doing forty, doing forty-five, doing fifty, the steering wheel held snug in my palms, the highway held grimly in my vision, the crown of the road now serving me (on the righthand curves), now defeating me (on the lefthand curves), I began to rouse myself from the stupefaction which a day's motor journey induces. It was a delicious evening, Henry, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore, if I may coin a phrase. Fields were richly brown where the harrow, drawn by the stripped Ford, had lately sunk its teeth; pastures were green; and overhead the sky had that same everlasting great look which you will find on Page 144 of the Oxford pocket edition. I could feel the road entering me, through tire, wheel, spring, and cushion; shall I not have intelligence with earth too? Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mold myself?—a man of infinite horsepower, yet partly leaves.

Stay with me on 62 and it will take you into Concord. As I say, it was a delicious evening. The snake had come forth to die in a bloody S on the highway, the wheel upon its head, its bowels flat now and exposed. The turtle had come up too to cross the road and die in the attempt, its hard shell smashed under the rubber blow, its intestinal yearning (for the other side of the road) forever squashed. There was a sign by the wayside which announced that the road had a "cotton surface." You wouldn't know what that is, but neither, for that matter, did I. There is a cryptic ingredient in many of our modern

[1] From *One Man's Meat* by E. B. White. Copyright, 1939, by E. B. White. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers, publishers.

improvements—we are awed and pleased without knowing quite what we are enjoying. It is something to be traveling on a road with a cotton surface.

The civilization round Concord to-day is an odd distillation of city, village, farm, and manor. The houses, yards, fields look not quite suburban, not quite rural. Under the bronze beech and the blue spruce of the departed baron grazes the milch goat of the heirs. Under the porte-cochère stands the reconditioned station wagon; under the grape arbor sit the puppies for sale. (But why do men degenerate ever? What makes families run out?)

It was June and everywhere June was publishing her immemorial stanza; in the lilacs, in the syringa, in the freshly edged paths and the sweetness of moist beloved gardens, and the little wire wickets that preserve the tulips' front. Farmers were already moving the fruits of their toil into their yards, arranging the rhubarb, the asparagus, the strictly fresh eggs on the painted stands under the little shed roofs with the patent shingles. And though it was almost a hundred years since you had taken your ax and started cutting out your home on Walden Pond, I was interested to observe that the philosophical spirit was still alive in Massachusetts: in the center of a vacant lot some boys were assembling the framework of a rude shelter, their whole mind and skill concentrated in the rather inauspicious helter-skeleton of studs and rafters. They too were escaping from town, to live naturally, in a rich blend of savagery and philosophy.

That evening, after supper at the inn, I strolled out into the twilight to dream my shapeless transcendental dreams and see that the car was locked up for the night (first open the right front door, then reach over, straining, and pull up the handles of the left rear and the left front till you hear the click, then the handle of the right rear, then shut the right front but open it again, remembering that the key is still in the ignition switch, remove the key, shut the right front again with a bang, push the tiny keyhole cover to one side, insert key, turn, and withdraw). It is what we all do, Henry. It is called locking the car. It is said to confuse thieves and keep them from making off with the laprobe. Four doors to lock behind one robe. The driver himself never uses a laprobe, the free movement of his legs being vital to the operation of the vehicle; so that when he locks the car it is a pure and unselfish act. I have in my life gained very little essential heat from laprobes, yet I have ever been at pains to lock them up.

The evening was full of sounds, some of which would have stirred your memory. The robins still love the elms of New England villages at sundown. There is enough of the thrush in them to make song inevitable at the end of day, and enough of the tramp to make them hang round the dwellings of men. A robin, like many another American, dearly loves a white house with green blinds. Concord is still full of them.

Your fellow-townsmen were stirring abroad —not many afoot, most of them in their cars; and the sound which they made in Concord at evening was a rustling and a whispering. The sound lacks steadfastness and is wholly unlike that of a train. A train, as you know who lived so near the Fitchburg line, whistles once or twice sadly and is gone, trailing a memory in smoke, soothing to ear and mind. Automobiles, skirting a village green, are like flies that have gained the inner ear—they buzz, cease, pause, start, shift, stop, halt, brake, and the whole effect is a nervous polytone curiously disturbing.

As I wandered along, the toc toc of ping pong balls drifted from an attic window. In front of the Reuben Brown house a Buick was drawn up. At the wheel, motionless, his hat upon his head, a man sat, listening to Amos and Andy on the radio (it is a drama of many scenes and without an end). The deep voice of Andrew Brown, emerging from the car, although it originated more than two hundred miles away, was unstrained by distance. When you used to sit on the shore of your pond on Sunday morning, listening to the church bells of Acton and Concord, you were aware of the excellent filter of the intervening atmosphere. Science has attended

to that, and sound now maintains its intensity without regard for distance. Properly sponsored, it goes on forever.

A fire engine, out for a trial spin, roared past Emerson's house, hot with readiness for public duty. Over the barn roofs the martins dipped and chittered. A swarthy daughter of an asparagus grower, in culottes, shirt, and bandanna, pedalled past on her bicycle. It was indeed a delicious evening, and I returned to the inn (I believe it was your house once) to rock with the old ladies on the concrete veranda.

Next morning early I started afoot for Walden, out Main Street and down Thoreau, past the depot and the Minuteman Chevrolet Company. The morning was fresh, and in a bean field along the way I flushed an agriculturalist, quietly studying his beans. Thoreau Street soon joined Number 126, an artery of the State. We number our highways nowadays, our speed being so great we can remember little of their quality or character and are lucky to remember their number. (Men have an indistinct notion that if they keep up this activity long enough all will at length ride somewhere, in next to no time.) Your pond is on 126.

I knew I must be nearing your woodland retreat when the Golden Pheasant lunchroom came into view—Seal-test ice cream, toasted sandwiches, hot frankfurters, waffles, tonics, and lunches. Were I the proprietor, I should add rice, Indian meal, and molasses —just for old time's sake. The Pheasant, incidentally, is for sale: a chance for some nature lover who wishes to set himself up beside a pond in the Concord atmosphere and live deliberately, fronting only the essential facts of life on Number 126. Beyond the Pheasant was a place called Walden Breezes, an oasis whose porch pillars were made of old green shutters sawed into lengths. On the porch was a distorting mirror, to give the traveler a comical image of himself, who had miraculously learned to gaze in an ordinary glass without smiling. Behind the Breezes, in a sun-parched clearing, dwelt your philosophical descendants in their trailers, each trailer the size of your hut, but all grouped together for the sake of congeniality. Trailer people leave the city, as you did, to discover solitude and in any weather, at any hour of the day or night, to improve the nick of time; but they soon collect in villages and get bogged deeper in the mud than ever. The camp behind Walden Breezes was just rousing itself to the morning. The ground was packed hard under the heel, and the sun came through the clearing to bake the soil and enlarge the wry smell of cramped housekeeping. Cushman's bakery truck had stopped to deliver an early basket of rolls. A camp dog, seeing me in the road, barked petulantly. A man emerged from one of the trailers and set forth with a bucket to draw water from some forest tap.

Leaving the highway I turned off into the woods toward the pond, which was apparent through the foliage. The floor of the forest was strewn with dried old oak leaves and *Transcripts*. From beneath the flattened popcorn wrapper (*granum explosum*) peeped the frail violet. I followed a footpath and descended to the water's edge. The pond lay clear and blue in the morning light, as you have seen it so many times. In the shallows a man's waterlogged shirt undulated gently. A few flies came out to greet me and convoy me to your cove, past the No Bathing signs on which the fellows and girls had scrawled their names. I felt strangely excited suddenly to be snooping around your premises, tiptoeing along watchfully, as though not to tread by mistake upon the intervening century. Before I got to the cove I heard something which seemed to me quite wonderful: I heard your frog, a full, clear *troonk*, guiding me, still hoarse and solemn, bridging the years as the robins had bridged them in the sweetness of the village evening. But he soon quit, and I came on a couple of young boys throwing stones at him.

Your front yard is marked by a bronze tablet set in a stone. Four small granite posts, a few feet away, show where the house was. On top of the tablet was a pair of faded blue bathing trunks with a white stripe. Back of it is a pile of stones, a sort of

cairn, left by your visitors as a tribute I suppose. It is a rather ugly little heap of stones, Henry. In fact the hillside itself seems faded, browbeaten; a few tall skinny pines, bare of lower limbs, a smattering of young maples in suitable green, some birches and oaks, and a number of trees felled by the last big wind. It was from the bole of one of these fallen pines, torn up by the roots, that I extracted the stone which I added to the cairn—a sentimental act in which I was interrupted by a small terrier from a nearby picnic group, who confronted me and wanted to know about the stone.

I sat down for a while on one of the posts of your house to listen to the bluebottles and the dragonflies. The invaded glade sprawled shabby and mean at my feet, but the flies were tuned to the old vibration. There were the remains of a fire in your ruins, but I doubt that it was yours; also two beer bottles trodden into the soil and become part of earth. A young oak had taken root in your house, and two or three ferns, unrolling like the ticklers at a banquet. The only other furnishings were a DuBarry pattern sheet, a page torn from a picture magazine, and some crusts in wax paper.

Before I quit I walked clear round the pond and found the place where you used to sit on the northeast side to get the sun in the fall, and the beach where you got sand for scrubbing your floor. On the eastern side of the pond, where the highway borders it, the State has built dressing rooms for swimmers, a float with diving towers, drinking fountains of porcelain, and rowboats for hire. The pond is in fact a State Preserve, and carries a twenty-dollar fine for picking wild flowers, a decree signed in all solemnity by your fellow-citizens Walter C. Wardwell, Erson B. Barlow, and Nathaniel I. Bowditch. There was a smell of creosote where they had been building a wide wooden stairway to the road and the parking area. Swimmers and boaters were arriving; bodies plunged vigorously into the water and emerged wet and beautiful in the bright air. As I left, a boatload of town boys were splashing about in mid-pond, kidding and fooling, the young fellows singing at the tops of their lungs in a wild chorus:

Amer-ica, Amer-i-ca, God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shi-ning sea!

I walked back to town along the railroad, following your custom. The rails were expanding noisily in the hot sun, and on the slope of the roadbed the wild grape and the blackberry sent up their creepers to the track.

The expense of my brief sojourn in Concord was:

Canvas shoes	$1.95	
Baseball bat	.25	gifts to take back
Left-handed fielder's glove	1.25	to a boy
Hotel and meals	4.25	
In all	$7.70	

As you see, this amount was almost what you spent for food for eight months. I cannot defend the shoes or the expenditure for shelter and food: they reveal a meanness and grossness in my nature which you would find contemptible. The baseball equipment, however, is the kind of impediment with which you were never on even terms. You must remember that the house where you practiced the sort of economy which I respect was haunted only by mice and squirrels. You never had to cope with a shortstop.

Mister Roberts: Introduction[1]

THOMAS HEGGEN

Now, in the waning days of the second World War, this ship lies at anchor in the glassy bay of one of the black islands of the Pacific. It is a Navy cargo ship. You know it as a cargo ship by the five yawning hatches, by the house amidships, by the booms that bristle from the masts like mechanical arms. You know it as a Navy ship by the color (dark, dull blue), by the white numbers painted on the bow, and unfailingly by the thin ribbon of the commission pennant flying from the mainmast. In the Navy Register, this ship is listed as the *Reluctant*. Its crew never refer to it by name; to them it is always "this bucket."

In an approximate way it is possible to fix this ship in time. The local civil time is 0614 and the day is one in the spring of 1945. Sunrise was three minutes ago and the officer-of-the-deck is not quite alert, for the red truck lights atop the masts are still burning. It is a breathless time, quiet and fresh and lovely. The water inside the bay is planed to perfect smoothness, and in the emergent light it is bronze-colored, and not yet blue. The sky, which will be an intense blue, is also dulled a little by the film of night. The inflamed sun floats an inch or so above the horizon, and the wine-red light it spreads does not hurt the eyes at all. Over on the island there begin to be signs of life. An arm of blue smoke climbs straight and clean from the palm groves. Down on the dock people are moving about. A jeep goes by on the beach road and leaves a puff of dust behind. But on this ship there seems to be no one stirring. Just off the bow, a school of flying fish breaks the water suddenly. In the quiet the effect is as startling as an explosion.

In Germany right now it would be seven o'clock at night. It would be quite dark, and perhaps there is a cold rain falling. In this darkness and in this rain the Allied armies are slogging on toward Berlin. Some stand as close as one hundred and fifty miles. Aachen and Cologne have fallen, inside of days Hanover will fall. Far around the girdle of the world, at Okinawa Gunto it is now three in the morning. Flares would be dripping their slow, wet light as the United States Tenth Army finishes its job. These are contemporary moments of that in which our ship lies stagnant in the bay.

Surely, then, since this is One World, the tranquil ship is only an appearance, this somnolence an illusion. Surely an artillery shell fired at Hanover ripples the air here. Surely a bomb dropped on Okinawa trembles these bulkheads. This is an American Man o'War, manned by American Fighting Men: who would know better than they that this is One World? Who indeed? Of course, then, this indolence is only seeming, this lethargy a façade: in actuality this ship must be throbbing with grim purposefulness, intense activity, and a high awareness of its destiny. Of course.

Let us go aboard this Man o'War.

Step carefully there over little Red McLaughlin, sleeping on the hatch cover. Red is remarkable for being able to sleep anywhere: probably he was on his way down to the compartment when he dropped in his tracks, sound asleep. There do not, in truth, seem to be many people up yet—but then it is still a few minutes to reveille. Reveille is at six-thirty. In the Chief's quarters there is one man up: it is Johnson, the chief master-at-arms. He is the one who makes reveille. Johnson is drinking coffee and he seems preoccupied: perhaps, as you suggest, his mind is thousands of miles away, following the battle-line in Germany. But no—to tell the truth—it is not. Johnson is thinking of a can of beer, and he is angry. Last night he hid

[1] From *Mister Roberts*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946.

the can carefully beneath a pile of dirty scivvies in his locker: now it is gone. Johnson is reasonably certain that Yarby, the chief yeoman, took it; but he cannot prove this. He is turning over in his mind ways of getting back at Yarby. Let us move on.

Down in the armory a group of six men sits tensely around a wooden box. You say they are discussing fortifications?—you distinctly heard the word "sandbag" spoken? Yes, you did: but it is feared that you heard it out of context. What Olson, the first-class gunner's mate, said was: "Now watch the son-of-a-bitch sandbag me!" Used like that, it is a common colloquialism of poker: this is an all-night poker game.

We find our way now to the crew's compartment. You are surprised to see so many men sleeping, and so soundly? Perhaps it would be revelatory to peer into their dreams. No doubt, as you say, we will find them haunted by battles fought and battles imminent. This man who snores so noisily is Stefanowski, machinist's mate second class. His dream? . . . well . . . there is a girl . . . she is inadequately clothed . . . she is smiling at Stefanowski . . . let us not intrude.

You are doubtless right: certainly an officer will be more sensitive. In this stateroom, with his hand dangling over the side of the bunk, is Ensign Pulver. He is one of the engineering officers. And you *are* right; his dream *is* conditioned by the war. In his dream he is all alone in a lifeboat. He is lying there on a leather couch and there are cases of Schlitz beer stacked all about him. On the horizon he sees the ship go down at last; it goes down slowly, stern first. A swimming figure reaches the boat and clutches the gunwales. Without rising from his couch, Ensign Pulver takes the ball-bat at his side and smashes the man's hands. Every time the man gets his hands on the gunwales, Pulver pounds them with the bat. Finally the man sinks in a froth of bubbles. Who is this man—a Jap? No, it is the Captain. Ensign Pulver smiles happily and opens a can of beer.

What manner of ship is this? What does it do? What is its combat record? Well, those are fair questions, if difficult ones. The *Reluctant,* as was said, is a naval auxiliary. It operates in the back areas of the Pacific. In its holds it carries food and trucks and dungarees and toothpaste and toilet paper. For the most part it stays on its regular run, from Tedium to Apathy and back; about five days each way. It makes an occasional trip to Monotony, and once it made a run all the way to Ennui, a distance of two thousand nautical miles from Tedium. It performs its dreary and unthanked job, and performs it, if not inspiredly, then at least adequately.

It has shot down no enemy planes, nor has it fired upon any, nor has it seen any. It has sunk with its guns no enemy subs, but there *was* this once that it fired. This periscope, the lookout sighted it way off on the port beam, and the Captain, who was scared almost out of his mind, gave the order: "Commence firing!" The five-inch and the two port three-inch guns fired for perhaps ten minutes, and the showing was really rather embarrassing. The closest shell was three hundred yards off, and all the time the unimpressed periscope stayed right there. At one thousand yards it was identified as the protruding branch of a floating tree. The branch had a big bend in it and didn't even look much like a periscope.

So now you know: that is the kind of ship the *Reluctant* is. Admittedly it is not an heroic ship. Whether, though, you can also denounce its men as unheroic is another matter. Before that is summarily done, a few obvious facts about heroism should perhaps be pleaded; the first of them being that there are *kinds* of it. On this ship, for instance, you might want to consider Lieutenant Roberts as a hero. Lieutenant Roberts is a young man of sensitivity, perceptiveness, and idealism: attributes which are worthless and even inimical to such a community as this. He wants to be in the war; he is powerfully drawn to the war and to the general desolation of the time, but he is held off, frustrated, defeated by the rather magnificently nonconductive character of his station. He is the high-strung instrument assuming the low-strung rôle. He has geared himself to the tempo of the ship and made the adjustment with—the words are not believed misplaced

—gallantry, courage, and fortitude. Perhaps he is a kind of hero.

And then in simple justice to the undecorated men of the *Reluctant* it should also be pointed out that heroism—physical heroism—is very much a matter of opportunity. On the physical level heroism is not so much an act, implying volition, as it is a reflex. Apply the rubber hammer to the patella tendon and, commonly, you produce the knee jerk. Apply the situation permitting bravery to one hundred young males with actively functioning adrenal glands and, reasonably, you would produce seventy-five instances of clear-cut heroism. Would, that is, but for one thing: that after the fifty-first the word would dissolve into meaninglessness. Like the knee jerk, physical courage is perhaps latent and even implicit in the individual, needing only the application of situation, of opportunity, to reveal it. A case in point: Ensign Pulver.

Ensign Pulver is a healthy, highly normal young man who sleeps a great deal, is amiable, well-liked, and generally regarded by his shipmates as being rather worthless. At the instigation of forces well beyond his control, he joined the Naval Reserve and by the same forces was assigned to this ship, where he spends his time sleeping, discoursing, and plotting ingenious offensives against the Captain which he never executes. Alter the accidents, apply the situation, locate Pulver in the ball turret of a B-29 over Japan, and what do you have? You have Pulver, the Congressional Medal man, who single-handedly and successively shot down twenty-three attacking Zekes, fought the fire raging in his own ship, with his bare hands held together the severed wing struts and with his bare feet successfully landed the grievously wounded plane on its home field.

These, then—if the point is taken—are unheroic men only because they are non-combatant: whether unwillingly or merely unavoidably is not important. They fight no battles: *ergo* in a certain literal and narrow sense they are non-combatant. But in the larger vision these men are very definitely embattled, and rather curiously so. The enemy is not the unseen Jap, not the German, nor the abstract villainy of fascism: it is that credible and tangible villain, the Captain. The warfare is declared and continual, and the lines have long been drawn. On one side is the Captain, alone: opposing him are the other one hundred and seventy-eight members, officers and men, of the ship's company. It is quite an even match.

The Captain of a naval vessel is a curious affair. Personally he may be short, scrawny, unprepossessing; but a Captain is not a person and cannot be viewed as such. He is an embodiment. He is given stature, substance, and sometimes a new dimension by the massive, cumulative authority of the Navy Department which looms behind him like a shadow. With some Captains this shadow is a great, terrifying cloud; with others, it is scarcely apparent at all: but with none can it go unnoticed. Now to this the necessary exception: Captain Morton. With Captain Morton it could and does up to a point go unnoticed. The crew knows instinctively that the Captain is vulnerable, that he is unaware of the full dimensions of his authority; and, thus stripped of his substance, they find him detestable and not at all terrifying. He is not hated, for in hate there is something of fear and something of respect, neither of which is present here. And you could not say loathed, for loathing is passive and this is an active feeling. Best say detested; vigorously disliked. As the chosen enemy he is the object of an incessant guerrilla warfare, which is, for the Navy, a most irregular business. Flat declarations like "Captain Morton is an old fart" appear in chalk from time to time on gun mounts; cigarette butts, an obsession of the Captain's, are mysteriously inserted into his cabin; his telephone rings at odd hours of the night; once when he was standing on the quarterdeck a helmet dropped from the flying bridge missed him by perhaps a yard—the margin of a warning. Childishness? Pettiness? Perhaps: but remember that these are the only weapons the men have. Remember that they are really hopelessly outmatched. Remember that the shadow, acknowledged or not, is there all the time.

Captain Morton is a tall bulging middle-

aged man with a weak chin and a ragged-mustache. He is bow-legged and broad-beamed (for which the crew would substitute "lardassed"), and he walks with the absurd roll of an animated Popeye. If you ask, any crew member will give you the bill of particulars against the Captain, but he will be surprised that you find it necessary to ask. He will tell you that the man is stupid, incompetent, petty, vicious, treacherous. The signalmen or yeomen will insist that he is unable to understand the simplest message or letter. Anyone in the deck divisions will tell you that he is far more concerned with keeping the decks cleared of cigarette butts than with discharging cargo, his nominal mission. All of the crew will tell you of the petty persecution he directs against them: the preposterous insistence (for an auxiliary operating in the rear areas) that men topside wear hats and shirts at all times; the shouting and grumbling and name-calling; the stubborn refusal to permit recreation parties ashore; the absurd and constantly increasing prohibitions against leaning on the rail, sleeping on deck, gum-chewing, heavy-soled shoes, that and this and that. And you will be told with damning finality that the man is vulgar, foul-mouthed. In an indelicate community this charge may appear surprising, but of all it is clearly the most strongly laid.

These are the ostensible reasons for the feeling against the Captain; and possibly, possibly not, they are the real ones. It is for a student of causative psychology to determine whether the Captain created his own situation, or whether it was born, sired by boredom and dammed by apathy, of the need for such an obsessional pastime. The only thing abundantly certain is that it is there.

Now on this slumberous ship, this battleground, this bucket, there is sudden movement. Chief Johnson leans back in his chair, yawns, stretches, and gets up. He looks at his watch—0629—time to make reveille. He picks up his whistle, yawns again, and shuffles forward to the crew's compartment. Now there will be action on this torpid ship. Now the day will spring to life; now men will swarm the decks and the sounds of purposeful activity fill the air. Now at least, at reveille, this Man o'War will look the part.

Chief Johnson blows his whistle fiercely in the compartment. He starts forward and works aft among the bunks croaking in a raw, sing-song voice: "Reveille. . . . Hit the deck! . . . Rise and shine! . . . Get out of them goddam sacks! . . . What the hell you trying to do, sleep your life away? . . . Reveille. . . . Hit the deck! . . ." He is like a raucous minstrel, the way he chants and wanders through the compartment. Here and there an eye cocks open and looks tolerantly upon the Chief; now and then a forgiving voices mumbles sleepily, "Okay Chief okay. . . ." but not a body moves, not a muscle stirs.

Chief Johnson reaches the after door. He turns around for a moment and surveys the sagging bunks. He has done his job: he has observed the rules. Some of these men, he knows, will get up in half an hour to eat breakfast. Most of the rest, the ones who don't eat breakfast, will probably get up at eight. Chief Johnson walks sleepily aft and turns in his own bunk to sleep until eight. Eight o'clock is a reasonable hour for a man's arising; and this is, above all else, a reasonable ship.

Kennebec Crystals[1]

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

THE SHOPKEEPERS of Hallowell and Gardiner and Augusta had watched the January weather like hawks. They thumbed their ledgers and shook their graying temples at the lengthening columns of debit. The doctors had their eye on the sky as they felt of their lank wallets. Twenty miles deep each side of the river, farmers in small story-and-a-half farmhouses eyed their grocery-store thermometers at the side door, and bit more sparingly into their B.L. plugs. They chewed longer on their cuds too. In the kitchen, the wife was scraping the lower staves of the flour barrel. The big bugs in the wide white mansions along the river looked out of their east or west windows at crack of day to see the state of the water. Teachers in school grew short with their pupils who confused Washington's crossing of the Delaware with Clark's fording the fields around Vincennes. The mild weather continued. The river rolled on, blue in its ripples. Shopkeepers got short with their wives.

Then a sharp blue wind came up out of the northwest, the mercury in the thermometers tumbled The pines roared on into the dark, the stars snapped in the sky like sapphires. Good weather for future soldiers, Napoleon once remarked. Napoleon be hanged! So thought the farmers along the Kennebec, who were up in history as much as they were down in their pork barrels. There were enough small pairs of pants running around their farms already. What they needed was nights to breed that life-giving ice which would keep the small thighs in the trousers going. Good freezing nights for starting the crop of the water.

The cold spell was a real one. Farmers had to beat their arms each side of their buffalo coats. Next sundown the wind fell. It got still as a pocket. You could hear the stars sputter over the valley. The shopkeepers sat sipping their evening's lime juice and gloated over their newspapers. "The Hudson Valley: continued mild weather, southerly winds, higher temperatures and showers for next week." It was a different story up here in Maine. The kitchen windowpanes had white ferns at their corners. A knife handle would have to be used on the water bucket in the morning. Down Hudson, up Kennebec! In the morning, there were no more waves running on the river. The water looked like a long, dark looking glass dropped between the hills. In a hundred sheds the grindstones were humming.

Then next day the January thaw came. Teachers went all to pieces as early as Wednesday in the week. Doctors used the whip on their horses as they clattered over the steaming ruts. Shopkeepers did not throw in the extra pilot bread but tied up the bags and bit off the twine. The big bugs behind the Ionian porticoes put aside the *Annals* of Tacitus and took down the *Magnalia Christi Americana* of Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards's *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.* Small boys lost their tempers and kicked the jackstraws their bachelor uncles had whittled out in the shape of oars and eelspears all over the floor. Farmers sat down to Indian pudding without any salt hake to season it off.

Young Timothy Toothaker decided not to ask Susannah Orr a certain question until mayflower time or later. And he stopped spooling new rungs for her future bed.

The thaw lasted eight days. Somebody saw a robin. He didn't get any vote of thanks from his neighbors. A body could see his dead grandmother in such fog as there was. The graybeards by the barrel stove in Ephraim Doughty's grocery store at Bowdoin Center shivered in their shoes. Ephraim

[1] From *Kennebec: Cradle of Americans* by Robert P. Tristram Coffin. Copyright, 1937, by Rinehart & Company, Inc. and reprinted with their permission.

had said earlier in the evening, as he looked out at the weather glumly, "Open winter, fat graveyards." Active Frost cheated at checkers and got caught. Wash Alexander drank up all his wife's Peruna.

The only consolation in Kennebec County was the newspaper. It said it was raining all up and down the Hudson, from Saratoga to Staten Island.

February came in murky. But the trotting horses on the Kennebec barns swung round at last and headed north: the thermometer went below zero and stayed there. Everybody began to breathe again, and the grindstones started singing.

The Kennebec was gray glass again, next dawn and next and next. It grew blacker as the days went by. In the third night the drums began, a single stroke, now and then, low bass and far away, rolling and reverberating along the hills. Next morning there were white cracks on the dark drumhead to show where the drumsticks had struck. All at once, at four o'clock, the whole stretch of river below the Augusta falls blossomed out with children in bright scarves, just out of school. A thousand young farmers and townsmen ground bark, cut figure eights, and yelled themselves hoarse at Ring-Leavo. Fat boys of six on their first skates stared wide-eyed at the green water weeds hanging still and going down into fearful darkness under their toes. At night bonfires ran down the river from bend to bend. Flame answered flame from Skowhegan to Swan Island. Everybody but those in slippers and those in the cradles was out on the ice. And next afternoon the horses had taken to the new ice highway that connected all the Kennebec towns. Men flew along behind them, mountains of robes in narrow sleighs. Their big mustaches smoked, and their breaths clung to them like mufflers straining out behind. Women swept past, little crepe bonnets cocked over the left eye and eyes like jets and blue diamonds. The ice was marked off into lanes, the racing sleighs came out. Horses came up the river, neck and neck, the flowers of the breaths festooned each side of them like garlands hung from high head to high head. Whips cracked, and shouts sent out long echoes each way. The chipped ice shone like splinters flying from a rainbow. Young men had young arms around waists of only eighteen inches, and young people started off on the road to matrimony on the thinnest of bright steel shoes.

But back up on the farms the men were grinding their picks. Women were laying out armfuls of gray socks with white heels and toes, piling up the flannel shirts, packing up bacon and ham and sausage meat and loaves. Boys were oiling harness and polishing the glass sidelights of headstalls. Chains were clinking, and sleds were being piled with blankets and bedding and victuals and extra whiffletrees, cant dogs, picks, and feed for the horses.

Down along the river the doors stood open in the big icehouses, with sides lined with sawdust, that for months had been shut in silence except for the sharp, thin music of wasps. Men were clearing out old roughage and rubbing the sections of track free of rust. Machinery was being oiled. Gouges and scrapers were being looked over and assembled by the river's side.

The preachers and everybody else in Gardiner and Richmond, Hallowell and Dresden, went to bed that night praying for the snow to hold up and the red blood in the glass to stay down in the ball where it belonged The river of Henry Hudson was still liquid as it went down under the Catskills and down by the walls of the Palisades. God was in his heaven!

In the clear dawn next day, along a hundred roads that led down to the Kennebec, farmers were trudging, mustaches hanging down to the woolen mufflers like the tusks on the walrus. Brown mustaches, golden ones, black ones, gray ones, and white. But every one in front of a man. And behind them streamed their wealth, on its own feet. Tall, sinewy sons, out of school for good and on the doorstep of manhood and marriage, horses with hides like scrubbed horse chestnuts, big of hoof and billowy of muscle, fattened on corn, sharp shod, with long calks of steel that bit into the frozen ground. Here you could reckon up a man's prosperity in

solid, tangible things, as in the days of Jacob and Laban. Goods with the breath of life in them. Like Job's. The richest man was one who had nine or ten strong men to follow the swing of his creasing trousers in ringing, ironed shoes. Or three or four spans of horses with the morning star in their foreheads and the music of steel under their feet. So the wealth of the Kennebec came down to the harvest of Maine's best winter crop in the eighties.

Tramps, even, were coming. And all the black sheep of a hundred faraway pastures, beyond Maine, were swinging off the sides of freight cars in the chill gray of the morning. Drifters from far beyond New England.

The men crowded into the river lodging houses of Hallowell and Gardiner, Pittston and Dresden. They unloaded and stowed their dunnage in their temporary homes for the next few weeks. They armed themselves with picks and gougers and saws. Each man had his favorite tool tucked under his quilted arm. They descended on the cold harvest floor with horses and sons in a great host.

Then the field of the harvest was marked off for the game of wealth to be played there. Men walked with gougers tracing the line their narrow plows made straight as a die across the river. After them came the horse-drawn gougers cutting a deeper double furrow. Another army of men took up the game at right angles to the others, crisscrossing the wide fields. And then the sawyers came, slow with their loads of shoulder muscle and woolen shirts. They set in their saws and began the cutting of the gigantic checkers from the checkerboards on the hard Kennebec. The men stood to their work with both hands on the handles each side of their long tools, going down, coming back, fifty men keeping time as they ate into the stuff that meant their life, bed, and board, and fodder for their cattle. It was a sight to see the gates-ajar mustaches swinging like pendulums, gold and dark, and the breath in them changing to icicles as they worked. Every so often the picks spoke, and the sawed lines lengthened ahead of the sawyers. Noon saw a dozen checkerboards marked out on the river. One notable fact about the tools of the ice industry on the Kennebec in this: they were the only tools that were good enough to remain unchanged from the beginning of the industry to the end of it.

Then the workers went to the shores and ate their cold ham and bread and broke the crystals at the top of their jugs and drank the sluggish milk. They built fires to toast their thick soles and sat on the leeward side chewing their quids of tobacco in the heat and haze of the smoke that made the tears run from their eyes. Fathers and sons broke into cakes and frosty doughnuts the wives and mothers had made. Apple pie with splinters of ice.

The afternoon saw the first great checkers of ice lifted from the checkerboards. With heaving of cant dogs and picks, the square crystals came up into the splendid sunshine, sparkling like emeralds shading to azure in their deep hearts, with sections of whole rainbows where the edges were flawed. Layer on layer of brightness, layers of solid winter to go into the hot heart of summer in faraway cities and scorching lands. Long canals opened up into dark water, and men poled the cakes down to the ends where other men caught them with cant dogs as they came, hoisted them up on the ice, slued them to the runways. Chains clanked, the hooks bit into them, and up they flashed along the high lines of steel and plunged into the ice-houses.

Inside, men caught the thundering cakes and switched them, this one to the right, this to the left, to their places. The walls of cakes rose gradually, aisles of air spaces left between the walls of solid crystal. The workers here were in their shirt sleeves. They were the youngest of the men, sons more often than fathers. Their work made them glow inside like cookstoves. The sweat ran down their faces. They stood by the cataracts of ice and flung the bright streams each way, stepping as in a dance to keep clear of a blow that would shatter their bones. The work was like the thunder of summer in their ears, thunder all day long. And the house filled up with the cakes. Square cakes piled as even as the sides of a barn, true and

deep blue in the steaming dusk. The men walked between walls of Maine's cold wealth.

And the steel-bright days went by. No thaws or rain came to erase the grooves in the checkerboards. The icehouses were filled to their eaves and the last tier roofed in the aisles between the cakes. Roughage was heaped over all. The doors were closed and sealed.

That year the Hudson did not freeze over till March. The betting of the Maine farmers had been three to one against its doing so. They won their bets. The rival river, the only rival the clear blue Kennebec had among the rivers of earth, had lean-kine stalls along its banks that year of our Lord. The Lord had been good. The Kennebec ice farmers heaped great towers of the harvest outside their houses and covered them with spruce boughs and sawdust, for extra measure. The Knickerbocker Ice Company lost nothing. For they owned most of the icehouses along both the Hudson and the Kennebec. All ice was ice to them. The Kennebec crop was better than the Hudson, in fact, for the water in the Maine river was clearer and purer. Kennebec ice stood at the head of all ice. It was the Hudson ice cutters who lost. But if Peter was robbed, Paul was paid. The Kennebec farmers went back to their hens and heifers with wallets stuffing out their trousers and their sons' trousers, after $4-a-week lodging and eating bills had been paid. The grocers canceled whole tomes of ledgers. The schoolteachers kept their patience right up to "Horatius at the Bridge" in the Friday afternoon's speaking. New barrels of pork and flour came home to the high farms on the whistling runners of the horse sleds. And barrels of halibuts' heads and brokenbread. Active Frost stopped moving his checkers when his foeman turned to take a shot at the spittoon. And Timothy Toothaker asked the question when he brought his Susannah the first bunch of mayflowers. They were married and setting up housekeeping on new pine floors and in the spooled maple bed before the catkins were gone from the popples.

The geese were coming back early, up along Merrymeeting, that same spring, before the middle of April. And in late April that best day of all the spring on the Kennebec came, when the first boat arrived, the Boston steamer, with the star on her smokestack and her whistle tied down all the way from Swan Island to the Cobbosseecontee, waking the dead and the hills with her news of spring at last. There was not a church bell in the five towns that wasn't ringing. Women in bombazine waved handkerchiefs. School was let out for the day, and the hills were alive with children.

May saw the ice ships arrive and tie up at the docks. The icehouses opened their doors. The Kennebec crystals came down the runs, slithered across the decks of the four-masters and into the holds. When a number of the old hulls were loaded, which had once breasted the waves on the underside of the world, white under thunderclouds of sail, a tugboat steamed down-river on a neap tide, dragging the old veterans of the Atlantic back to the Atlantic again, below Popham.

And down in New York and Philadelphia prosperous citizens were getting down their ice-cream freezers. Children in Richmond and children under the shadow of the Blue Ridge were running starry-eyed behind high carts with letters frosted and dripping with icicles. The letters on those carts spelled *Kennebec Ice.* And deep in Alabama and Mississippi pickaninnies ran with pieces of Maine's finest river in their black palms and heaven in their eyes. Farther south, the crystals of Maine touched the fruit of the Caribbees. Far down off the Horn and up the other side, ships with bones bred in Maine forests carried the Maine treasure to the Pacific. Trains plowed through the dusty cornlands of Nebraska and on to the Rockies, carrying Maine ice. And a whole nation knew the taste of the clear Kennebec. Half the world, too, England and France, and Holland.

But all that was in the twilight days of wooden ships, when Maine women still kept their neat houses moving around the world.

That was when the wizards had not wakened new secrets out of electricity and steel. That was in the eighties and nineties.

Now the Kennebec icehouses are rotting and falling back into the earth. Their interiors are taken over by the wasps and the mice. The old piers are sinking into the water. No ship comes up in tow of a tug through the first leaves of May. School keeps week after week, and there are no bells ringing out to greet the steamer that leads up the spring. The gougers and saws are rusted half away.

For the Kennebec crystals, last harvest of Maine's finest river, have joined the white pine and the spruce, the sturgeon and shad and salmon. The end is elegy. The day of natural ice is done. New men, outside New England, bring their sons in their strength to the work of refrigerating homes and factories. And the small farmhouses, back from the river, that once housed great numbers of young men and boys, are full of empty rooms where the swallows bring up their young, or they have only a few children who work at their tasks and never need turn their heads toward the river, where the strength of their fathers lay and their fathers' lives.

The other day my good Kennebec friend whose great house looked up the river and down, over a twelve-foot hedge of spruce, took me out and showed me the tools of the ice harvesters. They were dark with rust and covered with cobwebs. They had joined the flint arrows and the bows that once bent to bring life to the men along the ancient Kennebec. When we were coming back we passed a strange depression in the woods, grown up with lusty spruces. It was the refrigerator men of my friend's house used a hundred fifty years ago. It was the ruins of the earth cellar where they had stored their vegetables in summer and winter, to keep them from heat and cold. It was the Kennebec refrigerator his ancestors and mine learned how to make from the Indians when they drove them away into the everlasting dark from the bright blue river. That refrigerator was a ruin, and the Kennebec was as young and lusty as ever as it hurried toward the sea. Someday our own sons' far great-grandchildren may find among the timbers of my friend's house the rusted shards of the electric refrigerator that serves the house today. And the Kennebec will be going down to the sea, as young and as fresh and blue as ever.

3

Language and Thinking

Translation from one language to another is never easy. For William Caxton in the fifteenth century it was doubly hard: the English of his time had not become conventional enough in its choice of certain words for certain meanings —so how could a translator be sure? To illustrate his problem, we have the anecdote about eggs, though it is really not about eggs so much as about difficulties in communication. Two different words for the same object, and the only way the two people who use those words can understand each other is through a third person who happens to "know" both words. So one of the three gets the egg he wants to eat. He has made what James Harvey Robinson would call a practical judgment, has decided that he wants

to eat an egg, asks for it, is told there aren't any. But behold—a little more language from the third person, and it is disclosed that there were eggs there all the time! This is a practical demonstration of the fundamental nature of language, its advantages, and its disadvantages. Had the objects we call *eggs* been present, there would have been no need for language. But since they were not, language was employed in an attempt to identify by reference. Even so, each word was but meaningless noise to one of two people until the third person came in with the explanation. Then it was possible for all three minds to *think* of an "egg" whenever anyone should mention either word. Eventually, perhaps, all three would decide to keep one word and drop the other as unnecessary. William Caxton certainly hoped so. As a matter of fact, that is what happened. Plenty of eggs now, but no eyren!

This story also illustrates the connection between language and thinking. The thinking of all three people comes before their attempts to communicate. Person number three does a good deal of thinking before he speaks at all; and since it is not made patent to us in words but only suggested by what he actually *does* say, we have to make inferences by putting ourselves imaginatively in his place. Sometimes, in other situations, we do the same thing by saying "Oh, you mean . . ." and offering words we think are more descriptive of the other person's thoughts than his own words have been. He may agree or disagree according to what he has *in mind*. It is evident that much as "fingers came before forks" so thinking comes before language. Disagreement about this idea occurs frequently, presumably because any person with a good working vocabulary translates his own thoughts so readily into language that he may believe one cannot think without language. "If you really know what you want to say, you will have the words for it." That does give the lie to "I know what I have in mind but cannot find the right words to express it." It also gives the lie to any philosophy of revision so far as words and phrases are concerned. Actually it does seem better to believe that thinking and language are distinct and do not appear simultaneously even within our own minds.

It is when language comes without thought that the greatest trouble arises. "Do you realize what you are saying?" we often ask people. Sometimes they do, often they do not. There are two important needs: a clear understanding of one's ideas, and an active notion of what the words will "mean" to someone else. Consider the Caxton once again. The woman replied that she had no *egges*. Unless the word had been previously in her vocabulary to denote something else, how did she know she had none? She did not think she did; all she *knew* was that she had no reference in her mind to any object or idea when she heard that alien word. She appears similar to the student who asked, "Is it not a fact that people ought to . . .?" There is this difference —*fact* meant to that student something quite different from what it means to Harold Larrabee in the essay "What Are Facts?"—something quite different from what the word means to most clear thinkers. We cannot think well, we rightly say, without facts; we shall also be in great difficulties, *both with others and with ourselves*, if we do not distinguish between *facts* and moral *opinions*, no matter what names we employ.

The names we employ are most helpful when considered historically, conventionally, as Professors Greenough and Kittredge remind us. The jargon of scientists has been invented for just such a reason—ideally, to fix the meaning of each word as clearly as the square root of four, so that it will always

mean the same thing to the initiate. Chemical formulas are the very best illustration of fixed meanings. If language in general is still comparatively loose and shifting in its references, it will not be meaningless jargon entirely if one person—speaker or writer—knows firmly what it means to him.

More so than others, this century has been a slack time both in thinking and in language. There have been two results: (1) a tremendously increased interest in language and thinking, an organized study of language such as we have not known before; (2) too much success with that kind of propaganda which is the deliberate and calculated exploitation of emotions by shrewd manipulation of words. More than direct untruth, vagueness and emotional association are the propagandist's weapons. They are still weak before a clear knowledge of the nature of language and an alert interest in clear thinking.

What seems needed most of all is clear thinking about language itself, perhaps with the aid of modern semantics, the organized study of meaning, among whose leaders Mr. Hayakawa is prominent. We need then to distinguish among various kinds of "thinking," as James Harvey Robinson helps us to do. We shall then begin to realize that Bacon's "Idols of the Mind" is an enduring description of human psychology in language astonishingly clear to us in the twentieth century, and that even today we can easily worship the same idols. Having improved our scepticism and furthered self-examination by reading the words of Robert Thouless, we shall more readily appreciate the worth of Mr. Larrabee's "What are Facts?" We shall yield less easily to the adroitness of the propagandist, become better logicians and even better everyday thinkers and talkers. All these improvements will make happy the majority of those who write what they hold to be the "truth" about language and who analyze true and false thinking. For they are modern missionaries who know, as Bacon did, that the advancement of learning (Bacon's phrase) involves more than the building of laboratories and grants for study. That so much about language and thinking is written in the twentieth century indicates that people still believe in the advancement of learning through good logic and subsequent clear communication.

Eggys or Eyren?[1]

WILLIAM CAXTON

THAT comyn englysshe that is spoken in one shyre varyeth from a nother. In so moche that in my dayes happened that certayn merchanntes were in a shippe in tamyse, for to have sayled over the see into zelande; and, for lacke of wynde, thei taryed atte forland, and wente to lande for to refreshe them. And one of theym named sheffelde, a mercer, cam into an hows and axed for mete; and specyally he axyd after eggys; And the good wyf answerde, that she coude speke no frenshe. And the marchaunt was angry, for he also coude speke no frenshe, but wold have hadde egges and she understode hym not. And thenne at laste a nother sayd that he wold have eyren; then the good wyf sayd that she understod hym wel. Loo! what sholde a man in thyse dayes now wryte, egges or eyren? certaynly it is harde to playse every man by cause of dyversite and chaunge of langage.

[1] From Caxton's preface to *Eneydos*, his translation of a French prose romance printed in 1490.

Idols of the Mind[1]

SIR FRANCIS BACON

XXXIX

THERE ARE four classes of Idols which beset men's minds. To these for distinction's sake I have assigned names,—calling the first class Idols of the Tribe; the second, Idols of the Cave; the third, Idols of the Market-place, the fourth, Idols of the Theatre.

XL

The formation of ideas and axioms by true induction is no doubt the proper remedy to be applied for the keeping off and clearing away of idols. To point them out, however, is of great use; for the doctrine of Idols is to the Interpretation of Nature what the doctrine of the refutation of Sophisms is to common Logic.

XLI

The Idols of the Tribe have their foundation in human nature itself, and in the tribe or race of men. For it is a false assertion that the sense of man is the measure of things. On the contrary, all perceptions as well of the sense as of the mind are according to the measure of the individual and not according to the measure of the universe. And the human understanding is like a false mirror, which, receiving rays irregularly, distorts and discolours the nature of things by mingling its own nature with it.

XLII

The Idols of the Cave are the idols of the individual man. For every one (besides the errors common to human nature in general) has a cave or den of his own, which refracts and discolours the light of nature; owing either to his own proper and peculiar nature; or to his education and conversation with others; or to the reading of books, and the authority of those whom he esteems and admires; or to the differences of impressions, accordingly as they take place in a mind preoccupied and predisposed or in a mind indifferent and settled; or the like. So that the spirit of man (according as it is meted out to different individuals) is in fact a thing variable and full of perturbation, and governed as it were by chance. Whence it was well observed by Heraclitus that men look for sciences in their own lesser worlds, and not in the greater or common world.

XLIII

There are also Idols formed by the intercourse and association of men with each other, which I call Idols of the Market-place, on account of the commerce and consort of men there. For it is by discourse that men associate; and words are imposed according to the apprehension of the vulgar. And therefore the ill and unfit choice of words wonderfully obstructs the understanding. Nor do the definitions or explanations wherewith in some things learned men are wont to guard and defend themselves, by any means set the matter right. But words plainly force and overrule the understanding, and throw all into confusion, and lead men away into numberless empty controversies and idle fancies.

XLIV

Lastly, there are Idols which have immigrated into men's minds from the various dogmas of philosophies, and also from wrong laws of demonstration. These I call Idols of the Theatre; because in my judgment all the received systems are but so many stage-plays, representing worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion. Nor is it only of the systems now in vogue, or only of the ancient sects and philosophies, that I speak; for many more plays of the same kind may yet be composed and in like artificial manner set forth; seeing that errors

[1] From *Novum Organum*, in *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon*, edited by Robert Leslie Ellis and James Spedding, London, 1861, vol. IV.

the most widely different have nevertheless causes for the most part alike. Neither again do I mean this only of entire systems, but also of many principles and axioms in science, which by tradition, credulity, and negligence have come to be received.

But of these several kinds of Idols I must speak more largely and exactly, that the understanding may be duly cautioned.

XLV

The human understanding is of its own nature prone to suppose the existence of more order and regularity in the world than it finds. And though there be many things in nature which are singular and unmatched, yet it devises for them parallels and conjugates and relatives which do not exist. Hence the fiction that all celestial bodies move in perfect circles; spirals and dragons being (except in name) utterly rejected. Hence too the element of Fire with its orb is brought in, to make up the square with the other three which the sense perceives. Hence also the ratio of density of the so-called elements is arbitrarily fixed at ten to one. And so on of other dreams. And these fancies affect not dogmas only, but simple notions also.

XLVI

The human understanding when it has once adopted an opinion (either as being the received opinion or as being agreeable to itself) draws all things else to support and agree with it. And though there be a greater number and weight of instances to be found on the other side, yet these it either neglects and despises, or else by some distinction sets aside and rejects; in order that by this great and pernicious predetermination the authority of its former conclusions may remain inviolate. And therefore it was a good answer that was made by one who when they showed him hanging in a temple a picture of those who had paid their vows as having escaped shipwreck, and would have him say whether he did not now acknowledge the power of the gods,—"Aye," asked he again, "but where are they painted that were drowned after their vows?" And such is the way of all superstition, whether in astrology, dreams, omens, divine judgments, or the like; wherein men, having a delight in such vanities, mark the events where they are fulfilled, but where they fail, though this happen much oftener, neglect and pass them by. But with far more subtlety does this mischief insinuate itself into philosophy and the sciences; in which the first conclusion colours and brings into conformity with itself all that come after, though far sounder and better. Besides, independently of that delight and vanity which I have described, it is the peculiar and perpetual error of the human intellect to be more moved and excited by affirmatives than by negatives; whereas it ought properly to hold itself indifferently disposed towards both alike. Indeed in the establishment of any true axiom, the negative instance is the more forcible of the two.

XLVII

The human understanding is moved by those things most which strike and enter the mind simultaneously and suddenly, and so fill the imagination; and then it feigns and supposes all other things to be somehow, though it cannot see how, similar to those few things by which it is surrounded. But for that going to and fro to remote and heterogeneous instances, by which axioms are tried as in the fire, the intellect is altogether slow and unfit, unless it be forced thereto by severe laws and overruling authority.

XLVIII

The human understanding is unquiet; it cannot stop or rest, and still presses onward, but in vain. Therefore it is that we cannot conceive of any end or limit to the world; but always as of necessity it occurs to us that there is something beyond. Neither again can it be conceived how eternity has flowed down to the present day; for that distinction which is commonly received of infinity in time past and in time to come can by no means hold; for it would thence follow that one infinity is greater than another, and that infinity is wasting away and tending to become finite. The like subtlety arises touching the infinite divisibility of lines, from the same inability of thought to stop. But this

inability interferes more mischievously in the discovery of causes: for although the most general principles in nature ought to be held merely positive, as they are discovered, and cannot with truth be referred to a cause, nevertheless the human understanding being unable to rest still seeks something prior in the order of nature. And then it is that in struggling towards that which is further off it falls back upon that which is more nigh at hand; namely, on final causes: which have relation clearly to the nature of man rather than to the nature of the universe, and from this source have strangely defiled philosophy. But he is no less an unskilled and shallow philosopher who seeks causes of that which is most general, than he who in things subordinate and subaltern omits to do so.

XLIX

The human understanding is no dry light, but receives an infusion from the will and affections; whence proceed sciences which may be called "sciences as one would." For what a man had rather were true he more readily believes. Therefore he rejects difficult things from impatience of research; sober things, because they narrow hope; the deeper things of nature, from superstition; the light of experience, from arrogance and pride, lest his mind should seem to be occupied with things mean and transitory; things not commonly believed, out of deference to the opinion of the vulgar. Numberless in short are the ways, and sometimes imperceptible, in which the affections colour and infect the understanding.

L

But by far the greatest hindrance and aberration of the human understanding proceeds from the dullness, incompetency, and deceptions of the senses; in that things which strike the sense outweigh things which do not immediately strike it, though they be more important. Hence it is that speculation commonly ceases where sight ceases; insomuch that of things invisible there is little or no observation. Hence all the working of the spirits inclosed in tangible bodies lies hid and unobserved of men. So also all the more subtle changes of form in the parts of coarser substances (which they commonly call alteration, though it is in truth local motion through exceedingly small spaces) is in like manner unobserved. And yet unless these two things just mentioned be searched out and brought to light, nothing great can be achieved in nature, as far as the production of works is concerned. So again the essential nature of our common air, and of all bodies less dense than air (which are very many), is almost unknown. For the sense by itself is a thing infirm and erring; neither can instruments for enlarging or sharpening the senses do much; but all the truer kind of interpretation of nature is effected by instances and experiments fit and apposite; wherein the sense decides touching the experiment only, and the experiment touching the point in nature and the thing itself.

LI

The human understanding is of its own nature prone to abstractions and gives a substance and reality to things which are fleeting. But to resolve nature into abstractions is less to our purpose than to dissect her into parts; as did the school of Democritus, which went further into nature than the rest. Matter rather than forms should be the object of our attention, its configurations and changes of configuration, and simple action, and law of action or motion; for forms are figments of the human mind, unless you will call those laws of action forms.

LII

Such then are the idols which I call *Idols of the Tribe;* and which take their rise either from the homogeneity of the substance of the human spirit, or from its preoccupation, or from its narrowness, or from its restless motion, or from an infusion of the affections, or from the incompetency of the senses, or from the mode of impression.

LIII

The *Idols of the Cave* take their rise in the peculiar constitution, mental or bodily, of each individual; and also in education, habit, and accident. Of this kind there is a great number and variety; but I will instance

those the pointing out of which contains the most important caution, and which have most effect in disturbing the clearness of the understanding.

LIV

Men become attached to certain particular sciences and speculations, either because they fancy themselves the authors and inventors thereof, or because they have bestowed the greatest pains upon them and become most habituated to them. But men of this kind, if they betake themselves to philosophy and contemplation of a general character, distort and colour them in obedience to their former fancies; a thing especially to be noticed in Aristotle, who made his natural philosophy a mere bond-servant to his logic, thereby rendering it contentious and well-nigh useless. The race of chemists again out of a few experiments of the furnace have built up a fantastic philosophy, framed with reference to a few things, and Gilbert also, after he had employed himself most laboriously in the study and observation of the loadstone, proceeded at once to construct an entire system in accordance with his favourite subject.

LV

There is one principal and as it were radical distinction between different minds, in respect of philosophy and the sciences; which is this: that some minds are stronger and apter to mark the differences of things, others to mark their resemblances. The steady and acute mind can fix its contemplations and dwell and fasten on the subtlest distinctions: the lofty and discursive mind recognizes and puts together the finest and most general resemblances. Both kinds however easily err in excess, by catching the one at gradations the other at shadows.

LVI

There are found some minds given to an extreme admiration of antiquity, others to an extreme love and appetite for novelty; but few so duly tempered that they can hold the mean, neither carping at what has been well laid down by the ancients, nor despising what is well introduced by the moderns. This, however, turns to the great injury of the sciences and philosophy; since these affectations of antiquity and novelty are the humours of partisans rather than judgments; and truth is to be sought for not in the felicity of any age, which is an unstable thing, but in the light of nature and experience, which is eternal. These factions therefore must be abjured, and care must be taken that the intellect be not hurried by them into assent.

LVII

Contemplations of nature and of bodies in their simple form break up and distract the understanding, while contemplations of nature and bodies in their composition and configuration overpower and dissolve the understanding; a distinction well seen in the school of Leucippus and Democritus as compared with the other philosophies. For that school is so busied with the particles that it hardly attends to the structure; while the others are so lost in admiration of the structure that they do not penetrate to the simplicity of nature. These kinds of contemplation should therefore be alternated and taken by turns; that so the understanding may be rendered at once penetrating and comprehensive, and the inconveniences above mentioned, with the idols which proceed from them, may be avoided.

LVIII

Let such then be our provision and contemplative prudence for keeping off and dislodging the *Idols of the Cave,* which grow for the most part either out of the predominance of a favourite subject, or out of an excessive tendency to compare or to distinguish, or out of partiality for particular ages, or out of the largeness or minuteness of the objects contemplated. And generally let every student of nature take this as a rule,—that whatever his mind seizes and dwells upon with peculiar satisfaction is to be held in suspicion, and that so much the more care is to be taken in dealing with such questions to keep the understanding even and clear.

LIX

But the *Idols of the Market-place* are the most troublesome of all: idols which have

crept into the understanding through the alliances of words and names. For men believe that their reason governs words; but it is also true that words react on the understanding; and this it is that has rendered philosophy and the sciences sophistical and inactive. Now words, being commonly framed and applied according to the capacity of the vulgar, follow those lines of division which are most obvious to the vulgar understanding. And whenever an understanding of greater acuteness or a more diligent observation would alter those lines to suit the true divisions of nature, words stand in the way and resist the change. Whence it comes to pass that the high and formal discussions of learned men end oftentimes in disputes about words and names; with which (according to the use and wisdom of the mathematicians, it would be more prudent to begin, and so by means of definitions reduce them to order. Yet even definitions cannot cure this evil in dealing with natural and material things; since the definitions themselves consist of words, and those words beget others: so that it is necessary to recur to individual instances, and those in due series and order; as I shall say presently when I come to the method and scheme for the formation of notions and axioms.

LX

The idols imposed by words on the understanding are of two kinds. They are either names of things which do not exist (for as there are things left unnamed through lack of observation, so likewise are there names which result from fantastic suppositions and to which nothing in reality corresponds), or they are names of things which exist, but yet confused and ill-defined, and hastily and irregularly derived from realities. Of the former kind are Fortune, the Prime Mover, Planetary Orbits, Element of Fire, and like fictions which owe their origin to false and idle theories. And this class of idols is more easily expelled, because to get rid of them it is only necessary that all theories should be steadily rejected and dismissed as obsolete.

But the other class, which springs out of a faulty and unskilful abstraction, is intricate and deeply rooted. Let us take for example such a word as *humid;* and see how far the several things which the word is used to signify agree with each other; and we shall find the word *humid* to be nothing else than a mark loosely and confusedly applied to denote a variety of actions which will not bear to be reduced to any constant meaning. For it both signifies that which easily spreads itself round any other body; and that which in itself is indeterminate and cannot solidize; and that which readily yields in every direction; and that which easily divides and scatters itself; and that which easily unites and collects itself; and that which readily flows and is put in motion; and that which readily clings to another body and wets it; and that which is easily reduced to a liquid, or being solid easily melts. Accordingly when you come to apply the word,--if you take it in one sense, flame is humid, if in another, air is not humid, if in another, fine dust is humid; if in another, glass is humid. So that it is easy to see that the notion is taken by abstraction only from water and common and ordinary liquids, without any due verification.

There are however in words certain degrees of distortion and error. One of the least faulty kinds is that of names of substances, especially of lowest species and well-deduced (for the notion of *chalk* and of *mud* is good, of *earth* bad); a more faulty kind is that of actions, as *to generate, to corrupt, to alter;* the most faulty is of qualities (except such as are the immediate objects of the sense), as *heavy, light, rare, dense,* and the like. Yet in all these cases some notions are of necessity a little better than others, in proportion to the greater variety of subjects that fall within the range of the human sense.

LXI

But the *Idols of the Theatre* are not innate, nor do they steal into the understanding secretly, but are plainly impressed and received into the mind from the play-books of philosophical systems and the perverted rules of demonstration. To attempt refutations in this case would be merely inconsistent with what I have already said: for since we agree neither upon principles nor upon demonstrations there is no place for

argument. And this is so far well, inasmuch as it leaves the honour of the ancients untouched. For they are no wise disparaged—the question between them and me being only as to the way. For as the saying is, the lame man who keeps the right road outstrips the runner who takes a wrong one. Nay it is obvious that when a man runs the wrong way, the more active and swift he is the further he will go astray.

But the course I propose for the discovery of sciences is such as leaves but little to the acuteness and strength of wits, but places all wits and understandings nearly on a level. For as in the drawing of a straight line or a perfect circle, much depends on the steadiness and practice of the hand, if it be done by aim of hand only, but if with the aid of rule and compass, little or nothing; so is it exactly with my plan. But though particular confutations would be of no avail, yet touching the sects and general divisions of such systems I must say something; something also touching the external signs which show that they are unsound; and finally something touching the causes of such great infelicity and of such lasting and general agreement in error; that so the access to truth may be made less difficult, and the human understanding may the more willingly submit to its purgation and dismiss its idols.

The Conventional Character of Language[1]

J. B. GREENOUGH AND G. L. KITTREDGE

THE CHANGES which the meanings of words undergo in the development of a language seem, at first sight, purely fortuitous in some instances. In fact, however, the appearance of chance is due merely to our ignorance of the causes that have operated in each case. Such causes may be simple and easily understood, or so complex as never to be discoverable in their entirety. But so long as thought proceeds in obedience to definite laws, language, which is the expression of thought by means of conventional signs, must also obey rules which, if we could discover them, would account for every variation.

We often speak of the "proper or essential meaning" of a word. The term is convenient, and one could not well dispense with it in etymological study. Yet it may easily become misleading, if certain cautionary limitations are not borne in mind. In the absolute sense of the term a word has no "essential" meaning. Words are conventional signs. They mean what they are intended to mean by the speaker and understood to mean by the hearer. There is no other sense in which language can be properly said to signify anything. Thus when a boy in the street declares that he "hain't seen no dog," it is not true that his "two negatives make one affirmative," for he intends simply an emphatic negation, and we inevitably understand him in that way, however nice we may be about our own *not's*. In other words, two negatives may make an affirmative in logic, but they seldom do in English speech. The rule in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English was like that in Greek: "Use as many negatives as you can." Thus in King Alfred's description of the effects of the harping of Orpheus: "No hart shunned-not no lion, nor no hare no hound, nor no beast knew-not no hatred nor no fear from another, for the pleasure they took in the sound."

Many current social phrases show in a moment how conventional are the meanings of words. Thus, "Beg your pardon!" with a questioning inflection of the voice, has come to mean simply "What?"—an inquiry when one has failed to catch another's remark. The only difference between "Beg pardon"

[1] From Greenough and Kittredge: *Words and Their Ways in English Speech*. Copyright, 1901, by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

and "What?" is a difference in courtesy,—the former involving an apology for inattention. "Dear Sir" at the beginning of a letter, and "Your humble servant" (or "yours" anyway) at the end, may mean very much, but commonly mean very little; they are no more than a notification to your correspondent that a letter is beginning and ending (like *salutem* and *vale* in Latin). "Please" or "if you please," annexed to a command, carries no suggestion that the person who receives the order is to obey it or not, as he chooses. "An early remittance will greatly oblige" does not necessarily indicate that your tailor feels himself under an obligation when you pay your old bill. "Your favor of the 30th" is a common commercial phrase for any letter, though we all know that letters are hardly favors to busy men. "Be so good as to go home!" "Kindly let me see no more of you!" "Not at home!" "So glad to see you!" "Give my love to—," "Sorry to be out when you called!"—are all phrases which mean just as much and just as little as they are understood to mean by the speaker and the person spoken to.

Perhaps the final test of the fact that language is a convention,—that words have no natural and essential meaning which belongs to them more than any other,—is seen in irony. Here we use a word in a sense which is the direct opposite of that which it usually bears,—and we are understood without difficulty. Thus, "He is a very courageous person" may mean, if it is so intended and so taken, "He is an arrant coward!" Nor is it absolutely necessary that the remark should be uttered in any special tone of voice in order to convey this ironical meaning. The intention of the speaker and the understanding of the hearer are all that is required There is a whole class of expressions (more or less colloquial) which have become idiomatic in an ironical sense: as, "A precious rascal!" "That's a pretty thing to say!" "Fine work, this!" "Here's a pretty how-d'ye-do!" "A nice mess!" "You're too kind!" "How *very* good of you!" "Here's richness!" "This is pleasant!" "Much good may it do him!" "I wish you joy of it!" So *merci!* and *danke!* may mean "no, thank you!" and the Romans used *benigne* (like the Greek Καλῶς) in a similar sense.

The truth of these considerations may be tested in another way. Many words have so changed their meanings in the course of time that their present sense has no necessary logical connection with that which they formerly bore.

Thus the Latin *rivalis* is an adjective that meant "pertaining to a brook" (L. *rivus;* cf. *river, rivulet*), but a *rival* is a "competitor." There is no necessary connection of thought between the two senses. Philologists know the history of this curious change, and see that it is easy and natural. *Rivales* in Latin came to mean "neighbors who got water from the same stream,"—and it is thus used in the Roman Digest, which discusses the contests that often rose between such persons respecting their riparian rights. But this connection between the senses is a mere matter of history. It does not affect us today. We do not think of brooks when we talk of rivals in politics, or business, or love.

Chamberlain once meant a servant who attended to the chambers of a house or inn. The *Chamberlain* of London is the city treasurer.

Phaeton was a Greek participle that meant "shining," and was appropriately applied to the son of Phœbus. Phaeton once drove a chariot with disastrous results, and his name now designates a kind of vehicle. But we do not call such vehicles *phaetons* because they *shine.*

Explodo meant, in Latin, "to drive off an actor by clapping the hands," then "to hoot off" by any noisy sign of disapproval. Thus Cicero speaks of a player as being "exploded not merely by hissing, but by abusive words." The modern intransitive use of *explode* is very modern indeed, but it suggests neither actors nor catcalls. The bridge between the senses is the idea of "driving out" in such phrases as "the ball was exploded from the gun." So powerful, however, are the modern associations of the word that even the bookish phrase "an exploded fallacy," which preserves the old sense, is commonly understood

as an error that has been "blown up" or "blown to pieces" by the arguments of an adversary.

Ingenium originally meant "that which is born in a man" (cf. *generate, genus*). Now, in the form *engine* (taken into English through the French), it means a machine for the application of "power,"—a locomotive, for instance. The intermediate steps are well known ("mother-wit," "contrivance," "device"); but it would be manifestly absurd to interpret our English word by appealing to *in* and the root GEN, "to be born."

These are merely a few examples out of thousands, but they suffice to enforce what has been said of the conventional nature of words.

To be sure, the course by which these same words have strayed so far from their former selves may usually be traced; and the clew which has guided their wanderings may then become evident. But this does not alter the case; for the present signification of each of them *is* its meaning, and something very different *was* its meaning a hundred or a thousand years ago, and between the two is a great gap, which the memory and the linguistic consciousness of the modern speaker does not span, and could not if it would. It is as if the word had been annihilated and created anew. The modern user knows nothing of the former meaning.

Words, then, have no character in themselves. They are merely conventional signs, and consequently they can be good or bad, dignified or vulgar, only in accordance with the ideas which they conventionally denote or suggest in the mind of the speaker and his hearers. Yet under this head of *suggestions* comes in an important consideration, which accounts for a great deal that would otherwise be inexplicable. Most words, from their use, acquire special connotations or associations, which almost seem to give them a character of their own.

Thus the word *fist* means simply "the hand with the fingers doubled up against the palm." In the idiomatic comparison "as big as your fist," it is purely descriptive, and has no particular character, good or bad. The use of the fist in fighting, however, has given a peculiar connotation to the term. We may say "He hit his opponent with his clenched fist," for here again *fist* is purely descriptive and occurs in an appropriate environment. Similarly, we may say "The boy cried dismally, wiping his eyes with his dingy fist," for here there is a certain grotesqueness in the scene which justifies the use of undignified language. But we can no longer say, as was formerly possible, "The lady held a lily in her delicate fist." In other words, the associations of *fist* are either pugnacious, vulgar, or jocose.

These suggestive associations are partly general and partly individual. If certain phrases are habitually associated in our minds with low or disagreeable persons or things, they will inevitably be relegated to the category of unseemly terms; and, on the other hand, phrases that are associated with dignified and reputable persons or circumstances, will aquire a kind of respectability independent of the exact meaning which they convey.

The associations in question may be purely personal. Everybody remembers certain words which he dislikes intensely, though they are in common use, convey no bad or disagreeable meaning, and are quite euphonious. We may even remember our reason for such dislikes. Perhaps the word is associated with an unpleasant experience; more likely, however, our antipathy is due to its habitual use by some one whom we do not fancy. Or we may have been bored by hearing the word over-used, so that every new repetition gives us a feeling of satiety.

We have already averted to this doctrine of association in discussing slang. One of the chief objections to the excessive use of this pariah dialect is not that there is anything objectionable about the words themselves, but that their associations are low, or at least undignified, and perhaps disgusting. If they secure a position in the vocabulary, their origin is likely to be forgotten, and they cease to be offensive.

The associations of words are always shifting even when the meaning remains unchanged. Hence we continually meet with expressions in our older poets which have

lost their dignity, and appear to us out of harmony with the context, though they were quite irreproachable when the author used them. Examples are *brag, candy, pate, slubber, mope, fry, portly, smug, pother, liver, wink, blab, feed,* and many others. The effect referred to may be felt in such a passage as the following:—

> I have dispatch'd in post
> To sacred Delphos, to Apollo's temple,
> Cleomenes and Dion, whom you know
> Of *stuff'd* sufficiency
>
> Shakspere, The Winter's Tale, act ii, sc. 1, ll. 182-5.

It is largely these indefinable connotations of words that make it so difficult to speak a foreign tongue. We may be well trained in grammar and command a large vocabulary, and yet use words which, though they express our meaning accurately enough, suggest ridiculous or inopportune associations to a native. "Baboo English" is proverbial. The awkward and equivocal remarks into which one frequently blunders in speaking one's own language, "the things one would rather have left unsaid," depend on a momentary forgetfulness of some more or less obscure connotation which the words that we are using may bear.

Clearly, then, we are dealing with a very real phenomenon in the operations of language. When a word has been long used in a particular sense, there cluster about it a great variety of traditional associations,—religious, historical, literary, or sentimental, which, though not a part of its meaning, properly so called, are still a considerable factor in its significant power. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet, no doubt; yet no other name would so vividly suggest to us its fragrance. The noun *lily* is no whiter, nor is it more graceful, than, for example, *nilly*. Yet if it were possible to substitute *nilly* for *lily*, it would be long before the new term would call up in our minds either the whiteness or the grace of the lily as the accustomed word presents them,—not by virtue of any inherent quality, but merely because of its traditional and poetic associations.

The power of such connotations becomes very great when the word is an old one, which has been much used, and is in some manner, therefore, bound up with the most intense experiences of great numbers of men.

Words like *father, mother, home,* or the name of one's country, may have a tremendous effect in a great crisis. A mob may be roused to fury by the utterance of a single word; yet in all such cases it is of course not the word at all that produces the effect, but its associations. Cæsar's mutinous army was reduced to tearful submission by the one word *Quirites!* "fellow-citizens," which reminded them that they were no longer *commilitones,* the "fellow-soldiers" of their beloved leader.

Indeed, language is sometimes translated into conduct. A figure of speech may even suggest a course of action. To "*bridle* one's tongue" is an old and very natural metaphor. Is it too much to believe that it suggested the particular form of gag used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to confine the tongue of a convicted shrew? At all events, the figure of speech is centuries older than the actual "scold's bridle." A mistaken etymology may react in a similiar manner A *forlorn hope* is a body of soldiers who undertake some service of extraordinary peril. The phrase is an adaptation of the Dutch *verloren hoop,* "lost band" (in Fr., *enfants perdus*). *Hoop* is cognate with our *heap,* which formerly signified a multitude of persons as well as of things. Who can doubt that the happy confusion of tongues which illuminated with a ray of *hope* the desperate valor of the old phrase, has had its effect on the fortune of war?

As we have already remarked, we seem to ourselves to speak by nature, for we cannot remember learning to talk. This fact, taken in connection with the powerful influence which words often produce upon our minds through the association of ideas, enables us readily to understand how it is often thought that words have some natural power or meaning independently of usage or convention. This idea is widespread, and manifests itself alike in the savage and in the philosopher.

Thus we find amongst men of all degrees

of civilization a deep-seated belief in the magic potency of words. This belief underlies all kinds of charms and incantations. It is not the magician who forces the demon to appear or produces the convulsion of nature, but the words themselves which the magician speaks. His power consists only in knowing the words. There are stories of ignorant persons, and even children, who have accidentally read a passage, to them unintelligible, from a book of magic, with precisely the same effect which the spell would have had if recited by the enchanter. Similarly, it is often thought that the name of a person, an animal, or an object, has a mysterious connection with its bearer. A werewolf may be restored to his human form by calling him by name. If a berserk champion was addressed by his right name in the midst of a battle, he instantly lost his demonic strength. In invoking a god, or other supernatural being, it was customary to use many different names. Often, in later times, the object of this variety was thought to be the winning of the deity's favor by employing that title which he might prefer. Originally, however, the purpose was to make sure of uttering the one true and essential name of the divinity,—that name which would control him instantly and force him to grant your request. It is well known that the real name of the city of Rome was supposed to be kept secret, lest, if it became known to the enemy, they might use it in incantations which would deprive the city of its protecting gods. So, among some savages, it is a deadly insult to call a man by his right name,—an idea which has left its traces in the apologetic Latin formula "quem honoris causa nomino," and in the parliamentary phrase "the gentleman from Ohio."

All these superstitions, primitive as they seem to us, have had considerable effect on men's opinions about language, and, consequently, on language itself. They have even found philosophic expression in the Stoic doctrine of etymology, which has exerted a profound influence on the modern thought, and still sways us in our judgment of words.

When, in the fourth or fifth century before Christ, the Greek philosophers began to connect the study of words with that of things, one of the questions which confronted them, was, whether words and their meanings came "by nature" (φύσει), or artificially and "by convention" (θέσει). The Stoics, in accordance with their general theory of the universe, decided in favor of a "natural" origin, and held that if the "true" (ἔτυμος, *étumos*), or original meaning of a word could only be discovered, we should at once gain an insight into the divinely constituted nature of the thing which the word denotes. The search for this "true meaning" (ἔτυμον, *étumon*) was therefore called *etymology*, or "the science of true meanings."

The doctrine of the Stoics has long been exploded, and the term *etymology* has entirely changed its sense. Yet the old notion dies hard. In the popular mind there still lingers a haunting suspicion that it is true, and accordingly one often hears, from the pulpit or the platform, and even from the professor's chair, serious arguments based on the supposed original or essential meaning of this or that word. The fallacy of such reasoning may be illustrated by an anecdote. The writer recently asked a friend, in jest, whether a particular service came within the functions of an *amanuensis* "Oh! yes," was the reply, "she does it *with her hands!*" Now, it is true that *amanuensis* comes from *manus*, "the hand"; yet the jocose remark just quoted was none the less an absurdity, as indeed, it was meant to be. The Romans, who were accustomed to dictating their compositions, designated the slaves who wrote for them as *servi a manu*, i.e. "writing-servants," for *manus* was often used for "handwriting" (like our *hand*). Later they made, somewhat irregularly, a noun, *amanuensis* (like *Atheniensis*), and this we have borrowed in the same sense, and in that sense only. Hence the absurdity of drawing from the general meaning of *manus*, "hand," any inferences as to the proper duties of an amanuensis.

Yet similar "etymological" arguments are extremely common in serious discourse. One can hardly take up a periodical without reading that *education* is derived from L. *e-duco*, "draw out," and that *therefore* all education must be a "drawing out" of the child's facul-

ties. Nothing could be more erroneous. In the first place, *education* is not derived from *e-duco;* and if it were, it is absurd to suppose that the first Roman who used the noun *educatio* had any such sublimated and refined idea of education. The whole argument depends on the antiquated doctrine of the Stoic etymon.

Now, the fact is, that the Romans compounded the verb *duco,* "to lead," with *ex,* meaning "out" or "up." This compound *educo* they used for all kinds of "leading" (in distinction from *agere,* "to drive"), and particularly for "bringing up" from the egg to the chicken, or from infancy to mature years; always, however, with personal objects, that is, always with reference to the creature that was "brought up." As *educo* also came to be employed in many other senses, a special verb, *educo,* was made for this special meaning, and later, this *educo,* with its derivative noun, *educatio,* was applied especially to the "training" of children. We may believe that the proper method of education is to draw out the latent faculties of the pupil, but we can find no suggestion of that method in the etymology of the word itself.

It is equally misleading to seek for light as to the nature of the religious principle in men from the etymology of the word *religion.* Yet we are often told that the very name of this principle reveals its true quality as the *bond* that unites the human and the divine. There is, to be sure, a bare possibility of deriving *religio* (irregularly) from *religo,* "to bind"; but even if that were its origin, the sense in which the first heathen users of the word conceived the figure could not throw any light on the central principles of spiritual life. It is far more likely, however, that the word is an abstract from *relego.* This is Cicero's own derivation, and the use of the cognate words undoubtedly confirms it. The verb *relego,* "to pick up," and so "to notice," "take cognizance of" is compounded of *lego,* "to pick," and *red-,* "again" (the prefix being used somewhat in the sense of *re-* in *regard,* as we also have it in *respicio, respecto*). It undoubtedly meant "to notice carefully," "to observe closely" (cf. *diligens*), especially of noticing omens, portents, and other divine intimations. Hence we have *religiosus,* "inclined to" this action, often in a bad sense, "excessively so inclined," and hence "superstitious": compare the dictum quoted by Aulus Gellius (iv, 9, 1),—"religentem esse oportet, religiosum nefas," "One ought to be scrupulous,—it is wrong to be superstitious." At a time when man's connection with the gods was entirely through omens and the like, it would be natural that a "painful regard" (for divine intimations) should be "superstition" or "religion," either of which ideas *religio* expresses. The word *neglegere* is used of the opposite idea (though not, like *relegere,* without an object). It is only by taking into account the customs and beliefs that prevailed when a word was made, that we can have any just conception of its origin.

Such false linguistic doctrine as this of *education* and *religion* must not be confused with a proper study of "root-meanings." The history of every word begins with its root, if the root can be ascertained, as is not always the case. Yet we must not expect the root to contain, as in the germ, all the significance that successive civilizations have attached to the words that have grown out of it. We should never forget that words are conventional symbols, and that any word—whatever its origin—bears, at any moment, that meaning which the speakers of the language have tacitly agreed to assign to it. And this meaning may, or may not, have a direct logical connection with the original sense of the root.

This principle does not do away with the distinctions of right and wrong in speaking a language. The purpose of speech is to express one's thoughts so that they may be understood by others. Hence, the consensus of usage determines the meaning which a word bears, and this consensus is governed at all times by the *Sprachgefühl,* so that a language always remains true to itself, as we have had occasion to remark before. Within the limits of this feeling, however, hardly any influence is too slight to produce a variation in sense.

How We Know What We Know[1]

S. I. HAYAKAWA

The crucial point to be considered in a study of language behavior is the relationship between language and reality, between words and not-words. Except as we understand this relationship, we run the grave risk of straining the delicate connection between words and facts, of permitting our words to go wild, and so of creating for ourselves fabrications of fantasy and delusion.

WENDELL JOHNSON

BESSIE, THE COW

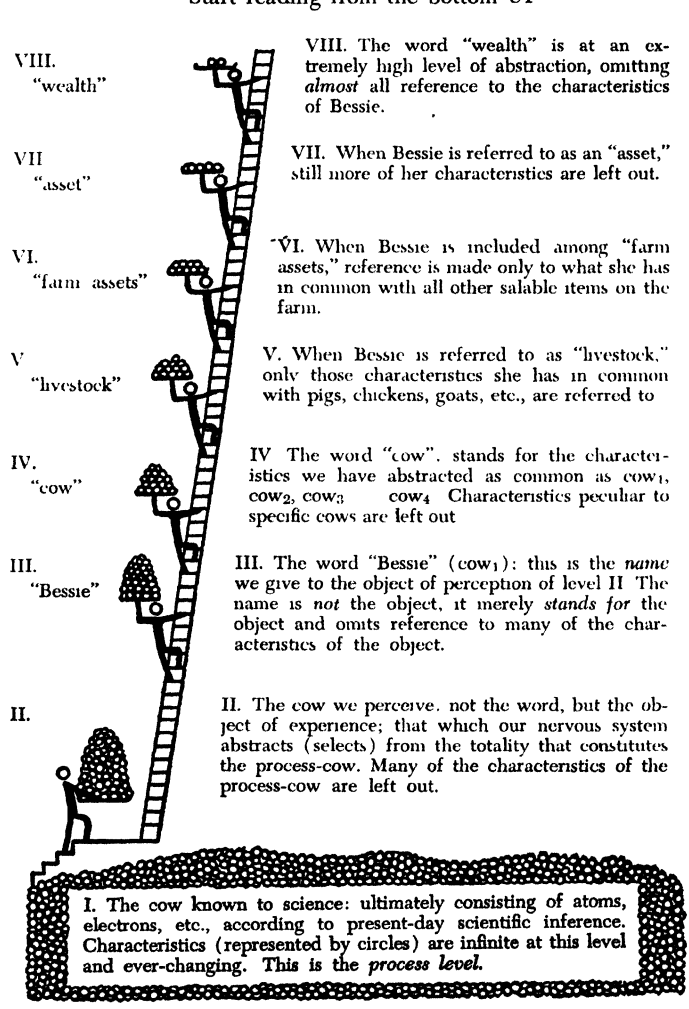
The universe is in a perpetual state of flux. The stars are in constant motion, growing, cooling, exploding. The earth itself is not unchanging; mountains are being worn away, rivers are altering their channels, valleys are deepening. All life is also a process of change, through birth, growth, decay, and death. Even what we used to call "inert matter"—chairs and tables and stones—is not inert, as we now know, for, at the submicroscopic level, it is a whirl of electrons. If a table looks today very much as it did yesterday or as it did a hundred years ago, it is not because it has not changed, but because the changes have been too minute for our coarse perceptions. To modern science there is no "solid matter." If matter looks "solid" to us, it does so only because its motion is too rapid or too minute to be felt. It is "solid" only in the sense that a rapidly rotating color chart is "white" or a rapidly spinning top is "standing still." Our senses are extremely limited, so that we constantly have to use instruments such as microscopes, telecopes, speedometers, stethoscopes, and seismographs to detect and record occurrences which our senses are not able to record directly. The way in which we happen to see and feel things is the result of the peculiarities of our nervous systems. There are "sights" we cannot see, and, as even children know today with their high-frequency dog whistles, "sounds" that we cannot hear. It is absurd, therefore, to imagine that we ever perceive anything "as it really is."

Inadequate as our senses are, with the help of instruments they tell us a great deal. The discovery of microorganisms with the use of the microscope has given us a measure of control over bacteria; we cannot see, hear, or feel radio waves, but we can create and transform them to useful purpose. Most of our conquest of the external world, in engineering, in chemistry, and in medicine, is due to our use of mechanical contrivances of one kind or another to increase the capacity of our nervous systems. In modern life, our unaided senses are not half enough to get us about in the world. We cannot even obey speed laws or compute our gas and electric bills without mechanical aids to perception.

To return, then, to the relations between words and what they stand for, let us say that there is before us "Bessie," a cow. Bessie is a living organism, constantly changing, constantly ingesting food and air, transforming it, getting rid of it again. Her blood is circulating, her nerves are sending messages. Viewed microscopically, she is a mass of variegated corpuscles, cells, and bacterial organisms; viewed from the point of view of modern physics, she is a perpetual dance of electrons. What she is in her entirety, we can never know; even if we could at any precise moment say what she was, at the next moment she would have changed enough so that our description would no longer be accurate. It is impossible to say completely what Bessie or anything else really *is*. Bessie is no static "object," but a dynamic process.

The Bessie that we experience, however, is something else again. We experience only a small fraction of the total Bessie: the lights

[1] From *Language in Thought and Action* by S. I. Hayakawa, copyright, 1941, 1949, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., and used with their permission.



and shadows of her exterior, her motions, her general configuration, the noises she makes, and the sensations she presents to our sense of touch. *And because of our previous experience, we observe resemblances in her to certain other animals to which, in the past, we have applied the word "cow."*

The Process of Abstracting

The "object" of our experience, then, is not the "thing in itself," but *an interaction between our nervous systems (with all their imperfections) and something outside them.* Bessie is unique—there is nothing else in the universe exactly like her in all respects. But our nervous systems, automatically *abstracting* or selecting from the process-Bessie those features of hers in which she resembles other animals of like size, functions, and habits. *classify* her as "cow."

When we say, then, that "Bessie is a cow," we are only noting the process-Bessie's resemblances to other "cows" and *ignoring differences.* What is more, we are leaping a huge chasm: from the dynamic process-Bessie, a whirl of electro-chemico-neural eventfulness, to a relatively static "idea," "concept," or *word,* "cow." The reader is referred to the diagram entitled "The Abstraction Ladder."[2]

As the diagram illustrates, the "object" we see is an abstraction of the lowest level, but it is still an abstraction, since it leaves out characteristics of the process that is the real Bessie. The *word* "Bessie" (cow_1) is the lowest *verbal* level of abstraction, leaving out further characteristics—the differences between Bessie yesterday and Bessie today, between Bessie today and Bessie tomorrow—and selecting only the similarities. The word "cow" selects only the similarities between Bessie (cow_1), Daisy (cow_2), Rosie (cow_3), and so on, and therefore leaves out still more about Bessie. The word "livestock" selects or abstracts only the features that Bessie has in common with pigs, chickens, goats, and sheep. The term "farm asset" abstracts only the features Bessie has in common with barns, fences, livestock, furniture, generating plants, and tractors, and is therefore on a very high level of abstraction.

The reason we must concern ourselves with the process of abstracting is that the study of language is all too often regarded as being a matter of examining such things as pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. The methods by which composition and oratory are taught in old-fashioned school systems seem to be largely responsible for this widespread notion that the way to study words is to concentrate one's attention exclusively on words.

But as we know from everyday experience, learning language is not simply a matter of learning words; it is a matter of correctly relating our words to the things and happenings for which they stand. We learn the language of baseball by playing or watching the game *and studying what goes on.* It is not enough for a child to learn to *say* "cookie" or "dog"; he must be able to use these words in their proper relationship to nonverbal cookies and nonverbal dogs before we can grant that he is learning the language. As Wendell Johnson has said, "The study of language begins properly with a study of what language is about."

Once we begin to concern ourselves with what language is about, we are at once thrown into a consideration of how the human nervous system works. When we call Beau (the Boston terrier), Pedro (the Chihuahua), Snuffles (the English bulldog), and Shane (the Irish wolfhound)—creatures that differ greatly in size, shape, appearance, and behavior—by the same name, "dog," our nervous system has obviously gone to work *abstracting* what is common to them all, ignoring for the time being the differences among them.

Why We Must Abstract

This process of abstracting, of leaving characteristics out, is an indispensable convenience. To illustrate by still another example, suppose that we live in an isolated village of four families, each owning a house. A's house is referred to as *maga;* B's house is *biyo;* C's is *kata,* and D's is *pelel.* This is quite satisfactory for ordinary purposes of communication in the village, unless a discussion arises about building a new house—a spare one, let us say. We cannot refer to the projected house by any one of the four words we have for the existing houses, since each of these has too specific a meaning. We must find a *general* term, at a higher level of abtraction, that means "something that has certain characteristics in common with *maga, biyo, kata,* and *pelel,* and yet is not A's, B's, C's, or D's." Since this is much too complicated to say each time, an *abbreviation* must be invented. Let us say we choose the noise, *house.* Out of such needs do our words come—they are a form of shorthand. The invention of a new abstraction is a great step forward, since it *makes discussion possible*—as,

[2] The "abstraction ladder" is based on "The Structural Differential," a diagram originated by A. Korzybski to explain the process of abstracting. For a fuller explanation both of the diagram and the process it illustrates, see his *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics* (1933), especially Chapter XXV.

in this case, not only the discussion of a fifth house, but of all future houses we may build or see in our travels or dream about.

A producer of educational films once remarked to the writer that it is impossible to make a shot of "work." You can shoot Joe hoeing potatoes, Frank greasing a car, Bill spraying paint on a barn, but never just "work." "Work," too, is a shorthand term, standing, at a higher level of abstraction, for a characteristic that a multitude of activities, from dishwashing to navigation to running an advertising agency to governing a nation, have in common. . . .

On Definitions

Definitions, contrary to popular opinion, tell us nothing about things. They only describe people's linguistic habits; that is, they tell us what noises people make under what conditions. Definitions should be understood as *statements about language.*

House. This is a word, at the next higher level of abstraction, that can be substituted for the more cumbersome expression, "Something that has characteristics in common with Bill's bungalow, Jordan's cottage, Mrs. Smith's tourist home, Dr. Jones's mansion . . ."

Red. A feature that rubies, roses, ripe tomatoes, robins' breasts, uncooked beef, and lipsticks have in common is abstracted, and this word expresses that abstraction.

Kangaroo. Where the biologist would say "herbivorous mammal, a marsupial of the family Macropodidae," ordinary people say "kangaroo."

Now it will be observed that while the definitions of "house" and "red" given here point *down* the abstraction ladder (see the charts) to *lower* levels of abstraction, the definition of "kangaroo" remains at the same level. That is to say, in the case of "house," we could if necessary go and *look* at Bill's bungalow, Jordan's cottage, Mrs. Smith's tourist home, and Dr. Jones's mansion, and figure out for ourselves what features they seem to have in common; in this way, we might begin to understand under what conditions to use the word "house." But all we know about "kangaroo" from the above is that where some people say one thing, other people say another. That is, when we stay at the *same* level of abstraction in giving a definition, we do not give any information, unless, of course, the listener or reader is already sufficiently familiar with the defining words so that he can work himself down the abstraction ladder. Dictionaries, in order to save space, have to assume in many cases such familiarity with the language on the part of the reader. But where the assumption is unwarranted, definitions at the same level of abstraction are worse than useless. Looking up "indifference" in some cheap pocket dictionaries, we find it defined as "apathy"; we look up "apathy" and find it defined as "indifference."

Even more useless, however, are the definitions that go *up* the abstraction ladder to higher levels of abstraction—the kind most of us tend to make automatically. Try the following experiment on an unsuspecting friend:

"What is meant by the word *red*?"
"It's a color."
"What's a *color*?"
"Why, it's a quality things have."
"What's a *quality*?"
"Say, what are you trying to do, anyway?"

You have pushed him into the clouds. He is lost.

If, on the other hand, we habitually go *down* the abstraction ladder to *lower* levels of abstraction when we are asked the meaning of a word, we are less likely to get lost in verbal mazes; we will tend to "have our feet on the ground" and know what we are talking about. This habit displays itself in an answer such as this:

"What is meant by the word *red*?"
"Well, the next time you see a bunch of cars stopped at an intersection, look at the traffic light facing them. Also, you might go to the fire department and see how their trucks are painted."

"Let's Define Our Terms"

An extremely widespread instance of an unrealistic (and ultimately superstitious) attitude toward definitions is found in the

common academic prescription, "Let's define our terms so that we shall all know what we are talking about." As we have already seen, the fact that a golfer, for example, cannot define golfing terms is no indication that he cannot understand and use them. *Conversely, the fact that a man can define a large number of words is no guarantee that he knows what objects or operations they stand for in concrete situations.* People often believe, having defined a word, that some kind of understanding has been established, ignoring the fact that *the words in the definition often conceal even more serious confusions and ambiguities than the word defined.* If we happen to discover this fact and try to remedy matters by defining the defining words, and then, finding ourselves still confused, go on to define the words in the definitions of the defining words, and so on, we quickly find ourselves in a hopeless snarl. The only way to avoid this snarl is *to keep definitions to a minimum and to point to extensional levels wherever necessary—and in writing and speaking, this means giving specific examples of what we are talking about.*

Ultimately, no adequate definition of "apple pie" can be given in words—one has to examine and taste an actual apple pie. The same goes for more abstract words. If we have never felt love, if we have never felt strongly about a moral principle nor felt the satisfactions of seeing a moral principle observed, we may verbally define "love" or "justice" until doomsday, but we shall still not know what they mean.

Chasing Oneself in Verbal Circles

In other words, the kind of "thinking" we must be extremely wary of is that which *never* leaves the higher verbal levels of abstraction, the kind that never points *down* the abstraction ladder to lower levels of abstraction and from there to the extensional world:

"What do you mean by *democracy?*"
"Democracy means the preservation of human rights."
"What do you mean by *rights?*"
"By rights I mean those privileges God grants to all of us—I mean man's inherent privileges."
"Such as?"
"Liberty, for example."
"What do you mean by *liberty?*"
"Religious and political freedom."
"And what does that mean?"
"Religious and political freedom is what we have when we do things the *democratic* way."

Of course it is possible to talk meaningfully about democracy, as Jefferson and Lincoln have done, as Charles and Mary Beard do in *The Rise of American Civilization,* as Frederick Jackson Turner does in *The Frontier in American History,* as Lincoln Steffens does in his *Autobiography,* as David Lilienthal does in *TVA: Democracy on the March*—to name only the first examples that come to mind—but such a sample as the above is not the way to do it. The trouble with speakers who never leave the higher levels of abstraction is not only that they fail to notice when they are saying something and when they are not; they also produce a similar lack of discrimination in their audiences. Never comng down to earth, they frequently chase themselves around in verbal circles, unaware that they are making meaningless noises.

This is by no means to say, however, that we must never make extensionally meaningless noises. When we use directive language, when we talk about the future, when we utter ritual language or engage in social conversation, we often make utterances that have no extensional verifiability. It must not be overlooked that our highest ratiocinative and imaginative powers are derived from the fact that symbols *are* independent of things symbolized, so that we are free not only to go quickly from low to extremely high levels of abstraction (from "canned peas" to "groceries" to "commodities" to "national wealth") and to manipulate symbols even when the things they stand for cannot be so manipulated ("If all the freight cars in the country were hooked up to each other in one long line . . ."), but we are also free to manufacture symbols at will even if they stand only for abstractions made from other abstrac-

tions and not for anything in the extensional world. Mathematicians, for example, often play with symbols that have no extensional content, just to find out what can be done with them; this is called "pure mathematics." And pure mathematics is far from being a useless pastime, because mathematical systems that are elaborated with no extensional applications in mind often prove later to be applicable in useful and unforeseen ways. Mathematicians, however, when they are dealing with extensionally meaningless symbols, usually know what they are doing. We likewise *must* know what we are doing.

Nevertheless, all of us (including mathematicians), when we speak the language of everyday life, often make meaningless noises without knowing that we are doing so. We have already seen what confusions this can lead to. The fundamental purpose of the abstraction ladder, as shown both in this chapter and the next, is to make us aware of the process of abstracting.

The Distrust of Abstractions

We may, using our abstraction ladder, allocate statements as well as words to differing levels of abstraction. "Mrs. Plotz makes good potato pancakes" may be regarded as a statement at a fairly low level of abstraction, although, to be sure, it leaves out many characteristics, such as (1) what one means by "goodness" in potato pancakes, and (2) the infrequent occasions when her pancakes fail to turn out well. "Mrs. Plotz is a good cook," is a statement at a higher level of abstraction, covering Mrs. Plotz's skill not only with potato pancakes, but also with roasts, pickles, noodles, strudels, and so on, nevertheless omitting *specific* mention of what she can accomplish. "Chicago women are good cooks," is a statement at a still higher level of abstraction; it is one that can be made (if at all) on the basis of the observation of the cooking of a statistically significant number of Chicago women. "The culinary art has reached a high state in America," would be a still more highly abstract statement, and if made at all, would have to be based not only on the observation of the Mrs. Plotzes of Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Denver, Albuquerque, and Chattanooga, but also on the observation of the quality of meals served in hotels and restaurants, the quality of training given in departments of home economics in high schools and colleges, the excellence of the writings on culinary art in American books and magazines, and many other relevant facts.

It is to be regretted, although it is understandable, that there exists a tendency in our times to speak contemptuously of "mere abstractions." The ability to climb to higher and higher levels of abstraction is a distinctively human trait, without which none of our philosophical or scientific insights would be possible. In order to have a science of chemistry, one *has* to be able to think of "H_2O," leaving out of consideration for the time being the wetness of water, the hardness of ice, the pearliness of dew, and the other extensional characteristics of H_2O at the objective level. In order to have a study called "ethics," one has to be able to think of what ethical behavior has in common under different conditions and in different civilizations; one has to abstract that which is common to the behavior of the ethical carpenter, the ethical politician, the ethical businessman, the ethical soldier, and that which is common to the laws of conduct of the Buddhist, the Judaist, the Confucian, and the Christian. Thinking that is most abstract can also be that which is most generally useful. The famous injunction of Jesus. "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise," is, from this point of view, a brilliant generalization of more particular directives—a generalization at so high a level of abstraction that it appears to be applicable to all men in all cultures.

But high level abstractions acquire a bad reputation because they are so often used, consciously or unconsciously, to confuse and befuddle people. A grab among competing powers for oil resources may be spoken of as "protecting the integrity of small nations." (Remember the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere"?) An unwillingness to pay

social security taxes may be spoken of as "maintaining the system of free enterprise." Depriving the Negro of his vote in violation of the Constitution of the United States may be spoken of as "preserving states' rights." The consequence of this free, and often irresponsible, use of high level abstractions in public controversy and special pleading is that a significant portion of the population has grown cynical about *all* abstractions.

But, as the abstraction ladder has shown, *all we know is abstractions.* What you know about the chair you are sitting in is an abstraction from the totality of that chair. When you eat white bread, you cannot tell by the taste whether or not it has been "enriched by vitamin B" as it says on the wrapper; you simply have to trust that the process (from which the words "vitamin B" are abstracted) is actually there. What you know about your wife—even if she has been your wife for thirty years—is again an abstraction. Distrusting all abstractions simply does not make sense.

The test of abstractions then is not whether they are "high" or "low level" abstractions, but *whether they are referrable to lower levels.* If one makes a statement about "culinary arts in America," one should be able to refer the statement down the abstraction ladder to particulars of American restaurants, American domestic science, American techniques of food preservation, and so on down to Mrs. Plotz in her kitchen. If one makes a statement about "civil rights in Wisconsin," one should know something about national, state, and local statutes, about the behavior of policemen, magistrates, judges, academic authorities, hotel managers, and the general public in Wisconsin, whose acts and whose decisions affect that minimum of decent treatment in the courts, in politics, and in society that we call "civil rights." *A preacher, a professor, a journalist, or politician whose high level abstractions can systematically and surely be referred to lower level abstractions is not only talking, he is saying something.* As *Time* would say, no windbag, he.

"Dead-Level Abstracting"

Professor Wendell Johnson of the State University of Iowa, in his *People in Quandaries,* discusses a linguistic phenomenon which he calls "dead-level abstracting." Some people, it appears, remain more or less permanently stuck at certain levels of the abstraction ladder, some on the lower levels, some on the very high levels. There are those, for example, who go in for "persistent low-level abstracting":

> Probably all of us know certain people who seem able to talk on and on without ever drawing any very general conclusions. For example, there is the back-fence chatter that is made up of he said, and then I said and then she said and I said and then he said, far into the afternoon, ending with, "Well, that's *just* what I told him!" Letters describing vacation trips frequently illustrate this sort of language, detailing places seen, times of arrival and departure, the foods eaten and the prices paid, whether the beds were hard or soft, etc.

A similar inability to get to higher levels of abstraction characterizes certain types of mental patients who suffer, as Johnson says, "a general blocking of the abstracting process." They go on indefinitely, reciting insignificant facts, never able to pull them together to frame a generalization to give a meaning to the facts.

Other speakers remain stuck at higher levels of abstraction, with little or no contact with lower levels. Such language remains permanently in the clouds. As Johnson says:

> It is characterized especially by vagueness, ambiguity, even utter meaninglessness. Simply by saving various circulars, brochures, free copies of "new thought" magazines, etc. . . . it is possible to accumulate in a short time quite a sizable file of illustrative material. Much more, of course, is to be found on library shelves, on newsstands, and in radio programs. Everyday conversation, classroom lectures, political speeches, commencement addresses, and various kinds of group forums and round-table discussions provide a further abundant source of *words cut loose from their moorings.* [Italics supplied.]

(The writer heard recently of a course in

esthetics given at a large middlewestern university in which an entire semester was devoted to Art and Beauty and the principles underlying them, and during which the professor, even when asked by students, persistently declined to name specific paintings, symphonies, sculptures, or objects of beauty to which his principles might apply. "We are interested," he would say, "in principles, not in particulars.")

There are psychiatric implications to dead-level abstracting on higher levels, too, since it is inevitable that, when maps proliferate wildly without any reference to a territory, the result can only be delusion. But whether at higher or lower levels, dead-level abstracting is, as Johnson says, always dull:

> The low-level speaker frustrates you because he leaves you with no directions as to what to do with the basketful of information he has given you. The high-level speaker frustrates you because he simply doesn't tell you what he is talking about. . . . Being thus frustrated, and being further blocked because the rules of courtesy (or of attendance at class lectures) require that one remain quietly seated until the speaker has finished, there is little for one to do but daydream, doodle, or simply fall asleep.

It is obvious, then, that interesting speech and interesting writing, as well as clear thinking and consequent psychological adjustment, require the constant interplay of higher and lower level abstractions, and the constant interplay of the verbal levels with the non-verbal ("object") levels. In science, this interplay goes on constantly, hypotheses being checked against observations, predictions against extensional results. (Scientific *writing*, however, as exemplified in technical journals, offers some appalling examples of *almost* dead-level abstracting—which is the reason so much of it is hard to read. Nevertheless, the interplay between verbal and non-verbal, experimental levels does continue, or else it would not be science.) The work of good novelists and poets also represents this constant interplay between higher and lower levels of abstraction. A "significant" novelist or poet is one whose message has a high level of *general* usefulness in providing insight into life; but he gives his generalizations an impact and a power to convince through his ability to observe and describe actual social situations and states of mind. A memorable literary character, such as Sinclair Lewis's George F. Babbitt, has *descriptive* validity (at a low level of abstraction) as the picture of an individual, as well as a *general* validity as a picture of a "typical" American businessman. . . .

The interesting writer, the informative speaker, the accurate thinker, and the well-adjusted individual, operate on all levels of the abstraction ladder, moving quickly and gracefully and in orderly fashion from higher to lower, from lower to higher—with minds as lithe and deft and beautiful as monkeys in a tree.

Four Kinds of Thinking[1]

JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON

WE DO NOT think enough about thinking, and much of our confusion is the result of current illusions in regard to it. Let us forget for the moment any impressions we may have derived from the philosophers, and see what seems to happen in ourselves. The first thing that we notice is that our thought moves with such incredible rapidity that it is almost impossible to arrest any specimen of it long enough to have a look at it. When we are offered a penny for our thoughts we always find that we have recently had so many things in mind that we can easily make a selection which will not compromise us too nakedly. On inspection we shall find that even if we are

[1] From *The Mind in the Making*. Copyright, 1921, by Harper & Brothers, publishers. Copyright, 1949, Bankers Trust Company, executors of the author.

not downright ashamed of a great part of our spontaneous thinking it is far too intimate, personal, ignoble or trivial to permit us to reveal more than a small part of it. I believe this must be true of everyone. We do not, of course, know what goes on in other people's heads. They tell us very little and we tell them very little. The spigot of speech, rarely fully opened, could never emit more than driblets of the ever renewed hogshead of thought—*noch grosser wie's Heidelberger Fass.* We find it hard to believe that other people's thoughts are as silly as our own, but they probably are.

We all appear to ourselves to be thinking all the time during our waking hours, and most of us are aware that we go on thinking while we are asleep, even more foolishly than when awake. When uninterrupted by some practical issue we are engaged in what is now known as a *reverie.* This is our spontaneous and favorite kind of thinking. We allow our ideas to take their own course and this course is determined by our hopes and fears, our spontaneous desires, their fulfillment or frustration; by our likes and dislikes, our loves and hates and resentments. There is nothing else anything like so interesting to ourselves as ourselves. All thought that is not more or less laboriously controlled and directed will inevitably circle about the beloved Ego. It is amusing and pathetic to observe this tendency in ourselves and in others. We learn politely and generously to overlook this truth, but if we dare to think of it, it blazes forth like the noontide sun.

The reverie or "free association of ideas" has of late become the subject of scientific research. While investigators are not yet agreed on the results, or at least on the proper interpretation to be given to them, there can be no doubt that our reveries form the chief index to our fundamental character. They are a reflection of our nature as modified by often hidden and forgotten experiences. We need not go into the matter further here, for it is only necessary to observe that the reverie is at all times a potent and in many cases an omnipotent rival to every other kind of thinking. It doubtless influences all our speculations in its persistent tendency to self-magnification and self-justification, which are its chief preoccupations, but it is the last thing to make directly or indirectly for honest increase of knowledge. Philosophers usually talk as if such thinking did not exist or were in some way negligible. This is what makes their speculations so unreal and often worthless.

The reverie, as any of us can see for himself, is frequently broken and interrupted by the necessity of a second kind of thinking. We have to make practical decisions. Shall we write a letter or no? Shall we take the subway or a bus? Shall we have dinner at seven or half past? Shall we buy U. S. Rubber or a Liberty Bond? Decisions are easily distinguishable from the free flow of the reverie. Sometimes they demand a good deal of careful pondering and the recollection of pertinent facts; often, however, they are made impulsively. They are a more difficult and laborious thing than the reverie, and we resent having to "make up our mind" when we are tired, or absorbed in a congenial reverie. Weighing a decision, it should be noted, does not necessarily add anything to our knowledge, although we may, of course, seek further information before making it.

A third kind of thinking is stimulated when anyone questions our beliefs and opinions. We sometimes find ourselves changing our minds without any resistance or heavy emotion, but if we are told that we are wrong we resent the imputation and harden our hearts. We are incredibly heedless in the formation of our beliefs, but find ourselves filled with an illicit passion for them when anyone proposes to rob us of their companionship. It is obviously not the ideas themselves that are dear to us, but our self-esteem, which is threatened. We are by nature stubbornly pledged to defend our own from attack, whether it be our person, our family, our property, or our opinion. A United States Senator once remarked to a friend of mine that God Almighty could not make him change his mind on our Latin-American Policy. We may surrender, but rarely confess ourselves vanquished. In the intellectual

world at least peace is without victory.

Few of us take the pains to study the origin of our cherished convictions; indeed, we have a natural repugnance to so doing. We like to continue to believe what we have been accustomed to accept as true, and the resentment aroused when doubt is cast upon any of our assumptions leads us to seek every manner of excuse for clinging to them. *The result is that most of our so-called reasoning consists in finding arguments for going on believing as we already do.*

I remember years ago attending a public dinner to which the Governor of the state was bidden. The chairman explained that His Excellency could not be present for certain "good" reasons; what the "real" reasons were the presiding officer said he would leave us to conjecture. This distinction between "good" and "real" reasons is one of the most clarifying and essential in the whole realm of thought. We can readily give what seem to us "good" reasons for being a Catholic or a Mason, a Republican or a Democrat, an adherent or opponent of the League of Nations. But the "real" reasons are usually on quite a different plane. Of course the importance of this distinction is popularly, if somewhat obscurely, recognized. The Baptist missionary is ready enough to see that the Buddhist is not such because his doctrines would bear careful inspection, but because he happened to be born in a Buddhist family in Tokio. But it would be treason to his faith to acknowledge that his own partiality for certain doctrines is due to the fact that his mother was a member of the First Baptist church of Oak Ridge. A savage can give all sorts of reasons for his belief that it is dangerous to step on a man's shadow, and a newspaper editor can advance plenty of arguments against the Bolsheviki. But neither of them may realize why he happens to be defending his particular opinion.

The "real" reasons for our beliefs are concealed from ourselves as well as from others. As we grow up we simply adopt the ideas presented to us in regard to such matters as religion, family relations, property, business, our country, and the state. We unconsciously absorb them from our environment. They are persistently whispered in our ear by the group in which we happen to live. Moreover, as Mr. Trotter has pointed out, these judgments, being the product of suggestion and not of reasoning, have the quality of perfect obviousness, so that to question them

> . . . is to the believer to carry skepticism to an insane degree, and will be met by contempt, disapproval, or condemnation, according to the nature of the belief in question. When, therefore, we find ourselves entertaining an opinion about the basis of which there is a quality of feeling which tells us that to inquire into it would be absurd, obviously unnecessary, unprofitable, undesirable, bad form, or wicked, we may know that that opinion is a nonrational one, and probably, therefore, founded upon inadequate evidence.

Opinions, on the other hand, which are the result of experience or of honest reasoning do not have this quality of "primary certitude." I remember when as a youth I heard a group of business men discussing the question of the immortality of the soul, I was outraged by the sentiment of doubt expressed by one of the party. As I look back now I see that I had at the time no interest in the matter, and certainly no least argument to urge in favor of the belief in which I had been reared. But neither my personal indifference to the issue, nor the fact that I had previously given it no attention, served to prevent an angry resentment when I heard *my* ideas questioned.

This spontaneous and loyal support of our preconceptions—this process of finding "good" reasons to justify our routine beliefs—is known to modern psychologists as "rationalizing"—clearly only a new name for a very ancient thing. Our "good" reasons ordinarily have no value in promoting honest enlightenment, because, no matter how solemnly they may be marshaled, they are at bottom the result of personal preference or prejudice, and not of an honest desire to seek or accept new knowledge.

In our reveries we are frequently engaged in self-justification, for we cannot bear to think ourselves wrong, and yet have constant illustrations of our weaknesses and mistakes.

So we spend much time finding fault with circumstances and the conduct of others, and shifting on to them with great ingenuity the onus of our own failures and disappointments. *Rationalizing is the self-exculpation which occurs when we feel ourselves, or our group, accused of misapprehension or error.*

The little word *my* is the most important one in all human affairs, and properly to reckon with it is the beginning of wisdom. It has the same force whether it is *my* dinner, *my* dog, and *my* house, or *my* faith, *my* country, and *my* God. We not only resent the imputation that our watch is wrong, or our car shabby, but that our conception of the canals of Mars, of the pronunciation of "Epictetus," of the medicinal value of salicine, or the date of Sargon I, are subject to revision.

Philosophers, scholars, and men of science exhibit a common sensitiveness in all decisions in which their *amour propre* is involved. Thousands of argumentative works have been written to vent a grudge. However stately their reasoning, it may be nothing but rationalizing, stimulated by the most commonplace of all motives. A history of philosophy and theology could be written in terms of grouches, wounded pride, and aversions, and it would be far more instructive than the usual treatments of these themes. Sometimes, under Providence, the lowly impulse of resentment leads to great achievements. Milton wrote his treatise on divorce as a result of his troubles with his seventeen-year-old wife, and when he was accused of being the leading spirit in a new sect, the Divorcers, he wrote his noble *Areopagitica* to prove his right to say what he thought fit, and incidentally to establish the advantage of a free press in the promotion of Truth.

All mankind, high and low, thinks in all the ways which have been described. The reverie goes on all the time not only in the mind of the mill hand and the Broadway flapper, but equally in weighty judges and godly bishops. It has gone on in all the philosophers, scientists, poets, and theologians that have ever lived. Aristotle's most abstruse speculations were doubtless tempered by highly irrelevant reflections. He is reported to have had very thin legs and small eyes, for which he doubtless had to find excuses, and he was wont to indulge in very conspicuous dress and rings and was accustomed to arrange his hair carefully. Diogenes the Cynic exhibited the impudence of a touchy soul. His tub was his distinction. Tennyson in beginning his *Maud* could not forget his chagrin over losing his patrimony years before as the result of an unhappy investment in the Patent Decorative Carving Company. These facts are not recalled here as a gratuitous disparagement of the truly great, but to insure a full realization of the tremendous competition which all really exacting thought has to face, even in the minds of the most highly endowed mortals.

And now the astonishing and perturbing suspicion emerges that perhaps almost all that has passed for social science, political economy, politics, and ethics in the past may be brushed aside by future generations as mainly rationalizing. John Dewey has already reached this conclusion in regard to philosophy. Veblen and other writers have revealed the various unperceived presuppositions of the traditional political economy, and now comes an Italian sociologist, Vilfredo Pareto, who, in his huge treatise on general sociology, devotes hundreds of pages to substantiating a similar thesis affecting all the social sciences. This conclusion may be ranked by students of a hundred years hence as one of the several great discoveries of our age. It is by no means fully worked out, and it is so opposed to nature that it will be very slowly accepted by the great mass of those who consider themselves thoughtful. As a historical student I am personally fully reconciled to this newer view. Indeed, it seems to me inevitable that just as the various sciences of nature were, before the opening of the seventeenth century, largely masses of rationalizations to suit the religious sentiments of the period, so the social sciences have continued even to our own day to be rationalizations of uncritically accepted beliefs and customs.

It will become apparent as we proceed that the fact that an idea is ancient and that it has been widely received is no argument in its favor, but should immediately suggest the necessity of carefully testing it as a probable instance of rationalization.

This brings us to another kind of thought which can fairly easily be distinguished from the three kinds described above. It has not the usual qualities of the reverie, for it does not hover about our personal complacencies and humiliations. It is not made up of the homely decisions forced upon us by everyday needs, when we review our little stock of existing information, consult our conventional preferences and obligations, and make a choice of action. It is not the defense of our own cherished beliefs and prejudices just because they are our own—mere plausible excuses for remaining of the same mind. On the contrary, it is that peculiar species of thought which leads us to *change* our mind.

It is this kind of thought that has raised man from his pristine, subsavage ignorance and squalor to the degree of knowledge and comfort which he now possesses. On his capacity to continue and greatly extend this kind of thinking depends his change of groping his way out of the plight in which the most highly civilized peoples of the world now find themselves. In the past this type of thinking has been called Reason. But so many misapprehensions have grown up around the word that some of us have become very suspicious of it. I suggest, therefore, that we substitute a recent name and speak of "creative thought" rather than of Reason. *For this kind of meditation begets knowledge, and knowledge is really creative inasmuch as it makes things look different from what they seemed before and may indeed work for their reconstruction.*

In certain moods some of us realize that we are observing things or making reflections with a seeming disregard of our personal preoccupations. We are not preening or defending ourselves; we are not faced by the necessity of any practical decision, nor are we apologizing for believing this or that. We are just wondering and looking and mayhap seeing what we never perceived before.

Curiosity is as clear and definite as any of our urges. We wonder what is in a sealed telegram or in a letter in which some one else is absorbed, or what is being said in the telephone booth or in low conversation. This inquisitiveness is vastly stimulated by jealousy, suspicion, or any hint that we ourselves are directly or indirectly involved. But there appears to be a fair amount of personal interest in other people's affairs even when they do not concern us except as a mystery to be unraveled or a tale to be told. The reports of a divorce suit will have "news value" for many weeks. They constitute a story like a novel or play or moving picture. This is not an example of pure curiosity, however, since we readily identify ourselves with others, and their joys and despairs then become our own.

We also take note of, or "observe," as Sherlock Holmes says, things which have nothing to do with our personal interests and make no personal appeal either direct or by way of sympathy. This is what Veblen so well calls "idle curiosity." And it is usually idle enough. Some of us when we face the line of people opposite us in a subway train impulsively consider them in detail and engage in rapid inferences and form theories in regard to them. On entering a room there are those who will perceive at a glance the degree of preciousness of the rugs, the character of the pictures, and the personality revealed by the books. But there are many, it would seem, who are so absorbed in their personal reverie or in some definite purpose that they have no bright-eyed energy for idle curiosity. The tendency to miscellaneous observation we come by honestly enough, for we note it in many of our animal relatives.

Veblen, however, uses the term "idle curiosity" somewhat ironically, as is his wont. It is idle only to those who fail to realize that it may be a very rare and indispensable thing from which almost all distinguished human achievement proceeds, since it may lead to systematic examination and seeking for things hitherto undiscovered. For research is but diligent search which enjoys the high flavor of primitive hunting. Occasionally and

fitfully idle curiosity thus leads to creative thought, which alters and broadens our own views and aspirations and may in turn, under highly favorable circumstances, affect the views and lives of others, even for generations to follow. An example or two will make this unique human process clear.

Galileo was a thoughtful youth and doubtless carried on a rich and varied reverie. He had artistic ability and might have turned out to be a musician or painter. When he had dwelt among the monks at Vallombrosa he had been tempted to lead the life of a religious. As a boy he busied himself with toy machines and he inherited a fondness for mathematics. All these facts are of record. We may safely assume also that, along with many other subjects of contemplation, the Pisan maidens found a vivid place in his thoughts.

One day when seventeen years old he wandered into the cathedral of his native town. In the midst of his reverie he looked up at the lamps hanging by long chains from the high ceiling of the church. Then something very difficult to explain occurred. He found himself no longer thinking of the building, worshipers, or the services; of his artistic or religious interests; of his reluctance to become a physician as his father wished. He forgot the question of a career and even the *graziosissime donne.* As he watched the swinging lamps he was suddenly wondering if mayhap their oscillations, whether long or short, did not occupy the same time. Then he tested this hypothesis by counting his pulse, for that was the only timepiece he had with him.

This observation, however remarkable in itself was not enough to produce a really creative thought. Others may have noticed the same thing and yet nothing came of it. Most of our observations have no assignable results. Galileo, may have seen that the warts on a peasant's face formed a perfect isosceles triangle, or he may have noticed with boyish glee that just as the officiating priest was uttering the solemn words, *ecce agnus Dei,* a fly lit on the end of his nose. To be really creative, ideas have to be worked up and then "put over," so that they become a part of man's social heritage. The highly accurate pendulum clock was one of the later results of Galileo's discovery. He himself was led to reconsider and successfully to refute the old notions of falling bodies. It remained for Newton to prove that the moon was falling, and presumably all the heavenly bodies. This quite upset all the consecrated views of the heavens as managed by angelic engineers. The universality of the laws of gravitation stimulated the attempt to seek other and equally important natural laws and cast grave doubts on the miracles in which mankind had hitherto believed. In short, those who dared to include in their thoughts the discoveries of Galileo and his successors found themselves in a new earth surrounded by new heavens.

On the 28th of October, 1831, three hundred and fifty years after Galileo had noticed the isochronous vibrations of the lamps, creative thought and its currency had so far increased that Faraday was wondering what would happen if he mounted a disk of copper between the poles of a horseshoe magnet. As the disk revolved an electric current was produced. This would doubtless have seemed the idlest kind of an experiment to the stanch business men of the time, who, it happened, were just then denouncing the child-labor bills in their anxiety to avail themselves to the full of the results of earlier idle curiosity. But should the dynamos and motors which have come into being as the outcome of Faraday's experiment be stopped this evening, the business man of to-day, agitated over labor troubles, might, as he trudged home past lines of "dead" cars, through dark streets to an unlighted house, engage in a little creative thought of his own and perceive that he and his laborers would have no modern factories and mines to quarrel about had it not been for the strange practical effects of the idle curiosity of scientists, inventors, and engineers.

The examples of creative intelligence given above belong to the realm of modern scientific achievement, which furnishes the most striking instances of the effects of scrupulous, objective thinking. But there are, of course, other great realms in which the recording

and embodiment of acute observation and insight have wrought themselves into the higher life of man. The great poets and dramatists and our modern story-tellers have found themselves engaged in productive reveries, noting and artistically presenting their discoveries for the delight and instruction of those who have the ability to appreciate them.

The process by which a fresh and original poem or drama comes into being is doubtless analogous to that which originates and elaborates so-called scientific discoveries; but there is clearly a temperamental difference. The genesis and advance of painting, sculpture, and music offer still other problems. We really as yet know shockingly little about these matters, and indeed very few people have the least curiosity about them. Nevertheless, creative intelligence in its various forms and activities is what makes man. Were it not for its slow, painful, and constantly discouraged operations through the ages man would be no more than a species of primate living on seeds, fruits, roots, and uncooked flesh, and wandering naked through the woods and over the plains like a chimpanzee.

The origin and progress and future promotion of civilization are ill understood and misconceived. These should be made the chief theme of education, but much hard work is necessary before we can reconstruct our ideas of man and his capacities and free ourselves from innumerable persistent misapprehensions. There have been obstructionists in all times, not merely the lethargic masses, but the moralists, the rationalizing theologians, and most of the philosophers, all busily if unconsciously engaged in ratifying existing ignorance and mistakes and discouraging creative thought. Naturally, those who reassure us seem worthy of honor and respect. Equally naturally those who puzzle us with disturbing criticisms and invite us to change our ways are objects of suspicion and readily discredited. Our personal discontent does not ordinarily extend to any critical questioning of the general situation in which we find ourselves. In every age the prevailing conditions of civilization have appeared quite natural and inevitable to those who grew up in them. The cow asks no questions as to how it happens to have a dry stall and a supply of hay. The kitten laps its warm milk from a china saucer, without knowing anything about porcelain; the dog nestles in the corner of a divan with no sense of obligation to the inventors of upholstery and the manufacturers of down pillows. So we humans accept our breakfasts, our trains and telephones and orchestras and movies, our national Constitution, our moral code and standards of manners, with the simplicity and innocence of a pet rabbit. We have absolutely inexhaustible capacities for appropriating what others do for us with no thought of a "thank you." We do not feel called upon to make any least contribution to the merry game ourselves. Indeed, we are usually quite unaware that a game is being played at all

What are Facts?[1]

HAROLD A. LARRABEE

THE FIRST STAGE of the combined method of induction and deduction has two main aspects, either of which may be considered first: observation—"get the facts," or hypothesis—"but what facts?" The two phases cannot be separated; and we shall begin by emphasizing observation rather than hypothesis. To consult experience is plainly to get the facts. But what are facts? The answer seems easy: facts are . . . just facts. The word "fact," however, has come to have a good many meanings, all the way from the broad sense of a factually supported theory

[1] From *Reliable Knowledge*. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1945. Reprinted by the permission of the author.

("Evolution is a fact") to the narrow notion of a single event ("It is a fact that this pebble is in motion"). To avoid unnecessary controversies, it will be best to start with the ordinary meaning of fact.

What we usually think of as a fact is something known to us directly in experience. It is what is appealed to as the ground for some human assertion or judgment. It is the stuff of evidence; it is the foundation or primary datum upon which a claim to knowledge rests. When we use such expressions as: "To get down to the facts . . . ," "Now the fact of the matter is . . . ," we call attention to some lower or more fundamental stratum upon which our assertions rest. To talk about "true facts," as people often do, is redundant: facts just *are*. They cannot be false. To demand the facts is to signify our intention to find out what it is that we are obliged to take account of—that is, to move away from the sphere of the merely possible: guesses, conjectures, and fancies, toward actuality—"the world as it really is."

Now if we are to make this appeal for confirmation of our knowledge with any success whatever, it is apparent that there must be present in human experience, no matter how chaotic or variable it may be in other respects, *some* elements or factors that are relatively stable and orderly. These may be physical or mental or a combination of both. Rocks are facts, but so are the obsessions of insane people. Recent experiments have shown that a bull can be kept within a field by a fence consisting of a single electrically charged wire, provided he has been conditioned by one or more shocks from it. Such a fence is no less a fact, although it consists of the physical wire, its charge, *and* the mental state of the conditioned bull (inferred from his behavior), than an ordinary steel fence which is so strong that no bull whatever could escape from it. Whatever in experience is compelling, coercive, inescapable—whatever cannot be conjured into and out of our world at will—deserves the name of fact.

"Facts," as Smollett and many other writers have remarked, "are stubborn things"; or, as the poet Burns put it, "they downa be disputed." The brute facts, as they are sometimes called, are what, in a thorough inquiry at any given time, or especially over a period of time, we cannot seem to get rid of; they are more or less blunt indications of states of affairs to which we are ultimately obliged to adjust ourselves in order to get along in the world. They can, of course, be temporarily obscured or glossed over with fictions, romances, and all manner of pretenses by the tender-minded, or even in some instances completely ignored. Men have deliberately refrained from inquiry; they have been deceived by illusions; and they have deceived themselves times without number ever since there have been human beings on earth. There are some matters concerning which it does seem as if the old saying "*Mundus vult decipi*" ("The world wishes to be deceived") were still true. Witness the comment of President Barnard of Columbia, himself a scientist, in 1873: "Much as I love truth in the abstract I love my sense of immortality still more, and if the final outcome of all the boasted discoveries of modern science is to disclose to men that they are more evanescent than the shadow of the swallow's wing upon the lake . . . give me then, I pray, no more science. I will live on in my simple ignorance, as my fathers did before me; and when I shall at length be sent to my final reprose, let me . . . lie down to pleasant, even though they may be deceitful dreams."[2]

But the will to believe what is pleasing, whether or not it is contrary to fact, must always battle with the counter-will to find out what is so; and there is abundant evidence that, in the long run, even apparently "vital lies" display poor staying powers. The facts, as we say, have a way of catching up with their most determined ignorers. Men, in other words, are forced to inquire objectively into some matters if they wish to survive and to satisfy their dearest desires. It may, of course, literally take centuries to dispel a universal acceptance of the existence of witches, sea-serpents, and vampires as

[2] Quoted by Sidney Ratner, "Evolution and the Rise of the Scientific Spirit in America," *Philosophy of Science*, vol. III (1936), p. 115.

facts of physical Nature instead of as illusions, or facts of abnormal psychology. Certainly we should expect that many of our present opinions concerning matters of fact will look just as silly to the wiser men of a few centuries hence.

What we shall be looking for, then, in all our attempts to "get the facts" by observation in any field of inquiry, are the ultimately compelling elements or factors in the ever-flowing stream of human experience, which may form relatively stable bases for human knowledge-claims. Experience acquaints us with the world as our whole organism reacts to it; but understanding in its primary stage of observation of facts interprets our experience by finding form in it or giving form to it. The relatively constant elements in our experience may be due to the outside structure and functioning of the physical world or to the inside structure and functioning of human minds, or to an interaction of all those factors. It is not a matter of discovering absolute anchorages for knowledge which shall be eternally immovable, but rather of trimming down gradually the unmanageable areas of change or flux.

Facts are living, growing, changing affairs with cores of sufficient relative permanence to enable us to count on them in inquiry and to utilize them in confirming or rejecting our hypotheses. That means, as Dewey points out, that our search for reliable knowledge through what is broadly known as scientific method will usually begin and end with the process of analyzing out of the flux of experience its relatively coercive aspects for us as knowers, whatever and wherever, in the line of our interests, they may happen to be. We should not expect all facts to be of the same type, or all equally accessible, or all equally easy to establish as "factual" by a single standardized method. Some facts lend themselves to scrutiny by instruments; some can be stated in exact quantities and precise measurements; some are capable of being expressed in words and sentences; while others, no less coercive and inescapable, are almot impossible to put into language of any sort. Some facts are also more plastic than others, at least in the sense that we are sometimes able to escape their coercion by changing our interest or dropping our inquiry. Pragmatists in philosophy emphasize this capacity of ours to determine, to some extent, what some of the facts we experience shall be *for us;* while Realists are inclined to stress the structural elements to which our knowing must inevitably conform.

Private and Public Facts

If facts are the coercive aspects of experience which we are able to "carve out" by analysis—that is, by relative isolation in a changing background or context, how shall we undertake the task of observing them? What method shall we use in dealing with the different kinds of experience for different purposes, always remembering that it is seldom the isolated fact in which we are ultimately interested, but rather its rôle in confirming or rejecting our tentative generalization or hypothesis?

INTROSPECTION

In our preliminary survey of man the knower as seen from the inside, we discovered the immense potential wealth and variety of the contents of any human consciousness when viewed as a "private world," without reference to anything outside itself. Minds that are both sane and insane entertain, as we know, all manner of fleeting sensations, dreams, memories, feelings, speculations, intuitions, and so on. The method by which the facts of one's private mental life are observed is called introspection. Fortunately its possibilities have been thoroughly explored by pioneer psychologists, so that its limitations are now generally recognized. Indeed, almost anyone can grasp the reasons for the essential awkwardness of subjective observation. For if I attempt to watch my own fugitive mental processes with a view to analyzing them, I find that I must, as it were, stand aside sufficiently to avoid obstructing and distorting them by "self-consciousness." To do this I must let them run their natural course, and then pause and view them retrospectively, i.e. in memory. Since any mental state lingers on vividly in memory

for only a few seconds at most, it is next to impossible for me to make any accurate observations of inner processes that extend over longer periods. Introspection, therefore, while it can deal with simple sensations such as after-images and the like, and can reveal in our minds the presence of a great many kinds of complex mental operations, is unable to cope with the latter with any precision.

It is possible, however, for a person to set up his own private tests of what he regards as coercive in his own introspected experience, and to insist against all challenges by others that such-and-such is a fact *as far as he is concerned.* Mystical revelations may be held to be authoritative by the individual to whom they come, in spite of all the arguments of the scoffers. Carried to an extreme, this may cut the person off from his fellows as insane; but milder cases of alleged private knowledge are extremely important in the fields of art, religion, and even in politics. In my private world, I may assert that I am having a sensation of yellow, or a feeling of warmth, or a vision of eternal bliss, or a direct assurance that I am being called upon to save my country. Are these subjective or objective? Are they facts indicative of states of affairs in physical Nature, or simply facts about my states of mind?

Now it is hard to see how anyone else can know better than I do what I am in fact experiencing. Yet the capacity to experience does not necessarily carry with it the capacity to express or to analyze one's experiences. We know that men are notorious self-deceivers, to say nothing of those who deliberately misrepresent the private feelings of which they are well aware, e.g., the malingerer who, to escape military service, assures the examining physician that he is suffering from sharp but invisible aches and pains. Even the most honest patients are seldom able to tell their doctors exactly how they feel; while to diagnose the ailment of a man who is suffering from delusions is extremely difficult. Legal cases involving attempts to prove in court that a certain amount of pain or indignity was suffered, especially pain of the sort called "mental anguish," present great psychological and logical obstacles. The "secrets of the heart" make notoriously slippery evidence; and a callous jury may place a value of only six cents upon the "established fact" of a breach of promise to marry.

Thus it would seem that the private facts which pass an individual's own tests and are accepted by him as reliable knowledge are beyond the power of public examination either to credit or to discredit, except by some inference from conditions that are open to public observation. When another person's finger is cut by a knife, we suppose that his pain is like one that we have experienced in a similar situation, although we cannot verify our inference directly. Yet, we do not, for that reason, abandon our bungling attempts to guess the contents of other minds on the basis of our own experiences. We have a large vocabulary for describing these correlations between inner states and outer actions: "You look as if you were tired, angry, elated, despondent . . ." But the "as if" is important, since you may be feigning fatigue or anger or elation. All our correlating (of your mental state with my remembered mental state via my observation of your outward behavior) is subject to a great many kinds of error.

What makes this matter of private knowledge of such crucial importance is the fact that within its scope lie some portions, at least, of all of our most profound experiences of value, and the seat of all of our ultimate bases of appraisal. The things by which and for which men live and die have final residues which are private because they lie beyond the possibility of expression in words or deeds. Lovers make momentous decisions on the basis of wordless intuitive estimates of each other that neither of them can coherently express. Many a religious mystic and romantic poet claims to "know what he knows" by intuition or direct assurance from within. If he is called upon to validate his personal feeling of certainty, he is likely to reply that the experience upon which it is based is wholly "ineffable"—that is, incommunicable, and therefore unimpeachable by anyone else. The fanatical nationalisms of Europe talk in terms of similar ultimately ir-

rational bases of conviction, the dogmatic *mystiques* of racial power politics, or secular religions.

But there are far more important although less spectacular instances of the central rôle of private knowledge than these. Any man's thinking, whether he is a scientist or an artist or an engineer or a poet, is bound to be governed to a great extent by what Professor C. J. Ducasse calls his "criterion of interestingness." The hard-boiled positivist who refuses to pay serious attention to any fact which cannot be tested publicly by sense-perception, and who finds the dreams of the mystic so much moonshine, is applying his own criterion of interestingness; and so is the mystic who dismisses the public facts of science as trivial. Their respective preferences for different orders of fact lie at the very fountainheads of their inquiries, in the primary demands which they make upon knowing. Various overt consequences can be shown to flow from accepting the different criteria. But, if one chooses to accept the consequences, neither criterion can be "refuted demonstrated, or shown to be more or less probable" than the other.[3] We have arrived at the inner citadel of men's philosophies: the area in which originate the criteria which govern the rest of our choices; and some part of that region is marked "Private. No Admittance."

There are some particular fields of human inquiry, such as the physical sciences, in which private facts are relatively unimportant, since the goal of investigation can be reached in terms of publicly verifiable data. But there are others, such as the social studies, in which supposedly objective and scientific conclusions are repeatedly upset by a missing "x" which has apparently been overlooked, and which is sometimes characterized as "sheer human perverseness." What has been forgotten is that, while the facts of the exact sciences are preponderantly public facts, those of the social studies are mixtures of public and private facts. In the laboratory sciences, the tests of reliable knowledge are public tests of common perception, by means of which private criteria can be largely eliminated. But in the social studies, it is not so easy to distinguish between what is objective fact and what is subjective attitude. Private criteria mingle with public; introspection and external observation aid and abet (and sometimes contradict) each other. Worse still, whatever the social-studies observer may succeed in distinguishing as his own subjective attitude may also be an objective fact of prime importance. The observer is not only a part of what he observes, but the very way in which he makes his observations is also a part of his results. To refuse to acknowledge this state of affairs results in the absurd blindness of "sterile intellectualism."

Where the two sets of standards, the inner "demonic" and the outer "scientific" (in Sir Arthur Eddington's terms) do not conflict, there are fewer difficulties. But where they do, it is fatal to exclude either the sympathetic understanding or the quantifying intellect. The problem is to come to a working agreement by "making allowances" from one point of view or the other. The mystic may try to banish exact science or place it at the service of madmen bent on megalomaniac dreams of world conquest. The overzealous scientist may assume that he has got rid of "demonic" activity by reducing it to his formulas, only to discover that he has overestimated the extent to which human irrationality can be systematized. It is far better to recognize the disturbing presence of the private facts of inner motivation in the picture of human conduct from the very beginning than it is to discover them, in the end, in a mysterious discrepancy between the predictions of "social science" and the ways in which men actually behave.

Approximate Coincidence Observations

Private facts revealed by introspection do not yield socially reliable knowledge for the simple reason that, unless they can be expressed publicly (thereby ceasing to be wholly private), no two observers can ever have any solid basis for assurance that they are knowing the same thing at the same time. There is nothing tangible for them to

[3] C. J. Ducasse, "Philosophy and Natural Science," *Philosophical Review*, vol. XLIX (1940), p. 139.

agree or disagree about, nothing which logic can take hold of, much less succeed in deciding, because there is no sound way of telling just what is at stake. Private facts may be challenged by anybody, but can be defended by nobody, except in the sense that when my private knowledge is doubted, I can defend it to myself by considerations which are convincing to me, but which may prove nothing to anyone else. The seeker for reliable knowledge is usually relieved, therefore, to get away from this shadowy sphere of private knowledge to the other extreme—the clear, daylight world of public fact so familiar to all students of the laboratory sciences.

Here at least, he says to himself, is something objective, in the structure of things, which men can grasp and agree upon. Here we shall find the really coercive, the genuinely stable elements in human experience, the facts nobody can successfully challenge, the universally admitted conclusions that are trustworthy if anything is. Private facts are one-man knowledge; but public facts are every man's knowledge, tested by criteria which do not depend upon the peculiarities of any single individual. In the language of the laboratory, private knowledge is dominated and corrupted by the "personal equation" of human variability; while in the public knowledge called science, the personal equation is reduced to the smallest possible degree.

Consider any one of the familiar operations in a laboratory which terminates in the establishment of a scientific fact: the length of a rod, the balancing of two weights, the time consumed by a given process, the comparison of two sounds or colors. Whether or not any complicated instruments are used to supplement the sense-organs of the observers, ultimately in each instance each observer comes to rest in a simple basic judgment of coincidence or the lack of it; this rod is (as far as he can determine) just as long, or longer, or shorter than that one; these two weights do or do not balance, and so on. This fundamental decision may be made by any one of the senses, or by several of them combined. Crude examples from our everyday experience are the comparison of two watches in order to tell the time, the fingering of coins in a pocket to tell whether we have two dimes or two pennies or one of each, or the recognition of two automobiles as being of the same make by the shape of their hoods. But whether we use the rough distinctions of common sense or the extremely precise readings of sensitive gauges and cross-hairs, the final step is the same: *This does or does not approximately coincide with that.*

Note that the coincidence does not have to be perfect in order to serve as the basis for a wide agreement among observers. Most of the exact measurements of science are advanced, not as final figures which are never to be corrected, but as the latest products of the method of successive approximations. The latter consists of indefinitely repeated measurements by more and more refined techniques of observation, giving rise to a group of slightly differing results which cluster about a moving center in what is called the normal curve of error. How far the refinement must be advanced in order to be acceptable in any given instance depends upon the demands of the observers. Ten surveyors measuring a quarter-mile running-track might not agree within several inches, and yet everyone would be willing to regard the track as approximately a quarter of a mile in length. Yet, in a bacteriological investigation, a discrepancy of a millimeter might upset all the results. This calls attention once more to the factor of demand on the part of the knower at the very heart of the fact-finding process.

Once such a coincidence is carefully observed, we expect it to be confirmed or verified by any normal observer anywhere. That does not mean that all human beings are capable of making coincidence observations with the same degree of fineness. But it does mean that all "normal" human beings are sufficiently alike to make possible wide areas of agreement within recognizable margins of error due to individual differences. There is, admittedly, some circularity in the use of "normal" here, because we use the ability

to make coincidence observations as one of the tests of the normal observer.

Public Facts as Our Most Reliable Knowledge

We seem at last to have reached the goal of the most reliable knowledge that is accessible to man for purposes of action, mastery, and control of his world. It is achieved whenever any individual succeeds in winning virtually unanimous social acceptance of something in his experience as a scientific fact—that is, as an item that can be tested publicly by means of approximate coincidence observations carried out by normal observers according to conventions which have proved serviceable in similar instances. It consists, when analyzed, of something sensed, concerning which there is a substantial agreement among independent inquirers who have not been coerced by violence or threats or indeed by anything except the "hard data" of the experience itself. It ends the particular inquiry that aimed at discovering what was inescapably there; it clinches that argument, and provides the basis for a knowledge-claim.

But it should be clear that this does not mean in any given instance that we have arrived at knowledge which is absolute or beyond doubt. We cannot even say figuratively that we have reached bedrock, and can now build up structures that will rest upon absolutely reliable knowledge. All normal observers may bring in approximately the same sense-reports about a given fact, and yet there is always the possibility that we are the victims of a gigantic "conspiracy to deceive." At the same time, we are justified in saying that, in our world, there is no human knowledge that is *more* reliable for purposes of action than that which approximate coincidence observations by many witnesses yield. To doubt *all* instances of that kind of knowledge is to refuse to credit not only the evidence of our own senses, but that of all other human observers whom we regard as normal—that is, as sharing roughly our own interests, demands, and sense-equipment. For this basic knowledge of socially tested public facts, like a bareback circus rider precariously poised on two galloping horses, rests upon elements of relative permanence in two changing realms: (1) in living human knowers, and (2) in the evolving environments with which they find that they must deal.

What happens when all such observers are able approximately to agree upon a fact is that a number of these stable elements appear and correspond. On the side of the observers, their interests, demands, past experiences, and sense-organs are sufficiently similar, while on the side of what is observed, the material is sufficiently lasting, to enable them all to direct their attention upon and to single out of its context a specific item of experience concerning which all of them are willing without extraneous influence to make about the same statements with regard to its relation to the rest of experience. If either set of factors, subjective or objective, fluctuates too rapidly, we shall have no commonly accepted facts in that field. When we are able to agree on a fact, however, our agreement usually extends beyond our perception of it to its status with respect to other facts. Even the simple acceptance of the whiteness of a piece of chalk as a perceived fact normally includes an agreement that, in all sorts of perspectives and amounts of light, the object will behave with a certain consistency upon which we can rely. In knowing facts for purposes of action, then, we are not content to register them in isolation. We are not interested merely in discriminating sounds and shapes and colors for their own sakes, as in intuitive aesthetic contemplation. What we want to grasp is their meaning or import through their structures and relations to other facts and meanings—the ways in which they can or cannot reliably be expected to fit into all the sorts of future situations and contexts in which we are or may become interested.

Habits of Thought[1]

ROBERT H. THOULESS

THE EASE and the pleasure with which our minds slip into habitual lines of thought is one of the characters of human thinking used by orators who wish to exploit our power of crooked thinking. Those of us who speak in public know how easy it is to find some phrase which just coincides with the thought habits of our audience. We know when we have got such a phrase by the applause which follows. A skillful orator begins his speech by many such phrases. He refers to "the glorious institutions of our great country" (applause), to "the sound common sense of the American people" (more applause), and to their "unconquerable spirit" (still more applause). By this time he has produced in his audience an attitude of willingness to accept what he says. He can now go on to say things which earlier their thought habits would have led them to reject. He can say, for example, that we have nothing left of Liberty except the Statue, or that the glory of our nation is being dimmed by our lawlessness or bureaucracy. And the audience go on accepting what he says. The resistance which would certainly have been shown against these statements if he started with them has been broken down by this simple device of beginning with easily accepted statements.

The same device may be used by a quack psychological healer. He tells his audience that the mind has greater power over the body, which is true. He goes on to illustrate this power by stories which may also be true. He may tell, for example, of people who seemed to be dumb or paralyzed who become suddenly well under the influence of some emotional crisis. He may even illustrate this power by some simple experiments. When his audience are in a receptive state of mind he goes on to tell them the falsehoods which are the real object of the whole discourse. He tells them that he has a method by which all their illnesses, physical or mental, may be cured, which will be communicated in small classes. If the trick has succeeded and members of his audience have gone on believing the speaker because the first things he said seemed to them to be obviously true, they will be $25 poorer and probably no better in health.

So if we hear a succession of statements, A, B, C, and D, which our minds accept readily and with enthusiasm, we must still be on guard against accepting a fifth statement E. A, B, C, and D may only have been ground bait intended to produce the habit of swallowing everything the speaker says. E may conceal the hook.

Our caution, however, should extend even further than this. The ease and readiness with which we accept A, B, C, and D is no guarantee that even they are true. The laws of habit formation hold in the mind as they do in the body. Thoughts we have thought often pass through our minds with increasing ease until they appear obvious. Emotions that have been called up in connection with particular thoughts are aroused more easily by those thoughts until the connection between emotion and thought appears to us to be a necessary one. So an appreciation of psychology should lead us to reject the old statement of the philosophers that what we cannot doubt must be true. What we cannot doubt may simply be based on a very deeply rooted thought habit and may well be false.

Our ancestors, for example, found themselves unable to doubt that the earth stood still while the sun moved round it every day. We ourselves have found it equally difficult

[1] From *How to Think Straight*, copyright, 1932, 1939, by Simon and Schuster, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Simon and Schuster.

to doubt that there is an exact meaning in the statement that two events in different places occurred at the same time. Yet both of these convictions were wrong, and were simply based on deeply grounded habits of thought. One of these sets of thought habits was broken by Copernicus when he showed that the facts were better explained by supposing that instead of the sun moving round the earth, the earth rotated on its axis. The other set was broken by Einstein when he revolutionized physics by bringing forward his special theory of relativity.

We all have a newspaper acquaintance with Einstein's theory of relativity, so I can safely take from it another example of the power of thought habits to hinder the mind from reaching new truth. In his general theory of relativity, Einstein made a statement offensive to our "common sense" (that is, to our habits of thought) by saying that space in the neighborhood of matter was non-Euclidean. This means that in such space the angles of a triangle would not add up to two right angles.

Now, the proposition that the three angles of every triangle together make up two right angles is a proposition in Euclid, but Euclid himself recognized that the proposition was a peculiar one. It was essential to nearly everything he proved afterward, but itself rested on another proposition which could not be proved. So he treated this as an axiom, although it was not self-evident. Other geometers since Euclid's time have tried to prove this proposition, but no sound proof has been found, and it was finally decided that a sound proof was impossible. So other mathematicians worked out what they called "non-Euclidean geometries," based on the assumption that the sum of the angles of triangles was less or was more than two right angles. If we make either of these assumptions, we can base a whole geometry on it. Such a geometry may not be true of the space we know, but it will be self-consistent. It will be true of a possible space if not of the space in which we live.

Now it might be asked (and frequently was asked): "What is the good of that kind of speculation? If we know that the angles of triangles do add up to two right angles what is the good of assuming they don't?" The answer was: "The question is not whether they *do* add up to two right angles but whether they *must*. If they must, then the conclusions of Euclid would hold for all possible universes, but if it only happens that they do, and our conviction that they must has no better foundation than our habits of thought, then it is quite worth while to find out what are the consequences of the opposite assumption." The important practical result of these speculations was that they made possible the acceptance of Einstein's theory (which was true and which had verifiable practical consequences). If people had remained convinced that every triangle must obey Euclid's law they could not have reached the general theory of relativity. Insight into new truth was made possible by the destruction of an old thought habit.

Few of the thought habits we may be asked to question will ever appear so obvious to us as the conviction that Euclidean geometry must be true. The apparent obviousness of a conviction is no guarantee of its truth. Once we are convinced of that, we should be prepared boldly to experiment in questioning the apparent truths based on our habits of thought.

The physical theory of relativity is a very useful example of the danger of thought habits closing our minds to new truth, for it is in the fact of relativity in its wider sense that this danger is greatest. We all of us tend to judge problems from one particular standpoint, the one determined by our own conditions of life. We are inhabitants of our own particular country, with a particular religious and moral tradition, and we are inclined to forget how many of our judgments are simply relative to this single standpoint and are not absolute.

It is only when we begin to study comparative religions and comparative codes of morals that we begin to see to what extent our own opinions about right and wrong and about other matters are not scientific truths (for these are true for all persons under all conditions), but are judgments whose truth is entirely relative to the particular

point of view from which they were made. By accustoming our minds to comparative studies and by forming the habit of trying to look at problems in a manner which discounts our own point of view, we can to some extent escape from this relativity. Such statements, for example, as that "the heathen are wicked folk without law or religion," that "Americans are dollar chasers," or that "Europeans are degenerate," will be seen to be statements made entirely from a limited point of view and with no objective validity at all.

Particularly in international affairs, we must remember this relativity of our point of view. Most of us would be able to judge a dispute between Rumania and Jugoslavia more objectively and scientifically than we would judge a dispute between the United States and Japan—always provided we had access to the facts. But until we can see and feel the other side's case as well as our own, our judgments cannot possibly even approach scientific validity. Most people seem not to realize this, and after the last war the Allied Powers felt they were capable not merely of acting as prosecuting attorneys against their late enemies, but as their judges. Now a judge has to make objective, universally true judgments, and this could plainly only be done by someone as detached from that dispute as Americans should be from one between Rumania and Jugoslavia.

An instructive experiment is to take a statement expressing our own point of view on a subject on which we have well-developed thought habits; then, making no other alteration, to change the particular matters with which it deals to others which are similar but about which we have different thought habits. Now we can consider the statement with its new subject matter and see whether our attitude toward it remains the same. So we judge how far our attitude toward the original statement possessed objective or scientific validity, and how far it was acceptable to us merely because it fitted in with our thought habits.

During a war, for example, we read with strong approval of its author's honesty and courage the writings of an enemy national living in a neutral country expressing opinions unfavorable to his own country. Perhaps our judgment is right, but, in order to be sure that we are not being unduly influenced by our own thought habits, let us consider what would be (or what, in fact, has been) our attitude toward members of our own country expressing in similar conditions opinions unfavorable to ourselves. Or we applaud our own Government's firm action in holding responsible for the death of a murdered American official an alien Government through whose neglect of precautions for his safety the murder took place. Let us consider what our attitude would be toward similar demands made by another country in similar circumstances (let us say, by the old Austrian empire against Serbia when an Austrian archduke is killed by a Serbian bomb). There is no limit to the field for such intellectual experimentation—Communist executions of Trotzkyites, Nazi executions of Communists, Franco's executions of Republicans, British executions of Indian Nationalists, the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The result of the experiment will not, of course, always be to lead us to revise our opinions. Very often, however, it will. Always it should help us to rid our judgments of that element in them which is due to our thought habits and which is relative only to our own limited point of view, and to replace such imperfect opinions by judgments, which more nearly approach the ideal of impartiality.

We may try this with the following passage from a speech which I found by chance at the back of a press cutting. It is a stirring passage, so it is a suitable subject for an experiment to determine how much of its stir (if any) is independent of the thought and emotional habits it arouses:

> *Unless we play our part as an Imperial race there is nothing but disaster in front of the human race. (Applause.) With the effervescence that is going on in the world today, the only force to my mind which can maintain the ideal of ordered freedom*

is the 70,000,000 of the true American nation and the 70,000,000 there or thereabouts, of the white race of the British Empire. These 140,000,000 people, speaking the English tongue, reading the English Bible and the English Shakespeare, with the ideas which were embodied originally in Magna Charta—these people with a common background of civilization have to share the responsibility for maintaining civilization among the 1800 or 1900 million people on the globe.

Now we are undoubtedly moved by this speech, but before we take our feelings at their face value we must remember that it is rather easy for us (as for other people) to form habits of thinking of ourselves as the chosen civilizers of all the rest of the world, and to form habits of responding with exalted emotions to speeches expressing this destiny. So to test the real worth of this passage we will try it again in a setting in which we have formed different habits.

At a review in 1914 of the German army at Potsdam, the Kaiser said:

Unless we play our part as an Imperial race there is nothing but disaster in front of the human race. With the effervescence that is going on in the world today, the only force to my mind which can maintain the ideal of ordered freedom is the 65,000,000, there or thereabouts, of the German Empire, and the 11,000,000 German-speaking members of the Austrian Empire. These 76,000,000 people, speaking the German tongue, reading the German Bible and the German Goethe—these people with a common background of Kultur *have to share the responsibility for maintaining civilization among the 1800 or 1900 million people on the globe.*

That, you will notice, is the same passage as before, put in a different setting. The setting has been changed to one in which we have different thought habits. Our reaction too is different. Instead of a dignified statement of imperial responsibility, it sounds like an expression of national megalomania. How would the original passage have sounded to an impartial visitor from Mars?

Even the things about which we feel most certain (and perhaps rightly feel certain) have been questioned, and it may not be a bad thing for us to hear these questionings so that our deepest beliefs may be based on reasoned and critical conviction and not merely on thought habits. Christian believers may read the attacks of Nietzsche, and good constitutionalists may read the writings of Marx, Kropotkin, and Lenin. They will experience the uncomfortable sensation of an attempt to shake long-founded and deeply based thought habits. Perhaps those who are old are right to protect themselves from such an uncomfortable process, but those who are young and have the necessary flexibility of mind could profit by it. Their opinions may not be reversed, but they will no longer be merely based on thought habits which have never been questioned. They will be something stronger and better, the reasonable convictions of free minds. Those whose attitude toward what they regard as "subversive" literature is simply that it must be suppressed (by force if necessary) show little faith in the truth of the beliefs they are trying to protect.

We have in ordinary speech a word for expressing the feelings that are aroused in us when something presented to us breaks across cherished mental habits. We say we are "shocked"; and we resent being shocked. We believe in a censorship of plays, books, films, and wireless talks which will save us from any danger of being shocked. People who seem deliberately to write in order to shock us, writers such as Ibsen, Bernard Shaw, and Upton Sinclair, we are careful not to read. But why should we be so tender to our mental habits? Such writers do us a great service (the service done to the science of physics by the writers on non-Euclidean geometry) of forcing us to question our old beliefs so that we may freely and intelligently choose what is sound in them and reject the rest, and thus have our minds prepared for seeing new and unfamiliar truths. Most people do not need protection from being shocked. They need to

be shocked a great deal more than they are.

There are a large number of problems it is impossible effectively to put before most people because they have so many thought habits in connection with them that they resent any questioning of them. "What changes (if any) ought we to make in the institution of marriage, or in the institution of private property?" "Ought we to control the size of our families?" "What ought to be our attitude toward those individuals who love members of their own and not of the opposite sex?" or "Is the New Deal a failure?" These are all questions which merely to raise in public is to set in action thought habits connected with such strong emotions that reasonable discussion and reasonable decision are quite impossible. Yet there should be no question reasonable people dare not ask, no thought too shocking to think if we are to regulate our affairs wisely.

Nor does the evil of keeping our minds closed to some possible lines of thought end with the social misfortune that there are some questions we can never decide wisely because we cannot think about them reasonably. We are learning more and more to recognize that people lead dwarfed and impoverished mental lives because there are parts of their own characters they dare not face, particularly the forces which belong to the life of love. We have comfortable little habits of thought which conceal from us the terrific forces of our instinctive natures, and these are treated by us as something alien and to be fought against when they ought to be recognized as our own and brought under our wise control. We smack our children when they ask us questions which we regard as improper or put them off with lies about storks and gooseberry bushes in order to preserve their innocence. Then we wonder why they are psychoneurotic and morbidly afraid at the stage of becoming grown up. We have ourselves destroyed their innocence by implanting habits of fear and evasion on a subject about which thought should be as free and unafraid as about any other. The reading of the works of Professor Freud has shocked many people out of such dangerous fears into a condition of mental liberation and mental health.

We must not suppose, of course, that we have escaped the danger of being imprisoned by our thought habits merely by giving up our old habits of thought which are much the same as everybody else's and starting new ones of our own. The unorthodox and unconventional are in just as much danger of finding their minds closed to new truth by the persistence of their old habits of thought as are the orthodox and the conventional. They too have just the same need of being occasionally shaken out of their thought habits so that they may retain flexibility of mind. We have taken Bernard Shaw as an example of a writer who questions orthodox and conventional thought habits. Similarly we might take G. K. Chesterton as a writer whose function it is to question the thought habits of those who are unorthodox and unconventional.

The worst danger of all which threatens those who have rejected commonly accepted habits of thought is that they should form the habit of disbelieving things merely because other people believe them. This is what we mean by "crankiness." A "crank" is not a person free from thought habits, but one who has formed a thought habit which is at least as likely to hide the truth from him as is the opposite habit of accepting what is commonly believed.

It should be one of the aims of education to produce a quality that we may describe as "flexibility of mind," an ability to try out new ways of thinking and to make unfamiliar assumptions. This means that we must be able at will to put on one side our old thought habits. The mathematicians had thought habits based on the fact that the angles of all the triangles they had ever met had added up to two right angles, but they were able to ask themselves: "Suppose they hadn't, what would follow?" So we must keep for ourselves the power of intellectual experimentation. We see everywhere men carrying out work for wages or salary. We must ask ourselves: "Is this a necessary law, or can we imagine a form of society in which

the monetary motive would not be the dominant one and yet in which the world's work would be done?" We are accustomed to a particular form of the marriage relationship. We must ask: "Is this the only possible one? Would other kinds of relationship be better or worse in securing the ends for which marriage exists?"

Clearly it is neither desirable nor possible to get rid of all thought habits. Such an aim would be absurd. The formation of thought habits is as inevitable as the formation of bodily habits and just as useful. But we must be ready continually to revise them. Thought habits once serviceable may prevent us from attaining to new truths. We differ from the lower animals in the possession of a rich and complicated brain. This is an instrument to give flexibility and adaptability to our behavior. If we allow ourselves merely to become creatures of habit, we become automatic and mechanical like the lower animals We are allowing our brain to degenerate into mere mechanisms when they were meant for plasticity and change. It is like using a razor for digging the ground.

Astronomers tell us that the human race has many million years more to spend on this globe if it does not destroy itself by wars. It is only by unceasing flexibility of mind that we can continue to adapt ourselves to our ever-changing environment. Inflexibility of mind will lead to the extermination of the human race.

"Government" vs "Business"[1]

STUART CHASE

GOVERNMENT is destroying the confidence of Business. . . .

If Government would leave Business alone, the depression would soon be over. . . .

Business is sabotaging recovery. . . .

If Business were not so blind, it would realize that Government is chiefly engaged in bolstering up Capitalism. . . .

Government and Business must co-operate if this nation is to march forward. . . .

To show that these paraphrases are not unfair, here are two run-of-the-mine samples clipped from the New York *Times* of April 28th, 1938:

Alfred P. Sloan: "The exploitation of industry by regimentation means the death knell of individual enterprise."

Henry Ford: "If finance would get out of government, and government would get out of business, everything would go again."

Mr. Sloan identifies "industry" with "business," and "regimentation" with "government." Mr. Ford complicates the situation by introducing something called "finance" which is in government's hair and should get out. Most commentators do not make this nice distinction; they lump "finance" with "business," i.e., bankers are assumed to be businessmen.

Similar statements can be found by the square yard in any newspaper, in almost any magazine, radio address, column by General (Iron Pants) Johnson, speech at the annual banquet of the American Widget Manufacturers, baccalaureate sermon . . . Government and Business glowering at each other over the barbed wire and shell holes of no man's land. Such pronouncements are gravely received by millions of Americans who are certified by life insurance examiners as sane. It is widely held that something of moment is being said, and that the cause of human understanding and knowledge is advanced.

Wherever you drive in the country, you are likely to see a billboard advertising a business magazine. The sign shows a gigantic baby about to burst into tears, with the caption: "What hurts Business hurts me."

[1] From *Common Sense*. Reprinted by kind permission of the author.

You are not to conclude that Business is a crying baby, but that Business provides milk and shoes for children, especially for your child. But what is Business and what are the things that hurt it? The sign does not say, nor do the columnists and orators. They could not tell you. It would be a tough job of analysis for anyone to tell you. This article will indicate some ways of going about that job.

II

Initially we must recognize that there are two prevalent motives in the minds of those who use the terms "government" and "business." Some of the talkers wish to create a prejudice for or against a definite measure (say a tax bill), for or against a definite person or group of persons (say Mr. Roosevelt or Mr. Willkie and his friends). They are using loose talk consciously and deliberately to confuse the issue, and will of course continue to do so. They are not interested in saying what they mean, and would be greatly alarmed if attempts were made to clarify their verbiage.

Other talkers, and I think they are in the majority, really want more knowledge about political and industrial affairs. They want to know clearly what is going on so that suitable inferences may be drawn and suitable action taken. They are like persons in a theater when a fire breaks out—where are the exits, what shall we do?—except that political and industrial fires, while just as dangerous, do not burn so fast. To them, semantics offers certain fire-fighting tools—to continue the analogy. Semantics does not merely encourage the habit of rejecting windy abstractions, it also provides a series of tests by which you can be sure that you are thinking straight when you tackle a mental problem with the serious intention of solving it.

These tests include:

1. The determination of the *referent*, or the concrete event in time and space, behind the abstract terms. When you say "monopoly is terrible," I want to know what corporations or other enterprises you are referring to.

2. The determination of the level of abstraction. How far away from the concrete event does the term lie? "Dog" is an abstract term close to the referent Rover. "The animal kingdom," or "sentient life," is far from the referent.

3. The pinning down of terms by time, place and kind. When you say "democracy is the only desirable form of government," I want to know: What kind of democracy? Where was it functioning? When was it functioning?

4. The use of the *operational test* to make terms clear in many cases. Scientists promote knowledge not by arguing, but by performing operations. Their concepts are usually based not on words, but on things they do silently with their hands and eyes in the laboratory. You say, "I can prove by logic that Achilles can never overtake the tortoise." You produce the logic and it is verbally faultless. But the scientist is not satisfied. He wants an operation, an experiment, performed. When it is performed, of course even an 80-year-old Achilles can beat the stuffing out of the speediest tortoise.

There are other tests in the semantic discipline, but this gives us a start.

People talk as though they saw an iron-booted entity "government" jumping on a frail, defenseless "business," or, *per contra*, a gross, recalcitrant "business" hurling a shower of monkey wrenches at a hard-working conscientious "government." In the world that we actually see with our eyes, or touch with our hands, there is no entity "government" and no "business." A man with a camera could not take a picture of either. He can take a picture of Dr. Bennett of the Soil Conservation Service, or a picture of Mr. Alfred P. Sloan. He can take a picture of Grand Coulee Dam—indeed I have a copy—where thousands of men working for a "business" contractor are building the biggest "government" structure in history, bossed by "government" engineers. He can take a picture of a fleet of "business" trucks running on US 1, a "government" road, or a picture of a little "business" man made happy by an RFC "government" loan.

A brief grounding in semantics makes it clear that most of the talk, emotion, fury,

this pounding of tables, these apoplexies in club armchairs, these editorials, upheavals of columnists, banquet orators, soap-box fireworks, are without meaning. The uproar is not about events in space and time, but about events in Cloudcuckooland. No fiery combatant knows what "government" or "business" means to his equally fiery opponent. He could not make an intelligent appraisal of what these terms mean to himself—not, if you please, because he does not stop to think, but because the words themselves are so abstract that they defy comprehensive appraisal by even the most careful appraiser. That is the kind of loose, general words they happen to be.

It follows that specific action taken by any combatant must be loose, random and confused. It will be on a par with action taken by Congo villagers when they beat drums to exorcise demons in the forest. The demons seem real to the villagers. "Government" and "business" seem real to most Americans.

Before citizen A and citizen B can intelligently communicate to one another about "government," it is necessary that they both go down the verbal ladder to events in the real world which both can see, and agree upon. At this lower level, citizen A can point to his income tax blank, and say to citizen B: "By 'government' I mean this. Take it, look at it, add it up. Isn't it the damndest thing?" But citizen B may say: "I pay no income tax. I'm on the Federal Arts Project. It saved my life. Look at these sketches for my new high-school mural. By 'government,' I mean *this*!" Income tax blanks and high-school murals, and millions of other tangible objects, acts, events, constitute the reality behind the term "government." Ditto for "business." How are you going to get A and B to agree in this situation? You cannot get them to agree. So they shout. But observe: if they stop shouting about "government," it may be possible for B to agree with A that his income tax is a complicated monstrosity; and for A to agree with B that his high-school mural sketch is admirable.

If two or more persons are going to understand one another and make sense in an abstract discussion, they must find a common object or event to which their words refer. Otherwise their discussions will be meaningless because (1) they have different referents for their words, and so are talking about different events, or (2) they have no referents at all. For such a term as "the sublime" there are no referents at all. Without a common referent A and B can make noises at one another, but they cannot communicate. It is as though one talked in Chinese and the other in Eskimo. Each can let the other know that he is very much stirred up, but not what he is stirred up about.

The student of semantics cannot get excited about all the acts of "government" because he does not know, and never can know, what all the acts are. Ditto for "business." He can get excited about Mr. Roosevelt, or Mr. Hopkins, about the acts of certain government officials, or about the behavior of Jim Hill or of Richard Whitney. But is the behavior of Richard Whitney to be taken as the mode for the behavior of "business"? I ask any corporation official if this is justifiable. Yet that same official may be growling to Mrs. Official over the *Times* and coffee cups tomorrow morning: "Look at that fellow Earle in Pennsylvania. That's government for you. That's why we can't make any progress in this country."

III

Words are not things. You cannot sleep on the word "bed," or eat the word "roast beef." The thing comes before the word and is recognized by the senses on the nonverbal level. A dog knows what "roast beef" is right enough, but he makes no conversation about it. Man alone of the animals invents labels for things in his environment and makes conversations about them. If A and B discuss a side of beef on the table in front of them, they both see the referent; they can touch it, taste it, smell it. Here communication difficulty is at a minimum. Similarly, scientists talk clearly to one another—sometimes aided by a special language called mathematics—because they constantly check their talk with physical experiments. They perform operations and find common referents. They must, if they are to continue

to be scientists. When they turn their backs on the laboratory and begin to argue, they resemble philosophers. Most philosophers, incidentally, do not like semantics. It is beneath their attention. It certainly is—far down the verbal ladder.

"Well," cries one enthusiastic convert to semantics, "let's get rid of abstract terms and stick to Rover—the actual dog out on the lawn there." We cannot get rid of abstractions; we require them constantly. This article I am writing is full of them. No. Relief is available not by striking abstractions from the language, *but by using them accurately;* by realizing which level of the verbal ladder we are on; by going down the ladder at frequent intervals to find the real events at the bottom. We should use abstractions cautiously and the last thing we should do is to get excited about them. To become emotional about a high order abstraction is pretty good evidence that we have mistaken a word for a thing, personified the label, and so delivered ourselves over, bag and baggage, to word magic.

Rover is never as goofy as this. He does not get excited about "private property" as a sacred principle. He gets excited when somebody steals his bone. It is sane to get excited about stolen bones, or stolen bonds. It is not sane to get excited about verbal machinery. The structure of language as it has developed down the ages, whether English, French or Hottentot, makes us tend to believe in things which are not there. Adjustment to the environment is a difficult business, as any dog or robin or bee knows. Men have made that adjustment far more difficult by peopling the environment with ghosts and demons derived from bad language.

Consider savages in New Guinea. In addition to floods, storms, insects, wild beasts, pestilences, the distraught native must contend with evil spirits in trees, caves, clouds and soul boxes. This doubles the job. We are just beginning to realize from the semantic studies of Ogden, Richards, Korzybski and others, that similar conditions obtain among civilized peoples today. We must deal not only with droughts, dust storms, floods, erosion, mortgages, men out of work, syphilis, slums, busted banks, wars, but with demons lurking behind such terms as "red," "Wall Street," "fascism," "democracy," "plutocracy," "collective security," "isolation," "the profit system," "dictatorship," "government," "business," "regimentation," "the bosses," and hundreds more. Foggy language about "dictatorship" killed the reorganization bill in Congress recently. (Part of it was, of course, intended deliberately to be foggy.) Foggy language about "spending" and "balanced budgets" may cut the national income to 50 billions or less, and give us more years like 1932. We work so much harder than we would need to work if we could understand what we are talking about.

Opium is a beneficial drug in certain limited fields of medical practice. Indiscriminately used, it is a curse. Similarly, the abstract terms "government" and "business" are useful in limited contexts, and breeders of confusion in others. If one says, "Governments all over the world in 1938 are spending more for armaments," the statement is clear, and can be checked by inspection of government budgets, nation by nation. But if one says, "The sole purpose of government is tyranny and oppression," clear use gives way to a ghost hunt.

IV

Where are the referents behind the word "government"? Great God, where are they not? Possibly five million individuals in America today are acting as representatives of the community in one capacity or another. There are thousands of laws on statute books, three hundred million acres of land, hundreds of great ships, schoolhouses, courthouses, dams, highways, mines. These individuals, buildings, printed laws, pieces of land, are referents for "government," in one context or another. Here is a typical abstraction ladder:

1. My neighbor, Roger Holmes, dog catcher for the town
2. Dog catchers as a class
3. Local police officers
4. Town governments
5. County governments

6. State governments
7. Federal governments
8. The concept of government

That is a long way from Roger Holmes. Furthermore, I have heard Roger, a good Republican, violently attack the encroachment of "government" on "personal liberty." Is he attacking himself? Does he know what he is attacking? Or is he just making a loud noise about a pair of spooks?

It is highly probable that Mr. Holmes is not objecting so much to "government" as he is to Mr. Roosevelt. Why doesn't he say so? To identify Mr. Roosevelt with "government" is to leave out some five million other individuals as referents for the term. No one of them is so important as Mr. Roosevelt today, but they do a tremendous number of important jobs, whoever happens to be President. Persons on government payrolls furnish us with pure water supplies, fire protection, schools for our children, concrete highways. They protect us from contagious diseases. Does this undermine our personal liberty? Do these acts make "government" an interloper and a menace? If we fired every government official who is performing some economic activity today, we should soon be in a fine jam. Consider the state of the roads alone, without traffic controls of any kind. Our hospitals would be filled to the roof—except that many of them, being government institutions, would have shut up shop. Quarrel with Mr. Roosevelt if you wish, for that is your traditional privilege as a sovereign voter, but do not talk nonsense about throwing out "government" because you would like to throw out Mr. Roosevelt.

Congress, says Mr. A, is all right, for it licked the President in the reorganization bill. Part of Congress would be more accurate, for the bill was defeated by eight votes. But Congressmen are important referents for that "government" which so tyrannizes over Mr. A's liberties. Does he mean that government is bad but that a bare majority of Congress is good? Does Mr. A recall, however, the shouts of approval with which he welcomed the news that Congress had adjourned, thus "allowing business to go back to work"?

Mr. A's opinion of the Supreme Court is high. At least, he bitterly resented a proposal to change its membership. Yet the Justices of that Court are also important referents for "government." Are these gentlemen interfering with his business, tearing up his liberties, prostrating him with taxes, taking orders from Moscow?

One could go on like this for pages. Once the semantic analysis is grasped, any high order abstraction can be chased down the ladder where tangible referents often make a mockery of passionate opinions as to the abstraction itself. It is plain goofy to become passionate about things which are not there, or about things which represent only a very small fraction of the total situation under discussion.

V

Turning now to "business" we find a similar situation, except that "business" is of a higher order and even vaguer than "government." You can at least line up and count government employees. How do you line up business men? The unconscious stereotype back of the label is probably the independent merchant of the early nineteenth century. There are some still left in America, but large corporations are liquidating them rapidly. Most Americans in "business" work for corporations and have not much independent action left. Important decisions are made higher up. Are professional men in business? Are farmers business men? Is an investor a business man? Is a filling-station owner a business man, or a laboring man? When I shut my ears to labels and project my imagination over the America I have seen with my eyes, I find it impossible to visualize a definite army of private business men. I can pick out some real entrepreneurs, but in the picture are millions of corporation employees, engineers, chain-store managers, architects, college presidents, all sorts of people. Furthermore, these various groups are frequently in violent conflict. One group wants free trade and another protection. One group wants to control retail stores by corporate devices while the neighborhood store man runs to "government" for laws prohibiting chains. Railroads fight shippers. Coal

men fight oil men. Managers of large corporations oust legal owners from all but a semblance of control over their "private property." Some groups want a free market; more powerful groups want prices fixed by executive fiat, and fix them. Mr. Ford thinks the trouble with "business" is "finance."

Here are two abstraction ladders, reading down:

Business	Business
The oil business	The oil business
Oil production	Oil production
Hot oil production	Standard Oil producing companies
Hot oil wells in Texas	
Mr. X, a hot oil runner in Texas, violently opposed to proration	Mr. Y, of a standard company in Texas, violently in favor of proration

In these cases, referents for "business" at the bottom of the ladder are found in two gentlemen with policies belligerently and diametrically opposed.

Certain astute politicians in the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Manufacturers' Association wangle resolutions through their respective organizations. I suppose these men are as close to the "voice of business" as one can get. But obviously they represent only a limited group.

Where does "business" end and "government" begin? At the margin, we find a hopeless confusion of referents. Ford builds cars and government builds roads. No roads, no Fords. Is transportation a government or a business activity or a mixture of both? How about enterprises "affected with a public interest" like the utilities, where rates and investment policies are controlled in name at least by regulatory commissions? How about the 600 million dollars the government has lent to the railroads to bail out the widows and orphans holding railroad bonds? Suppose these loans had not been made. What would have been the effect on the investment market and on "confidence"? How about government loans for housing projects? You cannot tear these operating realities apart—except in your head.

Meanwhile, one can say categorically that most persons buying and selling goods and services have benefited to some degree by government spending programs of the last five years. Such persons may hold the program morally wrong and economically odious, but they have not neglected to take the dollars as they rolled along from reliefer to retailer to wholesaler to manufacturer to banker.

VI

Some stockbrokers, manufacturers, merchants, investors, have lost money because of some laws passed and enforced since 1933. Undoubtedly true. Some have made money and avoided loss because of laws passed. Also true. For example, had it not been for certain fiscal laws passed in March and April of 1933, most bankers would have lost their banks. Nobody knows what the net effects of laws and the acts of government officials have been on the balance sheets and operating accounts of all corporations, partnerships and proprietorships. Nobody can know. The matter is too complex for appraisal. Many business activities in 1938 are not as profitable as they were in 1928. Ha! The New Deal is guilty! But they are considerably more profitable than they were in 1932. Ha! Mr. Hoover is guilty—and a government dominated by Republicans is worse for business than a government dominated by Democrats.

So the conclusions spin round and round until the mind reels. This kind of thing gets nowhere because it is about nothing. Generalizations about "government" destroying the confidence of "business," kicking the stuffing out of "business," are just windy salutes in the spring air. People on private payrolls are worried. But people on public payrolls are worried too. The whole damned population is worried, and has been since 1929. Rather than digging into the causes of that universal worry, people call each other names.

I happen to be an employee on part time of a small corporation in New York City. The undistributed profits tax hit this concern pretty hard in 1937. I feel that this tax is sometimes unfair to small companies. I am prepared to ask Congress to exempt certain classes of small corporations. But I do not propose to accompany the protest with loud

yells about the "government" destroying confidence. You have to take these things as they come. In 1934, when the Treasury began to borrow and spend, my business began to pick up. I happen to be a shrewd enough business man to grasp the connection. When the Treasury halted spending last year, my business took a nose dive. (Name of my company on request.)

Here you see I am dealing with real referents—a business I know thoroughly and a certain act of Congress whose effects on that business I know. I made out the tax form. I can talk intelligently, I hope, about this business and this law. But as a student of semantics the last thing I propose to do is to identify my business with all "business," or to identify this law with all "government." Such a technique may be good enough for naked savages; it is not good enough for civilized men.

What business enterprise has been hurt? What is the connection between a given law and a given hurt? How was it hurt? When was it hurt? What laws have helped this business? What is the net loss or gain? Such questions and answers make sense. Referents are found. Communication is aided. Laws can be intelligently discussed and perhaps rendered more just.

In this semantic exercise, I have tried to set forth a method. I have not examined the policies of Mr. Roosevelt or the policies of those who oppose him. This is an analytical essay directed against the whirlwind of bad language which fills the press and the air waves today. It is not supposed that this attack will have much tangible effect. But I venture the opinion that until enough of us, in this or some future generation, begin to separate mental machinery from things under our noses, we shall continue to tilt at verbal windmills, while the objective of making the environment a tolerable and peaceful place in which to live remains only a pious hope.

Emotional Meanings[1]

ROBERT H. THOULESS

WHEN WE USE a word in speech and writing, its most obvious purpose is to point to some thing or relation or property. This is the word's "meaning." We see a small four-footed animal on the road and call it a "dog," indicating that it is a member of the class of four-footed animals we call dogs. The word "dog" as we have used it there has a plain, straightforward, "objective" meaning. We have in no way gone beyond the requirements of exact scientific description.

Let us suppose also that one grandparent of the dog was a collie, another was an Irish terrier, another a fox terrier, and the fourth a bulldog. We can express these facts equally scientifically and objectively by saying that he is a dog of mixed breed. Still we have in no way gone beyond the requirements of exact scientific description.

Suppose, however, that we had called that same animal a "mongrel." The matter is more complicated. We have used a word which objectively means the same as "dog of mixed breed," but which also arouses in our hearers an emotional attitude of disapproval toward that particular dog. A word, therefore, can not only indicate an object, but can also suggest an emotional attitude toward it. Such suggestion of an emotional attitude does go beyond exact and scientific discussion because our approvals and disapprovals are individual—they belong to ourselves and not to the objects we approve or disapprove of. An animal which to the mind of its master is a faithful and noble dog of mixed ancestry may be a "mongrel" to his neighbor whose chickens are chased by it.

Similarly, a Negro may be indicated objectively as a "colored man" or he may be

[1] From *How to Think Straight*, copyright, 1932, 1939, by Simon and Schuster, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Simon and Schuster.

indicated with strong emotional disapproval and contempt as a "nigger." The use of the latter word debases any discussion in which it is used below the level of impartial and objective argument.

Once we are on the lookout for this difference between "objective" and "emotional" meanings, we shall notice that words which carry more or less strong suggestions of emotional attitudes are very common and are ordinarily used in the discussion of such controversial questions as those of politics, morals, and religion. This is one reason why such controversies cannot yet be settled.

There is a well-known saying that the word "firm" can be declined as follows: I am *firm,* thou are *obstinate,* he is *pigheaded.* That is a simple illustration of what is meant. "Firm," "obstinate," and "pigheaded" all have the same objective meaning—that is, following one's own course of action and refusing to be influenced by other people's opinions. They have, however, different emotional meanings: "firm" has an emotional meaning of strong approval, "obstinate" of mild disapproval, "pigheaded" of strong disapproval.

In much the same way when, during the World War, thoughts were dominated by emotions, the newspapers contrasted the *spirit* of our heroic boys with *ruthlessness* of the *Huns,* and the *heroism* of our troops with the enemy's *savagery.* Now, with the more objective attitude that has been brought by the lapse of time, we can look back and see that *spirit* and *ruthlessness* are objectively the same thing, only the one word has an emotional meaning of approval, the other of disapproval. We can see, too, that a soldier going forward under shellfire to probable death is doing the same thing whether he is a German or one of our own countrymen, and that to distinguish between them by applying the word *savagery* to the action of the one and *heroism* to that of the other is to distort reality by using words to make an emotional distinction between two actions which are objectively identical.

Such thinking in wartime may do much harm by leading humane people to condone cruelty. When the ordinarily liberal-minded Swinburne wrote a poem during the Boer War on the death of a British officer who had been blamed for the bad condition of the camps in which the Boer women and children were interned, he said:

Nor heed we more than he what liars dare say
Of mercy's holiest duties left undone
Towards whelps *and* dams *of* murderous *foes, whom none*
Save we had spared or feared to starve and slay.

Whelps and *dams* clearly mean in objective fact *children* and *wives* with the added meaning of the emotional attitude adopted toward the females and young of wild beasts, while *murderous* means no more in objective fact than that our foes killed us when they could (as we also killed them), with the added emotional meaning of an attitude toward them which is our attitude to those who are guilty of murder.

The use of emotionally toned words is not, of course, always to be condemned. They are always harmful when we are trying to think clearly on a disputable point of fact. In poetry, on the other hand, they have a perfectly proper place, because in poetry (as in some kinds of prose) the arousing of suitable emotions is an important part of the purpose for which the words are used. In *The Eve of St. Agnes,* Keats has written:

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast.

These are beautiful lines. Let us notice how much of their beauty follows from the proper choice of emotionally colored words and how completely it is lost if these words are replaced by neutral ones. The words with strikingly emotional meanings are *casement, gules, Madeline, fair,* and *breast. Casement* means simply a kind of window with emotional and romantic associations. *Gules* is the heraldic name for red, with the suggestion of romance which accompanies all heraldry. *Madeline* is simply a girl's name, but one calling out favorable emotions absent from a relatively plain and straightforward name. *Fair* simply means, in objective fact, that her skin was white or uncolored—a necessary condition for the colors of the window to show—but also *fair* implies warm emotional preference for an uncolored skin rather than

one which is yellow, purple, black, or any of the other colors which skin might be. *Breast* has also similar emotional meanings, and the aim of scientific description might have been equally well attained if it had been replaced by such a neutral word as *chest*.

Let us now try the experiment of keeping these two lines in a metrical form, but replacing all the emotionally colored words by neutral ones, while making as few other changes as possible. We may write:

Full on this window shone the wintry moon,
Making red marks on Jane's uncolored chest.

No one will doubt that all of its poetic value has been knocked out of the passage by these changes. Yet the lines still mean the same in external fact; they still have the same objective meaning. It is only the emotional meaning which has been destroyed.

Now if Keats had been writing a scientific description for a textbook on physics instead of a poem, it would have been necessary for him to have used some such coldly objective terms as the ones into which we have just translated his lines. Such emotionally charged phrases as *warm gules* and *fair breast* would only have obscured the facts to which the scientist exactly and unbeautifully refers when he speaks of "the selective transmission of homogeneous light by pigmented glass."

The purpose of the present book is to deal with the kind of problem in which cold and scientific thinking is required. Most of the practical problems of life are of this order. The fact that I shall abuse the use of emotional thinking in connection with such problems as tariffs, social ownership, revolution, and war does not mean that there is no place for emotional thinking. Poetry, romantic prose, and emotional oratory are all of inestimable value, but their place is not where responsible decisions must be made. The common (almost universal) use of emotional words in political thinking is as much out of place as would be a chemical or statistical formula in the middle of a poem. Real democracy will come only when the solution of national and international problems is carried out by scientific methods of thought, purged of all irrelevant emotion Into the action which follows decision we can put all the emotion which we have refused to allow in our thinking. Let us think calmly and scientifically about war, and then actively oppose it with all the passion of which we are capable.

The growth of the exact thinking of modern science has been very largely the result of its getting rid of all terms suggesting emotional attitudes and using only those which unemotionally indicate objective facts. It was not always so. The old alchemists called gold and silver "noble" metals, and thought that this emotionally colored word indicated something belonging to the metals themselves from which their properties could be deduced. Other metals were called "base." Although these terms have survived as convenient labels for the modern chemist they carry none of their old emotional significance.

In popular biological discussions, on the other hand, such words are still used with their full emotional meaning, as when the "nobility" of man is contrasted with his alleged "base" origin. In this respect, popular biological discussion differs from that of the textbook and the laboratory, in which are used terms almost as devoid of emotional meaning as those of physics or chemistry.

Psychology is still younger in the ranks of the sciences, and the clearing away from it of emotional words has not gone very far. "Passion," "emotion," "sex" are all terms of our science which carry strong emotional meanings, so that it is difficult to discuss a controversial matter in psychology without using words which rouse strong emotions and confuse all issues. A beginning is being made. "Intelligence" was a subject on which it was difficult to think clearly because it carried so much emotional meaning. Now Professor Spearman has replaced it by what he calls "g" (or the "general factor"), which is a conception derived from the statistical analysis of a large collection of figures, and yet which is in its essence all that was really scientific in the old conception of intelligence. Some day a psychological genius will give us X or Z to replace the old emotional

conception of sex, and we shall be able to discuss psychoanalysis as objectively as a mathematical physicist can discuss the quantum theory.

When we turn to politics and international questions, we are still further from straight scientific thinking. Such words as "Bolshevik," "Fascist," "reactionary," "revolutionary," "constitutional," "national honor," etc., are all words used in national and international political thinking which carry more of emotional than of any other meaning. So long as such words are the ordinary terms of rival politicians, how can we hope to think straight in national and international affairs? If a chemist doing an experiment depended on such thought processes as a nation uses in selecting its rulers or in deciding on peace or war with other nations, he would blow up his laboratory. This, however, would be a trivial disaster in comparison with what may result from emotional thinking in politics. Better have a hundred chemical laboratories blown up than the whole of civilization!

We must look forward to and try to help on the day when the thinking about political and international affairs will be as unemotional and as scientific as that about the properties of numbers or the atomic weights of elements. The spirit of impartial investigation of facts unswayed by irrelevant emotions has given us great advances in the sciences. Its triumphs will be even greater when it is applied to the most important affairs of life. We look forward to the day when we shall be able to discuss and settle such questions as Tariffs, Public *vs.* Private Ownership, and Disarmament Treaties as successfully as physicists have discussed and settled Einstein's theory of relativity.

Let us try to study a few more examples of the use of words with emotional meanings taken from various sources. Accounts of wars are rich sources of such material, so we are not surprised to find in a book on the French Commune the statement that large numbers of the regular troops were *assassinated* during the street fighting by the Communards, while a much larger number of the latter were *summarily executed* by the regulars. In order to reduce this to a statement of objective fact it is clear that the one word "killed" should be used in place both of *assassinated* and *summarily executed.* We have already noticed how such a choice of words with the same objective but opposite emotional meaning can be used to make us feel sympathetic to one and hostile to the other of two sides in warfare. During the Spanish Civil War, the supporters of the Government referred to themselves as the "Loyalists" and called Franco a "Rebel" or an "Insurgent." The supporters of Franco, on the other hand, called themselves "Nationalists" and referred to their opponents as "Reds." During the conflicts between Red and White forces in Russia and in China, our newspapers told us of the *atrocities* of the Bolsheviks and the *wise severity* of the White commanders. Examination of the details (often possible only long afterwards) shows that the objective facts of an *atrocity* and of *wise severity* are much the same, and that they are not the kind of objective facts which will call out an emotion of approval in a humane person.

A similar choice of words will be noticed in political discussion. A fluent and forcible speech delivered by one of our own party is *eloquent,* a similar speech by one of the opposite party is *fanatical;* again two words with the same objective meaning but with the opposite emotional meanings of approval and strong disapproval. The practical proposals of the opposition, moreover, are *panaceas*—a highly emotional word calling out the strongly disapproving emotions which we feel for those quack patent medicines which make extravagant claims. Those who show enthusiasm in support of proposals with which a speaker disagrees are *crackpots;* while those showing similar enthusiasm on his own side are called *sound.* If a politician wishes to attack some new proposal he has a battery of these and other words with emotional meanings at his disposal. He speaks of "this suggested *panacea* supported only by *fanatical crackpots*"; and the proposal is at once discredited in the minds of the majority of people, who like to think of themselves as moderate, distrustful of panaceas, and un-

influenced by windy eloquence. Also, we may notice that it has been discredited without the expenditure of any real thought, for of real objective argument there is none—only the manipulation of words calling out emotion.

It is not, however, only in warfare and politics that such words are used in order to influence opinion more easily than can be done by words embodying real thought. Art criticism is also a good source for this kind of material. Ruskin said of Whistler's Nocturnes: "I have heard and seen much of *Cockney impudence* before now, but never expected to hear a *coxcomb* ask two hundred guineas for *flinging a pot of paint in the public's face*." As in earlier passages, I have italicized the words or phrases with strongly emotional meanings. Stripped of these and reduced to a statement of objective fact, the passage would have to be paraphrased in some such way as follows: "I have heard and seen much of the behavior of Londoners before now, but never expected to hear a painter ask two hundred guineas for painting a picture which seemed to me to have no meaning." Plainly not much is left of Ruskin's criticism after this operation has been performed on it.

As a last example, we may take a part of an attack made by a newspaper on a novel. This runs: "Its *vicious plea* for the acknowledgment and *condonation of sexual perversity*, and the grounds on which it is based, loosen the very *sheet anchor of conduct*." This passage calls out such strong emotions of abhorrence that most readers will be content to condemn the novel without further inquiry. Yet the effect is gained entirely by the choice of words with emotional meanings. It happens to deal with a subject on which emotions are strong, so a dispassionate examination is all the more necessary. We note that a *plea* is simply an argument, plus a suggestion of repugnance for the kind of argument used; that *condonation* is tolerance plus an emotional suggestion that such toleration is indefensible; that *sexual* means something in the life of love of which we disapprove, and that a *perversity* is an unusualness plus an emotional suggestion of abhorrence. The loosening of a *sheet anchor* is a metaphor implying change and suggesting to a landsman the emotion of fear, while *conduct* is simply behavior of which we approve.

So reduced to its bare bones of statement of objective fact (ignoring for a moment the special difficulties raised by the word *vicious*), the passage becomes: "Its argument for the acknowledgment and tolerance of unusualness in the life of love, and the grounds on which it is based, change the principles of behavior." This clearly is an important statement if it is true, but is not enough in itself to condemn the book, because undoubtedly our principles of behavior do need changing from time to time. We can only decide intelligently whether or not they need changing in the particular case under discussion, when we have made a dispassionate statement of what the proposed changes are and why they are defended. As in all other cases, discussion of the question with emotionally charged words obscures the problem and makes a sensible decision difficult or impossible.

The word *vicious* has some special difficulties of its own. It arouses emotions of disapproval, but there is no word with the same objective meaning which would not. If we call the book bad, corrupt, or evil, the same emotions would be aroused. So we cannot perform the simple operation of replacing *vicious* by an emotionally neutral word with the same objective meaning. Can we then leave it out altogether, on the ground that it has no objective meaning, but that it is used merely to arouse emotion?

Here we are up against a problem about which there has been much dispute. Some people consider that all such words as "good," "bad," "beautiful," "ugly," only indicate one's own emotional reactions toward actions or things and in no sense properties of the actions or things themselves. But when we see a man steal a penny from a child and we call his action "bad," we are in fact saying something meaningful about the action itself and not merely about our own feelings. As to what that something is we may leave the philosophers to dispute; it may only be that the man's action has subtracted from the

total amount of human happiness. So to say a book is *vicious* is not the same kind of thing as contrasting the *slaughter* of regular troops by Communards with the *execution* of the Communards by regular soldiers. The statement that the book is *vicious* has a meaning which is not merely emotional, although, of course, the statement may not be true.

On the other hand, it is clearly not quite the same kind of meaning as a simple statement of outside fact such as "This is a book." Whether the book is good or bad is a real question, but it is a question peculiarly difficult to decide. Our own statement one way or the other is likely to be nothing but a reflection of our own personal prejudices and to have, therefore, no sort of scientific exactness. At the same time, such words certainly arouse strong emotions and should, therefore, be used sparingly in honest argument. The use of words implying moral judgments in the course of argument is very generally an attempt to distort the hearers' view of the truth by arousing emotions.

If we are trying to decide a simple question of fact, such words should be left out, because it is easier to settle one question at a time. If a man is accused of poisoning his wife, the prosecuting attorney should not say, "This *scoundrel* who hounded his wife to her grave." The question to be decided is whether the man did poison his wife. If he did, he is a "scoundrel" undoubtedly, but calling him a scoundrel does not help to decide the question of fact. On the contrary, it makes a correct decision more difficult by rousing emotions of hatred for the accused in the minds of the jury. Another obvious objection to the use of the word "scoundrel" before the man is convicted, which puts it in the ranks of "crooked thinking," is that it "begs the question" or assumes what is to be proved. The man is only a scoundrel if he is guilty, and yet the word has been used in the course of an argument to prove that he is guilty.

These two objections can be urged against the word "vicious" in the condemnation of a book quoted above. It calls up strong emotions making a just decision of the nature of the book difficult, and it assumes exactly what the article professes to prove—that the book is a bad one.

The aim of this chapter has been to distinguish one kind of crooked thinking, in the hope that those who recognize how their opinions can be twisted away from the truth by the use of words with emotional meanings may be able to recognize this source of error and to guard themselves against it. Those of its readers who have found anything new to them in the ideas of this chapter should not, I suggest, be content simply to read the chapter, but should try to do some practical work on its subject matter. If you were studying botany, you would not be content merely to read books on botany. If you were, that would not carry you far in botanical knowledge. Instead you would gather plants from the hedges and weeds from your garden, dissecting them, examining them with a microscope or magnifying glass, and drawing them in your notebook. Psychology too should be studied by practical methods. Emotional thinking (like most of the other kinds of crooked thinking we shall be studying) is as common as a weed. It is to be found in the leading articles of newspapers, in the words of people carrying on discussions on political, religious, or moral questions, and in the speeches made by public men when these deal with controversial matters. In order to understand it, we should collect specimens by putting them down on paper and then we should dissect them. Current political and social controversy in the United States abounds in such words and phrases as "crackpots," "economic royalists," "the abundant life," "bureaucracy" —or, on the street level—"scabs," "finks," "nigger-lovers." The *New York Herald Tribune* habitually referred to the child labor bill for New York State as the "youth control bill"; the Hearst press dubbed the New Deal the "Raw Deal"; Communists use the words "Trotzkyite" and "Fascist" to cover a multitude of sinners; Secretary Ickes managed to get some powerful emotional undertones from Ferdinand Lundberg's phrase, "America's Sixty Families."

With these ideas and phrases in mind, it is

not difficult to set forth on a practical search for truth. I suggest that readers should copy out controversial phrases from newspapers, books, or speeches which contain emotionally colored words. Then they should underline all the emotional words, afterwards rewriting the passages with the emotional words replaced by neutral ones. Examine the passage then in its new form in which it merely states objective facts without indicating the writer's emotional attitude toward them, and see whether it is still good evidence for the proposition it is trying to prove. If it is, the passage is a piece of straight thinking in which emotionally colored words have been introduced merely as an ornament. If not, it is crooked thinking, because the conclusion depends not on the objective meaning of the passage but on the emotions roused by the words.

When we condemn such a use of emotional words in writings and speeches, we must remember that this is a symptom of a more deep-seated evil—their prevalence in our own private, unexpressed thinking. Many of our highly colored political speakers whose speeches stir us as we are stirred by romantic poetry show themselves unable to think calmly and objectively on any subject. They have so accustomed themselves to think in emotionally toned words that they can no longer think in any other way. They should have been poets or professional orators, but certainly not statesmen.

It really does not matter much if we sometimes use emotional words. We all do when we are trying to produce conviction. What does matter is that we should not lose the power to think without them. So a more important exercise than any we can perform on written material is one we can perform on our own minds. When we catch ourselves thinking in emotional phraseology, let us form a habit of translating our thoughts into emotionally neutral words. So we can guard ourselves from ever being so enslaved by emotional words and phrases that they prevent us from thinking objectively when we need to do so—that is, whenever we have to come to a decision on any debatable matter.

4

Making Matters Clear

Explaining metaphysics to the nation;
I wish he would explain his explanation.

With this impudent jingle Byron lampooned the prose of Coleridge. If Byron was right, Coleridge was guilty of the cardinal sin of writing—vagueness, the failure to make his explanation clear. But Coleridge, like every writer, must be tested by each new reader word by word, through involutions of thought and grammar and over the barriers of the parenthetical quite to the end. The test of clarity is a severe one, but it is basic. For there can be little good in the "explanation" that does not explain. Whether the matter is new to us or one we "know" already, there is both intellectual and esthetic value —lasting satisfaction—in writing that makes something clearer to us than it was before. We then take pleasure in right language, easy transition, wise

progress point by point; and most of all in that unerring choice of what is said and what is not, to build this understanding for us. Even familiar things fall into a better pattern in our minds. And we will follow that good pattern almost instinctively when we explain these things to others. Or we may simply ask that others read what we have read—like Carl Becker's definition of democracy.

In these days, when the word *democracy* is used so loosely, merely to mention Becker's definition should gain him many readers. For few will think it waste of energy or time to be set right on matters not clear though important, even imperative, to understand. Yet many an explanation, just as good, must wait long for its curious and motivated reader and may wait in vain.

One function of the journalist, the writer of articles, is to make clear the explanations of the learned when scholars cannot do the job themselves, at least within our range. "Can Science be Explained?" asks Rudolph Flesch, and says yes, in two ways, one for the learned only and the other, on a "lower" level, for the rest of us. Thus Byron might have wished not Coleridge, but someone else, to paraphrase those explanations.

But one may also ask whether Byron or anyone else is interested, then or now, in metaphysics. Who shall be the curious patrons of our explanations? And why? Does it matter to most readers whether some things are made clear or not? Left to themselves, how many care about the Indian rope trick, democracy, humor, the size of animals, or weather? Not many, probably; and probably their numbers run down in the order of the topics given. The writer who would reach a larger audience than the special keeps these questions well in mind. He strives for human interest. He calculates the age and probable experience of his readers. He considers any special motivation that may quicken by a mere glance at a title, in so far as that gives a hint of subject. He begins and ends his piece so as to translate this solicitude into style. At the extreme, he may burlesque the very act of explanation, like Benchley with his rope trick. Benchley's opening and his digression into story are the planned economy of wit and impatience serving as a team in what is really a form of literary criticism. Fun and a good corrective it may be, but certainly no explanation of the rope trick. Who cares? says Benchley. And isn't explanation dull!

Yet, audience or no, people will persist in wanting to explain the things they understand. They seem impelled to do so, as was the Ancient Mariner to tell his story. And often if they can but make us *start* to read, our notion that this or that is dull will be at once dispelled and we will respond with admiration. Who has not sometime had that experience? "A man of genius creates his own taste," said Wordsworth. And surely explanations that win us without special or *a priori* interest are entitled to be called literature.

Whether the wooing and winning are a matter of genius or not, from the beginning of such reading we are released from our ordinary selves. An author well informed and rich in understanding replaces our anxiety about our *own* interest with his absorption in what he has to say. Like the great teacher, he is ever mindful of his listeners, but beyond the point of worrying whether any but the intrinsic appeal is needed. For the moment nothing is more important to him than this awareness, this illumination that must be achieved, because the subject should not fail to capture human interest for its own sake. So the good writer will let others ask whether his enthusiasm is overbalanced,

his explanation "useful," his respect for himself and his subject undue. Artist and scientist are one, giving discovery its commensurate eloquence. Rudolph Flesch might have answered a mere "yes and no" to his question "Can Science be Explained?" But that was not enough, *for him*. To Craven and Johnson, the logic of American history was engrossing even in summary—though often such summaries are deadly dull for the author and so for the reader too. There was no "demand" that Melville even briefly distinguish the two kinds of whales. But he wanted, even passionately, for everyone to "see" their differences and the ramifications of that contrast. "On Being the Right Size" is but one of many illuminating essays for which Haldane will long be remembered. So with the two Milnes in the whole book from which "Tenants of the Soil" was taken. These are about the most undutiful explanations one could imagine. Yet in each of them the writer's imagination burns so brightly with his subject that ours must take fire too.

Perhaps the best example of this controlled excitement, of the more than merely clear, is George Stewart's imaginative treatment of air and weather, with man in the midst. Human interest is never forgotten, nor is the science of weather. But there is much more—a muchness we cannot give an abstract label, as we cannot label any work of art. Would that all explanations could transcend the merely dutiful and be as spontaneous as this. Benchley was right, of course, to mock the dull, the stereotyped. But when certain "matters" are important to the well-balanced and informed and they are urged to speak and write—and when "clearness" is but the foundation of the whole good result—the literature of knowledge and the literature of power are not so separate as DeQuincey once insisted.

The Rope Trick Explained[1]

ROBERT BENCHLEY

IN EXPLAINING this trick, I need hardly say that it is known as "the Indian rope trick." That is the only trick that everyone explains, as well as the only trick that no one has ever seen. (Now don't write in and say that you have a friend who has seen it. I know your friend and he drinks.)

For readers under the age of three (of whom, judging from several letters at hand, I have several) I will explain that "the Indian rope trick" consists in throwing a rope into the air, where it remains, apparently unfastened to anything, while a boy climbs up to the top. Don't ask me what he does then.

This trick is very easy to explain. The point is that the boy gets up into the air somehow and *drops the rope down to the ground,* making it look as if the reverse were true. This is only one way to do it, however. There are millions of ways.

* * * * *

While in India, a friend of mine, a Mr. MacGregor, assisted me in confusing the natives, in more ways than one. We dressed up in Indian costume, for one thing. This confused even us, but we took it good-naturedly.

Then I announced to a group of natives, who were standing open-mouthed (ready to bite us, possibly) that Mr. MacGregor and I would perform the famous Indian Rope

[1] From *My Ten Years in a Quandary and How They Grew* by Robert C. Benchley. Copyright, 1936, by Robert C. Benchley. Reprinted by permission of Harper and Brothers.

Trick under their very noses. This was like stealing thunder from a child.

Stationing myself at the foot of a rope which extended upward into the air with no apparent support at the other end, I suggested to Mr. MacGregor that he climb it.

"Who—me?" he asked, hitching his tunic around his torso.

This took up some time, during which part of our audience left. The remainder were frankly incredulous, as was Mr. MacGregor. I, however, stuck to my guns.

"Up you go, MacGregor!" I said. "You used to be in the Navy!"

* * * * *

So, like a true yeoman, Mr. MacGregor laid hands on the rope, and, in a trice, was at its top. It wasn't a very good trice, especially when viewed from below, but it served to bring a gasp of astonishment from the little group, many of whom walked away.

"Come on in—the water's fine!" called Mr. MacGregor, waving from his pinnacle (one waves from one's pinnacle sideways in India).

"Is everything fast?" I called up at him.

"Everything fast and burning brightly, sir!" answered Mr. MacGregor, like a good sailor.

"Then—*let 'er go!*" I commanded, sounding *Taps* on a little horn I had just found in my hand.

And, *mirabile dictu*, Mr. MacGregor disappeared into thin air and *drew the rope up after him!* Even I had to look twice. It was a stupendous victory for the occult.

* * * * *

"Are there any questions?" I asked the mob.

"What is Clark Gable like?" someone said.

"He's a very nice fellow," I answered. "Modest and unassuming. I see quite a lot of him when I am in Hollywood."

There was a scramble for my autograph at this, and the party moved on, insisting that I go with them for a drink and tell them more about their favorite movie stars. There is a native drink in India called *"straite-ri"* which is very cooling.

* * * * *

It wasn't until I got back to our New York office that I saw Mr. MacGregor again, and I forgot to ask him how he ever got down.

Democracy[1]

CARL L. BECKER

DEMOCRACY, like liberty or science or progress, is a word with which we are all so familiar that we rarely take the trouble to ask what we mean by it. It is a term, as the devotees of semantics say, which has no "referent"—there is no precise of palpable thing or object which we all think of when the word is pronounced. On the contrary, it is a word which connotes different things to different people, a kind of conceptual Gladstone bag which, with a little manipulation, can be made to accommodate almost any collection of social facts we may wish to carry about in it. In it we can as easily pack a dictatorship as any other form of government. We have only to stretch the concept to include any form of government supported by a majority of the people, for whatever reasons and by whatever means of expressing assent, and before we know it the empire of Napoleon, the Soviet regime of Stalin, and the fascist systems of Mussolini and Hitler are all safely in the bag. But if this is what we mean by democracy, then virtually all forms of government are democratic, since virtually all governments, except in times of revolution, rest upon the explicit or implicit consent of the people. In order to discuss democracy intelligently it will be necessary, therefore, to define it, to attach to the word a sufficiently precise

[1] From *Modern Democracy*, by Carl L. Becker. Reprinted by permission of Yale University Press, publishers.

meaning to avoid the confusion which is not infrequently the chief result of such discussions.

All human institutions, we are told, have their ideal forms laid away in heaven, and we do not need to be told that the actual institutions conform but indifferently to these ideal counterparts. It would be possible then to define democracy either in terms of the ideal or in terms of the real form—to define it as government of the people, by the people, for the people; or to define it as government of the people, by the politicians, for whatever pressure groups can get their interests taken care of. But as a historian I am naturally disposed to be satisfied with the meaning which, in the history of politics, men have commonly attributed to the word —a meaning, needless to say, which derives partly from the experience and partly from the aspirations of mankind. So regarded, the term democracy refers primarily to a form of government by the many as opposed to government by the one—government by the people as opposed to government by a tyrant, a dictator, or an absolute monarch. This is the most general meaning of the word as men have commonly understood it.

In this antithesis there are, however, certain implications, always tacitly understood, which give a more precise meaning to the term. Peisistratus, for example, was supported by a majority of the people, but his government was never regarded as a democracy for all that. Caesar's power derived from a popular mandate, conveyed through established republican forms, but that did not make his government any the less a dictatorship. Napoleon called his government a democratic empire, but no one, least of all Napoleon himself, doubted that he had destroyed the last vestiges of the democratic republic. Since the Greeks first used the term, the essential test of democratic government has always been this: the source of political authority must be and remain in the people and not in the ruler. A democratic government has always meant one in which the citizens, or a sufficient number of them to represent more or less effectively the common will, freely act from time to time, and according to established forms, to appoint or recall the magistrates and to enact or revoke the laws by which the community is governed. This I take to be the meaning which history has impressed upon the term democracy as a form of government.

Humor[1]

JOHN ERSKINE

HUMOR is the art of adapting oneself to another temperament. Every temperament, men used to think, is conditioned by the quality of the moisture or "humor" in the individual's body. If you were melancholy, it was because you had a melancholy "humor." Ben Jonson wrote about *Every Man in His Humor.* To humor a person was to accommodate yourself to his characteristic tendencies. To have a sense of humor was to have such imaginative flexibility that you could adapt yourself to anybody.

Long ago we abandoned the physiological explanation, and instead built up around the word an atmosphere of rich meanings, having to do not with the origin of our temperament but with the ends to which we devote our gifts. Humor is now a thing to cultivate and achieve. Some of us have more of an aptitude for it than others, but in a truly civilized world no one is excused from having some of it—perhaps no one who lacked it entirely could survive. We fancy that the cave-man, some primitive brute who argued with a stone ax and disposed of ideas in an adversary by dashing out his brains,

[1] From *The Century Magazine.* Reprinted by the kind permission of the author.

might get on well without a sense of humor, provided that his own skull remained uncracked; if once, however, you admit the right of all your fellows to survive, even though they disagree with you, you must learn how to bend their peculiarities without surrendering your own pet queernesses. It's a great art.

As we now understand it, humor has a surface quality and an inner depth. It is related to cheerfulness, courage, fun, even to merriment. It is also allied to sympathy, to a fellow-feeling for the unfortunate and the unhappy, to the animal pathos of life. This inward aspect of humor most of us admit is the nobler and the more important. Laughter is no bad thing, not even if it is a shallow reaction of the nerves to silly and insignificant occasions, but a true sense of humor keeps the mind too occupied and the heart too alert to laugh. For the same reason it is at its best when divorced from wit. The kindest wit still has an edge on it, and to be sharp it becomes a little hard. Hardness and humor are contradictions.

To say it another way, humor is the most inclusive form of comedy. It keeps in mind our own peculiarities while it observes the tendency in others to be mechanical, or as we say, to be a little "set." However we explain the cause of temperament, we know that the daily habit of life trains us, perhaps against our will, in ruts and grooves, we develop tendencies of which we are not aware; in the eyes of our friends we become at last distinguished by stereotyped thoughts, emotions, conduct. Though these marks of our soul may be in themselves admirable, yet it is not entirely admirable that they should be automatic repetitions; it is not desirable that our ways of accepting experience should be less varied and flexible than the experience we accept. The aim of education, in one important aspect, is to acquire the art of distinguishing, of catching the minute differences which set apart each thing or thought, each person, each situation, from every other. The finest mind will not distinguish perfectly; the mind without humor, alas, will hardly distinguish at all. It is easier to take life in the rough, to group experience in large categories, to make choices from the crude contrast of good and bad, white and black. But to live so simply is, for civilized man, not to live at all. To be content in a few mental grooves, we must first have lost sight of the manifold shadings and combinations of life, and we must have forgotten that actions, thoughts, and emotions are always to some extent conditioned by time and place.

Mr. Micawber, looking for something to turn up, is a comic figure. That is, his value to us is the insight we get into what has become mechanical in him. His virtues were cheerfulness, loyalty and optimism, all admirable, but he has ceased to distinguish among the occasions when those virtues were adequate. He was optimistic in minor adversities, and equally optimistic when he faced disaster. We suspect that he didn't recognize disaster when he saw it. Our sympathy goes to his family, to whom discomfort arrived in varied degrees, however he tried to cheer them up with his automatic formulas.

Richard Feverel's father, in Meredith's novel, is a comic figure on a finer plane. Having suffered disaster in his private life, he determines that his boy shall be spared so bitter an experience, and he applies his splendid mind to the development of a system of education which will take account of human nature and will direct the impulses of youth to high purposes, instead of compressing them dangerously in frail conventions. Yet he overlooks some of the possibilities of life, accidents of time and place, and though his system works successfully, it doesn't work as he intended. His mind has become so set in his personal theories, that he fails to recognize success, as Mr. Micawber failed to recognize failure.

Suppose a man avoided the stereotyped attitude toward life by taking no attitude at all. Suppose you try to keep yourself free of all conventions, all systems; this stupid classification of black and white, utterly bad and utterly good, can be escaped, suppose you say, by denying that there is a difference between black and white. This was Falstaff's philosophy. At first glance there seems little

resemblance between his broad, loose acceptance of whatever fate sends, and Mr. Micawber's formulas, or Sir Austin Feverel's system. Yet to deny all distinction in experience is to adopt the most rigid of formulas. Falstaff is so mechanical in his ethics or in his lack of them that we hesitate to say he was a bad man. He made himself into an automaton so simple that his friends could anticipate his conduct in any situation, yet he remained unaware that his method was obvious. What he overlooked was the fact that there are gradations, even in logic, that however you avoid stereotyped patterns, there are laws in the universe and therefore, however flexible, a design. Sometimes the design is a temporary convention, and the laws not very profound, but at other moments we confront universal truths and obligations. It is easy to say that Falstaff interests us apart from the drama in which he appears—he is a character independent of plot. But Shakespere gave him a private drama. He shows us the fat knight in a succession of predicaments, caught lying, caught stealing, engaged in graft, frightened on the battle-field; in each case Falstaff extricates himself with a fresh ingenuity—no question that his wits are more flexible than Mr. Micawber's or Sir Austin Feverel's—but in each case we observe his blindness to the special point at issue. The climax of his philosophy occurs in his marvelous discussion of honor. Is it not good sense? Yet no one, not even the most ardent pacifist, ever felt that in that scene he was an admirable man. He was blind to the distinction between running away from death and running away from a cause, between escaping from a house on fire and escaping from a house in which others were burning to death.

If we merely appreciate the peculiarity of Mr. Micawber's temperament, or of Falstaff's, we may be said to have the sense of comedy. This cosmic sense, we are often told, is rare, yet it is not hard to smile at another man's frailty, after it has been called emphatically to our attention. What is rare is the sense of humor which makes us alert to the mechanical bent in all natures, even in our own. For this wisdom we need the aid of all our intelligence and of all our heart. If we recognize the fact that every man is liable to fall into a mechanical and blind routine, we must include ourselves in the picture, and find even Falstaff a reflection of ourselves in certain moods, a prophecy of what we might easily become if we were not on our guard. The human race, beset with this temptation to a mechanical dullness—which, however we fight against it, marks each of us with his special tricks and formulas—bears within its heart also a desire to know all the shades of truth, to be adjusted to the varieties of experience, to be unchained, to be altogether alive. In all of us the love of life is at war with the convenience of habits and formulas. It isn't our fault—we are made so. Of ourselves, this is easy to say. Are we intelligent enough to see that it is equally true of Micawber and Falstaff.

If Falstaff had the same desire as we have, to be a free spirit, at home in the gradations of admirable experience, then his life is a failure, and when we smile at him, it is not because he is funny but because he is tragic. A sense of humor must assume that the other man loves life as much as we; it must assume that life is worth loving and that to miss it because the machine tendency in us is too strong is the saddest of defeats. Perhaps we should never succeed in loving defeated men if we hadn't the brains to recognize ourselves in their troubles. Perhaps to recognize our kinship, even in the most depraved, is enough to make the depraved seem likable. Perhaps this is why we like Falstaff.

But if he is so tragic, why do we smile at him? We don't smile at King Lear. Well, the recognition of a new truth gives always the sense of pleasure. A demonstration in geometry, unexpected and convincing, may make us smile. We are forced to laugh when our adversary in debate scores a point on us. He isn't necessarily funny, but he has opened our eyes. The value of a sense of humor to ourselves is that in the faults of others we are suddenly aware of tendencies in ourselves, and can therefore correct them. When our nerves are taut, when we have worked ourselves up into a prejudice of idea

or emotion, when we have become, that is, mechanical and inflexible, the sudden vision of the same frailty in Micawber or Sir Austin Feverel helps us to relax. We are reminded of our common plight; we remember that perhaps the man against whom we cherish a temporary grudge is like ourselves the victim of his temperament. That is why the cultivation of humor is essential if we would survive in an advanced and complex society in which there will always be much to wear out the nerves and try the patience.

We smile too at the temperament which seems to show itself in inanimate things. They too have their personal cussedness, their exasperating inflexibilities. To fight them is neither more nor less stupid than to contend with the fixed habits of our friends. We can only understand and adjust ourselves. Oddly enough, for most of us a sense of humor comes more easily when we are dealing with machines than when we are facing the mechanical element in men. We have no great difficulty in learning the whims of our typewriter or of our automobile. We know we have to humor the engine, since no two engines are exactly alike. We are even reluctant to let another drive it, who may not understand its ways. To deal so imaginatively and sympathetically with human beings would be the height of wisdom, but the human engine at its simplest is complicated, and wisdom comes hard.

If we smile at Falstaff, is there any difference between comedy and tragedy? Not much. We usually call those stories comic in which the disaster is not too grim for us to detect a universal law of temperament, applicable to ourselves. If we understand the profound implications of humor, it makes little difference whether we call *Hamlet* a tragedy or a comedy. Some of us feel that *Much Ado* is as tragic as it is comic. *King Lear* and *Othello*, and all the stories which are too terrible to serve as mirrors of ourselves, ought to have another name. Iago and Goneril are devils, outside of the moral world as most of us can conceive of it. Admiration for Shakespeare prevents us from admitting freely that such characters are unintelligible, interesting only as monsters and nightmares. But the bulk of serious experience, no matter how sad, is susceptible of illumination by a sense of humor, by a realization that in spite of human ignorance and stupidity, life is lovable, and that the faults which handicap others are mere variations of tendencies in ourselves.

With all the laughter in the world, there are very few funny books. *Humphrey Clinker* is one, in English literature, and *Pickwick Papers* is another. In these stories we laugh at a succession of ridiculous incidents which illustrate nothing in particular, either about human nature or about the universe. Mr. Pickwick gets into the wrong room at the inn, and after he has gone to bed, the occupant, an old maid, enters and prepares to retire. The ridiculousness of the situation has nothing to do with the characters of the persons involved. If the characters did count in the episode, we should have to call on our sense of humor, and the fun would be translated into the more serious form of comedy. Humphrey Clinker engages as postilion to the coachful of travelers, but when he mounts his horse his tattered breeches come apart. Fun, in this elementary form, is nothing but the recognition of absurdity. It calls for no effort of the intelligence, and it stimulates us to no sympathy. We sometimes say it is the occasion of harmless laughter.

On the other hand, there are many witty books. To turn a phrase so that the word or the cadence puts a fresh point on an old idea, is not difficult for an intelligent person who is willing to study the best models and keep in practice. The attempt at wit may easily prove vulgar, if the writer or speaker makes his point too broad, and assumes too little alertness in his audience. The pleasure of successful wit is obvious, but by itself it does not necessarily imply great sympathy with life, nor a complete understanding of a neighbor's problems. Wit is sometimes the gift or the acquisition of a narrow heart and mind, and the employment of it by such a nature makes us fear that the clever point has been scored at some expense to truth.

Whether or not a book has wit, it can't be great without humor. If we say that the Bible is humorous, we are giving it the ut-

most praise. Not funny, and seldom witty, but almost always humorous. Think of the strongly marked temperament in Jacob or in Joseph. When we say they are very human, we are recognizing in the one a certain aptitude for trickery, which is in our temperament also, though perhaps less strongly marked—and we are fair enough to observe that Jacob had some better traits besides, which are less developed in us. In the other we recognize a most unpleasant habit of taking himself seriously, and of telling his family of his merits. We have caught ourselves at the same mischief, and we know that the family is always the worst audience to tell such news to. Or recall the little man who insisted on running to King David with the news of Absalom's death, but who didn't get the news straight and forgot it on the way. Or even David himself, on his deathbed, relapsing into a particularly tragic mood of vengeance, and giving Solomon a hint as to the treatment an old enemy ought to get. Such stories would be cynical if they were not humorous, to cite them as though they did not belong in a sacred book is to be blind ourselves to humor, to that tragic behavior of our natures in those moments when we are weak or off our guard. How else could we interpret St. Peter's cowardice and repentance? Most delightful of all the Old Testament stories, perhaps, is that of Naomi and Ruth. We think more of it rather than less because Naomi, in stating her claim on her kindred to provide Ruth with a husband, passed over the near and poor relative, and set her heart on the wealthy Boaz. If we recognize her motives, it is because we have met them in ourselves.

It is usually thought that the sense of humor is a gift, not an art. Perhaps wit, like any other form of expression, is to some extent a gift, but it would be sad if we had to believe that the understanding of life is natural to some of us and withheld from others. Humor can be learned and taught. The method at its simplest would be constant admonition not to go blind in the routine of life. He that has eyes to see, let him see—and we all start with eyes to see. But education could go further. We could train ourselves to think of life not as an experience exclusive and personal to us, not as a conglomeration of lives all entirely different, but as a common condition and fate, in which each of us develops a few peculiarities, fewer and less important than we suppose. Once we have reached that idea, we can go on to the truth that the whole race, from age to age, changes little, no matter how fast the outer surface of civilization alters. Falstaff, Naomi, David, and Peter, Thersites and Hector, are still recognizable as mirrors of us, in spite of electricity and motorcars and the philosophy of Freud. Well then, we have only to keep our love of life, and study the temperament of our fellows as we would the ruling passion of our pet automobile, and remembering how relatively unimportant those peculiarities are, humor them. To do this successfully, we must also study our own besetting queerness, and temper that to our suffering friends.

But we can't follow this old-fashioned and simple schooling unless we train ourselves first of all to think of human life in general terms. Since we do so to-day less often than our fathers did, we have a less rich sense of humor. The children used to study penmanship in copybooks, in which proverbs and mottoes, the cream of general experience, were constantly before their eyes. The old readers contained fables and more proverbs, the accumulated wisdom of the race about life in general. If young people now have meager ideas about human nature, and exaggerated notions of the uniqueness of their own personalities, it is because we have unintentionally fastened their attention on the temporary and exceptional aspects of their world. It's hard to have a sense of humor if you are brought up to be a special pleader. The writers to-day who make special pleas for one good cause or another, do so perforce without humor, because before they can envisage any human fate as special, they must discard temporarily that full view of life which sees the common heart and the common fate in us all.

Two Kinds of Whales[1]

HERMAN MELVILLE

HERE, NOW, are two great whales, laying their heads together; let us join them, and lay together our own. Of the grand order of folio leviathans, the Sperm Whale and the Right Whale are by far the most noteworthy. They are the only whales regularly hunted by man. To the Nantucketer, they present the two extremes of all the known varieties of the whale. As the external difference between them is mainly observable in their heads; and as a head of each is this moment hanging from the *Pequod's* side; and as we may freely go from one to the other, by merely stepping across the deck:—where, I should like to know, will you obtain a better chance to study practical cetology than here?

In the first place, you are struck by the general contrast between these heads. Both are massive enough in all conscience; but there is a certain mathematical symmetry in the Sperm Whale's which the Right Whale's sadly lacks. There is more character in the Sperm Whale's head. As you behold it, you involuntarily yield the immense superiority to him, in point of pervading dignity. In the present instance, too, this dignity is heightened by the pepper and salt colour of his head at the summit, giving token of advanced age and large experience. In short, he is what the fishermen technically call a "grey-headed whale."

Let us now note what is least dissimilar in these heads—namely, the two most important organs, the eye and the ear. Far back on the side of the head, and low down, near the angle of either whale's jaw, if you narrowly search, you will at last see a lashless eye, which you would fancy to be a young colt's eye; so out of all proportion is it to the magnitude of the head.

Now, from this peculiar sideway position of the whale's eyes, it is plain that he can never see an object which is exactly ahead, no more than he can one exactly astern. In a word, the position of the whale's eyes corresponds to that of a man's ears; and you may fancy, for yourself, how it would fare with you, did you sideways survey objects through your ears. You would find that you could only command some thirty degrees of vision in advance of the straight side-line of sight; and about thirty more behind it. If your bitterest foe were walking straight towards you, with dagger uplifted in broad day, you would not be able to see him, any more than if he were stealing upon you from behind. In a word, you would have two backs, so to speak; but, at the same time also, two fronts (side-fronts): for what is it that makes the front of a man—what, indeed, but his eyes?

Moreover, while in most other animals that I can now think of, the eyes are so planted as imperceptibly to blend their visual power, so as to produce one picture and not two to the brain; the peculiar position of the whale's eyes, effectually divided as they are by many cubic feet of solid head, which towers between them like a great mountain separating two lakes in valleys; this, of course, must wholly separate the impressions which each independent organ imparts. The whale, therefore, must see one distinct picture on this side, and another distinct picture on that side; while all between must be profound darkness and nothingness to him. Man may, in effect, be said to look out on the world from a sentry-box with two joined sashes for his window. But with the whale, these two sashes are separately inserted, making two distinct windows, but sadly impairing the view. This peculiarity of the whale's eyes is a thing always to be borne in mind in the fishery; and to be remembered by the reader in some subsequent scenes.

[1] From *Moby Dick, or The White Whale.*

A curious and most puzzling question might be started concerning this visual matter as touching the Leviathan. But I must be content with a hint. So long as a man's eyes are open in the light, the act of seeing is involuntary; that is, he cannot then help mechanically seeing whatever objects are before him. Nevertheless, any one's experience will teach him, that though he can take in an indiscriminating sweep of things at one glance, it is quite impossible for him, attentively, and completely, to examine any two things—however large or however small —at one and the same instant of time; never mind if they lie side by side and touch each other. But if you now come to separate these two objects, and surround each by a circle of profound darkness; then, in order to see one of them, in such a manner as to bring your mind to bear on it, the other will be utterly excluded from your contemporary consciousness. How is it, then, with the whale? True, both his eyes, in themselves, must simultaneously act; but is his brain so much more comprehensive, combining, and subtle than man's, that he can at the same moment of time attentively examine two distinct prospects, one on one side of him, and the other in an exactly opposite direction? If he can, then is it as marvellous a thing in him, as if a man were able simultaneously to go through the demonstrations of two distinct problems in Euclid. Nor, strictly investigated, is there any incongruity in this comparison.

It may be but an idle whim, but it has always seemed to me, that the extraordinary vacillations of movement displayed by some whales when beset by three or four boats, the timidity and liability to queer frights, so common to such whales; I think that all this indirectly proceeds from the helpless perplexity of volition, in which their divided and diametrically opposite powers of vision must involve them.

But the ear of the whale is full as curious as the eye. If you are an entire stranger to their race, you might hunt over these two heads for hours, and never discover that organ. The ear has no external leaf whatever; and into the hole itself you can hardly insert a quill, so wondrously minute is it. It is lodged a little behind the eye. With respect to their ears, this important difference is to be observed between the sperm whale and the right. While the ear of the former has an external opening, that of the latter is entirely and evenly covered over with a membrane, so as to be quite imperceptible from without.

Is it not curious, that so vast a being as the whale should see the world through so small an eye, and hear the thunder through an ear which is smaller than a hare's? But if his eyes were broad as the lens of Herschel's great telescope; and his ears capacious as the porches of cathedrals; would that make him any longer of sight, or sharper of hearing? Not at all.—Why then do you try to "enlarge" your mind? Subtilise it.

Let us now with whatever levers and steam-engines we have at hand, cant over the sperm whale's head, that it may lie bottom up; then, ascending by a ladder to the summit, have a peep down the mouth; and were it not that the body is now completely separated from it, with a lantern we might descend into the great Kentucky Mammoth Cave of his stomach. But let us hold on here by this tooth, and look about us where we are. What a really beautiful and chaste-looking mouth! from floor to ceiling, lined, or rather papered with a glistening white membrane, glossy as bridal satins.

But come out now, and look at this portentous lower jaw, which seems like the long narrow lid of an immense snuff-box, with the hinge at one end, instead of one side. If you pry it up, so as to get it overhead, and expose its rows of teeth, it seems a terrific portcullis; and such, alas! it proves to many a poor wight in the fishery, upon whom these spikes fall with impaling force. But far more terrible is it to behold, when fathoms down in the sea, you see some sulky whale, floating there suspended, with his prodigious jaw, some fifteen feet long, hanging straight down at right angles with his body, for all the world like a ship's jib boom. This whale is not dead; he is only dispirited; out of sorts, perhaps; hypochondriac; and so supine, that the hinges of his jaw have relaxed, leaving him there in that ungainly sort

of plight, a reproach to all his tribe, who must, no doubt, imprecate lock jaws upon him.

In most cases this lower jaw—being easily unhinged by a practised artist—is disengaged and hoisted on deck for the purpose of extracting the ivory teeth, and furnishing a supply of that hard white whalebone with which the fishermen fashion all sorts of curious articles, including canes, umbrella-stocks, and handles to riding-whips.

With a long, weary hoist the jaw is dragged on board, as if it were an anchor; and when the proper time comes—some few days after the other work—Queequeg, Daggoo, and Tashtego, being all accomplished dentists, are set to drawing teeth. With a keen cutting-spade, Queequeg lances the gums; then the jaw is lashed down to ring bolts, and a tackle being rigged from aloft, they drag out these teeth, as Michigan oxen drag stumps of old oaks out of wild wood lands. There are generally forty-two teeth in all; in old whales, much worn down, but undecayed; not filled after our artificial fashion. The jaw is afterwards sawn into slabs, and piled away like joists for building houses.

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Crossing the deck, let us now have a good long look at the Right Whale's Head.

As in general shape the noble Sperm Whale's head may be compared to a Roman war-chariot (especially in front where it is so broadly rounded); so, at a broad view, the Right Whale's head bears a rather inelegant resemblance to a gigantic galliot-toed shoe. Two hundred years ago an old Dutch voyager likened its shape to that of a shoemaker's last. And in this same last or shoe, that old woman of the nursery tale, with the swarming brood, might very comfortably be lodged, she and all her progeny.

But as you come nearer to this great head it begins to assume different aspects, according to your point of view. If you stand on its summit and look at these two *f*-shaped spout-holes, you would take the whole head for an enormous bass-viol, and these spiracles, the apertures in its sounding-board. Then, again, if you fix your eye upon this strange, crested, comb-like incrustation on the top of the mass—this green, barnacled thing, which the Greenlanders call the "crown," and the Southern fishers the "bonnet" of the Right Whale; fixing your eyes solely on this, you would take the head for the trunk of some huge oak, with a bird's nest in its crotch. At any rate, when you watch those live crabs that nestle here on this bonnet, such an idea will be almost sure to occur to you; unless, indeed, your fancy has been fixed by the technical term "crown" also bestowed upon it; in which case you will take great interest in thinking how this mighty monster is actually a diademed king of the sea, whose green crown has been put together for him in this marvellous manner. But if this whale be a king, he is a very sulky-looking fellow to grace a diadem. Look at that hanging lower lip! what a huge sulk and pout is there! a sulk and pout, by carpenter's measurement, about twenty feet long and five feet deep; a sulk and pout that will yield you some 500 gallons of oil and more.

A great pity, now, that this unfortunate whale should be hare-lipped. The fissure is about a foot across. Probably the mother during an important interval was sailing down the Peruvian coast, when earthquakes caused the beach to gape. Over this lip, as over a slippery threshold, we now slide into the mouth. Upon my word, were I at Mackinaw, I should take this to be the inside of an Indian wigwam. Good Lord! is this the road that Jonah went? The roof is about twelve feet high, and runs to a pretty sharp angle, as if there were a regular ridge-pole there; while these ribbed, arched, hairy sides, present us with those wondrous, half-vertical, scimitar-shaped slats of whalebone, say three hundred on a side, which depending from the upper part of the head or crown bone, form those Venetian blinds which have elsewhere been cursorily mentioned. The edges of these bones are fringed with hairy fibres, through which the Right Whale strains the water, and in whose intricacies he retains the small fish, when open-mouthed he goes through the seats of *brit* in feeding-time. In the central blinds of bone, as they stand in their natural order, there are certain curious

marks, curves, hollows, and ridges, whereby some whalemen calculate the creature's age, as the age of an oak by its circular rings. Though the certainty of this criterion is far from demonstrable, yet it has the savour of analogical probability. At any rate, if we yield to it, we must grant a far greater age to the Right Whale than at first glance will seem reasonable.

In old times, there seem to have prevailed the most curious fancies concerning these blinds. One voyager in Purchas calls them the wondrous "whiskers" inside of the whale's mouth,[2] another, "hogs' bristles"; a third old gentleman in Hackluyt uses the following elegant language: "There are about two hundred and fifty fins growing on each side of his upper *chop,* which reach over his tongue on each side of his mouth."

As everyone knows, these same "hogs' bristles," "fins," "whiskers," "blinds," or whatever you please, furnish to the ladies their busks and other stiffening contrivances. But in this particular, the demand has long been on the decline. It was in Queen Anne's time that the bone was in its glory, the farthingale being then all the fashion. And as those ancient dames moved about gaily, though in the jaws of the whale, as you may say; even so, in a shower, with the like thoughtlessness, do we nowadays fly under the same jaws for protection; the umbrella being a tent spread over the same bone.

But now forget all about the blinds and whiskers for a moment, and, standing in the Right Whale's mouth, look around you afresh. Seeing all these colonnades of bone so methodically ranged about, would you now think you were inside of the great Haarlem organ, and gazing upon its thousand pipes? For a carpet to the organ we have a rug of the softest Turkey—the tongue, which is glued, as it were, to the floor of the mouth. It is very fat and tender, and apt to tear in pieces in hoisting it on deck. This particular tongue now before us; at a passing glance I should say it was a six-barreler; that is, it will yield you about that amount of oil.

Ere this, you must have plainly seen the truth of what I started with—that the Sperm Whale and the Right Whale have almost entirely different heads. To sum up, then: in the Right Whale's there is no great well of sperm; no ivory teeth at all; no long, slender mandible of a lower jaw, like the Sperm Whale's. Nor in the Sperm Whale are there any of those blinds of bone; no huge lower lip; and scarcely anything of a tongue. Again, the Right Whale has two external spout-holes, the Sperm Whale only one.

Look your last, now, on these venerable hooded heads, while they yet lie together; for one will soon sink, unrecorded, in the sea; the other will not be very long in following.

Can you catch the expression of the Sperm Whale's there? It is the same he died with, only some of the longer wrinkles in the forehead seem now faded away. I think his broad brow to be full of a prairie-like placidity, born of a speculative indifference as to death. But mark the other head's expression. See that amazing lower lip, pressed by accident against the vessel's side, so as firmly to embrace the jaw. Does not this whole head seem to speak of an enormous practical resolution in facing death? This Right Whale I take to have been a Stoic; the Sperm Whale, a Platonian, who might have taken up Spinoza in his latter years.

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[2] This reminds us that the Right Whale really has a sort of whisker, or rather a moustache, consisting of a few scattered white hairs on the upper part of the outer end of the lower jaw. Sometimes these tufts impart a rather brigandish expression to his otherwise solemn countenance.

The United States of America[1]

AVERY O. CRAVEN AND WALTER JOHNSON

THE HISTORY of the American people may be divided roughly into three periods. The first is the colonial period, in which different European groups, with differing cultural patterns, were adjusting themselves to one another and to the American environment and, thereby, evolving a new people and a new nation. The second is the national period, in which the young United States of America turned its back on Europe, marched steadily westward across the American continent, and transformed it, region by region, from a simple wilderness into a land of farms and towns and complex social-industrial institutions. Connections with the outside world were reduced to a minimum, and Americans, engaged in American tasks, sharpened and modified their own national characteristics, both personal and institutional, and emerged before the world as a powerful nation with positive interests and values uniquely its own. The third period is the one in which we find ourselves, at the present time, an integral part of the larger world. We are back where we started. The days of isolation are over. Just before the dawn of the twentieth century the United States found itself, half reluctantly, again facing outward. American goods and American capital had already invaded other lands; interests and values had forced a war with Spain and bequeathed us a colonial empire; and then the blunt fact of world interdependence pushed us into two great European wars. The cycle was thus completed, but the attitudes and assumptions inherited from the two earlier periods of American life, and their need of readjustment, have left much of mental confusion and much of uncertainty. We often appear to be a people whose bodies are in one age and whose minds are in an earlier one. The great task of adjustment still plagues the American people.

Many nationalities and much of good fortune have entered into the making of the United States. The first settlers on the North American continent came out of Western Europe and brought with them the habits, the tastes, and the prejudices that they had acquired in that intensely active part of the world. It was a region where strong national governments, relying on taxes and gold and silver, not on personal services, had replaced feudalism; where commerce and trade, especially with the Orient, had greatly increased the importance of towns and townsmen; where great trading companies had been organized to exploit the riches of far-flung corners of the world; and where national churches, under the Protestant revolt, had defied the See of Rome and stressed anew the direct responsibility of the individual to his God.

The discovery of America came about as a result of the efforts of nations bordering on the Atlantic to escape the middlemen who controlled trade through the Mediterranean. In seeking the East they found the West. Some of the early American colonies were planted by the trading companies; others were founded by religious refugees who sought to escape the conformity required in most European nations; still others were made up of peoples set free by the great changes in rural Europe, and lured to the New World by hopes of better things than could be found amid the unsettled conditions at home. England furnished the greatest number of settlers, but Germany, Sweden, Holland, France, and Spain furnished enough to make the American colonies the children of Europe, not of Great Britain alone. Each of these groups made valuable contributions to American life.

[1] From *The United States: Experiment in Democracy*, by Avery O. Craven and Walter Johnson. Reprinted by permission of Ginn and Company, publishers.

From the English came the language which was to be the dominant one in use in the United States and with it the opportunity to share in the rich accumulations of English literature. Even the folk songs of Ireland and Wales and Scotland were a part of that heritage. The common law and most of the political forms and practices adopted in the colonies were of English origin. Much of the Protestant Reformation, but not all of it, came to America by way of England. The conception of classes in society, including the country-gentleman ideal, so important in the South, came from the same source. In fact, it would be difficult to find any part of life on the American continent that was not, to some degree, influenced by England.

The Dutch influenced only one colony, New York, but they left a decided impress on that colony. Their stanch Protestantism, their peculiar types of architecture, the great landed estates that they scattered along the Hudson, and the quaint, picturesque folklore that they created in both town and country added something rich to the American pattern.

Even greater was the contribution of the German people. They brought with them much of manual skill and a knowledge of farming, together with a taste for it, which the English sadly lacked. Their fields did not decline in fertility, and their great barns, soon known as "Pennsylvania Dutch barns," were symbolic of the interest and care that went into their efforts. They too were Protestants, and their Pietism, which came to them from Luther, flowered in various sects whose love of music, whose devotion to high social standards, and whose patient skill as craftsmen enriched the fiber being woven into American life.

The French Huguenots in New York and in South Carolina were comparatively few in number and were soon absorbed by the English stock. They did, however, reveal a peculiar aptitude for commerce and added something intellectual and artistic to the communities where they lived.

Farther away, and at first unconnected with these groups, were the French in Louisiana and the Spanish in the Southwest. Both were Catholic in religion, and both were strong enough in numbers to give the dominant color to life in the regions which they occupied. Each group had its type of houses and public buildings, which not only were different in appearance from those of the rest of the country, but exerted a strong and permanent influence on later American architecture. The Roman law, modified by French and Spanish influences, permanently shaped the legal code of Louisiana. The French love of music and the drama continued to characterize life in New Orleans and the neighboring region. In like manner, the Spanish missions and ranches colored life in California long after that state had become a part of the United States. Spanish influence in architecture was important, and, in later days, the cattle industry on the Plains carried the mark of its Spanish origin.

The contribution of the Negro to the Western world, to which he came first as a servant and then as a slave, is hard to measure. His labor helped to push the wilderness back and to open the way for the production of the great staples so necessary for trade. In places where his numbers were great, he altered and shaped both the economic and the social life. The plantation system and the caste system both rested in part on his shoulders. His strong sense of rhythm, his store of folk tales and superstitions, and the more subtle force of personality in the close contacts of rural living, all contributed something to the making of a new people in a new land.

All these early groups were augmented, both in colonial and in early national days, by new arrivals of the same stocks. Then, in the years after 1830, they were again increased, and new floods from wider areas also poured in. The Irish and the Germans headed the flow—the former settling in New England and along the canals and railroads which they helped to build into the West, and the latter finding places as tradesmen and farmers in Ohio, Texas, Missouri, and Wisconsin. Both groups, long subject to harsh treatment at home, gloried in the freedom and the security that they enjoyed in the United States. The Civil War found them stanchly

on the Union side. The Irish, already notable for their ready wit and romantic qualities, soon revealed a practical aptitude for politics, which matched their marked attachment to fellow countrymen and to their Catholic faith. The first Germans were joined, after 1848, by a group of intellectuals who, despairing of liberalism in the fatherland, hoped to realize their dreams in America. They showed less political acumen than the Irish, but not less of the desire to get ahead or to retain something of the joy of living.

After the Civil War great numbers of Scandinavians joined the few who had already come to make their homes largely in the newer states of the Old Northwest. Settlements now spread to Minnesota, northern Iowa, and out to the Dakota Territory. These were a hardy people, who settled in neighborhoods close together and revealed almost as much of thrift and eagerness for education as had the early Puritans themselves. The Jews, meanwhile, crowded into the cities to add something strangely different to the existing order—something older in tradition, but something intensely eager for success in the new urban-capitalistic society that was emerging. With them came from southern and southeastern Europe other new groups,—Italians, Poles, Greeks, and Czechs,—each with its own national traits and values, but nearly all alike in allegiance to the Catholic Church. The new flood was greater than the old; its birth rate was higher; its peoples tended to remain in the urban centers either as industrial laborers or as market gardeners on the outskirts of the cities. Members of these new groups, of the same nationality or race, often remained close together, retaining their national speech and, to some degree, their Old World customs. The problem of assimilation increased, but the public-school system and closer contact with the now established national ways of living worked wonders on second generations and brought unity of aspiration and feelings if not always of minor social practices. Thus, in spite of increased burdens, the "melting pot" continued its work of fusing divergent peoples into a new American race.

European peoples and ways, however, were only one factor in the making of the United States. Of equal importance was the influence of the continent itself, of the life it required of those who would make it their home. It was a continent great in size and rich in resources. Stretching nearly three thousand miles from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and more than fifteen hundred miles from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, it lay between the parallels 26° and 55° north latitude in a climate where crops familiar to Europeans would yield bountiful harvests, where white men would be more healthy than in the tropics or in the extreme north, and where the change in seasons would be marked enough to stimulate a maximum of mental and physical activity. To the known European crops the continent added corn and potatoes and tobacco. If offered generous areas of fertile soils, well watered and easily accessible. Its rivers and lakes formed natural highways that interlocked in such manner as to provide, with only short portages, routes from ocean to ocean. In its mountains were convenient gaps through which trails might grow into wagon roads and these in turn give way to railroads and paved highways. Within its borders could be found rich deposits of all the important minerals save tin and potash. The iron and coal deposits were especially rich; copper and oil, so important in later days, were equally abundant. Great timber resources and almost limitless water power rounded out the picture of a land unmatched by any other of equal size on the face of the earth. For years the United States was to be known as a land of fabulous resources; in 1924 one writer estimated that it produced 38 per cent of the world's coal, 70 per cent of its petroleum, 38 per cent of its electric power, 54 per cent of its copper, 33 per cent of its iron ore, 53 per cent of its timber, and from 25 per cent to 75 per cent of its corn and cereals. With such great natural resources, and with some eight hundred million acres capable of being turned into improved farm lands, the potentialities for comfort and luxury were to be measured only by the abilities of those who undertook their realization.

But this great land, when the European first entered it, was only an untamed wilderness thinly occupied by tribes of Indians. It had to be possessed and transformed. Step by step, from east to west, the wilderness had to be pushed back, and farms and towns and all the complex agencies of civilization had to be set up in its place. First, the coast nearest Europe had to be won, then the regions farther inland. Trappers and traders and intrepid missionaries would lead the way and prepare the region for the first crude "cabineers," who would begin the cultivation of the soil. Sometimes lumbermen or miners or cattlemen took the lead when their special kind of natural wealth attracted. Sometimes the forward movement was too rapid; then the advance guard would be driven in by Indian massacres, by drought or pestilence. But always the frontier would again move forward, and behind it life would grow more complex and more like the pattern for living which men had brought with them from the Old World.

For nearly three centuries Americans and their institutions knew this great experience of forward movement into the wilderness, a return in some degree, at least, to more primitive ways than they had already known, and the uneven advance toward that complexity which, deservedly or not, was called "civilization." By this experience they were altered in person and in characteristics. They became Americans. Just what that meant is not easy to say, but there were definite marks left on men and on institutions that distinguished them from the original settlers and practices that had first come out of Europe. Men became natives. They fitted the continent and its needs. Outsiders recognized the differences.

In the colonial period intimate connections with the Old World and the fact that colonial life was modeled after European patterns held back change to a degree. Most of the colonists thought of themselves as Europeans and strove to look and act like their fellows in the homeland. Residents of the towns and those in the older areas of the colonies, and persons of wealth and officeholders,—in fact, most who could afford to do so,—read English books and magazines, decked themselves and their homes in English-made goods, and took a real interest, direct or indirect, in what was going on abroad. If permitted to prosper and enjoy a reasonable degree of freedom, they were content to remain as part of the growing British Empire. Those who moved farther out, however, and who were forced, of necessity, to supply their own needs, lost both the English contacts and the English patterns. For some time before the Revolution many felt the separateness of their world and were thoroughly conscious of the fact that, if they were to be content and were to realize the possibilities offered in the new land, they must live their own lives in their own way. Troubles with the mother country, therefore, divided the colonists into Tories and Patriots. The bitter struggle over the Declaration of Independence only stressed the conflict between the persistence of things old and the force of change to things new. The ultimate acceptance of independence confirmed the fact that long years and long miles apart had created two peoples. Sadly many Tories left the colonies; others reluctantly accepted the inevitable.

But the greater influence of frontier living and the steady advance into the wilderness came in the years after the second war with England, in 1812. Emigrants poured westward in ever greater numbers. New Wests, one after the other in different geographic basins, sprang into being. Soon they had upset the old balance in American life and taken charge. Western men were elected to the Presidency; domestic issues occupied Congress; American traits and American assumptions deepened and became fixed. For eighty years and more the process went on until the end of the frontier was reached and new forces came to dominate. But even then the American was largely what he was because of these days under this great experience. His characteristics and outlook, for years to come, had been shaped.

Foreign writers and native observers generally agreed on the larger characteristics of this "new man," this American. They stressed

the fact that he was an individualist—a man who had learned to stand on his own feet, care for himself, do all kinds of things fairly well; who kept the patent office busy with his inventions; who liked his freedom and resented even government's interference. Yet, with all his stanch individualism, he was a man who knew how to co-operate, to help to raise the neighbor's house or barn, husk his corn, or bring into being a vigilance committee or a more substantial government.

He was, moreover, a confirmed believer in progress. He was used to change, and his experiences in transforming the wilderness into farms, in seeing his towns grow into cities and his nation become powerful among the nations, gave him faith in the future. Anything could be done. Dreams were forever becoming realities. He saw things not as they were, but as he and his fellows could make them to be. Henry Adams tells how the early American was wont to boast of his wealth, his "solid mountains of salt and iron, of lead, copper, silver, and gold", of his cities "broadcast to the Pacific," and his cornfields "rustling and moving in the summer breeze." But the visitor saw only "tremendous wastes," where "sickly men and women" were "dying of homesickness" or were being scalped by savages; mountains beyond reach or swamps "choked with their own rotten ruins." No wonder he called the American "a liar and swindler" and his story "a fraud." But what he did not realize was that the American was not talking about things as they were, but about things as they were to be. He was indulging in dreams that could and would come true. That became a national habit. The future, not the past, held America's Garden of Eden.

Yet with all his belief in progress and all his tolerance of change, the American was, at heart, a conservative and a conformist. Life on the frontier was rather simple, and the problems to be faced were rather restricted and definite. The men who successfully solved them were, therefore, much alike in ability and point of view. They were of the same general pattern, regardless of time and place. Their way of doing things also fell into a pattern and soon constituted the accepted way in which things should be done. Standards were thus set, and the notion was created that these were the means by which progress was achieved. Conformity to pattern of necessity became a virtue, and eccentricity a fault. Amid primitive conditions the price of survival was often the rigid adherence by all men to well-understood lines of conduct. Where men had to depend on one another and to know how each would react to a given situation, uniformity and conformity alone afforded security. The nonconformist was a weak link in the social chain.

And, in like manner, ways that had helped to give "progress" beyond anything known elsewhere were deemed superior to any "foreign" importations. A community that had struggled upward from simple crudeness to complex comforts and extravagance had, by that very fact, demonstrated its superiority. Most Americans lived in "the best town" in the world. Their form of government and business system were also "best." To hold fast to that which was "good" was as much an American trait as was the urge to change.

Out of the experience of crossing and transforming the continent came also a tendency to stress material things and accomplishments. The tasks that the American faced were largely those of clearing land, accumulating materials, extracting natural resources, and building things. His accomplishments represented victories over nature. He worked with his hands, bent his back, endured physical hardships. He measured his progress by the clearing he made in the forest, the acres he broke to the plow, the size of the buildings, the towns, and the factories that he erected. The measure of his success was the wealth he accumulated. He worked hard and glorified toil. He hated the lazy man. There were too many things that had to be done in a new country. The Massachusetts Bay Company instructed its governor to permit "noe idle drone . . . to live amongst us," and Virginia ordered slothful persons to be bound over to forced labor. Compulsory labor, in the form of Negro slavery, was long accepted as a "good."

Such a situation produced a quantitative

valuation of almost everything. When an American talked about what a man was worth, he was speaking of his material accumulations. When he said that a girl had married well, he probably was referring to her husband's bank account. The words *big* and *great* became synonyms. Values were to be measured by statistics. The height of a building, the enrollment of a university, the acres of a farm—these were the things on which judgments were to be based. Men should be "practical." Theories and speculations served no purpose. "Doing something useful" did not include much that had to do only with beauty for its own sake.

Yet here, again, was contradiction. Behind the American's pride in national accomplishment lay the more profound fact of an incurable idealism. The men who transformed a wilderness had to be men of faith. The finished product was the substance of things hoped for. Big buildings, big universities, big farms, represented achievement —victory over difficulties. The skyscraper stood where, only a few years before, there was a one-story structure with a false front. The rich man probably began as a poor boy and was proof of the opportunity offered in this new land. Both seemed to justify American optimism Both, in their way, seemed to prove, to the generations which saw their story repeated over and over again, that something better for mankind was always possible if the right effort was made.

A strong dislike of special privilege, something interpreted as a belief in equality, also marked the American. He believed in every man's having a chance. After that, men could draw as far apart as their abilities permitted. Freedom to become unequal was an essential part of his democracy. Yet the game had to be played fairly; and when the rules sometimes permitted favors to the few, there was a "higher law." This was only saying that the purpose of law, after all, was to secure a just social order based on equality.

Then there was the American brand of humor, characterized by "exaggeration and extravagance"; there was a new place for women, and new attitudes toward their rights; there was ever a restless moving about—a nervous tension that kept the nation on wheels much of the time, put rockers on chairs, and kept people chewing at something from morning until night. These and other qualities marked the American, with his back to Europe and his face to the West. With boundless energy he created kingdoms of wheat and cotton, and cities where the Industrial Revolution reached new levels of efficiency; fought a Civil War in order to adjust conflicting interests and values to the needs of changing conditions; created a new age of big business, with larger problems of social justice and the question of what government could do about it. And then, as domestic problems grew more complex, he found himself again, unwilling and bewildered, an active participant in the affairs of the larger world.

The years following the Civil War were years of drastic change, in which industrial and financial capitalism definitely established their dominance in American life. Agriculture was slowly pushed into a secondary place, and the policies favorable to industry and capital were enacted into law. Natural resources were developed and exploited as never before, and the patterns of living were greatly altered by urban developments and mass production. It was a period of transition marked by conflict and strife. Agriculture and industry, capital and labor, East and West, North and South, were often in bitter conflict with each other. The relationships and assumptions which had come down from the great era of physical expansion did not always fit the facts of the new day. Nevertheless they continued to play a part in shaping the course of developments, and they made the problems of adjustment more difficult. Soon the very power of business interests threatened the whole democratic order and forced an effort to find a balance between *laissez faire* and government control and regulation. The clash of rival groups and interests also bore heavy at times on the public welfare and brought demands for reform that ranged all the way from the passage of new legislation to a

complete reordering of the whole social-economic system. Urban growth brought greater emphasis on cultural achievements, such as music and the arts. The specialist began to take the place of the old Jack-of-all-trades, and a greater tolerance for the "expert" appeared. Group association for work and play and mutual development testified to a weakening of the old individualism of frontier days. More leisure was possible, and, though "the gospel of work" still persisted, men nevertheless began to talk of the good uses to which "spare time" could be put. The old American values were weakening.

Equally important was the gradual resumption of American participation in larger world affairs. External interests crowded in to turn the American face outward once again. The Monroe Doctrine was widened in its application; American capital and business interests looked outside for both raw materials and markets. We made Cuba's unhappy conditions our business, and, through a war with Spain, gained new territorial interests, which involved us in the affairs of areas as widely separated as the Caribbean and the Philippines in the far Pacific. That gave American isolationism a terrific jolt and brought sharp conflict over "imperialism" into American politics. But it was only a beginning. Soon American representatives were sitting at council tables where European problems were dealt with, and a world war, begun in 1914, soon drew us into the thick of it for the simple reason that our interests were as vitally affected as those of the other great nations of the earth. But our minds were not prepared to accept entirely the facts. The struggle over entrance into the war was a bitter one, and the conflict between the natural impulse to make the world safe for democracy and the equally good tradition of confining our interests to this hemisphere was never quite won or lost. Isolationism triumphed with peace, and the realization of how out of character we were as a participant in European strife was not the least of the reasons for our rejection of the League of Nations.

The conflict between necessary participation in world affairs and the bent to isolationism went on to the very outbreak of the Second World War. It was as confusing as was the struggle between "free enterprise" in our domestic economic life and government participation in business. It still finds many Americans torn between the necessity of accepting world responsibility for democracy and peace and the old urge to stay at home and "mind our own business." The American is still in the making.

The making of the American, however, is only one part of the story. The rest of it has to do with the great experiment in democratic government and the effort to create a more democratic social-economic order. Out of Europe, in early years, came much that favored the few and justified the exploitation of the many. There were "superiors" and "inferiors"; there were cliques that formed around the governors and enjoyed special privileges. There was an established church in some colonies; the franchise usually belonged to those with property; representation in the assemblies was seldom equitable.

But the harsh pressure of wilderness living brought aristocrats down and common men up, and the struggle for home rule in Revolutionary days forced concessions as the price of wider co-operation. Gradually the franchise was broadened and representation balanced. Church and State were separated, and freedom was granted to all sects. Freedom of speech, trial by an impartial jury, security of person and property, and the right to keep and bear arms were added, in the Bill of Rights, to the new national Constitution.

Nature, meanwhile, offered her riches impartially, and the pressure of sheer numbers gradually forced more liberal policies in their distribution. Free land became the symbol of democracy. And, though the speculator still held advantages, the demands of the actual settler forced the granting of pre-emption rights and the ultimate passage of homestead legislation. The right to begin over again on some new frontier was thereby guaranteed to all Americans.

The door of opportunity was thus kept

open, and the chance to fight for more democratic advances was always possible. Inequalities and injustice still remained, but the frontier and the continent's riches were on the side of greater equality and greater justice. The American tradition favored the common man more and more. With increasing force, the nation's outstanding leaders spoke for democracy. In early national days Thomas Jefferson insisted on the sacredness of individual personality, and fought to free his countrymen from the burdens of too much governing and the tyranny of traditional practices. A generation later Andrew Jackson took up the fight against the threatening power of business and finance, and established the claim of the commonest of men to the nation's highest offices. Abraham Lincoln, for the next generation, struck down human slavery and forced the nation to understand the significance to all mankind of the great experiment in government of the people, by the people, for the people. Then, in turn, came the Populists, the Progressives, and the New Dealers to stress anew the claims of democracy on the American people. They kept alive the tradition of protest and the ideal that government exists only to promote the general welfare. They carried on the tradition that forced the nation to accept responsibility for making the world safe for democracy under Woodrow Wilson, and equally safe for the Four Freedoms under Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Never have the American people been allowed to forget that the United States is an experiment in democracy. Even, at times, they have been reminded, as August Belmont reminded them in 1850, that "the day is not far distant when self-preservation will dictate to the United States the necessity of throwing her moral and physical force into the scales of European republicanism."

Can Science Be Explained?[1]

RUDOLPH FLESCH

WHEN PEOPLE talk about something that's difficult to read, they are apt to say it's "too technical." The ordinary person, when he gets bogged down in a book or article, wouldn't think of saying, "The author of this can't write", he will say, "A layman like me will never understand this" and let it go at that. In other words, most people think that some subjects are easy and some difficult and it hardly matters what language is used in explaining them.

I don't agree with those people. The principles of simple language are just as important, or maybe more so, in explaining, say, biochemistry, than they are for a news broadcast. The only difference is this: When you use simple language for anything that is *not* scientific or technical, you can explain it to anybody; but when you simplify science, you will find that only part of it will be understandable to the layman, and another part, however simply stated, will be clear only to people who have some training in that branch of science. There is no scientific discovery or theory that cannot be popularized —up to a point; the important thing is to know just what can be explained to the ordinary person and what can't.

Let me show you an example of what I mean: Some time ago Commander Howard S. Aiken of Harvard University developed a so-called mathematical robot, that is, an automatic calculator that can solve tremendous, otherwise insoluble mathematical problems. Now how can anybody explain this incredible machine to a layman? At first sight, you would think it's impossible; but that isn't so. In fact, the machine is being operated by laymen; they get a code book prepared by

[1] From *The Art of Plain Talk* by Rudolph Flesch. Copyright 1946 by Rudolph Flesch. Reprinted by permission of Harper and Brothers.

a mathematician and all they have to do is to follow the code and punch holes in a tape. So the *operations* of the machine can be explained very simply; the book probably says something like "First punch hole A6; then punch hole C31" and so on.

But you can also go one step further and explain to a layman what Commander Aiken was about when he was building that machine: you can tell what the problem was, for what purpose the machine was going to be used, what theory he had in mind and how he put it into practice, and finally what tests he used to be sure the monster-gadget worked. All this can be told in simple, ordinary language, and if it's properly dramatized and made interesting, it will go a long way toward explaining the *meaning* of this scientific development: not exactly what was done, but why and how it was done. It will give the layman an explanation he can understand, and usually that will be all he wants.

There is, of course, a third kind of explanation, a mathematical explanation of the machine for mathematicians. This, too, can be put in simple language, that is, short sentences, simple words and so on, and that will save mathematicians time and effort in reading their professional journals. But—let's face it—the layman will never understand the formulas and graphs. To understand exactly what Commander Aiken has done, you have to have so-and-so many years of higher mathematics, and that's that.

Or let's take another example that happens to be handy. How can the scientific yardstick formula of this book be explained? The answer is exactly the same. Again, there are three levels of explanation, two for laymen, one for scientists only. First, there is the *operation* of the formula: that can be explained by the simple set of directions which you will find in the back of the book. Second, there is the *meaning* of the formula: to explain that properly, I would have to go into the history of language simplifying, the relationship between language and understanding, the readability formulas that were developed by other researchers, the differences between those formulas and this one, and so on. Then I could dramatize the whole story and that would probably give most people all the explanation they want. However, there is still the third level, that of the *scientific* explanation; and here I would have to get into statistical regression formulas and multiple correlation and whatnot, and nobody who hasn't had a course in statistics would know what I am talking about.

Now let's see how the principles of language simplifying apply to these three types of scientific explanation. First, let's take a look at the language of operation sheets, directions, shop manuals, popular mechanics, the literature that tells how to do a technical job. Here is an example I picked at random from a book on papermaking:

> In the event of there being more than one screen serving the machine (as is usually the case) it is necessary to watch carefully the operation of the screens with reference to the stock supplied them, and each valve should be opened or closed in proportion to the capacity of the screen it is feeding. If there is any difference in the capacities of the screens, it is probably due to the cams or toeblocks being worn, or some other thing affecting the oscillation of the diaphragm.

Now obviously this is not very readable But what are the obstacles the reader has to face? Certainly *not* the technical terms; in fact, any reader interested in papermaking machines is apt to know what a cam or toeblock is, and if not, will have no trouble finding out. But that technical knowledge won't make it any easier for him to work his way through "in the event of there being" or "with reference to the stock supplied them" or "in proportion to the capacity." The simple fact is that people who know something about certain technical operations are usually those least equipped for writing about them or explaining what they know to somebody else.

Not so long ago a *New York Times* story described the excellent instruction manuals put out by Bell Telephone Laboratories for the Army and Navy. Let me quote one sentence: "The company has discovered that it is easier to hire a qualified editor and teach him what he needs to know about the techni-

cal terms involved than it would be to take a qualified engineer and teach him what he would need to know about the art of editing . . ."

If those papermakers had followed the same principle, our passage would probably read somewhat like this:

> Usually the machine is served by more than one screen. If so, watch carefully how much stock goes through each. To keep the flow even, just open or close the valves. (If you want to make the screens work evenly, look first for worn cams or toe-blocks. Most often that's what makes the difference.)

In other words, all writing of the operation-sheet type should address the reader directly, and should tell him step by step what to do. It's as simple as that. Anybody who writes how-to-do prose should start off by reading a good cookbook; here, for instance, is a model paragraph from Fannie Farmer:

> Apple Pie
>
> Line pie plate with pastry. Pare, core, and cut apples in eighths, put row around plate ½ inch from edge, and work towards center until plate is covered; then pile on remainder. Mix sugar, nutmeg, salt, lemon juice, and grated rind, and sprinkle over apples. Dot over with butter. Wet edges of undercrust, cover with upper crust, and press edges together. Prick several places with fork. Bake

Anybody can understand that, and anybody can understand any kind of technical directions that are written in the same style.

When we come to the second level of scientific explanation we find, oddly enough, that there is also one single standard formula. The reason is simple: Since the meaning of any modern scientific fact can only be explained by the method of its discovery, and since the scientific method is the same in all branches of science, and such explanation will be the story of a scientist, or several scientists, going through the classic four stages of modern scientific method: observation, hypothesis, deduction, and experimental verification. So this type of popularization will show how a scientist got curious about certain facts, thought up a theory to explain them, devised experiments to prove the theory, and finally tested it and found that it worked. If two scientists working on the same problem can be shown, so much the better: this will make the reader appreciate not only the scientific method, but also the fact that modern science is never a one-man affair.

Popular science written by this standard formula is probably the most educational type of writing there is: it's the only way of making laymen appreciate scientific method But let's not get into this; let me rather show you a classic example. This is from a *Reader's Digest* article on penicillin by J. D. Ratcliff:

> The story of penicillin begins in 1929, when Dr. Alexander Fleming . . . was examining a glass culture plate milky with millions of bacteria. His sharp eye detected something. There was a fleck of green mold on the plate, and around this fleck was a halo of clear fluid. *Something was destroying the bacteria!* A mold that had dropped in from the air was causing their sudden death on an unprecedented scale . . .
>
> Dr. Fleming fished out the mold but research on it stood still for ten years . . . Then the sulfa drugs came along to reawaken interest in this field.
>
> The sulfa drugs were amazing performers against some bacterial diseases; sorry failures against others. Something better was needed . . . Dr. Howard Florey of Oxford remembered Fleming's work. That green mold was poison to bacteria on culture plates. Might it not also work in the bodies of men?
>
> Florey and his colleagues . . . decided to investigate . . . They set to work at the tedious task of growing the green mold in earthenware flasks. When the mold had grown into a hard, rubbery mat the chemists took over. Hidden somewhere in the mold was a bacteria killer.
>
> By a slow process of elimination, the chemists discarded chemical components of the mold that had no antibacterial effect. In the end they turned up with the minutest pinch of a yellow-brown powdery stuff. This *might* be the bacteria murderer.
>
> The first trials of the yellow powder were run in test tubes. It appeared that as little as one part in 160 million would slow the growth

> of bacteria! . . . This looked splendid. But there was still a big hurdle to overcome. The stuff somehow poisoned microbes. Might it not also poison men?
>
> Florey and his helpers . . . shot huge doses of sure streptococcus death into 50 mice. Then the mice were divided into two groups of 25 each. One group would get no further attention; the other would get penicillin.
>
> Within 17 hours all the unprotected mice were dead . . . Hundreds of other mice trials followed, with similarly favorable results.
>
> At last Florey was ready to carry his work from mice to men . . .

And so on. This is science for laymen at its best, and it's written in typical *Reader's Digest* manner, so that an average person can understand it. But I hope you realize that it is a piece of what might be called science appreciation, not of scientific explanation. It does not even have the chemical formula for penicillin in it. In short, from a scientist's point of view, it offers no explanation at all.

To explain science fully, as I said before, you will have to use a third level of explanation, and this is where the layman will never be able to keep up with you. Suppose, for instance, you are asked for an explanation of what retene is, and the Encyclopaedia Britannica gives you the following clue:

> Retene, an aromatic hydrocarbon occurring in wood tars and obtained by distilling resinous woods. It crystallises in colourless plates melting at 98.5° C and boiling at 394° C. Chronic acid oxidises the hydrocarbon to retene quinone (an *ortho*diketone) and permanganate oxidises the quinon to 3-hydroxy-*iso*propyldiphenyl–1:1':2'–tricarboxylic acid. These reactions show that retene is thyl*iso*-propylphenanthrene, $C_{18}H_{18}$, with the adjacent structural formula.

Plainly, there is no way of really telling a layman what retene is. To understand it, with or without simple language, you have to be a chemist and that's that.

There is only one bit of advice I can offer in this business of giving laymen an exact scientific explanation: don't try. It is far better to be as frank as Bertrand Russell in his popular explanation of the relativity theory, who says at one point:

> . . . this part can be expressed by the method of "tensors." The importance of this method can hardly be exaggerated; it is, however, quite impossible to explain it in non-mathematical terms.

Or, if you are unfortunate enough to be assigned to such an impossible job, you might add some sort of apology, the way Gove Hambridge did in the 1941 *Yearbook of Agriculture:*

> . . . The editor would like to point out that to visualize even the more elementary aspects of atmospheric circulation over the earth is not easy, since you have to imagine that you are a mile or two up in the air, on your stomach with your head toward the North Pole, a clock nearby lying on its back so you can readily tell which is clockwise and which counter-clockwise rotation—also a mirror so you can see how everything would be reversed if you were in the Southern instead of the Northern Hemisphere, and you have to remember constantly that a south wind is a northward-moving wind, an east wind a westward-moving wind, and vice versa.

Tenants of the Soil[1]

LORUS J. MILNE AND MARGERY J. MILNE

WHEN A CYCLONE rips through a small town, tearing roofs from some houses and flattening others altogether, the Red Cross hurries to the scene and co-operates with state agencies in helping homeless victims. In the animal world an equally disastrous situation occurs when someone carelessly pries up a flat stone that has lain in a field for a year,

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or heedlessly rolls over a log that is rotting in the forest. Even more individual lives are in instant jeopardy. Many die from desiccation or sunburn before they can drag maimed bodies to shelter. And who is to say that Hindus and other groups are wrong in believing that a life is a life, no matter how insignificant the body that harbors it? Yet in this obscure catastrophe, not only is there absence of any assistance for most of the stricken, but removal of their roof makes them completely vulnerable to a whole host of enemies with which they have never before had to contend. The soil is richly tenanted by small animals—thousands of lives to the cubic foot. Their tunnels and chambers are exposed to view, and to the triple threat of dry air, strong light and new enemies, whenever a log or a stone is suddenly displaced.

A flat fragment of rock lying on the surface offers a special attraction to many subterranean animals. When sun shines on the stone, warmth is conducted through it far more rapidly than through an equal depth of earth. The rock becomes a radiant heater—one that is waterproof. These are its virtues. Elsewhere air spaces in the soil act as a blanket of insulation, resisting changes in temperature. And as heat gradually gets through porous ground, these same spaces draw off and squander the moisture that is so essential to the animals there.

Ants prepare special galleries under stones and rotting planks, where they can bring their young—eggs, grubs and pupae—to speed their growth in the welcome warmth without subjecting them to dangerously dry air. When the heavy roof is lifted, the adults seethe with sudden activity. Some seize pale cocooned pupae that look like puffed rice grains. Others lift wriggling white grubs or gently pick up a tiny egg in their sickle-shaped jaws. All hurry with their charges down unbroken tunnels to the safety of galleries deeper in the soil. Some scurry across flat earth areas on which the rock pressed until a minute ago, seeking enemies of any sort. Each of these belligerent ants is ready with sharp nippers. Many can spit an acid saliva that irritates other insects and frightens them away. A few can sting as well. Within a matter of moments the ants restore order for their own kind. Even their crippled fellows are dragged below to die. Sometimes additions are made to the communal food supply from captures of other creatures under the rock that were dazzled too long by the unexpected glare of daylight.

Earthworms, too, prepare tunnels roofed by solid rock, and spend the day in the warm damp soil there. Passageways prepared by worms are spacious and extend into the earth in many directions. Each burrow opens to the air above at several sites and from these holes the worms extend themselves at night in search of food. To them they withdraw at the first sign of dawn or the slightest jarring of a footstep on the nearby ground. Though the terms mean nothing to an earthworm, the creatures show a distinct awareness of the difference between "mor humus" and "mull humus." The former is the uppermost debris of dead leaves and decaying plant material, resting on mull humus in which there are mineral particles. Mor humus supplies the earthworms with their food but it is seldom suitable for tunneling. Rather the worms hold fragments with their sucking mouths and drag the pieces into burrows such as the spaces below stones. There the booty from their nocturnal prowlings on the surface can be digested in comparative safety. Often worms leave particles of plant material in burrow corners, and this becomes incorporated with the minerals of the soil to give mull humus its characteristic mixed and fine-grained appearance.

The earthworm takes into its digestive tract large amounts of sand and grit while burrowing in the soil. Much of this is not absorbed. Together with undigested residues from real food materials, such wastes are piled around a tunnel mouth on the surface as "castings." These rough-surfaced little mounds are a sure clue to the presence and activities of earthworms. Only on a putting green (which should be almost as smooth as a billiard table) does man object to an earthworm's casting; golf course attendants often go to considerable lengths to

keep worms from such areas. But in lawns and gardens, fields and forests, the castings represent a double benefit for plants. The tunnels open up the soil, allowing air and water to enter it more freely. The worm castings themselves are fertilizer, and soluble parts of this manure are washed into the ground with each rain.

Appreciation of the earthworm's role in the soil is far younger than a knowledge of its use in fishing. Juliana Berners, a nun in an English Benedictine convent, gave clear instructions for finding and using worms as bait in the Fifteenth Century. Aristotle had referred to earthworms inelegantly as "earth's guts" but he thought they were produced spontaneously and developed into eels. The part played by this animal in plant economy was guessed at by Gilbert White in 1777 when he wrote: "Earthworms, though in appearance a small and despicable link in the chain of nature, yet, if lost, would make a lamentable chasm. For to say nothing of half the birds, and some quadrupeds which are almost entirely supported by them, worms seem to be great promoters of vegetation . . . the earth without them would soon become cold, hard-bound, and void of fermentation, and consequently sterile; . . ." But it remained for the patience of Charles Darwin to follow through the earthworm's life in the soil, to see the importance of their tunnels and heaps of waste as a means of "formation of vegetable mold." He found that in a field having a normal population of earthworms, a thickness of an inch of castings and subsoil accumulated every five years. Since the animals show a preference for burrowing under small rocks, removing the earth from below them as well as piling it on the nearby surface, they allow these stones to sink into the earth as much as a quarter of an inch a year. Flagstones in a walk can disappear below the soil if left untended for a while. But after a rock has been covered over by earth, its rate of descent is less rapid. Its peculiar properties for the earthworm disappear once the sun can no longer shine on it.

Darwin's observations were extended by W. H. Hudson, who became interested in these tenants of the soil below the famously well-kept English lawns. Hudson contended that worms below closely-clipped, well-raked grass were being starved by the over-neat gardeners. He tried various interesting experiments to show how hungry the animals there were for a litter of dead leaves. He spread leaves over one small area in a well-kept lawn day after day and found that after a few nights earthworms had migrated in numbers to that particular patch, and had anchored every leaf by dragging one end of it into a tunnel opening. Such migrations intrigued him, but they are far more usual than is generally realized. It is easy to demonstrate that on cool nights worms cluster in surprising abundance below piles of cow manure in a pasture. The fermentation gives off heat and this attracts the earthworms. On a hot night similar materials are deserted. In winter the same fermentation keeps great numbers of earthworms active in barnyards while their fellows in distant fields have been driven far into the ground by frost.

Hudson found too that after earthworms have thoroughly populated a field or forest, they add enough of some unknown chemical to the soil to discourage later worms from living there. Where food was in abundance and worms numerous, all were of small size. The largest worms, in the best physical condition, were on the frontiers in the hardest, most compact ground, adjacent to rather small supplies of mor humus. But the importance of earthworms to the farmer was clear. So was their effect on landscapes over long periods of time. Every fact supported Darwin's well-considered conclusion that "it may be doubted whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world as have these lowly organized creatures." Their value in good farming is so well known today that rearing and selling them has become a business. At Ontario, California, is the headquarters of "California Earthworm Farms" where thousands of worms are fed a balanced diet in culture beds somewhat similar to those used in growing mushrooms. When two or three months old the worms are

packed in soil and peat moss, to be shipped by the carton to farmers all over the country.

Everyone is familiar with earthworms and their smooth moist skins. Local usage varies greatly as to the name by which they are known: mud worm, night walker, eas'worm, angledog, dew worm, night lion, rain worm, night prowler, or just plain fishworm. Yet this is but one of the animals that spends the day under stones. Salamanders and slugs have smooth moist skins, too. They frequent galleries under rocks for the same reasons. But unlike the earthworms and ants, when the roof is removed these creatures have no maze of tunnels into which they can retire for safety. The salamander wriggles like a short-legged tadpole to take cover under leaves or in the nearby grass. The slug contracts into a bean-shaped mass and exudes a creamy slime to render it unpalatable and less liable to damage by desiccation. If touched, a large slug can even squirt the yellow juice in fine jets that drench objects several inches away. As minutes pass the salamander grows restless and creeps deeper into the protective forest of grass shoots. The slug dries off a little and unfolds a pair of eye-tipped stalks. Slowly it glides into the nearest shadow, its route marked by a glistening wake. If both survive the dangers of the day, they become far more active in the moist dark of evening, and find new shelters for the morrow long before the sun is due to rise again.

Other animals exposed when rocks are lifted have crept into crevices there in search of food. Daylight and fresh air disturb them in their foraging. Centipedes wind around obstacles in seeking new shelter, their thirty-odd legs moving so rapidly that it is easy to see why they are credited with an even hundred. Beetles scurry off or wedge their heads below projecting fragments opaque enough to hide from their eyes the light of day. They may remain thus, exposed to view except for their heads, in apparent belief that because they can see nothing, no enemy can find them either. This is the ostrich fable in miniature, and has the benefit of truth, whereas the bird has long since been vindicated of such stupidity.

One of the beetles below rocks in open pastures near meandering streams, is *Brachynus,* the "bombardier." It is a trim little animal, with orange legs and fore body, and dusky blue wing covers that seem squarely cut off behind. When pursued or disturbed by such a disaster as loss of the roof over its head, this beetle ejects a defensive fluid from a special gland at the hinder end of the body. The material issues with an audible "pop" suggesting to early naturalists the explosion of a cannon, bombarding an enemy. Part of the discharge is a spray that must corrode the eyes of any pursuer since a few shots of it on a human fingertip harden the skin and stain it a dark brown. The beetle simulates gunfire in still another way. Each puff of vapor carries with it a gray powder that looks like smoke. By night this dust is faintly luminescent, like the muzzle flash of a rifle. Every "pop" of the beetle—and they can repeat the performance several times in quick succession—ejects the charge half an inch or more astern. The powder settles and loses its glow; the vapor drifts away. In some tropical species of larger size, each explosion throws out a thimbleful of the gray dust, and the accompanying mist has been identified as nitrous acid.

A young biologist who made a study of ground beetles had several favorite sources for specimens. In his mother's garden some two dozen bricks were laid close together flat on top of the soil. Each week for many summers he raised the blocks in turn and caught certain kinds with great regularity. The commonest of these beetles was a large black insect with a narrow rim of iridescent purple on its hard wing covers. It was an introduced form, originating in Europe, and the wing covers hid an empty space—the creature lacked flying wings altogether. Yet year after year these beetles spread from surrounding gardens to hide under the mosaic of bricks. In no other way was the abundance of these big insects evident, but their benefit to the community must have been considerable since their food is almost exclusively caterpillars. Another productive hunting place for beetles was around an old tumbledown mill on the muddy banks of a

nearby stream. Flat stones there sheltered a different type of beetle, with slender golden legs, long feelers and a soft, blackish brown body. It could fly, but each spring numbers congregated under those particular rocks. Nowhere else were they found.

One summer, the naturalist returned; he had been away eighteen years. But under a brick in the parental flower bed he observed one of the flightless caterpillar hunters. It scampered off just as had those seen many years before. The old mill had become a tea-room with a national reputation, but a visit there would have been incomplete without lifting a rock. And standing there on long delicate yellow legs were two of the same kind of soft ground beetles, upset over the loss of their roof in exactly the same way as their relatives had been in the past. In spite of the numbers of these insects that had been collected for study at the earlier date, finding them again in the same sites was like seeing old friends. The brick and the stone may well have been shelters lifted years before, but the animals under them were short-lived descendants carrying on an unwritten tradition in a place that suited their living needs. Without important changes in soil drainage or exposure, the population below rocks in any given locality is astonishingly stable.

Many of the creatures exposed by rolling a log or lifting a stone are hiding there just for the day that separates two active nights. Millipedes—"thousand-leggers" of various kinds—are vegetarians that rely on their armor and nocturnal habits to protect them from harm. Some are flat-backed; others have cylindrical bodies that curl up like watch springs when touched. Pale grayish sow-bugs, half an inch long, seem colored to blend better with stones in the dark. They are scavenging crustaceans, the only members of this huge class to solve the problem of living on land through all stages of development. Their jointed shells resemble the plates of an armadillo, and some of them roll into an almost perfect sphere when disturbed, hence their other name of "pill-bugs." Earwigs too creep under rocks, into earthworm burrows and through decayed wood, to wait until night comes and they can resume their roving in search of meat. Flat stones in sandy sea beaches often harbor these interesting animals. They are entirely harmless although they can nip mildly with jaw-like pincers on their abdominal ends. They investigate clothing left on the shore at night by beach parties, and can be recognized in the dark with ease. If the creature is small and runs away, but bites with the retreating end, it is almost surely an earwig. All our common kinds in the Northeast are transatlantic introductions. The largest measure over an inch in length and are wingless even when adult. Mother earwigs guard their eggs under stones, sitting on them like brooding hens until the youngsters hatch.

Some of the living animals below rotting wood and fallen logs use the decaying plant material for food. Termites and a special kind of cockroach often scurry to shelter when their homes are wrecked, their galleries torn apart. But in each case, only the large member of a remarkable partnership is visible without a microscope. Neither termites nor wood cockroaches by themselves can use the food they chew and swallow. They have no means for changing cellulose into sugars that can be absorbed. Instead they delegate digestion to a swarm of "guests" in their intestines. There thousands of protozoans swim through the moistened wood pulp, with long whip-lashes on their single-celled bodies. These tiny "simple" animals inside the insects engulf the plant fibers and split the large molecules into smaller ones. From the protozoans the insects recover the food in useful form. But the protozoans benefit too from this co-operative venture. Alone they could not live in even rotting wood. They have no jaws with which to break up the coarse fragments into pieces they can surround. In the digestive tract of their wood-eating partners, they thrive and make possible the success of the insect hosts.

Scientists have investigated this special sort of symbiosis by placing termites and wood cockroaches in heated dishes that did no harm to the insects but that were too hot for survival of their intestinal protozoans. The

experimental animals were returned to ordinary temperatures in a few hours. They continued to eat, but they became distended with undigested food and died of starvation without their living intestinal fauna. The most important gift a parent termite or wood cockroach can provide its young is a cropful of regurgitated food rich in protozoans, to populate the nymph's digestive system with living helpmates. Without them it can starve to death in the midst of an insect banquet.

A little rain fulfills a great need for tenants of the soil, but a continuous downpour means the undoing of many. The water fills the air spaces in the ground so that oxygen no longer diffuses freely into the depths. Some animals suffocate in their chambers. Others evade the water by burrowing deeper. A few drown where they lie, depending on unhatched eggs with waterproof shells to carry on their kind. Earthworms, swollen and discolored from absorbing too much water, leave their flooded burrows and take their chances on the surface. Robins gorge themselves on the hapless creatures as they seek drier spots in which to start afresh. Sunlight breaking through the storm clouds kills them and dries their soft bodies to stiff, shriveled relics that only the ants enjoy. Or beetle larvae attack a wet worm, biting it, backing off, only to rush in again and snap at another spot. Soon the insects have incapacitated their prey and are able to feast at leisure. But in the soil the water remains awhile to provide a medium for multitudes of parasites that swim in search of new hosts. Too much moisture can be almost as serious a misfortune as too little. Yet an excess usually lasts a far shorter time and the soil soon teems again with life.

Rain sometimes causes widespread redistributions of tenants of the soil. Slugs that were separated by considerable distances where they hid under rotting logs and decaying leaves, become active and seek out higher ground. A flat stone that ordinarily rests lightly on the ground and is too dry below to give an animal anything but momentary shelter, may become a haven during a rainy spell for dozens of slugs. These occasional clusterings are not without amorous advantages, and the creatures go forth after the deluge to scatter eggs far and wide.

Much of the moisture needed by soil animals comes to them, as to the plants, by capillarity from ground water far below the surface. For many of these creatures it is not necessary that they find drops of the liquid. Drinking may even be harmful since it introduces parasites and dilutes the digestive juices that should be concentrated to act efficiently on food. It is sufficient for great numbers of animals that they be surrounded by humid air. They are able to absorb water vapor from it and store the distilled moisture in their bodies where it is needed Beebe mentioned a spectacular demonstration of this that he noticed on a visit to an island in the West Indies: "The strangest sight was hundreds of large, brown millipedes clinging to the stems of bushes, and small trees, apparently finding more moisture in the steady tradewinds than in the soil, which even under large stones, was parched and dry." Much more recently other scientists have tested various insects, by weighing them, confining them in jars of air with known humidity, and reweighing them after some hours or days. These creatures slowly lost water to the air if it was dry, but they were able to gain weight, though starving, by absorbing moisture from more humid surroundings.

An entomologist named Berlese found a way to learn how many animals and what kinds inhabit soil. He prepared a large metal funnel with a narrow neck shielded by a screen. Into the funnel he threw a known quantity of earth spaded from a test location. The screen kept it from falling through. Over the earth he hung a strong electric light bulb, to provide illumination and heat—both anathemas to most ground dwellers. Then under the funnel tip he set a jar of preserving fluid. As heat from the lamp caused soil moisture to evaporate at the top, the creatures crept unseen, deeper into the funnel. Its metal walls hemmed them in. Gradually they worked their way to the bottom and fell through the gauze into the killing bottle.

Mites and spiders, round worms and segmented worms, insects of many kinds never found before, dropped in unbelievable abundance from the shovelful of earth. Most of them were minute and the collection grew by the hour for weeks, until the funnel's contents were bone dry all the way down. The invisible boundary of moist earth finally reached the screen, herding before it all the tenants of the soil.

Most numerous of soil inhabitants proved to be mites—tiny creatures of many types, but each showing kinship to the spiders through possession of eight legs. In the top two or three inches of forest soil, as many as four thousand of these animals occupy each square foot. Deeper down their numbers dwindle, but they are minute enough to creep through insignificant openings in the soil when winter provides a reason for greater distance from the surface. The great majority of these mites are vegetarians, with short legs carrying hard-shelled bodies at a slow pace. But some are hunting mites that hurry around on long legs, always seeking prey for their "big" jaws. Yet few are large enough to see with the unaided eye, even if induced to crawl over a sheet of white paper. Berlese sorted his catch with a microscope, and the many specialists to whom he sent the strange collections were grateful far out of proportion to the actual weight of animals they received.

Leaves falling to the ground in autumn make their first step toward becoming humus. Beneath their shelter many animals prepare for hibernation or merely put off the evil day when a hard frost will penetrate the litter and bring their death. Wasps lose their independent ways when they creep below the blanket to join the variety of centipedes and millipedes that forage in such places all year through. Crickets under the leaves chirp half-heartedly, and spiders go off by themselves to spin little silken bags in which to crouch. Woolly bear caterpillars spew saliva into fine golden threads to sew two fallen leaves together. To the loose mesh they add large numbers of their own stiff bristles until the reinforced strands make a crude cocoon. This they line with more silk and stretch out to shed the remains of their bird-repelling coat. It makes a little knot of bristles at one end of the cocoon, while the shiny brown pupa proceeds with internal changes. Already its surface markings outline the transformation of a hairy caterpillar into a flying dagger moth.

Only an astounding fecundity saves the earth dwellers from their multitude of enemies and series of calamities. Every human step on soft earth kills hundreds by crushing their bodies between soil particles. Moles and mice tunnel through the ground to seek the living bits of food. Skunks, bears and 'possums hunt for earthworms, snails, and beetles by turning over stones and rocking logs aside. Man plows the field to sow his crops and exposes the various small animals to light, dry air and an appreciative following of birds. He clears away the fallen trees and piles the rocks in dry walls replacing moisture-holding hedgerows. Only the naturalist feels for the tenants of the soil, and his care has a selfish aspect too. Meticulously he replaces the roof over the many homes he studies, so that the creatures there will be less disturbed, and may continue to be present for an unannounced inspection on the next visit to the area. "Roll the log back" and "leave the stone exactly as you find it." As George Herbert wrote:

> "More servants wait on man
> Then he'll take note of. In every path
> He treads down that which doth befriend him."

On Being the Right Size[1]

J. B. S. HALDANE

THE MOST obvious differences between different animals are differences of size, but for some reason the zoologists have paid singularly little attention to them. In a large textbook of zoology before me I find no indication that the eagle is larger than the sparrow, or the hippopotamus bigger than the hare, though some grudging admissions are made in the case of the mouse and the whale. But yet it is easy to show that a hare could not be as large as a hippopotamus, or a whale as small as a herring. For every type of animal there is a most convenient size, and a large change in size inevitably carries with it a change of form.

Let us take the most obvious of possible cases, and consider a giant man sixty feet high—about the height of Giant Pope and Giant Pagan in the illustrated *Pilgrim's Progress* of my childhood. These monsters were not only ten times as high as Christian, but ten times as wide and ten times as thick, so that their total weight was a thousand times his, or about eighty to ninety tons. Unfortunately, the cross sections of their bones were only a hundred times those of Christian, so that every square inch of giant bone had to support ten times the weight borne by a square inch of human bone. As the human thigh bone breaks under about ten times the human weight, Pope and Pagan would have broken their thighs every time they took a step. This was doubtless why they were sitting down in the picture I remember. But it lessens one's respect for Christian and Jack the Giant Killer.

To turn to zoölogy, suppose that a gazelle, a graceful little creature with long thin legs, is to become large—it will break its bones unless it does one of two things. It may make its legs short and thick, like the rhinoceros, so that every pound of weight has still about the same area of bone to support it. Or it can compress its body and stretch out its legs obliquely to gain stability like the giraffe. I mention these two beasts because they happen to belong to the same order as the gazelle, and both are quite successful mechanically, being remarkably fast runners.

Gravity, a mere nuisance to Christian, was a terror to Pope, Pagan, and Despair. To the mouse and any smaller animal it presents practically no dangers. You can drop a mouse down a thousand-yard mine shaft and, on arriving at the bottom, it gets a slight shock and walks away, provided that the ground is fairly soft. A rat is killed, a man is broken, a horse splashes. For the resistance presented to movement by the air is proportional to the surface of the moving object. Divide an animal's length, breadth, and height each by ten; its weight is reduced to a thousandth, but its surface only to a hundredth. So the resistance to falling in the case of the small animal is relatively ten times the driving force.

An insect, therefore, is not afraid of gravity; it can fall without danger, and can cling to the ceiling with remarkably little trouble. It can go in for elegant fantastic forms of support like that of the daddy longlegs. But there is a force which is as formidable to an insect as gravitation to a mammal. This is surface tension. A man coming out of a bath carries with him a film of water of about one fiftieth of an inch in thickness. This weighs roughly a pound. A wet mouse has to carry about its own weight of water. A wet fly has to lift many times its own weight and, as everyone knows, a fly once wetted by water or any other liquid is in a very serious position indeed. An insect going for a drink is in as great danger as a man leaning out over a precipice in search of food. If it once falls into the grip of the surface tension of the

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water,—that is to say, gets wet,—it is likely to remain so until it drowns. A few insects, such as water beetles, contrive to be unwettable; the majority keep well away from their drink by means of a long proboscis.

Of course tall land animals have other difficulties. They have to pump their blood to greater heights than a man and, therefore, require a larger blood pressure and tougher blood vessels. A great many men die from burst arteries, especially in the brain, and this danger is presumably still greater for an elephant or a giraffe. But animals of all kinds find difficulties in size for the following reason: A typical small animal, say a microscopic worm or rotifer, has a smooth skin through which all the oxygen it requires can soak in, a straight gut with sufficient surface to absorb its food, and a simple kidney. Increase its dimensions tenfold in every direction, and its weight is increased a thousand times, so that if it is to use its muscles as efficiently as its miniature counterpart, it will need a thousand times as much food and oxygen per day and will excrete a thousand times as much of waste products.

Now if its shape is unaltered, its surface will be increased only a hundred-fold, and ten times as much oxygen must enter per minute through each square millimetre of skin, ten times as much food through each square millimetre of intestine. When a limit is reached to their absorptive powers their surface has to be increased by some special device. For example, a part of the skin may be drawn out into tufts to make gills, or pushed in to make lungs, thus increasing the oxygen-absorbing surface in proportion to the animal's bulk. A man, for example, has a hundred square yards of lung. Similarly the gut, instead of being smooth and straight, becomes coiled and develops a velvety surface, and other organs increase in complication. The higher animals are not larger than the lower because they are more complicated. They are more complicated because they are larger. Just the same is true of plants. The simplest plants, such as the green algae growing in stagnant water or on the bark of trees, are mere round cells. The higher plants increase their surface by putting out leaves and roots. Comparative anatomy is largely the story of the struggle to increase surface in proportion to volume.

Some of the methods of increasing the surface are useful up to a point but not capable of a very wide adaptation. For example, while vertebrates carry the oxygen from the gills or lungs all over the body in the blood, insects take air directly to every part of their body by tiny blind tubes called tracheae which open to the surface at many different points. Now, although by their breathing movements they can renew the air in the outer part of the tracheal system, the oxygen has to penetrate the finer branches by means of diffusion. Gases can diffuse easily through very small distances, not many times larger than the average length traveled by a gas molecule between collisions with other molecules. But when such vast journeys —from the point of view of a molecule—as a quarter of an inch have to be made, the process becomes slow. So the portions of an insect's body more than a quarter of an inch from the air would always be short of oxygen. In consequence hardly any insects are much more than half an inch thick. Land crabs are built on the same general plan as insects, but are much clumsier. Yet, like ourselves, they carry oxygen around in their blood, and are therefore able to grow far larger than any insects. If the insects had hit on a plan for driving air through their tissues instead of letting it soak in, they might well have become as large as lobsters, though other considerations would have prevented them from becoming as large as man.

Exactly the same difficulties attach to flying. It is an elementary principle of aeronautics that the minimum speed needed to keep an airplane of a given shape in the air varies as the square root of its length. If its linear dimensions are increased four times, it must fly twice as fast. Now the power needed for the minimum speed increases more rapidly than the weight of the machine. So the larger airplane, which weighs sixty-four times as much as the smaller, needs one hundred and twenty-eight times its horsepower to keep up. Applying the same principles to the birds, we find

that the limit to their size is soon reached. An angel whose muscles developed no more power, weight for weight, than those of an eagle or a pigeon would require a breast projecting for about four feet to house the muscles engaged in working its wings, while to economize in weight its legs would have to be reduced to mere stilts. Actually a large bird such as an eagle or kite does not keep in the air mainly by moving its wings. It is generally to be seen soaring, that is to say balanced on a rising column of air. But even soaring becomes more and more difficult with increasing size. Were this not the case eagles might be as large as tigers and as formidable to man as hostile airplanes.

But it is time that we passed to some of the advantages of size. One of the most obvious is that it enables one to keep warm. All warm-blooded animals at rest lose the same amount of heat from a unit area of skin, for which purpose they need a food supply proportional to their surface and not to their weight. Five thousand mice weigh as much as a man. Their combined surface and food, or oxygen consumption, are about seventeen times a man's. In fact a mouse eats about one quarter of its weight of food every day, which is mainly used in keeping it warm. For the same reason small animals cannot live in cold countries. In the arctic regions there are no reptiles or amphibians, and no small mammals. The smallest mammal in Spitzbergen is the fox. The small birds fly away in the winter, while the insects die, though their eggs can survive six months or more of frost. The most successful mammals are bears, seals, and walruses.

Similarly, the eye is a rather inefficient organ until it reaches a large size. The back of the human eye on which an image of the outside world is thrown, and which corresponds to the film of a camera, is composed of a mosaic of "rods and cones" whose diameter is little more than a length of an average light wave. Each eye has about half a million, and for two objects to be distinguishable their images must fall on separate rods or cones. It is obvious that with fewer but larger rods and cones we should see less distinctly. If they were twice as broad, two points would have to be twice as far apart before we could distinguish them at a given distance. But if their size were diminished and their number increased, we should see no better. For it is impossible to form a definite image smaller than a wave length of light. Hence a mouse's eye is not a small-scale model of a human eye. Its rods and cones are not much smaller than ours, and therefore there are far fewer of them. A mouse could not distinguish one human face from another six feet away. In order that they should be any use at all, the eyes of small animals have to be much larger in proportion to their bodies than our own. Large animals, on the other hand, only require relatively small eyes, and those of the whale and elephant are little larger than our own.

For rather more recondite reasons the same general principle holds true of the brain. If we compare the brain weights of a set of very similar animals such as the cat, cheetah, leopard, and tiger, we find that as we quadruple the body weight the brain weight is only doubled. The larger animal with proportionately larger bones can economize on brain, eyes, and certain other organs.

Such are a very few of the considerations which show that for every type of animal there is an optimum size. Yet although Galileo demonstrated the contrary more than three hundred years ago, people still believe that if a flea were as large as a man it could jump a thousand feet into the air. As a matter of fact the height to which an animal can jump is more nearly independent of its size than proportional to it. A flea can jump about two feet, a man about five. To jump a given height, if we neglect the resistance of air, requires an expenditure of energy proportional to the jumper's weight. But if the jumping muscles form a constant fraction of the animal's body, the energy developed per ounce of muscle is independent of the size, provided it can be developed quickly enough in the small animal. As a matter of fact, an insect's muscles, although they can contract more quickly than our own, appear to be less efficient, as otherwise a flea or grass-

hopper could rise six feet into the air.

And just as there is a best size for every animal, so the same is true for every human institution. In the Greek type of democracy all the citizens could listen to a series of orators and vote directly on questions of legislation. Hence their philosophers held that a small city was the largest possible democratic state. The English invention of representative government made a democratic nation possible, and the possibility was first realized in the United States, and later elsewhere. With the development of broadcasting it has once more become possible for every citizen to listen to the political views of representative orators, and the future may perhaps see the return of the national state to the Greek form of democracy. Even the referendum has been made possible only by the institution of daily newspapers.

To the biologist the problem of socialism appears largely as a problem of size. The extreme socialists desire to run every nation as a single business concern. I do not suppose that Henry Ford would find much difficulty in running Andorra or Luxembourg on a socialistic basis. He has already more men on his pay roll than their population. It is conceivable that a syndicate of Fords, if we could find them, would make Belgium, Ltd., or Denmark, Inc., pay their way. But while nationalization of certain industries is an obvious possibility in the largest of states, I find it no easier to picture a completely socialized British Empire or United States than an elephant turning somersaults or a hippopotamus jumping a hedge.

Storm[1]

GEORGE R. STEWART

ENVELOPED IN the gaseous film of the atmosphere, half-covered by a skim of water forming the oceans—the great sphere of the earth spun upon its axis and moved inflexibly in its course around the sun. Continuously, in the succession of day and night, season and season, year and year, the earth had received heat from the sun, and again lost into space that same amount of heat. But this balance of the entire sphere did not hold for its individual parts. The equatorial belt received yearly much more heat than it radiated off, and the polar regions lost much more heat than they received. Nevertheless the one was not growing hotter while the others sank toward absolute zero. Instead, at once tempering cosmic extremes and maintaining equilibrium with the sun, by a gigantic and complex circulation, the poles constantly cooled the tropics and the tropics reciprocally warmed the poles.

In this process, cold currents bore icebergs toward the equator, and warm currents moved poleward. But even these vast rivers of the oceans achieved only a small part of the necessary whole.

In the stupendous work of transport the paramount agent was the atmosphere, thin and insignificant though it was in comparison with the monstrous earth itself. Within the atmosphere the chief equalizers of heat were the great winds—the trades and anti-trades, the monsoons, the tropical hurricanes, the polar easterlies, and (most notable of all) the gigantic whirling storms of the temperate zones, which in the stateliest of earthly processions moved ever along their sinuous paths, across ocean and continent, from the setting toward the rising run.

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As a crab moves on the ocean-bottom, but is of the water, so man rests his feet upon the earth—but lives in the air. Man thinks of the crab as a water-animal; illogically and curiously, he calls himself a creature of the land.

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As water environs the crab, so air surrounds, permeates, and vivifies the body of man. If traces of noxious gas mingle with it, he coughs and his complexion turns deathly gray. If it becomes overcharged with water-droplets he gropes helplessly in fog. If it moves too fast, he becomes a pitiable wind-swept creature, cowering in cellars and ditches. Even for rain he is dependent on air. If actually removed from air, he dies immediately.

Physicists describe the air as tasteless, odorless, and invisible. It could not well be otherwise. But these are not so much its qualities as adjustments of man. For if the air impressed the senses, being at the same time all-pervasive, it would necessarily obscure all other tastes, odors, and sights.

Air is so bound up with man's life that only with difficulty can he realize its existence as something in itself. To a savage it is as much an abstraction as consciousness; a child can conceive wind, which is air in motion, but not air itself. In our own language, *wind, mist,* and *rain* are ancient words, but *air* is a late and learned borrowing of a Greek word, which itself originally meant *wind.*

In his pre-natal months, indeed, man is aquatic. But thrust forth into the atmosphere —small and red—he sucks in a first breath spasmodically, and owns his allegiance to air. Seventy years later, a nurse stands by an old man's bed, waiting for what is known as "the last breath."

Even among the so-called land-animals, man is less than most bound to the earth. His tree-dwelling ancestors may have descended to the ground furtively, as to a foreign and hostile region; in civilization people spend most of their time upon raised platforms called floors.

As individual men move in a too well-known landscape without noticing its features, so man—fallaciously—takes for granted the all-pervasive air. His historians deal in lands and seas. But most movements of peoples have been not so much quests for better countries as for better atmospheric conditions. "A place in the sun" explains much of history more exactly than we usually realize, except that just as often we should say, "A place in the rain." A thunderstorm in haytime may overthrow a ministry, and a slight average rise or fall of temperature may topple a throne; a shift in the storm-track can ruin an empire. In the twentieth century a temporary variation of rainfall put Okies upon the highway by the hundred-thousand, just as in the third century a similar shift might in a single year hurl the Huns against the Chinese frontier and set the blue-painted Caledonians swarming at Hadrian's Wall. In the mass as in the individual, man is less a land-animal than a creature of the air.

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In an age all too familiar with war the yearly cycle of the weather is well imagined in terms of combat. It is a war in which a stronghold or citadel sometimes beats off assault after assault. More often the battle-line shifts quickly back and forth across thousands of miles—a war of sudden raids and swift counterattacks, of stern pitched battles, of deep forays and confused struggles high in the air. In the Northern Hemisphere the opponents are the Arctic and the Tropics, North against South. Uncertain ally to the South—now bringing, now withdrawing aid —the sun shifts among the signs of the zodiac. And the chief battle-line is known as the Polar Front.

There is no discharge in that war, nor shall be until the earth grows cold. Yet every spring as the sun swings north through Taurus, it renews the forces of the South, and they sweep forward as if to final victory. Night vanishes from the Pole, and in unbroken day Keewatin and Siberia grow warm. The northern forces shrink back into their last stronghold over the ice-cap. The sun moves from Cancer to Leo. The Polar Front is no longer a well-marked battle-line; few and weak storms, mere guerrilla skirmishes, move along it close to the pole.

Then, as if thinking the victory won or as if wishing to preserve some balance of power, the sun withdraws into Virgo and Libra. Again night falls over the Arctic. The northern ranks re-form and advance. But the forces

of the South still feel the sun at their backs and will not be routed. The line of the Polar Front becomes sharply marked—cold polar air to the north, warm tropical air to the south. And along the Front, like savage champions struggling in the death grapple, the storms move in unbroken succession.

In January the sun rides deep in Capricorn far from the northern Pole. Unbroken darkness lies over the Arctic, and from the ever-deepening chill of that night the cold air sweeps southward. Now it battles fiercely along the Polar Front, and now at some favorable point a lightning column breaks through and pierces clear to the Tropic. But still the forces of the South fight stiffly, and their ally never wholly deserts them. For even in mid-winter the broad equatorial belt lies hot in the sun, and high in the air through the great current of the anti-trades its reserves move northward toward the battle-line.

So in mid-winter the combat is fiercest, for then the forces of heat and cold both are strong, and have drawn most closely together. At that time, as in many another war, the citadels of the combatants are quiet and peaceful. In the South the trade winds blow gently, week in, week out. Far to the North the stars shine in the calm polar night. Only in that No Man's Land which is the Temperate Zone the storms raid and harry.

Then the sun moves from Aries into Taurus, and the southern forces drive northward once again.

In meteorology the use of such a military term as "front" may be a chonological accident—that the theory was developed in the years following 1914, a time when such military expressions were on everyone's tongue. The theory has become much complicated, but men still talk of the Polar Front, and may even yet talk of it when the Western Front has happily become a dim memory.

Had the discovery been made in more peaceful years, men (who involuntarily try to humanize nature) would perhaps have derived a term from marriage rather than war. This comparison also is apt—love, as well as hate, rises between unlikes, and love like hate breeds violent encounters. Best of all would be to use words unrelated to human feelings. Those great storms know neither love nor hate.

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Weather-wise after their kind, men say, the frogs from their puddles croak before rain, and the mountain goats move to the sheltered face of the peak before the blizzard strikes. Such also may have been the wisdom of man's ancestors before man was. In nerve-endings now decadent, they felt the moisture in the air, in the liquids of their joints they sensed the falling pressure.

The ages passed; brow and chin moved forward; man walked two-legged upon the earth. Hunter lying in wait, seed-gatherer wandering afield—they came to know vaguely the warnings of wind and cloud. And as fire (the new-found ally) flickered upon the cave-wall, they entrusted their knowledge to language (that great preserver of knowledge), fashioning rhymes and saws and proverbs. But language, which always said too much or too little, was also a great corrupter of knowledge. He who handled words most cunningly was seldom the wisest, but the catchiest proverbs, not the truest, survived. (So even yet those who speak English say:

Rain before seven,
Clear before eleven.

But those who speak other languages do not say that particular foolishness, not because they are wiser, but because in their speech the two numerals fail to rhyme).

Then, when many generations had passed, came high-priests and shamans and medicine-men. Self-deceived, stupid followers of tradition, or mere cynics, they beat drums for rain, and cried that the gods were wroth. They sacrificed bullocks, and gashed themselves with knives and lancets before the altars of Baal.

Next, too briefly, came the clean Hellenic mind searching rational truth. "The storm lasted three days," wrote Herodotus. "At last, by offering victims to the Winds, and charming them with the help of conjurers,

while they sacrificed to Thetis and the Nereids, the Magians succeeded in laying the storm." And then he added dryly, "Or perhaps it ceased of itself." Plato first used the word *meteorology,* meaning talk of high, celestial things, beyond the realm of air. Aristotle, canny north-country man, shunning such poetic flim-flam, took over the word for the study of all actions of wind, rain, and vapor in the air itself.

Ptolemy recorded his observations systematically, and Hippocrates studied the effect of weather upon his patients. But the Hellenic spirit withered, and the Roman mind was incurious and superstitious. Even the great Virgil commended the heifers and the rooks as divinely inspired weather-prophets, and the keen-witted Horace (more in jest than in earnest, we hope) saw the warning of Jove in an unexpected clap of thunder. Augur, astrologer, and wind-selling witch held sway through long centuries.

At last Galileo questioned nature's abhorrence of a vacuum, and recommended the problem to one of his students for investigation. From this beginning sprang modern meteorology. Temperature, wind, even humidity, man could feel through his own senses and roughly estimate. But pressure, most valuable guide of all, was too subtle for him, until he achieved the barometer. Then at last he came to know the waves and whirlpools, the swirling shallows and stagnant deeps, of that ever-changing ocean of air on the bottom of which the civilizations flourish and decay.

And since the storm knows no boundary of race or continent, men of all nations perforce have labored together to learn the ways of weather. Torricelli, the Italian, invented the barometer. Halley, the Englishman, mapped the winds. Franklin, the American, audaciously grasped the idea of a evolving and traveling storm. Coriolis, the Frenchman, discovered how the earth's own otation shifts the wind. Buys Ballots's Law lerives from a curiously named Dutchman; Dove, the German, stated the laws of storms; Bjerknes, the Norwegian, probed their nature and explained their life-history.

To these and many others man owes it that he no longer babbles a charm, or tears his flesh in supplication to a storm-demon. Ahead, if man can but conquer himself, lies every hope of greater victory. Still farther off, beyond limits of rational prophecy, lies the time when by arts as yet unimagined man may attain that dream of Magian, witch, and druid—not to predict weather, but to control it.

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. . . what was that storm?

It cannot well be compared to a mountain or a machine or any physical thing, for they exist continuously of the same materials But a storm constantly draws into itself new air and casts out the old.

In this a storm is like a wave or whirlpool which exists in the water but never of the same water. But a storm is vastly more complicated than any wave or whirlpool.

There is a closer analogy—with a living organism, even with a human being. As a man is conceived in the fierce onset of opposing natures, so also a storm begins in the clash of the dry cold air from the north and the mild moist air of the south. Like a person, a storm is a focus of activities, continuing and varying through a longer or shorter period of time, having a birth, youth, maturity, old age, and death. It moves; in a sense, it reproduces its kind, and even takes in food, exhausts it of energy, and casts out the waste. The storm, to be sure, develops only in a manner determined by its antecedents and environment—but many philosophers think little also of man's apparent free will. As for sensation and consciousness of which we talk much and know little—a storm seems to sheer off from a high-pressure area much as the human hand shrinks from the touched nettle.

But a community or a nation yields a still better analogy. Rome or England may endure through centuries although Romans and Englishmen die and are born hourly. The new storms sprung of the old are more like colonies than children; as with Rome and Constantinople there may be doubt as to which maintains the continuity of empire. The life-cycle of a storm is like that of a nation which from apparent decadence is

sometimes renewed into full vigor. Finally a storm, like a nation, has an indefinable abstract existence. Men speak of England when they mean neither its land nor its government nor its people, but merely some symbolic centuries-old ideal. And more, when men think thus, tears come to their eyes, and they march with high hearts to battle. So also in every storm exists a something which meteorologists cumbersomely name "a center of low pressure." This is neither air, nor cloud, nor wind, nor rain—yet, as with a nation, this mere abstraction represents the continuing reality of a storm.

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While as yet he scarce walked upright steadily, man fashioned for himself many gods—of earth and of sea, of the nether world, but (most of all) gods of the sky. Of these, sometimes he imagined gods of the farther air, high and serene, celestial in the empyrean. Sometimes they were of the middle air, rulers of the four winds, of thunder and lightning, of rain. Still again, they were demons of the lower air, malignant, haunting headland and cliff and rim-rock, pouncing in squall or sand-storm. But most often, each god had many aspects, being now the far master of the sky, now the rain-bringer, and again the spiteful demon crushing the corn-field with hail.

Of all lands and peoples is the roll-call of the storm-gods. Zeus the cloud-gatherer, lord of lightning. Adad-Ramman, the duplex, sender to the Babylonian plain alike of nourishing rain and devastating tempest. Jupiter of the rain; Thor, the thunderer; Indra, freer of the waters. Pulugu of the Bengal sea, before whose wrath the pigmy Andamanese cower low. Kilima, Mahu, Dzakuta. Pase-Kamui of the Ainus; Aziak who rules the air above the far-off northern ice. Tlaloc of Mexico, thundering from his mountain-top.

Man walks the earth, but is of the air. Everywhere he pays homage, not to the air itself of which he is unconscious, but to the powers which move within the air. He bows his head before wind and rain.

And what of Jehovah? Jehovah who poured the Deluge forty days and forty nights, and then sent the rainbow, his sign and pledge! Jehovah who came as a thick cloud upon the mountain and spoke to his servant Moses through thunders and lightnings!

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The place of man's birth is unknown; but in poetic dreams (as if dimly remembering) man yearns back toward some land benign and equable, far from the path of storms. Such was the Earthly Paradise. Such was Lotus-Land, and that far country of Those-beyond-the-North-Wind. Such was the Isle of Apples, Avalon:

> *Where falls not hail or rain or any snow,*
> *Nor ever wind blows loudly*

Still, near the Tropics, such regions may be found; in milder epochs they spread far toward the Poles.

Even yet, man seems to carry with him mementoes of some idyllic past. In his mind a grasshopper, each summer he assumes that the ever-blooming tropics still surround him. Only by hard-won wisdom, not by racial aptitude, does he lay up for the future. The birds fly south without waiting for frost; the bear stores up fat to hibernate; the bee and the beaver hoard food. If such creatures had grave and reverend philosophers, they might teach more concern with the present, and less with the future. But the average man always has difficulty in getting round to mend the roof in dry weather.

From the tropics also may stem man's dislike of the violent changes of the temperate zones. For (as the saying goes) the tropics have climate but no weather; they display a set diurnal or seasonal rhythm. In his deepest instincts man seems to expect such sameness, to resent sudden shifts. He has never learned that in mid-latitudes unusual weather is all he can expect. He always grumbles.

One belief of man's growth is that when as a proto-human he faced a more severe climate, he was forced to work harder and so survived and started on the road to civilization. But this negative theory fails to explain why man did not retreat to the tropics or

else like other species merely die off after a few uncomfortable lingering generations.

Another theory of survival stresses weather instead of climate. When the gentle epoch ended and storms became many and violent, then those very storms—the shock of constant adjustment—stimulated man out of his tropical languor, and gave him power and will to outface a harsher world. With each storm and passing front, blood pressure rises and falls, nerves react, secretions alter. So physicians have learned, and they quote from Hippocrates, father of medicine: "Air is lord."

Some theorists say even that civilization can flourish only in the lands along the storm-track, where man most often feels the bracing shift from warm and moist to cold and dry, back and forth. For evidence, they point to Ptolemy's records, which seem to show that in their times of greatness the Mediterranean lands knew more turns of weather than now in these decadent days.

This marriage of civilization and storms has not been proved, or yet refuted. If it is true, then those atmospheric powers which seem to overwhelm men in the temperate zone, also stimulate the energy to live and conquer. Civilized men are like Napoleon's grenadiers—they always grumble, but they always march.

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Four times in the known history of the earth have the mountains risen like a tide. Three times have the forces of air and water made head against those mountains, eating away the towering granite peaks into little rounded hills. Two hundred and fifty million years is the period of that cycle—majestic among earthly rhythms.

When, as now, the mountains have risen and stand high, then the storms rage most often and most fiercely. When the mountains again are low and the ice-caps melted and the seas grown shallow with wastage of granite, the air grows calm, and the languorous mood of the tropics reaches far toward north and south.

In this great struggle the chief allies of the hills are the plants. They bind the soil with their roots as with fine tough threads. With grass and fallen leaves they mat the earth against the rain-drops.

Dubious partners in the struggle are the animals. A few, like the beavers, work to hold back the water. Some, like the flyers and light-footed climbers, scarcely enter the conflict. The burrowers—rodents, insects, and worms—ease the rush of the water and give it entrance to the earth, but their castings of loose dirt wash away quickly. Worst of all, enemies against the hills, are the grazers and browsers. Like the stag in the fable, they eat away the cover of leaves and grass; with their sharp and hard hoofs they wear trails into the raw earth, and along the trails the running water cuts gullies.

Man, whose ancestors crawled out from the salt water, remains still a creature of the sea-margin, his habitat the low plains. A thousand feet is a small fraction of the ocean's depth; yet, if the ocean were suddenly to rise a thousand feet, man would be largely destroyed. Of Europe would remain only some mountainous islands; the United States would fare not much better. Mexico City, cupped among its mountains, would survive as the largest center of habitation in the world.

Living thus upon the plains, man is upon neutral ground between the mountains and the ocean. The torrents from the hills grow quiet, and let fall their silt. The great slow rivers here and there cut into the banks, and elsewhere build up the flood-plains or thrust forward the long fingers of their deltas into the sea.

Man allies himself now with the mountains, now with air and water. Like the beaver, he builds dams and retaining walls. Like the sheep, he strips the earth and cuts trailways. He protects his habitations against the water, so that through the centuries the level of a city rises foot by foot. In the main, swayed by immediate need and convenience, he remains through the long course of time careless of the struggle, planless.

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While men built Westminster Abbey and King Louis the Saint rode to his crusades, the cliff-cities of Mesa Verde—first civiliza-

tion within the area of the United States—knew their last prosperity. For seven centuries they have lain empty, shunned by Ute and Navajo as spirit-haunted ruins of the Old People. But those centuries have meant little to earth and sun; as today, the winter storms swept down when Balcony House was new and fat babies rolled on its terrace.

Most likely a storm made little difference in the life of those diminutive, nimble-footed people whose ancient toe-holds still pit the face of the cliffs. In the winter their corn-fields on the mesa-top needed no care; the season held off the nomad raiders who came harrying in summer. While the storm raged and ice-glaze made the cliff-paths impassable, the dwellers in Balcony House may have settled down to their quietest and happiest days. The granaries were deep with corn and beans; the spring at the back of the rock-shelter flowed (as it still flows) with pure, cool water. Their dogs lived with them, and their turkeys were penned at the back of the houses. A fire of a few sticks sufficed in the thick-walled houses and the underground club-rooms of the men. For clothing there were deer-skins and blankets of turkey feathers. The great over-hang of arched rock was a shelter from snow and wind.

An interval for talk and laughter, for weaving, for fashioning of arrow-heads, for discussion about next year's corn-planting, for long rituals of religion—when the storm had passed by and the ice-glaze was shattered beneath the unveiled sun, then was time enough to climb the cliffs, and go visiting to the other villages.

But modern man cannot withdraw. He expects much more of his civilization; he has spread it far and wide until it sprawls; he has given hostages. Therefore, he must sally forth about his flocks and herds; he must look to his roads and ditches, his levees and culverts, his wires and rails. To protect his machines he must invent other machines and with them labor against the storm. The honor of the battle is now not so much to skill and courage as to flawless steel and cool bearings.

At the end, our cities will stand like those others. In the year when Edward of England made war on Llewellyn the Welshman and Ser Marco Polo was new in the court of Kublai Khan, the rains failed; year after year, drought lay upon the mesa-land. As some think the people began to raise a great temple to placate the gods of storm; that temple still stands unfinished. Before the twenty-four years of drought had passed, the people were gone; dry winds swirled ashes in empty courtyards.

Whether the civilization of a land withdraws before the storm or fights against it, the end will be the same. Man is of the air, and the air must rule him. Drought or flood, cold winds and ice, heat, blown dust, shift of the storm track—in the end they overcome even the imperturbable machines.

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Once upon a time (to tell a fable) a primitive tribe lived beside a broad, brackish river near the ocean. This river had a disconcerting and inexplicable habit. Sometimes when the people wanted to dig clams, they found the water lapping high against the banks, and the clam-beds flooded. Sometimes when the people went to fish, they found wide mud-flats where they had expected to spear salmon.

At first the people attempted no explanation. After many generations they came to realize that a river-god, capricious and sometimes malignant, was responsible for this rise and fall. They placated the god by throwing flowers and food into the water, and now and then (when famine came) a baby.

After further generations a wise man arose among the people. He showed them how to outwit the river-god, who was really stupid, or else subordinate to the sun-god. For, observing the time of high water by the position of the sun, you could return next day when the sun was in the same position, and find the water high again. The priests were horrified, and had the man stoned to death for impiety, but the people found his ideas useful.

Throughout further centuries the knowledge of the tides increased. It was learned that they followed the moon more than the

sun, that they were greater toward the north, that even the vagaries of spring- and neap-tides accorded to rule. Finally the people, having developed mathematics and printing, published tables showing for a year in advance the height and time of every tide. Local influences such as wind and rain still produced a little variation, but the tide was no longer mysterious, and fearful; it was wholly understood.

As is the tide, so is the weather; the atmosphere, like the ocean, moves under physical laws. But the atmosphere is more mobile, so that the forces seriously affecting it are more numerous. All its motions arise from the heat of the sun, but this simplicity lies obscured beneath complications. Gravity, inertia, electricity, the spherical shape of the earth, its rotation, the ocean-currents, the contrasts beween water and land and between desert and forest, the height of mountains, the compressibility of air, the almost explosive qualities of water-vapor—these and other forces combine to produce the weather.

Man is now able to make approximate short-range forecasts. He has reached about as far as the people who estimated tides by the sun. But many of the forces of weather-control have already been stated with mathematical exactitude. The way of progress lies ahead, wide and open. A century hence, Siberia and Patagonia alike, Arctic and Antarctic, the islands of the sea and the ships that cross the sea, may all report to one great bureau. Then the published tables of next year's weather may be as accurate as the published tables of next year's tides.

Only man's quarrelsomeness seems likely to prevent this consummation. To master and apply the laws of the air without a world-wide co-operation is like trying to predict tides with an imperfect knowledge of the motions of sun and moon.

If the final success is attained, what will be the effect upon man? Will he at last have to stop talking and speculating about the weather? Will the foreknowledge that he must prepare against a tornado upon a given day be more strain than grasshopper-like ignorance and sudden disaster? Will the removal of the daily mystery only serve perhaps to make life at once safer and more boring?

5

Science and Scientific Method

Contemplation of the nature of knowledge and the way to achieve it has produced many contributions to the "philosophy" of science. Even as artists have shed most light on the nature and function of the arts, so scientists have made the wisest comment on the method and purpose of their work. Yet with all that has been said, a glance within ourselves will show that even today, in the so-called age of science, the meaning and implications of science are all too little understood. The notions of the average man in this respect are often vague and shallow. Even what is called "scientific method" is less well understood than we may believe; and certainly it is not widely practiced. Often the modern reader comes to think of the inductive method as the whole story, whereas men of imagination have extended the bounds of science by creative thought as much as by experiment—sometimes in ways as startling

at first as many a modern scientific generalization. Their contemplation of science has often produced more important results than their experimental conclusions.

One of these men was Francis Bacon. Near the end of his life he was making discoveries about preservation through freezing. But today he is remembered for the impetus he gave to scientific investigation. Soon after Bacon's death, the English Royal Society was established "for the promoting of . . . Experimental Learning." To this group Bacon was a kind of patron saint, for it was he who had most clearly phrased the whole idea of experimental learning. It was a time when understanding method was of prime importance, and scientists were anxious to indicate to fellow scientists that they knew their limits. This tendency can be seen in Galileo's "Proof That the Earth Moves" and in the "Discoveries" of Newton, one of the early members of the Royal Society. Today so much self-consciousness about what, as a scientist, one could or could not say might make a man seem like a newly-instructed schoolboy. Yet Thomas Henry Huxley's lectures less than a century ago were filled with homely illustrations used to help mature and intelligent laymen understand what the scientist was trying to do—witness his "The Method of Scientific Investigation." Huxley was explaining Darwin and the theory of evolution, but he also felt impelled to explain science itself

The story continues in our time. Bertrand Russell, philosopher and mathematician, has written about "social" science, and would, like Bacon, once more broaden the aim of science, but this time beyond mere learning to its human application. Russell considers possible relations between physical, biological, and social sciences for the betterment of society as a whole and the promotion of human happiness. He and other pioneers are the modern philosophers of science ranging widely in their creative thinking beyond laboratory walls and even "practical" ends. The reader may be startled to find Dante quoted in an article called "Science," or he may wonder at any possible linkage between mathematics and good and evil. He will find that Russell is not going off at a tangent with the Dante, and that Whitehead was not writing of "Mathematics and the Good" merely to indicate a queer association made by an ancient Greek called Plato. Both essays extend the imagination, as intended.

It may be that "science" now sees its limitations more clearly than in Bacon's day or Huxley's. One of its main features is its almost humorous recognition of these limitations—and of the empirical, not absolute, nature of scientific discovery. Both Fred L. Whipple and Gilbert H. Lewis show this quiet insistence, and Russell cites the limitations of a "scientific civilization" as well as its virtues.

What can be more clearly an idol of the marketplace than the wide-spread belief that science and philosophy no longer dwell in men together as of old? Perhaps, as Whitehead finally says, philosophy "is not a science." But in the twentieth century many scientists are good philosophers, looking critically at their own activity and relating science to a larger view of both the universe and man's doings and beliefs. Many a modern scientist turned writer has been interesting not only as scientist but as man speaking to man. Such writers do not find science all-sufficient; they do not forget common sense or put imagination on a shelf; they show themselves to be larger than their particular "science"—astronomy or economics or mathematics—and surely better and more lasting writers for so being.

Old and New Knowledge

SIR FRANCIS BACON

I

MAN, being the servant and interpreter of nature, can do and understand so much and so much only as he has observed in fact or in thought of the course of nature: beyond this he neither knows anything nor can do anything.

II

Neither the naked hand nor the understanding left to itself can effect much. It is by instruments and helps that the work is done, which are as much wanted for the understanding as for the hand. And as the instruments of the hand either give motion or guide it, so the instruments of the mind supply either suggestions for the understanding or cautions.

III

Human knowledge and human power meet in one; for where the cause is not known the effect cannot be produced. Nature to be commanded must be obeyed; and that which in contemplation is as the cause is in operation as the rule.

IV

Towards the affecting of works, all that man can do is to put together or put asunder natural bodies. The rest is done by nature working within.

V

The study of nature with a view to works is engaged in by the mechanic, the mathematician, the physician, the alchemist, and the magician; but by all (as things now are) with slight endeavour and scanty success.

VI

It would be an unsound fancy and self-contradictory to expect that things which have never yet been done can be done except by means which have never yet been tried.

VII

The productions of the mind and hand seem very numerous in books and manufactures. But all this variety lies in an exquisite subtlety and derivations from a few things already known; not in the number of axioms.

VIII

Moreover the works already known are due to chance and experiment rather than to sciences, for the sciences we now possess are merely systems for the nice ordering and setting forth of things already invented; not methods of invention or directions for new works.

IX

The cause and root of nearly all evils in the sciences is this—that while we falsely admire and extol the powers of the human mind we neglect to seek for its true helps.

X

The subtlety of nature is greater many times over than the subtlety of the senses and understanding, so that all those specious meditations, speculations, and glosses in which men indulge are quite from the purpose, only there is no one by to observe it.

XI

As the sciences which we now have do not help us in finding out new works, so neither does the logic which we now have help us in finding out new sciences.

XII

The logic now in use serves rather to fix and give stability to the errors which have their foundation in commonly received notions than to help the search after truth. So it does more harm than good.

XIII

The syllogism is not applied to the first principles of sciences, and is applied in vain

[1] From *Novum Organum*, in *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon*, edited by Robert Leslie Ellis and James Spedding, London, 1861, vol. iv.

to intermediate axioms; being no match for the subtlety of nature. It commands assent therefore to the proposition, but does not take hold of the thing.

XIV

The syllogism consists of propositions, propositions consist of words, words are symbols of notions. Therefore if the notions themselves (which is the root of the matter) are confused and over-hastily abstracted from the facts, there can be no firmness in the superstructure. Our only hope therefore lies in a true induction.

XV

There is no soundness in our notions whether logical or physical. Substance, Quality, Action, Passion, Essence itself, are not sound notions: much less are Heavy, Light, Dense, Rare, Moist, Dry, Generation, Corruption, Attraction, Repulsion, Element, Matter, Form, and the like, but all are fantastical and ill defined.

XVI

Our notions of less general species, as Man, Dog, Dove, and of the immediate perceptions of the sense, as Hot, Cold, Black, White, do not materially mislead us; yet even these are sometimes confused by the flux and alteration of matter and the mixing of one thing with another. All the others which men have hitherto adopted are but wanderings, not being abstracted and formed from things by proper methods.

XVII

Nor is there less of wilfulness and wandering in the construction of axioms than in the formations of notions; not excepting even those very principles which are obtained by common induction; but much more in the axioms and lower propositions educed by the syllogism.

XVIII

The discoveries which have hitherto been made in the sciences are such as lie close to vulgar notions, scarcely beneath the surface. In order to penetrate into the inner and further recesses of nature, it is necessary that both notions and axioms be derived from things by a more sure and guarded way; and that a method of intellectual operation be introduced altogether better and more certain.

XIX

There are and can be only two ways of searching into and discovering truth. The one flies from the senses and particulars to the most general axioms, and from these principles, the truth of which it takes for settled and immovable, proceeds to judgment and to the discovery of middle axioms. And this way is now in fashion. The other derives axioms from the senses and particulars, rising by a gradual and unbroken ascent, so that it arrives at the most general axioms last of all. This is the true way, but as yet untried.

XX

The understanding left to itself takes the same course (namely, the former) which it takes in accordance with logical order. For the mind longs to spring up to positions of higher generality, that it may find rest there; and so after a little while wearies of experiment. But this evil is increased by logic, because of the order and solemnity of its disputations.

XXI

The understanding left to itself, in a sober, patient, and grave mind, especially if it be not hindered by received doctrines, tries a little that other way, which is the right one, but with little progress; since the understanding, unless directed and assisted, is a thing unequal, and quite unfit to contend with the obscurity of things.

XXII

Both ways set out from the senses and particulars, and rest in the highest generalities; but the difference between them is infinite. For the one just glances at experiment and particulars in passing, the other dwells duly and orderly among them. The one, again, begins at once by establishing certain abstract and useless generalities, the other rises by gradual steps to that which is prior and better known in the order of nature.

XXIII

There is a great difference between the Idols of the human mind and the Ideas of

the divine. That is to say, between certain empty dogmas, and the true signatures and marks set upon the works of creation as they are found in nature.

XXIV

It cannot be that axioms established by argumentation should avail for the discovery of new works; since the subtlety of nature is greater many times over than the subtlety of argument. But axioms duly and orderly formed from particulars easily discover the way to new particulars, and thus render sciences active.

XXV

The axioms now in use, having been suggested by a scanty and manipular experience and a few particulars of most general occurrence, are made for the most part just large enough to fit and take these in: and therefore it is no wonder if they do not lead to new particulars. And if some opposite instance, not observed or not known before, chance to come in the way, the axiom is rescued and preserved by some frivolous distinction; whereas the truer course would be to correct the axiom itself.

XXVI

The conclusions of human reason as ordinarily applied in matter of nature, I call for the sake of distinction *Anticipations of Nature* (as a thing rash or premature). That reason which is elicited from facts by a just and methodical process, I call *Interpretation of Nature.*

XXVII

Anticipations are a ground sufficiently firm for consent, for even if men went mad all after the same fashion, they might agree one with another well enough.

XXVIII

For the winning of assent, indeed, anticipations are far more powerful than interpretations; because being collected from a few instances, and those for the most part of familiar occurrence, they straightway touch the understanding and fill the imagination; whereas interpretations on the other hand, being gathered here and there from very various and widely dispersed facts, cannot suddenly strike the understanding; and therefore they must needs, in respect of the opinions of the time, seem harsh and out of tune; much as the mysteries of faith do.

XXIX

In sciences founded on opinions and dogmas, the use of anticipations and logic is good; for in them the object is to command assent to the proposition, not to master the thing.

XXX

Though all the wits of all the ages should meet together and combine and transmit their labours, yet will no great progress ever be made in science by means of anticipations, because radical errors in the first concoction of the mind are not to be cured by the excellence of functions and remedies subsequent.

XXXI

It is idle to expect any great advancement in science from the superinducing and engrafting of new things upon old. We must begin anew from the very foundations, unless we would revolve forever in a circle with mean and contemptible progress.

XXXII

The honour of the ancient authors, and indeed of all, remains untouched; since the comparison I challenge is not of wits or faculties, but of ways and methods, and the part I take upon myself is not that of a judge, but of a guide.

XXXIII

This must be plainly avowed: no judgment can be rightly formed either of my method or of the discoveries to which it leads, by means of anticipations (that is to say, of the reasoning which is now in use); since I cannot be called on to abide by the sentence of a tribunal which is itself on its trial.

XXXIV

Even to deliver and explain what I bring forward is no easy matter; for things in themselves new will yet be apprehended with reference to what is old.

XXXV

It was said by Borgia of the expedition of the French into Italy, that they came with chalk in their hands to mark out their lodgings, not with arms to force their way in. I in like manner would have my doctrine enter quietly into the minds that are fit and capable of receiving it; for confutations cannot be employed, when the difference is upon first principles and very notions and even upon forms of demonstration.

XXXVI

One method of delivery alone remains to us, which is simply this: we must lead men to the particulars themselves, and their series and order; while men on their side must force themselves for awhile to lay their notions by and begin to familiarise themselves with facts.

XXXVII

The doctrine of those who have denied that certainty could be attained at all, has some agreement with my way of proceeding at the first setting out; but they end in being infinitely separated and opposed. For the holders of that doctrine assert simply that nothing can be known; I also assert that not much can be known in nature by the way which is now in use. But then they go on to destroy the authority of the senses and understanding; whereas I proceed to devise and supply helps for the same.

Proof that the Earth Moves[1]

GALILEO GALILEI

ABOUT TEN MONTHS AGO a report reached my ears that a Dutchman had constructed a telescope, by the aid of which visible objects, although at a great distance from the eye of the observer, were seen distinctly as if near; and some proofs of its most wonderful performances were reported, which some gave credence to, but others contradicted. A few days after, I received confirmation of the report in a letter written from Paris by a noble Frenchman, Jaques Badovere, which finally determined me to give myself up first to inquire into the principle of the telescope, and then to consider the means by which I might compass the invention of a similar instrument, which after a little while I succeeded in doing, through deep study of the theory of Refraction; and I prepared a tube, at first of lead, in the ends of which I fitted two glass lenses, both plane on one side, but on the other side one spherically convex, and the other concave. Then bringing my eye to the concave lens I saw objects satisfactorily large and near, for they appeared one-third of the distance off and nine times larger than when they are seen with the natural eye alone. I shortly afterwards constructed another telescope with more nicety, which magnified objects more than sixty times. At length, by sparing neither labour nor expense, I succeeded in constructing for myself an instrument so superior that objects seen through it appear magnified nearly a thousand times, and more than thirty times nearer than if viewed by the natural powers of sight alone.

FIRST TELESCOPIC OBSERVATIONS

It would be altogether a waste of time to enumerate the number and importance of the benefits which this instrument may be expected to confer, when used by land or sea. But without paying attention to its use for terrestrial objects, I betook myself to observations of the heavenly bodies; and first of all, I viewed the Moon as near as if it was scarcely two semi-diameters of the Earth distant. After the Moon, I frequently

[1] From *The Sidereal Messenger*. Translated by E. S. Carlos, 1880.

observed other heavenly bodies, both fixed stars and planets, with incredible delight. . . .

DISCOVERY OF JUPITER'S SATELLITES

There remains the matter, which seems to me to deserve to be considered the most important in this work, namely, that I should disclose and publish to the world the occasion of discovering and observing four planets, never seen from the very beginning of the world up to our own times, their positions, and the observations made during the last two months about their movements and their changes of magnitude. . . .

On the 7th day of January in the present year, 1610, in the first hour of the following night, when I was viewing the constellations of the heavens through a telescope, the planet Jupiter presented itself to my view, and as I had prepared for myself a very excellent instrument, I noticed a circumstance which I had never been able to notice before, owing to want of power in my other telescope, namely, that three little stars, small but very bright, were near the planet; and although I believed them to belong to the number of the fixed stars, yet they made me somewhat wonder, because they seemed to be arranged exactly in a straight line, parallel to the ecliptic, and to be brighter than the rest of the stars, equal to them in magnitude. The position of them with reference to one another and to Jupiter was as follows:

Ori. * * O * Occ.

On the east side there were two stars, and a single one towards the west. The star which was furthest towards the east, and the western star, appeared rather larger than the third.

I scarcely troubled at all about the distance between them and Jupiter, for, as I have already said, at first I believed them to be fixed stars; but when on January 8th, led by some fatality, I turned again to look at the same part of the heavens, I found a very different state of things, for there were three little stars all west of Jupiter, and nearer together than on the previous night, and they were separated from one another by equal intervals, as the accompanying figure shows.

Ori. O * * * Occ.

At this point, although I had not turned my thoughts at all upon the approximation of the stars to one another, yet my surprise began to be excited, how Jupiter could one day be found to the east of all the aforesaid fixed stars when the day before it had been west of two of them; and forthwith I became afraid lest the planet might have moved differently from the calculation of astronomers, and so had passed those stars by its own proper motion. I, therefore, waited for the next night with the most intense longing, but I was disappointed of my hope, for the sky was covered with clouds in every direction.

But on January 10th the stars appeared in the following position with regard to Jupiter, the third, as I thought, being

Ori. * * O Occ.

hidden by the planet. They were situated just as before, exactly in the same straight line with Jupiter, and along the Zodiac.

When I had seen these phenomena, as I knew that corresponding changes of position could not by any means belong to Jupiter, and as, moreover, I perceived that the stars which I saw had always been the same, for there were no others either in front or behind, within a great distance, along the Zodiac—at length, changing from doubt into surprise, I discovered that the interchange of position which I saw belonged not to Jupiter, but to the stars to which my attention had been drawn, and I thought therefore that they ought to be observed henceforward with more attention and precision.

Accordingly, on January 11th I saw an arrangement of the following kind:

Ori. * * O Occ.

namely, only two stars to the east of Jupiter, the nearer of which was distant from Jupiter three times as far as from the star further to the east; and the star furthest to the east

was nearly twice as large as the other one; whereas on the previous night they had appeared nearly of equal magnitude. I, therefore, concluded, and decided unhesitatingly, that there are three stars in the heavens moving about Jupiter, as Venus and Mercury round the Sun; which at length was established as clear as daylight by numerous other subsequent observations. These observations also established that there are not only three, but four, erratic sidereal bodies performing their revolutions round Jupiter. . . .

These are my observations upon the four Medicean planets, recently discovered for the first time by me; and although it is not yet permitted me to deduce by calculation from these observations the orbits of these bodies, yet I may be allowed to make statements, based upon them, well worthy of attention.

ORBITS AND PERIODS OF JUPITER'S SATELLITES

And, in the first place, since they are sometimes behind, sometimes before Jupiter, at like distances, and withdraw from this planet towards the east and towards the west only within very narrow limits of divergence, and since they accompany this planet alike when its motion is retrograde and direct, it can be a matter of doubt to no one that they perform their revolutions about this planet while at the same time they all accomplish together orbits of twelve years' length about the centre of the world. Moreover, they revolve in unequal circles, which is evidently the conclusion to be drawn from the fact that I have never been permitted to see two satellites in conjunction when their distance from Jupiter was great, whereas near Jupiter two, three, and sometimes all four, have been found closely packed together. Moreover, it may be detected that the revolutions of the satellites which describe the smallest circles round Jupiter are the most rapid, for the satellites nearest to Jupiter are often to be seen in the east, when the day before they have appeared in the west, and contrariwise. Also, the satellite moving in the greatest orbit seems to me, after carefully weighing the occasions of its returning to positions previously noticed, to have a periodic time of half a month. Besides, we have a notable and splendid argument to remove the scruples of those who can tolerate the revolution of the planets round the Sun in the Copernican system, yet are so disturbed by the motion of one Moon about the Earth, while both accomplish an orbit of a year's length about the Sun, that they consider that this theory of the universe must be upset as impossible; for now we have not one planet only revolving about another, while both traverse a vast orbit about the Sun, but our sense of sight presents to us four satellites circling about Jupiter, like the Moon about the Earth, while the whole system travels over a mighty orbit about the Sun in the space of twelve years.

Discoveries

Sir Isaac Newton

CONCERNING THE LAW OF GRAVITATION [1]

Hitherto we have explained the phaenomena of the heavens and of our sea by the power of gravity, but have not yet assigned the cause of this power. This is certain, that it must proceed from a cause that penetrates to the very centres of the sun and planets, without suffering the least diminution of its force; that operates not according to the quantity of the surfaces of the particles upon which it acts (as mechanical causes used to do), but according to the quantity of

[1] From Newton's *Principia*, third edition, 1726. Translated by Andrew Motte, 1729. First American edition, 1848.

the solid matter which they contain, and propagates its virtue on all sides to immense distances, decreasing always in the duplicate proportions of the distances. Gravitation towards the sun is made up out of the gravitations towards the several particles of which the body of the sun is composed; and in receding from the sun decreases accurately in the duplicate proportion of the distances as far as the orb of Saturn, as evidently appears from the quiescence of the aphelions of the planets; nay, and even to the remotest aphelions of the comets, if these aphelions are also quiescent. But hitherto I have not been able to discover the cause of those properties of gravity from phaenomena, and I frame no hypotheses; for whatever is not deduced from the phaenomena is to be called an hypothesis; and hypotheses, whether metaphysical or physical, whether of occult qualities or mechanical, have no place in experimental philosophy. In this philosophy particular propositions are inferred from the phaenomena, and afterwards rendered general by induction. Thus it was that the impenetrability, the mobility, and the impulsive force of bodies, and the laws of motion and gravitation were discovered. And to us it is enough that gravity does really exist, and act according to the laws which we have explained, and abundantly serves to account for all the motions of the celestial bodies, and of our sea.

LAWS OF MOTION [2]

Law I. *Every body perseveres in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line, unless it is compelled to change that state by force impressed thereon.*

Projectiles persevere in their motions, so far as they are not retarded by the resistance of the air, or impelled downwards by the force of gravity. A top, whose parts by their cohesion are perpetually drawn aside from rectilinear motions, does not cease its rotation, otherwise than as it is retarded by the air. The greater bodies of the planets and comets, meeting with less resistance in more free spaces, preserve their motions both progressive and circular for a much longer time.

Law II. *The alteration of motion is ever proportional to the motive force impressed; and is made in the direction of the right line in which that force is impressed.*

If any force generates a motion, a double force will generate double the motion, a triple force triple the motion, whether that force be impressed altogether and at once, or gradually and successively. And this motion (being always directed the same way with the generating force), if the body moved before, is added to or subducted from the former motion, according as they directly conspire with or are directly contrary to each other; or obliquely joined, when they are oblique, so as to produce a new motion compounded from the determination of both.

Law III. *To every action there is always opposed an equal reaction; or the mutual actions of two bodies upon each other are always equal, and directed to contrary parts.*

Whatever draws or presses another is as much drawn or pressed by that other. If you press a stone with your finger, the finger is also pressed by the stone. If a horse draws a stone tied to a rope, the horse (if I may so say) will be equally drawn back towards the stone; for the distended rope, by the same endeavor to relax or unbend itself, will draw the horse as much towards the stone, as it does the stone towards the horse, and will obstruct the progress of the one as much as it advances that of the other. If a body impinge upon another, and by its force change the motion of the other, that body also (because of the equality of the mutual pressure) will undergo an equal change, in its own motion, towards the contrary part. The changes made by these actions are equal, not in the velocities but in the motions of bodies; that is to say, if the bodies are not hindered by any other impediments. For, because the motions are equally changed, the changes of the velocities made towards contrary parts are reciprocally proportional to the bodies.

[2] *Ibid.*

THE DISPERSION OF LIGHT [3]

In the year 1666 (at which time I applied myself to the grinding of optick glasses of other figures than spherical) I procured me a triangular glass prism, to try therewith the celebrated phaenomena of colours. And in order thereto, having darkened my chamber, and made a small hole in my window-shuts, to let in a convenient quantity of the sun's light, I placed my prism at its entrance, that it might be thereby refracted to the opposite wall. It was at first a very pleasing divertissement, to view the vivid and intense colours produced thereby; but after a while applying myself to consider them more circumspectly, I became surprised, to see them in an oblong form, which, according to the received laws of refraction, I expected should have been circular. They were terminated at the sides with straight lines, but at the ends, the decay of light was so gradual that it was difficult to determine justly, what was their figure, yet they seemed semicircular.

Comparing the length of this colour'd Spectrum with its breadth, I found it about five times greater, a disproportion so extravagant, that it excited me to a more than ordinary curiosity to examining from whence it might proceed. I could scarce think, that the various thicknesses of the glass, or the termination with shadow or darkness, could have any influence on light to produce such an effect; yet I thought it not amiss, first to examine those circumstances, and so try'd what would happen by transmitting light through parts of the glass of divers thicknesses, or through holes in the window of divers bignesses, or by setting the prism without, so that the light might pass through it, and be refracted, before it was terminated by the hole: But I found none of these circumstances material. The fashion of the colours was in all these cases the same. . . .

The gradual removal of these suspicions led me to the Experimentum Crucis, which was this: I took two boards, and placed one of them close behind the prism at the window, so that the light might pass through a small hole, made in it for the purpose, and fall on the other board, which I placed at about 12 feet distance, having first made a small hole in it also, for some of the incident light to pass through. Then I placed another prism behind this second board, so that the light trajected through both the boards might pass through that also, and be again refracted before it arrived at the wall. This done, I took the first prism in my hand, and turned it to and fro slowly about its axis, so much as to make the several parts of the image cast, on the second board, successively pass through the hole in it, that I might observe to what places on the wall the second prism would refract them. And I saw by the variation of those places, that the light, tending to that end of the image, towards which the refraction of the first prism was made, did in the second prism suffer a refraction considerably greater than the light tending to the other end. And so the true cause of the length of that image was detected to be no other, than that light is not similar or homogenial, but consists of *Difform Rays, some of which are more Refrangible than others;* so that without any difference in their incidence on the same medium, some shall be more Refracted than others; and therefore that, according to their *particular Degrees of Refrangibility,* they were transmitted through the prism to divers parts of the opposite wall. . . .

ON THE ORIGIN OF COLOURS [4]

The colours of all natural bodies have no other origin than this, that they are variously qualified, to reflect one sort of light in greater plenty than another. And this I have experimented in a dark room, by illuminating those bodies with uncompounded light of divers colours. For by that means any body may be made to appear of any colour. They have there no appropriate colour, but ever appear

[3] From Newton's "A New Theory About Light and Colours." A letter communicated to the editor of the Transactions of the Royal Society, February, 1672.

[4] From Newton's "A New Theory About Light and Colours." A letter communicated to the editor of the Transactions of the Royal Society, February, 1672.

of the colour of the light cast upon them, but yet with this difference, that they are most brisk and vivid in the light of their own daylight colour. Minimum appeareth there of any colour indifferently, with which it is illustrated, but yet most luminous in red, and so bise appeareth indifferently of any colour, but yet most luminous in blue. And therefore minimum reflecteth rays of any colour, but most copiously those endowed with red, that is, with all sorts of rays promiscuously blended, those qualified with red shall abound most in that reflected light, and by their prevalence cause it to appear of that colour. And for the same reason bise, reflecting blue most copiously, shall appear blue by the excess of those rays in its reflected light; and the like of other bodies. And that this is the entire and adequate cause of their colours, is manifest, because they have no power to change or alter the colours of any sort of rays incident apart, but put on all colours indifferently, with which they are enlightened.

These things being so, it can be no longer disputed, whether there be colours in the dark, or whether they be the qualities of the objects we see, no nor perhaps, whether light be a body. For, since colours are the quality of light, having its rays for their entire and immediate subject, how can we think those rays qualities also, unless one quality may be the subject of, and sustain another; which in effect is to call it substance. We should not know bodies for substances; were it not for their sensibile qualities, and the principle of those being now found due to something else, we have as good reason to believe that to be a substance also.

Besides, whoever thought any quality to be a heterogeneous aggregate, such as light is discovered to be? But to determine more absolutely what light is, after what manner refracted, and by what modes or actions it produceth in our minds the phantasms of colours, is not so easie, and I shall not mingle conjectures with certainties.

The Method of Scientific Investigation[1]

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

THE METHOD of scientific investigation is nothing but the expression of the necessary mode of working of the human mind. It is simply the mode at which all phenomena are reasoned about, rendered precise and exact. There is no more difference, but there is just the same kind of difference, between the mental operations of a man of science and those of an ordinary person, as there is between the operations and methods of a baker or of a butcher weighing out his goods in common scales, and the operations of a chemist in performing a difficult and complex analysis by means of his balance and finely-graduated weights. It is not that the action of the scales in the one case, and the balance in the other, differ in the principles of their construction or manner of working; but the beam of one is set on an infinitely finer axis than the other, and of course turns by the addition of a much smaller weight.

You will understand this better, perhaps, if I give you some familiar example. You have all heard it repeated, I dare say, that men of science work by means of induction and deduction, and that by the help of these operations, they, in a sort of sense, wring from Nature certain other things, which are called natural laws, and causes, and that out of these, by some cunning skill of their own, they build up hypotheses and theories. And it is imagined by many, that the operations of the common mind can be by no means compared with these processes, and that they have to be acquired by a sort of special apprenticeship to the craft. To hear all these

[1] From *Darwiniana* by T. H. Huxley. Reprinted by permission from Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

large words, you would think that the mind of a man of science must be constituted differently from that of his fellow men; but if you will not be frightened by terms, you will discover that you are quite wrong, and that all these terrible apparatus are being used by yourselves every day and every hour of your lives.

There is a well-known incident in one of Molière's plays, where the author makes the hero express unbounded delight on being told that he had been talking prose during the whole of his life. In the same way, I trust that you will take comfort, and be delighted with yourselves, on the discovery that you have been acting on the principles of inductive and deductive philosophy during the same period. Probably there is not one here who has not in the course of the day had occasion to set in motion a complex train of reasoning, of the very same kind, though differing of course in degree, as that which a scientific man goes through in tracing the causes of natural phenomena.

A very trivial circumstance will serve to exemplify this. Suppose you go into a fruiterer's shop, wanting an apple—you take up one, and, on biting it, you find it is sour; you look at it, and see that it is hard and green. You take up another one, and that too is hard, green, and sour. The shopman offers you a third; but, before biting it, you examine it, and find that it is hard and green, and you immediately say that you will not have it, as it must be sour, like those that you have already tried.

Nothing can be more simple than that, you think; but if you will take the trouble to analyse and trace out into its logical elements what has been done by the mind, you will be greatly surprised. In the first place, you have performed the operation of induction. You found that, in two experiences, hardness and greenness in apples went together with sourness. It was so in the first case, and it was confirmed by the second. True, it is a very small basis, but still it is enough to make an induction from; you generalise the facts, and you expect to find sourness in apples where you get hardness and greenness. You found upon that a general law, that all hard and green apples are sour; and that, so far as it goes, is a perfect induction. Well, having got your natural law in this way, when you are offered another apple which you find is hard and green, you say, "All hard and green apples are sour; this apple is hard and green, therefore this apple is sour." That train of reasoning is what logicians call a syllogism, and has all its various parts and terms—its major premiss, its minor premiss, and its conclusion. And, by the help of further reasoning, which, if drawn out, would have to be exhibited in two or three other syllogisms, you arrive at your final determination, "I will not have that apple." So that, you see, you have, in the first place, established a law by induction, and upon that you have founded a deduction, and reasoned out the special particular case. Well now, suppose, having got your conclusion of the law, that at some times afterwards, you are discussing the qualities of apples with a friend: you will say to him, "It is a very curious thing, but I find that all hard and green apples are sour!" Your friend says to you, "But how do you know that?" You at once reply, "Oh, because I have tried them over and over again, and have always found them to be so." Well, if we were talking science instead of common sense, we should call that an experimental verification. And, if still opposed, you go further, and say, "I have heard from the people in Somersetshire and Devonshire, where a large number of apples are grown, that they have observed the same thing. It is also found to be the case in Normandy, and in North America. In short, I find it to be the universal experience of mankind wherever attention has been directed to the subject." Whereupon, your friend, unless he is a very unreasonable man, agrees with you, and is convinced that you are quite right in the conclusion you have drawn. He believes, although perhaps he does not know he believes it, that the more extensive verifications are—that the more frequently experiments have been made, and results of the same kind arrived at—that the more varied the conditions under which the same results are attained, the

more certain is the ultimate conclusion, and he disputes the question no further. He sees that the experiment has been tried under all sorts of conditions, as to time, place, and people, with the same result; and he says with you, therefore, that the law you have laid down must be a good one, and he must believe it.

In science we do the same thing;—the philosopher exercises precisely the same faculties, though in a much more delicate manner. In scientific inquiry it becomes a matter of duty to expose a supposed law to every possible kind of verification, and to take care, moreover, that this is done intentionally, and not left to a mere accident, as in the case of the apples. And in science, as in common life, our confidence in a law is in exact proportion to the absence of variation in the result of our experimental verifications. For instance, if you let go your grasp of an article you may have in your hand, it will immediately fall to the ground. That is a very common verification of one of the best established laws of nature—that of gravitation. The method by which men of science establish the existence of that law is exactly the same as that by which we have established the trivial proposition about the sourness of hard and green apples. But we believe it in such an extensive, thorough, and unhesitating manner because the universal experience of mankind verifies it, and we can verify it ourselves at any time; and that is the strongest possible foundation on which any natural law can rest.

So much, then, by way of proof that the method of establishing laws in science is exactly the same as that pursued in common life. Let us now turn to another matter (though really it is but another phase of the same question), and that is, the method by which, from the relations of certain phenomena, we prove that some stand in the position of causes towards the others.

I want to put the case clearly before you, and I will therefore show you what I mean by another familiar example. I will suppose that one of you, on coming down in the morning to the parlour of your house, finds that a tea-pot and some spoons which had been left in the room on the previous evening are gone—the window is open, and you observe the mark of a dirty hand on the window-frame, and perhaps, in addition to that, you notice the impress of a hob-nailed shoe on the gravel outside. All these phenomena have struck your attention instantly, and before two seconds have passed you say, "Oh, somebody has broken open the window, entered the room, and run off with the spoons and the tea-pot!" That speech is out of your mouth in a moment. And you will probably add, "I know there has, I am quite sure of it!" You mean to say exactly what you know; but in reality you are giving expression to what is, in all essential particulars, an hypothesis. You do not *know* it at all; it is nothing but an hypothesis rapidly framed in your own mind. And it is an hypothesis founded on a long train of inductions and deductions.

What are those inductions and deductions, and how have you got at this hypothesis? You have observed in the first place, that the window is open, but by a train of reasoning involving many inductions and deductions, you have probably arrived long before at the general law—and a very good one it is—that windows do not open of themselves, and you therefore conclude that something has opened the window. A second general law that you have arrived at in the same way is, that tea-pots and spoons do not go out of a window spontaneously, and you are satisfied that, as they are not now where you left them, they have been removed. In the third place, you look at the marks on the window-sill, and the shoe-marks outside, and you say that in all previous experience the former kind of mark has never been produced by anything else but the hand of a human being; and the same experience shows that no other animal but man at present wears shoes with hob-nails in them such as would produce the marks in the gravel. I do not know, even if we could discover any of those "missing links" that are talked about, that they would help us to any other conclusion! At any rate the law which states our present experience is strong enough for my present purpose. You next reach the conclusion, that as these kinds of marks have

not been left by any other animals than men, or are liable to be formed in any other way than by a man's hand and shoe, the marks in question have been formed by a man in that way. You have, further, a general law, founded on observation and experience, and that, too, is, I am sorry to say, a very universal and unimpeachable one—that some men are thieves; and you assume at once from all these premisses—and that is what constitutes your hypothesis—that the man who made the marks outside and on the window-sill, opened the window, got into the room, and stole your tea-pot and spoons. You have now arrived at a *vera causa;*—you have assumed a cause which, it is plain, is competent to produce all the phenomena you have observed. You can explain all these phenomena only by the hypothesis of a thief. But that is a hypothetical conclusion, of the justice of which you have no absolute proof at all; it is only rendered highly probable by a series of inductive and deductive reasonings.

I suppose your first action, assuming that you are a man of ordinary common sense, and that you have established this hypothesis to your own satisfaction, will very likely be to go off for the police, and set them on the track of the burglar, with the view to the recovery of your property. But just as you are starting with this object, some person comes in, and on learning what you are about, says, "My good friend, you are going on a great deal too fast. How do you know that the man who really made the marks took the spoons? It might have been a monkey that took them, and the man may have merely looked in afterwards." You would probably reply, "Well, that is all very well, but you see it is contrary to all experience of the way tea-pots and spoons are abstracted; so that, at any rate, your hypothesis is less probable than mine." While you are talking the thing over in this way, another friend arrives. And he might say, "Oh, my dear sir, you are certainly going on a great deal too fast. You are most presumptuous. You admit that all these occurrences took place when you were fast asleep, at a time when you could not possibly have known anything about what was taking place. How do you know that the laws of Nature are not suspended during the night? It may be that there has been some kind of supernatural interference in this case." In point of fact, he declares that your hypothesis is one of which you cannot at all demonstrate the truth, and that you are by no means sure that the laws of Nature are the same when you are asleep as when you are awake.

Well, now, you cannot at the moment answer that kind of reasoning. You feel that your worthy friend has you somewhat at a disadvantage. You will feel perfectly convinced in your own mind, however, that you are quite right, and you say to him, "My good friend, I can only be guided by the natural probabilities of the case, and if you will be kind enough to stand aside and permit me to pass, I will go and fetch the police." Well, we will suppose that your journey is successful, and that by good luck you meet with a policeman; that eventually the burglar is found with your property on his person, and the marks correspond to his hand and to his boots. Probably any jury would consider those facts a very good experimental verification of your hypothesis, touching the cause of the abnormal phenomena observed in your parlour, and would act accordingly.

Now, in this supposititious case, I have taken phenomena of a very common kind, in order that you might see what are the different steps in an ordinary process of reasoning, if you will only take the trouble to analyse it carefully. All the operations I have described, you will see, are involved in the mind of any man of sense in leading him to a conclusion as to the course he should take in order to make good a robbery and punish the offender. I say that you are led, in that case, to your conclusion by exactly the same train of reasoning as that which a man of science pursues when he is endeavouring to discover the origin and laws of the most occult phenomena. The process is, and always must be, the same; and precisely the same mode of reasoning was employed by Newton and Laplace in their endeavours to discover and define the causes of the

movements of the heavenly bodies, as you, with your own common sense, would employ to detect a burglar. The only difference is, that the nature of the inquiry being more abstruse, every step has to be most carefully watched, so that there may not be a single crack or flaw in your hypothesis. A flaw or crack in many of the hypotheses of daily life may be of little or no moment as affecting the general correctness of the conclusions at which we may arrive; but, in a scientific inquiry, a fallacy, great or small, is always of importance, and is sure to be in the long run constantly productive of mischievous, if not fatal results. . . .

Science[1]

BERTRAND RUSSELL

WESTERN CIVILIZATION is derived from three sources: the Bible, the Greeks, and Science—the last operating chiefly through machines. The reconciliation between the Bible and the Greeks was a slow business, achieved in the course of centuries by the Catholic Church. The Renaissance and the Reformation undid the synthesis, and left the two elements again at war, as in antiquity. On the whole, Protestanism represented the Bible and free thought represented the Greeks. Pre-industrial America was biblical rather than Hellenic, and agricultural America has remained biblical, while industrial America is developing a new attitude, not hitherto known in the history of man. It is this new attitude that makes America interesting to the student of social science.

The effects of science are of two sorts, rather sharply separable. On the one hand, there is the scientific outlook as it exists in the man of science; on the other there is the transformation of ordinary life through the practical applications of scientific knowledge, more particularly through machines. The first is best seen in Germany; the second in America. Let us begin with the first, since historically it developed earlier than the other.

The Greeks are habitually praised by cultured persons on account of their literature and their art, but in these respects they were not very greatly superior to some other ancient nations, for example, the Chinese. Where they were unquestionably superior was in their invention of the deductive method and the science of geometry. Some few Greeks were scientific in the modern sense—notably Archimedes, who combined practice and theory, experiment and inference, in a thoroughly modern way. Some of the pre-Socratics, for example, Empedocles, were as scientific as was possible in the then state of knowledge. Aristotle is habitually praised for his extensive collection of facts, more especially in zoology; but the "Historia Animalium" shows that he was by no means careful to verify the tales brought him by those whom he employed, and that he did not realize the difficulty of accurate observation. Plato's influence was in the direction of emphasizing morals and metaphysics rather than experiment; and in later times this attitude prevailed more and more, so that Archimedes remained an isolated figure. Plato, one feels, was led by his aristocratic mentality to think it vulgar to do anything with one's hands, and the methods of the modern laboratory would have seemed to him beneath the dignity of a gentleman. These and other causes interfered with the development of experimental science in the ancient world, so that even what had been achieved came to be forgotten.

But there existed no such obstacles to the development of geometry. Until the work of Lobatchevsky in 1829, it seemed that the

[1] From *Whither Mankind*, edited by Charles Beard. Copyright 1928 by Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., and used with their permission.

premises of geometry offered no difficulty, and that genuinely new knowledge about the actual world could be obtained by mere deduction. Consequently little attention was paid to premises and much to reasoning from them. This point of view dominated Greek philosophy and mediaeval theology. To the outlook thus generated, particular facts were uninteresting except as the conclusions of syllogisms with general premises. The fact that Socrates was mortal was not ascertained from Plato's accounts of his last moments, but from the premise that all men are mortal. With the Renaissance, the actual was rediscovered: it became interesting on its own account, not as a mere instance of a general rule. There was at first a revolt against the intellectual tyranny of system, for example, in Montaigne, who hardly ever mentions general rules except to refute them by amusing exceptions. But men tired of intellectual anarchy, and invented a new discipline for the mind. The new discipline was the scientific method, which is already complete, as a method, in the writings of Galileo.

The essence of the scientific method is the discovery of general laws through the study of particular facts. It is thus a synthesis of the Greek and renaissance outlooks. Particular facts are the basis of the whole structure, but they are used for the purpose of induction, and when they have led to general laws inductively obtained, the Greek methods of deduction are applied to infer new particular facts from the laws. This method has had the most amazing success—amazing, because it is as indefensible intellectually as the purely deductive method of the Middle Ages. Hume long ago showed it up. All philosophy since his day has consisted of sophistical refutations of his arguments: the special skill of the philosopher has consisted in making his refutations so subtle and obscure that their fallacious character was not apparent. Men of science, meanwhile, have simply ignored Hume, and have marched from triumph to triumph. Gradually, however, more especially during the last thirteen years, the best men of science, as a result of technical progress, have been led more and more to a form of skepticism closely analogous to Hume's. Eddington, in expounding the theory of relativity, tends to the view that most so-called scientific laws are human conventions. Some of the leading authorities on the structure of the atom maintain explicitly that there are no causal laws in the physical world. And some philosophers hold the same view. "Superstition," says Wittgenstein, "consists of belief in causality."

This skepticism is a canker at the heart of science, affecting, as yet, only a few leaders, but capable, in time, of paralyzing the activities of the whole army of scientific workers. At least this would be the effect if men remained in the contemplative and intellectualistic mood. But science is becoming increasingly a manner of life, a way of behaving, and is developing a philosophy which substitutes for the old conception of knowledge the new conception of successful behavior. The more skepticism seems to result from a purely theoretical attitude, the more the practical pragmatic attitude triumphs. This is likely to become true throughout the world, but for the moment it is of course more true in a country like America, where the practical success of science is very evident, than in post-war Germany, where pessimism and disillusion fit in with the prevailing tenor of the national life. It is therefore not surprising that America is leading the way in the transition from science as knowledge to science as a set of practical habits. On this ground, whoever is interested in the future should especially study America. To my mind, the best work that has been done anywhere in philosophy and psychology during the present century has been done in America. Its merit is due not so much to the individual ability of the men concerned as to their freedom from certain hampering traditions which the European man of learning inherits from the Middle ages.

Perhaps these traditions can be summed up in the one word *contemplation*. European universities were originally places for the training of monks; and monks, though they tilled the soil, existed primarily for the sake of the contemplative life. A modern European professor does not till the soil, but he

continues to believe in contemplation. In him this belief takes the form of admiration for pure learning regardless of its practical applications. I am myself sufficiently mediaeval to feel this admiration far more strongly than it is felt by the typical modern man. Nevertheless, I perceive that it is psychologically connected with an attitude of reverence towards the universe which is hardly compatible with the modern belief in man's omnipotence through the machine. We do not contemplate a flea; we catch it. The modern point of view is in its infancy, but we may foresee a time when it will lead men to regard the non-human world in general with as little reverence as we now feel towards the poor flea. This means that the philosophy of an industrial world cannot be materialism, for materialism, just as much as theism, worships the power which it believes to exist outside Man. Pious Russia, barely emerging from Byzantine ecclesiasticism, has become officially materialistic; probably the more pious portions of the American population will have to pass through this same phase. But sophisticated America, wherever it has succeeded in shaking off slavery to Europe (which is too common among the sophisticated), has already developed a new outlook, mainly as a result of the work of James and Dewey. This new outlook, embodied in the so-called instrumental theory of knowledge, constitutes the philosophy appropriate to industrialism, which is science in the sphere of practice.

The dominating belief of what may be called the industrial philosophy is that man is master of his fate, and need not submit tamely to the evils hitherto inflicted upon him by the niggardliness of inanimate nature or the follies of human nature. Man was in the past dependent upon the weather, which was beyond his control. This is still the case with peasants, who are usually pious, and still more so with fishermen, who are still more pious. It may be laid down broadly that the intensity of religious belief among seafaring folk is inversely proportional to the size of their vessel. Accidents such as the sinking of the *Titanic*, however, tend to keep some measure of religion alive even in the largest ships. But this state of affairs is passing, and its passing is accelerated by every increase in the safety of navigation.

Man, since he became capable of forethought, has been dominated by fears—fear of natural phenomena such as lightning and tempest, fear of starvation, fear of pestilence, fear of defeat in war, fear of murder by private enemies. Elaborate systems, partly rational, partly magical, have been built up to minimize these dangers. In the early ages of agriculture men dealt with the fear of starvation by means of human sacrifice, which was supposed to invigorate the Corn Spirit. It is only very gradually that scientific agriculture has displaced this attitude. Inundations, except in China, were usually dealt with by prayer to the River God. There was a general tendency to regard misfortunes as due to the anger of invisible beings, who could be propitiated by suitable ceremonies. Pestilence was viewed superstitiously down to our own day, and is still so viewed in India. The fear of war has only just begun to be treated rationally, and those who so treat it still labor under the suspicion of being cranks. Our natural view of the causes of war is more consonant with Coleridge's:

> *Kubla heard from far*
> *Ancestral voices prophesying war.*

The fear of murder by private enemies is supposed to be dealt with by the criminal law. But the criminal law, also, was in its origin superstitious, being based upon the notion of blood pollution. Even now, our emotion towards an ancient crime, such as murder, is quite different from that towards (say) forgery, which has no roots in the superstitious past. And even now, the retributive element is punishment, which is superstitious, being based upon the rage inspired by fear of the criminal, prevents our criminal law from being as effective as it might be in the prevention of crime.

Few people realize how very modern is the influence of science upon the intellectual outlook of cultivated men, let alone the ordinary citizen of a civilized community.

The Greeks, and the Romans in their best days, were, it is true, not dominated by fear. But their hopes had a different quality from ours. Compare Plato's "Republic" with any of Wells' Utopias. In Plato's hopes, men were to advance in virtue, and in a certain kind of wisdom; but he did not think of greater dominion over nature as an ingredient in the good life. Perhaps the reason for this was in part economic: where labor is performed by slaves, the free-man is not impressed with the importance of minimizing labor. But other more intellectual reasons played their part. Geometry led men to think that the truth could be discovered by reasoning, or, as Plato suggested, by reminiscence. Moral and aesthetic considerations were allowed an undue weight in framing hypotheses about the physical world: it was supposed that the physical world must be beautiful and intellectually agreeable to contemplate, which led to a preference for simple hypotheses, such as that the heavenly bodies moved in orbits which were circles or combinations of circles. As the intellectual vigor of the ancient world declined, authority became supreme, and commentaries took the place of fresh thought. Thus, although a few Greeks had achieved a scientific outlook, the ordinary cultivated man had a view of the world in which scientific investigation played no part.

This is no longer quite true of the Arabic civilization, which certainly had more scientific curiosity than the later Hellenistic centuries. But a great deal of superstition is mixed with science in all but the best of the Arabs. Alchemy, the search for the philosopher's stone, the attempt to discover the elixir of life, occupied many experimenters' thoughts to the exclusion of more genuine problems. In Europe, meanwhile, the overemphasis on ethical considerations which is visible in all Greek post-Socratic philosophy, and the subsequent undue respect for authority which was both effect and cause of intellectual inferiority to earlier centuries, prevented almost all scientific investigation throughout the Middle Ages, except by those few men who, like Roger Bacon, had been stimulated by contact with the learning of the Moors. For all these reasons, science played hardly any part in life, even for the small learned minority, until the Renaissance.

The Renaissance was, of course, primarily a literary movement, involving, at first, not an emancipation from authority, but only a change, more especially from Aristotle to Plato. However, when men realized that the ancients had disagreed with each other, they were forced to think for themselves to decide which ancient author they should follow. Copernicus discovered in Italy that some of the Greeks had taught that the earth goes round the sun, if he had not known this, it may be doubted whether he would have had the courage to propound his theory, in favor of which he had no very solid scientific reasons to offer.

Kepler and Galileo represent the real beginnings of modern science; it is in them that we first find the patient and unbiassed observation of large numbers of particular facts, leading to the formation of laws which they had not expected. The contemporaries of Galileo, especially the most learned, objected to his habit of ascertaining facts by looking at the world instead of at Aristotle. But the time was at last ripe for the victory of science. In an earlier age, Galileo might have been forgotten; as it was, a series of incredibly brilliant successors carried on his work quickly to its completion in Newton's "Principia."

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though science had to fight against both theology and the humanities, it acquired an increasing ascendancy over the minds of educated men. But until after the end of this period science was conceived almost wholly from the standpoint of theoretical knowledge. It is true that Bacon had said "knowledge is power," and had viewed knowledge in relation to its practical uses. But astronomy, the dominating science of the time, had not much utility except for navigation, and there only in its elementary portions. The inventions which made physics and chemistry useful had not yet been made, or at any rate had not yet achieved success. The motive of men of science, accordingly,

was to understand the world, not to change it. This is still the motive of those who make the great theoretical advances—Einstein, Planck, Bohr, and such men. But everybody now-a-days is aware that science is likely to have practical applications, and this has greatly modified the prevailing view of the purposes of science.

From the time when Charles II founded the Royal Society down to the outbreak of the French Revolution, science was associated with "enlightenment." At first, it was a cure for "enthusiasm," i.e., for the kind of fanaticism that had been displayed by the Puritans. Then, in France, in spite of the fact that both Jesuits and Jansenists had produced many admirable men of science, the pursuit of mathematical physics became gradually associated with materialism, with opposition to the Church, and with political radicalism. This movement culminated in the Revolution, which produced, throughout Europe, a temporary diminution in the rate of scientific progress.

It is only in the nineteenth century that science came to be commonly regarded as affording a means of improving the general level of human life, not by moral regeneration, and not by political reform, but by increasing man's command over the forces of nature. This point of view was, of course, due to the industrial revolution, and to various inventions, such as steamships, railways, and telegraphs. This view of science as the handmaid of industry has now become a commonplace. As already observed, it is now possible to hope that mankind may, to a very great degree, be freed from certain age-long terrors—pestilence, famine, drought and flood, perhaps even war.

Science, in so far as it is successful, eliminates these various kinds of fear from our lives. It cannot, of course, altogether eliminate the fear of death, but it can and does cause us to live longer than our ancestors, and to this process no definite limit can be set. Fear of natural phenomena plays a very small part in modern urban life. Once in a way, some event such as the Tokyo earthquake reminds us that Nature is not yet wholly subdued. Taking a longer view, science assures us that our planet will not always remain habitable, and that, although we may migrate to Venus when the sun's heat diminishes, that can only put off the date of our extinction by a million years or so. These distant speculations, however, have no power to disturb the urban worker as he hurries for his morning train. His emotional world is a human one, trivial, boring, but safe—except from the anger of the boss. And so politics increasingly takes the place of religion, since it is in the sphere of politics that fear now finds its home.

It may be said that, while science has already greatly diminished the fear of nature, it has so far, if anything, somewhat increased men's fear of each other. Lightning conductors, which George III (rightly, as I think) regarded as impious, have destroyed fear of "the all-dreaded thunder-stone." But other inventions have enabled man to wield powers as destructive as those formerly wielded by Nature. And science has made society more organic, so that on the one hand the rebel finds it increasingly difficult to escape the vengeance of the holders of power, while on the other hand social chaos, when it occurs, becomes a much greater disaster than in more primitive communities. Perhaps for these reasons, the pressure of the herd and the fear of neighbors, are greater in America than in any other civilized country. While man collectively has been freed from bondage to the non-human world, men individually are held in bondage to their fellowmen more completely than in the prescientific ages.

Will science, in the end, deal also with this form of fear? I think it will. Hitherto, the practical applications of science have been mainly directed to modifications of our material environment. Whereas formerly the environment was a datum, something to be merely accepted and contemplated, it is now, so far as the surface of the earth is concerned, raw material for human manipulation. But human nature is still accepted as a datum. While we alter the environment to suit ourselves, we do not much alter ourselves to suit each other. The reason is, of course, that the sciences that deal with the formation

of human character are far less developed than those that deal with the inanimate world. This, however, is rapidly changing. It is highly probable that in a hundred years we shall have acquired the same control over the characters of children that we now have over physical forces. We shall then, if we feel so disposed, be able to eliminate fear from the relations between human beings as we are already eliminating it from the relations of human beings with the world of nature. But what men will make of these powers when they come to possess them, it would be very rash to prophesy. Doubtless they will make something which, to our inherited standard of values, would seem horrible; but to them, one must suppose, it will seem good. Let us, then, console ourselves as best we may with Hamlet's dictum:

> *There's nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so*

A good community is one that those who live in it think good, and that, at least, the scientific educators of the future will almost certainly be able to secure.

The philosophy inspired by industrialism is seeping away the static conception of knowledge which dominated both mediaeval and modern philosophy, and has substituted what it calls the Instrumental Theory, the very name of which is suggested by machinery. In the Instrumental Theory, there is not a single state of mind which consists of knowing a truth—there is a way of acting, a manner of handling the environment, which is appropriate, and whose appropriateness constitutes what alone can be called knowledge as these philosophers understand it. One might sum up this theory by a definition: *To know something is to be able to change it as we wish.* There is no place in this outlook for the beatific vision, nor for any notion of final excellence.

This "dynamic" conception of knowledge and of value is so ingrained in most typical modern men that they are incapable of understanding the nostalgia which it produces in a sensitive European impregnated with the older culture. European countries (except Russia) differ far less from each other than all differ from the United States. It is perhaps worth while to consider this difference impartially, since any forecast of the development of machine civilization based upon European experience is likely to prove fallacious.

The last cantos of the "Divina Commedia" may serve to illustrate the point. In these the supreme bliss is represented as a combination of contemplation and love, both at the highest pitch of intensity, but wholly static, because perfection has been achieved and nothing is left to strive for. In Milton, more briefly, we find the same conception of heaven:

> *Where the bright seraphim in burning row*
> *Their loud uplifted angel trumpets blow,*
> *And the cherubic hosts in thousand quires*
> *Touch their immortal harps of golden wires.*

It is not suggested that the trumpets and harps should be of continually improved makes, or should be played by machinery to save the angels trouble and leave them free to increase the height of the buildings in the Golden City.

The modern European artist or man of learning knows that the beatific vision cannot constitute the whole of his life, and is skeptical of any life thereafter. But if he is sensitive, whether as an artist or a man of science, a lover or an explorer, he lives for the moments which approach nearest to the ultimate ecstasy, when he is "silent upon a peak in Darien." This is as true in the pursuit of knowledge as in that of beauty, for in a new theoretic insight he finds a rapture as intense as that of new love.

Such men, however, are to be regarded as strayed ghosts from an earlier epoch. Men do not always belong to their own time: eminent men are often psychologically ahead of this epoch, but are sometimes behind it. Dante, for example, sums up preceding centuries, and does not suggest the future in anything except his use of the Italian language. It is a curious speculation to consider what various men of past ages would think of our civilization if they were miraculously

transported into it. Archimedes, I fancy, would find it wholly delightful. He would indefatigably visit factories, observatories, scientific instrument makers; he would read encyclopaedias from cover to cover; he would be immensely impressed by wireless telegraphy, and beside himself with joy over aeroplanes. He would admire, above all things, our means of scientific warfare, but would be unable to understand why they are not used to exterminate the barbarians. He would master our science and our mathematics in a few years of intense study, but our politics would puzzle him—not so much what we do, but what we say, though what we do, also, would be in part unintelligible to him.

Aristotle, I fancy, would divide his time between Oxford Common Rooms and the Zoo. In the latter, he would question the keepers as to the habits of their animals, and would be led to amend what he says on cures for insomnia in elephants. In the former, his conversation on metaphysics would be better appreciated than anywhere else in the modern world, but he would be surprised by the lack of interest in zoölogy. He would make friends with explorers and statesmen, and would take a considerable interest in anthropology. But the mechanical aspects of our civilization would bore him, and he would be profoundly shocked by democracy. (So, indeed, would even the most democratic of the Greeks.) He would not use the subway unless he could have a special train for himself and his friends.

Plato, if he could return to this world, would make friends with Dean Inge and accept his views on modern civilization *in toto*.

Bacon would be appointed editor of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, but would be dismissed for inserting advertising matter under the guise of articles. He would admire museums, card catalogues, and machine politicians. He would enthsuiastically praise industrial technique, but would regard relativity and quantum theory as unduly subtle, and as fantastic speculations of no practical importance. He would have many friends among the eminent, and would feel thoroughly at home in our world as soon as he had acquired a comfortable fortune.

Newton, I fancy, would regret that he had ever allowed the world to become acquainted with his researches. He would be fairly happy so long as he remained within the gates of Trinity College, but motor cars and even bicycles would alarm him, and he would say that whenever he began to think about mathematics they ran into him. Machines, he would complain, have made present-day England less agreeable to the philosopher than the England of Queen Anne. And as Master of the Mint he would be inexpressibly shocked to find that paper had taken the place of gold.

I fear that a passion for psychological truth has led me to make these imagined reactions of distinguished ghosts more trivial than seems appropriate to their eminence, except in the case of Archimedes. Even the greatest men, however, are often influenced by very minor factors in forming their judgments; and this is an important fact, which should put us on our guard in attempting to sum up our own age. When we try to be as objective as possible in singling out the most important external differences between the present and the past before the nineteenth century, I think the following deserve emphasis.

First: greater mobility both of men and goods. From the time when the horse was first domesticated down to the invention of the locomotive, the greatest possible speed of land travel remained approximately constant. The Imperial Post in the Roman Empire travelled at about the same rate as Dickens' stage coaches. Trains made a rapid revolution, but soon achieved very nearly their present speed. Aeroplanes represent a new revolution. Sea travel, although there was a vast addition to geographical knowledge, did not very greatly increase in speed until the invention of steamboats.

Second: speed in sending messages. Here the three stages, so far, are the telegraph, the telephone, and wireless. It is theoretically impossible to surpass the speed of wireless, which is that of light. In this matter, therefor, we have, in a certain sense, achieved perfection.

Third: the substitution of machinery for handicrafts in industry, with the consequent enormous increase of material well-being in all classes.

Fourth: the improvement in public health, which has been particularly noteworthy since the beginning of the present century.

Fifth. the application of science to methods of warfare. But this is a trite theme, as to which I propose to say nothing further.

The intellectual changes brought about by science are in part considerably older than the above practical changes, but in part they also belong to the last hundred years. It may be said, broadly, that science has simultaneously, and in equal measure, increased man's power and diminished his pride. In the Middle Ages, the earth was the centre of the universe, and the human race was the principal object of divine solicitude. The first blow to this outlook, and perhaps the greatest, was the Copernican system, with the discovery that the earth is one of the smaller planets. The next blow was the doctrine of evolution, as to which traditionalists are still fighting a rearguard action. The next, which is only beginning to be delivered, is the analysis of mind and soul by behaviorists and bio-chemists. I have heard it suggested by a bio-chemist that mysticism is due to excessive alkalinity of the blood This particular doctrine may or may not be true, but some equally painful explanation of the mystic emotion is pretty sure to be found before long. Physics, biology, psychology, have each in turn passed over from superstition to science, and have each in turn demanded sacrifices dear to our human conceit. The increase of power which men derive from science has, however, made these sacrifices endurable, and has allowed the scientific outlook to triumph in practice even with those who continue to reject it in its general and speculative aspects.

Theoretical science itself has changed its character in the course of its development. Newton's "Principia" has a statuesque perfection; a modern man of science does not attempt to give his work this character. Final truth is no longer demanded of a scientific theory, or claimed for it by its inventor. There is no longer the same conception of "truth" as something eternal, static, exact, and yet ascertainable. Consequently even the best modern theories are more satisfying to the practical than to the theoretical side of our nature. The more physics advances, the less it professes to tell us about the external world. To the Greek atomist, an atom was a little hard lump, just like an ordinary body except that it was small. To the modern physicist, it is a set of radiations coming out from a centre, and as to what there may be in the centre nothing can be known. Even when we say that there are radiations coming out from a centre, we are saying something which, when correctly interpreted is found to mean much less than it seems to mean at first sight. More and more, science becomes the art of manipulating nature, not a theoretical understanding of nature. The hope of understanding the world is itself one of those daydreams that science tends to dissipate. This was not formerly the case; it is an outcome of the physics of the last twenty-five years. Undoubtedly it tends to strengthen the instrumentalist philosophy.

The influence of the theory of relativity has been in this same direction. Einstein's law of gravitation is better than Newton's, and represents an equal triumph of human genius; but its effect upon scientific mentality has been quite different. Both in England and in France, Newton's work led men to think that they had at last penetrated the secrets of the universe; fine ladies tried to understand the "Principia," and philosophers took pleasure in expounding it to them. But Einstein's work has, on the whole, made men think that they know less than they had supposed. It seems that, although physics enables us, within certain limits, to predict our own experiences, it gives us only an abstract and formal kind of knowledge concerning what lies outside. If we continue to use pictorial language, and say (for example) that the earth describes an orbit round the sun, we must not suppose that "earth" and "sun" and "orbit" mean what one naturally imagines them to mean—they are merely names for certain mathematical expressions. Einstein, therefore, has not brought men the

same sense of triumph as Newton brought, although his work is just as remarkable. "Laws of nature" have turned out to be in some cases human conventions, in others mere statistical averages. This may not be always the case, but at any rate the old glad certainty is gone.

In conclusion, I wish to consider some of the social effects of science, and some of the hopes and fears for the future to which these effects give rise.

There is one regrettable feature of scientific civilization as hitherto developed: I mean, the diminution in the value and independence of the individual. Great enterprises tend more and more to be collective, and in an industrialized world the interference of the community with the individual must be more intense than it need be in a commercial or agricultural régime. Although machinery makes man collectively more lordly in his attitude towards nature, it tends to make the individual man more submissive to his group. Perhaps this is one cause of the fact that herd instinct is much more insistent in America than in England, and that individual liberty is less respected both politically and socially. I think, however, that a more important cause is the mixture of races and nationalities in the United States, which makes herd instinct a necessary unifying force. Even if a diminution of individual liberty be an essential feature of a scientific civilization, the mastery over nature is so great a boon that it is worth while to pay even a high price in order to achieve it. And it is probable that, as men's habits become more adjusted to the new régime, the interference with liberty will become very much less.

The omnipotence of man collectively and the feebleness of each individual man, which are features of a scientific civilization, should logically entail certain changes in values, religious, moral, and aesthetic. Belief in the infinite value of the individual soul arose as a consolation for the powerless subjects of the Roman Empire: ego-compensation had to be placed in another world, because the ordinary man had no share of political power. In the modern machine-world, owing to democracy and to the achievements of science, other compensations are possible, more especially nationalism, which identifies the individual emotionally with the power of his group. But in order that such compensations may satisfy, it is necessary to belittle the individual wherever he is not contributing to a totality. Lyric love, for example, which has inspired half the poetry of the world, has been a product of courts and aristocracies. Its revival after the Dark Ages was due to the Emperor Frederick II. The loves of an Emperor were events of public importance, and he saw nothing ridiculous in taking them seriously. His courtiers saw nothing ridiculous in imitating him. And so lyric love became a tradition. But in a civilization dominated by the machine, such seriousness about a mere emotion is impossible.

Changes in religion and morals come slowly, owing to our emotional resistance; yet they seem almost inevitable if a scientific civilization remains dominant for several centuries. In morals, we may expect a substitution of hope for fear, and an increase in the sense of the rights of the community as against the individual. Traditional morality, historically, was concerned with the relation of the individual soul to God. Political obligations formed part of the republic morality of Greece and Rome, but not of early Christianity, which grew up among populations without political power and therefore without political responsibility. This explains why many people still consider adultery a greater crime than acceptance of bribes by a politician or public official. Again: the State increasingly interferes between parents and children—for example, by insisting on education and forbidding physical cruelty. It would seem likely that this tendency will continue, more particularly, the State may be expected to assume the role of the father by taking over economic responsibility for the child, on the ground that many fathers cannot be trusted in this matter. If so, there will inevitably be a breakdown of the family, which must modify social psychology profoundly, producing, in place of individuals, well-drilled armies of intelligent but submissive

Janissaries, without individual differences, and without loyalties other than their loyalty to the State.

There remains the question: Can a scientific society be stable? Or does it contain within itself some poison which must ultimately produce its downfall? The Greeks produced an admirable way of life, but it was incapable of survival. Something of what they created passed into the Roman Empire, and thence into the Catholic Church, but in a diluted form. So it may be that the intensity of the scientific element in life will have to be diminished before men arrive at a stable polity. This possibility is worth examining.

There is, to begin with, an intellectual inconsistency in the scientific outlook. The nominal practice of science is to accept nothing without evidence, to test all its assertions by means of facts. But in reality, as Dr. Whitehead has pointed out in "Science and the Modern World," science has dogmas as ill grounded as those of any theological system. All science rests upon induction, and induction rests upon what Mr. Santayana calls "animal faith." The proofs of the validity of induction are as numerous as the proofs of the existence of God; but not one of them is calculated to carry conviction to a candid mind. This will not impede the progress of science so long as most men of science remain genuinely unaware of their theoretical insecurity, but as soon as they have to practise a semi-deliberate shutting of the eyes, they will lose the ardor of fearless explorers, and will tend to become defenders of orthodoxy. If, on the other hand, the instrumental theory of knowledge prevails, and theoretical problems are put to one side as merely scholastic, the inspiration to fundamental discoveries will fail. I am not arguing that the instrumental theory is false; on the contrary, I incline to think that it is true. But I am arguing that it does not afford a sufficient incentive to the precarious labor of serious thinking. When Egyptian priests discovered the periodicity of eclipses, they did so because superstition had led them to record such phenomena with scrupulous care. A false belief may be an essential ingredient in discovery, and perhaps the progress of science will cease on the day when the men of science become completely scientific. If so, they will turn to superstition for relief, and the Dark Ages will return. All this, however, is no more than a doubtful speculation.

More serious is the effect of a scientific civilization upon population—not upon quantity, which is unimportant, but upon quality. The most intelligent individuals, on the average, breed least, and do not breed enough to keep their numbers constant. Unless new incentives are discovered to induce them to breed, they will soon not be sufficiently numerous to supply the intelligence needed for maintaining a highly technical and elaborate system. And new incentives will have to be far more powerful than any that seem politically feasible in any measurable future. In America and Great Britain, the fetish of democracy stands in the way; in Russia, the Marxian disbelief in biology. Wherever the Catholic Church is strong, mere quantity tends to be thought alone important. In France, the economic system that has grown up around the Code Napoléon makes any eugenic reform impossible. Probably the best chance is in Germany, but even there it is small. Meanwhile, we must expect, at any rate for the next hundred years, that each generation will be congenitally stupider than its predecessor. This is a grave prospect.

In the ancient world, it is clear that Greece in the age of Pericles and Rome in the Augustan age were more intelligent than at later times, it is also fairly clear that the decay of Rome was primarily a decay of intelligence. Will this kind of decadence repeat itself? Not if biological science can obtain the same hold over men's minds as physical and mechanical sciences have now. In that case, by positive and negative eugenics the average intelligence can be increased in each generation, instead of being diminished, as at present. Unfortunately the concern of biology is with the most intimate part of human life, where emotions, morals, and religion alike stand in the way of progress. It may be doubted whether human nature could bear so great an interference with the life of instinct as would be involved in a really effective application of eugenics. What-

ever may be thought disagreeable in the machine age would be greatly intensified by the application of science to parenthood, and men might well think the price not worth paying.

What does seem clear is that we cannot stand still with the measure of science that exists at present in western civilization. We must either have more science, in particular biological science, or gradually become incapable of wielding the science we already have. In that case the forces of ignorance and obscurantism will gradually creep back into power. For a while, the old machinery will survive, just as Roman aqueducts survived in the sixth and seventh centuries; but gradually there will be an increasing collapse, until the skyscrapers become as strange as Maya ruins in Yucatan. Let us not flatter ourselves that this is impossible, all past history proves the reverse.

In the course of this chapter, I have not sought to minimize what may be considered the defects of the machine civilization. I do not doubt, however, that its merits far outweigh its defects. Take two items alone: the diminution of poverty, and the improvement in public health. These two alone represent an almost incalculable increase in average happiness, and each of them is capable of being carried very much further than has yet been done.

The remedy for the one-sidedness and harshness of our present civilization is to be sought, not in less science, but in more. Psychology, physiology, and the study of heredity have much to contribute. But if they are to add to human happiness, it is essential that we should learn to use the machine without worshipping it. Studies of industrial fatigue with a view to facilitating a greater output are not the most important part of psychology. The effect of stimulants in diminishing work on Monday morning is not their only effect deserving of study. Nor is suitability as a factory hand the only quality the eugenist should aim at producing. The machine was made for man, not man for the machine. The important thing about work is that it affords leisure for play; if it does not do this, it is not fulfilling its social purposes. When the same scientific acumen comes to be applied to human nature as has already been applied to the physical world, it may be expected, with some confidence, that the importance of happiness will no longer be forgotten. And evidently the honeymoon intoxication of the machine age will pass soonest in the countries which have been the first to experience it. I look, therefore, to the western nations, and more particularly to America, to establish first that more humane, more stable, and more truly scientific civilization towards which, as I hope, the world is tending.

Mathematics and the Good[1]

A. N. WHITEHEAD

I

ABOUT two thousand three hundred years ago a famous lecture was delivered. The audience was distinguished: among others it included Aristotle and Xenophon. The topic of the lecture was The Notion of The Good. The lecturer was competent; he was Plato.

The lecture was a failure, so far as concerned the elucidation of its professed topic; for the lecturer mainly devoted himself to Mathematics. Since Plato with his immediate circle of disciples, the Notion of The Good has disengaged itself from mathematics. Also in modern times eminent Platonic scholars with a few exceptions successfully conceal

[1] From *The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead*, Volume III, of the "Library of Living Philosophers," a series published by The Library of Living Philosophers, Inc.

their interest in mathematics. Plato, throughout his life, maintained his sense of the importance of mathematical thought in relation to the search for the ideal. In one of his latest writings he terms such ignorance "swinish." That is how he would characterize the bulk of Platonic scholars of the last century. The epithet is his, not mine.

But undoubtedly his lecture was a failure; for he did not succeed in making evident to future generations his intuition of mathematics as elucidating the notion of The Good. Many mathematicians have been good men—for example, Pascal and Newton. Also many philosophers have been mathematicians. But the peculiar associations of mathematics and The Good remains an undeveloped topic, since its first introduction by Plato. There have been researches into the topic conceived as an interesting characteristic of Plato's mind. But the doctrine, conceived as a basic truth of philosophy, faded from active thought after the first immediate Platonic epoch. Throughout the various ages of European civilization, moral philosophy and mathematics have been assigned to separate departments of university life.

It is the purpose of the present essay to investigate this topic in the light of our modern knowledge. The progress of thought and the expansion of language now make comparatively easy some slight elucidation of ideas which Plato could only express with obscure sentences and misleading myths. You will understand, however, that I am not writing on Plato. My topic is the connection between modern mathematics and the notion of The Good. No reference to any detailed mathematical theorems will be essentially involved. We shall be considering the general nature of the science which is now in process of development. This is a philosophic investigation. Many mathematicians know their details but are ignorant of any philosophic characterization of their science.

II

Within the period of sixty or seventy years preceding the present time, the progressive civilization of the European races has undergone one of the most profound changes in human history. The whole world has been affected; but the origination of the revolution is seated in the races of western Europe and Northern America. It is a change of point of view. Scientific thought had developed with a uniform trend for four centuries, namely, throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. In the seventeenth century, Galileo, Descartes, Newton and Leibniz elaborated the set of concepts, mathematical and physical, within which the whole movement was confined. The culmination may be placed in the decade from 1870 to 1880 At that time Helmholtz, Pasteur, Darwin, and Clerk-Maxwell were developing their discoveries. It was a triumph which produced the death of the period. The change affects every department of thought. In this chapter I emphasize chiefly the shift in the scope of mathematical knowledge. Many of the discoveries which were effective in producing this revolution were made a century earlier than the decade which is here chosen as the final culmination. But the wide realization of their joint effect took place in the fifty years subsequent in 1880. May I add, as an aside, that in addition to its main topic of mathematics and The Good, this chapter is also designed to illustrate how thought develops from epoch to epoch, with its slow half-disclosures? Apart from such knowledge you cannot understand either Plato, or any other philosopher.

III

In order to understand the change, let us conceive the development of an intellectual life which initiated its growth about the year 1870, at the age of about nine or ten years. The whole story reads like a modern version of a Platonic dialogue—for example, the *Theaetetus* or the *Parmenides*. At the commencement of his intellectual life the child would have known the multiplication table up to twelve-times-twelve. Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division had been mastered. Simple fractions were familiar notions. The decimal notation for fractions was added in the next two or three years. In this way, the whole basis of arithmetic was soon mastered by the young pupil.

In the same period Geometry and Algebra were introduced. In Geometry, the notions of points, lines, planes, and other surfaces are fundamental. The procedure is to introduce some complex pattern of these entities defined by certain relationships between its parts and then to investigate what other relationships in that pattern are implicitly involved in these assumptions. For example, a right-angled triangle is introduced. It is then proved that—assuming Euclidean Geometry—the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares on the other sides.

This example is interesting. For a child can easily look on a figure of a right-angled triangle—as drawn on the black-board by his teacher—without the notion of the squares on the various sides arising in his consciousness. In other words, a defined pattern—such as a right-angled triangle—does not disclose its various intricacies to immediate consciousness.

This curious limitation of conscious understanding is the fundamental fact of epistemology. The child knew what his teacher was talking about, namely, the right-angled triangle quite evidently suggested on the board by the thick chalk lines. And yet the child did not know the infinitude of properties which were implicitly involved.

The primary factors in the boy's concept of a right-angled triangle—as he looked at the black-board—were points, lines, straightness of lines, angles, right-angles. No one of these notions has any meaning apart from the reference to the all-enveloping space. A point has definite position in space, but does not (as then explained) share in any spatial extension. Lines and straight lines have position and also do share in spatial relations between straight lines. Thus no one of the notions involved in the concept of a right-angled triangle has any meaning apart from reference to the spatial system involved.

IV

At that date, apart from a small selection even among eminent mathematicians, it was presupposed that there was only one coherent analysis of the notion of space; in other words, that any two people talking about space must refer to the same system of relations, provided that you expressed a full analysis of every ramification of their meanings. The aim of mathematics, according to their belief, and according to Plato's belief, and according to Euclid's belief, was the adequate expression of this unique, coherent notion of spatiality. We now know that this notion, which had triumphed for about two thousand four hundred years as the necessary foundation for any physical science, was a mistake. It was a glorious mistake: for apart from the simplification thus introduced into the foundations of thought, our modern physical science would have had no agreed simplification of presuppositions by means of which it could express itself.

Thus, the error promoted the advance of learning up to the close of the nineteenth century. At the close of that period, it obstructed the proper expression of scientific ideas. Luckily the mathematicians—at least some of them—had got ahead of the sober thoughts of sensible men of science, and had invented all sorts of fantastic variations from orthodox geometry. At the turn of the centuries, that is, between 1890 and 1910, it was discovered that these variant types of geometry were of essential importance for the expression of our modern scientific knowledge.

From the faint beginnings of geometry, in Egypt and Mesopotamia, up to the present is a stretch of time extending for almost four thousand years. Throughout the whole period this error of a unique geometry has prevailed. Our notions of today have a history of about one hundred to a hundred and fifty years. We enjoy the pleasurable satisfaction that "Now we know."

We shall never understand the history of exact scientific knowledge unless we examine the relation of this feeling "Now we know" to the types of learning prevalent in each epoch. In some shape or other it is always present among the dominant group who are preserving and promoting civilized learning. It is a misapplication of that sense of success which is essential for the maintenance of any enterprise. Can this misapplication be characterized? We may complete the

phrase "Now we know" by an adverb. We can mean "Now we know—*in part*;" or we can mean "Now we know—*completely*." The distinction between the two phrases marks the difference between Plato and Aristotle, so far as their influence on future generations is concerned. The notion of the complete self-sufficiency of any item of finite knowledge is the fundamental error of dogmatism. Every such item derives its truth, and its very meaning, from its unanalyzed relevance to the background which is the unbounded Universe. Not even the simplest notion of arithmetic escapes this inescapable condition for existence. Every scrap of our knowledge derives its meaning from the fact that we are factors in the universe, and are dependent on the universe for every detail of our experience. The thorough sceptic is a dogmatist. He enjoys the delusion of complete futility. Wherever there is the sense of self-sufficient completion, there is the germ of vicious dogmatism. There is no entity which enjoys an isolated self-sufficiency of existence. In other words, finitude is not self-supporting.

The summarized conclusion of this discussion is that geometry, as studied through the ages, is one chapter of the doctrine of Pattern; and that Pattern, as known to finite discrimination, is a partial disclosure with an essential relevance to the background of the Universe. Also the term "Geometry" refers to a genus of patterns; and this genus includes a variety of species.

V

We now turn to the discussion of Number, considered as a fundamental mathematical notion. This section can be shortened, because many relevant deflections have already been expressed in the previous examination of geometry.

The doctrine of number from the Greek period onwards has always included queer little contradictions which thoughtful people disregarded. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a more thorough examination of the whole subject, initiated by Georg Cantor and Frege in Germany and Austria, and by Peano and Pieri in Italy, and in England by students of symbolic logic, disclosed a number of awkward questions. Finally Bertrand Russell produced a peculiarly glaring self-contradiction in the current reasoning. I well remember that he explained it to Frege in a private letter. Frege's answer commenced with the exclamation, "Alas, arithmetic totters!"

Frege was correct: Arithmetic tottered and still totters. But Bertrand Russell was equal to the occasion. We were then in the midst of writing a book entitled, *Principia Mathematica*. Russell introduced the notion of "types" of entities. According to that doctrine, the notion of number should only be applied to a group of entities of the same type. Thus the number "three" as applied to entities of one type has a different meaning to the number "three" as applied to entities of another type. For example, if we are considering two different types, there are two different meanings of the number "three."

Russell was perfectly correct. By confining numerical reasoning within one type, all the difficulties are avoided. He had discovered a rule of safety. But unfortunately this rule cannot be expressed apart from the presupposition that the notion of number applies beyond the limitations of the rule. For the number "three" in each type, itself belongs to different types. Also each type is itself of a distinct type from other types. Thus, according to the rule, the conception of two different types is nonsense, and the conception of two different meanings of the number three is nonsense. It follows that our only way of understanding the rule is nonsense. It follows that the rule must be limited to the notion of a rule of safety, and that the complete explanation of number awaits an understanding of the relevance of the notion of the varieties of multiplicity to the infinitude of things. Even in arithmetic you cannot get rid of a sub-conscious reference to the unbounded universe. You are abstracting details from a totality, and are imposing limitations on your abstraction. Remember that a refusal to think does not imply the non-existence of entities for thought. Our

conscious thought is an abstraction of entities from the background of existence. Thought is one form of emphasis.

VI

Finally in this survey of mathematical notions we come to Algebra. Who invented Algebra? It was invented "in Arabia" or "in India," you all want to tell me. In one sense that is true—namely, the useful symbolism for the algebraic ideas started in one or other, or in both, of those countries. But there is a further question, which, I am sure, would have interested Plato if he had known about Algebra. Who invented the fundamental idea which is thus symbolized?

What is the fundamental notion at the base of Algebra? It is the notion of "*Any* example of a given sort, in abstraction from some particular exemplification of the example or of the sort."

VII

The first animal on this Earth, who even for a moment entertained this notion, was the first rational creature. You can observe animals choosing between *this thing* or *that thing*. But animal intelligence requires concrete exemplification. Human intelligence can conceive of a type of things in abstraction from exemplification. The most obvious disclosures of this characteristic of humanity are mathematical concepts and ideals of the Good—ideals which stretch beyond any immediate realization.

Any practical experience of exactness of realization is denied to mankind: Whereas mathematics, and ideals of perfection, are concerned with exactness. It is the difference between practice and theory. All theory demands exact notions, somewhere or other, however concealed. In practice exactness vanishes: the sole problem is, "Does it Work?" But the aim of practice can only be defined by the use of theory; so the question "Does it Work?" is a reference to theory. Also the importance of theory resides in its reference to practice. The vagueness of practice is energized by the clarity of ideal experience.

No one has ever observed in practice any exact mathematical notion. Consider the child as he learnt his geometry. He never observed an exact point or an exact line, or exact straightness, or an exact circle. Such things were unrealized ideals in the child's mind. So much will be conceded by the man of practical good sense. But when we pass to arithmetic he stalls. You can hear him saying—perhaps you are saying it yourselves—"I can see one chair, two chairs, three chairs, four chairs, and five chairs, and I can observe that two chairs and three chairs when assembled together form a group of five chairs." In this way, our sensible friend has observed exactly exemplifications of arithmetical notions and of an arithmetic theorem.

Now the question is—Has he observed exactly, or, Has he had exact notions elicited in his conceptual experience? In what sense did he observe exactly one chair? He observed a vague differentiation of the general context of his visual experience. But suppose we pin him down to one billionth of an inch. Where does the chair end and the rest of things begin? Which atom belongs to the chair, and which atom belongs to surrounding space? The chair is perpetually gaining and losing atoms. It is not exactly differentiated from its surroundings, nor is it exactly self-identical as time slips by. Again, consider the chair during long periods. It gradually changes, even throughout its solid wooden parts. At the end of a million years in a cave, it becomes fragile, and dissolves at a touch. A slow, imperceptible change is always in progress.

Remember that the human concepts of one inch in length, and of one second of time, as being reasonable basic quantities, are purely relevant to human life. Further, the modern discoveries of physicists and astronomers have disclosed to us the relevance of minute, and of immense, happenings. Our exact conceptual experience is a mode of emphasis. It vivifies the ideals which invigorate the real happenings. It adds the perception of worth and beauty to the mere transition of sense-experience. It is by reason of the conceptual stimulus that the sunset displays the glory of the sky. By this statement, it is not meant that a feeble train of explicit

thoughts works the miracle. It is the transformation of the real experience into its ideal limit. Our existence is invigorated by conceptual ideals, transforming vague perceptions.

We cannot understand the flux which constitutes our human experience unless we realize that it is raised above the futility of infinitude by various successive types of modes of emphasis which generate the active energy of a finite assemblage. The superstitious awe of infinitude has been the bane of philosophy. The infinite has no properties. All value is the gift of finitude which is the necessary condition for activity. Also activity means the origination of patterns of assemblage, and mathematics is the study of pattern. Here we find the essential clue which relates mathematics to the study of the good, and the study of the bad.

VIII

You will notice that earlier in this essay we have emphasized that there are no self-existent finite entities. The finite essentially refers to an unbounded background. We have now arrived at the converse doctrine, namely, that infinitude in itself is meaningless and valueless. It acquires meaning and value by its embodiment of finite entities. Apart from the finite, the infinite is devoid of meaning and cannot be distinguished from nonentity. The notion of the essential relatedness of all things is the primary step in understanding how finite entities require the unbounded universe, and how the universe acquires meaning and value by reason of its embodiment of the activity of finitude.

Among philosophers, Spinoza emphasized the fundamental infinitude and introduced a subordinate differentiation by finite modes. Also conversely, Leibniz emphasized the necessity of finite monads and based them upon a substratum of Deistic infinitude. Neither of them adequately emphasized the fact that infinitude is mere vacancy apart from its embodiment of finite values, and that finite entities are meaningless apart from their relationship beyond themselves. The notion of "understanding" requires some grasp of how the finitude of the entity in question requires infinity, and also some notion of how infinity requires finitude. This search for such understanding is the definition of philosophy. It is the reason why mathematics, which deals with finite patterns, is related to the notion of the Good and to the notion of the Bad.

The great religions illustrate this doctrine. Buddhism emphasizes the sheer infinity of the divine principle, and thereby its practical influence has been robbed of energetic activity. The followers of the religion have lacked impulse. The doctrinal squabbles of Christianity have been concerned with the characterization of the infinite in terms of finitude. It was impossible to conceive energy in other terms. The very notion of goodness was conceived in terms of active opposition to the powers of evil, and thereby in terms of the limitation of deity. Such limitation was explicitly denied and implicitly accepted.

IX

The history of the science of algebra is the story of the growth of a technique for representation of finite patterns. Algebra is one chapter in the larger technique, which is language. But, in the main, language indicates its meanings by means of casual associations as they arise in human history. It is true that language strives to embody some aspects of those meanings in its very structure. A deep sounding word embodies the deep solemnity of grief. In fact, the art of literature, vocal or written, is to adjust the language so that it embodies what it indicates.

But the larger part of what language physically presents is irrelevant to the meaning indicated. The sentence is a sequence of words. But this sequence is, in general, irrelevant to the meaning. For example, "Humpty-Dumpty sat on a wall" involves a sequence which is irrelevant to the meaning. The wall is in no sense subsequent to Humpty-Dumpty. Also the posture of sitting might have been realized simultaneously with the origination of the sitter and the wall. Thus the verbal order has the faintest reference to the idea conveyed. It is true that by exciting expectation, and by delay, the

verbal order does work on the emotions of the recipient. But the sort of emotion, thus aroused, depends on the character of the recipient. Algebra reverses the relative importance of the factors in ordinary language. It is essentially a written language, and it endeavours to exemplify in its written structures the patterns which it is its purpose to convey. It may not be always wholly successful in this endeavour. But it does invert the ordinary habits of language. In the usage of Algebra, the pattern of the marks on paper is a particular instance of the pattern to be conveyed to thought.

Also there is an enlargement of the notion of "any." In arithmetic we write "two plus three" equals "three plus two." We are considering two processes of assemblage. The type of assemblage is indicated by the word —or sign—"plus," and its meaning is restricted by the reference to number. The two procedures are asserted to issue in groups with identical number of members. This number is in fact "five;" but it is not mentioned.

Now in algebra, the restriction of thought to particular numbers is avoided. We write "$x + y = y + x$," where x and y are any two numbers. Thus the emphasis on pattern, as distinct from the special entities involved in the pattern, is increased. Thus algebra in its initiation involved an immense advance in the study of pattern. Relationships of diverse patterns, such as that involved in the Binomial Theorem, entered into human thought. Of course, algebra grew slowly. For centuries it was conceived as a mode of asking for the solution of equations. Somewhere in medieval times, an unfortunate emperor, or other bigwig, together with his court, had to listen to a learned Italian expounding the solution of a cubic equation. Poor men—a lovely Italian afternoon was wasted! They would have yawned if their interest had not been sustained by the sense of magic.

x

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Algebra was the study of patterns involved in the various ways of assembling numbers, so that each assemblage issued in the indication of one number, conceived as the outcome of that assemblage. The relation of equality between two assemblages meant that both assemblages indicated the same number. But the interest was directed to the two patterns of assemblage, with their identical indications. In this way, certain general characteristics of patterns of number as realized in the evolving universe were identified with characteristics of patterns of marks on two-dimensional surfaces—usually sheets of paper. Such identities of pattern of meaning with pattern of written marks, or sound variation, are a subordinate characteristic of ordinary language, though of some importance in respect to spoken language. But this identity is the major characteristic of algebraic language.

Today, surveying the first half of the twentieth century, we find an immense extension of algebra. It has been extended beyond the field of number, and applies to a large group of patterns in which number is a subordinate factor. Very often when number is explicitly admitted, its major use is to provide names, as it is employed for the naming of houses. Thus mathematics is now being transformed into the intellectual analysis of types of pattern.

The notion of the importance of pattern is as old as civilization. Every art is founded on the study of pattern. Also the cohesion of social systems depends on the maintenance of patterns of behaviour; and advances in civilization depend on the fortunate modification of such behaviour patterns. Thus the infusion of pattern into natural occurrences, and the stability of such patterns, and the modification of such patterns, is the necessary condition for the realization of the Good.

Mathematics is the most powerful technique for the understanding of pattern, and for the analysis of the relationships of patterns. Here we reach the fundamental justification for the topic of Plato's lecture. Having regard to the immensity of its subject-matter mathematics, even modern mathematics, is a science in its babyhood. If civilization continues to advance, in the next

two thousand years the overwhelming novelty in human thought will be the dominance of mathematical understanding.

The essence of this generalized mathematics is the study of the most observable examples of the relevant patterns; and applied mathematics is the transference of this study to other examples of the realization of these patterns.

XI

Pattern is only one factor in our realization of experience, either as immediate value or as stimulus to activity for future value. For example in a picture, the geometrical pattern may be good, but the relationship of colours may be horrible. Also each individual colour may be poverty-stricken, indeterminate, and feeble. This example elicits the truth that no entity is merely characterized by its individual character, or merely by its relationships. Each entity possesses essentially an individual character, and also is essentially a terminal of relationship, potential or actual. Some of the factors of individual character enter into the relationships, and conversely the relationships enter into the character. In other words, no entity can be considered in abstraction from the universe, and no entity can be divested of its own individuality. The traditional logic overstressed the notion of individual character. The notion of "any" frees us from individual character: but there is no entity which is merely "any." Thus when algebra is applied, factors beyond algebraic thought are relevant to the total situation. Returning to the picture, mere geometry is not the whole tale. Colours are relevant.

In a picture colour (including black and white) may be reduced to a minimum, as in a pen-and-ink sketch. But some differentiation of colour is necessary for the physical presentation of geometrical design. On the other hand, colour may be dominant in some glorious work of art. Again, the drawing may be good, and colour effect may be a failure. The whole topic of Good and Evil arises. And you cannot discuss Good and Evil without some reference to the interweaving of divers patterns of experience. The antecedent situation may demand depth of realization, and a thin pattern may thwart conceptual expectation. There is then the evil of triviality —a sketch in place of a full picture. Again, two patterns eliciting intense experience may thwart each other. There is then the intense evil of active deprivation. This type has three forms; a concept may conflict with a reality, or two realities may conflict, or two concepts may conflict.

There may be other types of evil. But we are concerned with the mal-adjustment of patterns of experience. The total pattern has inhibited the insistent effect of either of its parts. But this notion is meaningless except as a reference to the background of feeling—namely emotional and analytic experience—within which that total pattern arises. Every abstraction derives its importance from its reference to some background of feeling, which is seeking its unity as one individual complex fact in its immediate present. In itself a pattern is neither good nor bad. But every pattern can only exist in virtue of the doom of realization, actual or conceptual. And this doom consigns the pattern to play its part in an uprush of feeling, which is the awakening, of infinitude to finite activity. Such is the nature of existence: it is the acquisition of pattern by feeling, in its emphasis on a finite group of selected particulars which are the entities patterned—for example, the spatial arrangements of colours and sounds. But the particulars concerned are not necessarily purely qualitative. A human being is more than an assortment of colours and sounds. The notion of pattern emphasizes the relativity of existence, namely, how things are connected. But the things thus connected are entities in themselves. Each entity in a pattern enters into other patterns, and retains its own individuality in this variety of existence. The crux of philosophy is to retain the balance between the individuality of existence and the relativity of existence. Also each individual entity in one pattern may be capable of analysis, so as to display itself as the unity of achieved pattern. The point that I am emphasizing is the function of pattern in the

production of Good or Evil in the finite unit of feeling which embraces the enjoyment of that pattern. Also the essential characterization of mathematics is the study of pattern in abstraction from the particulars which are patterned.

XII

When Plato in his lecture connected mathematics with the notion of the Good, he was defending—consciously or unconsciously—the traditional ways of thought spread through all races of mankind. The novelty was the method of abstraction which the Greek genius was gradually emphasizing. Mathematics, as studied in his own Academy, was an abstraction of geometrical and numerical characterizations from the concrete facts of Athenian life. Aristotle was dissecting animals, and was analysing political constitutions. He conceived of genera and species. He thus abstracted the logical characters from the full-blooded experience. The new epoch of scientific abstractions was arising.

One danger in the use of this technique is the simple-minded use of Logic, whereby an erroneous proposition is merely discarded. All propositions are erroneous unless they are construed in reference to a background which we experience without any conscious analysis. Every scientific proposition which the great scientists of the mid-nineteenth century entertained, was erroneous in the sense in which it was then construed. Their doctrine of space was wrong: their doctrine of matter was wrong: their doctrines of evidence were wrong. The abiding interest of Plato's Dialogues does not lie in their enunciation of abstract doctrines. They are suffused with the implicit suggestion of the concrete unity of experience, whereby every abstract topic obtains its interest.

XIII

Abstraction involves emphasis, and emphasis vivifies experience, for good, or for evil. All characteristics peculiar to actualities are modes of emphasis whereby finitude vivifies the infinite. In this way Creativity involves the production of value-experience, by the inflow from the infinite into the finite, deriving special character from the details and the totality of the finite pattern.

This is the abstraction involved in the creation of any actuality, with its union of finitude with infinity. But consciousness proceeds to a second order of abstraction whereby finite constituents of the actual thing are abstracted from that thing. This procedure is necessary for finite thought, though it weakens the sense of reality. It is the basis of science. The task of philosophy is to reverse this process and thus to exhibit the fusion of analysis with actuality. It follows that Philosophy is not a science.

The Solar System and Its Origin[1]

FRED L. WHIPPLE

THE FIVE bright planets have been known to man for many thousands of years, but in antiquity as mysterious celestial deities whose very motions seemed to reflect the caprices of superhuman beings. The old Greek and Roman legends are well known. Mars was the God of War, Venus the Goddess of Love, while Mercury was a sort of messenger boy. And thus the planets remain today—to the poets, that is, and to others for whom imagery is the essence of life. But to the scientist the planets have assumed a new character; the massive spheres of stone and iron and gas are even more interesting and exciting individually than were their mythical other-selves. Their mo-

[1] Reprinted from *Earth, Moon and Planets* by Fred L. Whipple. The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, by permission from the publishers. Copyright 1941 by The Blakiston Company.

tions are now a matter of mathematical calculation, not of caprice. The question of what lies within and beneath the cloud-filled atmosphere of Venus is, for the scientist, more conducive to mental activity than the folklore of dead generations.

Each planet acquires more individuality and becomes more interesting as the astronomer, by observation and reasoning, deduces additional facts. Every year some of the problems of the preceding year are solved and new ones, once beyond the expectation of solution, appear within reach. To appreciate the current discoveries and deductions in planetary astronomy, we must be familiar with the fund of knowledge already accumulated. . . .

The planets are really so small compared to the vast distances between them, and their reflected sunlight is so weak in comparison with the great brilliancy of the Sun, that all of them can never show to good advantage from any one location. As a vantage spot for observations, our present position on the Earth is actually quite satisfactory, except for the thick atmosphere above us. Since we must surmount this obstacle, we might as well, in imagination, go out farther from the Sun to about the distance of Jupiter. From there the inner part of the solar system is easily visible. The orbits of the planets show first that the Sun is almost exactly in the center. The reason is very simple; the Sun possesses 99.866 per cent of the entire mass, so that by gravitational attraction it completely dominates the motions of the planets.

We notice next that the orbits lie almost in a plane, very close to the *ecliptic* or the plane of the Earth's orbit about the Sun. This favoritism on the part of the planets in adopting a common plane of motion is probably not due to chance. Although no rigorous proof has been given, it is possible that Jupiter is responsible, because this planet is 317 times as massive as the Earth and possesses seven tenths of the combined mass of all the planets. Jupiter is certainly the master planet and by gravitational attraction may have regulated the orbits of the others. There is the more likely possibility, of course, that the planets were all formed in a plane —but we must investigate this matter later on.

Mercury, the smallest planet, moves in the smallest orbit of all, but one that is tipped from the common plane with an inclination of seven degrees, while the other inner planets keep within about three degrees of the plane.

For measuring distances in the solar system we must use a larger unit than for distances on the Earth. The most convenient is the astronomical unit (A.U.), which equals the mean of the largest and least distances from the Earth to the Sun, technically called the Earth's mean distance. In miles it is 92,870,000, the zeros shouting that we do not know what numbers to put in for them, and that we are not very certain about even the number seven. This basic astronomical unit is very difficult to measure accurately in miles, and is known barely to one part in ten thousand.

The distance to the Sun is enormous in terms of ordinary distances on the Earth. An airplane, moving with the velocity of sound, 750 miles per hour, would require fourteen years for the trip (necessarily one-way), while a cannon projectile moving a mile per second would arrive in a little less than three years. If such distances seem large, remember that we spend our lives confined to one of the smaller planets of the solar system, and are denied the privilege of a "fuller" existence in the universe at large. The astronomical unit is actually much too small for conveniently listing the distances between the stars; a much larger unit is used for that purpose.

Mercury has a mean distance from the Sun of only 0.39 astronomical units, Venus 0.72, the Earth 1.00, Mars 1.52, and Jupiter 5.20, a rather uniform sequence of increasing distances except for the large gap between Mars and Jupiter. In this gap we find more than a thousand small planets called asteroids that fill the space where a planet might well move. These asteroids range from mountain size, a mile or so in diameter, up to

Ceres which is about 480 miles across—comparable to a large island. Pallas comes second with a diameter of 304 miles and Vesta third, 240 miles. There are certainly no large asteroids that have not been discovered but there must be many smaller ones, perhaps 40,000 that could be photographed with the larger telescopes. These fly-weight planets, although contributing a negligible part to the mass of the system (perhaps $\frac{1}{500}$ of the Earth's mass), provide astronomers with a great amount of work in observation and calculation. They are fine test specimens for theories of various kinds and may eventually assist materially in finding the key to the origin of the system.

The planets themselves have much of the character of the ancient gods for whom they were named. Mercury is indeed swift and small, characteristic of a messenger. It requires only 88 days for a complete revolution about the Sun, less than one fourth the length of our year. Its diameter is only 0.4 that of the Earth. Even this small diameter, 3,100 miles, is enough greater than the diameter of Ceres to distinguish Mercury definitely as a planet rather than as a large asteroid. The period of rotation remains quite uncertain at present but probably equals the period of revolution about the Sun. The planet is, unfortunately, so small and always remains so close to the Sun as observed from the Earth, that surface markings are difficult to discern.

Venus is certainly the "sister" planet of the Earth. The diameter is almost identical (97.3 per cent), the period of revolution about the Sun somewhat shorter (225 days), and the mass about 0.8. Venus too is cloaked with a large atmosphere; it is this opaque atmosphere that hides the surface features so completely that we cannot be certain of the rate of rotation. From indirect evidence we judge the period probably to be long—more than three weeks. The actual observations of both of these inner planets are made difficult by the circumstance that we can see only part of the sunlit face at any time. When nearest to the Earth, only a thin crescent of Venus can be seen, as is the case for the Moon when new, because the bodies are almost on a line between the Earth and the Sun. . . .

Mars may best be described as a pygmy Earth (one half its diameter) with a thin atmosphere, distinct surface features, but no oceans. It moves more slowly about the Sun, in 687 days. Mars, however, boasts two moons or satellites, while Mercury and Venus have none. These two satellites are little more than medals for Mars, the God of War, since the largest, Phobos, is only fifteen miles across. Deimos, the smaller, is just one half of Phobos in diameter. The existence of these Lilliputian satellites, strangely enough, was narrated by Jonathan Swift in his "Gulliver's Travels," some one hundred and fifty years before their discovery in 1877 According to Gulliver's account, the astronomers of the cloud island, Laputa, possessed small but most excellent telescopes and had "discovered two lesser stars, or satellites, which revolve about Mars; whereof the innermost is distant from the center of the primary planet exactly three of his diameters, and the outermost, five; the former revolves in the space of ten hours, and the latter in twenty-one and a half."

These periods of revolution are remarkably close to the truth, for Phobos revolves about Mars in 7 h. 39 m. while Deimos requires 30 h. 18 m. The mythical distances from the center of Mars, are, however, too great; Phobos is distant only 1.4 of the planet's diameter, and Deimos 3.5 diameters. It would be enlightening to have learned more of the Laputian discoveries, but Gulliver mentions only that they had "observed ninety-three different comets, and settled their periods with great exactness."

The rapid motion of Phobos makes this satellite unique in the solar system. Its period of revolution is less than the Martian day, 24 h. 37 m. As seen from the surface of Mars, Phobos would rise in the west and set in the east!

Before going on to the outermost planets, we note that the four planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars are really very much alike, of somewhat the same size, and all fairly dense, as though they were made of stone or iron. They are justly classed as the *terrestrial* planets because of their similarity

to the Earth. Probably Pluto is much like the Earth or Venus. Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, on the other hand, are of an entirely different species, giants compared to the Earth, and only about as dense as water. . . .

Jupiter is conspicuous as the greatest of the planets. It has eleven times the diameter of the Earth, but rotates faster than any other planet, its day being slightly less than ten hours in length. It rotates so fast, indeed, that the equator is much bulged out by the centrifugal force. Since Jupiter is only a third denser than water we are not surprised to find that it possesses an enormously thick atmosphere, how thick we cannot know. The depth of the atmosphere, if indeed there is a distinct solid surface below, can be calculated only on the basis of estimates of the chemical composition and temperatures within the planet. Ammonia and methane (marsh gas) are known to be present in the gigantic clouds that we can see from outside. These markings are certainly clouds because their forms are ever changing. The general structure is banded parallel to the equator as though clouds were being blown along by "trade winds" that result from the rapid rotation.

The atmospheres of the other giant planets are very similar to that of Jupiter, the differences being attributable in a large measure to the fact that the planets farther from the Sun are colder at their surfaces. Neptune, 30 A.U. from the Sun, is a frigid world by our standards because it receives only $\frac{1}{900}$ as much heat and light from the Sun as we receive. Solid carbon dioxide (dry ice) near its melting point is hot compared to the probable temperature at the surface of Neptune, about –330° F. Nitrogen gas would be frozen, likewise oxygen.

Although the giant planets are cold and uninhabitable, their great masses and wide separation in space allow them to control astonishingly large families of satellites. Jupiter is again first, with eleven moons. Saturn is second with nine, while Uranus has four and Neptune only one. Of these, the four brightest of Jupiter's family, one of Saturn's, and the single satellite of Neptune are about the size of our Moon, while the others range in diameter from that of small asteroids to about half the Moon. The systems of Jupiter and Saturn are really miniature solar systems in every respect except that the primary planets do not send out light by themselves but shine by reflected sunlight only. The great planets are more massive when compared to their largest satellites than is the Sun when compared to Jupiter or Saturn.

The similarity with the whole solar system is even more striking in the system of Saturn because this planet controls not only nine satellites, equal to the number of known planets about the Sun, but also possesses a family of miniature asteroids, which comprise the great rings. These rings are so close to Saturn itself that in the early telescopes they looked like ears or appendages. Galileo, who was the first scientist of the modern world to see Jupiter's four bright satellites, sometimes drew Saturn as consisting of three pieces—a central body with symmetrical side sections. We know now that the rings are made of small fragments of matter revolving about Saturn in nearly a plane, relatively thinner than a sheet of paper. When seen at different angles they present different appearances, from invisibility, if seen edge on, to wide rings at the brightest angle possible.

On beyond Neptune lies the more recently discovered Pluto. Little is known about Pluto as a planet. Our best information suggests that it is slightly smaller and less massive than the Earth, but its rate of rotation is uncertain. Probably there is no atmosphere because the surface seems to reflect sunlight very poorly; the planets with heavy atmospheres reflect much better than those with thin atmospheres. The Moon is an especially poor reflector, and Pluto may be even worse.

To complete this quick introduction to the solar family, some mention must be made of the ever-baffling comets. These strange wanderers have excited more superstitious fear in the human mind than any other class of celestial bodies. Today their continued existence is in itself a major riddle of the solar system and the phenomena that they manifest are far from well explained. Most

comets move in exceedingly elongated orbits, approaching the Sun for only a very small fraction of one period of revolution. When distant from the Sun they become too faint for observation but they brighten enormously at perihelion, when closest to the Sun. At this time they become so active that they waste an appreciable part of their substance into space, and produce a great coma of gases and small dust particles about their nuclei. The strong sunlight forces these gases and dust back from the comet in a great tail, sometimes multiple and always complicated in structure. . . .

No longer can the philosopher in his easy chair expect to solve the basic problems of the origin and evolution of the solar system. A great array of observational facts must be explained by a satisfactory theory, and the theory must be consistent with the principles of dynamics and modern physics. All of the hypotheses so far presented have failed, when physical theory has been properly applied. The modern attack on the problem is less direct than the old method, which depended upon an all-embracing hypothesis. The new method is perhaps slower, but it is much more certain. By a direct study of the facts, we can specify, within an increasingly narrow range, the physical conditions under which the planets evolved. The manner of their origin must finally become apparent. . . .

It is an interesting commentary on modern science that the *age* of the Earth has been determined, although its origin remains a baffling problem. The oldest rocks in the Earth's crust solidified some two billion years ago. Radioactive substances within the rocks leave minute traces of lead and helium which constitute a measure of the time elapsed since the Earth cooled. Studies of meteorites show that none of these visitors from space have been solid for a much longer period than the crustal rocks. If the meteorites represent fragments of the solar system, we may conclude that the system is coeval with the Earth. The problem of the origin of the Earth is, therefore, synonymous with the problem of the origin of the entire system. Something happened about three billion years ago to generate the planetary bodies and to produce the order and regularity that we observe today.

Outstanding orderliness is apparent in the planetary motions. The members of the solar system move in the same direction along a common plane. Not only do the planets and a thousand or so asteroids follow this plane in their revolution about the Sun, but the great majority of the satellites move about their primaries in a similar fashion. The Sun, moreover, and all but one of the planets exhibit the same phenomenon in their axial rotation. Even Saturn's rings share in the common motion. We have noted the few exceptions, the Uranus system, Neptune's satellite, a few of the outer satellites of Jupiter and Saturn and notably the comets. Since the comets seem to share so few of the properties of the planets and asteroids, we may well exclude them from our main discussion; cometary evolution appears to constitute a separate and independent problem.

The common motion of so many bodies suggests an initial rotary action, as though the solar system were once sent spinning by some cosmic finger. There is, in fact, so much motion in the outer bounds of the system that the older evolutionary hypotheses have failed in one respect; they cannot explain the *angular momentum* of the major planets. The angular momentum of a planet moving in a circular orbit at a given distance from the Sun[2] is the product of the mass, distance and speed. Since the speed diminishes only as the square root of the distance, a given mass contributes more angular momentum at a greater distance from the Sun. For a planet moving in an elliptical orbit, Kepler's law of areas expresses the constancy of the angular momentum at all times. When the planet is near the Sun it moves more rapidly than when it is farther away. No force toward or away from the Sun can change the angular momentum of a planet. Only an external push or drag along the orbit can increase

[2] Practically at the center of gravity of the solar system.

or diminish this fundamental quantity of motion.

Jupiter, with its great mass, carries about six tenths of the entire angular momentum of the solar system. The four giant planets contribute about ninety-eight per cent, and the terrestrial planets a fifth of a per cent. The Sun, with a thousand times the mass of Jupiter, rotates so slowly that its angular momentum is only two per cent of the whole. If all planets could be put into the Sun and could carry with them their present angular momentum, the augmented Sun would rotate in about twelve hours, rather than a month.

A satisfactory hypothesis for the origin of the solar system must first account for the existence of the planets, satellites and asteroids. It must then explain how they were set moving in the remarkable manner already noted, and must provide the system theoretically with the observed amount of angular momentum. Two types of hypotheses have been suggested. In the first type, the system condensed from a gigantic cloud of glowing gases. In the second, the planets were torn from the Sun by an encounter with a passing star. Neither is satisfactory, but both have contributed greatly to astronomy by their impetus to thought.

The hypothesis that was believed for the longest time, excepting the Biblical account, was presented apologetically by the great French mathematician Laplace. According to his Nebular Hypothesis, a rotating and flattened nebula of diffuse material cooled slowly and contracted. In the plane of motion, successive rings of matter were supposed to have split off, to condense into the planets of our present solar system. Most of the matter finally contracted to form the Sun. Between the present orbits of Mars and Jupiter, the ring failed to "jell," and produced many asteroids instead of a planet. . . .

The Nebular Hypothesis is untenable for several reasons, particularly because a speed of rotation sufficient to leave nebular rings at the present distances of the planets would provide the nucleus with many times the angular momentum of the rings. The Sun, according to the Hypothesis should have *more* angular momentum than the planets, not one fiftieth as much. Furthermore, James Clerk Maxwell showed that a fluid ring could not coalesce into large planets but would be transformed into a ring of *planetoids,* such as Saturn's ring or the belt of asteroids.

The collision or encounter theories attempt to avoid the difficulties of angular momentum. If another star collided with the sun or passed very close to it, material would be ejected from its surface and might condense to form the planets. Several variations of the encounter theory have been propounded. In the Planetesimal Theory, proposed early this century by T. C. Chamberlin and F. R. Moulton, the passing star was supposed to have raised gigantic tides on the Sun. An appreciable quantity of matter, several times the present masses of the planets, was then ejected from the Sun's surface, and sent spiraling around it by the passing star. Most of the matter was lost or fell back into the Sun, but part remained, with a highly elliptical motion. The gases then condensed into small fragments, the planetesimals, and as time progressed the larger fragments swept up the smaller, to form the planets. The rapid motion of the passing star provided the angular momentum for the orbital motions of the planets, their rotations and the satellite systems. Within twenty million years after the encounter the formation of the planets would have been essentially complete.

Sir James Jeans and Harold Jeffreys have proposed an alternative version of such an encounter. They argue, in their Tidal Theory, that a long tidal filament was drawn out of the Sun by the passing star. The inner part of the filament returned to the Sun while the outer portion escaped into space. A central portion coalesced into a string of beadlike condensations, the embryo planets.

Jeffreys has more recently abandoned the Tidal Theory as untenable, and has substituted a collisional hypothesis in which the approaching star brushed by the Sun in actual contact. The subsequent phenomena of the filament and planet formation follow

essentially the same plan as in the original Tidal Theory. R. A. Lyttleton of Cambridge, England has proposed that the Sun was a double star at the time of the collision. Its companion star was gravitationally torn away by a third star which closely approached the Sun. H. N. Russell had suggested previously that a companion star was struck, and that the panets evolved from its débris.

A number of serious objections have been raised against all of these encounter hypotheses. In particular, when mathematical analysis is applied, the observed distribution of angular momentum in the solar system has not yet been explained. A basic objection of another kind has more recently been presented.

Lyman Spitzer, while at the Harvard Observatory, proved by a physical and mathematical demonstration that the planets cannot be formed by a direct condensation of material taken forcibly from the Sun's surface or interior. Any star such as the Sun consists entirely of superheated gases. At a depth above which there is sufficient material to form the planets, either by a tidal or collisional process, the temperature is approximately 18,000,000° F. These tremendously hot gases would expand and escape except for the enormous pressure of the overlying layers, which are forced down by the Sun's great surface gravity. A tidal or collisional ejection, however, would remove the pressure and enable the gases to expand immediately. During a collision, two stars would remain in contact for only an hour or two, and the ejection would occur at velocities of hundreds of miles per second. Spitzer has shown that within a few minutes after their release, the gases would literally explode, long before they could cool by radiation. Even the internal gravitational attraction of a mass twice that of Jupiter would not hold the gases and permit them to condense. Hence planets cannot be formed directly out of matter that is removed catastrophically from the Sun.

We are left, apparently, with some form of the planetesimal hypothesis as the least objectionable explanation for the origin of the planetary system. Spitzer's arguments have not been applied mathematically to the formation of the small planetesimals, but certainly it is true that only a minute fraction of the gases ejected from the Sun would ever be available for forming the planets. Moreover, a stellar collision, rather than an encounter, is required. . . .

So far, our new approach to the problem of origin and evolution has not led to a complete solution. Nevertheless, considerable progress has been made. These conclusions are fairly certain. (1) The planets were once very hot, far above the temperature of melting rock. Even Pluto, now cold enough to hold helium and hydrogen, must have been sufficiently hot to lose the ordinary gases of the Earth's atmosphere. (2) The planets, therefore, grew from a fairly rapid condensation of material, not from a slow accretion process. (3) The planets developed probably from the Sun or possibly from another star. This third conclusion is based largely upon similitudes of chemical composition, but is strengthened by the first two conclusions. Interstellar material, the only alternative to stellar material for planet building, is, within our present knowledge, diffuse. Only an accretion process could produce the planets from diffuse material.

The problem of the possible existence of planets about other stars is still unsolved. If a stellar collision is required to produce planets, there will be only a few systems such as ours among millions of stars. If a single star, unaided, can generate a system of planets, then the number of planets may be enormous. . . .

The Scientific Meaning of Chance[1]

GILBERT N. LEWIS

. . . Do you believe in miracles? Let us consider a box with a one-gram weight resting on its floor. Let us place this box in a bath maintained at an extremely constant temperature, we will say 65° F, and let the whole be protected by the most perfect mechanism that we can think of to shield it from external jars. Let us, in other words, shut it off from all external influences, leaving only a small hole through which we may observe. We may look into the box millions of times and always find the weight upon the floor, and then state this to be a law of nature. But the time will come when we look in and find the weight some distance from the floor. It will not happen often, but we can calculate with a high degree of accuracy the chance of finding it, let us say, ten centimeters or more from the floor. This chance is so very small that I cannot express it in any ordinary way. We state chances as fractions, but to denote this chance I should have to put down a decimal point and zero after zero, and should spend my whole lifetime before I could write down a number not a zero. But the calculation is none the less exact.

The chance becomes larger if I consider smaller weights and lesser heights from the floor. Let the height be one hundred million times as small and the weight also one hundred million times as small, and then the calculation shows that if we look every second we shall find the weight as far off the floor as this 6.32 times in every million years. If you bet five to one on the appearance of this phenomenon in a million years, you might lose at first, but you would come out ahead in the long run.

If we take a still smaller weight the chance goes up very rapidly, and if we examine particles which are just visible with a good microscope, we find them hopping about in what is known as the Brownian movement, and which we now know to be identical with that thermal agitation which all molecules or groups of molecules exhibit, and which always increases with increasing temperature. From a study of these movements Perrin was able to draw some extremely important deductions with the aid of the same formula as I have used in these calculations.

If the jumping of the one-gram weight was a miracle, here in the Brownian movement thousands of such miracles are constantly occurring before our eyes. It is not true that things left to themselves approach a constant state, but only that they approach a state which ordinarily appears constant to us because of the dullness of our perceptions.

It was Maxwell who made the ingenious suggestion of a little demon who could see and distinguish between the individual molecules. Let us consider, as a type of irreversible phenomenon, the mixing of two gases. A container with a partition in the middle has oxygen on one side, nitrogen on the other. If a small hole is made in the partition, the gases mix by diffusion, so that ultimately we cannot distinguish between the contents of the two sides. This, according to the ideas of classical thermodynamics, is a completely irreversible phenomenon. But suppose the demon stationed at the orifice with a small shutter which he can open or close at will, and suppose that he decides to let only oxygen molecules pass in one direction and only nitrogen molecules in the other. Can he not through this exercise of *conscious choice* ultimately restore the original condition, with all the oxygen on the one side and all the nitrogen on the other? That such a reversal of a so-called irreversible process may occur, even without a demoniacal agency, was first recognized by Willard Gibbs, who an-

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nounced that such a reversal is not an impossibility but only an improbability; and this idea was most successfully developed by Boltzmann.

In order to illustrate the modern statistical view of thermodynamics, let us consider a fresh pack of cards, all sorted, for example, ace, king, queen of spades, ace, king, queen of clubs, and so on. Such a grouping of the cards is easily described and easily discernible. If I spread the pack before you, one-half is obviously black, the other red. If I should put this pack into some sort of shuffling and dealing machine the first deals might give some very singular hands, but as the process continued, a point would be reached where we would say that the pack was well shuffled. Now, any one of the particular arrangements obtained by shuffling is just as improbable *a priori* as the first well-sorted arrangement, and by this we mean that if we note the arrangement, card by card, in a well-shuffled pack, this identical arrangement is no more likely to recur than the arrangement of the fresh pack. Nevertheless, while the number of possible well-sorted or easily *describable* arrangements is very small, there is an enormous number of arrangements of a *nondescript* character. As the shuffling continues, the arrangement constantly changes; there is no approach to any one particular arrangement, but, on the other hand, it rarely happens that a remarkably distinguished arrangement occurs. If one picks up a bridge hand with thirteen trumps he will probably tell of it to all his friends and indeed such a hand is a very rare fluctuation from the general run of nondescript hands.

There is a psychological element in all this If we look down from a window upon a street of New York and see the people emerging from a subway exit, some occurrence may draw our attention to one group of ten people. We make note of their faces and their clothes. They thus become in some measure familiar to us, and it strikes us as remarkable that these ten people are about to melt into the crowds of the great city and will never again meet together. Yet all through the day each will be one of a group which differs from the first only in that we have not become acquainted with its members.

Since the rules of chance arrangement contain every essential feature of the second law of thermodynamics, let me further illustrate by considering a box containing ten black balls at the left and ten white balls at the right. If we shake the box, there will still perhaps be only a few black balls to the right, but if we continue to shake, they will soon be well mixed. Yet as the mixing continues we come not nearer and nearer to the even distribution of the five blacks and five whites on each side. On the contrary, the arrangement of six and four occurs more frequently than that of five and five, and occasionally greater fluctuations from the mean occur. Indeed, if we have the patience to shake the box two or three hundred thousand times we shall probably come to the original well-sorted arrangement, all whites on one side and all blacks on the other; and if we have recorded the result of each shaking, the record will show no particular dissymmetry with respect to the earlier and to the later shakings.

If instead of the twenty balls we had taken a million grains of white and black sand, the mixing would have appeared to be more thorough, but the fluctuations, although not so evident, would still be there, and if we should take an enormously greater number of particles we would have a complete analogy to the mixing of the molecules of oxygen and nitrogen. And here again we must assume the existence of fluctuations from the mean, sometimes small, sometimes great, and after the lapse of a vast period of time even so great as to give once more pure oxygen and pure nitrogen. Here again if there were a way of recording these fluctuations between the original distribution of pure oxygen and pure nitrogen until we arrive once more at the same distribution there would be nothing in all these fluctuations which would not be symmetrical with respect to past and future.

Are all cases of irreversible phenomena as simple as this? For many years I have found this one of the most perplexing and tantalizing of scientific questions. As long as it was

supposed that radiation, even from a single atom, goes out in a way which can never be entirely reversed, there seemed an insurmountable obstacle to the view that all irreversible processes are mere mixings and shufflings, with no element of novelty except that which arises from the vast number of elementary processes involved. But if we now regard radiation also as a process of exchange of energy between two atoms, the emitting and absorbing atoms playing symmetrical parts, this obstacle is removed.

We then find not even a shred of truth left in the statement that an isolated system moves towards a state of equilibrium. It will move towards it and move away from it, and in the long run as often in one direction as in the other. It is only when we start far away from the state of equilibrium, that is, when we start with some state of unusual distinction, and when we follow the system a little way along its path, that we can state that it will as a rule proceed towards more *nondescript* states.

The second law of thermodynamics has come to be regarded as one of the most powerful and inexorable of nature's laws. It is beginning to dominate chemistry and the biological sciences, and its sway extends from the pure sciences into the various domains of technology. Now, however, that we have looked behind the scenes, it almost seems as though it were all a sham, like some silly clown garbed in the ermine of royalty Stripped of its finery, we find that the second law states that if a pack of cards is thrown into a shuffling machine, the chances are that it will become shuffled.

If this discovery comes to us as a great disillusionment it is only because our minds are tinged from infancy with the hoary superstition of the absolute. We say, "If this great law is not always true what becomes of our other exact laws?" But can we have no reverence for any institution without making the childish assumption of its infallibility? Can we not see that exact laws, like all the other ultimates and absolutes, are as fabulous as the crock of gold at the rainbow's end? We have a sense of contentment as we travel day by day through the beautiful and fertile lands into which we are led by one of these will-o'-the-wisps. It is only after someone cries, "I have caught it in my hands," that we experience the bitterness of disappointment.

Our respect for the great law of entropy need be no less because it has its exceptions, nor yet because it can be reduced to the obvious. Think of all the propositions of Euclidean geometry which can be reduced to the simple statement that there are parallel lines and that there are circles. Familiarity breeds contempt only for artificiality and pretense; and the law of entropy becomes a greater law as we now must limit it by the following statement: an isolated system always proceeds in the direction of greater entropy, provided that it be so far removed from the state of equilibrium that the chance fluctuations in that state may be ignored.

A law of nature becomes a better law when we can predict the exceptions to it. If someone tells you that the sun will continue to rise and set through all future time, you are not deceived by the finality of this statement. You know that here and there through the galaxy of stars many cataclysms occur which would wipe out whole solar systems. If through a study of the average frequency of such occurrences, or through a study of the movements of all known bodies in the neighborhood of the sun, we predict that the earth will be safe for another trillion years, we have far more information than is furnished by the trivial statement that the sun will go on rising forever.

6

Literature and the Arts

The arts invite attention, and they have received it ever since the first story, the first dance, and the first painting which made a story graphic on the walls of a cave. The results of that attention have often been put into language, until the literature about literature and the other arts is perhaps the most prolific in the world. Technique, history, theory, criticism, analysis—every art has felt them all. Artists themselves have been impelled to talk about their own medium and their contributions within it. Truly individual writers or painters or musicians have often had good reason to feel neglected, but for the arts as a whole the word *neglect* cannot apply.

When we ask why so much has been written about the arts, we may first say it is because there are so many different arts. And this is partly true. But if we go a little further, we shall see the bigger reason. all the arts are the work of human beings, of individuals or groups What is so much a favorite with us all for thought, talk, writing as our fellow men and women? And in the arts those of our kind articulate enough, and bold enough, are telling us that here is their best doing—and what, for one reason or another, do we make of it? For centuries we have responded.

It takes much time and reading to obtain a really comprehensive view of the literature about the arts. A few selections can at best hint at some aspects of some arts and touch on but a few individual artists. Here we have tried to choose pieces that are good in themselves and that suggest the almost infinite number of approaches and attitudes that can be used.

Literature has its advocates, general and special. Arnold Bennett was one of the most active and most patient. He would make more and better readers if he could. He and Virginia Woolf openly recognized the reader as a potent force, a kind of patron, whether his tastes and demands seem educated or not. Virginia Woolf pays tribute to the reader's influence on the writer even before he writes. Bennett considers what may happen to the work once it appears. Out of good taste arise the "passionate few," who by their written judgments keep alive the "classics" of this art or that—though notably writing—and promote a wider knowledge of the things they love in current art. Through what these people say we realize more and more that our tastes have insistence, though the artist may resist such pressures.

In the last two centuries another kind of critic, reviewers, have written innumerable words about what has appeared in their own time. Reviewers have varied in taste and judgment and in their place as intermediary between artist and public. But every art has its reviewers. Our two reviews by Krutch and Canby show a philosophy of criticism and a knowledge of the trust

placed in a reviewer's report of his experience to a busy world. Since the eighteenth century, when many people felt they *had* to know the critical opinions of Samuel Johnson and the Club, there have been strong believers in the worth of reviews and criticis. There have, of course, been disbelievers too. But the sceptical and credulous alike will read reviews—and who more than the artists themselves? For the reviewer is a special kind of patron. And sometimes, maybe after years, an artist's whole work may be re-surveyed, particularly such great life-contributions as Willa Cather's.

A book like Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit* is published, reviewed, attacked, defended. After all this, what does the writer have to say? Perhaps we have not had enough of revelation such as this author gives us. Again, the regional reception of a work may be worth comment, though the comment may not always be as caustic as DeVoto's on how Boston "mobbed" *Strange Fruit*. A kind of social history might be written on the way works of art through the centuries have been received by the artists' fellow men.

A history of this kind might mention Thomas Hart Benton's gay account of how he came to paint the portrait of a Tammany ward-heeler. " 'I paint what I see,' said Rivera." So did Benton—but the result had to be kept for others through disguise. This episode among the politicians raises the whole issue of conscious or unconscious dictation to the artist, an issue burningly alive today.

Those who built the "White City" for Chicago's great Exposition in 1893 borrowed from Rome the faces of their buildings but not the structure. And they foisted their "Imperial Facade" on a whole epoch of American architecture. As Lewis Mumford shows, they could be bolder than Thomas Benton, happy in their dependence on the past and the broad shield it gave them from current social imagination. But in after-years the scorn of Mumford, and his insight as social historian, caught them up. Posterity will have *its* way with artists too. Informal and formal, judgments are infinite in possibility, given the work of the artist to start with. But none is ever final, and one age will reject what another may acclaim. No work of art exists in a vacuum.

In music, too, disputes are numerous—over the nature of music and its function, the merits of composers, the "right" interpretation of their works. But private disagreements melt before the almost universal faith that music itself is personal and good, a matter of the spirit's health. Whomever we praise, he may be for all time, but certainly he is for us. To celebrate this thought is one of the most difficult of tasks. Lucien Price has used the art of language to make eloquent beyond ordinary measure this certitude. The musician has need of writing like "Amphion's Lyre." And so do we, to help us know that beyond all technique art is a human matter. The artist and his public, now or later, whether at odds or happy together, have this humanness in common. Nothing in art is more important for us to discover.

On Literary Taste[1]

ARNOLD BENNETT

1. THE AIM

AT THE BEGINNING a misconception must be removed from the path. Many people, if not most, look on literary taste as an elegant accomplishment, by acquiring which they will complete themselves, and make themselves finally fit as members of a correct society. They are secretly ashamed of their ignorance of literature, in the same way as they would be ashamed of their ignorance of etiquette at a high entertainment, or of their inability to ride a horse if suddenly called upon to do so There are certain things that a man ought to know, or to know about, and literature is one of them: such is their idea. They have learnt to dress themselves with propriety, and to behave with propriety on all occasions, they are fairly "up" in the questions of the day; by industry and enterprise they are succeeding in their vocations; it behoves them, then, not to forget that an acquaintance with literature is an indispensable part of a self-respecting man's personal baggage. Painting doesn't matter; music doesn't matter very much. But "everyone is supposed to know" about literature. Then, literature is such a charming distraction! Literary taste thus serves two purposes: as a certificate of correct culture and as a private pastime. A young professor of mathematics, immense at mathematics and games, dangerous at chess, capable of Haydn on the violin, once said to me, after listening to some chat on books, "Yes, I must take up literature." As though saying: "I was rather forgetting literature. However, I've polished off all these other things. I'll have a shy at literature now."

This attitude, or any attitude which resembles it, is wrong. To him who really comprehends what literature is, and what the function of literature is, this attitude is simply ludicrous. It is also fatal to the formation of literary taste. People who regard literary taste simply as an accomplishment, and literature simply as a distraction, will never truly succeed either in acquiring the accomplishment or in using it half-acquired as a distraction; though the one is the most perfect of distractions, and though the other is unsurpassed by any other accomplishment in elegance or in power to impress the universal snobbery of civilised mankind. Literature, instead of being an accessory, is the fundamental *sine qua non* of complete living. I am extremely anxious to avoid rhetorical exaggerations. I do not think I am guilty of one in asserting that he who has not been "presented to the freedom" of literature has not wakened up out of his prenatal sleep. He is merely not born. He can't see, he can't hear, he can't feel, in any full sense. He can only eat his dinner. What more than anything else annoys people who know the true function of literature, and have profited thereby, is the spectacle of so many thousands of individuals going about under the delusion that they are alive, when, as a fact, they are no nearer being alive than a bear in winter.

I will tell you what literature is! No—I only wish I could. But I can't. No one can. Gleams can be thrown on the secret, inklings given, but no more. I will try to give you an inkling. And, to do so, I will take you back into your own history, or forward into it. That evening when you went for a walk with your faithful friend, the friend from whom you hid nothing—or almost nothing . . . ! You were, in truth, somewhat inclined to hide from him the particular matter which monopolized your mind that evening, but somehow you contrived to get on

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to it, drawn by an overpowering fascination. And as your faithful friend was sympathetic and discreet, and flattered you by a respectful curiosity, you proceeded further and further into the said matter, growing more and more confidential, until at last you cried out, in a terrific whisper: "My boy, she is simply miraculous!" At that moment you were in the domain of literature.

Let me explain. Of course, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, she was not miraculous. Your faithful friend had never noticed that she was miraculous, nor had about forty thousand other fairly keen observers. She was just a girl. Troy had not been burnt for her. A girl cannot be called a miracle. If a girl is to be called a miracle, then you might call pretty nearly anything a miracle . . . That is just it: you might. You can. You ought. Amid all the miracles of the universe you had just wakened up to one. You were full of your discovery. You were under a divine impulsion to impart that discovery. You had a strong sense of the marvellous beauty of something, and you had to share it. You were in a passion about something, and you had to vent yourself on somebody. You were drawn towards the whole of the rest of the human race. Mark the effect of your mood and utterance on your faithful friend. He knew that she was not a miracle. No other person could have made him believe that she was a miracle. But you, by the force and sincerity of your own vision of her, and by the fervour of your desire to make him participate in your vision, did for quite a long time cause him to feel that he had been blind to the miracle of that girl.

You were producing literature. You were alive. Your eyes were unlidded, your ears were unstopped, to some part of the beauty and the strangeness of the world; and a strong instinct within you forced you to tell someone. It was not enough for you that you saw and heard. Others had to see and hear. Others had to be wakened up. And they were! It is quite possible—I am not quite sure—that your faithful friend the very next day, or the next month, looked at some other girl, and suddenly saw that she, too, was miraculous! The influence of literature!

The makers of literature are those who have seen and felt the miraculous interestingness of the universe. And the greatest makers of literature are those whose vision has been the widest, and whose feeling been the most intense. Your own fragment of insight was accidental, and perhaps temporary. *Their* lives are one long ecstasy of denying that the world is a dull place. Is it nothing to you to learn to understand that the world is not a dull place? Is it nothing to you to be led out of the tunnel on to the hillside, to have all your senses quickened, to be invigorated by the true savour of life, to feel your heart beating under that correct necktie of yours? These makers of literature render you their equals.

The aim of literary study is not to amuse the hours of leisure; it is to awake oneself, it is to be alive, to intensify one's capacity for pleasure, for sympathy, and for comprehension. It is not to affect one hour, but twenty-four hours. It is to change utterly one's relations with the world. An understanding appreciation of literature means an understanding appreciation of the world, and it means nothing else. Not isolated and unconnected parts of life, but all of life, brought together and correlated in a synthetic map! The spirit of literature is unifying; it joins the candle and the star, and by the magic of an image shows that the beauty of the greater is in the less. And, not content with the disclosure of beauty and the bringing together of all things whatever within its focus, it enforces a moral wisdom by the tracing everywhere of cause and effect. It consoles doubly—by the revelation of unsuspected loveliness, and by the proof that our lot is the common lot. It is the supreme cry of the discoverer, offering sympathy and asking for it in a single gesture. In attending a University Extension Lecture on the sources of Shakespeare's plots or in studying the researches of George Saintsbury into the origins of English prosody, or in weighing the evidence for and against the assertion that Rousseau was a scoundrel, one is apt to forget what literature really is and is for. It is well to remind ourselves that literature is first and last a means of life, and that the enterprise

of forming one's literary taste is an enterprise of learning how best to use this means of life. People who don't want to live, people who would sooner hibernate than feel intensely, will be wise to eschew literature. They had better, to quote from the finest passage in a fine poem, "sit around and eat blackberries." The sight of a "common bush afire with God" might upset their nerves.

2. YOUR PARTICULAR CASE

The attitude of the average decent person towards the classics of his own tongue is one of distrust—I had almost said, of fear. I will not take the case of Shakespeare, for Shakespeare is "taught" in schools; that is to say, all authorities pedagogic bind themselves together in a determined effort to make every boy in the land a lifelong enemy of Shakespeare. (It is a mercy they don't "teach" Blake.) I will take, for an example, Sir Thomas Browne, as to whom the average person has no offensive juvenile memories. He is bound to have read somewhere that the style of Sir Thomas Browne is unsurpassed by anything in English literature. One day he sees the *Religio Medici* in a shop-window (or, rather, outside a shop-window, for he would hesitate about entering a bookshop) and he buys it, by way of a mild experiment. He does not expect to be enchanted by it; a profound instinct tells him that Sir Thomas Browne is "not in his line"; and in the result he is even less enchanted than he expected to be. He reads the introduction, and he glances at the first page or two of the work. He sees nothing but words. The work makes no appeal to him whatever. He is surrounded by trees, and cannot perceive the forest. He puts the book away. If Sir Thomas Browne is mentioned, he will say, "Yes, very fine!" with a feeling of pride that he has at any rate bought and inspected Sir Thomas Browne. Deep in his heart is a suspicion that people who get enthusiastic about Sir Thomas Browne are vain and conceited *poseurs*. After a year or so, when he has recovered from the discouragement caused by Sir Thomas Browne, he may, if he is young and hopeful, repeat the experiment with Congreve or Addison. Same sequel! And so on for perhaps a decade, until his commerce with the classics finally expires! That, magazines and newish fiction apart, is the literary history of the average decent person.

And even your case, though you are genuinely preoccupied with thoughts of literature, bears certain disturbing resemblances to the drab case of the average person. You do not approach the classics with gusto—anyhow, not with the same gusto as you would approach a new novel by a modern author who had taken your fancy. You never murmured to yourself, when reading Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* in bed. "Well, I really must read one more chapter before I go to sleep!" Speaking generally, the classics do not afford you a pleasure commensurate with their renown. You peruse them with a sense of duty, a sense of doing the right thing, a sense of "improving yourself," rather than with a sense of gladness. You do not smack your lips; you say: "That is good for me." You make little plans for reading, and then you invent excuses for breaking the plans. Something new, something which is not a classic, will surely draw you away from a classic. It is all very well for you to pretend to agree with the verdict of the elect that *Clarissa Harlowe* is one of the greatest novels in the world—a new Wodehouse, or even a new number of a magazine, will cause you to neglect *Clarissa Harlowe*, just as though Wodehouse, etc., could not be kept for a few days without turning sour! So that you have to ordain rules for yourself, as: "I will not read anything else until I have read Richardson, or Gibbon, for an hour each day." Thus proving that you regard a classic as a pill, the swallowing of which merits jam! And the more modern a classic is, the more it resembles the stuff of the year and the less it resembles the classics of the centuries, the more easy and enticing do you find that classic. Hence you are glad that George Eliot, the Brontës, Thackeray, are considered as classics, because you really *do* enjoy them. Your sentiments concerning them approach your sentiments concerning a "rattling good story" in a magazine.

I may have exaggerated—or, on the other hand, I may have understated—the unsatisfactory characteristics of your particular case, but it is probable that in the mirror I hold up you recognize the rough outlines of your likeness. You do not care to admit it; but it is so. You are not content with yourself. The desire to be more truly literary persists in you. You feel that there is something wrong in you, but you cannot put your finger on the spot. Further, you feel that you are a bit of a sham. Something within you continually forces you to exhibit for the classics an enthusiasm which you do not sincerely feel. You even try to persuade yourself that you are enjoying a book, when the next moment you drop it in the middle and forget to resume it. You occasionally buy classical works, and do not read them at all; you practically decide that it is enough to possess them, and that the mere possession of them gives you a *cachet*. The truth is, you are a sham. And your soul is a sea of uneasy remorse. You reflect: "According to what Matthew Arnold says, I ought to be perfectly mad about Wordsworth's *Prelude* And I am not. Why am I not? Have I got to be learned, in order to be perfectly mad about Wordsworth's *Prelude?* Or am I born without the faculty of pure taste in literature, despite my vague longings? I do wish I could smack my lips over Wordsworth's *Prelude* as I did over that splendid story by L. A. G. Strong, *The White Cottage*, in the *Grand Magazine*!" . . . Yes, I am convinced that in your dissatisfied, your diviner moments, you address yourself in these terms. I am convinced that I have diagnosed your symptoms.

Now the enterprise of forming one's literary taste is an agreeable one; if it is not agreeable it cannot succeed. But this does not imply that it is an easy or a brief one. The enterprise of beating Colonel Bogey at golf is an agreeable one, but it means honest and regular work. A fact to be borne in mind always! You are certainly not going to realize your ambition—and so great, so influential an ambition!—by spasmodic and half-hearted effort. You must begin by making up your mind adequately. You must rise to the height of the affair. You must approach a grand undertaking in the grand manner. You ought to mark the day in the calendar as a solemnity. Human nature is weak, and has need of tricky aids, even in the pursuit of happiness. Time will be necessary to you, and time regularly and sacredly set apart. Many people affirm that they cannot be regular, that regularity numbs them. I think this is true of a very few people, and that in the rest the objection to regularity is merely an attempt to excuse idleness. I am inclined to think that you personally are capable of regularity. And I am sure that if you firmly and constantly devote certain specific hours on certain specific days of the week to this business of forming your literary taste, you will arrive at the goal much sooner. The simple act of resolution will help you. This is the first preliminary.

The second preliminary is to surround yourself with books, to create for yourself a bookish atmosphere. The merely physical side of books is important—more important than it may seem to the inexperienced. Theoretically (save for works of reference), a student has need for but one book at a time. Theoretically, an amateur of literature might develop his taste by expending sixpence a week, or a penny a day, in one sixpenny edition of a classic after another sixpenny edition of a classic, and he might store his library in a hatbox or a biscuit-tin. But in practice he would have to be a monster of resolution to succeed in such conditions. The eye must be flattered; the hand must be flattered; the sense of owning must be flattered. Sacrifices must be made for the acquisition of literature. That which has cost a sacrifice is always endeared. A detailed scheme of buying books will come later, in the light of further knowledge. For the present, buy—buy whatever has received the *imprimatur* of critical authority. Buy without any immediate reference to what you will read. Buy! Surround yourself with volumes, as handsome as you can afford. And for reading, all that I will now particularly enjoin is a general and inclusive tasting, in order to attain a sort of familiarity with the look of

"literature in all its branches." A turning over of the pages of a volume of Chambers's *Cyclopaedia of English Literature,* the third for preference, may be suggested as an admirable and a diverting exercise. You might mark the authors that flash an appeal to you.

3. WHY A CLASSIC IS A CLASSIC

The large majority of our fellow-citizens care as much about literature as they care about archaeology or the programme of the Legislature. They do not ignore it, they are not quite indifferent to it. But their interest in it is faint and perfunctory; or, if their interest happens to be violent, it is spasmodic. Ask the two hundred thousand persons whose enthusiasm made the vogue of a popular novel ten years ago what they think of that novel now, and you will gather that they have utterly forgotten it, and that they would no more dream of reading it again than of reading Bishop Stubb's *Select Charters.* Probably if they did read it again they would not enjoy it—not because the said novel is a whit worse now that it was ten years ago; not because their taste has improved—but because they have not had sufficient practice to be able to rely on their taste as a means of permanent pleasure. They simply don't know from one day to the next what will please them.

In the face of this one may ask: Why does the great and universal fame of classical authors continue? The answer is that the fame of classical authors is entirely independent of the majority. Do you suppose that if the fame of Shakespeare depended on the man in the street it would survive a fortnight? The fame of classical authors is originally made, and it is maintained, by a passionate few. Even when a first-class author has enjoyed immense success during his lifetime, the majority have never appreciated him so sincerely as they have appreciated second-rate men. He has always been reinforced by the ardour of the passionate few. And in the case of an author who has emerged into glory after his death the happy sequel has been due solely to the obstinate perseverance of the few. They could not leave him alone; they would not. They kept on savouring him, and talking about him, and buying him, and they generally behaved with such eager zeal, and they were so authoritative and sure of themselves, that at last the majority grew accustomed to the sound of his name and placidly agreed to the proposition that he was a genius; the majority really did not care very much either way.

And it is by the passionate few that the renown of genius is kept alive from one generation to another. These few are always at work. They are always rediscovering genius. Their curiosity and enthusiasm are exhaustless, so that there is little chance of genius being ignored. And, moreover, they are always working either for or against the verdicts of the majority. The majority can make a reputation, but it is too careless to maintain it. If, by accident, the passionate few agree with the majority in a particular instance, they will frequently remind the majority that such and such a reputation has been made, and the majority will idly concur: "Ah, yes. By the way, we must not forget that such and such a reputation exists." Without that persistent memory-jogging the reputation would quickly fall into the oblivion which is death. The passionate few only have their way by reason of the fact that they are genuinely interested in literature, that literature matters to them. They conquer by their obstinacy alone, by their eternal repetition of the same statements. Do you suppose they could prove to the man in the street that Shakespeare was a great artist? The said man would not even understand the terms they employed. But when he is told ten thousand times, and generation after generation, that Shakespeare was a great artist, the said man believes—not by reason, but by faith. And he too repeats that Shakespeare was a great artist, and he buys the complete works of Shakespeare and puts them on his shelves, and he goes to see the marvellous stage-effects which accompany *King Lear* or *Hamlet,* and comes back religiously convinced that Shakespeare was a great artist. All because the passionate few could not keep their admiration of Shakespeare to themselves. This is not cynicism;

but truth. And it is important that those who wish to form their literary taste should grasp it.

What causes the passionate few to make such a fuss about literature? There can be only one reply. They find a keen and lasting pleasure in literature. They enjoy literature as some men enjoy beer. The recurrence of this pleasure naturally keeps their interest in literature very much alive. They are forever making new researches, forever practising on themselves. They learn to understand themselves. They learn to know what they want. Their taste becomes surer and surer as their experience lengthens. They do not enjoy to-day what will seem tedious to them to-morrow. When they find a book tedious, no amount of popular clatter will persuade them that it is pleasurable; and when they find it pleasurable no chill silence of the street-crowds will affect their conviction that the book is good and permanent. They have faith in themselves. What are the qualities in a book which give keen and lasting pleasure to the passionate few? This is a question so difficult that it has never yet been completely answered. You may talk lightly about truth, insight, knowledge, wisdom, humour, and beauty. But these comfortable words do not really carry you very far, for each of them has to be defined, especially the first and last. It is all very well for Keats in his airy manner to assert that beauty is truth, truth beauty, and that that is all he knows or needs to know. I, for one, need to know a lot more. And I shall never know. Nobody, not even Hazlitt nor Sainte-Beuve, has ever finally explained why he thought a book beautiful. I take the first fine lines that come to hand—

> The woods of Arcady are dead,
> And over is their antique joy—

and I say that those lines are beautiful, because they give me pleasure. But why? No answer! I only know that the passionate few will, broadly, agree with me in deriving this mysterious pleasure from those lines. I am only convinced that the liveliness of our pleasure in those and many other lines by the same author will ultimately cause the majority to believe, by faith, that W. B. Yeats is a genius. The one reassuring aspect of the literary affair is that the passionate few are passionate about the same things. A continuance of interest does, in actual practice, lead ultimately to the same judgments. There is only the difference in width of interest. Some of the passionate few lack catholicity, or, rather, the whole of their interest is confined to one narrow channel; they have none left over. These men help specially to vitalize the reputations of the narrower geniuses: such as Crashaw. But their active predilections never contradict the general verdict of the passionate few; rather they reinforce it.

A classic is a work which gives pleasure to the minority which is intensely and permanently interested in literature. It lives on because the minority, eager to renew the sensation of pleasure, is eternally curious and is therefore engaged in an eternal process of rediscovery. A classic does not survive for any ethical reason. It does not survive because it conforms to certain canons, or because neglect would not kill it. It survives because it is a source of pleasure, and because the passionate few can no more neglect it than a bee can neglect a flower. The passionate few do not read "the right things" because they are right. That is to put the cart before the horse. "The right things" are the right things solely because the passionate few *like* reading them. Hence—and I now arrive at my point—the one primary essential to literary taste is a hot interest in literature. If you have that, all the rest will come. It matters nothing that at present you fail to find pleasure in certain classics. The driving impulse of your interest will force you to acquire experience, and experience will teach you the use of the means of pleasure. You do not know the secret ways of yourself: that is all. A continuance of interest must inevitably bring you to the keenest joys. But, of course, experience may be acquired judiciously or injudiciously, just as Putney may be reached via Walham Green or via Moscow.

4. WHERE TO BEGIN

I wish particularly that my readers should not be intimidated by the apparent vastness and complexity of this enterprise of forming the literary taste. It is not so vast nor so complex as it looks. There is no need whatever for the inexperienced enthusiast to confuse and frighten himself with thoughts of "literature in all its branches." Experts and pedagogues (chiefly pedagogues) have, for the purpose of convenience split literature up into divisions and sub-divisions—such as prose and poetry; or imaginative, philosophic, historical; or elegiac, heroic, lyric; or religious and profane, etc., *ad infinitum*. But the greater truth is that literature is all one—and indivisible. The idea of the unity of literature should be well planted and fostered in the head. All literature is the expression of feeling, of passion, of emotion, caused by a sensation of the interestingness of life. What drives an historian to write history? Nothing but the overwhelming impression made upon him by the survey of past times. He is forced into an attempt to reconstitute the picture for others. If hitherto you have failed to perceive that an historian is a being in strong emotion, trying to convey his emotion to others, read the passage in the *Memoirs* of Gibbon, in which he describes how he finished the *Decline and Fall*. You will probably never again look upon the *Decline and Fall* as a "dry" work.

What applies to history applies to the other "dry" branches. Even Johnson's Dictionary is packed with emotion. Read the last paragraph of the preface to it: "In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed . . . It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe that if our language is not here fully displayed, I have only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed . . ." And so on to the close "I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wish to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds: I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having too little to fear or hope from censure or from praise." Yes, tranquillity; but not frigid! The whole passage, one of the finest in English prose, is marked by the heat of emotion. You may discover the same quality in such books as Spencer's *First Principles*. You may discover it everywhere in literature, from the cold fire of Pope's irony to the blasting temperatures of Swinburne. Literature does not begin till emotion has begun.

There is even no essential, definable difference between those two great branches, prose and poetry. For prose may have rhythm. All that can be said is that verse will scan, while prose will not. The difference is purely formal. Very few poets have succeeded in being so poetical as Isaiah, Sir Thomas Browne, and Ruskin have been in prose. It can only be stated that, as a rule, writers have shown an instinctive tendency to choose verse for the expression of the very highest emotion. The supreme literature is in verse, but the finest achievements in prose approach so nearly to the finest achievements in verse that it is ill work deciding between them. In the sense in which poetry is best understood, all literature is poetry—or is, at any rate, poetical in quality. Macaulay's ill-informed and unjust denunciations live because his genuine emotion made them into poetry, while his *Lays of Ancient Rome* are dead because they are not the expression of a genuine emotion. As the literary taste develops, this quality of emotion, restrained or loosed, will be more and more widely perceived at large in literature. It is the quality that must be looked for. It is the quality that unifies literature (and all the arts).

It is not merely useless, it is harmful, for you to map out literature into divisions and branches, with different laws, rules, or canons. The first thing is to obtain some possession of literature. When you have actually felt some of the emotion which great writers have striven to impart to you, and when your emotions become so numerous and puzzling that you feel the need of arranging them and calling them by names, then—and not before—you can begin to study what has been attempted in the way of classifying and ticketing literature. Manuals and treatises are excellent things in their kind, but they are simply dead weight at the start. You can

only acquire really useful general ideas by first acquiring particular ideas, and putting those particular ideas together. You cannot make bricks without straw. Do not worry about literature in the abstract, about theories as to literature. Get at it. Get hold of literature in the concrete as a dog gets hold of a bone. If you ask me where you ought to begin, I shall gaze at you as I might gaze at the faithful animal if he inquired which end of the bone he ought to attack. It doesn't matter in the slightest degree where you begin. Begin wherever the fancy takes you to begin. Literature is a whole.

There is only one restriction for you. You must begin with an acknowledged classic; you must eschew modern works. The reason for this does not imply any depreciation of the present age at the expense of past ages. Indeed, it is important, if you wish ultimately to have a wide, catholic taste, to guard against the too common assumption that nothing modern will stand comparison with the classics. In every age there have been people to sigh: "Ah, yes. Fifty years ago we had a few great writers. But they are all dead, and no young ones are arising to take their place." This attitude of mind is deplorable, if not silly, and is a certain proof of narrow taste. It is a surety that in 1959 gloomy and egregious persons will be saying: "Ah, yes. At the beginning of the century there were great poets like Swinburne, Meredith, Francis Thompson, and Yeats. Great novelists like Hardy and Conrad. Great historians like Stubbs and Maitland, etc. etc. But they are all dead now, and whom have we to take their place?" It is not until an age has receded into history, and all its mediocrity has dropped away from it, that we can see it as it is—as a group of men of genius. We forget the immense amount of twaddle that the great epochs produced. The total amount of fine literature created in a given period of time differs from epoch to epoch, but it does not differ much. And we may be perfectly sure that our own age will make a favourable impression upon that excellent judge, posterity. Therefore, beware of disparaging the present in your own mind. While temporarily ignoring it, dwell upon the idea that its chaff contains about as much wheat as any similar quantity of chaff has contained wheat.

The reason why you must avoid modern works at the beginning is simply that you are not in a position to choose among modern works. Nobody at all is quite in a position to choose with certainty among modern works. To sift the wheat from the chaff is a process that takes an exceedingly long time. Modern works have to pass before the bar of the taste of successive generations. Whereas, with classics, which have been through the ordeal, almost the reverse is the case. *Your taste has to pass before the bar of the classics.* That is the point. If you differ with a classic, it is you who are wrong, and not the book. If you differ with a modern work, you may be wrong or you may be right, but no judge is authoritative enough to decide. Your taste is unformed. It needs guidance, and it needs authoritative guidance. Into the business of forming literary taste faith enters. You probably will not specially care for a particular classic at first. If you did care for it at first, your taste, so far as that classic is concerned, would be formed, and our hypothesis is that your taste is not formed. How are you to arrive at the stage of caring for it? Chiefly, of course, by examining it and honestly trying to understand it. But this process is materially helped by an act of faith, by the frame of mind which says: "I know on the highest authority that this thing is fine, that it is capable of giving me pleasure. Hence I am determined to find pleasure in it." Believe me that faith counts enormously in the development of that wide taste which is the instrument of wide pleasures. But it must be faith founded on unassailable authority.

The Patron and the Crocus[1]

VIRGINIA WOOLF

YOUNG MEN and women beginning to write are generally given the plausible but utterly impracticable advice to write what they have to write as shortly as possible, as clearly as possible, and without other thought in their minds except to say exactly what is in them. Nobody ever adds on these occasions the one thing needful: "And be sure you choose your patron wisely," though that is the gist of the whole matter. For a book is always written for somebody to read, and, since the patron is not merely the paymaster, but also in a very subtle and insidious way the instigator and inspirer of what is written, it is of the utmost importance that he should be a desirable man.

But who, then, is the desirable man—the patron who will cajole the best out of the writer's brain and bring to birth the most varied and vigorous progeny of which he is capable? Different ages have answered the question differently. The Elizabethans, to speak roughly, chose the aristocracy to write for and the playhouse public. The eighteenth-century patron was a combination of coffee-house wit and Grub Street bookseller. In the nineteenth century the great writers wrote for the half-crown magazines and the leisured classes And looking back and applauding the splendid results of these different alliances, it all seems enviably simple, and plain as a pikestaff compared with our own predicament—for whom should we write? For the present supply of patrons is of unexampled and bewildering variety. There is the daily Press, the weekly Press, the monthly Press; the English public and the American public; the best-seller public and the worst-seller public; the high-brow public and the red-blood public; all now organised self-conscious entities, capable through their various mouthpieces of making their needs known and their approval or displeasure felt. Thus the writer who has been moved by the sight of the first crocus in Kensington Gardens has, before he sets pen to paper, to choose from a crowd of competitors the particular patron who suits him best. It is futile to say, "Dismiss them all, think only of your crocus," because writing is a method of communication; and the crocus is an imperfect crocus until it has been shared The first man or the last may write for himself alone, but he is an exception and an unenviable one at that, and the gulls are welcome to his works if the gulls can read them.

Granted, then, that every writer has some public or other at the end of his pen, the high-minded will say that it should be a submissive public, accepting obediently whatever he likes to give it. Plausible as the theory sounds, great risks are attached to it For in that case the writer remains conscious of his public, yet is superior to it—an uncomfortable and unfortunate combination, as the works of Samuel Butler, George Meredith, and Henry James may be taken to prove. Each despised the public; each desired a public; each failed to attain a public; and each wreaked his failure upon the public by a succession, gradually increasing in intensity, of angularities, obscurities, and affectations which no writer whose patron was his equal and friend would have thought it necessary to inflict. Their crocuses, in consequence, are tortured plants, beautiful and bright, but with something wry-necked about them, malformed, shrivelled on the one side, overblown on the other. A touch of the sun would have done them a world of good. Shall we then rush to the opposite extreme and accept (if in fancy alone) the flattering proposals which the editors of the *Times* and the *Daily News* may be supposed to make

[1] From *The Common Reader* by Virginia Woolf, copyright, 1925, by Harcourt Brace and Company, Inc., and used with their permission.

us—"Twenty pounds down for your crocus in precisely fifteen hundred words, which shall blossom upon every breakfast table from John o'Groats to the Land's End before nine o'clock to-morrow morning with the writer's name attached"?

But will one crocus be enough, and must it not be a very brilliant yellow to shine so far, to cost so much, and to have one's name attached to it? The Press is undoubtedly a great multiplier of crocuses. But if we look at some of these plants, we shall find that they are only very distantly related to the original little yellow or purple flower which pokes up through the grass in Kensington Gardens early in March every year. The newspaper crocus is an amazing but still a very different plant. It fills precisely the space allotted to it. It radiates a golden glow. It is genial, affable, warm-hearted. It is beautifully finished, too, for let nobody think that the art of "our dramatic critic" of the *Times* or of Mr. Lynd of the *Daily News* is an easy one. It is no despicable feat to start a million brains running at nine o'clock in the morning, to give two million eyes something bright and brisk and amusing to look at. But the night comes and these flowers fade. So little bits of glass lose their lustre if you take them out of the sea, great prima donnas howl like hyenas if you shut them up in telephone boxes; and the most brilliant of articles when removed from its element is dust and sand and the husks of straw. Journalism embalmed in a book is unreadable.

The patron we want, then, is one who will help us to preserve our flowers from decay. But as his qualities change from age to age, and it needs considerable integrity and conviction not to be dazzled by the pretensions or bamboozled by the persuasions of the competing crowd, this business of patron-finding is one of the tests and trials of authorship. To know whom to write for is to know how to write. Some of the modern patron's qualities are, however, fairly plain. The writer will require at this moment, it is obvious, a patron with the book-reading habit rather than the play-going habit. Nowadays, too, he must be instructed in the literature of other times and races. But there are other qualities which our special weaknesses and tendencies demand in him. There is the question of indecency, for instance, which plagues us and puzzles us much more than it did the Elizabethans. The twentieth-century patron must be immune from shock. He must distinguish infallibly between the little clod of manure which sticks to the crocus of necessity, and that which is plastered to it out of bravado. He must be a judge, too, of those social influences which inevitably play so large a part in modern literature, and able to say which matures and fortifies, which inhibits and makes sterile. Further, there is emotion for him to pronounce on, and in no department can he do more useful work than in bracing a writer against sentimentality on the one hand and a craven fear of expressing his feeling on the other. It is worse, he will say, and perhaps more common, to be afraid of feeling than to feel too much. He will add, perhaps, something about language, and point out how many words Shakespeare used and how much grammar Shakespeare violated, while we, though we keep our fingers so demurely to the black notes on the piano, have not appreciably improved upon *Antony and Cleopatra*. And if you can forget your sex altogether, he will say, so much the better; a writer has none. But all this is by the way —elementary and disputable. The patron's prime quality is something different, only to be expressed perhaps by the use of that convenient word which cloaks so much—atmosphere. It is necessary that the patron should shed and envelop the crocus in an atmosphere which makes it appear a plant of the very highest importance, so that to misrepresent it is the one outrage not to be forgiven this side of the grave. He must make us feel that a single crocus, if it be a real crocus, is enough for him; that he does not want to be lectured, elevated, instructed, or improved; that he is sorry that he bullied Carlyle into vociferation, Tennyson into idyllics, and Ruskin into insanity; that he is now ready to efface himself or assert himself as his writers require; that he is bound to them by a more than maternal tie; that they are twins indeed, one dying if the other dies,

one flourishing if the other flourishes; that the fate of literature depends upon their happy alliance—all of which proves, as we began by saying, that the choice of a patron is of the highest importance. But how to choose rightly? How to write well? Those are the questions.

Personal History of *Strange Fruit*[1]

LILLIAN SMITH

THERE ARE two forces in every reader that an author cannot long remain unaware of: a resistance to knowledge of self and a consuming curiosity about people. If, by reading a book, one can satisfy this curiosity about others without having to acquire in the process painful knowledge of one's self, pleasure ensues. The author will likely be pleased also, both by sales and comments, and his book will not be misunderstood, for there will be no need for misunderstanding. But should he tactlessly compel the reader to identify himself with a character or situation unflattering to self-esteem, then heaven help us! Whether it be a good book or a poor one, it has to be misunderstood, and the pasting of labels is inevitable.

There is, however, a third alternative. By happy chance, so delicate a balance may be achieved that knowledge of self rises no higher than one's toleration, and knowledge of others reaches no deeper than one's credulity. In which event, the reader may shout to the world that he has discovered a masterpiece. It is possible.

I wouldn't know. For as an author I have not experienced this artistic counterpart of the blessed state of repose between life and death of which Ferenczi writes with such eloquence. "Strange Fruit," somehow, did not turn out that way.

By even the most generous of white critics it was not treated as literature—not even as bad literature. The author's "purpose," they told the reader, was to better race relations, to uncover the "Negro problem"; hence, it was a problem novel. Why else would she have bothered to make of equal importance human beings of two colors, when one color is enough for any "real" novel! Unlike the lady on the library board of a North Carolina city, they did not write in and ask if her purpose was "noble." They assumed that it was. No matter how successful the characters, how interesting the story, how profound the insight, how subtle the imagination—or how otherwise—this "noble purpose" disqualified the author as artist, taking her amateur standing away from her.

The Negro reviewers were not so sure of the nobility of purpose. Some said if the author's purpose was noble, then why did she have Nonnie and Bess, graduates of a well-known college, cook in white folks' kitchens? "Because" (their answer was immediate) "the author is white and wants young Negro college graduates to work in white folks' kitchens; and probably also, she does not like Negro colleges." "Why," came the next question, "did the author let Bess, a college graduate, take off her shoes on a hot evening when her corns hurt?" "Because," came the answer, "Bess was Negro and should not, according to the white author's deep unconscious wishes, have had on shoes at all." The third question was always as follows: "Why did she let Tracy fall in love with a 'light' Negro?" "Because" (swelled the chorus), "the author scorns dark skin and thinks the lighter the skin, the better."

"No," other Negro reviewers said, "she doesn't think that. She wrote primarily about children and mothers; she was trying to break old stereotypes, black and white, and show the human beings beneath them." "But," cried the hearts of sensitive, edu-

[1] From *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Reprinted by permission of Lillian Smith.

cated Negroes, "we cannot bear to be shown as human beings in literature unless we are treated like human beings in culture." Which is fair enough.

Quickly, the lunatic fringe of the C.P. took up the chant, word having gone out apparently that the Negro is to be flattered and new stereotypes more pleasing must supersede old displeasing ones. Soon there appeared on the West Coast a pamphlet on the subject "*Strange Fruit* Attacks the Negro and Labor." And here and there in the East, columnists commented that "Strange Fruit" belittles the Negro and is unfair to labor. The most interesting were the "re-appraisals" —in certain journals—second reviews written by the original reviewer who had the squeamish job of taking back the favorable comments he had innocently and spontaneously made in his first review.

All this time, the lunatic fringe of the fascist groups and the White supremacy crowd (lunatic to the core) were writing editorials and reviews declaring that "Strange Fruit" advocates the mongrelizing of the white race. Gene Talmadge's paper described it as a story of a white girl in love with a Negro boy (the real story being too commonplace for hardened old rural Southerners) and defined it as a "literary corncob" (you may or may not know the varied uses to which the corncob is put in our South), and the once-edited-by-Mark-Ethridge *Macon Telegraph* repeated the corncob story on its editorial page. In the meantime, the *Southern Watchman* screamed in headlines that Alabama must not vote for Roosevelt because the author of "Strange Fruit" once wrote a piece in praise of our President.

Up North, the Boston banners, not to be outdone by Dixie demagogues, seized also upon sex, choosing as their battling stick a none-too-isolated word, in contrast to the Southerners' none-too-isolated situation.

In Washington the postal authorities banned—

But why go on? What does it add up to?

It may add up to no more than the notion that an author would do well not to subscribe to a clipping bureau!

Or it may mean that a lot of the characters in Maxwell, Georgia, have migrated to other parts of the country and react to S. F. exactly as one would expect them to do at home.

It may mean, also, that Boston banners and Dixie demagogues are always right, but for the wrong reasons. Boston banners and White supremacists felt endangered by the core of the book. The analysis of family life, childhood fantasies, opened too many doors in their memories. Feeling threatened, each chose a symbol by which to express this fear. Boston, eroticizing its literacy, chose a "word"; Dixie, eroticizing its blood stream, chose a situation. Each rationalized its fear consciously by projecting it on "race"—Boston in whispers, Dixie with rebel yells—as the white man has been doing for three centuries. And each betrayed his real fear by the choice of his symbol, as men have done since the beginning of time.

Or it may mean that this book cannot easily harmonize the conflicting forces in readers. It is obviously difficult for the reader (black or white) to forget his skin color long enough to identify with the common humanity of black and white characters. Some do, and close the book, stripped of their color—only to find themselves back in a world where color is a garment custom decrees that everyone must wear.

During all this time, thousands of letters were coming into Clayton saying things quite different from what appeared in the papers—suggesting a deep underground current of human warmth that few of us are aware of.

Among the good letters there naturally are others, the prize one being this brief note: "I have read your book. But since you did not write a preface to it, I do not know what it is about." After reading newspaper clippings for a year, there are times when I am not too sure that I know, either.

But it began, I think, like this:

When I was a little girl I lived in Maxwell, a town more easily found in your own childhood than on any road map. I lived on College Street in a big rambling house set under oak trees, the kind of house that catches memories like dust. . . . Rimming

the town, a great shadow behind Maxwell, were the shanties of colored folk, and in the north of town were the mills of which my father was owner: white mill town, colored mill town, little white church, little colored church—and one big commissary for all. Across the street from my home was a big white church and out near the graveyard was the unpainted half-tumbled-down church where colored folks worshipped. When I was little, I was rocked to sleep by an old colored nurse who eased the pain of the coming of a new baby in the household by a singing of songs that swept across bruised feelings in warm, soothing waves of sound. When I was older—though still a child—and lay in my bed at night, I listened to the same songs which came now, not from my old nurse, but from the little unpainted church, backwashing across town, filling the heart with a great burden, making me cry, though I did not know why I was crying. It was then, perhaps, that I first began to feel an invisible wall between human beings, between white folks and colored folks in Maxwell, yes; but also between a child and the people she loves. It did not seem like a strange wall—for nothing seems strange to a child because everything is so strange—but it was there, and I knew it was easy to hurt one's self against it. It was not until many years later that I heard the word "segregation," but I understood it long before I could say its syllables. I knew, and have never forgotten, that segregation has something to do with white and black people—as everyone in America knows—but it has to do also with childhood, and with mothers and their children, and it has to do with the heart's deepest fears and the child's earliest dreams.

I left Maxwell. And for a long time I did not want to go back there. Instead I traveled a good portion of the earth's surface, and I read a good portion of what wise men had written, and I learned quite a few big words and for a time was impressed with my learning, until I discovered that too often a word is only a mask to cover up the real meaning of life. Peeling off masks was a full time job for a while. . . . In the process, I learned to be unimpressed by the phrase "Negro problem"; and "race conflict" began to seem to me an euphonious term for a painful and profound struggle that was tearing the breast of the white man; and "Jim Crow" was only a devil mask for elaborate ceremonials by which the troubled white man tried to wall himself off from "infection." That he called this "infection" the "Negro problem" did not mean that the Negro had caused it. It meant only that the Negro was a handy thing on which to project it. We do not need the word "paranoid" to give us understanding of a habit of mankind so common as this of thrusting out upon an external object his internal feelings. But it is not an irrelevant word.

To understand what is troubling the white race so deeply that a great part of its culture is devoted to walling away this trouble, one might have to take a long journey that would lead down interesting by-paths. We might have to look long and hard at certain road signs: at Calvinism, monogamy, at the Western small family, at the high esteem Nordic culture puts on "sex purity" which in practice becomes autoeroticism instead of mature genitality. We might have to look also at the Protestant God-the-Father image in contrast to the Catholic Mary-Mother-of-Christ, and we might need to travel to countries where love and mature sex life are honorable and race prejudice is dishonorable, for there may be a close connection between the two—a far closer connection than between poverty and race prejudice. I think, along the way, we would discover that over-esteem of one's skin color, whether in individuals or in masses of men, is a regressive narcism, a symptom of psychosexual maladjustment that involves sex, religion, family life, and yes, money also. We might have to look at the whole of white culture and travel backward in time far beyond that date when the first Negro was enslaved by the first white Christian.

After many years of "traveling," I was ready to go back to Maxwell. And I wrote down in "Strange Fruit" what I found there. I thought of my book as a fable about a son in search of a mother, about a race in search

of surcease from pain and guilt—both finding what they sought in death and destruction.

So when people ask "Is 'Strange Fruit' a race book; is it about the Negro problem?" I say, "I don't think so." For it seems to me a book about human beings journeying across deep chasms, and down into forbidding areas, but journeying also back to childhood, always back to the room where they were born, seeking to find, wherever they travel, that which they left there, so long ago.

Boston Mobs *Strange Fruit*[1]

BERNARD DEVOTO

LET ME summarize some ideas about the South which we tend to believe in Boston. We understand that the South is culturally backward. We know that many Southerners are well-bred, well-educated people—cosmopolitan, of liberal minds, tolerant, interested in ideas, cultivated in the arts and occasionally adept at them. We think of them, however, as a minority which is made impotent by the surrounding illiteracy, ignorance, and prejudice, and by a social myth which looks back to a romanticized, unreal past and has kept the Southern mind from adjusting to the modern world. We understand that educational standards in the South are low and though we concede that this is due in part to poverty we believe that it is also due to traditions which set no great value on education. Moreover, a primitive form of Christianity, economic discrimination against Negroes, economic medievalism, fear of miscegenation, and a defensive psychology which goes back to defeat in the Civil War and back of that to the necessity of defending slavery—such additional matters, we tolerantly realize, have helped to make the Southerner bigoted, emotional, and reactionary. His prejudices are violent, his defensiveness makes him aggressive, he cannot permit the objective discussion of ideas that is one of the marks of a civilized man, he settles all questions by force.

We do not, in Boston, expect much from Southern civilization, and especially we do not expect liberality. We have, for instance, been trying to solve the Negro problem for well over a century and for well over a century what has prevented us from solving it is Southern prejudice, Southern passion, and Southern intolerance. Naturally we do not expect much devotion to the arts down South. Liberal thinking and artistic thinking require a kind of cultural leadership which the South lacks. We realize that even cultivated Southerners are too indelibly stained with the prejudices of the section to provide that kind of leadership. It follows that we do not expect a mature literature from the South. The soil is unfavorable, and even if one should germinate in it, Southern intolerance would stamp it out.

A Southern woman has lately published a novel about the South. It is both a courageous novel and a good one, serious, mature, wise, excellently written. It may be something of a landmark, but all these facts are irrelevant. It contains some words which were certain to arouse the bigotry of the South's primitive backwoods religion. Worse still, its theme is the most inflammatory of all themes down South, miscegenation. That is a topic on which no Southerner can hold an objective opinion. It strikes home to his deepest fears and taboos, he cannot tolerate any discussion of it, he cannot permit anyone to express an opinion about it. It was easy enough to predict that this novel, Miss Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit*, would be suppressed by a culturally backward society, illegally but with complete social assent, in

[1] From *Harpers Magazine*, May, 1944, "The Easy Chair." Reprinted by permission of Bernard de Voto.

the distorted violence and prejudice which animate such a society. And that in fact has occurred.

It has not occurred, however, exactly as predicted. *Strange Fruit* is being sold freely in for example Atlanta and Birmingham, as freely as in more advanced cultures like Oshkosh, Davenport, and Three Rivers. It is being sold just as freely in those ominous little Southern towns which we Bostonians recognize as socially sick and from which we fear an American fascism may emerge sometime. It is being discussed intelligently, temperately, and frequently with high praise in the Southern press which we have learned to regard as one of the most dangerous bulwarks of Southern prejudice. The mobbing of *Strange Fruit* did not take place down South. It took place in Boston.

That reversal may momentarily disconcert outlanders who do not understand Boston, and I feel that a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires me to explain my home town.

To begin with, you must understand that the suppression was in fact a mobbing. It occurred, that is, outside the law—so far outside that both the official and the unofficial suppressors are announcing that no suppression has occurred. As yet—I send this to the press on March 25th—the book has not been subjected to review by any official board or any socially accountable officer whomsoever. The truth is, we learned better than that long ago. There was a time when the police used to proceed against books which they thought Bostonians ought not to read. We did not object to the assumption of such authority by the police but we found that their exercise of it exposed us to ridicule, to the ridicule of even backward cultures. Furthermore it proved profitable to publishers. They inserted "Banned in Boston" in their advertising and readers soon came to understand that if Boston suppressed a book, that book was a serious treatment of an important subject by a writer of considerable skill—for exceedingly few books of any other kind were ever suppressed here. So we resorted to an ingenious expedient.

Many of us in Boston are Republicans and many more are anti-New Deal Democrats. As such we realize that one of the most dangerous threats to our institutions is government by fiat. Executive commissions and similar agencies which are not restrained by statutory law and are not accountable to elected representatives of the people, we have proclaimed, are despotic, essentially totalitarian, and incompatible with democracy. We believe in a government of laws, not men. With that principle in mind we have set up a committee of the Board of Trade of Boston Book Merchants. Whenever that committee thinks that a book may be prosecuted by the police, it notifies the booksellers that that book has been withdrawn from sale—withdrawn, that is, by the stores represented on the committee. That notification suffices. No Boston bookseller sells that book, knowing that if the police should prosecute him the Board of Trade would not come to his defense. (He is perfectly free to do what he likes, the head of the committee explained to me, but the committee has done its part.) Everyone is happy. The affair has been conducted in complete privacy, free alike of official dictation and social control. There has been no official censorship, no one has received any objectionable publicity, the police are tranquil and the booksellers safe, and if any freedom of any Bostonian or any author has been infringed, Boston does not give a damn.

Next you must realize that literature is not important in Boston. It has been seventy-five years since there was any general respect for literature hereabout and fully fifty years since there was any general interest in it. Books which make a lot of money are respected, of course, and it remains possible for a writer to be respected and even admired if he achieves eminence as a fisherman or a skier, if he makes money on the stock market, or if his collection of porcelains or even his love affairs create newspaper publicity, which is fully appreciated in Boston. But it is inconceivable that literature could be made a public issue here. There was a time when men like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry Thoreau could summon public opinion to the defense of such obscenity as

Whitman's *Leaves of Grass,* but that was many years ago.

Again, you must understand that *Strange Fruit* was not mobbed because of its inflammatory theme. It is true that racial tensions are increasing in Boston, as I shall report in a later Easy Chair, but we are extremely tolerant about discussions of the Negro problem at a distance. In holding this attitude we are living up to our traditions. The typical Boston reformer was a factory owner who felt deeply about slavery in Georgia, as Thoreau said, or a corporation lawyer who longed to bestow economic justice on the Filipinos, as Thoreau would have said if he had lived long enough. The cause of this suppression was not at all the theme of the book, miscegenation, it was sex. It was in fact three lines of sexual phraseology. The head of the booksellers' committee has told me that he assured the publisher that the book could be sold in Boston if the author would make deletions amounting to no more than three lines. (I asked him if he did not consider it an insult to me as a writer, a buyer of books, and a citizen of Massachusetts. He said no.)

Here it must be made clear that Boston is not uninterested in sex, afraid of sex, or opposed to the portrayal, representation, or exploitation of sex. All we have ever objected to is an honest, decent, or artistic treatment of sex. In the name of righteousness and for our taste's sake we insist that sex be treated with a leer and a snigger. Pornography circulates as freely in Boston as in any other city, as any casual visitor may determine. Boston is a town where strip-teasers flourish but the ballet must wear tights, where sexual and homosexual humor in night clubs is immune from prosecution provided only that it is kept vulgar enough, but three frank lines will get a novel lynched provided only that it is a decent and serious novel. Burlesque shows do a rousing business and we are the best town on the road for revues, but *Strange Interlude* cannot play here at all. You may freely patronize any kind of pornography in Boston, but the local standards of taste and morality, which the booksellers' committee accurately translates, will see to it that you cannot buy distinguished books which treat sex seriously. The much-repeated allegation that we are over-squeamish about indecency is a libel: we object only to decency.

True, Massachusetts has an anti-obscenity statute rather more idiotic than most such laws. Right here one is supposed to stop talking out loud and to whisper, as several who say they have been outraged by this latest suppression have whispered to me, that nothing can be done to attack that statute because it is supported by the Catholic Church. Protestant Bostonians tend to speak about the Catholic Church in whispers and one of them lately put it to me this way, "The cops run straight to the Cardinal." As one reared in and shaped by the Catholic Church, I deny both the statement and the implication. Both are a comforting alibi for Bostonians; they enable the timorous to excuse themselves from taking action. Certainly, though the Catholic Church has not officially backed the statute and though a very great many Catholics are opposed to it, certainly it has Catholic support. Also it has the support of the Watch and Ward Society (yes, that really is its name), which is Protestant, and of several queer remnants of Puritan heresies—Puritanism was never to my knowledge Catholic. Even an alliance between Catholic bigotry and Protestant bigotry, however, could not have put this statute on the books and enforced it (as the experience of New York, for one instance, shows) if that alliance were not supported by still a third group. Actually it is made effective by a third group, the well-born, the rich, the cultivated, the heirs of the old ruling class, from whom social and cultural leadership would normally be expected. It is made effective because this group—generalize them as the Harvard alumni—will not accept social responsibility or exercise leadership.

For many years Boston has been unable to buy good books legally because this group has refused to act—from indifference, the profit motive, or simple cowardice. These people do not believe in suppression or approve of the anti-obscenity statute, they

denounce it in private, they know that the situation is ridiculous and dangerous, but they will do nothing about it. Why? Well, literature is not important in the Boston culture and neither are civil rights. Not important enough, certainly, to make a fight for them. Boston will not defend a writer in the exercise of his freedom. And if either a bigot or a committee which has no legal status chooses to infringe Boston's own freedoms, that is perfectly all right with Boston.

You may suggest that a determined stand by anyone, even a bookseller, would certainly overturn the statute and restore literature to a respectable status in Boston and Boston to a decent respect in the opinions of mankind. That is true. The Society for the Suppression of Vice, for instance, can no longer successfully attack a decent book in New York—it no longer even tries to. The fight for freedom of expression in literature has been won everywhere except in Boston because it has been made everywhere except in Boston. You may think that the mere existence and still more the public toleration of a socially uncontrolled and irresponsible body like the booksellers' committee—which deprives both writers and readers of a basic freedom without any process of law whatever—you may think that its existence and public toleration are considerably more important than an absurd law or the suppression of a few books. You fail to understand how repugnant that idea is to the committee. It sees its motives as pure beyond expression and is proud of the fact that its activities assure every Boston bookseller who acts on its warnings that he will never go to jail, at least not for obscenity. It cannot see that any other issue is involved. And you must understand that it accurately expresses Boston's point of view. Boston does not mind being under the subjection of bigotry and it sees no reason to make a fight against either intolerance or the infringement of personal liberty.

You may keep coming back to that self-evident fact, after thinking over the history of censorship in Boston. You may end by deciding that there probably is in Boston a minority of liberal, tolerant people who are interested in ideas, cultivated in the arts, and occasionally adept at them. But that minority, you may decide, appears to be made impotent either by an absurd social myth which looks backward to an unreal past or by the ignorance and prejudices of the society that surrounds it. For the Bostonian, you observe, has violent prejudices, they make him aggressive, he will not permit the objective, detached discussion of ideas that is one of the marks of a civilized man. Boston, you may decide, must be backward culture.

It seems possible that the mobbing in Boston of one more serious, decent novel may suggest such conclusions to you. This sort of suppression is routine in Boston, it happens every once in a while, and you are forced to make two observations about it. The suppression is not even legal, and it is done with complete public assent—with only the most scattered and perfunctory protest. Not only a backward culture, you may think, but something else as well. For in this comfortable acceptance of the intolerable, beginning moreover in the area of civil rights where early decay is always significant. you catch a whiff of something sick and dangerous.

Farewell to Arms, A Review[1]

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

WHEN MR. HEMINGWAY dawned upon his native land with "The Sun Also Rises" he was received with mingled praise and doubt. His skill as a story-teller was evident, his dialogue was superb, he had that gift of creating a vivid reality which makes any

[1] From *The Saturday Review of Literature,* October 12, 1929, reprinted by permission.

suit trumps for a novelist, but his subject matter troubled the serious minded. So much art seemed wasted upon the lovable but futile revellers who ran from cocktail to cocktail up and down France, self-tortured, but flippant, as unmoral as monkeys yet pathetically appealing for sympathy in their mental woes (which were usually aggravated by a headache).

Since then we have had many short stories and this full-length novel, and now his scope and purpose become clearer. Those restless, witty youngsters of "The Sun Also Rises," charming even when drunk, were not trying to escape from life so much as from the anarchic whirl of their own minds. They were war neuroses, the electrons of a youthful generation dislodged by the rays of conflict and bombarding through the ether. Whether good physics or not, the comparison is instructive, for an electron, never still, meaning nothing except as a symbol, never all at one place at one time, is an exact similitude of the nervous wanderers from bar to bar and *plage* to bull ring.

The physical disturbance has subsided since "The Sun Also Rises." In "Farewell to Arms," war is confessedly the disintegrant, but the hero has found meaning in existence again. While the futile Italian army beats in vain against the white Austrian peaks, and the war sickens, and there is no more sense in valor or loyalty and only kindliness and good humor left in the world; when the fugitives crowd down from Caparetto, and honest men are shot as traitors, and the best soldiers want only to go home; then the trifling amour between an American lieutenant in the Italian service and an English nurse, which is the opening theme of this novel, intensifies to a love which is something to grip the imagination and risk life for. Human particle uniting to human particle turns accident into substance again. And in place of the know-nothingness of his earlier philosophy, Hemingway gives us a youth who hates fate because it attacks "the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too, but there will be no special hurry." He stands up against fate and defies it and makes of his love tragedy an experience to hold fast to in the midst of a general debacle. We have passed from the anarchic to the stoic view of things. Youth that stuck out its tongue at the world is playing the game. This is not reversal, it is only development.

I do not think that this attempted philosophic analysis is taking Hemingway too seriously. You cannot take too seriously a novel of such vivid reality as "Farewell to Arms," nor an observer and auditor of such uncanny powers. Hundreds of writers have told the story . . . weariness of routine . . . a casual love affair . . . an obsession with loving . . . the subtle change from mistress to wife (Henry never actually marries Catherine, but that is irrelevant) . . . tragedy impending upon too much happiness . . . the poignant end. But it is not the plot that counts, it is the circumstance and the complete realization of the characters. In this book you get your own times in typical essence to wonder about the interpret.

Yet I do not believe that Hemingway's strength lies in character creation. His Catherine and his Henry have nothing strange or novel in their personalities. Catherine is a fine girl who needs a lover. Henry is an individualist who acts by instinct rationalized, not by principle, and makes his friends love him. Hemingway's art is to make such not unfamiliar characters articulate when he finds them. His minor people, like the pagan and affectionate Rinaldi, or old Count Greffi, playing billiards and discoursing wisdom at 94, are more original than his protagonists. It isn't *what* they are, it is *how* they are that seems important, and of course that is a true principle in art. Anyone can outline a psychology, but how many can give you, whole and self-interpreting, just a darky crossing the road, or a man nursing his first wound!

Hemingway works almost entirely through a simple record of incident and dialogue which he stretches to include meditation in the rhythm of thought. It is a fine art. He plays upon a principle which Robert Frost stated years ago, that every speaker has his own style and rhythm, unmistakable as his finger prints, and adds a discovery in which

Gertrude Stein (who carries it into absurdity) helps him, that the recurrent rhythms of thought carry word repetitions with them, so that both dialogue and meditation can be charged with so much personality that further description is unnecessary.

"I'm going to have a baby, darling. It's almost three months along. You're not worried, are you? Please, please don't. Your mustn't worry."

"All right."

"Is it all right?"

"Of course."

"I did everything. I took everything but it didn't make any difference."

"I'm not worried."

"I couldn't help it, darling, and I haven't worried about it. You mustn't worry or feel badly."

"I only worry about you."

"That's it. That's what you mustn't do. People have babies all the time. Everybody has babies. It's the natural thing."

"You're pretty wonderful."

"No I'm not. But you musn't mind, darling. I'll try and not make trouble for you. I know I've made trouble now. But haven't I been a good girl until now? You never knew it, did you?"

"No."

"It will all be like that. You simply mustn't worry. I can see you're worrying. Stop it. Stop it right away. Wouldn't you like a drink, darling? I know a drink always makes you feel cheerful."

"No. I feel cheerful And you're pretty wonderful." . . .

We were quiet awhile and did not talk. Catherine was sitting on the bed and I was looking at her but we did not touch each other. We were apart as when one comes into a room and people are self-conscious. She put out her hand and took mine.

"You aren't angry are you, darling?"

"No."

"And you don't feel trapped?"

"Maybe a little. But not by you."

"I didn't mean by me. You mustn't be stupid. I meant trapped at all."

"You always feel trapped biologically." She went away a long way without stirring or removing her hand.

" 'Always' isn't a pretty word."

"I'm sorry."

"It's all right. But you see I've never had a baby and I've never even loved any one. And I've tried to be the way you wanted and then you talk about 'always.' "

"I could cut off my tongue," I offered.

"Oh, darling!" she came back from wherever she had been. "You mustn't mind me." We were both together again and the self-consciousness was gone. "We really are the same one, and we mustn't misunderstand on purpose. . . . Because there's only us two and in the world there's all the rest of them. If anything comes between us we're gone and then they have us."

"They won't get us," I said. "Because you're too brave. Nothing ever happens to the brave. . . . You're brave."

"No," she said. "But I would like to be."

Nothing more is needed than just this for a story. Of course there are other ways. Dialogue can be conventionalized (like Elinor Wylie's) and then it is the ideas set in their own personal rhythm which give the effect of life. Or it can be made realistic as when taken out of a note-book record, and this, if the worst way, is sometimes effective. But Hemingway is seeking voice rhythms and voice contrasts. It is the way these people talk not what they say that lifts the scene into reality.

I see that he is being criticized for writing in English that teachers of writing would despair of because of its devastations of grammar and syntax. If the teachers despair, they are ignorant. Few experimenters are always successful, and when he does go really wrong, which is seldom, it is because in the attempt to make his English more expressive he overstrains an instrument which, at its best, is crude.

Lying on the floor of the flat-car with the guns beside me under the canvas I was wet, cold and very hungry. . . . I could remember Catherine but I knew I would get crazy if I thought about her when I was not sure yet I would see her. . . . Hard as the floor of the car to lie not thinking only feeling, having been away too long, the clothes wet and the floor moving only a little each time and lonesome inside and alone with wet clothing and hard floor for a wife.

The rhythm of this last sentence is lovely, its success complete except just for an item of wilfulness which stopped him short in the last labor necessary to reconcile rhythm and sense.

> "I stay too long and talk too much." He was worried that he really did.

This is just sloppy English.

> Sometimes still pleasant and fond and warm and breakfast and lunch. Sometimes all niceness gone and glad to get out on the street but always another day starting and then another night and the difference between the night and the day and how the night was better unless the day was very clear and cold and I could not tell it; as I cannot tell it now.

This (in its context) is for all its looseness an admirable rendering of half articulate thought Hemingway knows what he is about. Let his imitators beware lest they copy him, twisting syntax, not as he does to fit necessity, but out of bravado and freakishness. English is a great language, which makes rules for textbooks, and its genius is to become more expressive not more correct.

I am sorry to have written so technically of such a human book, and yet cannot keep off this aspect where the author so loves his story that he makes a new style to get out all that he feels in it. It is not all style. There is a focussing of incident in the retreat from Caparetto, in the escape by night of the two on Lake Maggiore, and in the superb scene of childbirth that belongs to the great art of story-telling in general and would be admirable even if written in the straightforward method of the "Arabian Nights." But the vividness is from style.

"Farewell to Arms" is an erotic story, shocking to the cold, disturbing to the conventional who do not like to see mere impersonal amorousness lifted into a deep, fierce love, involving the best in both man and woman, without changing its dependence upon the senses, or trafficking with social responsibility. It deals with life where the blood is running and the spirit active —that is enough for me. As for Hemingway's frankness of language, to object to it would be priggish. There is no decadence here, no overemphasis on the sexual as a philosophy. Rather, this book belongs with those studies of conjugal love which just now are interesting the French. If you set out to write of the love life of a man and his wife when that love life is central in their experience, why that love life is what you write about and frankness belongs to the theme.

A good Victorian, I think, would have admired the frankness of this book, and also its style, but might have felt it to be narrow to the point of triviality in its concentration. Our most skilful writers today are more interested in vivid snap shots than in cosmologies. They prefer carved peach stones to panoramas. I prefer either myself to the dull tales of "cases" so much admired a few years ago, in which fiction began to look like sociology. Hemingway does lack scope. He is attracted by the vivid, and doesn't care what is vivid so that he gets it right. It's a better way to begin than the opposite method of biographing the universe as one sees it and calling that a novel. Nevertheless, his eroticism will deserve a less specific name when he has learned how to do it (I think he has learned) and begins to use it as a factor in synthesis. Not that "Farewell to Arms" is a "youthful," an "experimental" novel. It is absolutely done; and, even cosmically speaking, the flow of great social resolutions down and away from battle in the Alps to disillusion in the plains until all that is left of emotion is canalized into the purely personal business of love—that is a big enough theme for any novel. It is only that his stories seem to lack experience beyond the baffled, the desperate, the indifferent, the defiant so far. Which means, I suppose, that he is wise not to have written in that penetrative way of his about what has not yet engaged the imagination of his generation. In fiction, he is worthy to be their leader.

A Drama in Verse[1]

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

AT *Winterset* (Martin Beck Theater) the curtain rises on a stage of somber but breathtaking beauty. To the right the huge concrete pier of a bridge lifts itself sheer into the darkness above, and to the left a sullen block of tenements balances the opposing mass. In the remote gloom of these lower depths the solid foundation of the proud bridge equates itself with the dismal despair of the tenements, and the fact adds meaning to the pure plastic beauty of the forms. Physically and spiritually the foundations upon which the city rests are seen from the perspective of those who crawl about their bases, and it is not often that the creative possibilities of stage design have been so convincingly demonstrated.

During the three or four seconds which immediately succeeded the rising of the curtain, many spectators must have had time to reflect that if Maxwell Anderson's play could live up to the promise of Jo Mielziner's set it would win for itself a very high place in our dramatic literature. Long before the final curtain went down, the audience had divided itself into two camps, and I have no doubt that critical opinions on this play will be as fiercely irreconcilable as they were last year during the discussion of Mr. O'Casey's *Within the Gates*. Then I was among those who turned thumbs down, and in recent years I have also been among those who found in Mr. Anderson's romantic historical dramas something pretentiously literary. But in the present case I have no desire to hedge. *Winterset* seems to me bold, original, and engrossing. In its most general aspect the play might be described as an attempt to treat some of the material of contemporary life in a manner more richly imaginative than the method of realism permits. Thus, while the time is the present and the plot one which might serve for a tragic melodrama, the whole emphasis of the treatment is such as to stress the eternal rather than the local aspects of the passions involved and to lay the emphasis less upon the action itself than upon its reverberations in the souls.

Long before the play begins, a radical agitator (vaguely reminiscent of Vanzetti) has been railroaded to death by a court which shared the popular determination to fix the guilt of murder upon a man whom it had other reasons to hate. More recently, a college professor, reopening the case, has pointed the finger of suspicion at a gangster just released from prison, and thus a ghost has been raised to plague those who had had a part in the now almost forgotten events. The key to the mystery is held by a young witness lost in the obscurity of the lower depths, and upon him converge all those most deeply concerned—the actual murderer, determined at all cost to prevent the truth from coming to light, the outcast son of the man who paid the penalty for the crime he did not commit, and, finally, the presiding judge, now driven out of his wits by the unsuccessful effort to convince himself that he had done only what duty compelled him to do. Obviously there is in all this no lack of exciting action or of opportunities for direct socio-political argument. But both are subordinated as they would be in a classic tragedy to a brooding and poetic treatment of the themes which the action suggests—namely, the nature of guilt and of justice and the meaning of revenge.

Much of the dialogue is cast in the form of blank verse, and the fact is of course significant chiefly for what it implies. It means that the author, in claiming the right to make his characters speak more pointedly and more richly than ordinary people do, claims at the same time the right to make

[1] From *The Nation*, October 9, 1935. Reprinted by permission.

them think and feel more richly too. It means that even the lowest of his characters is, like the characters in Shakespeare, permitted to be both a poet and a philosopher, limited in certain ways no doubt by the limitations of his soul, but by virtue of poetic and philosophical gifts, capable of defining and expressing that soul with the clarity and intensity of the poet and the philosopher. It means, in other words, that the play is at least capable of being more interesting than any other kind of play just because only poets and philosophers are capable of realizing and feeling to its full depth the meaning of the experiences through which they pass.

Mr. Anderson's play immediately suggests comparison with two—and only two—other recent plays, *Within the Gates* and Robert Sherwood's *The Petrified Forest*. In a very general way both aimed at something of the same sort, but neither is precisely comparable since Mr. Sherwood kept considerably closer to realistic melodrama while Mr. O'Casey, abandoning representation entirely, wrote exclusively in terms of symbolism. More significant, perhaps, would be a comparison between *Winterset* and Mr. Anderson's previous play *Gods of the Lightning*, which dealt specifically and in the mood of direct social protest with the Sacco-Vanzetti case. Doubtless many will argue that the former was the better or at least the more "useful" play, but to me the contention would seem to indicate a fantastic misconception of the whole nature of literature and drama. Probably *Winterset* would never have been written if Mr. Anderson had not concerned himself with the famous case. But if the earlier play represents the immediate reaction of the citizen, *Winterset* is the product of a poet's brooding. It represents no change of opinion; the social protest is still here if one cares to look for it. But here also is that deeper penetration into thoughts and passions and souls which it is the dramatist's business to achieve. In the production two performances are outstanding: Burgess Meredith, as the son, is both fiery and ingratiatingly youthful; Richard Bennet, as the judge, is both brilliant and subtle.

Willa Cather's Novels of the Frontier: A Study in Thematic Symbolism[1]

EDWARD A. BLOOM AND LILLIAN D. BLOOM

I

THERE IS LITTLE critical dispute today over Willa Cather's position as a first-rate American novelist.[2] Despite this agreement, few other contemporary novelists have been so consistently damned by faint praise; nor have many other novelists been so consistently evaluated by means of a single fixed interpretation of the author's purpose. Because of at least two important factors, a novel may convey and absorb a variety of meanings: the most essential quotient is the author's skill in the manipulation of his creative framework; another is the reader's experience, for each brings to the work he is reading his own power of intellect, intensity of feeling, and weight of experience. Miss Cather's specialized readers have been many, among them Clifton Fadiman, Lionel Trill-

[1] Reprinted from *American Literature*, Vol. 21, No. 1, March, 1949, by permission.

[2] Each of the novels examined in this study is in whole or in part directly related to Miss Cather's idea of the frontier. For permission to quote from the works of Willa Cather, we wish to acknowledge our indebtedness to the following publishers: to Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, for permission to quote from *O Pioneers!* (1913), *The Song of the Lark* (1915), *My Ántonia* (1918); to Alfred A. Knopf, New York, for permission to quote from *One of Ours* (1922), *A Lost Lady* (1923), *The Professor's House* (1925), *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927), *Shadows on the Rock* (1931), *Not Under Forty* (1936).

ing, Louis Kronenberger, Alfred Kazin, Maxwell Geismar, Percy H. Boynton, and E. K. Brown.[3] With the exception of the last two critics, each of the others has for the most part tended to evaluate her work primarily by the standards—complex though they may be—of a social historian. Consequently, Miss Cather emerges, according to their tenets, as the novelist of a reactional agrarian movement, an escapist unable to deal with the problems of a progressive society, a "malicious" commentator upon a new American materialism. Such evaluations may or may not be justified but certainly they are limited. The critical weakness of Miss Cather's interpreters stems from their divorce of the content and form of the novels. The critic must be concerned not only with what is being said, but with the how and why of its saying. The divorce is a dangerous short cut, and its weakening effects have been written large over Willa Cather's reputation. Very few of Miss Cather's critics have attempted to see the over-all pattern of her novels, their profound basis of moral values which gives them universality of theme, their classical unity and selectivity of details which enable the writer to co-ordinate structure and moral meaning. For Miss Cather, "the design is the story and the story is the design."[4]

The timeless frontiers of the American continent have given Miss Cather her most significant creative materials. In her novels which are concerned with the frontier, the clue to both "design" and "story" is the seeming simplicity which characterizes them. This is a deceptive simplicity since it emerges not from naïveté but from her deliberate and conscious theory of art. According to Miss Cather, "The higher processes of art are all processes of simplification. The novelist must learn to write, and then he must unlearn it; just as the modern painter learns to draw, and then learns when utterly to disregard his accomplishment. . . ."[5] In short, Willa Cather derives her simplicity from the effort to subordinate all details and all subsidiary meanings to what she terms a "higher and truer effect."[6] While she frequently—particularly in her descriptions—appears unnecessarily rhetorical, she presents a general impression of casual unaffectedness in her writing. Nevertheless, Willa Cather writes purposefully in all her novels of the frontier, directing her talents in each to the exposition of one lofty theme and always arriving, with varying success, at her ultimate moralistic goal. In the fulfilment of her aim, Miss Cather is singularly impressed by the artistic principle enunciated by the elder Dumas, who said that "to make a drama, a man needed one passion, and four walls."[7]

By evidence of her own often-repeated statements, Willa Cather centers her frontier novels about a single "passion" or theme, characterized by "persistence, survival, recurrence in the author's mind." That this single theme should "have 'teased' the mind for years"[8] is no psychological or intellectual aberration. Indeed, according to I. A. Richards, "when a writer has found a theme or image which fixes a point of relative stability in the drift of experience, it is not to be expected that he will avoid it. Such themes are a means or orientation."[9] Thus, Miss Cather found the "point of relative stability"

[3] Louis Kronenberger, "Willa Cather," *Bookman*, LXXIV, 134-140 (Oct., 1931), Clifton Fadiman, "Willa Cather: The Past Recaptured," *Nation*, CXXXV, 563-565 (Dec. 7, 1932); Lionel Trilling, "Willa Cather," *New Republic*, XC, 10-13 (Feb. 10, 1937); Alfred Kazin, "Elegy and Satire: Willa Cather and Ellen Glasgow," *On Native Grounds* (New York, 1942), pp. 247-257; Maxwell Geismar, "Willa Cather: Lady in the Wilderness," *The Last of the Provincials* (Boston, 1947), pp. 153-222; Percy H. Boynton, "Willa Cather," *Some Contemporary Americans* (Chicago, 1924), pp. 162-177; E. K. Brown, Willa Cather and the West," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, V, 544-566 (July, 1936).

[4] "Miss Jewett," *Not Under Forty*, pp. 77-78.

[5] "The Novel Démeublé," *Not Under Forty*, pp 48-49.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 51. Earlier, Miss Cather had cited this same dictum in *The Song of the Lark*, p. 140.

[8] "Miss Jewett," *Not Under Forty*, p. 77. It is interesting to note that E. K. Brown (*op. cit.*) hints at a continuity of thematic characterization; that is, he suggests a few resemblances between the pioneers of the early Western novels and those of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* and *Shadows on the Rock*.

[9] As cited by Robert Penn Warren in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner—A Poem of Pure Imagination: An Experiment in Reading* (New York, 1946), p. 87.

in the universal theme of man's perpetual pilgrimage and struggle to find an ethical ideal, or in that of the barriers that circumvent his attainment of that end.

Part of the novelist's art, Miss Cather well realized, is to associate and to make clear a moral purpose with each tale that is related. She therefore presents characters and situations that do more than form the framework of a story; they represent large and broad issues that she has observed in her experiences and readings and that she believes to be true. Each of her novels to be considered in this discussion, then, becomes in whole or in part an allegory built upon the one dominating theme mentioned above. By allegory we do not mean an arbitrary, static diagram of point-to-point equations, rather we wish merely to make clear that the surface narrative in Miss Cather's novels is connected with a background meaning. Since allegories, with some remarkable exceptions like those of Franz Kafka, are essentially simple in treatment, Miss Cather's avowed aim of simplicity is decidedly to the point. Far from presenting depths of personality, her characters offer a flat surface; her situations, in so far as they are counterparts of specific occurrences, are for the most part devoid of psychological complexity. In this respect Willa Cather may be compared with two notable allegorical writers, Hawthorne and Melville, who likewise presented few animated characters. Their symbolic figures are vague when compared with the realistic people drawn by Fielding, Austen, Thackeray, or Dickens. Like Hawthorne and Melville, Miss Cather is interested primarily in the broad outline of human destiny, not in the motivation of individual quirks and foibles. Her people and places are mainly convenient vehicles for ideas, presented in conventional novel form. The idea is the thing, and once the reader has grasped the intellectual motif, all the other elements fall into readily perceivable patterns.

Examined in the aggregate, Miss Cather's novels of the frontier reveal an allegory of the individual's quest—his seeking and finding a direction of life.[10] Born of the spirit, the quest is barren of all external and materialistic prompting. The pioneer's yearning is, indeed, so basic to the inner spirit that it becomes a creative power, rich in imagination and spiritual values. "Desire is creation," Miss Cather iterates, "is the magical element in that process."[11] Because the search for an ideal is synonymous with an innate groping for perfectibility, it has great moral value. And because, in Miss Cather's philosophy, the mere desire for the ideal is in itself an act of creation, the creative instinct has aesthetic significance. That is to say, there is an indivisible union of the moral and the aesthetic, for, as Miss Cather writes, "artistic growth is, more than it is anything else, a refining of the sense of truthfulness."[12] Hence Miss Cather's characters, visionaries and mystics, heed only that something within themselves which they divine instinctively to be their real lives and consciousness. They choose as a result to forsake the fixed conventions of civilized society. They wander forth, instead, orphan souls, searching for an ideal—a divine presence in the early novels, or a Christian God in the later novels. Whether this ineffable being is a divine presence, pagan or Christian, He is endowed with certain immutable qualities. He is not

[10] In an early critical work dealing necessarily with incomplete materials, Percy H. Boynton (*op. cit.*) concluded that Miss Cather's artistic theme is the portrayal of self-fulfilment. The focus is not on the individual as such, we believe, but upon the individual in his relationship to a higher order.

[11] *The Professor's House*, p. 29. In *The Song of the Lark*, pp. 75-76, the idea is repeated: "Nothing is far and nothing is near, if one desires. . . . There is only one big thing—desire.' " Translated into the doctrine of Catholicism, desire becomes synonymous with the miracle. "The people have loved miracles for so many hundred years, not as proof or evidence, but because they are the actual flowering of desire. In them the vague worship and devotion of the simple-hearted assumes a form. From being a shapeless longing, it becomes a beautiful image; a dumb rapture becomes a melody that can be remembered and repeated; and the experience of a moment, which might have been a lost ecstasy, is made an actual possession and can be bequeathed to another" (*Shadows on the Rock*, p. 137).

[12] *The Song of the Lark*, p. 477.

a form but a power, a palpable presence but never imprisoned in matter.[13]

This spiritual odyssey drawn by Miss Cather is an eternal one, transcending both time and place. When she began her series of frontier novels, the West of America was her logical setting. She, like the Burdens of *My Ántonia,* had left the fixed conventions of Virginia for a crude and rigorous Nebraska. Like the Burdens, she came to know the simple joys of a new land and the admirable qualities of an emigrant folk, Bohemians, Swedes, and the like. So at first she tapped her own limited experiences to present the pioneer spirit in a locale she came to know well. And always in the frontier novels, in the early as well as in the later ones, she underscores the yearning, the emotional grasping which give shape and substance to the spirit itself.

When the road began to climb the first long swells of the Divide, Alexandra hummed an old Swedish hymn, and Emil wondered why his sister looked so happy. Her face was so radiant that he felt shy about asking her. For the first time, perhaps, since that land emerged from the waters of the geologic ages, a human face was set toward it with love and yearning. It seemed beautiful to her, rich and strong and glorious. Her eyes drank in the breadth of it, until her tears blinded her. Then the Genius of the Divide, the great, free spirit which breathes across it, must have bent lower than it ever bent to a human will before. The history of every country begins in the heart of a man or a woman.[14]

[13] Such a concept is typical of Miss Cather's fusion of Roman Stoicism and basic Christianity In the early novels she speaks of divinity in philosophical terminology; in the later novels she translates her ideas of divinity into purely Christian terms. But whether Stoic or Christian her conception of the godhead is always the same: ". . . in his essence a living all-wise Being; in his attributes immortal, immutable, active and benevolent; in his disposition occupied in contemplating and controlling his great work the universe, and in his relation to his creatures constantly concerned for their comfort and happiness." (Such is the Stoic definition of the first-moving principle as stated by E. Vernon Arnold, *Roman Stoicism,* Cambridge, 1911, p. 229.) For a further discussion of this same problem, see below.

[14] *O Pioneers!,* p. 65.

But the prairie of the Middle West, Miss Cather came to realize, was only one frontier, and the pioneer immigrants were only a single people. Her expanding interests, for example, revealed to her the possibilities of establishing the same spiritual motivation among the cliff dwellers and the fulfilment of their primitive culture. In their houses of hewn rock, Miss Cather said, "a dream had been dreamed . . . long ago, in the night of ages, and the wind had whispered some promise to the sadness of the savage."[15]

The rock of Ácoma had never been taken by a foe but once,—by Spaniards in armour. It was very different from a mountain fastness; more lonely, more stark and grim, more appealing to the imagination The rock, when one came to think of it, was the utmost expression of human need; even mere feeling yearned for it; it was the highest comparison of loyalty in love and friendship. Christ Himself had used that comparison for the disciple to whom He gave the keys of His Church. And the Hebrews of the Old Testament, always being carried captive into foreign lands,—their rock was an idea of God, the only thing their conquerors could not take from them.[16]

In *Shadows on the Rock* the spiritual seeking, again, was the chief stimulus for the pioneer French in seventeenth-century Canada. And on the strength of this seeking, they, like the cliff dwellers, found their rock and built a civilized island in the midst of barbarism.

Why, the priest wondered, were these fellows always glad to get back to Kebec? Why did they come at all? Why should this particular cliff in the wilderness be echoing tonight with French songs, answering to the French tongue? He recalled certain naked islands in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence; mere ledges of rock standing up a little out of the sea, where the sea birds came every year to lay their eggs and rear their young in the caves and hollows; where they screamed and flocked together and made a clamour, while the winds howled around them, and the spray beat over them. This headland was scarcely more than that; a crag where for some reason

[15] *The Song of the Lark,* p. 306.

[16] *Death Comes for the Archbishop,* p. 98.

human beings built themselves nests in the rock, and held fast.[17]

And finally, it brought the Catholic missionaries of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* to the great Southwest. In this unbounded area of the Ur-Americas the reverend fathers finally approach their goal—primitive Christianity untainted by materialism. It is this kind of setting that can make altogether credible the parable of the Holy Mexican Family.[18] And from such a setting the French fathers drew the full force of their religion.

> Beautiful surroundings, the society of learned men, the charm of noble women, the graces of art, could not make up to him for the loss of those light-hearted mornings of the desert, for that wind that made one a boy again. He had noticed that this particular quality in the air of new countries vanished after they were tamed by man and made to bear harvests. Parts of Texas and Kansas that he had first known as open range had since been made into rich farming districts, and the air had quite lost that lightness, that dry aromatic odour. The moisture of plowed land, the heaviness of labour and growth and grain-bearing, utterly destroyed it, one could breathe that only on the bright edges of the world, on the great grass plains or the sage-brush desert.
>
> That air would disappear from the whole earth in time, perhaps; but long after his day. He did not know just when it had become so necessary to him, but he had come back to die in exile for the sake of it. Something soft and wild and free, something that whispered to the ear on the pillow, lightened the heart, softly, softly picked the lock, slid the bolts, and released the pris-
> oned spirit of man into the wind, into the blue and gold, into the morning, into the morning![19]

Thus, Miss Cather's conception of spiritual desire and yearning is for the most part associated with the frontier. But the frontier is not the scene of melodramatic adventure and outlawry; it is not an economic, sociological force. It is the locale of idealistic quests, spiritual struggles, and religious awareness. Her frontier is as much a philosophical concept as it is a physical actuality.

Just as Miss Cather's idea of the frontier was one of subtle fusion of the real and the ideal, so her handling of the spiritual quest is a similar blend of the intangible and the material. The quest was always against the odds of monumental, physical struggle, being inextricably linked with a seemingly cruel, insensitive nature. It is this aspect of the seeking that Willa Cather treats most capably. With artistic insight she saw and portrayed the paradox involved in the struggle itself. Her characters, whether immigrant pioneers or erudite Frenchmen, are long sheltered by fixed social traditions. Suddenly they find themselves engaged in conflict with a primeval force that is infinitely older than the traditions themselves. The irony implicit in the paradox is further enforced by the realism with which the struggle is described. Indeed, Miss Cather, who was so skeptical of the validity of physical concreteness,[20] limits her use of realistic details largely to the description of this struggle. Actually, the realism was implicit in the situation itself. Her pioneers were a people fighting to master a language, to conquer the soil, to hold their land, and to establish for themselves a set of working ethical doctrines. Abandoning their earlier unsatisfactory environment with its decadent mores, they bring only their yearning, their religion, and the best of their culture into the wilderness to prepare themselves for a newly purposeful life.

Inferretque deos Latio. When an adventurer carries his gods with him into a remote and sav-

[17] *Shadows on the Rock*, pp. 225-226.

[18] The entire atmosphere of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* is one of a primitive Christianity. It is an atmosphere which draws its "greatness" from its "simplicity." For Miss Cather "there is always something charming in the idea of greatness returning to simplicity—the queen making hay among the country girls—but how much more endearing was the belief that They, after so many centuries of history and glory, should return to play Their first parts, in the persons of a humble Mexican family, the lowliest of the lowly, the poorest of the poor,—in a wilderness at the end of the world, where the angels could scarcely find Them!" (*Death Comes for the Archbishop*, p. 284). See also the story of the Pima Indian convert in the same work, pp. 207-208.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 276-277.

[20] See below, pp. 254-255.

age country, the colony he founds will, from the beginning, have graces, traditions, riches of the mind and spirit.[21]

Obviously, there is no despair in Miss Cather's philosophy of an absolute idealism. Accordingly, the pioneer spirit was innately victorious because—and only because—it was an ideal, a dream of youth; and "to fulfill the dreams of one's youth," argued the missionary priests in *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, "that is the best that can happen to man."[22] Indeed, to Captain Forrester of *A Lost Lady*, the dream, the idea was at its very inception "an accomplished fact."[23] Thus, for the pioneer the hardships which he endures and the struggles which he undergoes are merely a test. For after long strife he seems to advance in his spiritual quest, arriving at a triumph that for him is ultimate proof that his way is the only right way.

Human experience is a graph of rising and falling events, corresponding to man's fortunes and misfortunes. And man, Miss Cather believed, is responsible for his periods of rise and of decline. Once he begins to lose sight of spiritual ideals and to give precedence to material gains, he negates his spiritual advance. The frontiersman or pioneer—the term is of little consequence—represents for Willa Cather the creature of his own desires, for good or evil. In recording his adventures she constantly emphasizes his inner strength and weakness and the decay that results once he permits himself the luxury of material desire. The wish for good demands particular strength if the pioneer is to withstand the debilitating force of a materialistic society. Good intentions alone are insufficient; the man of true spirit must supplement purpose with active striving. This recognition leads Miss Cather to her philosophical interpretation of life as a kind of gigantic tug-of-war, with idealism tugging against materialism. The theme that develops throughout her novels is devastatingly plausible, for materialism inevitably seems to exhibit the superior strength. But the essentially optimistic Willa Cather searches beyond contemporary society. Instead she examines man's trials in other eras. Always the conclusion is the same and implacable. Cyclically, even as material progress and evil flower from yearning and desire, good must ultimately come from the temporary condition of evil.

Unlike many of the other novelists of her generation who set themselves up as dispassionate or satirical observers of mankind, Willa Cather records her theme with delicate, subjective adumbrations. In so doing she follows an anti-realistic tradition already established in the nineteenth century by Hawthorne and James, and by E. M. Forster in the twentieth. Turning away from a tendency current in her generation toward muscular realism, Miss Cather says:

> There is a popular superstition that "realism" asserts itself in the cataloguing of a great number of material objects, in explaining mechanical processes, the methods of operating manufactories and trades, and in minutely and unsparingly describing physical sensations. But is not realism, more than it is anything else, an attitude of mind on the part of the writer toward his material, a vague indication of the sympathy and candour with which he accepts, rather than chooses, his theme?[24]

She objects, then, to the merciless uninterpretative reports on the condition of mankind—mere photographic observations. She strives, instead, to modify physical probability with moral necessity. Miss Cather arrives at an artistic theory that is much akin to Hawthorne's when he proposed the dis-

[21] *Shadows on the Rock*, p. 98. There occurs in this same work, pp. 24 ff., a long discussion of the need for transplanting in modified form the age-old traditions and conventions of European society into the new soil of the frontier.

[22] *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, pp. 263-264.

[23] *A Lost Lady*, p. 55. See also *The Professor's House*, p. 29: "A man can do anything if he wishes to enough, St. Peter believed. . . . If there were an instrument by which to measure desire, one could foretell achievement." In *O Pioneers!*, p. 48, Miss Cather says that "a pioneer should have imagination, should be able to enjoy the idea of things more than the things themselves." And in *One of Ours*, the idea appears in the following form: "Ideals were not archaic things, beautiful and impotent; they were the real sources of power among men." (p. 420).

[24] "The novel Démeublé," *Not Under Forty*, p. 45.

tinction between Romance and Novel.[25] But even closer is she to Henry James's opinion of the realistic and the romantic.

> . . . the real represents to my perception the things we cannot possibly *not* know, sooner or later, in one way or another. . . . The romantic stands, on the other hand, for the things that, with all the facilities in the world, all the wealth and all the courage and all the wit and all the adventure, we never can directly know, the things that can reach us only through the beautiful circuit and subterfuge of our thought and desire.[26]

And Willa Cather is undeniably motivated throughout her works by the twin ideas, beauty and desire. Although there is danger of conventional tags and diversity of terms, it is apparent that all three novelists—Hawthorne, James, and Cather—were defending romanticism and in particular that aspect of romanticism commonly called moral realism, "which is not the awareness of morality itself but of the contradictions, paradoxes and dangers of living the moral life."[27]

II

For the enunciation of her theme Miss Cather turns inevitably to the use of symbols. The moral idea for her is always an empirical one. As a novelist she faces the necessity of making clear and credible her underlying theme. This she discovers she can do most readily with symbols which illustrate and magnify her ideas in concrete terms. To understand Willa Cather, therefore, is to understand her meaningful employment of a system of symbols, all of which are segments of the whole theme. Each symbol is a part of but inseparable from the whole. For a better understanding of Miss Cather as a symbolist, we may refer to Coleridge on this particular aspect of symbolism.

> . . . A Symbol . . . is characterized by a translucence of the Special in the Individual or of the General in the Especial or of the Universal in the General. Above all by the translucence of the Eternal through and in the Temporal. It always partakes of the Reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that Unity; of which it is the representative.[28]

In Miss Cather's work, by this criterion, the symbol concretely represents the idea, giving it strength, magnitude, and reality. So tightly co-ordinated are her symbols with the ideas they project that no one may be divorced or altered without inestimable damage to the whole. This becomes particularly apparent from the systematic, chronological examination of her writings. The idea is the reality, the reality is the idea.

Although Willa Cather built up a careful scheme of symbols, she was in no sense a formal devotee of any of the "schools" that followed the European *symbolistes* of the late nineteenth century. Never does she indulge in the private, excessively subjective symbolism that began with Mallarmé and Baudelaire and culminated with Yeats. Hers is not an imagination that can work with the obscure and the esoteric. She does not say with Verlaine, *"Pas de couleur, rien que la nuance."* To the contrary, the aesthetic is for her never an isolated measure of artistic skill, art for art's sake. The aesthetic she always associates with her moral purpose, and this she must exemplify through the use of crystalline, objective symbols. Her symbols are not like Yeats's, tests of private ingenuity and nebulosity. They are symbols of necessity;[29] that is, they have their origins in the meaningful pattern of universal human experience.

For her principal symbol Miss Cather takes the vast panorama of an untamed land. Now any symbol, be it the remotely subjective, aesthetic tool of Yeats or the relatively objective device of Miss Cather, may have a complexity of meanings. No symbol can submit to arbitrary definition, although it must of course have a fundamental meaning in the author's intention. The meaning

[25] Preface to *The House of the Seven Gables.*

[26] As cited by F. O. Matthiessen, *Henry James: The Major Phase* (New York, 1944), p. 103.

[27] Lionel Trilling, *E. M. Forster* (Norfolk, Conn., 1943), pp. 11-12.

[28] *The Statesman's Manual* (London, 1816), p. 37.

[29] For this term we are indebted to Robert Penn Warren, *op cit.*, p. 75.

must be interpreted, rather than defined, in the light of the experience brought to the work by each reader. Since, as we have already suggested, no two sets of experience are identical, there must be considerable diversity of exact interpretation. The writer, likewise, may frequently emboss levels and degrees of meaning on each symbol. This becomes the case with Miss Cather. Thus in her work we must recognize the complex function of her symbols. For example, the symbol of the land has several thematic levels, all essentially and inevitably integrated. Note, for instance, that she sees in the land a common and spiritual meeting ground for her idealistic pioneers. Then she links to this idea the importance of the land as a place of spiritual sanctuary. Yet she is impressed that the land, or nature, is an overwhelming force often capable of rigorous subjection even while it may offer protection. But, above all, she will never have us forget that the land is the manifestation of a divine, supersensible force.

As a place of communion for idealistic pioneers, Miss Cather exalts the land. It is the consecrated, tangible evidence of a superior authority and is imbued with the might of that force. The irresistible sense of a God-inspiring unity is intuitive for Miss Cather's pioneers; such a recognition of the divine workings of creation is the root of her theosophic implications. For to obey authority man must in some way identify authority. The pioneer's chief awareness is based on the original unity of the earth. He sees the earth, the spirit of a stern but not necessarily orthodox deity, jealously protecting its harmony which he must associate with his own well-being. Jealously, as Miss Cather describes it, and at any cost, the dominance of the deity with its fierce and overwhelming strength must be retained.

> The little town behind them had vanished as if it had never been, had fallen behind the swell of the prairie, and the stern frozen country received them into its bosom. The homesteads were few and far apart; here and there a windmill gaunt against the sky, a sod house crouching in a hollow. But the great fact was the land itself, which seemed to overwhelm the little beginnings of human society that struggled in its sombre wastes. It was from facing this vast hardness that the boy's mouth had become so bitter, because he felt that men were too weak to make any mark here, that the land wanted to be let alone, to preserve its own fierce strength, its peculiar, savage kind of beauty, its uninterrupted mournfulness.[30]

In all of the frontier novels is a pervasive religious spirit of the land that is Miss Cather's deliberate attempt to arrive at a tone parallel with that of the introspective searching of the Old Testament. The entire frontier tradition with which she deals is molded in the cast of a stern element, simplicity and goodness are derived from harsh nature through an awareness of, and an acquiescence in, some divine supervision. Miss Cather's pioneers, like the ancient wandering tribes of Israel, have gone into the wilderness, at once searching for an ideal and seeking a sanctuary from a troubled existence. And there, in the wilderness, they often find their sanctuary.

In an example already cited from *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, we see the summation of everything that Miss Cather means by sanctuary.[31] For pagan and Christian, for skeptic and believer, there was always a refuge. The symbol was simple and elemental. In *O Pioneers!* and *My Ántonia* it was the land itself. But frequently the symbol was narrowed and made more specific. In *The Song of the Lark, The Professor's House, Death Comes for the Archbishop,* and *Shadows on the Rock,* the concentrated symbol becomes a rock rising out of the land. The rock is at once accessible to the comfort of a primitive devotion, and a warning to materialistic desire. At the same time it is in a profoundly mysterious way the end of the quest. This is the lesson that makes itself clear through the Catholic eyes of a Bishop Latour or of the people of seventeenth-century Canada. And again it is the lesson to be sought by those people who seek a

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[30] *O Pioneers!*, p. 15. See also pp. 19 ff. and 118 in the same work.

[31] See above, n. 16.

spiritual belief in an absolute unimpaired by creed. This is the revelation that comes to a Thea Kronborg and a Tom Outland.

Man stands in an enigmatic relationship to nature, in Miss Cather's world of the frontiersman. His world, in juxtaposition to the universal scheme of creation, is microcosmic. The larger macrocosm, the essence of an omnipresent divinity, looms as a protection and a threat. But the threat need trouble only those who fail to pay due homage to a superior will. Shelter, not harm, will be the reward of those who have learned the lesson of a supernal order and are sincerely reverent in their acknowledgment. The reader of Miss Cather must be aware that nature, as she depicts it, is capable of objective beneficence but has no anthropomorphic properties to link it directly with man. Nature is at once a barrier and a refuge. But always nature is the *idée fixe* in the pioneer's life. The laws of nature are immutable. They are the eternal verities with which man must comply; they never bend to man's will. In an attempt to crystallize this relationship, Miss Cather uses a constantly recurring artistic device. She always portrays man on a reduced scale, and at the same time she projects the phenomena of nature in heroic proportions.

> Presently we saw a curious thing: There were no clouds, the sun was going down in a limpid, gold-washed sky. Just as the lower edge of the red disc rested on the high fields against the horizon, a great black figure suddenly appeared on the face of the sun . . . On some upland farm, a plough had been left standing in the field. The sun was sinking just behind it. Magnified across the distance by the horizontal light, it stood out against the sun, was exactly contained within the circle of the disc, the handles, the tongue, the share—black against the molten red. There it was, heroic in size, a picture writing on the sun.
>
> Even while we whispered about it, our vision disappeared, the ball dropped and dropped until the red tip went beneath the earth. The fields below us were dark, the sky was growing pale, and that forgotten plow had sunk back to its own littleness somewhere on the prairie.[32]

[32] *My Ántonia*, p. 279.

Miss Cather depicts the pioneer in an ironic, uneven fight against the inflexible force of the land. This is a conflict that he may win only by spiritual submission, not by physical strength. By his act of submission the pioneer is in effect helping the fulfilment of his own destiny.[33] The idea becomes paradoxical because the very land that harbors him is set forth as cruel and elemental. For her principle she cogitates a scheme of existence hypothesized long before by the Roman Stoics.[34] They too promulgated the need for obeisance to a superior force. With the Stoics Willa Cather adopts the position that man cannot reject destiny.[35] His

[33] Miss Cather draws two portraits of individuals submerged and destroyed by the land. These are the portraits of Bergson in *O Pioneers!* and Shimerda in *My Ántonia*. Both men were already old when they came to the prairie of the Middle West. They clung tenaciously to the habits, traditions, and motivations of their European environments. They were either unwilling or unable to modify their earlier belief or to adjust it to a locale which left no room for the softness and sentimental overtones of European culture. For example, "John Bergson had the Old-World belief that land, in itself, is desirable. But this land was an *enigma*. It was like a horse that no one knows how to break to harness, that runs wild and kicks things to pieces" (*O Pioneers!*, pp. 21-22). With such an attitude, John Bergson's desire for the land turned to hatred and rebellion. And so he dies, destroyed by the land which he once so desired. His daughter, however, by her own admission looks to the land only with "love and understanding." And she waits *passively* and *submissively* for the land to redeem her faith (*ibid.*, pp. 307 ff.).

[34] For the parallel, cf. E. Vernon Arnold, *op cit.*, pp. 199-200.

[35] This idea is so implicit in Miss Cather's theme that it is difficult to find an overt statement. Alexandra in *O Pioneers!* and Ántonia in *My Ántonia* are both called fatalists, both maintaining an impervious calm and both subordinating their own personalities to that of the land itself. Claude Wheeler in *One of Ours* indulges in a sentimental and quasi-philosophical fatalism and attributes all the events in his life to a destiny which he simultaneously condemns and exalts. Monsieur Auclair in *Shadows on the Rock*, Miss Cather's closest approximation to the Roman Stoic, sees all of human life governed by a philosophical principle over which one has no control and which he identifies with "fate" or "destiny." The most clear-cut statement of fatalistic submission occurs in *My Ántonia*. "I tried to go to sleep, but the jolting made me bite my tongue, and I soon began to ache all over. When the straw settled down I had a hard bed. Cautiously I slipped from under the

success lies in submission to the demiurge that controls his fate, his failure in rebellion against that same spirit. Like the Stoics, Miss Cather finds submission a virtue, restlessness and indecision its opposite. Nature for all its apparent cruelty, consequently, is the force that will temper the pioneer and bring him to his peace—his ultimate goal—as a result of his acquiescence. Only by an ethical courage can he withstand the land. The warm, pleasant summers lull him into a false sense of security. But in winter the land is another matter. "It is like an iron country, and the spirit is oppressed by its rigor and melancholy. One could easily believe that in that dead landscape the germs of life and fruitfulness were extinct forever"[36] Man is but a tiny element in a supreme irony, struggling like an animal while nature withdraws her support "in the season in which [she] recuperates, in which she sinks to sleep between the fruitfulness of autumn and the passion of spring."[37] But certainly Miss Cather's philosophy is not one of despair. The seasons are merely tests of determination.[38] "And yet," she writes, "down under the frozen crusts, at the roots of the trees, the secret of life was still safe, warm as the blood in one's heart; and the spring would come again! Oh, it would come again."[39]

Again drawing inspiration from a source common to both Stoicism and biblical Christianity, Willa Cather sees conclusive and definite proof of a supernal will in the natural order and harmony everywhere about the pioneer. Whether in the orderly arrangement of forests, prairies, and mountains, or of the constellations overhead, the regularity that betokens the perfection of the works of a divine power is ever apparent. To Miss Cather, as to Cicero and Seneca and the Psalmist,[40] the contemplation of the celestial bodies leads to the full perception of a divine spirit and the magnificence of its work.

Alexandra drew her shawl closer about her and stood leaning against the frame of the mill, looking at the stars which glittered so keenly through the frosty autumn air. She always loved to watch them, to think of their vastness and distance, and of their ordered march. It fortified her to reflect upon the great operations of nature, and when she thought of the law that lay behind them, she felt a sense of personal security [41]

buffalo hide, got up on my knees and peered over the side of the wagon. There seemed to be nothing to see; no fences, no creeks or trees, no hills or fields. If there was a road, I could not make it out in the faint starlight. There was nothing but land· not a country at all, but the material out of which countries are made. No, there was nothing but land. . . . I had the feeling that the world was left behind, that we had got over the edge of it, and were outside man's jurisdiction. . . . But this was the complete dome of heaven, all there was of it. . . . Between that earth and that sky I felt erased, blotted out. I did not say my prayers that night: here, I felt, what would be would be" (*My Antonia*, pp. 7-8).

At the same time that the over-all pattern of one's life is shaped by an uncontrollable destiny, one has the power to work within the limits of that destiny; one has the power to shape the single day, the single event. See *Shadows on the Rock*, p. 198.

[36] *O Pioneers!*, pp. 187-188.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 187.

[38] The hardships which the pioneer must sustain are not in themselves evil. Actually, they are tests imposed by a divine power upon man so that man himself can prove his worth. In setting forth this thesis, Miss Cather follows in part the Stoic conception of the origin of evil. According to Seneca, " 'No man . . . seems to me more unhappy than one who has never met with adversity.' For such a man has never had an opportunity to test himself. Though all things have flowed to him according to his prayer, though even before his prayer, nevertheless the gods have passed an adverse judgment upon him. He was deemed unworthy ever to gain the victory over Fortune. . . " ("On Providence," *Moral Essays*, ed. John W. Basore, Loeb Classical Library, 1928, p. 17).

[39] *O Pioneers!*, p. 202.

[40] Cicero, *De natura deorum*, ed. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, 1933, pp. 137-139. See also pp. 125-127 in the same work. The idea appears constantly in Seneca's essays and epistles. See particularly, *Of Benefits, Epistle XC*, and *The Natural Questions, passim* At least two notable expressions of this idea are to be found in the Old Testament. Psalm 19, Daniel 5.

[41] *O Pioneers!*, pp. 70-71. The idea is repeated in *One of Ours*, p. 229: ". . . Claude walked . . . under the frosty brilliance of the winter stars. As he looked up at them, he felt more than ever that they must have something to do with the fate of nations, and with the incomprehensible things that were happening in the world. In the ordered universe there must be some mind that read the riddle of this one unhappy planet, that knew what was forming in the dark eclipse of this hour."

It is not enough for the successful pioneer merely to recognize this natural order as the law of a superior force. He must seek to reaffirm it in his own everyday life. Thus Alexandra in her farm, which is the test of her personality and the expression of her being, seeks to imitate the order of a form which she vaguely and unconsciously recognizes as divine.

> When you go out of the house into the flower garden, there you feel again the order and fine arrangement manifest all over the great farm, in the fencing and hedging, in the windbreaks and sheds, in the symmetrical pasture ponds, planted with scrub willow to give shade to the cattle in fly-time. There is even a white row of bee-hives in the orchard, under the walnut trees. You feel that, properly, Alexandra's house is the big out-of-doors, and that it is in the soil that she expresses herself best.[42]

For the pioneer, success and failure alike, the land is everywhere and inescapable. Ultimately all distinction vanishes between the pioneer spirit and the land. One merges into the other, and each is an extension of the other. By this measure, to cite an instance, Alexandra, the essence of the pioneer spirit, and the land, the symbol of the conclusive goal of the pioneer quest, coalesce their identities.

> There were certain days in her life, outwardly uneventful, which Alexandra remembered as peculiarly happy, days when she was close to the flat, fallow world about her, and felt, as it were, in her own body the joyous germination in the soil.[43]

[42] *O Pioneers!*, p. 84. For the translation of this idea into Catholic terms, see Miss Cather's description of the nuns in Quebec, their recognition of the "well-ordered universe about them" and their subsequent devotion to order in their own daily lives (*Shadows on the Rock*, pp. 97-98).

[43] *O Pioneers!*, pp. 203-204. The idea is repeated again in this same work (p. 309): "Fortunate country, that is one day to receive hearts like Alexandra's into its bosom, to give them out again in the yellow wheat, in the rustling corn, in the shining eyes of youth!" And in *My Ántonia* the identification continues. "More than any other person we remembered, [Ántonia] seemed to mean to us the country, the conditions, the whole adventure of our childhood" (*My Ántonia*, p. x).

III

The land is, indeed, Miss Cather's chief symbol through which she may interpret a spiritual striving in realistic detail. The land is tangible evidence of man's ability to thrust himself into an alien wilderness, to abandon his old modes of living and thinking, and to seek a course of moral good. The land with its paradoxical union of violent force and fruitful beneficence symbolizes the final and absolute peace which satisfies and concludes man's spiritual quest. As such, it is part of an experience that at some time has been common to all peoples. Yet as a symbol, it does not completely satisfy Miss Cather, she gropes for new devices to express this same idea and finds that the pioneer spirit of the ancient past correspondingly leads to an answer. Hence she lessens her emphasis on the ideal nature of the land in novels other than *O Pioneers!* and *My Ántonia*, and focuses on the image of the historical absolute (or ideal, since the two terms are synonymous in Miss Cather's ethic). Although Miss Cather chooses to minimize the symbol of the land or reduce it to relative obscurity in her later novels, she never allows it to vanish completely. Even if often only by suggestion, the magnetic attraction of the land draws her people in *The Song of the Lark*, *One of Ours*, *A Lost Lady*, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, and *Shadows on the Rock*. Actually, we must recognize that the land and the historical absolute are parallel for her in symbolic meaning; both become the manageable representation of the ideal of the primal quest. This is best exemplified in the ancient struggle of the cliff dwellers treated in *The Song of the Lark*, where Miss Cather first initiates the idea, and in *The Professor's House* and *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, where she further expands the idea.

The symbol of the historical ideal is more complex than the symbol of the land. The historical ideal is an abstraction which Miss Cather employs to modify another abstraction—man's spiritual quest. Her use of an abstract symbol is a seeming contradiction in terms, but any misinterpretation is readily

clarified by analysis of her second major symbol. The logical point of departure is the question: Precisely what is Miss Cather's symbol of the historical ideal? The symbol is the novelist's subjective interpretation of a primitive people whose culture survives only as meager archeological remains on the mesas of the Southwest. The symbol is effective because of its complexity. It is not merely a sign or "picture writing"; nor is it only an idea. Actually, the symbol is an indivisible combination of both and draws its strength from the special complex of emotional attitudes with which Miss Cather handles it. A casual analysis would suggest an apparent paradox in the symbol itself because Miss Cather turns to an elemental society for the lesson that she would teach to her contemporaries. In all actuality this is no paradox. The cliff dwellers are primitive but not in degree of culture or civilization Indeed, their culture is comparable, in her eyes, with the best in all cultures. Timeless in spirit, the cliff dwellers are yet primitive only in point of time of historical existence The idea becomes clearer upon comparison with Miss Cather's earlier symbol of the land. In her use of this symbol she arrived at the ultimate conclusion that the ethically best man is he who lives closest to nature. She turns then to the cliff-dwellers and finds that their ethical goodness stems, in accentuated significance, from spiritual proximity to nature.

Miss Cather's perception of the historical ideal as a dual device for coupling man's perpetual quest and the eternal victory of good is most effective in *The Song of the Lark*, *The Professor's House*, and *Death Comes for the Archbishop;* for in them she adapts the culture of the cliff dwellers to her theory of the ideal and finds it propitious. Like the tales of the pioneers in the novels of the West, the legends of the cliff dwellers typify man's struggle for an absolute. During their searching for this same absolute, the cliff dwellers were confronted by the grim necessity of fighting for existence, harried as they were by the rigors of nature and the persecutions of their Spanish or Indian inquisitors. Actually theirs too was the eternal struggle of idealism against materialism.

> I see them here, isolated, cut off from other tribes, working out their destiny, making their mesa more and more worthy to be a home for man, purifying life by religious ceremonies and observances, caring respectfully for their dead, protecting the children, doubtless entertaining some feelings of affection and sentiment for this stronghold where they were at once so safe and so comfortable, where they had practically overcome the worst hardships that primitive man had to fear. They were, perhaps, too far advanced for their time and environment.
>
> They were probably wiped out, utterly exterminated, by some roving Indian tribe without culture or domestic virtues, some horde that fell upon them in their summer camp and destroyed them for their hides and clothing and weapons, or from mere love of slaughter. I feel sure that these brutal invaders never even learned of the existence of this mesa, honeycombed with habitations. If they had come here, they would have destroyed. They killed and went their way.[44]

For Miss Cather, then, the cliff dwellers symbolize the victory of good through the perpetuation of their cultural remains and the condemnation by history of their oppressors.

The philosophical truths of the past as they offer a solution to existence in the present are understood by people with transcendent imaginations and deep-rooted spiritual values.[45] As the land offers a way of ethical

[44] *The Professor's House,* pp. 220-221.

[45] The reaction of Thea Kronborg and Tom Outland to the remains of the cliff dwellers takes the form of a vague mystic experience. Thus Tom, speaking of the mesa, says: "This was the first time I ever saw it as a whole. It all came together in my understanding, as a series of experiments do when you begin to see where they are leading. Something had happened in me that made it possible for me to co-ordinate and simplify, and that process, going on in my mind, brought with it great happiness. It was possession. The excitement of my first discovery was a very pale feeling compared to this one. For me the mesa was no longer an adventure, but a religious emotion. I had read of filial piety in the Latin poets, and I knew that was what I felt for this place. It had formerly been mixed up with other motives; but

life to those with the genuine humility that stems from a sympathetic understanding of a superior force, so a knowledge of the historical ideal offers strength to those who can convert their knowledge to true understanding. Miss Cather, as a result of this consistent thesis, selects visionaries or people with acute inward perception to motivate her symbolism of the historical ideal and to give it immediate application. Thea Kronborg, Ray Kennedy, and Tom Outland are all spiritual introverts able to profit from the lesson of the past Father Latour, likewise, is introspective and capable of deep understanding, though he already has the strength of a dogmatic, yet nonetheless intensely emotional and introverted, religious experience. He, in short, discovered the goal of his quest in Catholicism; but he can understand the inspiration of a comparable if pagan philosophy. All these dreamers are admirable tools for the development of Miss Cather's symbolism because they are responsive to the mystic associations of a buried past that would find a realist impervious.

For those near-mystics who, unlike Father Latour, are still groping for philosophical values, the lesson of the cliff dwellers becomes a rock as steadfast as the biblical conception of God. The visionary, in Miss Cather's sense, has not successfully come to grips with life. He needs a sanctuary that will give him respite from the present, even as the pioneers of the West require an inward haven. But Miss Cather's dreamers are not escapists in the aesthetic sense of the term. Each, for some reason, needs a justification for being, and symbolically, the recaptured culture of the cliff dwellers provides that justification.[46] Thea Kronborg is an artist who chafes against material restraints. For this struggle she needs the strength which she finds among the ghosts of a spiritual ideal, a triumphant ideal which has fought against materialistic standards even at the cost of its own existence. Once understanding that, she dedicates herself in action to the same ideal.

> O eagle of eagles! Endeavor, achievement, desire, glorious striving of human art! From a cleft in the heart of the world she saluted it . . It had come all the way; when men lived in caves, it was there. A vanished race, but along the trails, in the stream, under the spreading cactus, there still glittered in the sun the bits of their frail clay vessels, fragments of their desire.[47]

Similarly, Tom Outland, himself tortured by the conflict between the acceptance or renunciation of material values, adheres finally to the *modus vivendi* of the cliff dwellers, as he translates their standards and course of action into his own.

The relationship of Tom and Thea to the cliff dwellers and their mesa is not to be confused with pure artistic escape from the moil of an ugly society. Indeed, there is strength in this temporary retreat even as there is weakness in the romantic, indeterminate longings of Professor St. Peter's interest in the historical past for its own sake. The vestiges of the ancient cliff dwellers combine for Thea and Tom spiritual and physical certainty. From antiquity they extract the will to take their place in the present, not the longing to seal themselves hermetically in the void of the past. This active, essential, intelligent reaction to the idealism of the past must be remembered as the extreme pole to the Professor's inactive, illusory

now that they were gone, I had my happiness unalloyed. . . . I can scarcely hope that life will give me another summer like that one. It was my high tide. Every morning, when the sun's rays first hit the mesa top, while the rest of the world was in shadow, I wakened with the feeling that I had found everything, instead of having lost everything. Nothing tired me. Up there alone, a close neighbour to the sun, I seemed to get the solar energy in some direct way. And at night, when I watched it drop down behind the edge of the plain below me, I used to feel that I couldn't have borne another hour of that consuming light, that I was full to the brim, and needed dark and sleep" (*The Professor's House*, pp. 250-252). For a like statement of Thea's reaction, see *The Song of the Lark*, pp. 302-303.

[46] E. K. Brown (*op. cit.*, p. 561) has made an inconclusive allusion to this same idea, limiting his interpretation to the regenerative function of the cliff remains. This is only partially true since the association not only "invigorates and enriches" but also provides a way of life.

[47] *The Song of the Lark*, p. 321.

immersion in the verbal past of history books.[48]

Miss Cather is not reluctant to point out the lesson to be learned from an examination of the lives of the cliff dwellers. For them, she reasoned, existence was a primal struggle against barbarism and irreverence. They sought such spiritual goods as would bring them to their final goal of an untroubled peace. This was their ideal quest, and as Miss Cather frequently points out, one that moderns might well imitate.

> Like you, I feel a reverence for this place. Wherever humanity has made that hardest of all starts and lifted itself out of mere brutality, is a sacred spot. Your people were cut off here without the influence of example or emulation, with no incentive but some natural yearning for order and security. They built themselves into this mesa and humanized it.[49]

It is at this point that Miss Cather's homiletic leanings become most pronounced. So intent does she become at teaching her lesson, that she forgets the outward trappings of her story and presents instead bald statements which have no other purpose than the justification of her particular moral belief.

IV

While Miss Cather was symbolizing the positive qualities of the frontier spirit, she became increasingly conscious of the negative force of materialism upon that spirit. This awareness is foreshadowed in all of the early novels until it culminates in her attack upon the exploitation of the West in *A Lost Lady*, her definitive exposition of anti-progress.[50] The West of *A Lost Lady* is a narrower embodiment of all Miss Cather's frontiers, whether those of Colorado and Nebraska, or of the great Southwest and Canada. Geographic location and historic time are less important to her than the spiritual quests of the pioneers with whom she deals, and she condemns exploitation in any frontier as an irritant to the moral purpose of the pioneers. Through her focus on the historical ideal Miss Cather discovers comparable corrosive forces at work throughout the entire record of mankind. And always her conclusion is that good must triumph over evil, and that the morality of the spirit must defeat opportunism. Because she is a philosopher of hope, she tells us that the degeneracy of a single frontier such as that of the West is not defeat. This particular degeneracy appears to her but an instance of man's *immediate* failure to adjust to a purer spirit. Miss Cather's inference is that if, ironically, some men have failed because of their civil-

[48] The symbol of the historical ideal should not be identified with a vague and romantic interest in the past for its own sake. Miss Cather's historical sense was largely directed toward the study of early struggles of idealism against materialism. There is, however, a single occasion in which she develops a theory of the historical past as an avenue of aesthetic escape for one who finds active reality unsatisfactory. For this purpose she develops the character of Godfrey St. Peter in *The Professor's House*. Addicted to what he called "the pomp and circumstance" of a vague historical past, St. Peter lives vicariously in the pages of his history books, for through them he becomes "a principal in a gorgeous drama with God, glittering angels on one side and the shadows of evil coming and going on the other." And according to St. Peter, "that's what makes men happy, believing in the mystery and importance of their own little individual lives" (pp. 67 ff.). This particular attitude towards the historical past which Miss Cather projects through St. Peter is untypical and results in a twisted, enervated character. The explanation is simple. Miss Cather, consciously or unconsciously, is out of sympathy with an inactive or dead devotion to history. For her the successful test of history is its association with contemporary experience. St. Peter's ostrich-like renunciation of life is Miss Cather's unsuccessful experiment with history as pure escape. She does not repeat it. Her belief in history in action is verified by her success with the constantly recurring symbol of the cliff dwellers.

[49] *The Professor's House*, p. 221. See also *The Song of the Lark*, p. 306.

[50] Because Willa Cather's doctrine of the true frontier is essentially positive, and because space limitations obviate complete analysis, we have reduced her third major symbol—the negative one of anti-progress—to summary. Early intimations of her displeasure with exploitation may be found in *O Pioneers!*, p. 118; and especially in *My Ántonia*, pp. 249 ff., 225-226; and *One of Ours*, pp. 101-102. Excellent examples of fulmination are everywhere in *A Lost Lady*, especially pp. 22-25, 106. The attack on exploitation, however, does not end with *A Lost Lady*. There are anti-progress allusions and situations in *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, pp. 124-125, 142 ff.; and in *Shadows on the Rock*, pp. 119, 269 ff., 280.

ized progress, which to her is synonymous with exploitation, others will always seek and find other frontiers. The West of *A Lost Lady,* then, is but the essence of an unrealized ideal. The conclusion to be drawn is inevitable upon recognition that the novelist's concept of the land—whether harsh and cruel or orderly and tranquil—is always that of the constructive expression of divine order. As she represents it, the historical ideal is the record of man's reconciliation with and subordination to the divine will. In effect, therefore, the ideals of both the past and nature are good. Destructive exploitation and materialism, being contrary to the laws of nature and spiritual order, are therefore evil. That is the moral and aesthetic belief of Willa Cather.

Amphion's Lyre [1]

LUCIEN PRICE

LAST JANUARY I heard your concert in Sanders Theatre. Of course you know you are good! But I wonder if you quite know how good you are. Your Bach and Händel were majestic, your madrigals in Italian, French, and English were pleasing, your new music by Ballantine, Copland, and Irving Fine was interesting, and I laughed immoderately over Mr. Fine's musical wit. But you may be surprised when I tell you what impressed me most. It was not your Handel and Bach, magnificent though they were; it was something which happened when you began singing those choruses from Gershwin's comic opera. They are easy. All you had to do was enjoy yourselves. The tunes are good, the words are comical, and you could let yourselves go. Spontaneity and high spirits are infectious: you remember how the audience made you sing one of them over again:

Love is sweeping the country,
There never was so much love. . . .

(That tune kept on running through my head for days, until I cursed you roundly for it.) But all through the concert I saw something which I had often seen before when your Glee Club has sung, though never quite as clearly as in the gaiety of those comic choruses. Had I had the time and strength I would have gone home and written several pages in my note book of memoranda to myself about what I saw. But there happened to be two wars on, one in Europe and another in Asia, the European war was detonating toward its close, and I had to hang over teletype despatches several hours a day. And yet, as I have noticed so often, in the life of the spirit, nothing is lost or wasted; and what I would have written to myself last January I can now say to you face-to-face. What I saw that evening were young men, and young women, in the act of expressing themselves through an art-form, energized to the fullness of their powers. You were all alive and vibrant to the roots of your beings. The air tingled. Everything in you that is most gracious and beautiful, from religious worship to the laughter of high animal spirits, was set flowing. It flowed through you into the audience and sent us home happy and invigorated.

Now just *what was going on*? That was not, as I have said, the first time I had seen this singular manifestation. Several years ago one winter evening I happened to be passing Symphony Hall. It was lighted. I remembered that the Harvard Glee Club was singing. I went in. (There were plenty of seats, you are regretfully informed, so I bought a good one.) The concert was half over—Pablo Casals was the assisting artist, and the next piece was a song by Brahms,

[1] An address to the Harvard Glee Club, May 31, 1945, copyright by the author and reprinted with his permission.

I hear a harp so mild and soft,
It tells of love and longing . . .

yes, a bit sentimental, but I still have a soft spot in my head for a good sentimental ballad. This one had a harp accompaniment with violoncello obbligato. Señor Casals set his chair and 'cello peg on one of those low wooden platforms which solo 'cellists sometimes use to increase the sonority of the instrument in a large hall He then put on a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles the better to read the music on his desk, and Dr. Davison, who then conducted the club, raised his hand to begin . . .

(But come now: wouldn't this be a bit risky? Mr. Alfred Holy, the virtuoso harpist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Señor Pablo Casals, who is the wonder and admiration of his colleagues,—"Casals" who, they tell us, "is master of us all, the greatest living player of a stringed instrument"—and a male chorus of musical amateurs, no more. What would happen?)

What happened was a rich flood of sonorous choral tone, with just a tinge of that unconscious melancholy which sounds its undernote in the voices of young men when they sing together well; and this to the accompaniment of harp arpeggii and that sustained cantilena in which no instrument equals the 'cello . . . As this went on I noticed a singular thing. Without being aware that he did it, Dr. Davison bent his ear over that sonority of choral tone the way a violinist bends his ear over his instrument to savour its richness. That was the first time I saw what was happening: through music he had found a way to release into articulation the emotions, the minds, the yearnings, the aspirations,—in two words, the essential being,—of these young men. "That," thought I then and there, "is something to have done." Professional musicians slave during the first part of a lifetime for a technique by which to express themselves for the second part of a lifetime. In so doing they may gain their own souls, but they often forfeit something else, youthful spontaneity. These amateur singers had it: they sang acceptably enough (Davison had seen to that) but through their singing came that distinctive electricity of youth, which is in all youth, but which rarely gets expressed through an art-form. *What was going on here?* The human soul, being released in music, was experiencing unawares one of the most profound varieties of religious experience.

In a civilization which is not yet sure whether it will survive or perish; in a world where men are commandeered to slaughter one another by the millions, why pause seriously over a concord of harmonious sounds? Isn't it just a little silly?

Let me state a case. You may then, as you would anyhow, decide for yourselves. A good many years ago and a good many miles from here I was a lad in a country town The scenery was mediocre; there were, it is true, small lakes and woodlands, and the rolling fields under tillage had in summer a certain placid and smiling beauty, but we knew that to keep our souls alive something must be done, and we did it. We did it with books and music. The books were mostly great books, and the music was good music. Of course we had to make it ourselves. About half a dozen families set the tone, but scores of others followed. My father being the country doctor had Darwin's *Origin of Species* on his shelves twenty years, I suppose, before anyone else in the county, and, being also the conductor of the village Philharmonic orchestra, he studied at brief intervals between professional calls Hector Berlioz's *Treatise on Instrumentation.*

My own instrument was the 'cello. (I learned to play it under heavy pressure and strong protest.) That is, until a brilliant virtuoso 'cellist of the Chicago Orchestra, still a young man and a remote sort of kinsman, came for a visit. For the first time I heard what the 'cello could do. A good deal of chamber music was played in the village and we were working at Haydn's Trios. "Why don't you try Beethoven's?" proposed our guest. It was the first we knew that Beethoven had written any trios. We went to New York for them. They came. Quite a bulky volume, the piano-score; paper-bound in that pale greenish blue of the Edition Peters.

Our violinist was talented; our pianist was more than talented: she was a virtuosa schooled by some of the best pianists in the country, but prevented by an affliction of unsteady nerves from the career of the concert platform. So she gave piano lessons in an old white wooden mansion with a portico of Doric columns in a grove of pines about a mile and a half up the river road, and there she also gave for her friends private recitals of the very best music. Our 'cello was the weak link. So we started looking through the trios for something *he* could play at sight. And of all trios, which must we pitch upon but the one in B-flat, Opus 97!

The *andante cantabile* looks easy. It isn't. By the time you reach the second variation the going is rough for an adolescent 'cellist. All the same we kept going. And, as we did so, our eyes bulged with amazement. You know the history of that trio. It was written in 1812, a difficult year in Beethoven's life. His affairs were going badly and the work was not published until 1816. Although two unwritten symphonies were roaring in his head during this same period, it is possible, and a good many people think it probable, that had the pressure of his hardships been less severe, the material in this trio might have become an orchestral symphony. Its grandeur goes on increasing; one of the later variations in the *andante cantabile* sounds like a passage of free fantasia in a pianoforte concerto.

We played the movement again. We spent that whole evening playing it again, and played nothing else. The time was midsummer and rain had been falling. It was my office to drive the pianist home,—"drive" in the equine sense of that verb, to drive a horse, by reins, and hitched into a phaeton carriage. On my way home, alone, the horse plodding at a walk, for streets were unpaved and the mud was heavy, Pallas Athene sent me a thought:

This town is no great shakes. You are only a boy of sixteen. The future is uncertain, and there is no telling what may become of you. But one thing is certain: so long as there is such music in the world there is always something you can do about the worst that the world can do to you.

Now why should I detain you over the solitary meditation of a boy about a piece of music,—and a good many years ago too? Surely your thoughts must be preoccupied with far graver concerns. So are mine during the working-day, or night, telegraph wires tingling and wave-lengths crackling with horrors that reduce the hell of theology to the status of a feeble joke. At such times, that world seems the only real one. But I know better. God was not in the great and strong wind, nor in the fire, not yet in the earthquake. The spirit is in the still, small voice.

We live in an exploding universe. This is the point to which I speak. We live in a period when the educated classes, and a good many more important people than the educated classes only—let me call them the thinking classes—are outgrowing their traditional religion. We have had no choice. The roof of inherited belief has been burnt over our heads. Each new technology profoundly alters, if it do not destroy, the society built on the old technology. The bronze sword destroyed the society based on the stone axe, iron destroyed the society based on bronze; steel supplanted iron; gunpowder is assigned as one of the forces which destroyed the feudal system. And so we come to the 19th century and the most revolutionary discovery of all. What was discovered in the 19th century was a *method of discovery*. Since then we have lived in an exploding universe.

Our apparatus of daily living has changed faster in the past hundred years—one could even say the past fifty—than it had changed in the previous three thousand. And not our physical existence alone. There is not an intellectual edifice but has been jostled in this earthquake: politics, economics, science, theology, art, ethics . . . including morals, not in the narrow and often contemptible 19th century bourgeois definition of morals, but the whole immense and majestic range of that problem: what in man constitutes virtue, ἀρετή, excellence, nobility?

Certitude has vanished. In 1880 the New-

tonian physics were still unquestioned. Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, published in 1687, had, so far as anyone then knew, established mathematically the laws which underlay the workings of the universe,—earth, sky, and all that therein is. There remained, it is true, a few obscure spots, but these were thought to be relatively minor points which a few years' investigation would suffice to clarify. That investigation went forward. By 1900 the Newtonian physics had blown up. They were, and are, still useful as a way of looking at things, but can no longer be considered absolutely true—only a convenient half-truth. Yet the Newtonian physics dealt with that which is generally supposed to be the most real thing in existence, matter, the physical universe.

If the physical universe is not real, then what is? This little silver spoon for after dinner coffee, which the Harvard Club of Boston sends in with our crimson-rimmed demitasse, looks solid enough. You can whack it on your cup. Solid? Hah! It is a raging mass of activity. And if our notions of time were not so arbitrarily conditioned by our own brief life-spans of seventy or eighty years (as our notions of size are almost as absurdly governed by the spatial dimensions of our bodies) we might see this little spoon disintegrating before our eyes. Reality? What is reality? In one of these little pearl buttons which hold your cuffs together, the distances of the infinitely small in the universe of electrons are, we are told, relatively as enormous as the distances up there in

The starry conclave of the midnight sky . . .

No one has ever seen an electron. Its very existence has to be inferred, and this by processes at once intricate and elaborate. So much, then, for physical reality, that which we can touch and handle between thumb and fingers. We must seek elsewhere.

Politics, too, has blown up. This was to be expected since political government is a manifestation of the material world. By "politics" understand "property," for government is the expressed pleasure of a ruling class. In fact, property and theology may almost be said to have been blown up in the same year, 1859, when Darwin published his *Origin of Species* and Karl Marx his *Critique of Political Economy*. The invention of machinery dating roughly from the late 18th century and continuing in a steadily accelerating crescendo ever since, has made inevitable the collectivization of our society—if our society do not first eviscerate itself by turning these scientific techniques to lethal weapons for mutual extermination. The airplane is symbol. At the turn of the 19th century into the 20th, man for the first time built himself a practicable pair of wings and learned to fly.

Our economic system, then, has blown up. Let me mention one simple illustration. There was a politico-economic concept which was bound to appear as the 19th century went on, and did in fact appear in the year 1870 during the Paris Commune after the defeat of France by the Prussians, though for its full blooming it had to wait another forty-seven years, until the Russian Revolution of 1917. I do not mean the March revolution of that year, a Parliamentarian regime, —something quite respectable, of the sort which might have happened at Philadelphia in 1776, on the 18th century political model. (Here the gentlemen of the Glee Club laughed, it seemed to me, not unsympathetically.) No. I mean the November revolution of that same year, 1917, which sent a chill of fear up the spines of every middle class on earth; November, 1917, when Lenin said, "*Now*, comrades, we have a revolution!"

The English, American, and French political systems, being predominantly agrarian in their origins, were based on territorial representation. Machinery, by collectivizing industry, shifted the industrial workers' grubstake from the land to the machine. That concept which I said was bound to appear as the Machine Age went on, was a shift from territorial representation as your sole form of voting, to occupational representation. What else is a labor union but voting in accordance with one's occupation? Being asked one time to speak before an irreproachable Rotary Club, I scandalized the brethren by pointing out to them that their system of

representation, one member each from a variety of occupations, is in fact a Soviet. Being good Americans they laughed at their own expense. Where your own sympathies lay with regard to Communism I didn't know and was trying not to step on any toes. Since evidently I haven't, let me go on and tell you something that—Col. Charles Erskine Scott Wood, I think it was—said in the old *Masses* (it was then being called *The Liberator* after Lloyd Garrison's abolitionist paper): this was in 1919 or 1920. "I am accused of sympathy with the Bolshevik Revolution," said he. "That is not true. When I see a sick souse sitting on the railroad track and the Twentieth Century Limited coming down the rails, my sympathies are not with the locomotive."

We come now to the one subject in our exploding world that is touchier than property. That subject is sex. Sex has exploded. (Here again the gentlemen of the Glee Club permitted themselves to laugh, and again, or so it seemed to me, not unsympathetically.) Be that as it may . . . you have all probably heard of the late Dr. Sigmund Freud, sometime resident in Vienna. How many present have seen either the play or the film, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street?* . . . Then I can illustrate the situation quite simply from that. I went to see Miss Katharine Cornell play it at the Shubert Theatre here in Boston innocently supposing that what I had bought was an evening's entertainment. Pfouff! *Bang!* What I had bought was a sociological cannon cracker. It went off in our faces. As the performance went on, the tension in that audience was palpable, like an emanation of psychic electricity. Others felt it too and spoke of it afterwards. What the play did was confront the two generations, the children of the two centuries: those who were young in the late 19th century, and those who were young in the 20th: those who grew up before the revolution which for want of a better word, though the word is inadequate, we may call "Freudian," and those who have grown up since it has had time to permeate; say 1914 to 1920. There we sat, both crops, elbow-to-elbow, while the issues were being fought out on the stage before us. Still in my innocence I supposed this play to be a legitimate subject for polite discussion by mixed companies, parents and children, in urbane households among the educated classes. I found it wasn't! In no time at all, both sides were at it hammer and tongs, and both factions white with anger. That play split hearthstones. And there was no telling which way a given person would jump. Age was no determinant; neither was sex nor previous condition of domestic servitude or felicity: the most unlikely persons landed on the most improbable side, and landed with both feet. I make no secret of where my own sympathies lie. They lie with your generation. I grew up under that system of psychic terrorism, that imposition of hush and taboo which flourished at its most ruthless in the two decades before 1914; and no one could have loathed its falsehood, its ignobility, more than I loathed it, and loathed it even as a boy. Your generation may be forced to face death in battle anywhere from Europe to Asia, but at least you have known what it is to call your souls your own.

How the art-forms have exploded I need hardly remind you. Verse which affects a cult of unintelligibility; painting so bizarre and eccentric as to suggest the psychopathic; architecture harsh and bleak in its new vestments of ferro-concrete, sculpture that is arthritic if not dropsical,—though drama seems relatively immune from the extremities of this nervous disorder; because, I suppose, if you bore your audience they walk out. In music, written since 1926, much of that which I have heard I do not understand. The deficiency may be entirely in myself, and yet most of us know beauty when we hear it, for, to paraphrase Euripides, "Beauty is that which when heard is loved." In contemporary writing, you know that much of it is plumb illiterate. Illiterate, I mean, in the sense of the higher uses of language. Some of this I attribute to the neglect of Greek and Latin. Ignorant of the ancient languages, writers can not know their own. They are as painters who never learned to draw; as sculptors who never studied anatomy.

If I do not linger over this chaos in the

art-forms, it is not because the subject is unimportant, but because we are just now hunting bigger game. In leaving it let me quote Mr. W. G. Constable, curator of paintings at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Last autumn on a railway train coming down from Vermont we met unexpectedly and had a leisurely afternoon as seat-companions in which to thresh out this problem. We hammered it flat and we hammered it round. At the end Mr. Constable remarked:

"The artists have their World Wars from ten to twenty years ahead of everybody else."

Of the sea we expect instability, but when the ground trembles under our feet our sensation of dismay is that the very earth has failed us. Among all these earthquakes of our time, the most shattering is the earthquake in religion. The first to feel it are those whom I call the thinking classes. In periods of rapid change they are the first to outgrow their traditional beliefs. This has happened more than once in recorded history, but the classic instance is 5th century Athens. One can watch the process from Aeschylus to Plato, from the victories over Persia to the collapse of the Athenian Empire after the Peloponnesian War. It was at first a period of rapid social development and ever widening diffusion of knowledge. Myth and folklore are subjected to critical scrutiny, the validity of religious beliefs and the authenticity of their moral mandates are exposed to the challenge of philosophy and science. This procession of beacon fires kindled from mountain peak to mountain peak of the Athenian dramatists, historians, philosophers, and pioneers of science illumines the Great Age. Aeschylus is passionately concerned with religion, now a rebel against religious authority, as in *Prometheus Bound,* again on the side of divine justice, as in the *Oresteia;* Sophocles is more at ease in Zion, though still deeply concerned; Euripedes, anxious and unhappy over the clash between the old and the new epoch, makes the Athenians so uncomfortable about it so often, that they finally drive him out of their city into Macedon to write the *Bacchae* and to die. Even Aristophanes, prince of comic dramatists though he is, returns again and again to this collision between advanced ideas and inherited beliefs, until we come to Thucydides and Plato, who knew quite well that they lived in a disintegrating social system and asked themselves what they could salvage from its best thinking which would be of worth to posterity. Our present civilization, at its worthiest, is based largely on what they, their colleagues, and their successors contrived to save. I know of no age in which this recurrent crisis, when a thinking class is forced to move beyond its traditional religion, was faced as honestly or met with a wisdom equally fraught with value to the future of mankind.

Christianity arose among Galilean peasants who were never responsible for maintaining a social system. Its precepts are personal. It arose amongst a people devoid of the plastic arts. These were, in fact, forbidden by their traditional religion. It arose amongst a people devoid of science. That, too, would have been forbidden had they known what it was. It arose amongst a pastoral people with next to no technology, yet its mandates have lingered on into an age dominated by the impact of novel scientific techniques. This conflict, this dichotomy in our spiritual life, is felt by multitudes who do not know what it means and many of whom are scandalized or terrified when its meaning is pointed out to them. I cite you the experience of ancient Hellas because the Greeks are the only people in the western world who ever created from the ground up a culture on the grand scale, who ever faced with candor the problems incurred in so doing, and bequeathed to us a heritage of thought and experience which may see us through our own ordeal.

In a destructible world, where is something indestructible? Our sense of beauty has not been repealed by the Machine Age. One form of beauty is music. The paradox here is violent. What could be more fragile than music? No sooner does it sound than it is gone; no sooner it is than it is not. What is indestructible here? No one even knows what music is. It has never been seen

by human eye any more than an electron has been seen. Perhaps both are of the same stuff and perhaps their texture is the ultimate stuff of being—a mere rate of vibration. You who in youth have enjoyed the inestimable privilege of access to an art-form as participant performers in works of genius form an audience to whom I can speak freely, and that is why I am here, for you, whether aware of it or not, have had the experiences to which these ideas can be addressed. How often, as I have heard and watched you and your predecessors sing the choral parts of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony or his *Missa Solemnis,* or Bach's *B-Minor Mass* or *Matthew Passion Music,* or Brahms' *Requiem,*[2] how often have I reflected, "To have sung this music with a virtuoso orchestra and in youth must be one of the decisive events in a lifetime. A man would be one person before it, he would be another ever afterward. For no one need tell him that a world of the creative spirit exists. He has lived in it. *He knows.*"

Music is a form of religious meditation. It clears the mind, cleanses the heart, stills the chatterbox of trivial ideas, and fortifies the will. These men of genius who compose the masterworks of musical literature are able to carry us on voyages of discovery over vast interior seas to the empurpled shores of strange continents which we never could have found for ourselves and which perhaps they could never find for us a second time,

But we have felt the good ship riding free
And watched the dawn on purple islands break.

You must know from your own experience of music how it fructifies one's creative impulses. It kindles in us something akin to that which is first kindled in its composer and performers. Everything is in it from tears to laughter, from flesh to spirit, from revelry to worship. You are men; I will say it. Everything is in music from the sexual orgasm to the noblest aspirations of mankind, and every note in that infinite scale can be harmonious, beautiful and ennobling.

These are the inner sonorities. You know that in listening to music, as you hear the same work repeatedly until it is so familiar that you know what is coming from measure to measure and from note to note, the themes or tunes are the first elements which your memory retains. After that, the harmonization, the instrumental color, the inner voices. As these repeated hearings go on, first the themes are relegated to the unconscious part of one's attention: you know those anyhow, your ear hears them without trying, and it is more interesting to listen to the harmonic structure into which these themes have been wrought by an *artifex maximus*—like looking at the setting instead of at the gem which shines with such lustre that eyes take that in without effort. Finally, when both the themes and structure are so firmly grasped as no longer to need conscious attention, the ear turns to the inner sonorities of the music. These are the distinctive quality, the unique and peculiar texture of tone which can now at last speak to the imagination directly. They are perhaps what in its final essence the music is, that which the composer felt most deeply when creating it, perhaps so deeply that he was not aware of feeling it at all. These inner sonorities could have been apprehended only by his inner ear, the ear of his imagination. The excitation of imaginary images which they arouse in the listener is utterly unpredictable, is seldom if ever the same for any two persons among thousands, and even for the individual may vary from one performance to another, though they may also be sufficiently vivid the first time to become fixed with each repetition. Again, these imaginary images may seem, or be, totally irrelevant to the music. The composer has no power to govern their effects; he looses these sounds and they produce whatsoever

[2] Beauty of form may outlast acceptability of content. It is not likely that the monkish copyists found themselves completely in agreement with the comedies of Aristophanes or even with all of the Dialogues of Plato and yet these MSS survived the Middle Ages, and today the Mediaeval cathedrals make a profound aesthetic impression on those who find the theological concepts which are supposed to have inspired them abhorrent. The same may be true of music written to Biblical or missal texts. Aesthetic perceptions would appear to be more durable than ethical concepts

effects they may on the listener according to his capacities. These inner sonorities convey the deepest part of his consciousness to the deepest part of ours; they are abstract, amoral, and, like other elemental forces of nature, quite indifferent to our formal categories.

And yet they are related to the conduct of life—are themselves the conduct of life. A man's thoughts and acts are his thematic material (tunes) and harmonization; his development from childhood to maturity as a human being is the *durchfuhrung,* the working-out of his themes in sonata form, the same tunes often recurring, deepened and enriched; but the abstruse inner sonorities of him are the sum of what he has experienced, endured, conquered, lost, survived, outgrown, matured into . . . Actually that part of him which most weighs, most prevails, most goes forth into other lives, is this unconscious cumulative self of him—all that he has fought through, most of it so long ago that he has forgotten. It is this which makes him what he is: he is unaware of it: those who feel it and respond do not know what this substance is, but they do know that something is there. These are his inner sonorities, the ultimate music of his being, the full flower of his life as an art-form, and, like the inner sonorities of great music, they have passed out of their creator's custody and beyond his control. They move freely among other human beings to produce in them, not predictable results, but whatsoever responses those human beings are attuned to resonate. Tolstoy found in Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata* a novel of homicidal sexuality: others find in it only the noblest aspirations of their own souls. In these higher voltages of the spirit one is creating at levels both above and below the consciously worded thought or the consciously planned act. The totality of him goes forth and exerts itself on the totality of other personalities. They will respond at that level to which they are attuned. Perhaps this is what we mean when we say that we are not influenced by what a man says, or even by what he does, but by what he is. What he is is this totality of his being, expressed like music through his inner sonorities.

We live in a destructible world, yet somehow we must go on building. An ancient myth says that Amphion had a golden lyre given him by Hermes to whose strains the stones of Thebes rose one above another until the city walls were built. Not only must the city walls of world security, if possible, be built; some edifice of the spirit must be built also and built by us to house the soul of man in an epoch to come. That will be the labor of many brains and many hands, yet the spirit of man is not many but one, and its inner sonorities are a golden lyre which can cause the very stones to stir at the touch of Amphion, son of Zeus. For we are all sons of Zeus in that we are all created to be creators.

One summer in the 1930's being in Europe I went up to Finland to see Dr. Sibelius. He was most gracious and we had long conversations. As you probably know, he lives about twenty-five miles outside of Helsinki at a place called Jarvenpaa, which means "Lake's End." One can go out from the capital by a little train in about an hour, or by motor car in less. His villa is built of logs and stands on a knoll among pines and silver birches overlooking the lake to the westward. At the foot of this knoll but still in the grove is an assemblage of heavy out-of-door wooden chairs around a table, all of them painted white, and down here one sunny afternoon late in August Mme. Sibelius had the coffee service carried. The lake glittered under a westering sun and in the meadow close at hand peasants were reaping golden rye. In Finland the age of myth and legend is still just around the corner and doors stand open to the great winds which blow from the past out of the Kalevala, the Sagas and the Edda. Let me give you an idea of how close it is. That evening these same peasants were cooking their supper over a fire of twigs on a raised, open hearth. The hearth was like the one you see on the stage in Act I of Wagner's *Die Walküre.*

Dr. Sibelius had put on his white suit and that broad-brimmed, flat-crowned hat of tan felt which so often appears in his photographs. He was in high spirits and conversation was lively. It was about history, literature, music, philosophy, ethics, the daemonic element in the creative process, and a good deal else which I have never felt at liberty to repeat. He also talked of Goethe, Byron, Wagner, Ibsen, Emerson, Brahms, of his own preference in working hours, of what to do when the spring refuses to flow, and about his relationships with his publishers . . . Then of a sudden he was speaking of Beethoven, and of a sudden I realized that he was speaking of that *andante cantabile*, the slow movement of the B-flat Trio. He stopped speaking and began to sing. It was as though the composer, impatient of words, had found speech an impertinence in the presence of such music. The conversation ceased while he sang the theme through to its end. Then he resumed:

"And it does not end . . . The variations go on until they seem to merge into a purple horizon, and vanish."

How often since then in these dreary war-years, I have thought of him at Järvenpää, burdened with his share of his nation's and the world's grief. But I have thought also that, knowing and loving that trio of Beethoven, and having composed perhaps as great music of his own, he too must know, and far better than you or I, that although this world may be no great shakes, the future problematical, and no telling what may become of us, one thing is certain—so long as there is such music in the world, there is always something we can do about the worst that the world can do to us.

For eternal life is not a duration; it is an intensity.

An American Portrait[1]

Thomas Hart Benton

The life I lived in New York had no significance for my art. For me, as for all my kind, art was a purity divorced from the common ways of the day. Though some lip service was given to the relations of art and life, in our gatherings, and we talked of art and social idealism and discussed the effect on art of the war that raged in Europe, none of this affected what we did. We were studio painters. We were essentially Bohemians, adrift from the currents of our land and contemptuous of them. We cultivated romantic and esoteric notions and beliefs. New York's high temple of aesthetic pose and lunatic conviction was maintained by Alfred Stieglitz, the engaging and romantic photographer at 291 Fifth Avenue. In his shop, the artistic elite would gather and spout for hours on end. Up in the Bronx a rival station was maintained by John Weichsel, a learned man with Utopian urges about an abstraction called "the people" which he believed would support art if given a chance. Apart from his Utopian urges, Weichsel was a man of sound sense who held the run of conversation and discussion in his place of a saner level than was maintained downtown. Weichsel's allusions set me to reading the theoretical literature of the day, and I made the acquaintance of James, Dewey, Freud, and Karl Marx, among others.

At this time I got involved in psychological theory and worked up elaborate though confused psychological defenses of my painting. But my painting practice itself remained tied to studio habit, to an eclectic combination of classic and ultramodern ways. I did constantly improve my drawing by sketching the girl models who were always hanging around the studios looking for entertainment

[1] From *An Artist in America* by Thomas Hart Benton. Copyright 1937 by Thomas Benton. Reprinted by permission of Crown Publishers.

and by an intensive study of my own anatomy in a mirror. But I regarded drawing as an exercise existing apart from the higher abstract values of painting toward which, though I couldn't define them, I had deep hankerings. I still professed to believe, with the other young men of my entourage, that no really fine art was representative. I declared that it must convey abstract *principles* to have eternal value. I pretended to see, in those Renaissance masters I loved so much, nothing but geometrical orders. I was full of *principle* And yet, at bottom, I didn't believe in my own logic. I carried a front, but, unlike my friend Wright, I couldn't carry my professions to their logical end and paint geometrical abstractions with the facets of the spectrum.

When the time for America's entrance into the World War arrived, I was in the most confused and, secretly, depressed state of mind I had ever been in. Chicago, Paris, and New York had left me finally in a purposeless void The great cities and the "life of art" had failed me.

Tom Craven and I were living together when the news of America's mobilization plans hit the country. We were in line for the draft. We did a lot of tall thinking Neither of us relished the idea of stopping bullets. We were well aware of the fact that the country was out to defend the affairs of citizens with whom we had little or nothing in common. We could see no point in taking risks for dollars which we could never share. Weighing all the propositions in sight, from a declared pacifism to flight to Mexico, we decided that the safest and least troublesome asylum would be the Navy. Others had decided the same thing earlier than we, and we had some difficulty getting in. I was shut out, at first, because of my height. The height ruling, I suspected, was devised to keep such shirkers as myself in the soldiering business. I had no faith that it would save me when the drums began to roll. Remembering that I was the son of a Democratic politician and that we were going to war under a Democratic administration, I lit out for Washington.

I went in to see old Governor Dockery of Missouri, a friend and political crony of my father's. He was Assistant Postmaster under Wilson. Getting into his office I introduced myself. He looked me up and down with squinty eyes.

"So you're old M. E.'s boy Tom, the artist feller. . . . Well, Tom, what can I do for you?"

"Governor," I said, deciding to be frank, "I'm in line for the next draft and I don't want to interfere with the progress of any German bullets."

The old boy nearly fell out of his chair laughing. He laughed till he cried.

"Why Tom," he said, "I don't blame you. I wouldn't want to get in the way of any of them things either but what can I do. The country's at war!"

I told him I had naval ambitions. After considering the matter a little, he gave me some letters and I not only got in the Navy but in the intelligence service, where I figured things would be pretty soft. I heaved a sigh of relief and returning to New York settled down to await my call.

My call finally came, but through some mix-up in my papers it led me to the coal pile and I found myself, not in a swivel chair, but down in Virginia with a shovel, loading boats with dirty coal. This was tough. But I was strong, just thirty years old, and I could take it.

Along with all the art business in New York, I had maintained enough interest in athletics to hang around gymnasiums. I swam much in the summers and prided myself on my physical condition. Still, the coal pile was not the most desirable location for exercise, and I began looking about for ways to escape it. I noticed that a group of privileged young men hung about doing nothing. These, I found, were athletes and athletic instructors. Conniving with one who was friendly, I declared myself an athlete and escaped the pile. I paid for this escape by taking a beating every Saturday night, for the entertainment of the sailors. I set up as a boxer, and though I looked good in preparatory performance, I had poor ring psychology and got licked by boys that I should have handled

easily. After a month of this, my papers got straightened out and I found myself in Norfolk at the new naval base. I was put in the architectural service as a draftsman. Having had no training in the business I had visions of a return to the coal pile. There were thousands of them around Hampton Roads. So I set about making drawings of the base as records for the architects.

This was the most important thing that, so far, I had ever done for myself as artist. My interests became, in a flash, of an objective nature. The mechanical contrivances of building, the new airplanes, the blimps, the dredges, the ships of the base, because they were so interesting in themselves, tore me away from all my grooved habits, from my play with colored cubes and classic attenuations, from my aesthetic drivelings and morbid self-concerns. I left for good the art-for-art's-sake world in which I had hitherto lived. Although my technical habits clung for a while, I abandoned the attitudes which generated them and opened thereby a way to a world which, though always around me, I had not seen. That was the world of America.

There were forces, however, beyond blimps and airplanes which worked for a change in me. Down there in Virginia, I was thrown among boys who had never been subjected to any aesthetic virus. They were boys from the hinterlands of the Carolinas, from the Tennessee country, from all over the South, in whom I discovered, despite all the differences in our experiences, bonds of sympathy. They possessed characteristics which I had known in my childhood companions around Neosho. I got along with them easily. I realized that psychologically I was much nearer to these boys than I was to the cultivated people of the Chicago, Paris, and New York art worlds. Their egos were not of the frigid, touchy sort developed by brooding much on the importance of the self. They were objective. They were interested in things, rather than selves. With them my own secret internal animosities, which were always boiling in me against people, ideas, or pretensions, faded away. I felt perfectly natural and at ease for the first time since the old creek-bank days in Missouri.

When the War was over I came back to the city full of a cockiness that I had not known since I discovered, in Paris, that my "genius" was not a thing to be much depended upon. I had found that it was not necessary to look into myself and my "genius" to find interesting things. I had found that these things existed in the world outside myself and that it made no difference whether I had any "genius" or not. I was released from the tyranny of the prewar soul which everybody so assiduously cultivated in the world of art and which was making of it such a precious field of obscurities. I proclaimed heresies around New York, talked on the importance of subject matter, then under rigid taboos among the aesthetic elite, and ridiculed the painters of jumping cubes, of cockeyed tables, blue bowls, and bananas, who read cosmic meanings into their effusions. In a little while, I set out painting American histories in defiance of all the conventions of our art world. I talked too much, and trod on all sorts of sensibilities and made enemies But I didn't care.

Our old prewar aesthetic world had disintegrated. Its power to put a blanket of gloom over me was gone. Alfred Stieglitz had given up his 291 Fifth Avenue and the droning talk of the aesthetic soul probers he sheltered was ended. It was usually empty talk but always insidious to young artists.

Now that it is well in the past and its troublesome effects on my youth forever gone, I think sometimes of that 291 crowd with a sort of regret. It had a kind of glamorous character which I never expect to find again. I think of little quiet Abe Walkowitz so deeply serious that you could never understand anything he said, of Max Weber so in love with his own "genius" that he preserved his every brush stroke as a gift to posterity. I think of Marsden Hartley with his distressed egotism and his fishlike hand, of Leo Stein (brother of the famous Gertrude) with his keen but tortured intelligence, and of old Stieglitz himself, with his Socratic poses and his boundless, infinitely shaded egotism.

It was a picturesque crowd that Stieglitz gathered under the roof of 291. I never fitted

very well under that roof but I must give it its due for the sheltering of more intellectual curiosities than I have ever seen anywhere else.

There was Willard Huntington Wright, young enough at that time to think that he could rationalize aesthetics. He was a brother of Stanton Wright. Willard was a character in those days, before he became the famous S. S. Van Dine. He wore a square beard and was ostentatiously pro-German when that was most unpopular. He was devoted to Nietzsche and did all that was possible to live up to his conception of the iron-willed and ruthless Nietzschean superman, taking haughty attitudes with doorkeepers, elevator men, hotel flunkies, and any of his acquaintances who would stand for it. He patronized German delicatessen stores, going into them with the airs of a Junker aristocrat and combing his beard over the potato salads to the consternation of the Teutonic proprietors, who were afraid to say anything to him for fear that he might really be one of the great ones of the Fatherland over on some secret mission.

There was Traubel, who had sunk his personality into that of Walt Whitman and who lived completely in reminiscence of the master. There was the extraordinarily genteel Henry McBride, who was trying, and for that matter still is, to be the delicately cultivated wit of art criticism. And there was Cortissoz of the *Tribune,* who was so much in love with art that he never saw any of it. There was Lee Simonson, now a famous scenic designer, who runs over to Europe every summer and brings back the latest fads to incorporate into American scenic technique.

Lee in those days still thought he was a painter. He thought it on the surface, however. In his soul he was in much doubt. Stanton Wright, who had a sadistic genius for torturing the uncertain, used to turn poor Simonson inside out by telling him he looked like a Hungarian rug dealer who'd got a paint brush in his hand by mistake. I always thought Simonson looked like one of those ifrits in the *Arabian Nights* who had somehow or other escaped from the bottle in which Solomon had sealed him and who was in constant fear of being put back. Simonson had all the effrontery of the fearful-minded.

And then there was Stanton Wright, the only one for whom I had any real use in that crowd Stanton went away after the War to California. He was tired, he said, of "chasing art up the back alleys of New York." He was certainly the most intelligent fellow in the whole outfit, and the most talented. With the exception of Tom Craven, Wright was the closest friend I ever had. He was an incalculable friend in some respects. He'd get the girl I was interested in or even my mother, and, under the guise of witty conversation which would hide the lapse of good taste, let them in on all the secrets of my career. When my doings weren't interesting enough or low enough he'd embroider them. But in spite of this twist of loyalty I depended a good deal on Stanton Wright's friendship, and in spite of the mounting self-assurance that came to me after the War I had a sincere regret when he departed for the nut state.

With the dissolution of that old prewar crowd which formed the nucleus of artistic society in New York, somehow or other I began to expand and live. Their cultivated sensibilities had always affected me adversely. When I got among them I felt as if I were down cellar with a lot of toadstools. I always secretly thought they were an intellectually diseased lot but I didn't have enough confidence in myself to break with them and turn my mind out into the real world.

After the experiences of the War I got free of them—of all their sickly rationalizations, their inversions, and their God-awful self-cultivations.

. . . . .

In time I came to like Denny and Sally and their friends a great deal and looked forward to their parties. Sally, whose heart embraced the welfare of everything and everybody, induced Denny to buy my pictures and pretty soon the brocaded walls of her apartment were full of them. Every time Denny saw a new one hung he'd study it

with long, serious, and doubtful stares. When observed by any of his legal or political cronies, he'd take quick refuge in Broadway wisecracks. Denny was very skeptical about my paintings at first but in time he became proud of them and they got to be one of the main topics of conversation of his dinner table. There was one picture, a big exercise in figure arrangement, about which there was much argument for a proper title. The name *Figure Composition* didn't suit Denny's crowd, so after several sessions of hilarious and liquid discussion, the painting became known as *Basketball in Hell.* I took a lot of kidding about my pictures at Denny's but as long as I had my face over a highball I didn't mind and returned as much as was given me. Denny paid money for my pictures, Sally was continually giving Rita things for our apartment, and we lived well.

For a while I had some pretty mixed-up feelings about Denny and his kind. Their activities ran plainly into shady places, the people they brought around were frequently coarse and brutalized. But in time I came to see that in spite of this they were very human and that their extravagant sentiments had a sort of reality for them. I found that lawyers with burnt fingers and politicians with an easy sense of municipal responsibility could be very loyal and entertaining friends, and that their wisecracks never took on the malicious character of the witticisms of the artistic world. Strange as it may seem, lots of these fellows in comparing themselves with me found that I was calloused and cynical. This was because I found it impossible to share their sentimentality, or look upon their moral views as other than compensatory frauds. I was never quite able to reconcile the sweetness of their sentiments with the devious nature of their actual ways, and my undisguised and simple realism shocked them. But in spite of this I got along extraordinarily well with the most of the crowd. Maybe it was because I knew how to laugh.

One day after I had known Denny a long time he came into my studio and announced enthusiastically that he had found a way for me to turn up a lot of dough. I was to go over to a certain Tammany club, he explained, and introduce myself as the artist commissioned to do the portrait of the new alderman—who had had his instructions and would sit for me. I was to make a good snappy portrait, for the club had agreed to buy it. Denny had the idea that once such a precedent was set all the Tammany organizations in New York would be calling me in to memorialize their chiefs.

I regarded this proposition with my tongue in my cheek, but I didn't want to offend Denny or seem to spurn his generous effort to help me along, so I took my painting outfit the next day and went to the club as directed. The clubhouse was uptown just off the skirts of black Harlem. It was a conventional brownstone affair. Its window shades were drawn and it looked forbidding. I went inside. The rooms, dimly lit, were full of lounging men. Cigar and cigarette butts littered the floors. Wooden camp chairs and some big tables did for furniture. At most of the tables card games were in progress. I stood around a few minutes and looked at the faces of the men, trying to catch an eye. A low coarse set of faces they were for the most part—stupid but at the same time shrewd.

Putting my canvas and paintbox down I approached a couple of young fellows inspecting a racing sheet and asked for Mr. So-and-so, the alderman.

"Wot'cha want wid 'um?" said one.

"I'm the artist Denny sent to make his portrait," I replied. As they looked blankly and suspiciously at me, I explained the matter. Denny's name, once it became plain that I knew him, was enough to fire interest and one of the boys left for the back of the house. The other returned to his sheet. I stood around. Generally I can make some sort of talk with people, but against the dead cold indifference of the faces in this house I was dumb.

After a long time my messenger returned and took me down a flight of back stairs. He made me sit down on a bench in the basement hallway while he briskly opened and shut a door leading into a side room. In the split second that the door was open he

shouted, "Here he is, Benny!" Then he went back up stairs and left me.

I sat in the faint light of the hall for fully twenty minutes. Enraged finally, I got up and opened the side room door myself. Jammed close together, a pack of men surrounded a table in the center of the room. Some kind of game was going on but I couldn't see what it was.

"Say gentlemen," I called, "Denny So-and-so sent me down here on business. I can't wait all day. Where's the man I'm to make the picture of?"

The men about the table turned with amazed stares. There was a guffaw from inside the circle. "Aw, it's Denny's nut," a voice said. "Take care of 'um, Sam, I'll be there in a minute."

A short kinky-haired fellow disengaged himself from the circle and took me by the arm. I resisted. "Say, buddy," I said talking loud but trying to be friendly, "if it's Benny I'm to make the picture of, let's get a look at him. I can't paint if it gets dark. Denny told me everything was fixed for me here." Sensing its potency, I stressed Denny's name.

The circle of men parted and out came the very prince of young aldermen, the very archetype of young Tammany's schemers. Benny, the neighborhood political genius, took me off my feet. He was *it* so thoroughly, so completely, that without my eyes to show me I shouldn't have believed him real. He was immaculately dressed. His swank derby was cocked at the exactly correct aldermanic angle. His broken, flattened nose was squashed over his fat lips and his uptilted cigar was a silent cock's crow to the world.

"Hello there." He extended his hand with a grand good-humored air of patronage. "So you're Denny's boy. Well, anything I can do fer Denny goes easy with me. Wot's yer name?"

"Benton." I ignored his lofty manner for the magnificence of his style.

"Eyetalian?"

"No—Missouri Benton. Old Democratic family, you know." It occured to me that this might impress him but it didn't. His political background didn't extend beyond his own ward. "Denny told me," I went on, trying flattery, "that you were the up-and-coming man in this town and that your friends wanted an oil painting of you."

"That's right, that's right," he agreed. "The boys do want the pitchur. But I'm a busy man and haven't got no time so I brought some good photos fer yuh. You can do yer stuff from them and I'll come in with the boys and help you out ever once in a while. Git them photos, Sam," he commanded.

"No, no," I remonstrated as Sam produced a bulky envelope. "Let the photos go. Give me just half or three-quarters of an hour and I'll do you a real job."

Benny revolted, but with a liberal use of Denny's name and all the tricks of persuasion I could think of, I finally got him to consent to sit for me. He wanted to get back to his game and was a little self-conscious about yielding to me before his gang, but we finally proceeded to an empty room on the second floor. Sam led the way with the envelope of photographs.

"Show 'im them pitchurs, Sam," Benny commanded.

"No, no," I protested. "Just sit down and let me get started. I'll look at the pictures later."

I got Benny down in a chair, put my canvas on another, whipped out my palette and colors, and began to sketch. Benny jerked off his derby, straightened his necktie, and took his cigar out of his mouth.

"Stay as you are," I pleaded. "Put your hat back on."

Benny turned on me. "Hey, you!" A gleam of suspicion came into his eyes. "None o' that. Wot yuh think I am—a mug, to have my pitchur taken wid a hat on! This here's a clubhouse pitchur. Show 'im them photos, Sam."

Well, I had to look at the photos. As I expected, they looked more like Rudolph Valentino than Benny the alderman. His busted nose had been smoothed over and all the other marks of his picturesque individuality wiped out.

"I can do better than these," I said. "I'll make you look like a man."

"Yeah," said Benny, a little hurt.

"Yes," I urged, "just keep still and give me a chance."

Benny wouldn't put the derby back on but he settled down and I began to work as fast as I could. Sam stood behind my back. He was joined pretty soon by some of the loafers from downstairs who'd got wind of Benny's ordeal. They watched me silently I put on all the steam I could, drawing with stains of brown paint on the white canvas. I got the aldermanic head in rapidly.

Forgetting all about Denny's plan to treat this portrait as the start of a money racket, I simply painted the face in front of me as it was Absorbed, I forgot the onlookers at my back. As I put the last dent in the broken nose and was preparing some flesh tones to lay over the basic drawing, I saw the aldermanic eye look past me to his loafing henchmen. I caught the restless question in its glance and sensed the negative sign that replied. Benny jumped up and looked over my canvas.

"Hey, wot's that!" he growled indignantly. "Wot yuh think this is? Yuh think Denny sent yuh here to make a monkey out o' me?"

"What's the matter with it?" I asked, blind in my enthusiasm over my sitter's picturesque countenance.

"Git them photos, Sam."

He held one out. "That's me," he barked with crackling emphasis.

"Sure," I replied, coming out of my painter's trance and waking up to the situation, "but I'm not finished. Wait a little, I'll get you all right."

"Work from them photos till I come back. Sam and the boys'll help you." He pushed out of the room. That was the last I saw of him.

Sam spoke up. "Say, yuh don't want to make no pitchur like that. Ain't you got no respec' for a man's position? Tha's a mug you made there."

It seemed to me that there was a touch of menace in Sam's voice, veiled but positively there. I thought a minute.

"Do you think I got the shape of his head?" I asked in as conciliatory a tone as I could muster.

"A pitchur ought not to be so fat in the back of the neck," one of the ward boys behind me spoke up.

"That's right," said Sam. "A pitchur is a pitchur."

I picked up one of Benny's photographs. "Does that look like the chief?"

"That's a good pitchur," said Sam.

"But the chief has a broken nose," I insisted.

"That's a accident," replied Sam. "We don't want no pitchurs of accidents. You make the chief like he is without any accidents. You better get it fixed. The boss don't feel so good about you."

I began to feel certain that I was going to lose my sketch if I didn't do something about it. I sensed that these fellows would never let me take it out of the building. I didn't give a damn about the commission, but I wanted my young alderman.

I felt my canvas and knew that it was sufficiently absorbent to hold what I had so far done. I coated it with retouching varnish. Then deliberately taking my time so that the varnish would dry, I mixed up a lot of thick flesh-colored paint. I picked up one of the photographs and with a light touch copied it over my original. I worked an hour or more. Sam kept around me. He'd go away for a while and then come back with suggestions The other fellows left for good.

By the time it was dark I had a pretty fair copy of the photograph. I asked Sam how it was.

"It's a better pitchur but it still don't look so much like the chief," said Sam.

"You're a pretty good critic," I ventured.

"Yes," Sam agreed. "You know I'm an artist myself. I'm a barber. I'm Benny's barber. I shave him every day. I know how he looks."

"Well, I'll have to come back and finish this from the chief himself," I said. "You think we can get him to pose if I phone tomorrow? You seem to have some influence with him," I insinuated flatteringly, "maybe you can help me."

Sam responded to my suggestion of his importance. He spoke with a sort of friendliness.

"I'll help you O.K.," he said. "You just call me here at noon. I'll fix it with the chief."

I packed my stuff. "I'll have to take this home," I said, picking up my canvas, "to keep the paint from drying."

"That's O.K.," said Sam. "You call me tomorrow noon. I'll fix it for you. One mistake ain't nothin' with the boss." Then he whispered, "Don't forget who helped you out with this."

He let me out the front door.

I rushed home with my canvas. Tenderly I scraped off the surface paint with a palette knife. My original was there, blurred a little but easy to fix. While my memory was good I touched up my alderman.

That was the first of a long series of American portraits.

When Denny saw the picture he was sore.

"Can't help a nut," he said. "You threw away a gold mine."

Later, however, he confided to Sally, "Tom sure nailed that mug."

The Imperial Facade[1]

LEWIS MUMFORD

I

THE DECADE between 1890 and 1900 saw the rise of a new period in American architecture. This period had, it is true, been dimly foreshadowed by the grandiose L'Enfant, but if the superficial forms resembled those of the early republic, and if the precedents of classic architecture again became a guide, the dawning age was neither a revival nor a continuation.

In the meanwhile, fresh influences had entered. The generation of students who had studied in the Ecole des Beaux Arts after the Civil War was ready, at last, to follow the lone trail which Richard H. Hunt had blazed. Richardson's most intimate disciples reacted against the stamp of his personality and sought a more neutral mode of expression, consecrated by established canons of good taste. On top of this, the introduction of steel-cage construction removed the necessity for solid masonry, and placed a premium upon the mask. The stage was set for a new act of the drama.

All these influences shaped the style of our architecture when it arose; but the condition that gave it a substantial base was the rise of a new order in America's economic life. Up to this time, the chief industrial problem had been to improve the processes of mechanical production and to stake out new areas for exploitation. One may compare these economic advances to the separate sorties of an army operating on a wide front: any lone adventurer might take his courage in his hands and exploit an invention, or sink an oil well, if he could find it. By 1890 the frontier had closed; the major resources of the country were under the control of the monopolist; it became more important to consolidate gains than freshly to achieve them. Separate lines of railroads were welded into systems; separate steel plants and oil plants were wrought into trusts; and where monopoly did not rest upon a foundation of natural advantage, the "gentleman's agreement" began its service as a useful substitute. The popular movements which sought to challenge the forces of this new régime—the labor movement, socialism, populism—had neither analyzed the situation with sufficient care nor attracted the adherence of the majority. The defeat of Henry George as a local political candidate was symbolic: by 1888 a humane thinker like Edward Bellamy had already accepted the defeat, had embraced the idea of the trust, and had conceived a comprehensive utopia on the basis

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of letting the process of monopoly go the limit, so that finally, by a mere yank of the levers, the vast economic organizations of the country would become the "property" of the people.

The drift to the open lands came to a full pause. The land-empire had been conquered, and its overlords were waxing in power and riches; the name "millionaire" became the patent of America's new nobility. With the shift from industry to finance went a shift from the producing towns to the spending towns: architecture came to dwell in the stock exchanges, the banks, the shops, and the clubs of the metropolis; if it sought the countryside at all, it established itself in the villas that were newly laid out on hill and shore in the neighborhood of the great cities. The keys to this period are opulence and magnitude: "money to burn."

These years witnessed what the Roman historian, Ferrero, has called a *"véritable recommencement d'histoire."* In the new centers of privilege there arose a scale of living and a mode of architecture which, with all its attendant miseries, depletions, and exploitations, recalled the Rome of the first and second centuries after Christ. It is needless to say that vast acres of buildings, factories, shops, homes, were erected which had no relation at all to the imperial régime for not everyone participated in either the benefits or the depressions that attended the growth of monopoly; but the accent of this period, the dominant note, was an imperial one. While the commonplace building of the time cannot be ignored, it remains, so to say, out of the picture.

II

Hardly had the process of concentration and consolidation begun before the proper form manifested itself. The occasion for its appearance was the World's Columbian Exposition, opened in 1893. In creating this fair, the enterprise and capacity for organization which the architects of Chicago had applied to the construction of the skyscraper transformed the unkempt wilderness of Jackson Park into the Great White City in the space of two short years. Here the architects of the country, particularly of New York and Chicago, appeared for the first time as a united profession, or, to speak more accurately, as a college. Led by the New Yorkers, who had come more decisively under European influence, they brought to this exposition the combination of skill and taste in all the departments of the work that had, two centuries earlier, created the magnificent formalities of Versailles. There was unity of plan in the grouping of the main buildings about the lagoon; there was unity of tone and color in the gleaming white façades, there was unity of effect in the use of classic orders and classic forms of decoration. Lacking any genuine unity of ideas and purposes—for Root had initially conceived of a variegated oriental setting—the architects of the exposition had achieved the effects of unity by subordinating their work to an established precedent. They chanted a Roman litany above the Babel of individual styles. It was a capital triumph of the academic imagination. If these main buildings were architecture, America had never seen so much of it at one time before. Even that belated Greco-Puritan, Mr. Charles Eliot Norton, was warm in praise.

It would be foolish to quarrel with the style that was chosen for these exposition buildings, or to deny its propriety. Messrs. McKim, White, Hunt, and Burnham divined that they were fated to serve Renaissance despots and emperors with more than Roman power, and unerringly they chose the proper form for their activities. Whereas Rome had cast its spell over the architects of the early Renaissance because they wished once more to enter into its life, the life of its sages and poets and artists, it attracted the architects of the White City because of its external features—because of its stereotyped canons and rules—because of the relatively small number of choices it offered for a lapse in taste—because of its skill in conspicuous waste, and because of that very noncommittal quality in its massive forms which permitted the basilica to become a church, or the temple to become a modern bank.

Of all the Renaissance architects, their impulses and interests were nearest, perhaps,

to Robert Adam, whose church at West Wycombe could be turned into a ballroom by the simple act of removing the pews, and permitting the gay walls and decorations to speak for themselves. Behind the white staff façade of the World's Fair buildings was the steel and glass structure of the engineer. the building spoke one language and the "architecture" another. If the coming of the skyscraper had turned masonry into veneer, here was a mode of architecture which was little but veneer.

In their place, at the Fair, these classic buildings were all that could be demanded: Mr. Geoffrey Scott's defense of the Baroque, in *The Architecture of Humanism,* applies particularly to its essential manifestations in the Garden and the Theater—and why not in the Fair? Form and function, ornament and design, have no inherent relation, one with the other, when the mood of the architect is merely playful: there is no use in discussing the anatomy of architecture when its only aim is fancy dress. As a mask, as a caprice, the classic orders are as justifiable as the icing on a birthday cake. they divert the eye without damaging the structure that they conceal. Unfortunately, the architecture of the Renaissance has a tendency to imitate the haughty queen who advised the commons to eat cake. Logically, it demands that a Wall Street clerk shall live like a Lombardy prince, that a factory shall be subordinated to esthetic contemplation; and since these things are impossible, it permits "mere building" to become illiterate and vulgar below the standards of the most debased vernacular. Correct in proportion, elegant in detail, courteous in relation to each other, the buildings of the World's Fair were, nevertheless, only the simulacra of a living architecture: they were the concentrated expression of an age which sought to produce "values" rather than goods. In comparison with this new style, the romanticism of the Victorian Age, with its avid respect for the medieval building traditions, was honesty and dignity itself.

The Roman precedent, modified by the work of Louis XIV and Napoleon III, by Le Nôtre and Haussmann, formed the basis not merely for the World's Fair, but for the host of city plans that were produced in the two decades that followed. It seemed for a while as if the architect might take the place of the engineer as city planner, and that the mangled regularity of the engineer's grid-iron plan, laid down without respect to topographic advantage or to use, might be definitely supplanted in the remodeled central districts and in the new extensions and suburbs of the American city. The evil of the World's Fair triumph was that it suggested to the civic enthusiast that every city might become a fair: it introduced the notion of the City Beautiful as a sort of municipal cosmetic, and reduced the work of the architect to that of putting a pleasing front upon the scrappy building, upon the monotonous streets and the mean houses, that characterized vast areas in the newer and larger cities.

If the engineer who had devoted himself to sewers and street-plans alone had been superficial, the architectural city planner who centered attention upon parkways alone, grand avenues alone, and squares like the Place de l'Etoile alone, was equally superficial. The civic center and the parkway represented the better and more constructive side of this effort: in Cleveland, in Pittsburgh, in Springfield, Mass., harmonious groups of white buildings raised their heads above the tangle of commercial traffic, and in the restoration of L'Enfant's plan for Washington, the realities of the imperial régime at length caught up with the dreamer born out of his due time. A good many of these plans, however, were pathetically immature. One of the reports for Manhattan, for example, devoted pages and pages to showing the improvement that would follow the demolition of the wall around Central Park —and the importance of clipped trees in the design of grand avenues!

Plainly, the architect did not face with sufficient realism the colossal task with which he was confronted in the renovation of the city. He accepted his improvements too much at the value placed upon them by the leaders of Big Business—as a creator of land-values, as an element in increasing the commercial attractiveness of the city. Did

not Mr. Daniel Burnham himself point to the improvements in Periclean Athens, not as the embodiment of Athenian citizenship and religion at its highest point, but as a measure for increasing the attractiveness of the city to visitors from abroad? Cut off from his true function to serve and beautify the community, made an accessory of business itself, like the merest salesman or advertising agent, it is no wonder that the architect speedily lost his leadership, and that the initiative went once again into the hands of the engineer.

The main merit of all these efforts to perpetuate the World's Fair is that they sought to achieve some of the dignity and decisiveness of the formal plan Their weakness was that they neglected new elements, like the billboard, the skysign, the subway, the tall building, which undermined the effects of the plan even when it was achieved. In their efforts to escape from the welter of misguided commercial enterprise, the advocates of the city beautiful placed too great reliance upon spots of outward order and decency; they took refuge in the paper symmetry of axial avenues and round-points, as one finds them in Haussmann's Paris, and neglected the deeper and more genuine beauties of, let us say, the High Street in Oxford or Chipping Camden, or of many another European town that had achieved completion in its essentials before the nineteenth century.

In short, the advocates of the city beautiful sought a remedy on paper which could be purchased only by a thorough reorganization of the community's life. If all this applies to the better side of the World's Fair, it touches even more emphatically the worse.

The twenty years between 1890 and 1910 saw the complete rehabilitation of the Roman mode, as the very cloak and costume of imperial enterprise. The main effort of architecture was to give an effect of dignity and permanence to the façades of the principal thoroughfares: the public buildings must dominate the compositions, numerous boulevards and avenues must concentrate the traffic at certain points and guide the stranger to the markets and amusements: where possible, as in the Chicago plan, by Messrs. Burnham and Bennett, avenues must be cut through the gridiron pattern of blocks in order to achieve these effects. If this imperial street system is somewhat arbitrary, and if the necessary work of grading, filling, demolishing, and purchasing existing property rights is extremely costly, the end, nevertheless, justifies the means—the architecture impresses and awes a populace that shares vicariously in its glories. Should the effect prove a little too austere and formidable, the monuments will be offset with circuses and hippodromes.

In all this, the World's Fair was a precise and classic example, for it reproduced in miniature the imperial order. When the panic of 1893 kept people away from the exhibitions of art, industry, and culture, sideshows were promptly introduced by the astute organizers. Beyond the serene classic façades, which recalled the elevation of a Marcus Aurelius, sprawled the barkers, the freaks, and the tricksters, whose gaudy booths might have reminded the spectator of the other side of the imperial shield—the gaminism of Petronius Arbiter. The transformation of these white façades into the Gay White Ways came during the next decade; whilst the sideshows achieved a separate existence as "Coney Island." On top of this came the development of the mildly gladiatorial spectacles of football and baseball: at first invented for playful exercise, they became a standard means of exhibition by more or less professional performers. The erection of numerous amphitheaters and arenas, such as the Yale Bowl, the Harvard Stadium, the Lewisohn Stadium, and their counterparts in the West, rounded out the imperial spectacle.

By a happy congruence of forces, the large-scale manufacture of Portland cement, and the reintroduction of the Roman method of concrete construction, came during the same period. Can anyone contemplate this scene and still fancy that imperialism was nothing more than a move for foreign markets and territories of exploitation? On the contrary, it was a tendency that expressed itself in every department of Western civilization,

and if it appears most naked, perhaps, in America, that is only because, as in the earlier periods, there was so little here to stand in its way. Mr. Louis Sullivan might well complain, in *The Autobiography of an Idea*, that imperialism stifled the more creative modes of architecture which might have derived from our fine achievements in science, from our tentative experiments in democracy. It seems inevitable, however, that the dominant fact in our civilization should stamp the most important monuments and buildings with its image. In justice to the great professors of the classic style, Messrs. McKim and Burnham and Carrere and Hastings, one must admit that the age shaped them and chose them and used them for its ends. Their mode of building was almost unescapably determined by the milieu in which they worked.

The change in the social scene which favored an imperial setting was not without its effects upon the industries that supplied the materials for architecture, and upon the processes of building itself. Financial concentration in the stone quarries, for example, was abetted by the creation of a national system of rail transportation, and partly, perhaps, by the elaboration of the mechanical equipment for cutting and trimming stone beyond a point where a small plant could work economically. The result was that during this period numerous small local quarries, which had been called into existence by Richardson's fine eye for color contrasts, were allowed to lapse. Vermont marble and Indiana limestone served better the traditions that had been created in the White City.

The carrying of coals to Newcastle is always a pathetic practice; it remained for the imperial age to make it a subject for boasting. Just as many Connecticut towns whose nearby fields are full of excellent granite boulders, boast a bank or a library of remote marble, so New York City, which has a solid foundation of schist, gneiss, and limestone, can point to only a handful of buildings, notably the College of the City of New York and Mr. Goodhue's Church of the Intercession, in which these excellent local materials were used. The curious result of being able by means of railway transportation to draw upon the ends of the earth for materials has been, not variety, but monotony. Under the imperial order the architect was forced to design structures that were identical in style, treatment, and material, though they were placed thousands of miles apart and differed in every important function. This ignorance of regional resources is not incompatible with grand effects, or even on occasion with decently good architecture. But it does not profit that fine adaptation to site, that justness of proportion in the size of window and slope of roof, which is an earnest of the architect's mastery of the local situation. Substitute Manila for the military colony of Timgad, or Los Angeles for Alexandria, and it is plain that we have here another aspect of Ferrero's generalization. Even architects whose place of work was nearer to the site of their buildings were, nevertheless, compelled to copy the style of the more successful practitioners, in New York and Chicago.

In government, in industry, in architecture, the imperial age was one. The underlying policy of imperialism is to exploit the life and resources of separate regions for the benefit of the holders of privilege in the capital city. Under this rule, all roads lead literally to Rome. While, as the German historian, W. H. Riehl, points out, the provincial highroads served to bring the city out into the countryside, the railroads served to bring the major cities together and to drain the products of rural regions into the metropolis. It was no accident that the great triumphs of American architecture during the imperial period were the railroad stations; particularly the Pennsylvania and the Grand Central in New York, and the Union Station in Washington. Nor is it by mere chance that the Washington and the Pennsylvania stations are the monuments to two architects, McKim and Burnham, who worshiped most wholeheartedly at the imperial shrine. With capital insight, these men established the American Academy at Rome: they recognized their home.

Esthetically considered, it is true, perhaps, that the finest element in the Pennsylvania station is the train hall, where the architect

has dealt sincerely with his steel elements and has not permitted himself to cast a fond, retrospective eye upon the Roman baths. When all allowances are made, however, there remains less for criticism in the railway stations and the stadiums—those genuinely Roman bequests—than in any of the other imperial monuments. Indeed, so well does Roman architecture lend itself to the railroad station that one of the prime virtues of such a building, namely, ease of circulation, was even communicated to the New York Public Library, where it is nothing but a nuisance, since it both increases the amount of noise and diminishes the amount of space for reading rooms that are already overcrowded.

Here, indeed, is the capital defect of an established and formalized mode: it tends to make the architect think of a new problem in terms of an old solution for a different problem. Mr. Charles McKim, for example, found himself hampered in competition over the New York Public Library because the demands of the librarian for a convenient and expeditious administration of his business interfered with the full-blown conception which Mr. McKim had in mind. All this happened after years of demonstration in the Boston Library of Messrs. McKim and White's failure to meet that problem squarely; and it apparently was not affected by Mr. McKim's experience with the great Columbia Library, which has ample space for everything except books. In short, the classic style served well enough only when the building to be erected had some direct relation to the needs and interests of the Roman world—the concourse of idlers in the baths or the tiers of spectators in the circuses and hippodromes. When it came face to face with our own day, it had but little to say, and it said that badly, as anyone who will patiently examine the superimposed orders on the American Telegraph Building in New York will discover for himself.

III

With the transition from republican to imperial Rome, numerous monuments were erected to the Divine Caesar. Within a much shorter time than marked the growth of the imperial tradition in America, a similar edification of patriotic memories took place.

In the restoration of the original plan of Washington, which began in 1901, the axis of the plan was so altered as to make it pass through the Washington Monument; and at the same time the place of the Lincoln Memorial, designed by the late Mr. Henry Bacon, a pupil of Mr. McKim's, was assigned. This was the first of a whole series of temples devoted to the national deities. In the Lincoln Memorial, in the McKinley Memorial at Niles, Ohio, in the Hall of Fame at New York University, and in their prototype, Grant's Tomb, one feels not the living beauty of our American past, but the mortuary air of archæology. The America that Lincoln was bred in, the homespun and humane and humorous America that he wished to preserve, has nothing in common with the sedulously classic monument that was erected to his memory. Who lives in that shrine, I wonder—Lincoln, or the men who conceived it: the leader who beheld the mournful victory of the Civil War, or the generation that took pleasure in the mean triumph of the Spanish-American exploit, and placed the imperial standard in the Philippines and the Caribbean?

On the plane of private citizenship a similar movement took place: while before 1890 one can count the tombs in our cemeteries that boast loudly of the owner's earthly possessions and power, from that time onward the miniature temple-mausoleum becomes more and more frequent. In fact, an entire history of architecture could be deduced from our cemeteries; all that has so far been described could be marked in the progress from the simple slab, carved in almost Attic purity with a weeping willow or a cubistic cherub, that characterized the eighteenth century, to the bad lettering and the more awkward headstones of the early nineteenth century; and from this to the introduction of polished granite and iron ornament in the post-Civil War cemetery, down to the mechanically perfect mausoleum, where the corpses are packed like the occupants of a subway train, that some of our more effu-

sively progressive communities boast of today. As we live, so we die: no wonder Shelley described Hell as a place much like London.

The Roman development of New York, Chicago, Washington, and the lesser metropolises, had an important effect upon the homes of the people. Historically, the imperial monument and the slum-tenement go hand in hand. The same process that creates an unearned increment for the landlords who possess favored sites, contributes a generous quota—which might be called the unearned excrement—of depression, overcrowding, and bad living, in the dormitory districts of the city. This had happened in imperial Rome; it had happened again in Paris under Napoleon III, where Haussmann's sweeping reconstructions created new slums in the districts behind the grand avenues, quite as bad, if far less obvious, as those that had been cleared away; and it happened once again in our American cities Whereas in Rome a certain limit, however, was placed upon the expansion of the city because of the low development of vehicular traffic, the rise of mechanical transportation placed no bounds at all on the American city. If Rome was forced to create huge engineering projects like aqueducts and sewers in order to cleanse the inhabitants and remove the offal of its congested districts, the American city followed the example of the modern Romes like London and Paris by devising man-sewers, in which the mass of plebians could be daily drained back and forth between their dormitories and their factories.

So far from relieving congestion, these colossal pieces of engineering only made more of it possible: by pouring more feeder lines into the central district of New York, Boston, Chicago, or where you will, rapid transit increased the housing congestion at one end and the business-congestion at the other. As for the primary sewer system devised for the imperial metropolis, it could scarcely even claim, with rapid transit, that it was a valuable commercial investment. The water outlets of New York are so thoroughly polluted that not merely have the shad and the oyster beds vanished from the Hudson River, where both once flourished, but it is a serious question whether the tides can continue to transport their vast load of sewage without a preliminary reduction of its content. Like the extension of the water conduits into the Adirondacks, all these necessary little improvements add to the per capita cost of living in an imperial metropolis, without providing a single benefit that a smaller city with no need for such improvements does not enjoy. In the matter of public parks, for example, the Committee on Congestion in New York, in 1911, calculated that the park space needed for the East Side alone, on the scale provided by the city of Hartford, would be greater than the entire area of Manhattan Island. In short, even for its bare utilitarian requirements, the mass-city, as the Germans call it, costs more and gives less than communities which have not had imperial greatness inflicted upon them

As to the more positive improvements under the imperial régime, history leaves no doubt as to their dubious character, and current observation only reenforces history's lesson. In discussing the growth of the tenement in Rome after the Great Fire, Friedlander says:

"The motives for piling up stories were as strong as ever: the site for Caesar's Forum had cost over £875,000 compensation to tenants and ground landlords. Rome had loftier houses than the modern capital. A disproportionately large part of the area available for building was monopolized by the few, in consequence of the waste of space in the plethoric architecture of the day, and a very considerable portion was swallowed up by the public places, such as the imperial forums, which took up six hectares, as well as by the traffic regulations and extensions of the streets. The transformation and decoration of Rome by the Cæsars enhanced the scarcity of housing, as did Napoleon III's improvements in Paris. A further adjutory cause of the increase in the price of dwellings was the habit of speculation in house property (which Crassus had practiced in great style) and the monopoly of the proprietors, in consequence of which houses were let and sublet."

It would be tedious to draw out the paral-

lel: given similar social conditions in America we have not been able to escape the same social results, even down to the fact that the palliatives of private philanthropy flourish here again as they had not flourished anywhere on the same scale since the Roman Empire. So much for imperial greatness When an architect like Mr Edward Bennett can say, as he did in *The Significance of the Fine Arts*: "House the people densely, if necessary, but conserve great areas for recreation," we need not be in doubt as to who will profit by the density and who will profit, at the other end, by the recreation. It is not merely that the park must be produced to remedy the congestion· it is even more that the congestion must be produced• in order to provide for the park. To profit by both the disease and the remedy is one of the masterstrokes of imperialist enterprise. Mr. Daniel Burnham said of the World's Fair, according to Mr. Bennett and Mr. Charles Moore, "that it is what the Romans would have wished to create in permanent form." One may say of our imperial cities that they are what the Romans did create—but whether the form will be permanent or not is a matter we may leave to the sardonic attentions of history.

For my own part, I think we have at last acquired a criterion which will enable us to sum up the architecture of the imperial age, and deal justly with these railroad stations and stadiums, these sewers and circuses, these aqueducts and parkways and grand avenues. Our imperial architecture is an architecture of compensation: it provides grandiloquent stones for people who have been deprived of bread and sunlight and all that keeps man from becoming vile. Behind the monumental façades of our metropolises trudges a landless proletariat, doomed to the servile routine of the factory system; and beyond the great cities lies a countryside whose goods are drained away, whose children are uprooted from the soil on the prospect of easy gain and endless amusements, and whose remaining cultivators are steadily drifting into the ranks of an abject tenantry. This is not a casual observation: it is the translation of the last three census reports into plain English. Can one take the pretensions of this architecture seriously; can one worry about its esthetics or take full delight in such finer forms as Mr. Pope's Temple of the Scottish Rite in Washington, or Mr. Bacon's Lincoln Memorial? Yes, perhaps—if one refuses to look beyond the mask.

Even in some of its proudest buildings, the imperial show wears thin, and one need not peer into the slums beyond in order to realize its defects. The rear of the Metropolitan Museum or the Brooklyn Museum, for example, might be the rear of a row of Bronx tenements or Long Island City factories, so gaunt and barren and hideous is their aspect. If the imperial age was foreshadowed in the World's Fair, it has received its apotheosis in the museum. In contrast to the local museums one still finds occasionally in Europe, which are little more than extensions of the local curio cabinet, the imperial museum is essentially a loot-heap, a comprehensive repository for plunder. The sage Viollet-le-Duc once patly said that he preferred to see his apples hanging on a tree, rather than arranged in rows in the fruit shop: but the animus of the museum is to value the plucked fruit more than the tree that bore it.

Into the museum come the *disjecta membra* of other lands, other cultures, other civilizations All that had once been a living faith and practice is here reduced to a separate specimen, pattern, or form. For the museum, the world of art has already been created: the future is restricted to a duplication of the perfected past. This animus is identic with that which made the Romans so skillful in copying Greek statues and so dull in carving their own; a desirable habit of humility were it not for the fact that the works of art in the past could not have been created had our ancestors been so punctual in respect to finished designs. The one thing the museum cannot attempt to do is to supply a soil for living art: all that it can present is a pattern for reproduction. To the extent that an insincere or imitative art is better than no art at all, the Imperial Age marked an advance: to the extent, however, that a living art is a fresh gesture of

the spirit, the museum confessed all too plainly that the age had no fresh gestures to make; on that score, it was a failure, and the copying of period furniture and the design of period architecture were the livid proofs of that failure.

The museum is a manifestation of our curiosity, our acquisitiveness, our essentially predatory culture; and these qualities were copiously exhibited in the architecture of imperialism. It would be foolish to reproach the great run of architects for exploiting the characteristics of their age; for even those who in belief and design have remained outside the age—such resolute advocates of a medieval policy as Dr. Ralph Adams Cram—have not been able to divert its currents. In so far as we have learned to care more for empire than for a community of freemen, living the good life, more for dominion over palm and pine than for the humane discipline of ourselves, the architect has but enshrined our desires. The opulence, the waste of resources and energies, the perversion of human effort represented in this architecture are but the outcome of our general scheme of working and living. Architecture, like government, is about as good as a community deserves. The shell that we create for ourselves marks our spiritual development as plainly as that of a snail denotes its species. If sometimes architecture becomes frozen music, we have ourselves to thank when it is a pompous blare of meaningless sounds.

7

Meeting the Occasion

Nothing is harder for most students in high school or the first year of college than writing a theme of so many words "on one of the following topics." This is a kind of contrived "occasion." Some few students are resourceful enough to meet it intelligently and come out with at least a passing mark. They are all getting experience for the times when they will be called upon to speak and will be reported as uttering a "few well-chosen words."

More often than not a speaker or writer, when solicited, does a little genteel fumbling, recovers a bit, utters the expected in perfunctory manner, and retires as gracefully as possible. Classic examples are the king's birthday and the New Year's poems which until Tennyson were the task of English poets laureate. Funeral and memorial orations are generally as undistinguished work as can be found in any language. But Spenser's marriage hymns and Milton's *Lycidas* endure. In plays, two excellent speeches for the occasion are Mark Antony's over Caesar in *Julius Caesar* and the disastrous speech of Coriolanus in the play of that name. But one needs neither verse nor the theatre for illustrious examples. Such are the speech of Patrick Henry and the Declaration of Independence.

There were two speeches made on one occasion at Gettysburg. Abraham Lincoln and a famous orator delivered them. That by the latter was well arranged and delivered; the sentiments were fitting. Perhaps no other pro-

fessional speaker could have done better. But Lincoln could. The greatest speeches, like Lincoln's, and the enduring letters and poems and editorials and proclamations do more than merely meet the occasion. One senses in them something prepared unconsciously over a long while, so that the ultimate request is but a pressing of the button which affords release. Emerson's "The American Scholar" ranks with Lincoln's address in its extraordinary appropriateness. It is another declaration of independence that had been waiting its occasion for utterance. Phi Beta Kappa poems and addresses are generally good, since the speakers are carefully chosen, but few have the inspiring quality of Emerson's "Scholar."

In the greatest of these responses something of central importance to the speaker or writer is stirred into expression, and the pattern of a man's whole absorption over a period of time comes clear. He and his whole culture are almost startlingly revealed. So was it in the Exposition speech of Booker T. Washington at Atlanta in 1895. This was no mere adroit side-stepping of the wrong remarks and uttering of the ephemeral. Through this sincere, impassioned speech breathes Washington's whole way of living, the way of the visionary who is still fully aware of his social heritage, and of what it means that he has been asked to speak at all. Patterns of living reveal themselves in the private letter of Vanzetti and the inaugural address of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Interchange these occasions and thus put these three men in different situations—they would not have produced communication so significant and so much more than merely appropriate. The way times and the man make the occasion an opportunity is at times almost breathtaking. Our minds tell us it is all a matter of lucky chance, nothing mystical about it. But the whole exciting result on certain occasions is hard to explain rationally.

We can return, though, to the idea that the rightness of a speech or a piece of writing comes not overnight but out of a way of life. That is why the Thanksgiving proclamations of Governor Wilbur T. Cross were so superior—think how many such proclamations have been issued and forgotten! It was a way of life that forced young Wendell Phillips to abandon his set speech at the Lovejoy meeting in Faneuil Hall and rise to his feet out of turn, with an impromptu reply to another's challenge. That other was to Phillips so anti-American and so wrong that his whole being met the challenge. A kind of philosophy of life and love and death enabled Alexander Woollcott to write that remarkable letter to his dead sister's friend. For years William Allen White's life ran apparently in two parallel grooves—his newspaper work and his happy life as husband and father. There came a time when those courses crossed, and Mr. White was ready. His readiness was not achieved overnight, or by any conscious preparation.

Because he is an editor or governor or President, because he must defend a faith (like Vanzetti or Plato's Socrates), a man is called upon to speak or write. For greatness of utterance on such occasions, for thought and expression transcending the ordinary, his whole life until that time is tested—his philosophy of good and evil, of what is important and what is not, or what passes and what is permanent; his studying and thinking over years; his imagination about himself and those to whom he speaks. The test of the result is how long it endures beyond the casual hour.

The Declaration of Independence[1]

PREAMBLE

WHEN, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government.

SPECIFIC CHARGES AGAINST THE KING

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:

He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained, and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative Houses repeatedly for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the State remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the dangers of invasions from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners,

[1] The unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America, made in Congress, July 4, 1776.

refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our Legislatures

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments;

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war; in peace, friends.

CONCLUSION AND DECLARATION

WE, THEREFORE, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as free and independent States they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent States may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

The Apology of Socrates[1]

PLATO

THERE ARE many reasons why I am not grieved, O men of Athens, at the vote of condemnation. I expected this, and am only surprised that the votes are so nearly equal, for I had thought that the majority against me would have been far larger; but now, had thirty votes gone over to the other side, I should have been acquitted. And I may say that I have escaped Meletus. And I may say more; for without the assistance of Anytus and Lycon, he would not have had a fifth part of the votes, as the law requires, in which case he would have incurred a fine of a thousand drachmæ, as is evident.

And so he proposes death as the penalty. And what shall I propose on my part, O men of Athens? Clearly that which is my due. And what is that which I ought to pay or to receive? What shall be done to the man who has never had the wit to be idle during his whole life, but has been careless of what the many care about—wealth and family interests, and military offices, and speaking in the assembly, and magistracies, and plots, and parties. Reflecting that I was really too honest a man to follow in this way and live, I did not go where I could do no good to you or to myself; but where I could do the greatest good privately to every one of you, thither I went, and sought to persuade every man among you that he must look to himself, and seek virtue and wisdom before he looks to his private interests, and look to the State before he looks to the interests of the State; and that this should be the order which he observes in all his actions. What shall be done to such a one? Doubtless some good thing, O men of Athens, if he has his reward; and the good should be of a kind suitable to him. What would be a reward suitable to a poor man who is your benefactor, who desires leisure that he may instruct you? There can be no more fitting reward than maintenance in the Prytaneum, O men of Athens, a reward which he deserves far more than the citizen who has won the prize at Olympia in the horse or chariot race, whether the chariots were drawn by two horses or by many. For I am in want, and he has enough; and he only gives you the appearance of happiness, and I give you the reality. And if I am to estimate the penalty justly, I say that maintenance in the Prytaneum is the just return.

Perhaps you may think that I am braving you in saying this, as in what I said before about the tears and prayers. But that is not the case. I speak rather because I am convinced that I never intentionally wronged anyone, although I cannot convince you of

[1] Translated by Benjamin F. Jowett.

that—for we have had a short conversation only; but if there were a law at Athens, such as there is in other cities, that a capital cause should not be decided in one day, then I believe that I should have convinced you; but now the time is too short. I cannot in a moment refute great slanders; and, as I am convinced that I never wronged another, I will assuredly not wrong myself. I will not say of myself that I deserve any evil, or propose any penalty. Why should I? Because I am afraid of the penalty of death which Meletus proposes? When I do not know whether death is a good or an evil, why should I propose a penalty which would certainly be an evil? Shall I say imprisonment? And why should I live in prison, and be the slave of the magistrates of the year —of the Eleven? Or shall the penalty be a fine, and imprisonment until the fine is paid? There is the same objection. I should have to lie in prison, for money I have none, and I cannot pay. And if I say exile (and this may possibly be the penalty which you will affix), I must indeed be blinded by the love of life if I were to consider that when you, who are my own citizens, cannot endure my discourses and words, and have found them so grievous and odious that you would fain have done with them, others are likely to endure me. No, indeed, men of Athens, that is not very likely. And what a life should I lead, at my age, wandering from city to city, living in ever-changing exile, and always being driven out! For I am quite sure that into whatever place I go, as here so also there, the young men will come to me; and if I drive them away, their elders will drive me out at their desire: and if I let them come, their fathers and friends will drive me out for their sakes.

Someone will say: Yes, Socrates, but cannot you hold your tongue, and then you may go into a foreign city, and no one will interfere with you? Now I have great difficulty in making you understand my answer to this. For if I tell you that this would be a disobedience to a divine command, and therefore that I cannot hold my tongue, you will not believe that I am serious; and if I say again that the greatest good of man is daily to converse about virtue, and all that concerning which you hear me examining myself and others, and that the life which is unexamined is not worth living—that you are still less likely to believe. And yet what I say is true, although a thing of which it is hard for me to persuade you. Moreover, I am not accustomed to think that I deserve any punishment. Had I money I might have proposed to give you what I had, and have been none the worse. But you see that I have none, and can only ask you to proportion the fine to my means. However, I think that I could afford a mina, and therefore, I propose that penalty: Plato, Crito, Critobulus, and Apollodorus, my friends here, bid me say thirty minæ, and they will be the sureties. Well then, say thirty minæ, let that be the penalty; for that they will be ample security to you.

Not much time will be gained, O Athenians, in return for the evil name which you will get from the detractors of the city, who will say that you killed Socrates, a wise man; for they will call me wise even although I am not wise when they want to reproach you. If you had waited a little while, your desire would have been fulfilled in the course of nature. For I am far advanced in years, as you may perceive and not far from death. I am speaking now only to those of you who have condemned me to death. And I have another thing to say to them: You think that I was convinced through deficiency of words —I mean, that if I had thought fit to leave nothing undone, nothing unsaid, I might have gained an acquittal. Not so; the deficiency which led to my conviction was not of words—certainly not. But I had not the boldness or impudence or inclination to address you, weeping and wailing and lamenting, and saying and doing many things which you have been accustomed to hear from others, and which, as I say, are unworthy of me. But I thought that I ought not to do anything common or mean in the hour of danger: nor do I now repent of the manner of my defense, and I would rather die having spoken after my manner, than speak in your manner and live. For neither in war nor yet at law ought any man

to use every way of escaping death. For often in battle there is no doubt that if a man will throw away his arms, and fall on his knees before his pursuers, he may escape death; and in other dangers there are other ways of escaping death, if a man is willing to say and do anything. The difficulty, my friends, is not in avoiding death, but in avoiding unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death. I am old and move slowly, and the slower runner has overtaken me, and my accusers are keen and quick, and the faster runner, who is unrighteousness, has overtaken them. And now I depart hence condemned by you to suffer the penalty of death, and they, too, go their ways condemned by the truth to suffer the penalty of villainy and wrong; and I must abide by my award—let them abide by theirs I suppose that these things may be regarded as fated—and I think that they are well.

And now, O men who have condemned me, I would fain prophesy to you; for I am about to die, and that is the hour in which men are gifted with prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who are my murderers, that immediately after my death punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you. Me you have killed because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of your lives. But that will not be as you suppose: far otherwise. For I say that there will be more accusers of you than there are now; accusers whom hitherto I have restrained. and as they are younger they will be more severe with you, and you will be more offended at them. For if you think that by killing men you can avoid the accuser censuring your lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honorable; the easiest and noblest way is not to be crushing others, but to be improving yourselves. This is the prophecy which I utter before my departure, to the judges who have condemned me.

Friends, who would have acquitted me, I would like also to talk with you about this thing which has happened, while the magistrates are busy, and before I go to the place at which I must die. Stay then awhile, for we may as well talk with one another while there is time. You are my friends, and I should like to show you the meaning of this event which has happened to me. O my judges—for you I may truly call judges—I should like to tell you of a wonderful circumstance. Hitherto the familiar oracle within me has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error about anything, and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition, either as I was leaving my house and going out in the morning, or when I was going up into this court, or while I was speaking, at anything which I was going to say; and yet I have often been stopped in the middle of a speech; but now in nothing I either said or did touching this matter has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this? I will tell you. I regard this as a proof that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. This is a great proof to me of what I am saying, for the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good.

Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good, for one of two things: either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by the sight of dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private man, but even the great king, will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others. Now if death is like this,

I say that to die, is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead are, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this? If indeed when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered from the professors of justice in this world, and finds the true judges who are said to give judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Æacus and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life, that pilgrimage will be worth making. What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musæus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I, too, shall have a wonderful interest in a place where I can converse with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and other heroes of old, who have suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasure, as I think, in comparing my own sufferings with theirs. Above all, I shall be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge, as in this world, so also in that, I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus or Sisyphus, of numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions! For in that world they do not put a man to death for this; certainly not. For besides being happier in that world than in this, they will be immortal, if what is said is true.

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth—that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that to die and be released was better for me; and therefore the oracle gave no sign. For which reason also, I am not angry with my accusers, or my condemners, they have done me no harm, although neither of them meant to do me any good, and for this I may gently blame them.

Still I have a favor to ask of them. When my sons are grown up, I would ask you, O my friends, to punish them; and I would have you trouble them, as I have troubled you, if they seem to care about riches, or anything, more than about virtue; or if they pretend to be something when they are really nothing—then reprove them, as I have reproved you, for not caring about that for which they ought to care, and thinking that they are something when they are really nothing. And if you do this, I and my sons will have received justice at your hands.

The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is better, God only knows.

The American Scholar

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

I GREET YOU on the re-commencement of our literary year. Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. We do not meet for games of strength or skill, for the recitation of histories, tragedies, and odes, like the ancient Greeks; for parliaments of love and poesy, like the Troubadours; nor for the advancement of science, like our co-temporaries in the British and European capitals. Thus far, our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such, it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come, when it ought to be, and will be, something else;

when the sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids, and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions, that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt, that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp, which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce, shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years?

In this hope I accept the topic which not only usage but the nature of our association seem to prescribe to this day,—the AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Year by year we come up hither to read one more chapter of his biography. Let us inquire what light new days and events have thrown on his character and his hopes.

It is one of those fables which, out of an unknown antiquity, convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself; just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.

The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime; that there is One Man,—present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty; and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the *divided* or social state, these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his. The fable implies, that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely subdivided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney, a statute-book; the mechanic, a machine; the sailor, a rope of the ship.

In this distribution of functions, the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state, he is *Man Thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or, still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

In this view of him, as Man Thinking, the theory of his office is contained. Him nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the past instructs, him the future invites. Is not, indeed, every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof? And, finally, is not the true scholar the only true master? But the old oracle said, "All things have two handles: beware of the wrong one." In life, too often, the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives.

I. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after sunset, night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power re-

turning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find,—so entire, so boundless. Far, too, as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward, without centre, without circumference, —in the mass and in the particle, nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind, every thing is individual, stands by itself. By and by, it finds how to join two things, and see in them one nature; then three, then three thousand; and so, tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground, whereby contrary and remote things cohere, and flower out from one stem. It presently learns, that since the dawn of history, there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each refractory fact; one after another, reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on for ever to animate the last fibre of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

Thus to him, to this school-boy under the bending dome of day, is suggested, that he and it proceed from one root; one is leaf and one is flower; relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that Root? Is not that the soul of his soul? A thought too bold,—a dream too wild. Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures,—when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first gropings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see, that nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal, and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

II. The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar, is the mind of the Past,—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth,—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently,—by considering their value alone.

The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him, life; it went out from him, truth. It came to him, short-lived actions, it went out from him, immortal thoughts. It came to him, business; it went from him, poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone, of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air-pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought, that shall be as efficient, in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this.

Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The

sacredness which attaches to the act of creation,—the act of thought,—is transferred to the record. The poet chanting, was felt to be a divine man: henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled, the book is perfect, as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly, the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry, if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing in their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries, when they wrote these books.

Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence, the book-learned class, who value books, as such, not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate with the world and the soul. Hence, the restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees.

Books are the best of things, well used, abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book, than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although, in almost all men, obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth; and utters truth, or creates. In this action, it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence, it is progressive. The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. This is good, say they,—let us hold by this. They pin me down. They look backward and not forward. But genius looks forward: the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead: man hopes: genius creates. Whatever talents may be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his,—cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words; manners, actions, words, that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but springing spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

On the other part, instead of being its own seer, let it receive from another mind its truth, though it were in torrents of light, without periods of solitude, inquest, and self-recovery, and a fatal disservice is done. Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have Shakespearized now for two hundred years.

Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated. Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times When he can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must,—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining,—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fruitful."

It is remarkable, the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets, of Chaucer, of Marvell, of Dryden, with the most modern joy,—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all *time* from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our surprise, when this poet, who lived in some past world, two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul,

that which I also had well nigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose some pre-established harmony, some foresight of souls that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects, who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

I would not be hurried by any love of system, by any exaggeration of instincts, to underrate the Book. We all know, that, as the human body can be nourished on any food, though it were boiled grass and the broth of shoes, so the human mind can be fed by any knowledge. And great and heroic men have existed who had almost no other information than by the printed page I only would say that it needs a strong head to bear that diet. One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out the wealth of the Indies" There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world. We then see, what is always true, that, as the seer's hour of vision is short and rare among heavy days and months, so is its record, perchance, the least part of his volume The discerning will read, in his Plato or Shakspeare, only that least part,—only the authentic utterances of the oracle,—all the rest he rejects, were it never so many times Plato's and Shakspeare's.

Of course, there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious reading. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us, when they aim not to drill, but to create; when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns, and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never countervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year.

III. There goes in the world a notion, that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian,—as unfit for any handiwork or public labor as a penknife for an axe. The so-called "practical men" sneer at speculative men, as if, because they speculate or *see*, they could do nothing. I have heard it said that the clergy,—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day,—are addressed as women; that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a mincing and diluted speech. They are often virtually disfranchised, and, indeed, there are advocates for their celibacy. As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise. Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it, he is not yet man. Without it, thought can never ripen into truth. Whilst the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we cannot even see its beauty. Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic mind. The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action. Only so much do I know, as I have lived. Instantly we know whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

The world,—this shadow of the soul, or *other me*, lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself. I run eagerly into this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct, that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech. I pierce its order; I dissipate its fear; I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life. So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any

man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom. The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action past by, as a loss of power.

It is the raw material out of which the intellect moulds her splendid products. A strange process too, this, by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin. The manufacture goes forward at all hours.

The actions and events of our childhood and youth, are now matters of calmest observation. They lie like fair pictures in the air. Not so with our recent actions,—with the business which we now have in hand. On this we are quite unable to speculate. Our affections as yet circulate through it. We no more feel or know it, than we feel the feet, or the hand, or the brain of our body. The new deed is yet a part of life,—remains for a time immersed in our unconscious life. In some contemplative hour, it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind. Instantly it is raised, transfigured; the corruptible has put on incorruption. Henceforth it is an object of beauty, however base its origin and neighborhood. Observe, too, the impossibility of antedating this act. In its grub state, it cannot fly, it cannot shine, it is a dull grub. But suddenly, without observation, the self-same thing unfurls beautiful wings, and is an angel of wisdom. So is there no fact, no event, in our private history, which shall not, sooner or later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean. Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already; friend and relative, profession and party, town and country, nation and world, must also soar and sing.

Of course, he who has put forth his total strength in fit actions, has the richest return of wisdom. I will not shut myself out of this globe of action, and transplant an oak into a flowerpot, there to hunger and pine; nor trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought, much like those Savoyards, who, getting their livelihood by carving shepherds, shepherdesses, and smoking Dutchmen, for all Europe, went out one day to the mountain to find stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine trees. Authors we have, in numbers, who have written out their vein, and who, moved by a commendable prudence, sail for Greece or Palestine, follow the trapper into the prairie, or ramble round Algiers, to replenish their mechantable stock.

If it were only for a vocabulary, the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors; in town,—in the insight into trades and manufactures; in frank intercourse with many men and women; in science; in art; to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and copestones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.

But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is, that it is a resource. That great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety; in the ebb and flow of the sea; in day and night; in heat and cold, and, as yet more deeply ingrained in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of Polarity,—these "fits of easy transmission and reflection," as Newton called them, are the law of nature because they are the law of spirit.

The mind now thinks; now acts; and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer apprehended and books are a weariness,—he has always the resource *to live*. Character

is higher than intellect. Thinking is the function. Living is the functionary. The stream retreats to its source. A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think. Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truths? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them. This is a total act. Thinking is a partial act. Let the grandeur of justice shine in his affairs. Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof. Those "far from fame," who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can be measured by any public and designed display. Time shall teach him, that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives. Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence. What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength. Not out of those, on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhandselled savage nature; out of terrible Druids and Berserkirs come at last Alfred and Shakspeare.

I hear therefore with joy whatever is beginning to be said of the dignity and necessity of labor to every citizen. There is virtue yet in the hoe and the spade, for learned as well as for unlearned hands. And labor is everywhere welcome; always we are invited to work; only be this limitation observed, that a man shall not for the sake of wider activity sacrifice any opinion to the popular judgments and modes of action.

I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, and by action. It remains to say somewhat of his duties.

They are such as become Man Thinking. They may all be comprised in self-trust. The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances. He piles the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamsteed and Herschel, in their glazed observatories, may catalogue the stars with the praise of all men, and, the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he, in his private observatory, cataloguing obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind, which as yet no man has thought of as such,—watching days and months, sometimes, for a few facts; correcting still his old records;—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation, he must betray often an ignorance and shiftlessness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech, often forego the living for the dead. Worse yet, he must accept,—how often! poverty and solitude. For the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and self-directed; and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what offset? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one, who raises himself from private considerations, and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions,—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing men and events of to-day,—this he shall hear and promulgate.

These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer never to the popular cry. He and he only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended on this particu-

lar up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself, add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,—happy enough, if he can satisfy himself alone, that this day he has seen something truly. Success treads on every right step. For the instinct is sure, that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns, that in going down into the secrets of his own mind, he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts, is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that, which men in crowded cities find true for them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions,—his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses, —until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers;—that they drink his words because he fulfills for them their own nature; the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds, this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it; the better part of every man feels, This is my music; this is myself.

In self-trust, all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be,—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, "without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution." Brave; for fear is a thing, which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the presumption that, like children and women, his is a protected class; or if he seek a temporary peace by the diversion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles to keep his courage up. So is the danger a danger still; so is the fear worse. Manlike let him turn and face it. Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin,—see the whelping of this lion,—which lies no great way back, he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent; he will have made his hands meet on the other side, and can henceforth defy it, and pass on superior. The world is his who can see through its pretension. What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold, is there only by sufferance,—by your sufferance. See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow.

Yes, we are the cowed,—we the trustless. It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature, that the world was finished a long time ago. As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it To ignorance and sin, it is flint. They adapt themselves to it as they may, but in proportion as a man has any thing in him divine, the firmament flows before him and takes his signet and form. Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind. They are the kings of the world who give the color of their present thought to all nature and all art, and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter, that this thing which they do, is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, now at last ripe, and inviting nations to the harvest. The great man makes the great thing. Wherever Macdonald sits, there is the head of the table. Linnaeus makes botany the most alluring of studies, and wins it from the farmer and the herbwoman; Davy, chemistry; and Cuvier, fossils. The day is always his who works in it with serenity and great aims. The unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth, as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.

For this self-trust, the reason is deeper than can be fathomed,—darker than can be

enlightened. I might not carry with me the feeling of my audience in stating my own belief. But I have already shown the ground of my hope, in adverting to the doctrine that man is one. I believe man has been wronged, he has wronged himself. He has almost lost the light, that can lead him back to his prerogatives. Men are become of no account. Men in history, men in the world of to-day, are bugs, are spawn, and are called "the mass" and "the herd." In a century, in a millennium, one or two men; that is to say,—one or two approximations to the right state of every man. All the rest behold in the hero or the poet their own green and crude being,—ripened, yes, and are content to be less, so *that* may attain to its full stature. What a testimony,—full of grandeur, full of pity, is borne to the demands of his own nature, by the poor clansman, the poor partisan, who rejoices in the glory of his chief. The poor and the low find some amends to their immense moral capacity, for their acquiescence in a political and social inferiority. They are content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person, so that justice shall be done by him to that common nature which it is the dearest desire of all to see enlarged and glorified. They sun themselves in the great man's light, and feel it to be their own element. They cast the dignity of man from their downtrod selves upon the shoulders of a hero, and will perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer. He lives for us, and we live in him.

Men, such as they are, very naturally seek money or power; and power because it is as good as money,—the "spoils," so called, "of office." And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and this, in their sleep-walking, they dream is highest. Wake them, and they shall quit the false good, and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks. This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture. The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man. Here are the materials strown along the ground. The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy,—more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history. For a man, rightly viewed, comprehendeth the particular natures of all men. Each philosopher, each bard, each actor has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself. The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye, we have quite exhausted. What is that but saying, that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe; we have been that man, and have passed on. First, one; then, another, we drain all cisterns, and waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person, who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily; and, now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.

But I have dwelt perhaps tediously upon this abstraction of the Scholar. I ought not to delay longer to add what I have to say, of nearer reference to the time and to this country.

Historically, there is thought to be a difference in the ideas which predominate over successive epochs, and there are data for marking the genius of the Classic, of the Romantic, and now of the Reflective or Philosophical age. With the views I have intimated of the oneness or the identity of the mind through all individuals, I do not much dwell on these differences. In fact, I believe each individual passes through all three. The boy is a Greek; the youth, romantic; the adult, reflective. I deny not, however, that a revolution in the leading idea may be distinctly enough traced.

Our age is bewailed as the age of Introversion. Must that needs be evil? We, it seems, are critical; we are embarrassed with second thoughts; we cannot enjoy any thing for

hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists; we are lined with eyes; we see with our feet; the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—

"Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

It is so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear lest we should outsee nature and God, and drink truth dry? I look upon the discontent of the literary class as a mere announcement of the fact, that they find themselves not in the state of mind of their fathers, and regret the coming state as untried, as a boy dreads the water before he has learned that he can swim. If there is any period one would desire to be born in,—is it not the age of Revolution, when the old and the new stand side by side, and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old, can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

I read with some joy of the auspicious signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state.

One of these signs is the fact, that the same movement which effected the elevation of what was called the lowest class in the state, assumed in literature a very marked and as benign an aspect. Instead of the sublime and beautiful, the near, the low, the common, was explored and poetized. That, which had been negligently trodden under foot by those who were harnessing and provisioning themselves for long journeys into far countries, is suddenly found to be richer than all foreign parts. The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life, are the topics of the time. It is a great stride. It is a sign—is it not? of new vigor when the extremities are made active, when currents of warm life run into the hands and the feet. I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic; what is doing in Italy or Arabia, what is Greek art, or Provençal minstrelsy; I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low. Give me insight into today, and you may have the antique and future worlds. What would we really know the meaning of? The meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street; the news of the boat; the glance of the eye; the form and the gait of the body;—show me the ultimate reason of these matters; show me the sublime presence of the highest spiritual cause lurking, as always it does lurk, in these suburbs and extremities of nature; let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on an eternal law; and the shop, the plough, and the ledger, referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing;—and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber-room, but has form and order, there is no trifle; there is no puzzle; but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench.

This idea has inspired the genius of Goldsmith, Burns, Cowper, and, in a newer time, of Goethe, Wordsworth, and Carlyle. This idea they have differently followed and with various success. In contrast with their writing, the style of Pope, of Johnson, of Gibbon, looks cold and pedantic. This writing is blood-warm. Man is surprised to find that things near are not less beautiful and wondrous than things remote. The near explains the far. The drop is a small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries. Goethe, in this very thing the most modern of the moderns, has shown us, as none ever did, the genius of the ancients.

There is one man of genius, who has done much for this philosophy of life, whose literary value has never yet been rightly estimated;—I mean Emanuel Swedenborg. The most imaginative of men, yet writing with the precision of a mathematician, he endeavored to engraft a purely philosophical Ethics on the popular Christianity of his time. Such an attempt, of course, must have difficulty, which no genius could surmount. But he saw and showed the connection be-

tween nature and the affections of the soul. He pierced the emblematic or spiritual character of the visible, audible, tangible world. Especially did his shade-loving muse hover over and interpret the lower parts of nature; he showed the mysterious bond that allies moral evil to the foul material forms, and has given in epical parables a theory of insanity, of beasts, of unclean and fearful things.

Another sign of our times, also marked by an analogous political movement, is the new importance given to the single person. Every thing that tends to insulate the individual, —to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel the world is his, and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state; —tends to true union as well as greatness. "I learned," said the melancholy Pestalozzi, "that no man in God's wide earth is either willing or able to help any other man." Help must come from the bosom alone. The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be a university of knowledges. If there be one lesson more than another, which should pierce his ear, it is, The world is nothing, the man is all; in yourself is the law of all nature, and you know not yet how a globule of sap ascends; in yourself slumbers the whole of Reason; it is for you to know all, it is for you to dare all. Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. Public and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat. The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant. See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any but the decorous and the complaisant. Young men of the fairest promise, who begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these, but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust,—some of them suicides. What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hopeful now crowding to the barriers for the career, do not yet see, that, if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him. Patience,—patience;—with the shades of all the good and great for company; and for solace, the perspective of your own infinite life; and for work, the study and the communication of principles, the making those instincts prevalent, the conversion of the world. Is it not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be an unit;—not to be reckoned one character;—not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong; and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defence and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.

On the Murder of Lovejoy[1]

WENDELL PHILLIPS

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are met for the free discussion of these resolutions, and the events which gave rise to them. I hope I shall be permitted to express my surprise at the sentiments of the last speaker:—surprise not only at such sentiments from such a man, but at the applause they have elicited in these walls. A comparison has been drawn between the events of the Revolution and the tragedy at Alton. We have heard it asserted in this Hall, that Great Britain had a right to tax the Colonies, and we have heard the mob at Alton, got up to murder Lovejoy, compared to that band of our patriot fathers, who threw the tea overboard! Fellow citizens, is this true? The mob at Alton were met to wrest from a citizen his just rights; to resist the laws. We have been told that our fathers did the same; and the glorious mantle of Revolutionary precedent has been thrown over the mobs of our days. For to make out their title to such defence, it has been asserted that the British Parliament had a right to tax these Colonies. It is manifest that without such an assertion, the gentleman's parallel would have fallen to the ground:—for Lovejoy had stationed himself within constitutional bulwarks. The men who assailed him went against and over the laws. The mob, as the gentleman terms it, which assembled in the Old South, to destroy the tea, were met to resist not the laws, but illegal exactions; not the King's prerogative, but the King's usurpation. To find any other account, you must read our Revolutionary history upside down. Our State archives are loaded with arguments of John Adams, to prove the taxes laid by the British Parliament unconstitutional—beyond their power. It was not till this was made out, that the people of New England rushed to arms. The arguments of the Council Chamber and the House of Representatives preceded and sanctioned the contest. To draw the conduct of our ancestors into a precedent for mobs; for a right to resist laws we ourselves have enacted, is an insult to their memory. The difference between the excitements of those days and our own, which the gentleman, in kindness to the latter, has overlooked, is simply this. The men of that day went for the right. They were the people rising to sustain the laws and constitution of the Province. The rioters of our day go for their own wills, right or wrong. Sir, when I heard the gentleman lay down principles which place the rioters, incendiaries and murderers of Mt. Benedict and Alton, side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams, I thought those pictured lips [pointing to the portraits in the Hall] would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American—the slanderer of the dead. The gentleman said that he should sink into insignificance, if he dared to gainsay the principles of these resolutions. Sir, for the sentiments he has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of Puritans and the blood of Patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up!

Another ground has been taken to excuse the mob, and throw doubt and discredit on the conduct of Lovejoy and his associates. Allusion has been made to what the lawyers understand very well, the "conflict of laws." We are told that nothing but the Mississippi River rolls between St. Louis and Alton; and the conflict of laws somehow or other, gives the citizens of the former a right to find fault with the defender of the press for publishing his opinions so near their limits. How the laws of the two States could be said to come into conflict in such circumstances, I question whether any lawyer in this audience can explain or understand. No matter whether the line that divides one sovereign

[1] Delivered in Faneuil Hall, Boston, December 8, 1837.

State from another, be an imaginary one, or ocean wide, the moment you cross it, the State you leave is blotted out of existence, so far as you are concerned. The Czar might as well claim to control the deliberations of Faneuil Hall, as the laws of Missouri demand reverence or the shadow of obedience from the inhabitants of Illinois.

I must find some fault with the statement which has been made of the events at Alton. It has been asked why Lovejoy and his friends did not appeal to the executive; trust their defence to the police of the city. It has been hinted that from hasty and ill-judged excitement, the men within the building provoked a quarrel, and that he fell in the course of it, one mob resisting another. Recollect, sir, that they acted with the approbation and sanction of the Mayor. There was no executive to appeal to.—The Mayor acknowledged he could not protect them. They asked him if it was lawful for them to defend themselves? He told them it was, and sanctioned their assembling in arms to do so. They were not then a mob; they were not merely citizens defending their own property, they were in some sense the *posse comitatus*, adopted for occasion into the police of the city, acting under the order of a magistrate. It was civil authority resisting lawless violence. Where then was the imprudence? Is the doctrine to be sustained here, that it is imprudent for men lawfully to defend and protect life, liberty and property?

It has been stated, perhaps inadvertently, that Lovejoy or his comrades fired first. This is denied by parties present there. Guns were first fired by the mob. But suppose the party assailed did fire first. They had a right so to do: not only the right which every citizen has to defend himself, but the higher right which every civil officer has to resist violence. Even if Lovejoy fired the first gun, it would not lessen his claim to our sympathy, or destroy his title to be considered a martyr in the cause of free discussion. The whole question is, did he act within the Constitution and the laws? The men who fell in State street on the 5th of March, 1770, did more than they say Lovejoy did. They were the first assailants. Upon some slight quarrel, they pelted the troops with every missile within reach. Did this bate one jot of the eulogy with which Hancock and Warren hallowed their memory, hailing them as the first martyrs in the cause of civil liberty?

If, sir, I had adopted what are called peace principles, I should lament the circumstances of this case. But if I believe in self-defence in support of constitutional rights, then I must brand as base hypocrisy the conduct of those who assemble year after year on the 4th of July, to fight over the battles of the Revolution, and yet "damn with faint praise," or load with obloquy, the memory of this man, because he shed his blood in defence of life, liberty, property, and the freedom of the press!

The fact is, Lovejoy and his associates were assembled under civil authority—in arms by its sanction—they bore insult and violence patiently. After firearms had been repeatedly used against them, they fired on the mob. So doing they acted legally, in the spirit of our institutions, and after the example of their founders. The patriot can find nothing in the affair to regret but this: that within the limits of our country, civil authority should have been so prostrated as to oblige a citizen to arm in his own defence.

But it is said Lovejoy was presumptuous and imprudent—he "died as the fool dieth." And a right reverend clergyman of the city has told us that no citizen has a right to publish opinions disagreeable to the community! If any mob follows such publication, on him rest its guilt! He must wait, forsooth, till the people come up to it, and agree with him! This libel on liberty goes on to say, that the want of right to speak as we think is an evil inseparable from republican institutions! If this be so, what are they worth? Welcome the despotism of the Sultan, where one knows what he may publish and what he may not, rather than the tyranny of this many-headed monster, the mob, where we know not what we may do or say, till some fellow citizen has tried it, and paid for the lesson with his life. This clerical absurdity chooses as a check for the abuses of the Press, not the law, but the dread of a mob.

By so doing, it deprives not only the individual and the minority of his rights, but the majority also; for the expression of their opinion may sometimes provoke disturbance from the minority. A few men may make a mob as well as many. Consequently the majority have no right, as Christian men, to utter their sentiments, if there is any supposition that it may lead to a mob! Is this the doctrine for our pulpits, for our presses, and for Faneuil Hall?

Imprudent to defend the liberty of the Press! Why? Because the defence was unsuccessful? Does success gild crime into patriotism? And the want of it change heroic self-devotion to imprudence? Was Hampden imprudent when he drew the sword and threw away the scabbard? Yet he was unsuccessful. After a short exile, the race he hated sat again upon the throne.

Imagine yourself present when the first news of Bunker Hill battle reached a New England town. The tale would have run thus—"The Patriots are routed—the troops victorious—Warren lies dead upon the field." With what scorn would that Tory have been received, who should have charged Warren with imprudence! who should have said that he was "out of place" in that battle; that he died as the fool dieth! How would the intimation have been received, that Warren and his associates should have waited a better time? But if success be indeed the only criterion of prudence, *Respice finem*—wait till the end.

Presumptuous to assert the freedom of the press on American ground! Is the assertion of such freedom before the age? So much before it as to leave one no right to make it, because it displeases the community? Who utters this libel on his country? It is this very thing which entitles Lovejoy to greater praise. The disputed right which provoked the Revolution, taxation without representation, is far beneath that for which he died. As much as thought is better than money, so much is the cause in which Lovejoy died, nobler than a mere question of taxes. James Otis thundered in these Halls, when the King did but touch his pocket. What mortal pen could have written down his burning eloquence, had England offered to put a gag upon his lips?

Sir, I reverence the patriots of those stirring times. I reverence the clergymen who did not so far forget their country in their immediate profession, as to deem it a duty to separate themselves from the struggle—the Mayhews and Coopers, who remembered they were citizens before they were ministers.

The question that stirred the revolution touched our civil interests. This concerns us not only as citizens, but as immortal beings. Wrapped up in its fate, saved or lost with it, are not only the voice of the statesman, but the instructions of the pulpit, and the progress of our faith.

The right to speak as they thought was never denied our fathers. It had been fought for and gained on English ground—was brought over by the Puritans—the motive which drew them to the rocky shores—the privilege which endeared these barren hills. The liberty of the press was too holy, too evident to be disputed, when Milton's lips had been closed but a single century. Had the king invaded that, instead of the Custom House, who can imagine the storm which would have shaken these colonies?

I am glad, sir, to see this crowded house. It is good for us to be here. Faneuil Hall has the right, it is her duty to strike the key note for these United States. I am glad for one reason, that remarks such as those to which I have alluded, have been uttered here. The passage of these resolutions in spite of them, will show more clearly, more decisively, the deep indignation with which Boston regards this outrage.

Letter to Alice Stone Blackwell[1]

BARTOLOMEO VANZETTI

February 27, 1924. *Charlestown Prison*

DEAR COMRADE BLACKWELL.

Yours of the 23rd has reached me. You are right. Neither do I expect any good from that letter to the judge I have never expected, nor do I expect anything from him, other than some ten thousand volts divided in few times, some meters of cheap board and 4 x 7 x 8 feet hole in the ground.

No matter how much sympathy I try to bestow upon him, or with how much understanding I try to judge his actions; I only and alone can see him a self-conceited narrow-minded little tyrant, believing himself to be just, and believing his utterly unjust and unnecessary social office to be a necessity and a good. He is a bigot, and therefore, cruel. At the time of our arrest and trials, his peers were seeing red all around, and he saw red more than his peers.

He was ready to kill us even before the trials, for he deadly hates the subversive, and he believed to have become judge of the State Supreme Court by elimmating us via Law. For he knows that the servants of Capital were always remunerated by the Bosses for a crusifixion of some rebel or lover.

I do not know if his conduct during the trial was determined by his preconceptions, hate and ignorance, or if he consciously murdered us by details of bad faith, double playing, simulation, etc. I know that he did it. I know that even now he does not want to give us another trial though he could not deny it. And this is why he delays so much to give the answer. . . .

And if I am wrong, if according to his own standard, he is fair; if he wishes to be just, ('til now he is very unjust) then he could be hurt by my letter, but also enlightened. And if he would not forgive the crude defence of a man extremely wronged, then, not even a sparrow would I submit to him as arbiter.

An almost centenial struggle against every form of exploitation, oppression and fraud, taught us that "the wolf eats him who makes himself a sheep."

I am not sure, but I believe, that there are no pamphlets in Italian language, which treat with detail the case. This is the second reason of my letter and the 3rd reason is, my wish to say what no one else can say—silence would be cowardness—and treat the case accordingly to my own criterions. This may hurt me, but will help the Cause. Otherwise, if it means a life sentence, I prefer to be burnt away once and for all, and I also know that those in height, upon the back and the heads of the slaves, are against me. . . .

There is no spirit of sacrifice in this deed. I simply realize to be in merciless hands, and do my utmost to say to my enemy that he is wrong. In a way that helps the cause. The great one, not the small. My only hope remains in the solidariety of friends and comrades and of the workers. After having spent $200,000, we are still at the beginning. The work of the lawyers are useless before the law.

It has helped only because they brought the fact to the conscience and consciousness of the People. That is why Nick and I were not yet roasted. Authority, Power, and Privilege would not last a day upon the face of the earth, were it not because those who possess them, and those who prostitute their arms to their defence do suppress, repress, mercilessly and inescapable every efforts of liberations of each and all the rebels.

I abhor useless violence. I would my blood to prevent the sheading of blood, but neither the abyss nor the earth, nor the heavens, have a law which condemns the self-defense. Not every woman has sacrificed to bring forth one more rufian, idiot, or coward to

[1] From *The Letters of Sacco and Vanzetti*. Edited by Marion Denman Frankfurter and Gardner Jackson. Copyright 1928 by The Viking Press, Inc. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc.

the world. There are yet some men. And if tragedy is compelled to us, who knows, who knows if to speak now is not my duty?

The champion of life and of the liberty should not yield before the death. The struggle for the liberty, between the oppressor and the oppressed, shall continue beyond the life, beyond the graves. I know what they have done and are doing to me and to thousands of others, rebels and lovers. And I know that they are and will always be ready to do against us. I know the millions of youth that they slandered, the virgins that they have torn in the breast; the millions of wives that they have widowed; the millions of bastards that they let to miasma of the gutter, or grown to the fratricide. I know the old fathers and mothers whom they killed by breaking their hearts; and all the children that they starved and are starving to death, and the hospitals and the crazy-houses filled of their victims, and the little criminals, victims, irresponsible and semi-compelled to crime that they mercilessly executed or entombed alive. They have never had pity for our children, our women, our dear, poor old fathers and mothers—and they never will have it.

The sorrow of their victims torture me in blood and spirit As for me, I would forgive them, but I could not, for I would be a traitor of the race. Until not a man will be exploited or oppressed by another man, we will never bend the banner of freedom.

Are they not ready to do with other comrades what they are doing to us? Are they not more willing than ever to squeeze out the worker's blood for more gold? Are they not preparing a greater war?

I will ask for revenge—I will tell that I will die gladly by the hands of the hanger after having known to have been vindicated. I mean "eye for an eye, ear for an ear," and even more, since to win it is necessary that 100 enemies fall to each of us.

The only vengence which could placate me is the realization of freedom, the great deliverance which would beneficiate all my friends as well as all my enemies: All. But till that, the struggle goes on, till we are breath to breath with the enemy fighting with short arms, till then, to fight is our duty, our right, our necessity. For, one of the two. Either we must go on and win, or we must ask for an armistice. And who will grant it to us? Since the enemy has no scruples nor pity, to ask pity of him is to encourage him to slander our fellows, to try to grant to him the immunity for his crimes against us; it would be as a matricide.

The more I live, the more I suffer, the more I learn, the more I am inclined to forgive, to be generous, and that the violence as such does not resolve the problem of life. And the more I love and learn that "the right of all to violence does not go together with the liberty, but that it begins when the liberty ends." The slave has the right and duty to arise against his master. My supreme aim, that of the Anarchist is, "the complete elimination of violence from the rapports (relations)."

To be possible, we must have freedom and justice. Now we have the opposite of them, because through errors and consequent aberations, men have risen as tyrants, deceiters and exploiters of other men, believing to gain their personal, familiar and cast welfare by such deed. Through both tyranny and servitude, we have lost our capacity of liberty and we are making life evermore miserable, operating our own ante-distruction.

Since "only the liberty, or the struggle for liberty, may be school of liberty" and since mine is but self and racial defence, why should not I use the truth to defend myself? It is supremely sweet to me—my consciousness of superiority, of righteousness, to know that I can judge and that the future shall bow to me, the doomed, and curse my judges.

Well, I have said many things which I sincerely believe to be so. But there are surely some mistake! Who possesses the absolute, or even the absolute-relative truth? So your point of view may be right, and I also realized that you spoke exclusively for my own good.

Wisdom is not only comprehension, but also many other faculties together; among which discrimination and sense of measure are prominent. I will try to be wise! ! ! ! ! I will think it over and over again.

Address at the Opening of the Atlanta Exposition[1]

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

MR. PRESIDENT and Gentlemen of the Board of Directors and Citizens:

One-third of the population of the South is of the Negro race. No enterprise seeking the material, civil, or moral welfare of this section can disregard this element of our population and reach the highest success I but convey to you, Mr. President and Directors, the sentiment of the masses of my race when I say that in no way have the value and manhood of the American Negro been more fittingly and generously recognized than by the managers of this magnificent Exposition at every stage of its progress. It is a recognition that will do more to cement the friendship of the two races than any occurrence since the dawn of our freedom.

Not only this, but the opportunity here afforded will awaken among us a new era of industrial progress. Ignorant and inexperienced, it is not strange that in the first years of our new life we began at the top instead of at the bottom; that a seat in Congress or the State legislature was more sought than real estate or industrial skill; that the political convention or stump speaking had more attractions than starting a dairy farm or truck garden.

A ship lost at sea for many days suddenly sighted a friendly vessel. From the mast of the unfortunate vessel was seen a signal, "Water, water; we die of thirst!" The answer from the friendly vessel at once came back, "Cast down your bucket where you are." A second time the signal, "Water, water; send us water!" ran up from the distressed vessel, and was answered, "Cast down your bucket where you are." And a third and fourth signal for water was answered, "Cast down your bucket where you are." The captain of the distressed vessel, at last heeding the injunction, cast down his bucket, and it came up full of fresh sparkling water from the mouth of the Amazon River. To those of my race who depend on bettering their condition in a foreign land, or who underestimate the importance of cultivating friendly relations with the Southern white man, who is their next-door neighbor, I would say: "Cast down your bucket where you are"—cast it down in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom we are surrounded.

Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions. And in this connection it is well to bear in mind that whatever other sins the South may be called to bear, when it comes to business, pure and simple, it is in the South that the Negro is given a man's chance in the commercial world, and in nothing is this Exposition more eloquent than in emphasizing this chance. Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labor and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life; shall prosper in proportion as we learn to draw the line between the superficial and the substantial, the ornamental gewgaws of life and the useful. No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and

[1] Delivered at Atlanta, Georgia, September 18, 1895. From: *Selected Speeches of Booker T. Washington.* Copyright 1932 by Doubleday & Company, Inc.

not at the top. Nor should we permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities.

To those of the white race who look to the incoming of those of foreign birth and strange tongue and habits for the prosperity of the South, were I permitted I would repeat what I say to my own race, "Cast down your bucket where you are." Cast it down among the eight millions of Negroes whose habits you know, whose fidelity and love you have tested in days when to have proved treacherous meant the ruin of your firesides. Cast down your bucket among these people who have, without strikes and labour wars, tilled your fields, cleared your forests, builded your railroads and cities, and brought forth treasures from the bowels of the earth, and helped make possible this magnificent representation of the progress of the South. Casting down your bucket among my people, helping and encouraging them as you are doing on these grounds, and to education of head, hand, and heart, you will find that they will buy your surplus land, make blossom the waste places in your fields, and run your factories. While doing this, you can be sure in the future, as in the past, that you and your families will be surrounded by the most patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful people that the world has seen As we have proved our loyalty to you in the past, in nursing your children, watching by the sick-bed of your mothers and fathers, and often following them with tear-dimmed eyes to their graves, so in the future, in our humble way, we shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defence of yours, interlacing our industrial, commercial, civil, and religious life with yours in a way that shall make the interests of both races one. In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.

There is no defence or security for any of us except in the highest intelligence and development of all. If anywhere there are efforts tending to curtail the fullest growth of the Negro, let these efforts be turned into stimulating, encouraging, and making him the most useful and intelligent citizen. Effort or means so invested will pay a thousand per cent interest. These efforts will be twice blessed—"blessing him that gives and him that takes."

There is no escape through law of man or God from the inevitable:—

> The laws of changeless justice bind
> Oppressor with oppressed;
> And close as sin and suffering joined
> We march to fate abreast.

Nearly sixteen millions of hands will aid you in pulling the load upward, or they will pull against you the load downward. We shall constitute one-third and more of the ignorance and crime of the South, or one-third its intelligence and progress; we shall contribute one-third to the business and industrial prosperity of the South, or we shall prove a veritable body of death, stagnating, depressing, retarding every effort to advance the body politic.

Gentlemen of the Exposition, as we present to you our humble effort at an exhibition of our progress, you must not expect overmuch. Starting thirty years ago with ownership here and there in a few quilts and pumpkins and chickens (gathered from miscellaneous sources), remember the path that has led from these to the inventions and production of agricultural implements, buggies, steam-engines, newspapers, books, statuary, carvings, paintings, the management of drug stores and banks, has not been trodden without contact with thorns and thistles. While we take pride in what we exhibit as a result of our independent efforts, we do not for a moment forget that our part in this exhibition would fall far short of your expectations but for the constant help that has come to our educational life, not only from the Southern States, but especially from Northern philanthropists, who have made their gifts a constant stream of blessing and encouragement.

The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges

that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house.

In conclusion, may I repeat that nothing in thirty years has given us more hope and encouragement, and drawn us so near to you of the white race, as this opportunity offered by the Exposition; and here bending, as it were, over the altar that represents the struggles of your race and mine, both starting practically empty-handed three decades ago, I pledge that in your effort to work out the great and intricate problem which God has laid at the doors of the South, you shall have at all times the patient, sympathetic help of my race; only let this be constantly in mind, that, while from representations in these buildings of the product of field, of forest, of mine, of factory, letters, and art, much good will come, yet far above and beyond material benefits will be that higher good, that, let us pray God, will come, in a blotting out of sectional differences and racial animosities and suspicions, in a determination to administer absolute justice, in a willing obedience among all classes to the mandates of the law. This, this, coupled with our material prosperity, will bring into our beloved South a new heaven and a new earth.

Letter to Lucy Christie Drage[1]

ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT

Antibes
June, 1928

DEAR LUCY,

When Julie died, I had a strong impulse to jump on a train and go to you as the only person left in the world to whom I could really talk about her. There seemed to be too much to do. The day she died, Billy [A. W.'s brother] himself was taken to a hospital in Baltimore and hung between life and death for weeks of anxiety. Then I think I invented things to preoccupy me, made a great pother about work to be done, ran round and round in busy little circles, anything rather than sit down and face the fact that there was no Julie any more and never would be again.

I wired you that day that I would write you a letter and here I am at last, in this corner of the Riviera where I have bestowed myself for the next few weeks, sitting down before the portable I have toted across the world, batting out a letter that should be full of the things I would have told you had I really hopped on that train and gone out to see you. I wish now I had done it.

I am glad you did not see her in those agonizing summer months when her sickness first took hold of her, when we were dragging experts to see her and she was trying to walk but couldn't, unable to speak clearly but trying to all the time, shaking so that she could hardly guide a cigarette to her lips. It was cruel business. The experts had some elaborate explanation of the inexplicable phenomenon—a progressive degeneration of the nerve tissue which defeats medicine and eludes surgery. But the ways of the spirit are mysterious and I know that she had just invented a way of getting out of a world that was too intolerably lonely for her without

[1] From *The Letters of Alexander Woollcott*, edited by Beatrice Kaufman and Joseph Hennessey. Copyright 1944 by The Viking Press, Inc. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

Charles. You could tell that from the peace and satisfaction which settled on her when the invention worked at last, for in the final six weeks at the hospital, there was no pain or distress or trouble. She just lay there at rest in a room that somehow began to look like her, with the yellow roses on the table and the blue silk shawl thrown across the foot of her bed. Day by day the years seemed to fall away from her, cast off like garments she no longer needed. She did not know even me, but she was pleased when it was Paul Robeson's voice on the phonograph and pleased when the nurse would put a gardenia on the pillow beside her. If you bent close, you could hear her say "Sweet, sweet." The lines went out of her face, the gray out of her hair, the pain out of her eyes. Her hair, braided and tied with little blue ribbons, lay tossed upon the pillow and framed so prettily a face that was the one you saw when she first came out to Kansas City nearly forty years ago.

Toward the end, while she was still talking, all her thoughts ran back to those years and the ones between were forgotten She talked of the day I was born and of the trip west and of Aldine Place, with Rose Field calling up to your window and making all manner of fun of her because she was so excited over the fact that Frank and Mailie [Sauerwen] were coming. One of the last things she said was that she must find out where Rose Field was living and go to him and offer to keep house for him. One of her last commissions to me was to write you the birthday letter for which she could no longer hold a pen.

She told me all about the day in January when I was born—how, after breakfast, Mother told her not to bother to clear away the things but to go up to the old house and ask Grandma to send one of the teamsters to fetch the doctor. It was snowing and Old Dr. Kimball came the seven miles in his cutter. The other youngsters on the place were not told what was up and went to their lessons in Mailie's room as usual. While they were bent over their books, Mailie slipped out and found her father taking a surreptitious drink in honor of so agitating an occasion. She came back with the news and imparted it cryptically by scribbling a line on a piece of paper and smuggling it unseen into Julie's hand. It was a line from *Bleak House* which they were all reading then. It ran something like this: "A young gentleman has arrived whose name is Mr. Guppy." So they always called me Mr. Guppy. I made a stab at it myself but got no nearer than Guffy. Mailie called me Guffy always. The advent of the newcomer was regarded as a family calamity. Aunt Julie told me once that she spent that day crying in her room as the least she could do.

It was of those days Julie talked toward the last. It is then I wish you could have come. I wish you could have seen her when the sentries we all post to warn us that the world is looking could no longer do their duty. I am sick at the thought of what swinishness and poltroonery and malice the spectators would find if ever *my* guards were dismissed and I could no longer edit myself for my neighbors' inspection. But the Julie that was turned toward you and toward me was the same all the way through—a gentle and gracious and gallant person in the very core of her. There was nothing base in her.

There are just a few of us left to whom it matters. In September Dr. Humphreys died. You remember I was named after him. He was a person of circumstance and Trinity was so crowded for his funeral that I had to stand in the back of the church. In the shadow of the pillar there I watched the procession following the coffin out into the afternoon sunlight—Aunt Eva, bent and old but able to make the journey, and behind her young Eva and her husband and a swarm of grandchildren. And I knew that there were great-grandchildren stowed away in sundry nurseries. And I knew, too, that I could stand in the shadow of that pillar for a hundred years without seeing the end of the procession, without seeing the end of the chapter written by that full and fruitful life. It is so different when a childless woman dies. Julie's chapter is ended. She was perfume, scattered now on the ground. And there is just a small company

of us—you, dear Lucy, and a few others, for whom the fragrance of her lingers in the air.

The Phalanx is ghostly now. There are strangers in the little cottage, so that what Aunt Anne used to call the Julie light can once more be seen through the trees. But the big house is mostly dark. When I used to come home at Christmas time from school, I could see it from a great way off through the bare branches of the trees, warm lamplight shining from each of the twelve French windows that looked out across the lawn. Now only two or three windows are lighted.

The last to go was Uncle Will. He had been born there and did his first toddling in that pretty ravine of which he painted the beech trees all his days. Even when he had to go into exile as an old man and was supposed to be painting landscapes in Florida and California, it was the beech trees he saw with the eyes of his heart and the beech trees that kept showing up in those pictures of his. Aunt Anne took his ashes down into the ravine and buried them at the roots of one of those trees. Then she just carved his initials in the bark of the trunk. That was only a month ago.

So one by one the lights go out. I have had to write you about them. It is because Julie loved you with a surpassing loyalty and tenderness. The miles and years between made no difference to her at all—none at all. I think you knew that there was always that lamp in her window for you, always that loving kindness in her heart.

Something stops me from trying to say anything of the impoverishment I feel. What a world this would be—what a morning light would shine across it—if all people were like her. I think of that and of many things and I send you her love and mine. I wish I could stand beside you at some window today and look out into the twilight and say nothing.

Aleck

Mary White [1]

William Allen White

May 17, 1921.

The Associated Press reports carrying the news of Mary White's death declared that it came as the result of a fall from a horse. How she would have hooted at that! She never fell from a horse in her life. Horses have fallen on her and with her—"I'm always trying to hold 'em in my lap," she used to say. But she was proud of few things, and one of them was that she could ride anything that had four legs and hair. Her death resulted not from a fall but from a blow on the head which fractured her skull, and the blow came from the limb of an overhanging tree on the parking.

The last hour of her life was typical of its happiness. She came home from a day's work at school, topped off by a hard grind with the copy of the High School Annual, and felt that a ride would refresh her. She climbed into her khakis, chattering to her mother about the work she was doing, and hurried to get her horse and be out on the dirt roads for the country air and the radiant green fields of the spring. As she rode through the town on an easy gallop she kept waving at passers-by. She knew every one in town. For a decade the little figure in the long pigtail and the red hair ribbon has been familiar on the streets of Emporia, and she got in the way of speaking to those who nodded at her. She passed the Kerrs, walking the horse, in front of the Normal Library, and waved at them; passed another friend a few hundred feet farther on, and waved at

[1] From William Allen White, *The Editor and his People*. Copyright 1924 by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission. Originally published in The Emporia Gazette

her. The horse was walking, and as she turned into North Merchant Street she took off her cowboy hat, and the horse swung into a lope. She passed the Tripletts and waved her cowboy hat at them, still moving gayly north on Merchant Street. A *Gazette* carrier passed—a high-school boy friend—and she waved at him, but with her bridle hand; the horse veered quickly, plunged into the parking where the low-hanging limb faced her, and while she still looked back waving, the blow came. But she did not fall from the horse, she slipped off, dazed a bit, staggered, and fell in a faint. She never quite recovered consciousness.

But she did not fall from the horse, neither was she riding fast. A year or so ago she used to go like the wind. But that habit was broken, and she used the horse to get into the open, to get fresh, hard exercise, and to work off a certain surplus energy that welled up in her and needed a physical outlet. That need had been in her heart for years. It was back of the impulse that kept the dauntless little brown-clad figure on the streets and country roads of this community and built into a strong, muscular body what had been a frail and sickly frame during the first years of her life. But the riding gave her more than a body. It released a gay and hardy soul. She was the happiest thing in the world. And she was happy because she was enlarging her horizon. She came to know all sorts and conditions of men: Charley O'Brien, the traffic cop, was one of her best friends. W. L. Holtz, the Latin teacher, was another. Tom O'Connor, farmer-politician, and Rev. J. H. J. Rice, preacher and police judge, and Frank Beach, music master, were her special friends, and all the girls, black and white, above the track and below the track, in Pepville and Stringtown, were among her acquaintances. And she brought home riotous stories of her adventures. She loved to rollick; persiflage was her natural expression at home. Her humor was a continual bubble of joy. She seemed to think in hyperbole and metaphor. She was mischievous without malice, as full of faults as an old shoe. No angel was Mary White, but an easy girl to live with, for she never nursed a grouch five minutes in her life.

With all her eagerness for the out-of-doors, she loved books. On her table when she left her room were a book by Conrad, one by Galsworthy, *Creative Chemistry*, by E. E. Slosson, and a Kipling book. She read Mark Twain, Dickens, and Kipling before she was ten—all of their writings. Wells and Arnold Bennett particularly amused and diverted her. She was entered as a student in Wellesley for 1922; was assistant editor of the High School Annual this year, and in line for election to the editorship next year. She was a member of the executive committee of the High School Y. W. C. A.

Within the last two years she had begun to be moved by an ambition to draw. She began as most children do by scribbling in her schoolbooks, funny pictures. She bought cartoon magazines and took a course—rather casually, naturally, for she was, after all, a child with no strong purposes—and this year she tasted the first fruits of success by having her pictures accepted by the High School Annual. But the thrill of delight she got when Mr. Ecord, of the Normal Annual, asked her to do the cartooning for that book this spring was too beautiful for words. She fell to her work with all her enthusiastic heart. Her drawings were accepted, and her pride—always repressed by a lively sense of the ridiculous figure she was cutting—was a really gorgeous thing to see. No successful artist ever drank a deeper draft of satisfaction than she took from the little fame her work was getting among her schoolfellows. In her glory, she almost forgot her horse—but never her car.

For she used the car as a jitney bus. It was her social life. She never had a "party" in all her nearly seventeen years—wouldn't have one; but she never drove a block in her life that she didn't begin to fill the car with pick-ups! Everybody rode with Mary White—white and black, old and young, rich and poor, men and women. She liked nothing better than to fill the car with long-legged high-school boys and an occasional girl, and parade the town. She never had

a "date," nor went to a dance, except once with her brother, Bill, and the "boy proposition" didn't interest her—yet. But young people—great spring-breaking, varnish-cracking, fender-bending, door-sagging carloads of "kids" gave her great pleasure. Her zests were keen. But the most fun she ever had in her life was acting as chairman of the committee that got up the big turkey dinner for the poor folks at the county home: scores of pies, gallons of slaw, jam cakes, preserves, oranges, and a wilderness of turkey were loaded into the car and taken to the county home. And, being of a practical turn of mind, she risked her own Christmas dinner to see that the poor folks actually got it all. Not that she was a cynic: she just disliked to tempt folks. While there she found a blind colored uncle, very old, who could do nothing but make rag rugs, and she rustled up from her school friends rags enough to keep him busy for a season. The last engagement she tried to make was to take the guests at the county home out for a car ride. And the last endeavor of her life was to try to get a rest room for colored girls in the High School. She found one girl reading in the toilet because there was no better place for a colored girl to loaf, and it inflamed her sense of injustice, and she became a nagging harpy to those who she thought could remedy the evil. The poor she always had with her, and was glad of it. She hungered and thirsted for righteousness; and was the most impious creature in the world. She joined the Congregational Church without consulting her parents; not particularly for her soul's good. She never had a thrill of piety in her life, and would have hooted at a "testimony." But even as a little child she felt the Church was an agency for helping people to more of life's abundance, and she wanted to help. She never wanted help for herself. Clothes meant little to her. It was a fight to get a new rig on her; but eventually a harder fight to get it off. She never wore a jewel and had no ring but her high-school class ring, and never asked for anything but a wrist watch. She refused to have her hair up; though she was nearly seventeen. "Mother," she protested, "you don't know how much I get by with, in my braided pigtails, that I could not with my hair up." Above every other passion of her life was her passion not to grow up, to be a child. The tomboy in her, which was big, seemed loathe to be put away forever in skirts. She was a Peter Pan, who refused to grow up.

Her funeral yesterday at the Congregational Church was as she would have wished it, no singing, no flowers except the big bunch of red roses from her brother Bill's Harvard classmen—Heavens, how proud that would have made her! and the red roses from the *Gazette* force, in vases at her head and feet. A short prayer; Paul's beautiful essay on "Love" from the Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians; some remarks about her democratic spirit by her friend, John H. J. Rice, pastor and police judge, which she would have deprecated if she could; a prayer sent down for her by her friend, Carl Nau; and opening the service by the slow, poignant movement from Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata, which she loved; and closing the service a cutting from the joyously melancholy first movement of Tschaikowski's Pathetic Symphony, which she liked to hear, in certain moods, on the phonograph; then the Lord's Prayer by her friends in the High School.

That was all.

For her pallbearers only her friends were chosen: her Latin teacher—W. L. Holtz; her high-school principal, Rice Brown; her doctor, Frank Foncannon; her friend, W. W. Finney; her pal at the *Gazette* office, Walter Hughes; and her brother Bill. It would have made her smile to know that her friend, Charley O'Brien, the traffic cop, had been transferred from Sixth and Commercial to the corner near the church to direct her friends who came to bid her good-by.

A rift in the clouds in a gray day threw a shaft of sunlight upon her coffin as her nervous, energetic little body sank to its last sleep. But the soul of her, the glowing, gorgeous, fervent soul of her, surely was flaming in eager joy upon some other dawn.

First Inaugural Address[1]

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

I AM certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself —nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunken to fantastic levels, taxes have risen, our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side, farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone.

More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

True they have tried, but their efforts have been cast in the pattern of an outworn tradition. Faced by failure of credit they have proposed only the lending of more money. Stripped of the lure of profit by which to induce our people to follow their false leadership, they have resorted to exhortations, pleading tearfully for restored confidence. They know only the rules of a generation of self-seekers. They have no vision, and when there is no vision the people perish.

The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may now restore that temple to the ancient truths. The measure of the restoration lies in the extent to which we apply social values more noble than mere monetary profit.

Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. The joy and moral stimulation of work no longer must be forgotten in the mad chase of evanescent profits. These dark days will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that our true destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves and to our fellow men.

Recognition of the falsity of material wealth as the standard of success goes hand in hand with the abandonment of the false belief that public office and high political

[1] Delivered March 4, 1933.

position are to be valued only by the standards of pride of place and personal profit; and there must be an end to a conduct in banking and in business which too often has given to a sacred trust the likeness of callous and selfish wrongdoing. Small wonder that confidence languishes, for it thrives only on honesty, on honor, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, on unselfish performance; without them it cannot live.

Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This Nation asks for action, and action now.

Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time, through this employment, accomplishing greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our natural resources.

Hand in hand with this we must frankly recognize the overbalance of population in our industrial centers and, by engaging on a national scale in a redistribution, endeavor to provide a better use of the land for those best fitted for the land. The task can be helped by definite efforts to raise the values of agricultural products and with this the power to purchase the output of our cities. It can be helped by preventing realistically the tragedy of the growing loss through foreclosure of our small homes and our farms. It can be helped by insistence that the Federal, State, and local governments act forthwith on the demand that their cost be drastically reduced. It can be helped by the unifying of relief activities which today are often scattered, uneconomical, and unequal. It can be helped by national planning for and supervision of all forms of transportation and of communications and other utilities which have a definitely public character. There are many ways in which it can be helped, but it can never be helped merely by talking about it. We must act and act quickly.

Finally, in our progress toward a resumption of work we require two safeguards against a return of the evils of the old order: there must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments, so that there will be an end to speculation with other people's money; and there must be provision for an adequate but sound currency.

These are the lines of attack. I shall presently urge upon a new Congress, in special session, detailed measures for their fulfillment, and I shall seek the immediate assistance of the several States.

Through this program of action we address ourselves to putting our own national house in order and making income balance outgo. Our international trade relations, though vastly important, are in point of time and necessity secondary to the establishment of a sound national economy. I favor as a practical policy the putting of first things first. I shall spare no effort to restore world trade by international economic readjustment, but the emergency at home cannot wait on that accomplishment.

The basic thought that guides these specific means of national recovery is not narrowly nationalistic. It is the insistence, as a first consideration, upon the interdependence of the various elements in and parts of the United States—a recognition of the old and permanently important manifestation of the American spirit of the pioneer. It is the way to recovery. It is the immediate way. It is the strongest assurance that the recovery will endure.

In the field of world policy I would dedicate this Nation to the policy of the good neighbor—the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others—the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.

If I read the temper of our people correctly, we now realize as we have never realized before our interdependence on each other; that we cannot merely take but we must give as well; that if we are to go forward, we must move as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of a common discipline, because without such discipline no progress is made, no leadership becomes effective. We are, I know, ready

and willing to submit our lives and property to such discipline, because it makes possible a leadership which aims at a larger good. This I propose to offer, pledging that the larger purposes will bind upon us all as a sacred obligation with a unity of duty hitherto evoked only in time of armed strife.

With this pledge taken, I assume unhesitatingly the leadership of this great army of our people dedicated to a disciplined attack upon our common problems.

Action in this image and to this end is feasible under the form of government which we have inherited from our ancestors. Our Constitution is so simple and practical that it is possible always to meet extraordinary needs by changes in emphasis and arrangement without loss of essential form. That is why our constitutional system has proved itself the most superbly enduring political mechanism the modern world has produced. It has met every stress of vast expansion of territory, of foreign wars, of bitter internal strife, of world relations.

It is to be hoped that the normal balance of Executive and legislative authority may be wholly adequate to meet the unprecedented task before us. But it may be that an unprecedented demand and need for undelayed action may call for temporary departure from that normal balance of public procedure.

I am prepared under my constitutional duty to recommend the measures that a stricken Nation in the midst of a stricken world may require. These measures, or such other measures as the Congress may build out of its experience and wisdom, I shall seek, within my constitutional authority, to bring to speedy adoption.

But in the event that the Congress shall fail to take one of these two courses, and in the event that the national emergency is still critical, I shall not evade the clear course of duty that will then confront me. I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis—broad Executive power to wage a war against the emergency, as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe.

For the trust reposed in me I will return the courage and the devotion that befit the time. I can do no less.

We face the arduous days that lie before us in the warm courage of national unity; with the clear consciousness of seeking old and precious moral values; with the clear satisfaction that comes from the stern performance of duty by old and young alike. We aim at the assurance of a rounded and permanent national life.

We do not distrust the future of essential democracy. The people of the United States have not failed. In their need they have registered a mandate that they want direct, vigorous action. They have asked for discipline and direction under leadership. They have made me the present instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift, I take it.

In this dedication of a Nation we humbly ask the blessing of God. May He protect each and every one of us. May He guide me in the days to come.

Thanksgiving Proclamation[1]

GOVERNOR WILBUR L. CROSS

AS THE COLORS of Autumn stream down the wind, scarlet in sumach and maple, spun gold in the birches, a splendor of smoldering fire in the oaks along the hill, and the last leaves flutter away, and dusk falls briefly about the worker bringing in from the field a late load of its fruit, and Arcturus is lost to sight and Orion swings upward that great sun on his shoulder, we are stirred once

[1] Thanksgiving Day, 1938.

more to ponder the Infinite Goodness that has set apart for us, in all this moving mystery of creation, a time of living and a home. In such a spirit I appoint Thursday, the twenty-fourth of November, a day of Public Thanksgiving. In such a spirit I call upon the people to acknowledge heartily, in friendly gathering and house of prayer, the increase of the season nearing now its close: the harvest of earth, the yield of patient mind and faithful hand, that have kept us fed and clothed and have made for us a shelter even against the storm. It is right that we whose arc of sky has been darkened by no war hawk, who have been forced by no man to stand and speak when to speak was to choose between death and life, should give thanks also for the further mercies we have enjoyed, beyond desert or any estimation, of Justice, Freedom, Loving-kindness, Peace—resolving, as we prize them, to let no occasion go without some prompting or some effort worthy in a way however humble of those proudest among man's ideals which burn, though it may be like candles fitfully in our gusty world, with a light so clear we name its source divine.

8

Making History Alive

"The history that lies inert in unread books does no work in the world. The history that does work in the world, the history that influences the course of history, is living history, that pattern of remembered events, whether true or false, that enlarges and enriches the collective specious present, the specious present of Mr. Everyman." This was said by Carl Becker before the American Historical Society in his presidential address of 1931. The whole of this address is here reprinted, and should be read before any of the other selections; in fact, it has been placed here for that purpose.

As a second step, one should read to see how some old family letters have worked on the imagination of John Holmes to start a "pattern of remembered events" generated by what all historians prize and need—documents. But what Mr. Holmes is doing will not be best understood, might even be scorned by "historians," until Mr. Becker is read. Turn then to one of the great primary sources of English history, the diary of Samuel Pepys, for the vivid details of the Great Fire. Rushed as it was into the diary, the account is still not the events themselves but a pattern of remembered events to be matched in our time only by the livest of journalism. We might compare it to accounts of flood days along the Ohio and the Mississippi, or of hurricanes on the Gulf Coast or in New England.

Then, but then only, turn to two more formal historians who bring to life two of the great events in history—Parkman on the fight before Quebec and Froude in that tremendous story of the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. Come thus to the four contributions to American history by Forbes and Binns and Coffin and Howard, and finally, to the story of the Great Run at the

opening of the Cherokee Strip. Here is a story that grew because the boy Marquis relentlessly questioned his father and his mother and the hired man —the man James has edited slightly because of subsequent information, but only slightly.

After all this, the reader may well apply the words "you are not forgotten" not only to those people imagined by John Holmes, but also to Marquis James's father, the executioner in Froude, the snow of that day in Boston, the sound of the little brook at night below the Plains of Abraham, the dust and hammering of the big launching at Pennellville, burying wine and Parmesan cheese in 1666, rain and the house with no roof that was the city of Seattle in 1851. In the latter part of his address Becker thus paraphrases Shakespeare: "to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow creeps in this petty pace, and all our yesterdays diminish and grow dim." But this can never happen while such historians as these write as they have done.

It will be asked whether they are really historians if they write this way, and how they obtained all the data they have here interwoven. They have chosen to run the risk of such attack, but no one of them can rightfully be accused of mere romancing, or of failing to study known facts. One is sure these stories will be read, if only readers discover them, and one can safely say that Carl Becker and many other historians would approve of what they have done. After reading accounts such as these it would be hard to think, say, of the Boston Massacre in any way other than that made so alive by Esther Forbes, herself one of the most hardworking and patient of researchers, or of the Run except as lived through the words of James, or of Mary's execution without its melodrama before the huge fire in the great hall, the double descent of the axe, and the sudden irony of Mary's failure after such extensive preparations. Who shall do better stories of these events?

For these writers have written, it seems, out of a felt need to give the past some flesh-and-blood intimacy. They have all been indeed much like young Marquis James. Even Ernest Elmo Calkins, writing a fine example of the historical feature article, confesses at the end to a task uncompleted but indicates he has found the last of the nineteenth century more alive in its "emotional" history than ever before. The collections of old hymns have come to mean something to him as they never had before. More research and more imaginative contemplation would have given greater satisfaction, and some time the energy for both might develop, in him or in another writer.

Behind the hymns, behind the dates and documents, people live, if one can only "find" them. In greater or less measure they have been found in their authors' own image, much as have the characters in fiction. Thus what happened has been intensely lived in terms of what moved these people and how they must have felt. He who wishes may test these writings for the facts, and he will find them in the main to be "true." They are true as well in the larger sense. This is the kind of history that "does work in the world."

Every Man His Own Historian[1]

CARL L. BECKER

ONCE UPON A TIME, long long ago, I learned how to reduce a fraction to its lowest terms. Whether I could still perform that operation is uncertain; but the discipline involved in early training had its uses, since it taught me that in order to understand the essential nature of anything it is well to strip it of all superficial and irrelevant accretions—in short, to reduce it to its lowest terms That operation I now venture, with some apprehension and all due apologies, to perform on the subject of history.

I ought first of all to explain that when I use the term history I mean knowledge of history. No doubt throughout all past time there actually occurred a series of events which, whether we know what it was or not, constitutes history in some ultimate sense. Nevertheless, much the greater part of these events we can know nothing about, not even that they occurred; many of them we can know only imperfectly; and even the few events that we think we know for sure we can never be absolutely certain of, since we can never revive them, never observe or test them directly. The event itself once occurred, but as an actual event it has disappeared; so that in dealing with it the only objective reality we can observe or test is some material trace which the event has left—usually a written document. With these traces of vanished events, these documents, we must be content since they are all we have; from them we infer what the event was, we affirm that it is a fact that the event was so and so. We do not say "Lincoln is assassinated"; we say "it is a fact that Lincoln was assassinated." The event *was*, but is no longer, it is only the affirmed fact about the event that *is*, that persists, and will persist until we discover that our affirmation is wrong or inadequate. Let us then admit that there are two histories: the actual series of events that once occurred; and the ideal series that we affirm and hold in memory. The first is absolute and unchanged—it was what it was whatever we do or say about it; the second is relative, always changing in response to the increase or refinement of knowledge. The two series correspond more or less; it is our aim to make the correspondence as exact as possible; but the actual series of events exists for us only in terms of the ideal series which we affirm and hold in memory. This is why I am forced to identify history with knowledge of history. For all practical purposes history is, for us and for the time being, what we know it to be.

It is history in this sense that I wish to reduce to its lowest terms. In order to do that I need a very simple definition. I once read that "History is the knowledge of events that have occurred in the past." That is a simple definition, but not simple enough. It contains three words that require examination. The first is knowledge. Knowledge is a formidable word. I always think of knowledge as something that is stored up in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* or the *Summa Theologica*; something difficult to acquire, something at all events that I have not. Resenting a definition that denies me the title of historian, I therefore ask what is most essential to knowledge. Well, memory, I should think (and I mean memory in the broad sense, the memory of events inferred as well as the memory of events observed); other things are necessary too, but memory is fundamental: without memory no knowledge. So our definition becomes, "History is the memory of events that have occurred in the past." But events—the word carries an implication of something grand, like the taking of the Bastille or the Spanish-American War. An occurrence need not be spectac-

[1] Reprinted from *The American Historical Review*, 1932, by permission.

ular to be an event. If I drive a motor car down the crooked streets of Ithaca, that is an event—something done, if the traffic cop bawls me out, that is an event—something said; if I have evil thoughts of him for so doing, that is an event—something thought. In truth anything done, said, or thought is an event, important or not as may turn out. But since we do not ordinarily speak without thinking, at least in some rudimentary way, and since the psychologists tell us that we cannot think without speaking, or at least not without having anticipatory vibrations in the larynx, we may well combine thought events and speech events under one term; and so our definition becomes, "History is the memory of things said and done in the past." But the past—the word is both misleading and unnecessary: misleading, because the past, used in connection with history, seems to imply the distant past, as if history ceased before we were born; unnecessary, because after all everything said or done is already in the past as soon as it is said or done. Therefore I will omit that word, and our definition becomes, "History is the memory of things said and done." This is a definition that reduces history to its lowest terms, and yet includes everything that is essential to understanding what it really is.

If the essence of history is the memory of things said and done, then it is obvious that every normal person, Mr. Everyman, knows some history. Of course we do what we can to conceal this invidious truth. Assuming a professional manner, we say that so and so knows no history, when we mean no more than that he failed to pass the examinations set for a higher degree; and simple-minded persons, undergraduates and others, taken in by academic classifications of knowledge, think they know no history because they have never taken a course in history in college, or have never read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* No doubt the academic convention has its uses, but it is one of the superficial accretions that must be stripped off if we would understand history reduced to its lowest terms. Mr. Everyman, as well as you and I, remembers things said and done, and must do so at every waking moment. Suppose Mr. Everyman to have awakened this morning unable to remember anything said or done. He would be a lost soul indeed. This has happened, this sudden loss of all historical knowledge. But normally it does not happen. Normally the memory of Mr. Everyman, when he awakens in the morning, reaches out into the country of the past and of distant places and instantaneously recreates his little world of endeavor, pulls together as it were things said and done in his yesterdays, and coördinates them with his present perceptions and with things to be said and done in his tomorrows. Without this historical knowledge, this memory of things said and done, his today would be aimless and his to-morrow without significance.

Since we are concerned with history in its lowest terms, we will suppose that Mr Everyman is not a professor of history, but just an ordinary citizen without excess knowledge. Not having a lecture to prepare, his memory of things said and done, when he awakened this morning, presumably did not drag into consciousness any events connected with the Liman von Sanders mission or the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals; it presumably dragged into consciousness an image of things said and done yesterday in the office, the highly significant fact that General Motors has dropped three points, a conference arranged for ten o'clock in the morning, a promise to play nine holes at four-thirty in the afternoon, and other historical events of similar import. Mr. Everyman knows more history than this, but at the moment of awakening this is sufficient: memory of things said and done, history functioning, at seven-thirty in the morning, in its very lowest terms, has effectively oriented Mr. Everyman in his little world of endeavor.

Yet not quite effectively after all perhaps; for unaided memory is notoriously fickle; and it may happen that Mr. Everyman, as he drinks his coffee, is uneasily aware of something said or done that he fails now to recall. A common enough occurrence, as we all know to our sorrow—this remembering, not the historical event, but only that there was an event which we ought to remember

but can not. This is Mr. Everyman's difficulty, a bit of history lies dead and inert in the sources, unable to do any work for Mr. Everyman because his memory refuses to bring it alive in consciousness. What then does Mr. Everyman do? He does what any historian would do: he does a bit of historical research in the sources. From his little Private Record Office (I mean his vest pocket) he takes a book in MS., volume XXXV, it may be, and turns to page 23, and there he reads: "December 29, pay Smith's coal bill, 20 tons, $1017.20." Instantaneously a series of historical events comes to life in Mr. Everyman's mind. He has an image of himself ordering twenty tons of coal from Smith last summer, of Smith's wagons driving up to his house, and of the precious coal sliding dustily through the cellar window. Historical events, these are, not so important as the forging of the Isidorian Decretals, but still important to Mr. Everyman: historical events which he was not present to observe, but which, by an artificial extension of memory, he can form a clear picture of, because he has done a little original research in the manuscripts preserved in his Private Record Office.

The picture Mr. Everyman forms of Smith's wagons delivering the coal at his house is a picture of things said and done in the past. But it does not stand alone, it is not a pure antiquarian image to be enjoyed for its own sake; on the contrary, it is associated with a picture of things to be said and done in the future; so that throughout the day Mr. Everyman intermittenly holds in mind, together with a picture of Smith's coal wagons, a picture of himself going at four o'clock in the afternoon to Smith's office in order to pay his bill. At four o'clock Mr. Everyman is accordingly at Smith's office. "I wish to pay that coal bill," he says. Smith looks dubious and disappointed, takes down a ledger (or a filing case), does a bit of original research in his Private Record Office, and announces: "You don't owe me any money, Mr. Everyman. You ordered the coal here all right, but I didn't have the kind you wanted, and so turned the order over to Brown. It was Brown delivered your coal: he's the man you owe." Whereupon Mr. Everyman goes to Brown's office; and Brown takes down a ledger, does a bit of original research in his Private Record Office, which happily confirms the researches of Smith; and Mr. Everyman pays his bill, and in the evening, after returning from the Country Club, makes a further search in another collection of documents, where, sure enough, he finds a bill from Brown, properly drawn, for twenty tons of stove coal, $1017.20. The research is now completed. Since his mind rests satisfied, Mr. Everyman has found the explanation of the series of events that concerned him.

Mr. Everyman would be astonished to learn that he is an historian, yet it is obvious, isn't it, that he has performed all the essential operations involved in historical research. Needing or wanting to do something (which happened to be, not to deliver a lecture or write a book, but to pay a bill; and this is what misleads him and us as to what he is really doing), the first step was to recall things said and done. Unaided memory proving inadequate, a further step was essential—the examination of certain documents in order to discover the necessary but as yet unknown facts. Unhappily the documents were found to give conflicting reports, so that a critical comparison of the texts had to be instituted in order to eliminate error. All this having been satisfactorily accomplished, Mr. Everyman is ready for the final operation—the formation in his mind, by an artificial extension of memory, of a picture, a definitive picture let us hope, of a selected series of historical events—of himself ordering coal from Smith, of Smith turning the order over to Brown, and of Brown delivering the coal at his house. In the light of this picture Mr. Everyman could, and did, pay his bill. If Mr. Everyman had undertaken these researches in order to write a book instead of to pay a bill, no one would think of denying that he was an historian.

I have tried to reduce history to its lowest terms, first by defining it as the memory of things said and done, second by showing concretely how the memory of things said and done is essential to the performance of

the simplest acts of daily life. I wish now to note the more general implications of Mr. Everyman's activities. In the realm of affairs Mr. Everyman has been paying his coal bill; in the realm of consciousness he has been doing that fundamental thing which enables man alone to have, properly speaking, a history: he has been reenforcing and enriching his immediate perceptions to the end that he may live in a world of semblance more spacious and satisfying than is to be found within the narrow confines of the fleeting present moment.

We are apt to think of the past as dead, the future as nonexistent, the present alone as real; and prematurely wise or disillusioned counselors have urged us to burn always with "a hard, gemlike flame" in order to give "the highest quality to the moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake." This no doubt is what the glow-worm does; but I think that man, who alone is properly aware that the present moment passes, can for that very reason make no good use of the present moment simply for its own sake. Strictly speaking, the present doesn't exist for us, or is at best no more than an infinitesimal point in time, gone before we can note it as present. Nevertheless, we must have a present; and so we create one by robbing the past, by holding on to the most recent events and pretending that they all belong to our immediate perceptions. If, for example, I raise my arm, the total event is a series of occurrences of which the first are past before the last have taken place; and yet you perceive it as a single movement executed in one present instant. This telescoping of successive events into a single instant philosophers call the "specious present." Doubtless they would assign rather narrow limits to the specious present; but I will willfully make a free use of it, and say that we can extend the specious present as much as we like. In common speech we do so: we speak of the "present hour," the "present year," the "present generation." Perhaps all living creatures have a specious present; but man has this superiority, as Pascal says, that he is aware of himself and the universe, can as it were hold himself at arm's length and with some measure of objectivity watch himself and his fellows functioning in the world during a brief span of allotted years. Of all the creatures, man alone has a specious present that may be deliberately and purposefully enlarged and diversified and enriched.

The extent to which the specious present may thus be enlarged and enriched will depend upon knowledge, the artificial extension of memory, the memory of things said and done in the past and distant places. But not upon knowledge alone, rather upon knowledge directed by purpose. The specious present is an unstable pattern of thought, incessantly changing in response to our immediate perceptions and the purposes that arise therefrom. At any given moment each one of us (professional historian no less than Mr. Everyman) weaves into this unstable pattern such actual or artificial memories as may be necessary to orient us in our little world of endeavor. But to be oriented in our little world of endeavor we must be prepared for what is coming to us (the payment of a coal bill, the delivery of a presidential address, the establishment of a League of Nations, or whatever); and to be prepared for what is coming to us it is necessary, not only to recall certain past events, but to anticipate (note I do not say predict) the future. Thus from the specious present, which always includes more or less of the past, the future refuses to be excluded; and the more of the past we drag into the specious present, the more an hypothetical, patterned future is likely to crowd into it also. Which comes first, which is cause and which effect, whether our memories construct a pattern of past events at the behest of our desires and hopes, or whether our desires and hopes spring from a pattern of past events imposed upon us by experience and knowledge, I shall not attempt to say. What I suspect is that memory of past and anticipation of future events work together, go hand in hand as it were in a friendly way, without disputing over priority and leadership.

At all events they go together, so that in a very real sense it is impossible to divorce history from life: Mr. Everyman cannot do

what he needs or desires to do without recalling past events; he cannot recall past events without in some subtle fashion relating them to needs or desires to do. This is the natural function of history, of history reduced to its lowest terms, of history conceived as the memory of things said and done: memory of things said and done (whether in our immediate yesterdays or in the long past of mankind), running hand in hand with the anticipation of things to be said and done, enables us, each to the extent of his knowledge and imagination, to be intelligent, to push back the narrow confines of the fleeting present moment so that what we are doing may be judged in the light of what we have done and what we hope to do. In this sense all *living* history, as Croce says, is contemporaneous: is so far as we think the past (and otherwise the past, however fully related in documents, is nothing to us) it becomes an integral and living part of our present world of semblance.

It must then be obvious that living history, the ideal series of events that we affirm and hold in memory, since it is so intimately associated with what we are doing and with what we hope to do, cannot be precisely the same for all at any given time, or the same for one generation as for another. History in this sense cannot be reduced to a verifiable set of statistics or formulated in terms of universally valid mathematical formulas. It is rather an imaginative creation, a personal possession which each one of us, Mr. Everyman, fashions out of his individual experience, adapts to his practical or emotional needs, and adorns as well as may be to suit his esthetic tastes. In thus creating his own history, there are, nevertheless, limits which Mr. Everyman may not overstep without incurring penalties. The limits are set by his fellows. If Mr. Everyman lived quite alone in an unconditioned world, he would be free to affirm and hold in memory any ideal series of events that struck his fancy, and thus create a world of semblance quite in accord with the heart's desire. Unfortunately, Mr. Everyman has to live in a world of Browns and Smiths; a sad experience, which has taught him the expediency of recalling certain events with much exactness. In all the immediately practical affairs of life Mr. Everyman is a good historian, as expert, in conducting the researches necessary for paying his coal bill, as need be. His expertness comes partly from long practice, but chiefly from the circumstance that his researches are prescribed and guided by very definite and practical objects which concern him intimately. The problem of what documents to consult, what facts to select, troubles Mr. Everyman not at all. Since he is not writing a book on "Some Aspects of the Coal Industry Objectively Considered," it does not occur to him to collect all the facts and let them speak for themselves. Wishing merely to pay his coal bill, he selects only such facts as may be relevant; and not wishing to pay it twice, he is sufficiently aware, without ever having read Bernheim's *Lehrbuch*, that the relevant facts must be clearly established by the testimony of independent witnesses not self-deceived. He does not know, or need to know, that his personal interest in the performance is a disturbing bias which will prevent him from learning the whole truth or arriving at ultimate causes. Mr. Everyman does not wish to learn the whole truth or to arrive at ultimate causes. He wishes to pay his coal bill. That is to say, he wishes to adjust himself to a practical situation, and on that low pragmatic level he is a good historian precisely because he is not disinterested: he will solve his problems, if he does solve them, by virtue of his intelligence and not by virtue of his indifference.

Nevertheless, Mr. Everyman does not live by bread alone; and on all proper occasions his memory of things said and done, easily enlarging his spacious present beyond the narrow circle of daily affairs, will, must inevitably, in mere compensation for the intolerable dullness and vexation of the fleeting present moment, fashion for him a more spacious world than that of the immediately practical. He can readily recall the days of his youth, the places he has lived in, the ventures he has made, the adventures he has had—all the crowded events of a lifetime; and beyond and around this central

pattern of personally experienced events, there will be embroidered a more dimly seen pattern of artificial memories, memories of things reputed to have been said and done in past times which he has not known, in distant places which he has not seen. This outer pattern of remembered events that encloses and completes the central pattern of his personal experience, Mr. Everyman has woven, he could not tell you how, out of the most diverse threads of information, picked up in the most casual way, from the most unrelated sources—from things learned at home and in school, from knowledge gained in business or profession, from newspapers glanced at, from books (yes, even history books) read or heard of, from remembered scraps of newsreels or educational films of *ex cathedra* utterances of presidents. and kings, from fifteen-minute discourses on the history of civilization broadcast by the courtesy (it may be) of Pepsodent, the Bulova Watch Company, or the Shepard Stores in Boston. Daily and hourly, from a thousand unnoted sources, there is lodged in Mr. Everyman's mind a mass of unrelated and related information and misinformation, of impressions and images, out of which he somehow manages, undeliberately for the most part, to fashion a history, a patterned picture of remembered things said and done in past times and distant places. It is not possible, it is not essential, that this picture should be complete or completely true: it is essential that it should be useful to Mr. Everyman; and that it may be useful to him he will hold in memory, of all the things he might hold in memory, those things only which can be related with some reasonable degree of relevance and harmony to his idea of himself and of what he is doing in the world and what he hopes to do.

In constructing this more remote and far-flung pattern of remembered things, Mr. Everyman works with something of the freedom of a creative artist; the history which he imaginatively recreates as an artificial extension of his personal experience will inevitably be an engaging blend of fact and fancy, a mythical adaptation of that which actually happened. In part it will be true, in part false; as a whole perhaps neither true nor false, but only the most convenient form of error. Not that Mr. Everyman wishes or intends to deceive himself or others. Mr. Everyman has a wholesome respect for cold, hard facts, never suspecting how malleable they are, how easy it is to coax and cajole them; but he necessarily takes the facts as they come to him, and is enamored of those that seem best suited to his interests or promise most in the way of emotional satisfaction. The exact truth of remembered events he has in any case no time, and no need, to curiously question or meticulously verify. No doubt he can, if he be an American, call up an image of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 as readily as he can call up an image of Smith's coal wagons creaking up the hill last summer. He suspects the one image no more than the other; but the signing of the Declaration, touching not his practical interests, calls for no careful historical research on his part. He may perhaps, without knowing why, affirm and hold in memory that the Declaration was signed by the members of the Continental Congress on the fourth of July. It is a vivid and sufficient image which Mr. Everyman may hold to the end of his days without incurring penalties. Neither Brown nor Smith has any interest in setting him right, nor will any court ever send him a summons for failing to recall that the Declaration, "being engrossed and compared at the table, was signed by the members" on the second of August. As an actual event, the signing of the Declaration was what it was; as a remembered event it will be, for Mr. Everyman, what Mr. Everyman contrives to make it: will have for him significance and magic, much or little or none at all, as it fits well or ill into his little world of interests and aspirations and emotional comforts.

What then of us, historians by profession? What have we to do with Mr. Everyman, or he with us? More, I venture to believe, than we are apt to think. For each of us is Mr. Everyman too. Each of us is subject to the limitations of time and place; and for each of us, no less than for the Browns and Smiths of the world, the pattern of remembered

things said and done will be woven, safeguard the process how we may, at the behest of circumstance and purpose.

True it is that although each of us is Mr. Everyman, each is something more than his own historian. Mr. Everyman, being but an informal historian, is under no bond to remember what is irrelevant to his personal affairs. But we are historians by profession. Our profession, less intimately bound up with the practical activities, is to be directly concerned with the ideal series of events that is only of casual or occasional import to others; it is our business in life to be ever preoccupied with that far-flung pattern of artificial memories that encloses and completes the central pattern of individual experience. We are Mr. Everybody's historian as well as our own, since our histories serve the double purpose, which written histories have always served, of keeping alive the recollection of memorable men and events We are thus of that ancient and honorable company of wise men of the tribe, of bards and story-tellers and minstrels, of soothsayers and priests, to whom in successive ages has been entrusted the keeping of the useful myths. Let not the harmless, necessary word "myth" put us out of countenance. In the history of history a myth is a once valid but now discarded version of the human story, as our now valid versions will in due course be relegated to the category of discarded myths. With our predecessors, the bards and story-tellers and priests, we have therefore this in common: that it is our function, as it was theirs, not to create, but to preserve and perpetuate the social tradition; to harmonize, as well as ignorance and prejudice permit, the actual and the remembered series of events; to enlarge and enrich the specious present common to us all to the end that "society" (the tribe, the nation, or all mankind) may judge of what it is doing in the light of what it has done and what it hopes to do.

History as the artificial extension of the social memory (and I willingly concede that there are other appropriate ways of apprehending human experience) is an art of long standing, necessarily so since it springs instinctively from the impulse to enlarge the range of immediate experience, and however camouflaged by the disfiguring jargon of science, it is still in essence what it has always been. History in this sense is story, in aim always a true story; a story that employs all the devices of literary art (statement and generalization, narration and description, comparison and comment and analogy) to present the succession of events in the life of man, and from the succession of events in the life of man, and from the succession of events thus presented to derive a satisfactory meaning. The history written by historians, like the history informally fashioned by Mr. Everyman, is thus a convenient blend of truth and fancy, of what we commonly distinguish as "fact" and "interpretation." In primitive times, when tradition is orally transmitted, bards and story-tellers frankly embroider or improvise the facts to heighten the dramatic import of the story. With the use of written records, history, gradually differentiated from fiction, is understood as the story of events that actually occurred; and with the increase and refinement of knowledge the historian recognizes that his first duty is to be sure of his facts, let their meaning be what it may. Nevertheless, in every age history is taken to be a story of actual events from which a significant meaning may be derived; and in every age the illusion is that the present version is valid because the related facts are true, whereas former versions are invalid because based upon inaccurate or inadequate facts.

Never was this conviction more impressively displayed than in our own time—that age of erudition in which we live, or from which we are perhaps just emerging. Finding the course of history littered with the *débris* of exploded philosophies, the historians of the last century, unwilling to be forever duped, turned away (as they fondly hoped) from "interpretation" to the rigorous examination of the factual event, just as it occurred. Perfecting the technique of investigation, they laboriously collected and edited the sources of information, and with incredible persistence and ingenuity ran illu-

sive error to earth, letting the significance of the Middle Ages wait until it was certainly known "whether Charles the Fat was at Ingelheim or Lustnau on July 1, 887," shedding their "life-blood," in many a hard fought battle, "for the sublime truths of Sac and Soc." I have no quarrel with this so great concern with hoti's business. One of the first duties of man is not to be duped, to be aware of his world; and to derive the significance of human experience from events that never occurred is surely an enterprise of doubtful value. To establish the facts is always in order, and is indeed the first duty of the historian; but to suppose that the facts, once established in all their fullness, will "speak for themselves" is an illusion. It was perhaps peculiarly the illusion of those historians of the last century who found some special magic in the word "scientific." The scientific historian, it seems, was one who set forth the facts without injecting any extraneous meaning into them. He was the objective man whom Nietzsche described—"a mirror: accustomed to prostration before something that wants to be known, . . . he waits until something comes, and then expands himself sensitively, so that even the light footsteps and gliding past of spiritual things may not be lost in his surface and film." "It is not I who speak, but history which speaks through me," was Fustel's reproof to applauding students. "If a certain philosophy emerges from this scientific history, it must be permitted to emerge naturally, of its own accord, all but independently of the will of the historian." Thus the scientific historian deliberately renounced philosophy only to submit to it without being aware. His philosophy was just this, that by not taking thought a cubit would be added to his stature. With no other preconception than the will to know, the historian would reflect in his surface and film the "order of events throughout past times in all places"; so that, in the fullness of time, when innumerable patient expert scholars, by "exhausting the sources," should have reflected without refracting the truth of all the facts, the definitive and impregnable meaning of human experience would emerge of its own accord to enlighten and emancipate mankind. Hoping to find something without looking for it, expecting to obtain final answers to life's riddle by resolutely refusing to ask questions—it was surely the most romantic species of realism yet invented, the oddest attempt ever made to get something for nothing!

That mood is passing. The fullness of time is not yet, overmuch learning proves a weariness to the flesh, and a younger generation that knows not Von Ranke is eager to believe that Fustel's counsel, if one of perfection, is equally one of futility. Even the most disinterested historian has at least one preconception, which is the fixed idea that he has none. The facts of history are already set forth, implicitly, in the sources; and the historian who could restate without reshaping them would, by submerging and suffocating the mind in diffuse existence, accomplish the superfluous task of depriving human experience of all significance. Left to themselves, the facts do not speak; left to themselves they do not exist, not really, since for all practical purposes there is no fact until someone affirms it. The least the historian can do with any historical fact is to select and affirm it. To select and affirm even the simplest complex of facts is to give them a certain place in a certain pattern of ideas, and this alone is sufficient to give them a special meaning. However "hard" or "cold" they may be, historical facts are after all not material substances which, like bricks or scantlings, possess definite shape and clear, persistent outline. To set forth historical facts is not comparable to dumping a barrow of bricks. A brick retains its form and pressure wherever placed; but the form and substance of historical facts, having a negotiable existence only in literary discourse, vary with the words employed to convey them. Since history is not part of the external material world, but an imaginative reconstruction of vanished events, its form and substance are inseparable: in the realm of literary discourse substance, being an idea, *is* form; and form, conveying the idea, *is* substance. It is thus not the undiscriminated fact, but the perceiving mind of the historian that speaks:

the special meaning which the facts are made to convey emerges from the substance-form which the historian employs to re-create imaginatively a series of events not present to perception.

In constructing this substance-form of vanished events, the historian, like Mr. Everyman, like the bards and story-tellers of an earlier time, will be conditioned by the specious present in which alone he can be aware of his world. Being neither omniscient nor omnipresent, the historian is not the same person always and everywhere; and for him, as for Mr. Everyman, the form and significance of remembered events, like the extension and velocity of physical objects, will vary with the time and place of the observer. After fifty years we can clearly see that it was not history which spoke through Fustel, but Fustel who spoke through history. We see less clearly perhaps that the voice of Fustel was the voice, amplified and freed from static as one may say, of Mr. Everyman; what the admiring students applauded on that famous occasion was neither history nor Fustel, but a deftly colored pattern of selected events which Fustel fashioned, all the more skillfully for not being aware of doing so, in the service of Mr. Everyman's emotional needs—the emotional satisfaction, so essential to Frenchmen at that time, of perceiving that French institutions were not of German origin. And so it must always be. Played upon by all the diverse, unnoted influences of his own time, the historian will elicit history out of documents by the same principle, however more consciously and expertly applied, that Mr. Everyman employs to breed legends out of remembered episodes and oral tradition.

Berate him as we will for not reading our books, Mr. Everyman is stronger than we are, and sooner or later we must adapt our knowledge to his necessities. Otherwise he will leave us to our own devices, leave us it may be to cultivate a species of dry professional arrogance growing out of the thin soil of antiquarian research. Such research, valuable not in itself but for some ulterior purpose, will be of little import except in so far as it is transmuted into common knowledge. The history that lies inert in unread books does no work in the world. The history that does work in the world, the history that influences the course of history, is living history, that pattern of remembered events whether true or false, that enlarges and enriches the collective specious present, the specious present of Mr. Everyman. It is for this reason that the history of history is a record of the "new history" that in every ages rises to confound and supplant the old. It should be a relief to us to renounce omniscience, to recognize that every generation, our own included, will, must inevitably, understand the past and anticipate the future in the light of its own restricted experience, must inevitably play on the dead whatever tricks it finds necessary for its own peace of mind. The appropriate trick for any age is not a malicious invention designed to take anyone in, but an unconscious and necessary effort on the part of "society" to understand what it is doing in the light of what it has done and what it hopes to do. We, historians by profession, share in this necessary effort. But we do not impose our version of the human story on Mr. Everyman; in the end it is rather Mr. Everyman who imposes his version on us—compelling us, in an age of political revolution, to see that history is past politics, in an age of social stress and conflict to search for the economic interpretation. If we remain too long recalcitrant Mr. Everyman will ignore us, shelving our recondite works behind glass doors rarely opened. Our proper function is not to repeat the past but to make use of it, to correct and rationalize for common use Mr. Everyman's mythological adaptation of what actually happened. We are surely under bond to be as honest and as intelligent as human frailty permits; but the secret of our success in the long run is in conforming to the temper of Mr. Everyman, which we seem to guide only because we are so sure, eventually, to follow it.

Neither the value nor the dignity of history need suffer by regarding it as a foreshortened and incomplete representation of the reality that once was, an unstable pattern of remembered things redesigned and newly col-

ored to suit the convenience of those who make use of it. Nor need our labors be the less highly prized because our task is limited, our contributions of incidental and temporary significance. History is an indispensable even though not the highest form of intellectual endeavor, since it makes, as Santayana says, a gift of "great interests . . . to the heart. A barbarian is not less subject to the past than is the civic man who knows what the past is and means to be loyal to it, but the barbarian, for want of a transpersonal memory, crawls among superstitions which he cannot understand or revoke and among people whom he may hate or love, but whom he can never think of raising to a higher plane, to the level of a purer happiness. The whole dignity of human endeavor is thus bound up with historic issues, and as conscience needs to be controlled by experience if it is to become rational, so personal experience itself needs to be enlarged ideally if the failures and successes it reports are to touch impersonal interests."

I do not present this view of history as one that is stable and must prevail. Whatever validity it may claim, it is certain, on its own premises, to be supplanted, for its premises, imposed upon us by the climate of opinion in which we live and think, predispose us to regard all things, and all principles of things, as no more than "inconstant modes or fashions," as but the "concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their way." It is the limitation of the genetic approach to human experience that it must be content to transform problems since it can never solve them. However accurately we may determine the "facts" of history, the facts themselves and our interpretations of them, and our interpretation of our own interpretations, will be seen in a different perspective or a less vivid light as mankind moves into the unknown future. Regarded historically, as a process of becoming, man and his world can obviously be understood only tentatively, since it is by definition something still in the making, something as yet unfinished. Unfortunately for the "permanent contribution" and the universally valid philosophy, time passes, time, the enemy of man as the Greeks thought, tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in this petty pace, and all our yesterdays diminish and grow dim: so that, in the lengthening perspective of the centuries, even the most striking events (The Declaration of Independence, the French Revolution, the Great War itself; like the Diet of Worms before them, like the signing of the Magna Carta and the coronation of Charlemagne and the crossing of the Rubicon and the battle of Marathon) must inevitably, for posterity, fade away into pale replicas of the original picture, for each succeeding generation losing, as they recede into a more distant past, some significance that once was noted in them, some quality of enchantment that once was theirs.

You Are Not Forgotten[1]

JOHN HOLMES

To Mr. Joseph Harris
Hanover Township
Burlington County, And
State of New Jersey, Near Penny Hill

January the 14, 1809

DEAR CHILDREN,

I take this opportunity to let you know that we are all well hoping these few Lines may find you in the same I want Jobe to send me some muzling for Caps and a handkerchief checklining for an apron and thread to make them for it is not to be had here and a paper

[1] From *The Yale Review*, Spring, 1937. Copyright 1937 by the Yale University Press, and reprinted with their permission.

of pins you may send them by Isaac Estellow for we hear that he is coming out in the Spring we received your letter November 21 and was glad to hear from you all I want to know wether Jobe ever talks of coming to see us or no I want you to write to us the first opportunity we have killed four hogs and they weighed 830 pounds in December we had 16 snows in January 12 no more at preasant only our kind Love to you all.

These from

William and Lettice Rainier

To Joseph and Mary Harris

January, 1937

Dear Friends,

I take this opportunity to answer your letter of a January much more than a hundred years ago, a letter you wrote, not to me, but to Joseph and Mary, in another part of the country. I do not know how long it was until they found a traveller to take a letter to you, or if they waited till spring. I only know that Mary was your daughter, gone a long way from home, and married. Though you could know less of me than I know of you now, there was something in your words that made other strangers wish to keep the letter longer than you would have believed, until at last, and by accident, it fell into my hands. I know that both of you were old when it was written, and that I who read it am young, less than half your age. I know that somehow, with that fitful warmth some men still feel, you felt the life there is in words when you spread a sheet of white, ruled paper on a farmhouse table, drew the lamp near, and dipped your pen in ink. And I know that your words lie here now on my table, and as I read them over and over, they still come into my mind with a mystery and shock and pain that is, nevertheless, as sound and sweet as your kind love to all was when it was new.

Your words have not faded into the silence where most words go. That is what I want to say across the many years. Letters are an extraordinarily silent communication between people. We do not speak as we write them, or when we read them and lay them down, or when we write again to answer them. The words themselves on the paper are notes in a music meant to be lifted into sound once, and no more. But your words still speak from the page, as good letters may; they say, "Answer me." They call all the way from you to me to say, "Send me a part of yourself—tell me how life is with you—make me know that you are real—think of me and say that you think of me." That is why I am writing.

Questions may not be asked of you now. I understand that. But if they could be, I would ask if Isaac came your way in the spring, bringing with him the muslin for caps and handkerchiefs, and thread to make them, and a paper of pins. Did you make the caps, Lettice, and were they for yourself, or for your grandchildren, or for presents? Did Jobe, if he was able to come to see you, write first that he was coming, and were you busy and happy and excited then, getting ready for him by cooking and baking in the old kitchen? Did Joe—grandson, son, or son-in-law—tell you those small tales of the daily life of his home, and of your children's children, that never get into letters, never enough of them? What did he tell you? What did William ask him about his ways of work, and prices, and crops, and news of the country and countryside? And was life, with Jobe's telling, almost as bright in your house for a while as when all your children were young at home, the whole family under one roof, as parents always dream may come true once more somehow? But I may not ask you questions. I might better content myself with ironical agreement that 16 snows in one month, and in the next 12, is snows enough. You lived in a time when there was enough, even of weather.

I am glad that you told me you were well in that month, in that year. Of course, it was from your own children you wished assurance that they were well. I am as sure as anyone can be that you had word from them soon, and that they were all well. But I must write as if your letter had been sent to me, as after all these years it has come to me.

Your letter found me as you were. In a time you could not understand, and would

not like, separated by years infinitely longer than the miles that separate your home and mine, I am well and happy. I have found my work and the strength to do it and the knowledge that is needed. In these things alone I am richer than you would know; it is a great deal now simply to be needed. I have a family, and good friends in my house. As far as I have been able, although you would not understand that, either, I have made my house with my own hands and mind and love It is so now that one is thankful for simple things like these, because they may no longer be taken for granted.

Life with me, further than this, goes so very differently that I do not know how to begin to tell you about it. We live as we have always lived—near a large city. When we were children, we played our games with toys that were all bought for us, not made, and we played them most of the time indoors. My father made me a toy-box in the shape of a fat and ample barn, one side of which let down, and the roof was hinged. You would think it a queer thing to have a toy in the shape of a barn. We plant now for flowers, and for exercise of the body and peace for the mind, not as you did to provide food. Animals we scarcely know, except for dogs in the house, and horses on those occasions when we ride them for pleasure, not to travel or for work. I have never seen a hog killed. We travel rapidly in machines that move themselves. Our nights are lighted by a miracle we take for granted. Most of the people I know have, as a matter of course, seen parts of this country and the world you scarcely knew existed.

Nothing, it seems to me, is the same, except the snow and the summer, and distance and the need for communication. To go on counting these new things is useless because they are not important except in their difference. Such a gulf of difference separates us, though, that almost nothing will reach across it. Nothing but words are in your letter, and because they are there, I am able to tell you that life still goes that way with us, though sometimes we forget ourselves that it is the same. There are still voices silent to us after many years, and there are new ways of being apart, new areas of pain between man and man.

When you were old, and the children away, and the months long between their letters, and the years between their visits, you might have been sad. But the words in your heart were not silenced, nor the plain, sound strength of age diminished, for these have lasted on your letter-sheet to this day. And though my name is strange to you, I have, nevertheless, some part of that kind love you sent to all.
This to William and Lettice

To Mr. Joseph Harris
Near Penny Hill
West New Jersey
Burlington County
Hanover Township

April 22, 1810

Dear Children,

I take this opportunity to let you know that we are all in good helth at preasant hoping these few lines may find you injoying the same Blessing we had a very favourable winter we had but Little Snow this Spring we made 400weight of shugar & one barrel of vinegar I received the things sent by Isaac Estlow and was very glad of them in three weeks after they left your house they came to see us they had been in some days last fall we had 877weight of pork we have got two new milk cows we have plenty to eat and to wear I wish some of you could come to see us I want Jobe to come to see us I made last year 108 yard of cloath we have more wool and flax than we can spin I want you to write to us the first opertunity for I want to hear from you I want to know where William and Charlotte Pope lives so no more at preasant only our kind Love to you all these from your mother.

Samuel Warrin is going to move to the Jerseys near Haddonfield. He has got tired of living among the yankeys he is as keen to come back as he was to come here he is going to live with his son William Warrin their are some very cleaver people here but they are scarce I want to see you

all once more but the Lord only knows weather I shall or not.

These from

William Rainier & Lettice

To Joseph Harris & Mary Harris

January, 1937

Dear Friends,

You wrote again in the spring of the next year, and again I write to you, one of whose children I am on earth. Thinking of you now, and sending back this answer to your hope, I cannot make you understand, and I scarcely understand it myself, that I am so far distant as that. I am one of your children only in the sense that I am an inheritor with many others of your life long ago.

What you had to give us has come to me changed with the touch of hands I know nothing about. I can guess a little because of the differences, but I may be wrong, and I wonder most of all at what I shall do with your gift. You had a way of life that kept close to the realities; sometimes I think that we parcel life out in half-pound packages. How is sugar made? How is vinegar made? How is cloth spun? During the winter, you write me, you had plenty to eat and wear, and I am glad that it was so. You had more flax and wool than you could spin. What would you say if you were told that you had this plenty in your house and barn merely because you lived when the times were good? I think you would have been surprised if it were true.

The times, in that phrase we both know, have of course been slower, quieter, or simpler than they are now in my life, and by turns good, and bad. But when you knew they were better than they had been, or worse than you liked, you knew it depended on weather and work. Sometimes with us, for reasons we do not wholly understand, it does not. What did you do with the wool and flax that was left over after you had spun all you needed? Was there an answer then to that question? There is no good answer to that sort of question now. Here and now, I, too, have had plenty to eat and to wear. But it has not been so with all people. You knew, of course, that when you had plenty, there were others somewhere who had not, others who perhaps had nothing. Did you give them the flax and wool you couldn't use? I know you didn't destroy it. In my time those who have not plenty are so many, and their need so desperate, that your hearts would break with the knowledge and the sight of it. Yet we have, as you had, more flax and wool than we can spin —more of those things all men used to live. In our times we know what it is to offer to the children, as you must have to yours, though they were grown up and married and able to work, some of what we have, even when it is not plentiful, because we must. I have bought meals for men, and given clothes, and sent money to those who will use it for need; and this in every year. But it is like sweeping the sea back with a broom. And it is not because of hard winters always, or the failure of crops, or because men will not work, that there is need.

Samuel was indeed restless, wasn't he? I see him clearly, divided between amusement and sympathy at the sight. Poor Samuel, who got tired of the Jerseys, and then got tired of your country, and must go back and get tired of the Jerseys again. And just as keen for one thing as the other. And old enough to know better, too, if he had a son he could go to live with. I wish more than ever that I were going to have more letters from you, because I should like to know more about him, and what happened to him afterward. Was he one of the clever people, and were they still scarcer when he left? But the Samuels we have always with us, or leaving us, taking themselves with them. He has grown old being restless and keen for the move, but perhaps not unhappy. Not everyone can stay in one place and harvest a surplus of wool and flax and grain and pork; it was not his happiness to do that. Men like that had rather plant than reap.

There may have been a reason for old Samuel's cleverness, and restlessness, and keenness. Samuel sounds to me like a man who had unsuspected depths; he might have

been an artist. Suppose he were an artist, though without an art, and suppose his wilfulness was the outward sign of his seeking for it. Or suppose Samuel was a fool; artists often do seem fools. But if he was not merely the unreasonable fellow you suggest, then he might have been a symptom. Samuel might have been an early uneasy stirring in the American mind of stories and plays and paintings yet to come. He would be the last one to know, perhaps, just what was the trouble with him, except that he got tired of the hills, and then tired of the shore, and did not want to be a farmyard tree with his roots always in the same soil.

If all that was untrue, and I read too much into your letter, I am much surer of another thing you do not say, and that is that you were kind to him, appreciated him, and missed him. I have been talking only to amuse myself. Let us merely agree that Samuel must have been a perplexing arrival at William's house; and may I say as I close that the Samuels, young and old, of my time, are no less difficult, and kindness such as yours surely was to him no less rare?

To William and Lettice

Mr. Joseph Harris
Burlington
Hanover Township
West New Jersey
Egypt P.O.

April 3, 1833

I now take my pen in hand to write to you I don't know whether you are ded or alive for we think you have forgot us for we have not heard from you this seven years but we hope these Lines may find you all in good helth as we are at present but we are getting very old and have many complaint about us for I am in my eighty sence last August the 19 and Lettice was Seventy eight last february 22 William lives where he did when you was out here Job lives not fur of and Thomas lives near whear he did when you was out here Thomas has lost his second wife and Beulah keeps house for him at present for she has lost her husband and has got one child a boy and generaly speaking they and all their famelis are in good helth at present our crops failed us very much last season we have very littel more than half a crop and Sum not more than a quarter crop wheat Seven Shillings and six pence per bushel rye six shillings indian corne about four and six oats about two shillings and nine pence butter one shilling and three pence pur pound cheese six pence pur pound poark last fall was three dollars and a half pur hundred we have had a midlin cold winter of and on Sum Days warmer and Sum Days colder but very littel Snow till the first of March and then we had severil Days of good Sledding . . and so no more at present only our affectionate Love to you all.

These from
William and Lettice Rainier

Dear Children, I am yet in the Land of the Living but in very poor helth at present Job lives one mile & half from us he has got a piece of land they have six children William lives where he did when you was here only he has built him a new house & barn William has three children alive they have lost four Thomas has lost his second wife he has three children and Beaulah has lost her husband she has moved back again and is now keeping hous for Thomas she has one little boy five year old So no more at present my kind love to you all. This from your mother. Write to us soon.

To Joseph and Mary Harris

January, 1937

Dear Friends,

We have not forgotten you. I wish I could think that the silence of those seven years, now many times multiplied, could be ended by my thoughts and words, but I do not know that it is so. Your third letter, written so much later, has also come to me, and I am answering it like the others. To learn that Joseph and Mary at last had made the long journey to visit you took away only a part of the sorrow I felt when I read your first sentences. Seven years of silence. I could hardly believe it, yet I know how it can happen. How many times I have written to my friend across the ocean that he has lived

in my thought, and yet months and years pass before I assure him of that again. I think now more and more often of William and Lettice, but it has become less easy to find time or occasion to write, until now. It must have been that way with Mary and Joseph. Now I have your letter, and wish that I had written every day to say again that you are not forgotten; that we are not dead but alive; that we are in good health. This is of necessity a belated greeting, and does small enough honor to your years, which have been full, and not in vain.

Since you wrote, something has happened even to time. The space between twelve and one on a clock's face seems not to be any less, but in our minds it is less. In our ways of living we strive to fill an hour with more and more, and we do it at the heavy cost of saying to some friend in some hour of each day, "We have not forgotten you." We have lost time, and we have forgotten how to write letters. Until your voice came to me, still strong and strangely moving, I had not been so sharply aware of this loss. I might have been one who said, "But tomorrow I will write to William and Lettice, and tell them I have not forgotten them." Tomorrow came and I did not write to you. I said to myself then, "After I have done thus and so, and it is finished so I can tell them the whole story of it, I will sit down and write to them." But that time came, and I did not write about it. Later I remembered my promise to myself, and to you, and I said, "It has been so long now since I have written that I scarcely know where to begin, and my news is old; nevertheless, I ought to let them know that I think of them, and with affection." But somehow I did not write to you even then, and as time went on I became ashamed of myself, and the thought of a letter more painful. And so it was seven years, and since then it has been more, and only now is the letter being written that a friend should have written long ago. Now I say to myself, "If only I had known how they would feel, not hearing whether I was dead or alive, or loved them still or not, or had forgotten them. What could I have been busy with all those years that was of the slightest importance compared with a letter a friend needed, and had asked for? I have worked, and enjoyed myself—but I cannot remember at what. I have put clothes on and off and worn them out; talked with hundreds whose names mean nothing now; hurried, worried, been happy, angry, dismayed, amused—and all over what I do not know. It is all dim in my mind, and time has slipped away, and I have not written to my friends. "Why," I ask myself finally, in real surprise and grief, "why have I never written a letter to them, something that needed no more than a few moments of all the moments I have spent living? Why have I never done it?"

That is the way I felt when your last letter came into my hands.

I could hear the sound of your voice speaking, and feel the ache and bewilderment in your mind, and the still question shaped there. I am writing to tell you that it is remembered that your winter then was harsh and mild by turns, with very little snow until March, and then there was a week of good sledding. By daylight in a cutter down to the village, the horse stamping the packed snow and breathing small clouds into the clear cold air when you threw off the robes and got down and talked with the men. By moonlight along roads that wound past drifted walls and under great laden trees, the white fields shining, and the horse running steadily and easily in the runner track. Or crowded close with twenty or thirty others, young and old, in a great sleigh, again by night, the four horses running with a brave music of harness and hooves; the laughter, the songs, the hands meeting under the robes; the floor packed with straw, the road running backward and out of sight; the distant windows lighted in houses you had known all your long lives, and at last the supper in some neighbor's warm kitchen, and the bright cheeks and glistening eyes there, and many voices.

I am writing to tell you that it is remembered you did this when you were old, as you had done it all the winters of your life. You had in mind the failure of crops and the half-empty barns, the prices charged for

wheat and rye and Indian corn, and the cost of what you could not raise. You had behind your quick old eyes the pictures of the daughters-in-law and the children who had gone, who had made a break in the ring of farms around your countryside, a son to the east, a son to the northwest, a son towards the south, and the grain growing or the grain dying alike in all their acres. You had seen other families fall sick, and their children die, the headstones saying "Aged Three Years and Two Months," or five years, or six years, that would be all they were to know of the life you had so much of. But you were still in the land of the living, and getting older; William was in his eightieth year, and Lettice seventy-eight the February before. And the children had not written for seven years, but you said "Write to us soon," being anxious for the family farthest away, and more than ever eager for life and the news of life.

What can I tell you? The things words stand for have all changed now, and the words with them, a little at a time, until it is only the fact that I answer you that has any meaning. And it is too easy for me to seem sad about this change, and write as if I were full of sorrow for all that is past, and all that may not be said now. But I am not sad. In my way, which was not yours, I find life full, both of happiness and perplexity, failure and success, and would, if I could, have it last as long as yours. I should be glad to be able near the end to set some words on paper so forthright and sound, so close to the things they mean, that men afterward could not throw them out with the rubbish. "We think you have forgot us," you said, and you thought, "If they forget us, who will remember us?" William and Lettice, I remember you. I remember all that I know of your lives, and the lives of your children, and the deaths of your friends, the planting of your crops, your handwriting slanted and firm, your health and strength at eighty and seventy-eight, your late winters with good sledding, and the springs with the hills turning green, your generosity, and tenderness, and the warmth of the kind love you sent to all. I write this letter only to say that I remember.

This to William and Lettice Rainier

Wonderful Words of Life[1]

EARNEST ELMO CALKINS

I

A YEAR AGO the Methodists released their new hymnbook, last revised in 1906, and styles in hymnology have undergone some changes. Those two exponents of the hell-and-blood school of vocal theology, the brothers Wesley, have had their representation cut, Charles 121 to 54 hymns, and John from 50 to 17. Strange demands are made by sections of the church in various parts of the country; the Methodist Church South is said to have asked for a binding that cockroaches would not eat. The sales of the work will be promoted by the Methodist Book Concern, the astute business side of the church. It is optimistically estimated that the book will have twelve million users—if not purchasers.

The Presbyterian hymnal put out in 1933 was the result of seven years of careful, prayerful work. Out of a visible supply of 400,000 hymns, 5000 were examined to select 516 for the current opus. Regular church hymnbooks are revised and brought up to date as often as the traffic will stand, about once in twenty-five years.

But an even more significant trend is the gradual disappearance, from these and other modern collections, of the so-called "gospel

[1] Reprinted from *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. CLIX, Feb., 1937, by the kind permission of the author and *The Atlantic Monthly*.

hymns," once sung by millions, and known by heart today by thousands old enough to have attended Sunday School in their heyday. They are preserved from oblivion by radio pluggers who conduct hymn sings over the air in approved revival fashion, and by barroom vocalists who, when the right degree of sentimentality has been reached, break out into gospel hymns sung from painful memory. Soused contestants vie in recalling and singing the greatest number of verses from the greatest number of hymns, and there are virtuosos who can go on for hours without repeating.

In the 1870's there appeared a hymnbook which broke sharply with the old church tradition of lugubrious lyrics and added fervor to the devotions of groups of young people in Sunday Schools, Y.M C.A.'s, Epworth Leagues, Christian Endeavors, and Bands of Hope. *Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs*, by P. P. Bliss and Ira D. Sankey (appropriately published by the John Church Company), was the title of this dynamic work, which dented the American mind at least as deeply as McGuffey's moral textbooks. The first number appeared in 1875, and by 1891 six successive collections had been published, circulated, and sung.

The devastating effect of these compilations on the American mind in the Garfield and Arthur eras has never received the consideration from social philosophers it so richly merits. By dint of repetition at the most impressionable years these words and tunes were indelibly stamped on the memory of youth, and to some of us they were all of poetry and music we imbibed, and no life has been long enough to forget them. They cling to the memory like cockleburs. Some of us find them as persistent as Mark Twain found "Punch, Brother, Punch," but not so entertaining.

Churches in those days had their own exclusive sectarian hymnbooks, large black volumes with red edges, which, even if they did not explicitly promote their dogmas, contained nothing contrary to them. Certain old and famous hymns and tunes were common to all church books, the Doxology, "Old Hundred," "Lead, Kindly Light," and "Rock of Ages," which even a Baptist or Methodist could sing without violence to his conscience; but mainly they were assembled along the lines of Congregational hymns for Congregationalists, Presbyterian airs for Presbyterians, and you couldn't give out a hymn in a crowd of mixed Christians and be sure of a whole-hearted response.

These books were used upstairs in the church, but downstairs in the Sunday School room a more liberal spirit was astir. Sunday School lessons had become international, thanks to Peloubet's *Select Notes*, and his work was the standard textbook, relieving volunteer teachers of the responsibility of deciding how much of the Bible was fit to be taught to adolescent minds. It was Peloubet who set the little Baptists and Congregationalists all over Christendom reciting the same lesson and the same golden text on the same Sunday.

Need was felt for a musical common denominator on which all could raise their voices without conflicting with those technical points which make Congregationalists and Presbyterians so alike and so different. It was this hiatus which Messrs. Bliss and Sankey so ably filled with gospel hymns.

Dwight L. Moody was sweeping the English-speaking world with high-pressure evangelism directed against gospel resistance. He understood the value of music, or at least singing, in working up that emotional pitch so necessary to what is technically known as conversion. His illustrious predecessor, Charles G. Finney, originator of revival technic (the famous Mr. Finney, who had the turnip), got along without much music. He had dramatic gifts at least as effective for harrowing up the feelings. But Moody believed the adage that he who wrote a nation's songs could defy decisions of the supreme court, and gospel hymns became the nation's songs. The orthodox church books were of no use to him. They were mainly liturgical, arranged for the worship of God by safe and satisfied Christians, with nothing on their minds but their Sunday dinners. What he needed was "gospel" hymns to worry and disturb and get action; livelier music than the slow-paced church hymnals afforded,

something the multitude could join in on and raise the roof.

He found Sankey and got them.

II

Ira David Sankey was known as the "singing evangelist." He was tall, stout, imposing, rather unctuous, and wore English mutton-chop whiskers. His was not a great voice in the musical sense, but he knew how to put fervor into it. A goodly proportion of the thousands of souls brought into the fold by the famous firm of Moody and Sankey during their twenty-five years of work together should be credited to Sankey's not too good singing of second-rate songs.

His colleague, Philip Paul Bliss, wrote some of the most popular hymns. Everyone in the 1880's not wholly beyond redemption knew "Dare to Be a Daniel," "Almost Persuaded," "Hold the Fort," "Pull for the Shore, Sailor," "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," "Whosoever Will," and "Wonderful Words of Life." These were the most popular, but also the most ephemeral. Hymn-books widely used to-day have no place for Bliss, though Sankey is still represented by the air he wrote for "I'm Praying for You" to words by S. O'Maley Cluff. Bliss was killed in the Ashtabula railroad disaster. His tomb bears the simple inscription, "Author of 'Hold the Fort.'" Both "Hold the Fort" and "Dare to Be a Daniel" were prohibited by the Sultan of Turkey.

A popular tear-starter by Bliss, often sung to the very young in the 1880's to prepare them to meet their end in the right spirit, ranks with "Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" It began thus:—

"I should like to die," said Willie, "if my papa could die too,
But he says he isn't ready 'cause he has so much to do;
But my little sister Nellie says that I must surely die,
And mama—and then she stopped because she saw it made me cry."

Bliss and Sankey were not, as you might suspect, a sort of evangelical Gilbert and Sullivan, one writing the words, the other the music. (Sullivan, by the way, wrote hymns. "Onward, Christian Soldiers," to words by S. Baring-Gould, with its stirring march tune, is by the author of "Three Little Maids from School.") *Gospel Hymns* was a compilation, though both editors contributed. Bliss wrote both hymns and tunes, but Sankey composed music only, usually impromptu. His method was to collect fugitive pieces from the poet's corner of newspapers, with an eye to devotional content rather than literary merit, and write his own tune or assign the job to one of his journeyman hymn writers. He had a scrapbook full of such random verse, the quality of which may be inferred from its source.

Traveling to Edinburgh to conduct a meeting, he cut from a Glasgow newspaper some lines by Elizabeth Clephane entitled "The Ninety and Nine" and read them to Moody, who paid no attention. That night when Moody asked if he had a song appropriate to the occasion, Sankey pulled out the cutting, set it on the organ rack, and sang it offhand. "Where did you get that?" asked Moody. "That's the piece you wouldn't listen to this morning." It was one of Sankey's favorites and had a tremendous vogue, but it contains some awkward, almost unsingable lines:—

"Lord, thou hast here thy ninety and nine:
Are they not enough for thee?"
But the shepherd made answer, "This of mine
Has wandered away from me;
And although the road be rough and steep
I go to the desert to find my sheep."

P. T. Barnum, at one of the gospel meetings gently resisting the well-meant efforts to gather him in, said to Sankey, "You go on singing 'The Ninety and Nine,' and when you get that last sheep in the fold we shall all be saved." Barnum, it seems, was a Universalist.

Most hymns made religious history, or were the result of it. "Here I am, Take Me," was sung in the Senate when Lincoln was present; much impressed, he called for an encore. In London a singing actress, sud-

denly converted, came down to the lights for her regular number, stopped the show, and paralyzed the waiting orchestra by singing "Depths of Mercy, Can It Be." She left the stage and became a minister's wife.

Some of the hymns were inspired by what might be called current events—flood, fire, battle, shipwreck.

Let the lower lights be burning,
Send the gleam across the wave,
Some poor struggling, shipwrecked seaman
You may rescue, you may save,

drew a moral lesson from a ship wrecked in Cleveland Harbor when her master lost his bearings because the harbor lights were missing. Sherman, going to the rescue of Corse, defending stores and supplies in a small fort in Allatoona Pass, wig-wagged "Hold the fort; I am coming. Sherman." Corse held it, though with great loss, and was finally relieved. Hence Bliss's most famous hymn:—

"Hold the fort for I am coming,"
Jesus signals still.
Wave the answer back to heaven:
"By thy grace we will."

Gospel Hymns were the successors to the old camp-meeting spirituals—not so crude, but with the same jump and go. The tunes were characterized by contagious melody, dance rhythms, climactic catchwords, the qualities that make popular secular songs whistleable.

On the cross He sealed my pardon (sealed
my pardon, sealed my pardon),
Paid the debt, and made me free (and
m-a-ade me free-e-e). . . .

Crown Him, crown Him, angels, crown Him;
Crown the Savior King of kings. . . .

Hallelujah, thine the glory!
Hallelujah, amen!
Hallelujah, thine the glory,
Revive us again. . . .

Bliss was particularly good at catch melody, joyousness, and the martial note:—

Whosoever heareth, shout, *shout* the sound;
Send the blessed tidings all the world around.
Whosoever *will* MAY COME.

Beautiful words,
Wonderful words,
Wonderful words of life! . . .

Besides the shouting genus, there were narratives in ballad style, telling a story, always a popular form ("I love to tell the story"), such as:—

"Master, the tempest is raging;
The billows are tossing high,
The sky is o'ershadowed with blackness,
No shelter nor help is nigh.
Carest thou not that we perish?
How canst thou lie asleep,
When each moment so madly is threatening
A grave in the angry deep?"

"The winds and the waves shall obey my will,
Peace, be still; peace, be still.
Whether the wrath of the storm-tossed sea,
Or demons, or men, or whatever it be,
No water can swallow the ship where lies
The master of ocean and earth and skies—
They all shall sweetly obey my will,
Peace be still, Peace—peace—be—still."

The songs made up in piety and enthusiasm for what they lacked as poetry. A syllable too much or too little was easily slurred in mass singing. Little effort was made toward rhyme or metre; the same rhymes were used over and over. "Blood" was made to rhyme with "God," "o'er me" with "glory," "seen" with "sin," "riven" with "heaven," and not a soul was kept from salvation thereby. One we never could refrain from giving its proper rhyme:—

O word of words, the sweetest;
O words in which there lie
All promise, all fulfillment,
And end of myster-*eye*.

The blood atonements of the Old Testament imagery were not played up as much as of yore.

Sweeping through the gates to the new
Jerusalem;
Washed in the blood of the lamb,

and that barroom favorite,

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains,

—written, by the way, by William Cowper, —did not evoke pleasant associations for the squeamish. The gospel-hymn idea was to get away from hell and blood and put more snap into the worship of God. Emphasis was on the joys of the blest rather than the tortures of the damned. Compare this gem from the good Dr. Watts,—

Loud Hallelujahs to the Lord
From distant worlds where creatures dwell!
Let heaven begin the solemn word
And sound it dreadful down to hell,

with the immensely popular "Beulah Land":—

I've reached the land of corn and wine,
And all its riches freely mine,
Here shines undimmed one blissful day,
For all my night has passed away.

The proselyting motif was not forgotten. There was a good deal of pursuing the erring, rescuing the perishing, and working up of emotional excitement:—

Alas, and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

When Bliss was killed, Sankey was joined by Charles Coles Stebbins and James McGranahan, both proved hymn writers, in the compilation of gospel hymns, and the good work went on.

There were two names enshrined in the hearts of all Christian Endeavorers and Epworth Leaguers of those times, two bluestockings whose output was chiefly hymns, Frances Ridley Havergal and Fanny Crosby. Miss Havergal began writing at a tender age and produced reams of hymns, the best-known being,—

I gave, I gave my life for thee;
What hast thou given for me?

Fanny Crosby, the "blind poetess," was equally precocious and prolific. She wrote her first hymn at the age of six, lived to be ninety-eight, and wrote six thousand hymns, "mostly oyster shells," as one critic remarked, "but with now and then a pearl." She is best known, perhaps, by "There's Music in the Air," but of her hymns "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" is probably a pearl; at least it is retained in most collections. The Methodist Church once celebrated "Fanny Crosby Day."

Among writers otherwise known to fame who have written hymns which "made" these famous collections are Phoebe Cary ("One Sweetly Solemn Thought") and Harriet Beecher Stowe ("Knocking, Knocking, Who Is There?")

III

Dwight L. Moody put gospel hymns over. They took England and Scotland by storm Oxford, Cambridge and Eton were converted. Gladstone and Lord Kinnaird attended meetings, and Queen Victoria, the Princess of Wales, and members of the royal family heard the songs from their private box at Her Majesty's Theatre. England was wholly sold on them. When music-hall entertainers tried to burlesque them, the audience broke out in song. At a circus in Dublin one clown asked another:—

"I am rather Moody; how you feeling?"

"I feel Sankeymonious."

The sally was greeted with boos and hisses; the whole audience rose and sang "Hold the Fort" by way of rebuke.

Gospel hymns spread like wildfire over the Western prairies. They were ice breakers for frozen prayer meetings, used for all religious meetings from Band of Hope to Chautauqua convocations, from Baptist Young People's Unions to Gideon's Bands ("O, do you belong to Gideon's Band?"),

by all denominations except Episcopalians and Catholics, who have a classic heritage of far greater music. The time was ripe for them. There was little to distract the young from the worship of God; religion did not have to compete with radio, movie, and motorcar. Revivals were scenes of emotional excitement for sex-starved females who expended their energies in converting their men friends. The books were in every home on the back of the Estey organ or the Mathushek square piano, and social gatherings wound up with a good sing. Well might it be asked, as one of the hymns searchingly did, "What, oh, what shall the harvest be?"

Sales exceeded those of any current publication; the profits were large. No figures are available, but in the life of Moody by his son it is mentioned that the royalties for the first ten years were $357,388.64, an amount so meticulous as to be convincing. At thirty-five cents a copy, with 10 per cent royalty, it would mean over ten million copies. And the sales after 1885 must have been greater.

Neither Moody nor Sankey touched the money. A trust was set up for the fund; William E. Dodge was one of the trustees, and the profits were devoted to pious works, but largely to support preparatory schools at Northfield, Massachusetts, Moody's home town; and, despite the tautness of religious lines, they are excellent schools.

Gospel hymns have passed. The six collections are still published, in one volume with duplicates eliminated, but it is merely a curio. The Hope Publishing Company of Chicago is said to hold the copyrights of the old headliners,—Bliss, Sankey, Stebbins, McGranahan, Fanny Crosby, and other shining lights,—and to do a tidy business in "permissions." Arthur Billings Hunt, who conducts a Sunday-evening hymn sing over the radio, is a customer for "permissions," and finds Fanny Crosby a good "buy" for his public. He writes hymns of his own and sends them out to inquirers on leaflets at five cents a copy. The Gospel Singers over NBC network have compiled a hymnbook which has in one year exhausted three editions, running from ten to fifteen thousand copies each. It was brought out by Homer Alvan Rodeheaver, who was Billy Sunday's Man Friday, as Sankey was Moody's.

There were other collections during those fruitful years between 1870 and 1890 when gospel hymns rolled over the prairies, but none which went over with such a bang as Sankey's collections. Their popularity is easily explained. Religion was due for another lightening of its gloomy burden which rested so heavily on the spirits of youth, to keep the next generation from kicking over the traces. The process had been going on since the Pilgrims landed on that stern and rock-bound coast and began to promulgate their stern and rock-bound tenets. Just as Lyman Beecher in the thirties mitigated the tortures of infants damned under Jonathan Edwards's intolerable theory of original sin, so Moody and Sankey played down the insistence of hell and blood which had made Finney and his "Holy Band" holy terrors to scared young sinners in the forties, and played up the blessings of the saved:—

> There's a land that is fairer than day,
> And by faith we can see it afar . . .

or

> Not half of that city's bright glory
> To mortals has ever been told.

The new hymns represented relief from the grimmer religion of the previous generation, and to youth meant escape. Whether this was sound theology or not, it was good psychology, and saved the day for another generation. So gay were some of the tunes which Sankey roared out in his barytone voice that Moody had misgivings, and once requested Sankey not to sing "Bringing in the Sheaves" again, as some of the ministers feared it would set the young people to dancing.

The hymns were a real resource to rural towns, so barren of amusement; reluctant and hardened youths were compelled to attend prayer meetings and Sunday School or eschew social life, for social life meant girls, and girls meant facing the music of

Sankey, Bliss, McGranahan, and Stebbins, and thus we all learned them, willy-nilly. They were bound to spread, for they possessed the seeds of popularity and were constructed on an approved model, that of popular secular songs. They had not only the catchy music but the sentimental wording of such ditties as "Twenty Years Ago," "Old Black Joe," and "I Don't Want to Play in Your Yard."

Popular music as an exponent of national emotions and tendencies has never received the respectful study it merits. Plato says in the *Republic* (though I got it from Mark Sullivan's *Old Times*), "Styles of music are never disturbed without affecting the most important political institutions." Some day some social philosopher will explore the gospel-hymn era for its deeper implications. Meanwhile those who still know the hymns by heart are dying off, and the modern glorified cocktail bar does not lend itself to barroom sentimental vocalization.

Thus it is strange, considering the impression they made on the American mind for two decades, that those six hymnbooks in sober gray boards with black muslin backs, each accompanied by a smaller edition in paper wrappers with words only,—for those who could carry the tune, or perhaps couldn't sing anyway,—have escaped the eagle eyes of collectors of Americana, which have ferreted out Currier and Ives prints, Will Carleton's *Farm Ballads*, and the immortal works of Mr. Beadle and Nick Carter. They all belong to the same phase of our emotional history. But I have never seen them listed, not even in the catalogues of that one-hundred-per cent Americana specialist, Heartman of Metuchen.

The Great Fire of London [1]

SAMUEL PEPYS

September 2nd. (Lord's Day.) Some of our mayds sitting up late last night to get things ready against our feast to-day, Jane called us up about three in the morning to tell us of a great fire they saw in the City. So I rose and slipped on my night-gowne and went to her window, and thought it to be on the back-side of Marke-lane at the farthest; but, being unused to such fires as followed, I thought it far enough off; and so went to bed again and to sleep. About seven rose again to dress myself, and there looked out at the window and saw the fire not so much as it was, and further off. So to my closett to set things to rights after yesterday's cleaning. By and by Jane comes and tells me that she hears that above 300 houses have burned down to-night by the fire we saw, and that it is now burning down all Fish-street, by London Bridge. So I made myself ready presently and walked to the Tower, and there got up upon one of the high places, Sir J. Robinson's little son going up with me; and there I did see the houses at that end of the bridge all on fire, and an infinite great fire on this and the other side the end of the bridge. So with my heart full of trouble, I down to the water-side, and there got a boat and through bridge, and there saw a lamentable fire. Poor Michell's house, as far as the Old Swan, already burned that way, and the fire running further. Everybody endeavouring to remove their goods, and flinging into the river or bringing them into lighters that lay off; poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats, or clambering from one pair of stairs by the water-side to another. And among other things the poor pigeons, I perceive, were loth to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconys till they were, some of them burned, their wings, and fell down. Having staid, and in an hour's time seen the fire

[1] From the *Diary* of Samuel Pepys.

rage every way, and nobody, to my sight, endeavouring to quench it, but to remove their goods and leave all to the fire; and having seen it get as far as the Steele-yard, and the wind mighty high and driving it into the City, and every thing after so long a drought proving combustible, even the very stones of churches, I to White Hall and there up to the King's closett in the Chappell, where people come about me and I did give them an account dismayed them all, and word was carried in to the King. So I was called for and did tell the King and Duke of Yorke what I saw, and that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down nothing could stop the fire. They seemed much troubled, and the King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor from him and command him to spare no houses, but to pull down before the fire every way. The Duke of York bid me tell him that if he would have any more soldiers he shall. Here meeting with Captain Cocke, I in his coach which he lent me, and Creed with me to Paul's, and there walked along Watling-street as well as I could, every creature coming away loaden with goods to save, and here and there sicke people carried away in beds. Extraordinary good goods carried in carts and on backs. At last met my Lord Mayor in Canning-street like a man spent, with a handkercher about his neck. To the King's message he cried, like a fainting woman, "Lord! what can I do? I am spent: people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses, but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." That he needed no more soldiers; and that, for himself, he must go and refresh himself, having been up all night. So he left me, and I him, and walked home, seeing people all almost distracted; and no manner of means used to quench the fire. The houses, too, so very thick thereabouts, and full of matter for burning, as pitch and tarr, in Thames-street; and warehouses of oyle, and wines, and brandy and other things. I saw Mr. Isaake Houblon, the handsome man, prettily dressed and dirty, at his door at Dowgate receiving some of his brothers' things, whose houses were on fire; and, as he says have been removed twice already, and he doubts (as it soon proved) that they must be a little time removed from his house also, which was a sad consideration. And to see the churches all filling with goods by people who themselves should have been quietly there at this time. By this time it was about twelve o'clock; and so home, and soon as dined, away and walked through the City, the street full of nothing but people and horses and carts loaden with goods. They now removing out of Canning-streete (which received goods in the morning) into Lumbard-streete, and further. Met with the King and Duke of York in their barge, and with them to Queenhithe, and there called Sir Richard Browne to them. Their order was only to pull down houses apace; and so below bridge at the water-side, but little was or could be done, the fire coming upon them so fast. River full of lighters and boats taking in goods, and good goods swimming in the water, and only I observed that hardly one lighter or boat in three that had the goods of a house in, but there was a pair of Virginalls in it.

Having seen as much as I could now, I away to White Hall by appointment, and there walked to my boat; and there upon the water again, and to the fire up and down, it still encreasing, and the wind great. So near the fire as we could for smoke; and all over the Thames, with one's face in the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of fire-drops. This is very true; so as houses were burned by these drops and flakes of fire, three or four, nay, five or six houses, one from another. When we could endure no more upon the water, we to a little ale-house on the Bankside, over against the Three Cranes, and there staid till it was dark almost, and saw the fire grow; and, as it grew darker, appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples, and between churches and houses as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire. We staid still, it being darkish, we saw the fire as only one entire arch of fire from this to the other side of the bridge, and in a bow up the hill for an arch of above a mile long: it made

me weep to see it. The churches, houses and all on fire and flaming at once; and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking of houses at their ruine. So home with a sad heart, and there find poor Tom Hater come with some few of his goods saved out of his house, which is burned. I invited him to lie at my house and did receive his goods, but was deceived in his lying there, the newes coming every moment of the growth of the fire; so as we were forced to begin to pack up our owne goods and prepare for their removal; and did by moonshine (it being brave dry and moonshine and warm weather) carry much of my goods into the garden, and Mr. Hater and I did remove my money and iron chests into my cellar, as thinking that the safest place. And got my bags of gold into my office ready to carry away, and my chief papers of accounts also there, and my tallys into a box by themselves. So great was our fear, as Sir W. Batten hath carts come out of the country to fetch away his goods this night. We did put Mr. Hater, poor man, to bed a little; but he got but very little rest, so much noise being in my house taking down of goods.

3rd. About four o'clock in the morning my Lady Batten sent me a cart to carry away all my money and plate and best things to Sir W. Rider's at Bednall-greene: which I did, riding myself in my night-gowne in the cart, and, Lord! to see how the streets and the highways are crowded with people running and riding, and getting of carts at any rate to fetch away things. I find Sir W. Rider tired with being called up all night and receiving things from several friends. His house full of goods, and much of Sir W. Batten's and Sir W. Pen's. I am eased at my heart to have my treasure so well secured. Then home, with much ado to find a way, nor any sleep all this night to me nor my poor wife, but then, and all this day, she and I and all my people labouring to get away the rest of our things. The Duke of Yorke come this day by the office and spoke to us, and did ride with his guard up and down the City to keep all quiet (he being now Generall, and having the care of all). This day, Mercer being not at home but against her mistress's order gone to her mother's, and my wife going thither to speak with W. Hewer met her there, and was angry; and her mother saying that she was not a 'prentice girl, to ask leave every time she goes abroad, my wife with good reason was angry, and when she came home bid her be gone again. And so she went away, which troubled me; but yet less than it would, because of the condition we are in fear of coming into in a little time of being less able to keepe one in her quality. At night lay down a little upon a quilt of W. Hewer's in the office, all my owne things being packed up or gone; and after me my poor wife did the like, we having fed upon the remains of yesterday's dinner, having no fire nor dishes, nor any opportunity of dressing any thing.

4th. Up by break of day to get away the remainder of my things. Sir W. Batten not knowing how to remove his wine did dig a pit in the garden and laid it in there; and I took the opportunity of laying all the papers of my office that I could not otherwise dispose of. And in the evening Sir W. Pen and I did dig another and put our wine in it, and I my Parmazan cheese as well as my wine and some other things. This afternoon, sitting melancholy with Sir W. Pen in our garden, and thinking of the certain burning of this office without extraordinary means, I did propose for the sending up of all our workmen from Woolwich and Deptford yards (none whereof yet appeared), and to write to Sir W. Coventry to have the Duke of Yorke's permission to pull down houses rather than lose this office, which would much hinder the King's business. So Sir W. Pen he went down this night, in order to the sending them up to-morrow morning; and I wrote to Sir W. Coventry about the business, but received no answer. This night Mrs. Turner (who, poor woman, was removing her goods all this day, good goods into the garden, and knows not how to dispose of them) and her husband supped with my wife and I at night in the office, upon a shoulder of mutton from the cook's, without any napkin or any thing, in a sad man-

ner, but were merry. Only now and then walking into the garden, and saw how horridly the sky looks, all on a fire in the night, was enough to put us out of our wits; and indeed it was extremely dreadful, for it looks just as if it was at us, and the whole heaven on fire. I after supper walked in the darke down to Tower-streete, and there saw it all on fire. Now begins the practice of blowingup of houses in Tower-streete, those next to Tower, which at first did frighten people more than any thing. W. Hewer this day went to see how his mother did, and comes late home, telling us how he hath been forced to remove her to Islington, her house in Pye-corner being burned; so that the fire is got so far that way, and all the Old Bayly, and was running down to Fleete-streete; and Paul's is burned, and all Cheapside. I wrote to my father this night, but the posthouse being burned, the letter could not go.

5th. I lay down in the office again upon W. Hewer's quilt, being mighty weary and sore in my feet with going till I was hardly able to stand. About two in the morning my wife calls me up and tells me of new cryes of fire, it being come to Barkeing Church, which is the bottom of our lane. I up, and finding it so resolved presently to take her away, and did, and took my gold, which was about £2,350, W. Hewer and Jane down by Proundy's boat to Woolwich, but, Lord! what a sad sight it was by moone-light to see the whole City almost on fire, that you might see it plain at Woolwich as if you were by it. There when I come I find the gates shut, but no guard kept at all, which troubled me because of discourse now begun that there is plot in it and that the French had done it. I got the gates open, and to Mr. Sheldon's, where I locked up my gold and charged my wife and W. Hewer never to leave the room without one of them in it, night or day. So back again, by the way seeing my goods well in the lighters at Deptford and watched well by people. Home, and whereas I expected to have seen our house on fire, it being now about seven o'clock, it was not. But to the fyre, and there find greater hopes than I expected; for my confidence of finding our Office on fire was such that I durst not ask any body how it was with us till I come, and saw it not burned. But going to the fire I find, by the blowing up of houses and the great helpe given by the workmen out of the King's yards sent up by Sir W. Pen, there is a good stop given to it, as well to Marke-lane end as ours; it having only burned the dyall of Barking Church and part of the porch, and was there quenched. I up to the top of Barking steeple and there saw the saddest sight of desolation that I ever saw; every where great fires, oyle-cellars and brimstone and other things burning. I became afeard to stay there long, and therefore down again as fast as I could, the fire being spread as far as I could see it; and to Sir W. Pen's, and there eat a piece of cold meat, having eaten nothing since Sunday, but the remains of Sunday's dinner. And having removed all my things and received good hopes that the fire at our end is stopped, I walked into the town, and find Fanchurch-streete, Gracious-streete, and Lumbard-streete all in dust. The Exchange a sad sight, nothing standing there of all the statues or pillars but Sir Thomas Gresham's picture in the corner. Walked into Moore-fields (our feet ready to burn, walking through the towne among the hot coles), and find that full of people, and poor wretches carrying their goods there, and every body keeping his goods together by themselves (and a great blessing it is to them that it is fair weather for them to keep abroad night and day). Drank there, and paid twopence for a plain penny loaf; thence homeward, having passed through Cheapside and Newgate Market, all burned, and seen Anthony Joyce's house in fire. I also did see a poor cat taken out of a hole in the chimney joyning to the wall of the Exchange, with the hair all burned off the body and yet alive. So home at night, and find there good hopes of saving our office, but great endeavours of watching all night, and having men ready; and so we lodged them in the office and had drink and bread and cheese for them. And I lay down and slept a good night about midnight.

6th. Up about five o'clock, and there met Mr. Gawden at the gate of the office to call our men to Bishop's-gate, where no fire had yet been near, and there is now one broke out. I went with the men, and we did put it out in a little time; so that that was well again. It was pretty to see how hard the women did work in the cannells, sweeping of water; but then they would scold for drink, and be as drunk as devils. I saw good butts of sugar broke open in the street, and people go and take handsfull out and put into beer and drink it. And now all being pretty well I took boat and over to Southwarke, and took boat on the other side the bridge and so to Westminster thinking to shift myself, being all in dirt from top to bottom; but could not there find any place to buy a shirt or pair of gloves, Westminster Hall being full of people's goods, those in Westminster having removed all their goods; but to the Swan, and there was trimmed, and then to White Hall, but saw nobody, and so home. A sad sight to see how the River looks, no houses nor church near it, to the Temple, where it stopped. To Sir R. Ford's and there dined on an earthen platter; a fried breast of mutton; a great many of us, but very merry, and indeed as good a meal, though as ugly a one, as I ever had in my life. Thence down to Deptford, and there with great satisfaction landed all my goods at Sir G. Carteret's safe, and nothing missed I could see, or hurt. This being done to my great content, I home and to Sir W. Batten's, and there supped well and mighty merry, and our fears over. From them to the office, and there slept with the office full of labourers, who talked and slept and walked all night long there. But strange it was to see Cloathworkers' Hall on fire these three days and nights in one body of flame, it being the cellar full of oyle.

7th. Up by five o'clock, and blessed be God! find all well; and by water to Paul's Wharfe. Walked thence and saw all the towne burned, and a miserable sight of Paul's church, with all the roofs fallen, and the body of the quire fallen into St. Fayth's; Paul's school also, Ludgate, and Fleet-streete, my father's house and the church and a good part of the Temple the like. So to Creed's lodging near the New Exchange, and there find him laid down upon a bed, the house all unfurnished, there being fears of the fire's coming to them. There borrowed a shirt of him and washed. To Sir W. Coventry at St. James's, who lay without curtains, having removed all his goods, as the King at White Hall and every body had done and was doing. He hopes we shall have no publique distractions upon this fire, which is what every body fears, because of the talke of the French having a hand in it. And it is a proper time for discontents, but all men's minds are full of care to protect themselves and save their goods. The militia is in arms every where. Our fleetes, he tells me, have been in sight one of another, and most unhappily by fowle weather were parted, to our great losse. So home and did give orders for my house to be made clean.

This day our Merchants first met at Gresham College, which, by proclamation, is to be their Exchange. Strange to hear what is bid for houses all up and down here, a friend of Sir W. Rider's having £150 for what he used to let for £40 per annum. Much dispute where the Custome-house shall be; thereby the growth of the City again to be foreseen. I home late to Sir W. Pen's, who did give me a bed, but without curtains or hangings, all being down. So here I went the first time into a naked bed, only my drawers on, and did sleep pretty well; but still both sleeping and waking had a fear of fire in my heart, that I took little rest. People do all the world over cry out of the simplicity of my Lord Mayor in generall; and more particularly in this business of the fire, laying it all upon him. A proclamation is come for markets to be kept at Leadenhall and Mile-end-greene and several other places about the towne, and Tower-hill; and all churches to be set open to receive poor people.

The Execution of Queen Mary[1]

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

BRIEFLY, SOLEMNLY, and sternly they delivered their awful message. They informed her that they had received a commission under the great seal to see her executed, and she was told that she must prepare to suffer on the following morning.

She was dreadfully agitated. For a moment she refused to believe them. Then, as the truth forced itself upon her, tossing her head in disdain and struggling to control herself, she called her physician and began to speak to him of money that was owed to her in France. At last it seems that she broke down altogether, and they left her with a fear either that she would destroy herself in the night, or that she would refuse to come to the scaffold, and that it might be necessary to drag her there by violence.

The end had come. She had long professed to expect it, but the clearest expectation is not certainty. The scene for which she had affected to prepare she was to encounter in its dread reality, and all her busy schemes, her dreams of vengeance, her visions of a revolution, with herself ascending out of the convulsion and seating herself on her rival's throne—all were gone. She had played deep, and the dice had gone against her.

Yet in death, if she encountered it bravely, victory was still possible. Could she but sustain to the last the character of a calumniated suppliant accepting heroically for God's sake and her creed's the concluding stroke of a long series of wrongs, she might stir a tempest of indignation which, if it could not save herself, might at least overwhelm her enemy. Persisting, as she persisted to the last, in denying all knowledge of Babington, it would be affectation to credit her with a genuine feeling of religion; but the imperfection of her motive exalts the greatness of her fortitude. To an impassioned believer death is comparatively easy.

[1] From *History of England*, Vol. XII.

Her chaplain was lodged in a separate part of the castle. The Commissioners, who were as anxious that her execution should wear its real character as she was herself determined to convert it into a martyrdom, refused, perhaps unwisely, to allow him access to her, and offered her again the assistance of an Anglican Dean. They gave her an advantage over them which she did not fail to use. She would not let the Dean come near her. She sent a note to the chaplain telling him that she had meant to receive the sacrament, but as it might not be she must content herself with a general confession. She bade him watch through the night and pray for her. In the morning when she was brought out she might perhaps see him, and receive his blessing on her knees. She supped cheerfully, giving her last meal with her attendants a character of sacred parting; afterwards she drew aside her apothecary, M. Gorion, and asked him if she might depend upon his fidelity: when he satisfied her that she might trust him, she said she had a letter and two diamonds which she wished to send to Mendoza. He undertook to melt some drug and conceal them in it where they would never be looked for, and promised to deliver them faithfully. One of the jewels was for Mendoza himself; the other and the largest was for Philip. It was to be a sign that she was dying for the truth, and was meant also to bespeak his care for her friends and servants. Every one of them so far as she was able, without forgetting a name, she commended to his liberality. Arundel, Paget, Morgan, the Archbishop of Glasgow, Westmoreland, Throgmorton, the Bishop of Ross, her two secretaries, the ladies who had shared the trials of her imprisonment, she remembered them all, and specified the sums which she desired Philip to bestow on them. And as Mary Stuart then and throughout her life

never lacked gratitude to those who had been true to her, so then as always she remembered her enemies. There was no cant about her, no unreal talk of forgiveness of injuries. She bade Gorion tell Philip it was her last prayer that he should persevere, notwithstanding her death, in the invasion of England. It was God's quarrel, she said, and worthy of his greatness: and as soon as he had conquered it, she desired him not to forget how she had been treated by Cecil, and Leicester, and Walsingham; by Lord Huntingdon, who had ill-used her fifteen years before at Tutbury; by Sir Amyas Paulet, and Secretary Wade.

Her last night was a busy one. As she said herself, there was much to be done and the time was short. A few lines to the King of France were dated two hours after midnight. They were to insist for the last time that she was innocent of conspiracy, that she was dying for religion, and for having asserted her right to the crown; and to beg that out of the sum which he owed her, her servants' wages might be paid, and masses provided for her soul. After this she slept for three or four hours, and then rose and with the most elaborate care prepared to encounter the end.

At eight in the morning the Provost-marshal knocked at the outer door which communicated with her suite of apartments. It was locked and no one answered, and he went back in some trepidation lest the fears might prove true which had been entertained the preceding evening. On his returning with the Sheriff, however, a few minutes later, the door was open, and they were confronted with the tall majestic figure of Mary Stuart standing before them in splendour. The plain gray dress had been exchanged for a robe of black satin; her jacket was of black satin also, looped and slashed and trimmed with velvet. Her false hair was arranged studiously with a coif, and over her head and falling drawn over her back was a white veil of delicate lawn. A crucifix of gold hung from her neck. In her hand she held a crucifix of ivory, and a number of jewelled Paternosters was attached to her girdle. Led by two of Paulet's gentlemen, the Sheriff walking before her, she passed to the chamber of presence in which she had been tried, where Shrewsbury, Kent, Paulet, Drury, and others were waiting to receive her. Andrew Melville, Sir Robert's brother, who had been master of her household, was kneeling in tears. "Melville," she said, "you should rather rejoice than weep that the end of my troubles is come. Tell my friends I die a true Catholic. Commend me to my son. Tell him I have done nothing to prejudice his kingdom of Scotland, and so, good Melville, farewell." She kissed him, and turning asked for her chaplain Du Preau. He was not present. There had been a fear of some religious melodrama which it was thought well to avoid. Her ladies, who had attempted to follow her, had been kept back also. She could not afford to leave the account of her death to be reported by enemies and Puritans, and she required assistance for the scene which she meditated. Missing them, she asked the reason of their absence, and said she wished them to see her die. Kent said he feared they might scream or faint, or attempt perhaps to dip their handkerchiefs in her blood. She undertook that they should be quiet and obedient. "The Queen," she said, "would never deny her so slight a request;" and when Kent still hesitated, she added with tears, "You know I am cousin to your Queen, of the blood of Henry the Seventh, a married Queen of France, and anointed Queen of Scotland."

It was impossible to refuse. She was allowed to take six of her own people with her, and select them herself. She chose her physician Burgoyne, Andrew Melville, the apothecary Gorion, and her surgeon, with two ladies, Elizabeth Kennedy and Curle's young wife Barbara Mowbray, whose child she had baptized.

"Allons donc," she then said—"Let us go," and passing out attended by the Earls, and leaning on the arm of an officer of the guard, she descended the great staircase to the hall. The news had spread far through the country. Thousands of people were collected outside the walls. About three hundred

knights and gentlemen of the county had been admitted to witness the execution. The tables and forms had been removed, and a great wood fire was blazing in the chimney. At the upper end of the hall, above the fireplace, but near it, stood the scaffold, twelve feet square and two feet and a half high. It was covered with black cloth; a low rail ran round it covered with black cloth also, and the Sheriff's guard of halberdiers were ranged on the floor below on the four sides to keep off the crowd. On the scaffold was the block, black like the rest; a square black cushion was placed behind it, and behind the cushion a black chair, on the right were two other chairs for the Earls. The axe leant against the rail, and two masked figures stood like mutes on either side at the back. The Queen of Scots as she swept in seemed as if coming to take a part in some solemn pageant. Not a muscle of her face could be seen to quiver; she ascended the scaffold with absolute composure, looking round her smiling, and sate down. Shrewsbury and Kent followed and took their places, the Sheriff stood at her left hand, and Beale then mounted a platform and read the warrant aloud.

In all the assembly Mary Stuart appeared the person least interested in the words which were consigning her to death.

"Madam," said Lord Shrewsbury to her, when the reading was ended, "you hear what we are commanded to do."

"You will do your duty," she answered, and rose as if to kneel and pray.

The Dean of Peterborough, Dr. Fletcher, approached the rail. "Madam," he began, with a low obeisance, "the Queen's most excellent Majesty"; "Madam, the Queen's most excellent Majesty"—thrice he commenced his sentence, wanting words to pursue it. When he repeated the words a fourth time, she cut him short.

"Mr. Dean," she said, "I am a Catholic, and must die a Catholic. It is useless to attempt to move me, and your prayers will avail me but little."

"Change your opinion, Madam," he cried, his tongue being loosed at last; "repent of your sins, settle your faith in Christ, by him to be saved."

"Trouble not yourself further, Mr. Dean," she answered; "I am settled in my own faith, for which I mean to shed my blood."

"I am sorry, Madam," said Shrewsbury, "to see you so addicted to Popery."

"That image of Christ you hold there," said Kent, "will not profit you if he be not engraved in your heart."

She did not reply, and turning her back on Fletcher, knelt for her own devotions.

He had been evidently instructed to impair the Catholic complexion of the scene, and the Queen of Scots was determined that he should not succeed. When she knelt he commenced an extempore prayer in which the assembly joined. As his voice sounded out in the hall she raised her own, reciting with powerful deep-chested tones the penitential Psalms in Latin, introducing English sentences at intervals, that the audience might know what she was saying, and praying with especial distinctness for her Holy Father the Pope.

From time to time, with conspicuous vehemence, she struck the crucifix against her bosom, and then, as the Dean gave up the struggle, leaving her Latin, she prayed in English wholly, still clear and loud. She prayed for the Church which she had been ready to betray, for her son, whom she had disinherited, for the Queen whom she had endeavoured to murder. She prayed God to avert his wrath from England, that England which she had sent a last message to Philip to beseech him to invade. She forgave her enemies, whom she had invited Philip not to forget, and then, praying to the saints to intercede for her with Christ, and kissing the crucifix and crossing her own breast, "Even as thy arms, O Jesus," she cried, "were spread upon the cross, so receive me into thy mercy and forgive my sins."

With these words she rose; the black mutes stepped forward, and in the usual form begged her forgiveness.

"I forgive you," she said, "for now I hope you shall end all my troubles." They offered their help in arranging her dress. "Truly, my lords," she said with a smile to the Earls, "I never had such grooms waiting on me before." Her ladies were allowed to come

up upon the scaffold to assist her; for the work to be done was considerable, and had been prepared with no common thought.

She laid her crucifix on her chair. The chief executioner took it as a perquisite, but was ordered instantly to lay it down. The lawn veil was lifted carefully off, not to disturb the hair, and was hung upon the rail. The black robe was next removed. Below it was a petticoat of crimson velvet. The black jacket followed, and under the jacket was a body of crimson satin. One of her ladies handed her a pair of crimson sleeves, with which she hastily covered her arms; and thus she stood on the black scaffold with the black figures all around her, blood-red from head to foot.

Her reasons for adopting so extraordinary a costume must be left to conjecture. It is only certain that it must have been carefully studied, and that the pictorial effect must have been appalling.

The women, whose firmness had hitherto borne the trial, began now to give way, spasmodic sobs bursting from them which they could not check. "Ne criez vous," she said, "j'ay promis pour vous." Struggling bravely, they crossed their breasts again and again, she crossing them in turn and bidding them pray for her. Then she knelt on the cushion. Barbara Mowbray bound her eyes with a handkerchief. "Adieu," she said, smiling for the last time and waving her hand to them, "Adieu, au revoir." They stepped back from off the scaffold and left her alone. On her knees she repeated the Psalm, In te, Domine, confido, "In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust." Her shoulders being exposed, two scars became visible, one on either side, and the Earls being now a little behind her, Kent pointed to them with his white wand and looked inquiringly at his companion. Shrewsbury whispered that they were the remains of two abscesses from which she had suffered while living with him at Sheffield.

When the psalm was finished she felt for the block, and laying down her head muttered: "In manus, Domine tuas, commendo animam meam." The hard wood seemed to hurt her, for she placed her hands under her neck. The executioners gently removed them, lest they should deaden the blow, and then one of them holding her slightly, the other raised the axe and struck. The scene had been too trying even for the practised headsman of the Tower. His arm wandered. The blow fell on the knot of the handkerchief, and scarcely broke the skin. She neither spoke nor moved. He struck again, this time effectively. The head hung by a shred of skin, which he divided without withdrawing the axe; and at once a metamorphosis was witnessed, strange as was ever wrought by wand of fabled enchanter. The coif fell off and the false plaits. The laboured illusion vanished. The lady who had knelt before the block was in the maturity of grace and loveliness. The executioner, when he raised the head, as usual, to shew it to the crowd, exposed the withered features of a grizzled, wrinkled old woman.

The Heights of Abraham[1]

FRANCIS PARKMAN

MEANWHILE A deep cloud fell on the English. Since the siege began, Wolfe had passed with ceaseless energy from camp to camp, animating the troops, observing everything, and directing everything; but now the pale face and tall lean form were seen no more, and the rumor spread that the general was dangerously ill. He had in fact been seized by an access of the disease that had tortured him for some time past; and fever had followed. His quarters were at a French farmhouse in the camp at Montmorenci; and

[1] From *Montcalm and Wolfe*, 1884.

here, as he lay in an upper chamber, helpless in bed, his singular and most unmilitary features haggard with disease and drawn with pain, no man could less have looked the hero. But as the needle, though quivering, points always to the pole, so, through torment and languor and the heats of fever, the mind of Wolfe dwelt on the capture of Quebec. His illness, which began before the twentieth of August, had so far subsided on the twenty-fifth that Knox wrote in his Diary of that day: "His Excellency General Wolfe is on the recovery, to the inconceivable joy of the whole army." On the twenty-ninth he was able to write or dictate a letter to the three brigadiers, Monckton, Townshend, and Murray: "That the public service may not suffer by the General's indisposition, he begs the brigadiers will meet and consult together for the public utility and advantage, and consider of the best method to attack the enemy." The letter then proposes three plans, all bold to audacity. The first was to send a part of the army to ford the Montmorenci eight or nine miles above its mouth, march through the forest, and fall on the rear of the French at Beauport, while the rest landed and attacked them in front. The second was to cross the ford at the mouth of the Montmorenci and march along the strand, under the French intrenchments, till a place could be found where the troops might climb the heights. The third was to make a general attack from boats at the Beauport flats. Wolfe had before entertained two other plans, one of which was to scale the heights at St. Michel, about a league above Quebec; but this he had abandoned on learning that the French were there in force to receive him. The other was to storm the Lower Town; but this also he had abandoned, because the Upper Town, which commanded it, would still remain inaccessible.

The brigadiers met in consultation, rejected the three plans proposed in the letter, and advised that an attempt should be made to gain a footing on the north shore above the town, place the army between Montcalm and his base of supply, and so force him to fight or surrender. The scheme was similar to that of the heights of St. Michel. It seemed desperate, but so did all the rest; and if by chance it should succeed, the gain was far greater than could follow any success below the town. Wolfe embraced it at once.

Not that he saw much hope in it. He knew that every chance was against him. Disappointment in the past and gloom in the future, the pain and exhaustion of disease, toils, and anxieties "too great," in the words of Burke, "to be supported by a delicate constitution, and a body unequal to the vigorous and enterprising soul that it lodged," threw him at times into deep dejection. By those intimate with him he was heard to say that he would not go back defeated, "to be exposed to the censure and reproach of an ignorant populace." In other moods he felt that he ought not to sacrifice what was left of his diminished army in vain conflict with hopeless obstacles. But his final resolve once taken, he would not swerve from it. His fear was that he might not be able to lead his troops in person. "I know perfectly well you cannot cure me," he said to his physician; "but pray make me up so that I may be without pain for a few days, and able to do my duty: that is all I want."

In a despatch which Wolfe had written to Pitt, Admiral Saunders conceived that he had ascribed to the fleet more than its just share in the disaster at Montmorenci; and he sent him a letter on the subject. Major Barré kept it from the invalid till the fever had abated. Wolfe then wrote a long answer, which reveals his mixed dejection and resolve. He affirms the justice of what Saunders had said, but adds: "I shall leave out that part of my letter to Mr. Pitt which you object to. I am sensible to my own errors in the course of the campaign, see clearly wherein I have been deficient, and think a little more or less blame to a man that must necessarily be ruined, of little or no consequence. I take the blame of that unlucky day entirely upon my own shoulders, and I expect to suffer for it." Then, speaking of the new project of an attack above Quebec, he says despondingly: "My ill state of health prevents me from executing my own plan; it is of too desperate a nature to order others

to execute." He proceeds, however, to give directions for it. "It will be necessary to run as many small craft as possible above the town, with provisions for six weeks, for about five thousand, which is all I intend to take. My letters, I hope, will be ready to-morrow, and I hope I shall have strength to lead these men to wherever we can find the enemy."

On the next day, the last of August, he was able for the first time to leave the house. It was on this same day that he wrote his last letter to his mother: "My writing to you will convince you that no personal evils worse than defeats and disappointments have fallen upon me. The enemy puts nothing to risk, and I can't in conscience put the whole army to risk. My antagonist has wisely shut himself up in inaccessible intrenchments, so that I can't get at him without spilling a torrent of blood, and that perhaps to little purpose. The Marquis de Montcalm is at the head of a great number of bad soldiers, and I am at the head of a small number of good ones, that wish for nothing so much as to fight him; but the wary old fellow avoids an action, doubtful of the behavior of his army. People must be of the profession to understand the disadvantages and difficulties we labor under, arising from the uncommon natural strength of the country."

On the second of September a vessel was sent to England with his last despatch to Pitt. It begins thus: "The obstacles we have met with in the operations of the campaign are much greater than we had reason to expect or could foresee; not so much from the number of the enemy (though superior to us) as from the natural strength of the country, which the Marquis of Montcalm seems wisely to depend upon. When I learned that succors of all kinds had been thrown into Quebec; that five battalions of regular troops, completed from the best inhabitants of the country, some of the troops of the colony, and every Canadian that was able to bear arms, besides several nations of savages, had taken the field in a very advantageous situation,—I could not flatter myself that I should be able to reduce the place. I sought, however, an occasion to attack their army, knowing well that with these troops I was able to fight, and hoping that a victory might disperse them." Then, after recounting the events of the campaign with admirable clearness, he continues: "I found myself so ill, and am still so weak, that I begged the general officers to consult together for the general utility. They are all of opinion that, as more ships and provisions are now got above the town, they should try, by conveying up a corps of four or five thousand men (which is nearly the whole strength of the army after the Points of Levi and Orleans are left in a proper state of defence), to draw the enemy from their present situation and bring them to an action. I have acquiesced in the proposal, and we are preparing to put it into execution." The letter ends thus: "By the list of disabled officers, many of whom are of rank, you may perceive that the army is much weakened. By the nature of the river, the most formidable part of this armament is deprived of the power of acting; yet we have almost the whole force of Canada to oppose. In this situation there is such a choice of difficulties that I own myself at a loss how to determine. The affairs of Great Britain, I know, require the most vigorous measures; but the courage of a handful of brave troops should be exerted only when there is some hope of a favorable event; however, you may be assured that the small part of the campaign which remains shall be employed, as far as I am able, for the honor of His Majesty, and the interest of the nation, in which I am sure of being well seconded by the Admiral and by the generals; happy if our efforts here can contribute to the success of His Majesty's arms in any other parts of America."

Some days later, he wrote to the Earl of Holdernesse: "The Marquis of Montcalm has a numerous body of armed men (I cannot call it an army), and the strongest country perhaps in the world. Our fleet blocks up the river above and below the town, but can give no manner of aid in an attack upon the Canadian army. We are now here with about thirty-six hundred men, waiting to attack them when and wherever they can best be got at. I am so far recovered as to do business; but my constitution is entirely

ruined, without the consolation of doing any considerable service to the state, and without any prospect of it." He had just learned, through the letter brought from Amherst by Ensign Hutchins, that he could expect no help from that quarter.

Perhaps he was as near despair as his undaunted nature was capable of being. In his present state of body and mind he was a hero without the light and cheer of heroism. He flattered himself with no illusions, but saw the worst and faced it all. He seems to have been entirely without excitement. The languor of disease, the desperation of the chances, and the greatness of the stake may have wrought to tranquillize him. His energy was doubly tasked: to bear up his own sinking frame, and to achieve an almost hopeless feat of arms.

Audacious as it was, his plan cannot be called rash if we may accept the statement of two well-informed writers on the French side. They say that on the tenth of September the English naval commanders held a council on board the flagship, in which it was resolved that the lateness of the season required the fleet to leave Quebec without delay. They say further that Wolfe then went to the admiral, told him that he had found a place where the heights could be scaled, that he would send up a hundred and fifty picked men to feel the way, and that if they gained a lodgment at the top, the other troops should follow; if, on the other hand, the French were there in force to oppose them, he would not sacrifice the army in a hopeless attempt, but embark them for home, consoled by the thought that all had been done that man could do. On this, concludes the story, the admiral and his officers consented to wait the result.

As Wolfe had informed Pitt, his army was greatly weakened. Since the end of June his loss in killed and wounded was more than eight hundred and fifty, including two colonels, two majors, nineteen captains, and thirty-four subalterns; and to these were to be added a greater number of disabled by disease.

The squadron of Admiral Holmes above Quebec had now increased to twenty-two vessels, great and small. One of the last that went up was a diminutive schooner, armed with a few swivels, and jocosely named the "Terror of France." She sailed by the town in broad daylight, the French, incensed at her impudence, blazing at her from all their batteries; but she passed unharmed, anchored by the Admiral's ship, and saluted him triumphantly with her swivels.

Wolfe's first move toward executing his plan was the critical one of evacuating the camp at Montmorenci. This was accomplished on the third of September. Montcalm sent a strong force to fall on the rear of the retiring English Monckton saw the movement from Point Levi, embarked two battalions in the boats of the fleet, and made a feint of landing at Beauport. Montcalm recalled his troops to repulse the threatened attack, and the English withdrew from Montmorenci unmolested, some to the Point of Orleans, others to Point Levi. On the night of the fourth a fleet of flatboats passed above the town with the baggage and stores. On the fifth, Murray, with four battalions, marched up the river Etechemin, and forded it under a hot fire from the French batteries at Sillery. Monckton and Townshend followed with three more battalions, and the united force, of about thirty-six hundred men, was embarked on board the ships of Holmes, where Wolfe joined them on the same evening.

These movements of the English filled the French commanders with mingled perplexity, anxiety, and hope. A deserter told them that Admiral Saunders was impatient to be gone. Vaudreuil grew confident. "The breaking up of the camp at Montmorenci," he says, "and the abandonment of the intrenchments there, the reimbarkation on board the vessels above Quebec of the troops who had encamped on the south bank, the movements of these vessels, the removal of the heaviest pieces of artillery from the batteries of Point Levi,—these and the lateness of the season all combined to announce the speedy departure of the fleet, several vessels of which had even sailed down the river already. The prisoners and the deserters who daily came in told us that this was the common report

in their army." He wrote to Bourlamaque on the first of September: "Everything proves that the grand design of the English has failed."

Yet he was ceaselessly watchful. So was Montcalm; and he, too, on the night of the second, snatched a moment to write to Bourlamaque from his headquarters in the stone house, by the river of Beauport: "The night is dark; it rains; our troops are in their tents, with clothes on, ready for an alarm; I in my boots; my horses saddled. In fact, this is my usual way. I wish you were here; for I cannot be everywhere, though I multiply myself, and have not taken off my clothes since the twenty-third of June." On the eleventh of September he wrote his last letter to Bourlamaque, and probably the last that his pen ever traced. "I am overwhelmed with work, and should often lose temper, like you, if I did not remember that I am paid by Europe for not losing it. Nothing new since my last. I give the enemy another month, or something less, to stay here." The more sanguine Vaudreuil would hardly give them a week.

Meanwhile, no precaution was spared. The force under Bougainville above Quebec was raised to three thousand men. He was ordered to watch the shore as far as Jacques-Cartier, and follow with his main body every movement of Holmes's squadron. There was little fear of the heights near the town; they were thought inaccessible. Even Montcalm believed them safe, and had expressed himself to that effect some time before. "We need not suppose," he wrote to Vaudreuil, "that the enemy have wings"; and again, speaking of the very place where Wolfe afterwards landed, "I swear to you that a hundred men posted there would stop their whole army." He was right. A hundred watchful and determined men could have held the position long enough for reinforcements to come up.

The hundred men were there. Captain de Vergor, of the colony troops, commanded them, and reinforcements were within his call; for the battalion of Guienne had been ordered to encamp close at hand on the Plains of Abraham. Vergor's post, called Anse du Foulon, was a mile and a half from Quebec. A little beyond it, by the brink of the cliffs, was another post, called Samos, held by seventy men with four cannon: and, beyond this again, the heights of Sillery were guarded by a hundred and thirty men, also with cannon. These were outposts of Bougainville, whose headquarters were at Cap-Rouge, six miles above Sillery, and whose troops were in continual movement along the intervening shore. Thus all was vigilance; for while the French were strong in the hope of speedy delivery, they felt that there was no safety till the tents of the invader had vanished from their shores and his ships from their river. "What we knew," says one of them, "of the character of M. Wolfe, that impetuous, bold, and intrepid warrior, prepared us for a last attack before he left us."

Wolfe had been very ill on the evening of the fourth. The troops knew it, and their spirits sank; but, after a night of torment, he grew better, and was soon among them again, rekindling their ardor, and imparting a cheer that he could not share. For himself he had no pity; but when he heard of the illness of two officers in one of the ships, he sent them a message of warm sympathy, advised them to return to Point Levi, and offered them his own barge and an escort. They thanked him, but replied that, come what might, they would see the enterprise to an end. Another officer remarked in his hearing that one of the invalids had a very delicate constitution. "Don't tell me of constitution," said Wolfe; "he has good spirit, and good spirit will carry a man through everything." An immense moral force bore up his own frail body and forced it to its work.

Major Robert Stobo, who, five years before, had been given as a hostage to the French at the capture of Fort Necessity, arrived about this time in a vessel from Halifax. He had long been a prisoner at Quebec, not always in close custody, and had used his opportunities to acquaint himself with the neighborhood. In the spring of this year he and an officer of rangers named Stevens had made their escape with extraordinary

skill and daring; and he now returned to give his countrymen the benefit of his local knowledge. His biographer says that it was he who directed Wolfe in the choice of a landing-place. Be this as it may, Wolfe in person examined the river and the shores as far as Point-aux-Trembles; till at length, landing on the south side a little above Quebec, and looking across the water with a telescope, he descried a path that ran with a long slope up the face of the woody precipice, and saw at the top a cluster of tents. They were those of Vergor's guard at the Anse du Foulon, now called Wolfe's Cove. As he could see but ten or twelve of them, he thought that the guard could not be numerous, and might be overpowered. His hope would have been stronger if he had known that Vergor had once been tried for misconduct and cowardice in the surrender of Beauséjour, and saved from merited disgrace by the friendship of Bigot and the protection of Vaudreuil.

The morning of the seventh was fair and warm, and the vessels of Holmes, their crowded decks gay with scarlet uniforms, sailed up the river to Cap-Rouge. A lively scene awaited them; for here were the headquarters of Bougainville, and here lay his principal force, while the rest watched the banks above and below. The cove into which the little river runs was guarded by floating batteries, the surrounding shore was defended by breastworks; and a large body of regulars, militia, and mounted Canadians in blue uniforms moved to and fro, with restless activity, on the hills behind. When the vessels came to anchor, the horsemen dismounted and formed in line with the infantry; then, with loud shouts, the whole rushed down the heights to man their works at the shore. That true Briton, Captain Knox, looked on with a critical eye from the gangway of his ship, and wrote that night in his Diary that they had made a ridiculous noise. "How different!" he exclaims, "how nobly awful and expressive of true valor is the customary silence of the British troops!"

In the afternoon the ships opened fire, while the troops entered the boats and rowed up and down as if looking for a landing-place. It was but a feint of Wolfe to deceive Bougainville as to his real design. A heavy easterly rain set in on the next morning, and lasted two days without respite. All operations were suspended, and the men suffered greatly in the crowded transports. Half of them were therefore landed on the south shore, where they made their quarters in the village of St. Nicolas, refreshed themselves, and dried their wet clothing, knapsacks, and blankets.

For several successive days the squadron of Holmes was allowed to drift up the river with the flood tide and down with the ebb, thus passing and repassing incessantly between the neighborhood of Quebec on one hand, and a point high above Cap-Rouge on the other; while Bougainville, perplexed, and always expecting an attack, followed the ships to and fro along the shore, by day and by night, till his men were exhausted with ceaseless forced marches.

At last the time for action came. On Wednesday, the twelfth, the troops at St. Nicolas were embarked again, and all were told to hold themselves in readiness. Wolfe, from the flagship "Sutherland," issued his last general orders. "The enemy's force is now divided, great scarcity of provisions in their camp, and universal discontent among the Canadians. Our troops below are in readiness to join us; all the light artillery and tools are embarked the Point of Levi; and the troops will land where the French seem least to expect it. The first body that gets on shore is to march directly to the enemy and drive them from any little post they may occupy; the officers must be careful that the succeeding bodies do not by any mistake fire on those who go before them. The battalions must form on the upper ground with expedition, and be ready to charge whatever presents itself. When the artillery and troops are landed, a corps will be left to secure the landing-place, while the rest march on and endeavor to bring the Canadians and French to a battle. The officers and men will remember what their country expects from them, and what a determined body of soldiers inured to war is capable of doing against five weak French battalions mingled with a disorderly peasantry."

The spirit of the army answered to that of its chief. The troops loved and admired their general, trusted their officers, and were ready for any attempt, "Nay, how could it be otherwise," quaintly asks honest Sergeant John Johnson, of the fifty-eighth regiment, "being at the heels of gentlemen whose whole thirst, equal with their general, was for glory? We had seen them tried, and always found them sterling. We knew that they would stand by us to the last extremity."

Wolfe had thirty-six hundred men and officers with him on board the vessels of Holmes; and he now sent orders to Colonel Burton at Point Levi to bring to his aid all who could be spared from that place and the Point of Orleans. They were to march along the south bank, after nightfall, and wait further orders at a designated spot convenient for embarkation. Their number was about twelve hundred, so that the entire force destined for the enterprise was at the utmost forty-eight hundred. With these, Wolfe meant to climb the heights of Abraham in the teeth of an enemy who, though much reduced, were still twice as numerous as their assailants.

Admiral Saunders lay with the main fleet in the Basin of Quebec. This excellent officer, whatever may have been his views as to the necessity of a speedy departure, aided Wolfe to the last with unfailing energy and zeal. It was agreed between them that while the General made the real attack, the Admiral should engage Montcalm's attention by a pretended one. As night approached, the fleet ranged itself along the Beauport shore; the boats were lowered and filled with sailors, marines, and the few troops that had been left behind; while ship signalled to ship, cannon flashed and thundered, and shot ploughed the beach, as if to clear a way for assailants to land. In the gloom of the evening the effect was imposing. Montcalm, who thought that the movements of the English above the town were only a feint, that their main force was still below it, and that their real attack would be made there, was completely deceived, and massed the troops in front of Beauport to repel the expected landing. But while in the fleet of Saunders all was uproar and ostentatious menace, the danger was ten miles away, where the squadron of Holmes lay tranquil and silent at its anchorage off Cap-Rouge.

It was less tranquil than it seemed. All on board knew that a blow might be struck that night, though only a few high officers knew where. Colonel Howe, of the light infantry, called for volunteers to lead the unknown and desperate venture, promising, in the words of one of them, "that if any of us survived we might depend on being recommended to the general." As many as were wanted—twenty-four in all—soon came forward. Thirty large bateaux and some boats belonging to the squadron lay moored alongside the vessels; and late in the evening the troops were ordered into them, the twenty-four volunteers taking their place in the foremost. They held in all about seventeen hundred men. The rest remained on board.

Bougainville could discern the movement, and misjudged it, thinking that he himself was to be attacked. The tide was still flowing; and, the better to deceive him, the vessels and boats were allowed to drift upward with it for a little distance, as if to land above Cap-Rouge.

The day had been fortunate for Wolfe. Two deserters came from the camp of Bougainville with intelligence that, at ebb tide on the next night, he was to send down a convoy of provisions to Montcalm. The necessities of the camp at Beauport, and the difficulties of transportation by land, had before compelled the French to resort to this perilous means of conveying supplies; and their boats, drifting in darkness under the shadows of the northern shore, had commonly passed in safety. Wolfe saw at once that, if his own boats went down in advance of the convoy, he could turn the intelligence of the deserters to good account.

He was still on board the "Sutherland." Every preparation was made, and every order given; it only remained to wait the turning of the tide. Seated with him in the cabin was the commander of the sloop-of-war "Porcupine," his former schoolfellow, John Jervis, afterwards Earl St. Vincent. Wolfe told him that he expected to die in the battle

of the next day; and taking from his bosom a miniature of Miss Lowther, his betrothed, he gave it to him with a request that he would return it to her if the presentiment should prove true.

Towards two o'clock the tide began to ebb, and a fresh wind blew down the river. Two lanterns were raised into the maintop shrouds of the "Sutherland." It was the appointed signal; the boats cast off and fell down with the current, those of the light infantry leading the way. The vessels with the rest of the troops had orders to follow a little later.

To look for a moment at the chances on which this bold adventure hung. First, the deserters told Wolfe that provision-boats were ordered to go down to Quebec that night; secondly, Bougainville countermanded them; thirdly, the sentries posted along the heights were told of the order, but not of the countermand; fourthly, Vergor at the Anse du Foulon had permitted most of his men, chiefly Canadians from Lorette, to go home for a time and work at their harvesting, on condition, it is said, that they should afterwards work in a neighboring field of his own; fifthly, he kept careless watch, and went quietly to bed; sixthly, the battalion of Guienne, ordered to take post on the Plains of Abraham, had, for reasons unexplained, remained encamped by the St. Charles; and lastly, when Bougainville saw Holmes's vessels drift down the stream, he did not tax his weary troops to follow them, thinking that they would return as usual with the flood tide. But for these conspiring circumstances New France might have lived a little longer, and the fruitless heroism of Wolfe would have passed, with countless other heroisms, into oblivion.

For full two hours the procession of boats, borne on the current, steered silently down the St. Lawrence. The stars were visible, but the night was moonless and sufficiently dark. The general was in one of the foremost boats, and near him was a young midshipman, John Robison, afterwards professor of natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. He used to tell in his later life how Wolfe, with a low voice, repeated Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" to the officers about him. Probably it was to relieve the intense strain of his thoughts. Among the rest was the verse which his own fate was soon to illustrate,—

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

"Gentlemen," he said, as his recital ended, "I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec." None were there to tell him that the hero is greater than the poet.

As they neared their destination, the tide bore them in towards the shore, and the mighty wall of rock and forest towered in darkness of their left. The dead stillness was suddenly broken by the sharp *Qui vive!* of a French sentry, invisible in the thick gloom. *France!* answered a Highland officer of Fraser's regiment from one of the boats of the light infantry. He had served in Holland, and spoke French fluently.

A quel régiment?

De la Reine,[2] replied the Highlander. He knew that a part of that corps was with Bougainville. The sentry, expecting the convoy of provisions, was satisfied, and did not ask for the password.

Soon after, the foremost boats were passing the heights of Samos, when another sentry challenged them, and they could see him through the darkness running down to the edge of the water, within range of a pistol-shot. In answer to his questions, the same officer replied, in French: "Provision-boats. Don't make a noise; the English will hear us." In fact, the sloop-of-war "Hunter" was anchored in the stream not far off. This time, again, the sentry let them pass. In a few moments they rounded the headland above the Anse du Foulon. There was no sentry there. The strong current swept the boats of the light infantry a little below the intended landing-place. They disembarked on a narrow strand at the foot of heights as steep as a hill covered with trees can be. The twenty-four volunteers led the way, climbing with what silence they might, closely followed by a much larger body.

[2] "To what regiment [do you belong]?" "The Queen's."

When they reached the top they saw in the dim light a cluster of tents at a short distance, and immediately made a dash at them. Vergor leaped from bed and tried to run off, but was shot in the heel and captured. His men, taken by surprise, made little resistance. One or two were caught, and the rest fled.

The main body of troops waited in their boats by the edge of the strand. The heights near by were cleft by a great ravine choked with forest trees, and in its depths ran a little brook called Ruisseau St.-Denis, which, swollen by the late rains, fell plashing in the stillness over a rock. Other than this no sound could reach the strained ear of Wolfe but the gurgle of the tide and the cautious climbing of his advance-parties as they mounted the steeps at some little distance from where he sat listening. At length from the top came a sound of musket-shots, followed by loud huzzas, and he knew that his men were masters of the position. The word was given; the troops leaped from the boats and scaled the heights, some here, some there, clutching at trees and bushes, their muskets slung at their backs. Tradition still points out the place, near the mouth of the ravine, where the foremost reached the top. Wolfe said to an officer near him: "You can try it, but I don't think you'll get up." He himself, however, found strength to drag himself up with the rest. The narrow slanting path on the face of the heights had been made impassable by trenches and abattis; but all obstructions were soon cleared away, and then the ascent was easy. In the gray of the morning the long file of red-coated soldiers moved quickly upward, and formed in order on the plateau above.

Before many of them had reached the top, cannon were heard close on the left. It was the battery at Samos firing on the boats in the rear and the vessels descending from Cap-Rouge. A party was sent to silence it; this was soon effected, and the more distant battery at Sillery was next attacked and taken. As fast as the boats were emptied they returned for the troops left on board the vessels and for those waiting on the southern shore under Colonel Burton.

The day broke in clouds and threatening rain. Wolfe's battalions were drawn up along the crest of the heights. No enemy was in sight, though a body of Canadians had sallied from the town and moved along the strand towards the landing-place, whence they were quickly driven back. He had achieved the most critical part of his enterprise; yet the success that he coveted placed him in imminent danger. On one side was the garrison of Quebec and the army of Beauport, and Bougainville was on the other. Wolfe's alternative was victory or ruin; for if he should be overwhelmed by a combined attack, retreat would be hopeless. His feelings no man can know; but it would be safe to say that hesitation or doubt had no part in them.

He went to reconnoitre the ground, and soon came to the Plains of Abraham, so called from Abraham Martin, a pilot known as Maître Abraham, who had owned a piece of land here in the early times of the colony. The Plains were a tract of grass, tolerably level in most parts, patched here and there with cornfields, studded with clumps of bushes, and forming a part of the high plateau at the eastern end of which Quebec stood. On the south it was bounded by the declivities along the St. Lawrence; on the north, by those along the St. Charles, or rather along the meadows through which that lazy stream crawled like a writhing snake. At the place that Wolfe chose for his battlefield the plateau was less than a mile wide.

Thither the troops advanced, marched by files till they reached the ground, and then wheeled to form their line of battle, which stretched across the plateau and faced the city. It consisted of six battalions and the detached grenadiers from Louisbourg, all drawn up in ranks three deep. Its right wing was near the brink of the heights along the St. Lawrence; but the left could not reach those along the St. Charles. On this side a wide space was perforce left open, and there was danger of being outflanked. To prevent this, Brigadier Townshend was stationed here with two battalions, drawn up at right angles with the rest, and fronting the St. Charles. The battalion of Webb's regiment, under Colonel Burton, formed the reserve;

the third battalion of Royal Americans was left to guard the landing; and Howe's light infantry occupied a wood far in the rear. Wolfe, with Monckton and Murray, commanded the front line, on which the heavy fighting was to fall, and which, when all the troops had arrived, numbered less than thirty-five hundred men.

Quebec was not a mile distant, but they could not see it; for a ridge of broken ground intervened, called Buttes-à-Neveu, about six hundred paces off. The first division of troops had scarcely come up when, about six o'clock, this ridge was suddenly thronged with white uniforms. It was the battalion of Guienne, arrived at the eleventh hour from its camp by the St. Charles. Some time after there was hot firing in the rear. It came from a detachment of Bougainville's command attacking a house where some of the light infantry were posted. The assailants were repulsed, and the firing ceased Light showers fell at intervals, besprinkling the troops as they stood patiently waiting the event.

Montcalm had passed a troubled night. Through all the evening the cannon bellowed from the ships of Saunders, and the boats of the fleet hovered in the dusk off the Beauport shore, threatening every moment to land. Troops lined the intrenchments till day, while the general walked the field that adjoined his headquarters till one in the morning, accompanied by the Chevalier Johnstone and Colonel Poulariez. Johnstone says that he was in great agitation, and took no rest all night. At daybreak he heard the sound of cannon above the town. It was the battery of Samos firing on the English ships. He had sent an officer to the quarters of Vaudreuil, which were much nearer Quebec, with orders to bring him word at once should anything unusual happen. But no word came, and about six o'clock he mounted and rode thither with Johnstone. As they advanced, the country behind the town opened more and more upon their sight, till at length, when opposite Vaudreuil's house, they saw across the St. Charles, some two miles away, the red ranks of British soldiers on the heights beyond.

"This is a serious business," Montcalm said; and sent off Johnstone at full gallop to bring up the troops from the centre and left of the camp. Those of the right were in motion already, doubtless by the governor's order. Vaudreuil came out of the house. Montcalm stopped for a few words with him; then set spurs to his horse, and rode over the bridge of St. Charles to the scene of danger. He rode with a fixed look, uttering not a word.

The army followed in such order as it might, crossed the bridge in hot haste, passed under the northern rampart of Quebec, entered at the Palace Gate, and pressed on in headlong march along the quaint narrow streets of the warlike town: troops of Indians in scalp-locks and war-paint, a savage glitter in their deep-set eyes; bands of Canadians whose all was at stake,—faith, country, and home; the colony regulars; the battalions of Old France, a torrent of white uniforms and gleaming bayonets, La Sarre, Languedoc, Roussillon, Béarn,—victors of Oswego, William Henry, and Ticonderoga. So they swept on, poured out upon the plain, some by the gate of St. Louis, and some by that of St. John, and hurried, breathless, to where the banners of Guienne still fluttered on the ridge.

Montcalm was amazed at what he saw. He had expected a detachment, and he found an army. Full in sight before him stretched the lines of Wolfe: the close ranks of the English infantry, a silent wall of red, and the wild array of the Highlanders, with their waving tartans, and bagpipes screaming defiance. Vaudreuil had not come; but not the less was felt the evil of a divided authority and the jealousy of the rival chiefs. Montcalm waited long for the forces he had ordered to join him from the left wing of the army. He waited in vain. It is said that the governor had detained them, lest the English should attack the Beauport shore. Even if they did so, and succeeded, the French might defy them, could they but put Wolfe to rout on the Plains of Abraham. Neither did the garrison of Quebec come to the aid of Montcalm. He sent to Ramesay, its commander, for twenty-five field-pieces which were on the Palace battery. Ramesay would give him

only three, saying that he wanted them for his own defence. There were orders and counter-orders; misunderstanding, haste, delay, perplexity.

Montcalm and his chief officers held a council of war. It is said that he and they alike were for immediate attack. His enemies declare that he was afraid lest Vaudreuil should arrive and take command; but the governor was not a man to assume responsibility at such a crisis. Others say that his impetuosity overcame his better judgment; and of this charge it is hard to acquit him. Bougainville was but a few miles distant, and some of his troops were much nearer, a messenger sent by way of Old Lorette could have reached him in an hour and a half at most, and a combined attack in front and rear might have been concerted with him. If, moreover, Montcalm could have come to an understanding with Vaudreuil, his own force might have been strengthened by two or three thousand additional men from the town and the camp of Beauport; but he felt that there was no time to lose, for he imagined that Wolfe would soon be reinforced, which was impossible, and he believed that the English were fortifying themselves, which was no less an error. He has been blamed not only for fighting too soon, but for fighting at all. In this he could not choose. Fight he must, for Wolfe was now in a position to cut off all his supplies. His men were full of ardor, and he resolved to attack before their ardor cooled. He spoke a few words to them in his keen, vehement way. "I remember very well how he looked," one of the Canadians, then a boy of eighteen, used to say in his old age; "he rode a black or dark bay horse along the front of our lines, brandishing his sword, as if to excite us to do our duty. He wore a coat with wide sleeves, which fell back as he raised his arm, and showed the white linen of the wristband."

The English waited the result with a composure which, if not quite real, was at least well feigned. The three field-pieces sent by Ramesay plied them with canister-shot, and fifteen hundred Canadians and Indians fusilladed them in front and flank. Over all the plain, from behind bushes and knolls and the edge of cornfields, puffs of smoke sprang incessantly from the guns of these hidden marksmen. Skirmishes were thrown out before the lines to hold them in check, and the soldiers were ordered to lie on the grass to avoid the shot. The firing was liveliest on the English left, where bands of sharpshooters got under the edge of the declivity, among thickets, and behind scattered houses, whence they killed and wounded a considerable number of Townshend's men. The light infantry were called up from the rear. The houses were taken and retaken, and one or more of them was burned.

Wolfe was everywhere. How cool he was, and why his followers loved him, is shown by an incident that happened in the course of the morning. One of his captains was shot through the lungs; and on recovering consciousness he saw the general standing at his side. Wolfe pressed his hand, told him not to despair, praised his services, promised him early promotion, and sent an aide-de-camp to Monckton to beg that officer to keep the promise if he himself should fall.

It was towards ten o'clock when, from the high ground on the right of the line, Wolfe saw that the crisis was near. The French on the ridge had formed themselves into three bodies, regulars in the centre, regulars and Canadians on right and left. Two field-pieces, which had been dragged up the heights at Anse du Foulon, fired on them with grape-shot, and the troops, rising from the ground, prepared to receive them. In a few moments more they were in motion. They came on rapidly, uttering loud shouts, and firing as soon as they were within range. Their ranks, ill ordered at the best, were further confused by a number of Canadians who had been mixed among the regulars, and who, after hastily firing, threw themselves on the ground to reload. The British advanced a few rods; then halted and stood still. When the French were within forty paces the word of command rang out, and a crash of musketry answered all along the line. The volley was delivered with remarkable precision. In the battalions of the centre, which had suffered least from the enemy's bullets, the simultan-

eous explosion was afterwards said by the French officers to have sounded like a cannon-shot. Another volley followed, and then a furious clattering fire that lasted but a minute or two. When the smoke rose, a miserable sight was revealed: the ground cumbered with dead and wounded, the advancing masses stopped short and turned into a frantic mob, shouting, cursing, gesticulating. The order was given to charge. Then over the field rose the British cheer, mixed with the fierce yell of the Highland slogan. Some of the corps pushed forward with the bayonet; some advanced firing. The clansmen drew their broadswords and dashed on, keen and swift as bloodhounds. At the English right, though the attacking column was broken to pieces, a fire was still kept up, chiefly, it seems, by sharpshooters from the bushes and cornfields, where they had lain for an hour or more. Here Wolfe himself led the charge, at the head of the Louisbourg grenadiers. A shot shattered his wrist. He wrapped his handkerchief about it and kept on. Another shot struck him, and he still advanced, when a third lodged in his breast. He staggered, and sat on the ground. Lieutenant Brown, of the grenadiers, one Henderson, a volunteer in the same company, and a private soldier, aided by an officer of artillery who ran to join them, carried him in their arms to the rear. He begged them to lay him down. They did so, and asked if he would have a surgeon. "There's no need," he answered; "it's all over with me." A moment after, one of them cried out: "They run; see how they run!" "Who run?" Wolfe demanded, like a man roused from sleep. "The enemy, sir. Egad, they give way everywhere!" "Go, one of you, to Colonel Burton," returned the dying man; "tell him to march Webb's regiment down to Charles River, to cut off their retreat from the bridge." Then, turning on his side, he murmured, "Now, God be praised, I will die in peace!" and in a few moments his gallant soul had fled.

Montcalm, still on horseback, was borne with the tide of fugitives towards the town. As he approached the walls a shot passed through his body. He kept his seat; two soldiers supported him, one on each side, and led his horse through the St. Louis Gate. On the open space within, among the excited crowd, were several women, drawn, no doubt, by eagerness to know the result of the fight. One of them recognized him, saw the streaming blood, and shrieked, "*O mon Dieu! mon Dieu! le Marquis est tué!*" "It's nothing, it's nothing," replied the death-stricken man; "don't be troubled for me, my good friends." (*"Ce n'est rien, ce n'est rien; ne vous affligez pas pour moi, mes bonnes amies."*)

The Boston Massacre[1]

ESTHER FORBES

AND AT LAST the day came, snowy and cold at first, but gradually clearing and warmer. On the fifth of March, 1770, Boston was padded with thick white silence. Surely a foot of snow should be enough to keep the regulars in their barracks and the inhabitants off the streets. There had been an increasing number of threats, the town boys boasting they were going to clean up the "bloody-backs," the soldiers swearing they would teach the "cowardly rascals" respect for His Majesty's uniform. The fifth of March was Monday. On the previous Friday an unusually large number of pates had been broken at Gray's ropewalks, on Hutchinson Street. When the very name Hutchinson became hateful to Boston, it was re-named Pearl.

One of the ill-paid, hornet-tempered privates of the Twenty-Ninth went to the walks

[1] From *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*, by Esther Forbes. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

hoping to earn a little money. Sam Gray, a journeyman, employed there but not related to the owner, asked him if he wanted work. The soldier humbly said, yes, he did. But the work offered him (in pure Anglo-Saxon) started a fist fight between them. The soldier was defeated, ran back to his barracks, and returned with a crowd of his fellows. The "squabble" went on, augmented by more and more soldiers and more and more workmen. It began to rise to the proportions of a Pope's Day frolic. Among the regulars was Private Kilroy, who was as bad a fellow as was to be found, even in the Twenty-Ninth. Shortly before this encounter at the ropewalks, George Robert Twelvetrees Hewes had caught him robbing a Boston woman of most of her outside clothing. This consisted of a "cardinal," bonnet, muff, and tippet. Hewes forced Kilroy to give up his booty. Everyone knew that Kilroy was a scamp, even as they knew that Captain Preston, for instance, "bears a good character." These six hundred men had, in a year and a half, become individuals. Finally officers and citizens ended the battle, and the soldiers, wiping bloody noses, nursing black eyes, and counting missing teeth, were forced back to their barracks. They had been defeated by the smouldering sticks and tar-pots of the ropewalk men, and were swearing vengeance.

Mr. Gray promptly fired Sam Gray. The colonels, although humiliated by the trouncing their men had taken, promised to keep them under restraint. Both sides privately began to watch for a chance to go on with this interrupted battle. The soldiers, especially of the Twenty-Ninth, busily went to work preparing cudgels and sharpening cutlasses and prophesying to anyone who would listen to them the vengeance they would take on Boston.

Just how systematic the badgering of the regulars had been is now impossible to say. John Adams, who never once wavered from the principles of the Whig Party, believed that "certain busy characters," seeking "to kindle immortal hatred between the inhabitants of the lower class and the soldiers," urged them on to "quarrels, re-encounters and combats." And he pitied "the poor tools" who had been "intentionally wrought upon by designing men, who knew what they were aiming at better than the instruments employed." To get rid of these two regiments, without whose protection civil government could not function in Boston, was the avowed ambition of the radical Whig leaders. One obvious way to do this was to goad the soldiers into firing upon the "innocent" inhabitants. Then public opinion of all political color would unite to demand their withdrawal. Sam Adams would have proved his statement that you cannot quarter troops on an unwilling town without bloodshed, and Boston would have some martyrs—which has never hurt any political party. There was also the possibility that a popular uprising would take vengeance into its own hands. The Boston garrison had recently been reduced, and there were left only the original Fourteenth and Twenty-Ninth. Many people thought then—and think now—that this was what Sam Adams was leading up to during the winter of '69-'70. He had certainly warned towns roundabout Boston that their help might be needed on that Monday night. Something was going to happen.

The snow, already a foot deep, stopped. The sun came out and icicles formed along the eaves. The sun set, the moon rose, and it was night. The colonels did not restrain their men. More of them than usual were out "driving the streets" in small packs. They pushed and cursed at civilians, who got in their way as much as possible and cursed back. The regulars were at their worst, and what John Adams calls "the lower classes" (Cousin Sam had more endearing terms for them) were out in full force. But by eight o'clock that night the air was so charged with dynamite any flash-in-the-pan would blow the whole town sky high.

Captain Goldfinch, of the Fourteenth, seems to have been a well-disposed young officer, with the failing so fashionable among eighteenth-century gentlemen of not bothering to pay "tradesmen." He owed the French barber, Piemont, quite a bill for shaving him, and Piemont, unable to get a cent out of him, told one of his apprentices that any

money he could squeeze out of Goldfinch he could have for himself.

By eight o'clock, outside Murray's Barracks on Brattle Street, a boy had been knocked down and was bawling that he was killed. Captain Goldfinch was standing there as the crowd began to gather. Some soldiers, returning from duty, tried to get down the black and narrow street to their barracks, but found their way blocked. Ensign Mall, in charge of them, lost his head, bade the men make a way for themselves with bayonets, "he'll stand by them." Goldfinch intervened, scolded the ensign, and got the men inside the heavy doors of the old sugar house, but a good many blows had been exchanged and both sides were ugly.

Goldfinch himself tried to slip unseen over to King Street, where the main guard was housed, and see what was afoot. So the Captain, with the "greasy" and diminutive barber's boy bawling at his heels, emerged into the moonlit width of King Street. The child pointed at the officer, roaring out what a bad fellow he was not to pay his bills, also suggesting canine ancestry. The officer paid no heed, but it was too much for the solitary sentry stationed outside the custom house.

This man, Montgomery, had been enduring more than the usual amount of snowballs, chunks of ice, oyster shells, sea-coal, and provincial wit which was the fate of solitary sentries. For some time he had been muttering and cursing and saying what he'd do if any came within reach of his bayonet. A large crowd had gathered about to enjoy his spleen, but he had not been attacked thus far except by missiles and adjectives. In spite of his threats he had run nobody through. Now he left his box, stepped down, demanded the saucy boy to "show his face." The boy smugly said he wasn't ashamed of his face and Montgomery (old enough to know better, for he was bald as an egg) hit him a glancing blow which did not even knock him down. Instantly the crowd rushed him, yelling that the bloodthirsty butcher was murdering the child.

There was still a third crowd gathered in the neighborhood that night. This has always been the most mysterious. Two hundred able-bodied sailors, porters, and other likely street-fighters were lined up at this time close to Faneuil Hall, listening to an oration by a "tall gentleman" in red cloak and white wig. This may have been Sam Adams (who was not tall), but was probably William Molineaux. It was also said that this was "Joyce Jr." When the oration was done, the cry went up, "To the Main Guard!" and there were threats to kill all the "lobsters" they could find.

What had been three separate, angry groups now all came together on King Street, milling about in the snow and the moonlight, just in front of the old State House. On its corbels strutted the lion and unicorn of England.

And now, close on nine o'clock, the bell of Old Meeting began to ring as though for fire. All over Boston doors flew open and windows up.

"Where is the fire?"

"The regulars are cutting and slashing everyone."

"They are cutting down Liberty Tree."

"The regulars are massacring the people."

And that other cry from the gates on the Neck to Copp's Hill, "Town-born, turn out . . . town-born, turn out."

But others were calling excitedly that the town was on fire. Many rushed into the streets carrying their fire-buckets. Boys went too. And Mrs. Maverick, a poor widow who ran a small shop, flung a cloak about her and plunged off into the snow in pursuit of her seventeen-year-old son, sure that if trouble was abroad her Samuel would be in it. He had been doing so well as Mr. Greenwood's apprentice, learning the ivory-turner's arts.

Montgomery was now hard-pressed. Besides the usual cries of "lobster" and "bloody-back," there rang in his ears, "kill him, kill him."

"If you come near me," he panted, "I'll blow your brains out."

"Fire and be damned."

Montgomery loaded. An enormous mulatto loomed up over him. Crispus Attucks would have frightened any man. He was well over six feet, was part Indian, part negro, and

part white. His master in Framingham thought highly of him. He was forty-seven at this time. Attucks had a crowd of sailors at his heels and a stick in his hand. He poked at Montgomery and said he'd "have off one of his claws."

The hard-pressed "lobster" did not fire, but he called in a loud voice. "Turn out Main Guard." His voice carried across King Street to the guardhouse, through the hubbub of whistles, Indian yells, and jangling bells.

Instantly a corporal's guard stepped out of the main guardhouse, followed by Captain Preston, the officer for the day. They had to struggle to cross King Street and reach the sentry, who stepped down and joined the semicircle of level bayonets presented to his assailants. Captain Preston's reputation was good. His colonel called him "cool and distinct," but the judgment that sent only seven men and himself to rescue the sentry was poor. Nine men are enough for a target, but not enough to overawe a mob. Someone yelled at Preston to keep his men in order and mind what he was about. The Captain did not answer, but ordered the soldiers to prime and load. The silence at that moment was so complete everyone heard the rattle of the iron ramrods. Preston put his body between the men and the crowd to keep them from firing. Henry Knox, a plump, likable, twenty-year-old bookseller, grabbed Preston by the arm, begged him for God's sake to take his men back; for if he fired his life must answer for it. Preston said he was "sensible to it."

Now the rumor spread that the guns were not loaded. But when asked, the Captain said that they were "with powder and ball."

"Do you mean to fire upon the inhabitants?"

"By no means," but Knox noticed that he seemed much agitated.

A number of people (Captain Goldfinch among them) were entreating the crowd to go home, not to lose their heads. Instead they made a sudden, blind rush at the soldiers, those behind pushing on those in front, even jumping on their backs to see.

Crispus Attucks was still muttering about the "claws" he was going to get off lobsters. He hit at Preston with his stick of cordwood, grazed him, but knocked down Montgomery. The two of them fought a moment for the soldier's musket. In the mêlée that followed, Montgomery got it and was up on his feet. Now "the motley mob of saucy boys, negroes, mulattoes, Irish teagues and outlandish jack-tars" (to use John Adams' words) had pushed against the soldiers until you couldn't get a hat between them. Among the soldiers was Private Kilroy and among the mob Sam Gray, now out of a job. Kilroy was watching him.

Above the hubbub came the sinister word, "Present . . ." The struggle went on. And then the fatal command, "Fire . . ." No one knows who gave the order. Unbiased witnesses, close to Preston at the moment, agreed with him and said that he did not.

Montgomery, his hat gone, his bald head shining in the moonlight, fired first at Attucks, who got two balls through the chest.

Kilroy had not forgotten Sam Gray's leadership of the ropewalk men two days before. He took deliberate aim at him. Gray, too, died instantly, as did James Caldwell, a mate from a coasting vessel. Sam Maverick had been holding his master's twelve-year-old son, Isaac Greenwood, by the hand. At this moment he threw up his arms crying, "Fire away, you damned lobster-backs." The British bullets dropped him. He died a few hours later. But Patrick Carr, "the Irish teague," and the only victim who deserves our grateful memory, lived in torture for several days. A number of others were hit, but only these five died.

Kilroy (as unpleasant as ever) stepped forward and thrust his bayonet into Gray's lifeless body. The crowd rushed backwards over each other, tripping and slipping on the packed snow as they went. The width of the street was littered with lost overcoats and hats. It was still being said that the soldiers' guns were not loaded with ball. And some thought all those huddles of clothing on the snow were lost garments. A few of these bundles were struggling and crying out. Three at least lay completely quiet. Captain Preston, once more in front of his men, was desperately pushing up their

guns, demanding they hold their fire, and prevented a second shot.

Now all over Boston the British drums beat to arms. Soldiers half dressed, officers with waistcoats unbuttoned, poured into King Street, forming their precise platoons, their disciplined faces stony, their bayonets fixed ready to resist the charge of the mob.

Lieutenant Governor Hutchinson, struggling through milling, infuriated masses of fellow townsmen, fought his way to the State House, under whose shadow the "Massacre" had taken place. He was incensed through and through, loathing what seemed to him the stupid brutality of the regulars and the wilful fecklessness of the inhabitants. Although the "lower classes" had been taught by their leaders that Thomas Hutchinson was a more dangerous enemy to their liberties than any minister in England, that night they seemed to have remembered their former confidence in him. He spoke from the balcony of the State House—and it was the last time his people listened to him. He swore that justice should be done, and they gratefully accepted his leadership. So he got the mob off the streets and the regiments locked up in their barracks.

Before sunrise, Captain Preston and his eight men were under arrest for murder. They were to be tried immediately and the feeling was so high no jury could possibly be found in Boston who would not have convicted them. Seemingly no lawyer would even dare defend them. Whoever did would be mobbed and ostracized.

The Pilgrim Ship[1]

ARCHIE BINNS

SEATTLE, TOO, had its Puritans and pilgrims and gentlemen adventurers, and adventurers who were no gentlemen. The city acted out the building of America accurately, but with the growing momentum of more than two centuries. At the far end of telescoped time, Seattle's beginning was the same as the beginning of the nation. The pilgrims of Seattle landed from their little sailing ship on a shore as unknown and forbidding as the shore of Plymouth, and as isolated from the home states as Plymouth was from England, at the edge of a denser forest, as well supplied with Indians and wild beasts. And though the Indians, ignorant of history, were friendly at the time, that flaw in the parallel was soon corrected.

On November twelfth, 1851, the stage was set for the arrival of the pilgrims who founded Seattle. From unnamed Smith Cove to Duwamish Head the bluff shore and mud flats of Elliott Bay were walled by a heavy fir forest that had never been penetrated by a white man. A few miles up the Duwamish River, on meadow lands and little prairies, there were the Collins, two Maples and Van Asselt claims. All of the men were bachelors except Collins. His wife and fourteen-year-old daughter, Lucinda, were the first white women in the region. West of the divided mouth of the Duwamish River, near Duwamish Head, was the only settlement on Elliott Bay. That was a temporary fishing camp where Chief Seattle and some of his tribe were catching salmon for their winter food supply. The place was called "Skwudux," a name that never would have done for a great city.

From bold Duwamish Head the heavily timbered shore inclined southwest and diminished to low-shored Alki Point, which was then called "Smaquamox." There, on Alki Point, was the beginning of a city, and one white resident. The beginning of a city was a log cabin, complete as to walls but without a roof. That evening the heavy November rain roared down into the building and ran

[1] From *Northwest Gateway* by Archie Binns. Copyright 1941 by Archie Binns. Reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc.

out of the doorway. It was no place to live, and the one white resident huddled under a leaking shelter of cedar boughs, with his blanket around him like an Indian, while he kept his fire alive under the kettle in which he was cooking his supper.

The white resident was a young man who had crossed the plains that year from Illinois. He was nineteen and his name was David Denny. For three weeks he had been alone, except for visits from the Indians. There was a certain amount of discomfort in his situation that November evening. An older man in the same fix would have considered the situation desperate. A few days before, working on the unfinished cabin, he had cut his foot with the ax. He had managed to stop the bleeding, but the wound left him too crippled to work or hunt. Along with the wound he had a return of malarial chills and fever, brought in his blood from Illinois. On top of malaria he had a bad case of neuralgia. And that afternoon, hobbling back from a look at the roofless cabin, he had found a family of wild animals in possession of his shelter. He was not afraid, but neither was he a fool, and he stood patiently in the rain while the skunk tribe ate up the last of his food. When they were gone, the comforts of life were vigorously reduced. About all David Denny had were a leaking shelter of thatched boughs, a handful of tea that the skunks had left, and his hopeful youth.

A sad song might be written about a boy of nineteen, sick and wounded, without food and almost without shelter, deserted on an unexplored shore among the Indians and battered by the icy rain of northern autumn. But David Denny did not feel deserted or sorry for himself. He was at the beginning of manhood, at the beginning of great things. Not many young men have the opportunity to keep vigil in such a primeval place, with the knowledge that it is the beginning of a great city. John Low and Lee Terry had decided that six weeks before, when the exploring party of three landed at Smaquamox. They decided to build a city there, and their plans went ahead so fast that within a few days Terry had decided on a name for their city. They would call it "New York," after his birthplace, which their city would shortly rival. So John Low left young Terry and David to build the first house while he walked back to Portland, two hundred miles away, to bring his family. David Denny's father and four brothers were also there, and he sent a letter to his married brother, Arthur, to come at once to Puget Sound Arthur had already decided on that region, but chills and fever had kept him helpless in Portland while his young brother and John Low had gone to drive Low's cattle north for winter range and to spy out the country.

At the village of Olympia, in northern Oregon, the two explorers met Lee Terry, the boy from New York, and the three of them joined forces with Captain Fay, who had a boat and who was setting out to buy salmon from the Indians to ship to San Francisco. The four sailed down the Sound as far as Elliott Bay and up the Duwamish as far as the four newly staked claims. Then Captain Fay left the others at Smaquamox, which later became Alki, and the party was reduced to three. Low went back to Portland to bring some population for his city, and the party was reduced to two. David Denny and Lee Terry built the city as far as one cabin without a roof. Then they discovered they had no frow for splitting shakes. Luther Collins came down the Duwamish in his scow, on the way to the Hudson's Bay station at Nisqually, and Terry caught a ride with him. The settlement was thus reduced to one man of nineteen and a roofless cabin. And after three weeks of solitude and an invasion of skunks, the food supply of the budding city was reduced to a handful of tea.

When his pot boiled, young David made some tea and drank it, hot and strong and straight. Then he muffled himself in his damp blanket and crawled out of his shelter for the evening look around, which had become part of his Robinson Crusoe life.

There was not much to see but night coming down fast with the autumn rain. On the wide reach of the Sound there was no sail or running lights of any ship. To the northeast there was the luminous smoke of an

Indian fire on Duwamish Head. All the other shores were black with the impenetrable darkness of the forest, where night came early and materialized into a solid thing of multiplied blackness. There was nothing to hear but a breath of wind passing through the great fir trees on the point and the cold wash of waves on the gravel beach. Inherently there was not much comfort in standing there alone at the edge of the primeval world in the roaring cold rain. But the young man did not feel cold. He was full of hot tea and burning with malarial fever that made him lightheaded, and he did not feel like a lonely castaway. From Alki to Duwamish Head and across Elliott Bay, north to West Point, he saw the lighted buildings of a great city. It was the city that he and young Terry had dreamed, and it was real because Lee Terry was from New York and he had described the city and the gas-lit windows, seen from the opposite shore across dark water at night. Terry, gone for three weeks now, was sure they could build as big a city out here. Low, the cautious, middle-aged man of thirty-one, had said it would take years. But David and Lee were both in their teens. Working on the cabin or lying under their shelter of boughs at night, they had talked as if the city were already a fact. This night David could see it at last: the dark bulk of buildings walling the shore like a forest, shot with the twinkling lights of countless windows. It was so vast and grand that it made him feel delirious, and he could even hear the roar of traffic, like wind going through great trees. . . . The city faded and the countless lighted windows dwindled to dancing fever sparks inside his eyes. He was alone at the edge of the forest, beside a roofless cabin in the rain. Sick and wounded and supperless, with no food left for breakfast, he crawled into the shelter of boughs and went to bed under his damp blankets. He was not sorry for himself, because he was young and holding the fort where a great city was about to spring up at the edge of the unexplored forest.

When John Low reached Portland with David Denny's letter and his own endorsement of northern Oregon, he found everything favorable. Arthur Denny and his wife had somewhat recovered from their malaria. Between chills and fevers, Arthur had learned more about Puget Sound, and he was eager to start north at once. His brother-in-law, Carson Boren, also wanted to go, and Boren's attractive young sister, Louisa, was of the same mind. She and Arthur Denny's wife were sisters, and she and David had crossed the plains together and were good friends. An emigrant by the name of William Bell had also caught the "Northern Oregon Fever," and in the small world of Portland, which had a population of two thousand, another man had joined the party. He was a California gold miner of 'forty-nine, and he already had some experience in the west although he was only twenty-two. He was Charles Terry of New York, and he joined the main party without knowing that his young brother, Lee, had already joined the advance guard. It was a party of young people for a young country. The oldest member was John Low, who was thirty-one, and the youngest was Arthur Denny's son, Roland, born in Portland two months before.

Everything had gone well for John Low's plan to round up a population for his city at Smaquamox. He had found more willing recruits than he had expected, and there was no difficulty about transportation. The *Exact* was at Portland, fitting out for an expedition to the Queen Charlotte Islands, and on the way she was entering Puget Sound with emigrants for Olympia. Captain Folger agreed to take the city builders to Smaquamox, if they could find it. He had never seen Puget Sound, which was only sketchily charted, and he could not be expected to recognize a spot the Indians called Smaquamox unless it was pointed out to him.

Carrying emigrants to Puget Sound was only a sideline for Captain Folger. The real destination of the *Exact,* Queen Charlotte Islands, was the home of the fierce Haidahs, who terrorized the Indians of Puget Sound on their raids for slaves and plunder. A discovery of gold in the Queen Charlottes had been reported, and now it was the Haidahs'

turn to be plundered. Most of the passengers in the little schooner were miners on their way to the islands of a strange and splendid race that wore armor and helmets in battle, and carved great totem poles and tombs for their dead, which were raised on cedar columns five feet through and ornamented with great, brooding figures of the Thunderbird. The Haidahs also carved beautiful canoes that were sometimes seventy feet long and carried upwards of a hundred trouble-loving warriors. Only the lure of gold would have tempted men in their right senses to their forbidding islands.

The founders of Seattle were hitching onto the star of a gold rush, and it was a good omen.

The pilgrim ship was the schooner *Exact,* and she hailed from Nantucket, not very far away from where the *Mayflower* landed. She was not so big as the *Mayflower,* and probably no easier on the stomach, but she was a better, more seaworthy ship for those who could stay with her. The *Exact* was a two-masted, bald-headed schooner, seventy-three feet long, twenty feet in beam and six feet deep in the hold, of about seventy tons burden. She was the product of generations of pilgrim descendants: English colonists becoming Yankees and developing fast and handy smuggling craft to outsmart the revenue cutters of the mother country, and outright Yankees developing still faster craft for outright competition.

The *Exact* had the profile of a Gloucester fisherman and, except for the lack of topsails, she had the same rig; and she could sail. In her day she was one of the smallest craft to round Cape Horn, and she made a better passage of it than some of the big ships. And she was easier on her crew. With her bald-headed rig there was no occasion for men to go aloft, and when the wind piped up and the helm threatened to take charge, they clapped tackles on the tiller and drove her like a clipper ship.

The *Exact* was commanded by Captain Isaiah Folger of Nantucket, Isaiah was the son of Walter Folger, the scholar and inventor, and one of his crew was his young son, George, who was there by way of a health experiment. All the other Folger children had died, and when the youngest began to pine away, the captain said to his wife, "Sarah, we won't have a doctor to George. I'll take him with me in the schooner." Sea life and salt horse and Cape Horn weather and hard chances did the trick, and George lived to be a man.

Captain Fay had brought the advanced guard for the founding of the city, and Grandma Fay was in the pilgrim ship, but she was not called that until long afterward Captain Fay and she had not even met. At the time she was Mrs. Alexander, and she and her husband and their two little boys were on their way to Olympia. But Grandma Fay was the right woman to be on board. She was the only one of that party of inland people who would ever talk about the voyage of the pilgrim ship. She had gone on observing, no matter what, and she should have been a novelist because she remembered the right things; for instance, how the women prepared for the voyage, and what they had for breakfast on the fifth of November 1851, and how Charlie Terry got seasick, and what the gold miners sang on their way to the island of the Haidahs.

The *Exact* was to sail on November fifth, and on the fourth the pilgrims brought their belongings on board and the women primped up for the voyage. Grandma Fay, who remembered the right things, observed that they starched their sunbonnets very stiffly and ironed them against the firm, short grass on the river bank.

Charles Terry had decided to go into business at the new city, and in the morning his stock of goods came on board, and he wrote in his memorandum book:

schooner
Shipped on the brig *Exact*
1 Box Tin ware
1 " Axes
1 " tobacco
1 Keg Brandy
1 " Whiskey
1 Box Raisins
Portland Nov. 5 1851

His first calling the *Exact* a brig has the flavor of his earlier days in San Francisco,

where nearly every small vessel was a brig. It also suggests that he was no seaman, and while it required only a few seconds to correct the error on paper, it took him years to correct an error in city planning that came from the same ignorance of maritime matters.

While Terry checked the goods for his store, Indians came on board offering fresh salmon. All the emigrants bought some, and as many women as could get frying pans on the stove began frying salmon cutlets for breakfast. The one small stove was in the center of the *Exact's* cabin, and the double tier of berths around the cabin were filled with emigrant families and household goods, and fish waiting to be cooked. The packed cabin was hazy with grease smoke and the smell of raw and cooking salmon, and through it all there was the undefined but ever-present smell of the ship, which none of the landsmen commented on, and none of them failed to note.

From above there came the sound of creaking halyard blocks as the sails were hoisted, and the clatter of capstan pawls as the cable was hove in short and the anchor broken out. The *Exact* dropped down the Willamette River toward the Columbia, with the emigrant women cooking salmon on the little stove or quieting their hungry children and trying to make order out of cramped chaos while they waited their turn to cook. All of them had learned patience in the hard school of wagon trains across the continent, and everyone was good natured in the family confusion and cooking smoke and smells of the crowded little cabin. Now and then a bearded face looked down from the hatch, and the miner made relishing comments on the good smell of frying salmon, but the miners did not add themselves to the uproar below.

Considerately the miners stayed on deck, where they sang and played poker. The miners for the Queen Charlotte Islands were fine fellows. Some of them were from the California diggings and some were not; but all of them followed the cut and pattern of the 'Forty-niners: disreputable slouch hats, all the beards their faces would raise and all the dirt they could collect, heavy flannel shirts and trousers tucked into high cowhide boots. And at least everyone who could justify the repair had the seat of his trousers patched with the choice cut of flour sacking that bore the legend XXXX, like kisses appended to a letter.

The miners stayed on deck, playing poker and singing "Three Blind Mice," and in the cabin below the relays of pilgrims waited their turn and fried their salmon and ate, precariously, in the crowded bunks. The hardly little *Exact* reached down the Willamette to the Columbia, with a freshening wind, and came into the great, rolling river.

Mrs. Alexander, later Fay, had a long wait for the stove, but she was a young woman of cheerful patience. She fixed up her little boys so they would be clean and neat for breakfast, and had a go at the impossible task of arranging her housekeeping affairs in quarters so cramped that everything had to be on top of something else, with something else on top of it. And nothing could be moved without moving everything, and there was no room to move anything. After that, she sliced her fine fat salmon and fixed her coffeepot. All the time there was the disurbing, foreign smell of the ship and the rich smell of salmon sizzling in fat. All around her in the jammed cabin people were eating salmon, and on deck the miners were singing "Three Blind Mice." It sounded innocent at first, but it became exhausting and made her head ache as it went on endlessly, with the parts of the round overlapping. It was such a short song and it went on forever, like identical waves running after the farmer's—running after each other, and it made her a little dizzy. *"Three blind mice, three blind mice—"* The round went on in successive waves, and it seemed to make waves as the little schooner surged along in the rolling Columbia. *"Three blind mice—"* One of the women took her breakfast from the stove, and it was Mrs. Alexander's chance to cook her mice—to cook her salmon.

She started for the stove with her frying pan and coffeepot. The cabin floor heaved under her feet, and the air of the cabin swam with the smells of fat salmon, raw and fried,

and the awful smell of disturbed bilge water. Mrs. Alexander knew that she was about to be very sick.

With a second to decide where, and wondering sickly what the others would think, she gave one glance and saw and heard them pushing their breakfasts away and hanging over the edge of their bunks. She stumbled vaguely to her own, and they were all sick in unison. Abandoned coffeepots and pans of salmon drifted about the reeling cabin floor as the little schooner surged along in the rolling river. And on deck the heartless miners roared their round, unceasingly, and the three blind mice ran round and round in the aching heads of the pilgrims and in their retching stomachs.

The Dennys had a bunk on one side of the stove, and Mrs. Alexander and her boys were on the opposite side. Arthur Denny was very sick, but he was also under the spell of something ludicrous he had seen. Whenever he found time to speak, he looked at the prostrate woman on the other side of the cabin and gasped, with a wan twinkle in his eyes: "What are you lying there for, Mrs. Alexander? Why don't you get up and cook your fish?" And Mrs. Alexander could not answer because each mention of the word "fish" brought on a new wave of nausea.

All of the pilgrims were seasick except Charles Terry. He was on deck, visiting with the miners and feeling very good indeed. He was a man of the world, and he could be with the happy-go-lucky gold miners in spirit though he was not with them in a business way because he knew something better. He had had his try at the diggings on the Sacramento, and he had observed that the man who runs the store has the best chance of getting rich. He was an experienced man of twenty-two, and that was why he was sailing with store goods in the hold instead of a pick and shovel and gold pan on deck. But Terry could talk the miners' language and he felt generous toward them. So he said, "Boys, how about a smoke to celebrate our sailing? I have some good cigars downstairs."

The miners cheered the suggestion, and Terry descended, whistling, into the cabin of affliction. While he bent over his traveling chest and had a struggle with the lock, the schooner rose and fell and rolled, mixing strange odors, and derelict coffeepots and pans of fish skated about the slippery cabin floor. Leaning over the chest, Terry began to vomit. And while he vomited, the heartless miners crowded round the companion hatch and called, "Hurry up with them cigars you went after, Terry! What are you doing down there, Terry?" They kept it up long after Terry had crawled into a bunk. Then they gave him up, loudly, as a stingy four-flusher who promised good cigars and did not give them even a civil word. They went back to playing poker and singing "Three Blind Mice" in rhythm with the plunge and roll of the schooner, and the pilgrims, with mice running around in their aching heads and convulsed stomachs, loathed the healthy sound of their singing. In a seasick world the unnatural monsters are the healthy ones. "Did ever you see such a sight in your life as three blind mice?"

It was a voyage of blind mice and blind destiny. The by-product was the founding of a great city, and the main expedition came to nothing. The Queen Charlotte Islands gold strike was a false alarm, and the *Exact's* miners sailed back without one nugget. At that, they were fortunate. The other schooner in search of gold was wrecked on one of the islands. When a rescue party went in search of them, long afterward, they found that the fierce Haidahs had a sense of humor. They had made slaves of the shipwrecked men, and the schooner crew and miners served a long apprenticeship at menial work usually reserved for old women and Indians captured on Puget Sound.

With her passenger list of gold-seekers and home-seekers, the *Exact* was cleared by the custom's authorities at Astoria on November seventh. The same day she bucked and rolled her way across the bar between the furious breakers on the sands south of Point Adams and the furious breakers on the sands east of Cape Disappointment. After that terrifying introduction to the sea, the Pacific looked quite reasonable to the pilgrims. They were only normally seasick

as the little schooner sailed up the coast of northern Oregon, which is now the coast of Washington.

On November eleventh the *Exact* rounded Cape Flattery and sailed in the generous Strait of Juan de Fuca to where it opens into a much wider sea. There the wind deserted her altogether and she lay becalmed for twenty-four hours off Dungeness Spit.

At three o'clock on the rainy morning of the thirteenth a northwesterly breeze stirred and freshened, and Captain Folger tumbled his crew out to make sail. By the time they had the anchor catted, half a gale was blowing and the little Nantucket schooner was running off before it with a bone of gleaming spray in her teeth. At daybreak she was storming along between the towering, forested shores of Admiralty Inlet, making better than ten knots.

Captain Folger called passenger John Low and told him to keep a good lookout for Smaquamox. Low was the only man on board who had ever been on Puget Sound, and he was one of the half-dozen white men in the world who could vouch for the existence of Smaquamox. If he could not identify the place, the *Exact* would pass it up as one of the lost cities of the earth.

With half a gale behind her, the *Exact* roared past Point No Point against the push of the outgoing tide. The great reach of the inland sea opened still wider, and the little schooner ran due south in Puget Sound. While she stormed along, John Low stood in the wind and rain forward, steadying himself against the port foreshrouds and keeping an anxious lookout. The honor of his city was at stake. He knew it was somewhere on the left side of the Sound, but he did not know exactly where. And the left shore was ten miles away, blotted out by drifting rain clouds and gray rain.

As the *Exact* raced on, the Sound narrowed to a five-mile width and the left shore came within eye's reach: three-hundred-foot yellow bluffs topped by two-hundred- and three-hundred-foot fir forests that seemed to be sailing through the rain clouds. The shore of Smaquamox was low and gently sloping. They were not yet there, unless they had already passed it.

The *Exact* passed an Indian camp at the mouth of a river that looked something like one of the mouths of the Duwamish, but the rest of the landscape did not fit, and the point of land beyond was tremendously high. They roared past the high point and opened up a great bay. Half the bay was surrounded by steep bluffs that left off suddenly, and the rest of it was bordered by wet, gray mud flats uncovered by the outgoing tide. Above the bluffs and beyond the misty ooze of the mud flats was the tremendous, unbroken forest, with rain clouds sailing past the great trees; about everything there was the primeval look of a world at the beginning of time. At the head of the bay mud flats and marshy land and water and mist were mixed up at the edge of the wet northern jungle. It looked as if there might be a river mouth in there; maybe the twin mouths of the Duwamish. Then, looking ahead, up the Sound, Low saw a long, wooded point of land with a gently sloping shore that thinned to nothing where it met the exposed beach. It looked like the point the Indians called "Smaquamox," but there should be the beginnings of a city there if young Denny and Lee Terry had done their part. Then, between the forest and the beach, he caught the wet shine of peeled logs. Low ran aft, calling to Captain Folger that Smaquamox was dead ahead.

He had found the obscure port of call, but on closer look he was disappointed. The new cabin was roofless in the driving rain, and there was no sign of life about the point. It looked as if the boys had abandoned the place, unfinished, or been killed by the Indians.

While Low pondered the mystery, Captain Folger shouted commands. The long tiller was swung over and the *Exact* rounded up into the wind, well off the point. The big single jib crumpled and came down, and the anchor was let go with a harsh roar of cable chain that echoed from the lonely woods. It was then eight o'clock on the morning of November thirteenth, 1851.

In his leaking bower of cedar boughs David Denny was awakened by the sudden harsh roar of cable chain. He crawled out and saw the schooner lying off the point, with her crew smothering the wet, threshing sails as they came down. The deck of the little pilgrim ship was dark with bearded men and shawl-wrapped women with their sunbonnets flapping in the wind and rain. The population for the city had arrived, and the hungry boy hobbled to the outer edge of the wide beach, with his neuralgic head tied up in a cloth and his damp blanket drawn around him Indian style. He was so excited and happy that it did not occur to him that the women might not be thrilled by the prospect ashore.

Actually, the women had considered the new city from the *Exact*, and they were crushed by what they saw: one roofless cabin at the edge of the tremendous forest, in the rain; something like a sick Indian waving to them from the edge of the wet beach; and a rabble of naked and half-naked Indians hurrying along the beach toward the landing place.

The men in the party did not notice the temporary lack of conveniences ashore, and they were busy and excited getting their possessions out of the hold to start their new life in a new world. Louisa Boren was the only woman who was not in tears by the time they crowded into the longboat. The cold autumn rain had wilted the sunbonnets they had starched so stiffly and ironed with such care on the grassy bank of the Willamette. Mrs. Alexander, who was going on to Olympia, saw them crying as they were rowed ashore, with their stricken sunbonnets going flip-flap, flip-flap in the wind and rain. Mrs. Denny and Mrs. Bell and Mrs. Boren each carried a baby in her arms, and Mrs. Low held a two-year-old girl. Among them, the four had twelve children, nine of them girls, and the oldest was nine. Mrs. Alexander was sorry for them all, but she was sorriest for Mrs. Denny. Her baby was only two months old; she was weak from chills and fever and seasickness, and she was going ashore in a storm of rain to a city of one house with no roof.

The Run[1]

MARQUIS JAMES

IN THE BARN LOT I saw a saddletree stripped bare and asked Mama about it. She took the tree and disappeared through the barn door. An old dried-out unused saddle that had hung in the barn as long as I could remember was missing from its peg.

"Of all things. This belongs to your father's saddle. Who on earth stripped it?"

She learned that a neighbor had stripped it. He wanted some leather for shoe soles for the young'uns and Papa had told him to strip the saddle.

Mama certainly gave Papa the what-for.

"Houstin James, you get that saddle leather right back. I want that saddle for Marquis."

Papa said the saddle was no good. A stirrup was gone and the cinch was broken. He said he would get me a proper boy's saddle one day.

"But that's the saddle you made the Run in. It'll be an heirloom for Marquis when he grows up."

It was too late about the leather. The man had cut it up. But I was the gainer by the day's events. First was the promise of a saddle of my own. And, of course, there would have to be a pony. You wouldn't put a new saddle on Billy, the big, jug-headed, spavined, dirty-black plug used for light plowing and hauling wood, and the only horse I had to ride. He didn't even belong

[1] From *The Cherokee Strip* by Marquis James. Copyright 1945 by Marquis James. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc, New York.

to us. A man had left him in our barn and never come for him. The second thing was that Papa told me about the Run.

Of course this was a story everyone knew —the commonest story in all the Strip. By now I didn't bother to listen to it, sometimes. But I listened to Papa because it was Papa telling a story and because he told it so differently. Never before had I known that there were so many, so very, very many people in the Run. Somehow, I'd only thought of there having been just a few—like Mr. Howell and Mr. Schrock and Clark the claim-jumper and Jim Utsler's cowboy and Mrs. Ackerman and so on. But no, there was a whole world of people in the Run. More than I had ever seen in Enid on circus day. Papa covered the prairie with them.

He said the Run was the biggest horse race that ever had been; and for the biggest purse —all the Cherokee Strip. He asked me to think of four or five horses lined up at the post at the Fair Grounds. They break and are away. Well, sir, in this race there were thousands of horses and thousands of riders and drivers, and they stretched in a line across the prairie as far as you could see. Papa asked me to look to the east and look to the west and imagine all those horses strung out ready to break. Most of the horses were under saddle. The others were hitched to every kind of rig. Light rigs—buckboards, spring wagons and sulkies—were the best. But there were covered wagons, lots of them, and even people on foot.

They broke with a yell and at first you couldn't see a thing for the dust that was raised where the grass had been trampled away along the starting line. In this blinding cloud the wheels of rigs locked and there were spills at the very start. When the racers got out on the grass, the dust went down, except along the Chisholm Trail. The riders took the lead, mostly, with the fastest driving horses and lightest wagons next. And on they went. There were no roads, mind you, except the Trail, and no bridges. You got down and up draws and across creeks and ravines and gullies as best you could. Or you headed them. Wagons stuck in the streams and stalled in draws. Rigs broke down from the rough going. By and by the horses that had been ridden or driven too hard began to play out. Horses that had started slower began to edge ahead.

The thing to do was to get to Enid first, and get the choice of town lots, or of the claims close by. It was seventeen miles by beeline from the nearest point on the starting line north of Hennessey, in Old Oklahoma, to Enid's south line. With five miles to go, of the thousands who started about a hundred held the lead. Most of the others were far behind, some dropping out all the time to stake claims along the Trail or to veer east or west. The rest pressed on to get nearer Enid. The hundred leaders dwindled to fifty, nearly all on horseback, though a few buckboards were still keeping up.

A small man on a small and fleet cow pony was gliding past rider after rider. The man was Walter Cook, a twenty-two-year-old cowpuncher from the Chickasaw Nation. Pretty soon he was ahead of everyone. He kept his lead and was the first to reach the townsite. He could have had any town lot there. But the little cowhand was out for bigger game. Sweeping past the land office he staked the claim—one hundred and sixty acres—adjoining the Square on the north: the prize quarter-section in the whole Cherokee strip.

Two or three minutes later Albert Hammer dashed up, threw himself from his heaving horse, and without batting an eye staked the same claim. Then came Ben Clampitt in a swaying buckboard behind a foam-flecked team that was beating its own dust in a high south wind. All the way Clampitt's race had been a sight to see. A lean old Texan, he had rigged his buckboard with leather stirrups like those on a racing sulky. Mounted behind the driver was a hired hand with a pitchfork who in the crowded early stages of the race had jabbed to the right and left, keeping competitors at a distance and making a clear track for Ben.

Next came Bill Coyle; and after him people just swarmed in. Before night there were three hundred claim-jumpers on the quarter-section Walter Cook had staked first.

"What happened, Pa?" I asked breathlessly, knowing that a dose of lead was the thing for claim-jumpers caught in the act.

"A lot of things happened. First off, the claim-jumpers got together and began to divide the claim into town lots. They called the place Jonesville. Now, if you're the better man, you can put one claim-jumper off your land. But you can't put three hundred of them off. Walter Cook could have had a share of the town lots, a big share, but he insisted on having his claim. He was just a boy, you see, and green. There were contests and contests and in the end the organized townsters came out on top. Walter Cook, who had won fair and square the greatest horse race in the world, never got a thing."

I always think of Walter Cook, whose path was to cross mine before I left Oklahoma, as a victim of democracy in its most primitive form: the law of the pack.

In addition to an active indignation over the injustice to Walter Cook, my father's long-winded or oft-repeated accounts of the Run gave me a feeling of the dash and scope of that contribution to the Southwest's boisterous history which I have had from no other source. When old enough to understand a map of the United States I chanced to note that the Cherokee Strip was larger than the State of Massachusetts, and, lopping off Cape Cod, about the same shape. That made me feel pretty good, for the historian made so much of what had gone on in Massachusetts. There were a hundred thousand people in the Run, and they came in from all four directions. About fifteen thousand started from the Hennessey section of the south line. All who staked near Enid (either Enid) came from there. Yet Mr. Howell, in his story, mentioned only perhaps a half dozen riders besides himself—his immediate competitors. Other storytellers did the same. Each was pretty much the hero of his own story. Only my father brought before me a picture of all those hard-riding thousands. And he did it without mentioning himself.

My father had not seen Walter Cook, Albert Hammer, Ben Clampitt and the rest pile onto the Strip's most-sought-after claim, for he was two miles away and with other things to attend to at the time. The scene he laid before me must have been reconstructed from testimony in Oklahoma's most famous series of claim contests. Then, too, Papa would have had the benefit of Mr. Pat Wilcox's story. Nobody had so good a view of the birth of Enid as Mr. Wilcox, an observer whom the research of half a century has not proved mistaken on an essential point. Before the Run, there was one building in Enid, the L-shaped land office, one room of which was set aside for the post office. Young Mr. Wilcox was assistant postmaster. As soon as he had washed his dinner dishes, he climbed to the roof and began scanning the southern skyline.

When I was older I got Mr. Wilcox to tell more than once what he had seen: first a haze faintly discernible above the crest of the slope we called South Hill. The haze grew larger and denser. His eyes on this looming dust cloud, Mr. Wilcox did not see Walter Cook, who was ahead of it, until Walter had topped the rise and was tearing down the slope inside the townsite. Ben Clampitt and the others who followed next engrossed the attention of the observer. Then Mr. Wilcox happened to glance to the west. Riding easily on a fairly fresh horse was a man in light blue overalls—without doubt, thought Mr. Wilcox, a sooner who had hidden out in the blackjacks. The man mixed with the crowd which by nightfall had swelled to ten thousand, and Mr. Wilcox was unable to spot him again.

From my mother I learned of Papa's own part in the race. It was the kind of story that Mama, with her love of horses, would tell with relish.

Especially for the Run, Papa had bought a race horse in El Reno. It was wind-broken but otherwise a sound and strong animal, capable of carrying my father's more than two hundred pounds.

"In his young days your father was a real fancy rider," Mama would say. "And for a man of his size very easy on a horse."

This was no small tribute. My mother was about as accomplished a judge of riding as any woman in our part of the country.

The Run was a young man's undertaking. My father was crowding forty-nine, a good twenty years older than the average man who entered the race on horseback with serious intentions of reaching Enid in time to stake anything. A year and half of law practice in Old Oklahoma and the Indian nations had made him fairly used to the saddle again. Nevertheless, he took three weeks to condition himself and to find out what he and his horse could do. He knew the ropes well enough to get himself the best possible place on the starting line—smack on the Chisholm Trail, just north of Hennessey, in Old Oklahoma.

You could begin your race anywhere you could get on one of the four borders of the Strip, which was about a hundred and sixty-five miles east and west and fifty-eight miles north and south. Papa picked the Hennessey section because it lay closest Enid, which he figured would be *the* town of the Strip. There was also the Trail to follow. It made for easier riding and led straight to the desired township. On a prairie experience is necessary to preserve a sense of direction.

Mama's understanding was that Papa spent about three days and nights on the line, holding his place. The wonder is that the wait wasn't longer, considering the premium on places in the neighborhood of the Trail. I have heard men tell of spending three weeks on the line. Possibly they were with covered-wagon outfits, but, unless close to water, they must have got pretty tired of it. The sheets of some of the wagons were scrawled with notices of intention such as "Oklahoma or Bust." Substituting "Texas" or "Oregon," the phrase had been western usage for a good fifty years.

The line was patrolled by soldiers to prevent anyone from crossing over before the opening gun. The country had been evacuated by the cattle outfits which formerly leased it from the Indians. Excepting land-office and post-office staffs and soldiers on the site of each county seat, the Strip was depopulated. That was the theory, and it came tolerably close to being the fact. Nobody knows how many sooners did manage to hide out in the promised land before the opening gun was fired, but probably not more than you would find trying to obtain their ends by illegal means in any collection of a hundred thousand persons. (Walter Cook, you understand, lost his claim by strictly legal procedure.)

After a man had staked a claim he had to "file" at the nearest land office. In order to file he was required to exhibit an evidence of registration permitting him to make the Run in the first place. Registration slips were issued from booths along the line. It was in no way difficult for a prospective sooner who knew the country to register a week before the Run and sneak up a draw through the thinly patrolled line. He could camp in the blackjacks west of Enid, for instance, and ride out with the first honest comers—as Mr. Wilcox suspected the man in light blue overalls had done. A cavalry troop encamped on the Enid site had reconnoitred the surrounding country for three weeks. Though the lieutenant in command was sure a number of sooners had eluded him, they must have formed a minute proportion of the whole body of settlers.

The Hennessey stretch of the line broke five minutes before the official gun. Somebody may have discharged a firearm by accident. My father was in the saddle and ready. Waiting only to see that there was no turning back the tide, he, too, set off, keeping to the Chisholm Trail and reining his horse to a pace it could maintain for fifteen or sixteen miles and have a spurt left for an emergency.

The Chisholm Trail was the name cowmen gave to the Oklahoma section of the Abilene Trail, greatest of the southwestern cattle thoroughfares. It ran from San Antonio, Texas, to the railway terminus at Abilene, Kansas, a distance of eight hundred miles. Though little used for cattle drives since the completion of the Rock Island Railroad through the Cherokee Strip in 1889, the famous prairie road was still distinct. Like a carelessly laid ribbon, which your eye would lose in the dips and pick up in the rises of the undulating plain, the Oklahoma part stretched almost due north. On level places it was like several ribbons side by

side. These markings were the Trail's core, made by the wheels of chuck wagons, calf wagons, freighters and stages. When wheels and hoofs wore through the sod, creating a "high center," teamsters would start a new road alongside the old. For two or three hundred yards on either side of these ruts the grass had been beaten down by the feet of the cattle. This on level stretches. To ford a stream or cross a draw the Trail narrowed.

The race was going well for my father At first many riders and some drivers passed him; but this he had counted on. In the fullness of time, however, without increasing the pace of his horse, he began to pass them. When Papa calculated that he had gone about fifteen miles he was feeling the strain, and his horse was feeling it. Ahead of him were perhaps fifty riders in sight whom he doubted his ability to pass. (Fifty out of fifteen thousand starters from Hennessey.)

Glancing to the east my father saw the top of a distant string of trees. That meant a stream, an asset of great value to a claim: also an asset of great value to my father, who liked trees. They were the thing he missed most on the plains. Turning his horse from the Trail, he crossed the Rock Island track and the bed of a dry creek. He urged his tiring mount up the rise. On the other side he saw only a shallow draw, its naked sides exposing coarse sandy soil tinted from red to orange. Was this a wild-goose chase? Holding a northeast course he made for the next rise. He was traveling over short-grass prairie, knobby-surfaced and with washes of bare red soil: a good place for a horse, especially a tired, wind-broken horse, its breath coming in rasps, to stumble; and no good to grow anything. The crest of this second rise brought a welcome sight into view: the trees he had seen from the Trail; and beyond them more trees.

Watering the roots of the first trees was a disappointing stream, hardly more than a yard wide. (This was the driest season of the year.) But better trees were beyond; indeed, what seemed a veritable forest, in terms of the plains, with a noble green mass—surely the granddaddy of all the trees in the Cherokee Strip—dominating the whole. The first of these trees were soon reached. The creek was wider there: ten or twelve feet across. The illusion of a grove had been caused by the way the creek curved in the shape of an S. Papa followed the course of the stream in the direction of the Big Tree. He crossed the creek once and found that, to reach the Big Tree, he must cross again or double a loop. He started to double the loop and came upon a steep ravine. The ravine wouldn't have been much to head, but Papa didn't take the time. Precious minutes had been lost feeling his way toward the trees. On the next fold of the prairie to the south other riders were in sight. Unseen riders might be coming up the draws. Papa wanted that creek, flowing in the shape of an S with good bottom lands in the loops, and he wanted the Big Tree. His horse barely made the steep yonder side of the ravine. A few rods farther, at the high point on our pasture, luxuriant in red top, Papa dismounted and set his stake on what proved to be the Southeast Quarter of Section 17, Township 22, Range 6 West of the Indian Meridian.

It was 12:53 P.M., September 16, 1893. As the Hennessey line had broken at 11:55, my father had ridden seventeen miles in fifty-eight minutes without injuring his horse. A note of pride would touch Mama's tone as she spoke the last four words. Walter Cook covered eighteen miles in fifty to fifty-five minutes—he carried no watch and no one seems to have timed him exactly.

Something else my father had had to watch out for during the last part of his ride were the markers, designating section and certain quarter-section corners. Twenty years before, surveyors had checker-boarded the Strip with these little monuments. Where there were any, roughly cut sandstones sticking six or eight inches above the ground were used; elsewhere, "pits and mounds." A pit-and-mounds marker consisted of a hole about three feet deep, surrounded by four piles of earth and sod indicating the points of the compass. Virgin prairie sod is thick and durable. Except where beaten down by cattle, these mounds could still be picked up by a person who knew what to look for easier than the stones hidden by grass.

Before the Run much of the Strip had been burned over. I have heard this laid to sooners, in an effort to drive off rightful homesteaders. It appears, however, to have been the work of the troops—with the object of rendering markers more readily visible, of preventing prairie fires with possible serious consequences during the chaotic first days of settlement, and of smoking out sooners. The fires had been set too late. In areas they were burning on the day of the Run, and for some time after. I have heard men tell of riding through lines of flame, and of droves of rabbits, coyotes, and snakes fleeing the fires. Near North Town a woman was burned to death trying to save her team.

Streams, arid gulches, green bottom-land grass and so on stopped the fires in places. Where my father was had not been burned at all. Stone and pit-and-mounds markers were mixed in together and all hard to see. Later examination disclosed the three designated corners of his quarter to be marked with stones—in all likelihood not visible more than a few yards away. As there was no time to search out these markers before he staked, my father had to estimate his boundaries by eye—while in motion on horseback, taking his bearings from the last marker he had seen. In the matter of acquiring title to the Big Tree luck was with him, too. Only three corners of any quarter-section were marked. Lines had to be run to determine the fourth. When they were run on our place the Big Tree was found to be less than a hundred yards from the Utsler boundary. Of course my father could have tried to make sure of the tree by setting his stake right under it. But he would have sacrificed the advantage of observation—for claim-jumpers and sooners—which his commanding position in the pasture afforded.

Having driven his stake, Papa set up a pup tent to which he affixed an American flag. I would like to know who gave him that flag, which was the last thing my father would ever have thought of taking along. From the tent he could see almost the entire claim, barring the East Draw and where the bluff hid the creek. He removed his saddle and, leading his horse so it would cool off gradually, began a tour of his estimated boundaries—probably looking for the markers. In the East Bottom he found a man preparing to set his stake. Cases of lead poisoning developed from a number of such meetings that day. But this man was no sooner or intentional claim-jumper. He rode with Papa to higher ground and took a look at the tent and the flag.

"You beat me out, stranger," said the man. "I'll strike eastward a piece."

Papa wished him luck, and never saw the man again.

Hurry, Honyocker![1]

JOSEPH KINSEY HOWARD

HONYOCKER, SCISSORBILL, NESTER. . . .He was the Joad of a quarter century ago, swarming into a hostile land: duped when he started, robbed when he arrived; hopeful, courageous, ambitious: he sought independence or adventure, comfort and security. Or perhaps he sought wealth; for there were some who did not share the Joads' love of the soil, whose interest was speculative. . . .

The honyocker was farmer, spinster, deep-sea diver; fiddler, physician, bartender, cook. He lived in Minnesota or Wisconsin, Massachusetts or Maine. There the news sought him out—Jim Hill's news of free land in the Treasure State:

"More Free Homesteads; Another Big Land Opening; 1,400,000 Acres Comprising

[1] From *Montana, High, Wide and Handsome* by Joseph Kinsey Howard. Copyright, 1943, and reprinted by permission of Yale University Press.

Rocky Boy Indian Lands Open to Settlers; MONTANA. . . .

"By order of the secretary of the interior, the lands shown on the map herein will be opened to homestead settlement March 1, 1910, and to entry at the Glasgow, Montana, land office.

"Professor Thomas Shaw, the well-known agricultural expert, after making a thorough examination of the soil and crop conditions of this land, writes as follows:

" 'The soil of this entire area is essentially a clay loam, very rich in mineral matter . . . has great staying power. The native grasses are more than ordinarily abundant and in this fact is evidence of producing power that can be relied on. The water supply is relatively good. In much of this area it is possible to secure a quarter section without a single foot of broken land on it. . . . A portion of this region has been homesteaded for the past *two or three years* by persons who have prospered since they came.' "

The italics are this writer's not Professor Shaw's!

The honyocker read on:

"The winter climate . . . is less cold than that of eastern Dakota. The snowfall is also usually considerably less than that of the Red River valley. [Was this supposed to be advantageous?] There have been no records kept of the rainfall for any lengthened period, but it is safe to conclude that it is not far different from the rainfall of Williston in North Dakota. This would mean the average rainfall is about 15 to 16 inches in a year, sometimes running higher than 18, sometimes, but rarely, as low as 11 to 12. This is not high rainfall . . . but it is sufficient to grow crops fair to excellent on summer fallow land *any season*. . . ."

Again the italics are mine.

"The statements made above are not mere guesses. They are based upon observation and experience. North from Culbertson 20 miles, and not so very far from the heart of this area, is a post-office named Homestead. The farmers around have tilled their lands for two or three years. They have grown nearly all the crops enumerated in this circular and with gratifying success."

Hurry, honyocker, hurry!

"As stated previously, these lands comprise 1,400,000 acres. Giving each man who files 160 acres, this area will furnish 8,750 farms. At first thought it might seem to be many months before all these farms would be taken. If any cherish such a view they will be greatly disappointed. It is questionable if a single farm will be left unfiled upon one month after the opening of the lands for entry."

Hurry, honyocker!

"One-way settlers' fares, $12.50 from St. Paul and Minneapolis to Bainville, Culbertson, and other points in eastern Montana."

Hurry, honyocker, and do not investigate too closely!

To be sure, no records of rainfall had been kept "for any lengthened period" at Culbertson: once a cowtown, careless of statistics, it was just being reborn. But in Glasgow, a hundred miles west, the records had been kept since 1894. There the 15-16 inches which you were told were "average" had only been recorded three times in fifteen years; precipitation had been 12 inches or less ("rarely," said the brochure) seven times in fifteen years. Williston was less than half Glasgow's distance from Culbertson, and Williston, though no Garden of Eden, had a better record; but you could not go by that, honyocker. Bozeman, Montana, has an average annual precipitation of about 19 inches. Sixty miles west as the crow flies the average is 11. That is Montana.

And how could you have been expected to know, honyocker, that even a "normal" 15-inch rainfall would have given you no guarantee of success, for "normal" means nothing in the arid high plains? It is not the "normal" (which, anyway, can only be determined by study of precipitation over a score of years) but the frequency and extent of *variation from the normal* which indicates the crop potentialities of the soil. On the dry Montana prairie the "normal" is always so close to the minimum for crop production that any variation extended in degree or in time must mean failure.

You could not know; but Jim Hill didn't know either. . . . Though had he listened to

the old-timers and the experts, he could have guessed. It was fifteen years, however, before a Montana scientist, after thorough study of the state's young weather records, was able to report:

> From the crop standpoint (as differentiated from the meteorological) the term drought must include not only lack of rainfall, but a consideration of temperature, relative humidity, winds, soil, moisture content, weather and precipitation preceding the rainless period, and the stage of the plant's growth. A year of abundant rainfall may be followed by one of great deficiency, or the reverse, and with no apparent order. All such plans (agricultural programs) should be developed in the light of the erratic nature of the rainfall, and the number of years with the different extremes should be known.

And what would you know, honyocker, of humidity? It was fifteen years before this admission came: "During the major growing season the relative humidity (ratio of actual moisture in the air to the total amount it could hold) in this region is low. Extremes as low as 4 per cent have been recorded."

You did not know these things, honyocker, and so you were coming. On one day—May 3, 1913—one Great Northern railroad conductor took up 503 railroad tickets from you folks who were bound for Montana!

The origin of your name, "honyocker," is obscure. In Minnesota, the Dakotas, Canada, Slav immigrants were "hunyaks." There were Slavs among you, though most of you were native-born, hailing from middle western states. Your advance guard was greeted with hostility in Montana, and it may be that the contemptuous term "hunyak" had been expanded by custom to cover all "foreigners" or outlanders. The Montana cowboy's original term for the tenderfoot arrival was "pilgrim"; but that was an honorable, if slightly derisive word, and too good for the likes of you!

The honyockers came in tourist sleepers which reeked with the greasy odor of heavy food cooking. These cars were equipped with stoves upon which the wives took turns preparing the family's meals.

They came in model T Fords—and model T Fords, with their high, slim wheels, are still good cars for a muddy farm road. They came in rattling little Maxwells, and broke their axles on rutted trails.

And they came on immigrant trains. The honyocker rented a freight car (St. Paul to eastern Montana, $50) and in it he was permitted to place "all second hand articles such as household goods, machinery, agricultural implements, vehicles, wagons, tools, etc.," and the following: "Fifty bushels of grain, a sufficient amount of feed grain for animals in transit, 2,500 feet of lumber, 500 fence posts, a small portable house, trees and shrubbery, small stock including hogs and sheep not to exceed 20 head, or horses, mules and cattle not to exceed 10 head," or equivalent numbers of both. Some of the immigrant cars were a bit crowded.

When a car contained livestock the owner could ride in it free, to care for his animals. Frequently his son was smuggled into the car to help his Dad with the stock—and to save payment of another fare. Occasionally other wanderers sneaked in, too—ambitious adventurers looking for homes in the west, or just plain bums. When trainmen spotted these extra passengers at division points, the farmer who had engaged the car was called upon to pay their passage. If he refused, the stowaways were thrown off the train. There were instances, however, when the glib-tongued vagrant had become so popular with his host that the latter paid enough out of his meager store of cash to retain his new friend's company.

The trip from St. Paul to Malta, Montana, in an immigrant car took from Sunday night to Thursday morning. Then the freight car door was rolled back and the honyocker climbed stiffly out—into a den of wolves.

"Almost every man, woman and child," wrote a pioneer Montanan of the scene when the immigrant trains came in, "has become obsessed with a wish to help locate the 'scissorbills' and secure a little of the money they were bringing into the country—get it while they could, as too many of them had no hope that these people would succeed in making a permanent home for themselves."

The land was free to the homesteader (save for his nominal filing fee) but first he had to find it. Standing bewildered in the railroad yard, back to his loaded car, he gazed across thousands of acres of grassland and wondered what to do next. He was not long left in doubt, for here came the locators. Some were Montanans, but many came in from "outside" with the homesteaders.

Locating homesteads was just about the juiciest racket Montana ever had. It got so good that before the vein had run out locators were traveling east on the cushions to round up their own suckers and bring them to the promised land, thus making sure that no other locator would get to them first in that confused moment when the Great Northern train slid to a stop in front of a prairie depot.

The locator's standard fee for finding the homesteader his place and helping him to file upon it was $20. Not infrequently, however, the fee was $50—if the honyocker had it, if competition were not too tough, and if the prospective settler seemed to be in enough of a hurry. The $20 fee perhaps would not have been excessive had each honyocker been escorted singly about the country until a site could be found for his home. . . . But the locators took several in their democrat wagons on a single trip. Frequently the men arriving on one immigrant train were from the same, or neighboring, districts "back east"; usually they were eager to locate near each other. The fortunate locator who got to them first could take the whole bunch and collect $20 from each. During the peak of the boom, some locators carted five to ten newcomers in a day's trip over the prairie. In a few months they were rich.

Sometimes they earned their money; sometimes their clients were fussy. And there were honest locators. There was one who tried earnestly to talk a woman settler out of the tract she had chosen: it contained a lake and she wanted her home to front a lake. The locator's arguments (he could not bring himself, however, to tell the whole truth) proving fruitless, he bore the woman back to town to file on the place and gather her belongings. When she returned to her farm a day or so later, her "lake," one of the type frequently formed by "flash floods" in the spring, was gone—dried up. That was twenty-six years ago; the woman is still there, but her lake has never come back.

This first well-paid service did not end the locator's relationship with the homesteader. Most of the locators were real estate men or had ranches of their own. A few were ex-stockmen, bitter and cynical, hating the newcomers and convinced they were doomed, getting their revenge in advance. Most of them had land to sell; and the homesteaders often were infected on their first day in Montana with the germ of greed for land which later was to step up the pace of disaster.

Of course, the honyocker was told, his homestead was all right, the soil and weather were perfect, and he would make a good living; but to *get rich*—then he would need more land.

It was a clever argument, so good that some of the locators believed it themselves. And it did more to wreck the state than even the initial homestead rush had done. . . . It held out hope to those for whom there was none now, and never would be; it extended the life of a futile experiment entailing criminally wasteful exploitation of unfit soil, and it created a credit boom based upon inflated crop values which was to end in financial collapse.

The years 1910-18 were "good" years on the northern plains. It rained, and the war sent wheat to above $2 a bushel. The price doubled between 1914 and 1918, and in that final year of war Montana expected the greatest wheat crop in its history—50,000,000 bushels. City men, said the newspapers in May, were going to be needed to help with the harvest. They were not needed, for drought brought crop failure that fall, and the next, and the next; but in the meantime the honyocker, egged on by virtually every public and private influence, had bought more land, more machinery. From 1910 to 1920 the number of farms more than doubled, the crop land acreage was trebled. The inflation in land "values" was even more startling:

from less than $250,000,000 in 1910 to nearly $700,000,000 in 1920.

Montana newspapers in May of the disastrous year 1918 carried advertisements signed by Alfred Atkinson, United States food administrator for the state, which said: "The government of the United States, as well as its war associates, is in great need of wheat. Every available pound is needed if the German flood is to be stemmed." Newspapers in dryland towns began calling upon the honyockers to increase their purchases of mechanized equipment. (The machinery companies were good advertisers throughout this period.) Montana had sent its young men to war—too many of them, as we shall see later—and farm labor scarcity was becoming serious. Machinery might be the answer, the homesteader thought. True, its cost was high—even the newspapers admitted it; but on the other hand wheat had doubled in value in four years. There were some who said that in 1920 it would bring $4 a bushel. With machinery the farmer could handle more land, grow more wheat, stop the Germans, and grow rich.

The homesteaders began to buy the new combine harvester-thresher, paying $1,500 to $2,000 or more for it. They bought tractors and Ford trucks. From 15 men and 14 horses for harvesting and threshing 25 acres with the header system, they reduced the labor and power factors to 2 men, no horses, a tractor-drawn combine and 2 trucks. . . . But there was nothing to harvest.

During the good years it had been possible for some homesteaders to pay off their initial indebtedness and find themselves square with the world after one or two years, perhaps even make a few hundred dollars. Now, even as bad year followed incredibly upon bad year, their credit was still good. They were improving their farming practices; surely, in the long run, it must rain.

Their credit was good, too, for land. If, in those few good years, they were able to make money on 320 or 640 acres, simple arithmetic (too simple) indicated that they could double it on 640 or 1,000. But most of the homestead land had been taken up, or that which was still available was too distant from the homesteader's place to make it practicable. There was plenty of land to be bought, and according to middle western standards it was still cheap. The locator who had helped the honyocker select his farm had some land for sale; he had quoted a price of $5 an acre.

But that had been some years ago, the locator now explained. The price had gone up and 160 acres were now worth $1,000. He urged the farmer to make up his mind, for values were rising rapidly. Before the boom collapsed there would be instances when 160 acres of virtually worthless land would sell for $4,000.

Nevertheless, $1,000 was a lot of money, and the honyocker went home to think it over.

That night the banker came. The honyocker had met him before, several times. This same banker sent his clerk to copy the names of homesteaders as they were posted at the land office; on follow-up visits he offered the facilities of his institution for loans to purchase machinery or land. He kept in touch with the real estate men, too; and tonight he found the honyocker in receptive mood. A thousand dollars? It was chicken feed in Montana!

The banker had plenty of money. Eastern capital was coming into the state now; the banker paid 6 per cent for it, charged 10. With wheat at $2 a bushel, he told the homesteader, and with some of the land producing 50 bushels to the acre (when it produced at all) how could he lose, if he had any crop? The deal was closed.

But that year the homesteader's crop was insufficient to pay the cost of harvesting. . . .

Well, he hadn't had enough land. His neighbor had a crop; not very good, but still a crop. If you had land enough you were sure to get crop on some of it; and he had always suspected that the first 320 had been poor soil. Now he had 480, but a man needed 640 in this country. . . . He went back to see locator and banker. Sure, his credit was still good!

Strange tales have come down in Montana

from the days of the land boom which accompanied the homestead rush.

There was the rancher who entertained all the young, single women of a whole town—teachers, stenographers, salesgirls—at dinner and a dance on his place. Before they left he had the signature of each on a homestead claim.

There were other ranchers who took up homesteads in the names of their cowpunchers, built shacks for them, and had them live there to establish residence. When the punchers had proved up, they were to turn the places over to the rancher and receive their reward—$100 each; but frequently these well-laid plans went awry. The cowpoke might have caught the fever himself, and then he would announce calmly that he was staying on his place; in that case the boss sometimes sent other cowpunchers to make things uncomfortable for the treacherous nester. Or the cowhand might calmly repudiate his earlier, verbal agreement and demand $1,000 or more. Then the boss would curse, but sometimes he would pay: the homestead frequently was so situated that the rancher had to have it to preserve his range.

The epic double-cross of the Montana homestead era involved a banker and his loving son. The banker had lent $1,400 on a homestead which had not yet been proved up—a fantastic piece of financial recklessness, as the borrower had as yet no equity in the land he offered for security. Discovering that the debtor was about to abandon the place, the banker secured a "relinquishment" in his son's name and put him on the land to serve out the residence requirement, prove up, and enable the father to sell the place and get his money back. The son stayed a few weeks; someone then appeared and offered him $500 to relinquish the homestead. He took the $500 and skipped the country.

Few of the homesteaders were smart enough to sell when land and crop values were up. The immigrants were still coming, still clamoring for farms. United States commissioners, in towns which had no land offices, received entries for a fee of $2, and at the rate of a hundred a day soon became tolerably prosperous. Homestead land gone, the "scissorbills" bought from land companies and ranchers. The big cattle and sheep spreads were being broken up. "We feel [one brochure asserted] that there is not a place offered by the Montana Ranches Co. which will not pay at least 10 per cent interest yearly on the investment if properly handled. Most of our properties are priced so that they should yield from 20 to 25 per cent as an operating return, and in addition to these returns is bound to be an enormous increase in value with the great influx of immigration that is now being brought to this state. . . ."

Thus Montana pulled land values up by their bootstraps. "There is bound to be an enormous increase in value. . . ." The refrain echoed in the land dealers' circulars, in the press, in the railroads' advertising, especially in the railroads' advertising. There was no audible questioning of the state's ability to support this influx; it was taken for granted that where there were so many people the formula for their support would develop automatically. It was a naïve theory of economic perpetual motion which had caused trouble for older empires than this.

The homesteaders, however, were convinced. They responded eagerly to the railroads' request for testimonial letters. H. W. Lebeck wrote the Great Northern in 1912 that he had been a store clerk six years before, in Iowa, that now his land in Montana was worth $100 an acre "due to the increase in value of real estate, also the prospects of the Great Northern building through this section." Ola L. Grice of Dawson County started with $500; he wrote that he wouldn't take $5,000 for his place, "with the railroad coming so close to me." William C. Moores, also of that county, had only 88 acres under cultivation, but "I consider my place worth $8,000; land is increasing in value with the prospects of the new railroad."

The railroad never got to their town; a spur did, however, finally reach a town fifteen miles from them. From 1920 to 1930 their county lost 7 per cent of its population; in the succeeding ten years it lost another 15 per cent. In 1939, two hundred of its farm

families—20 per cent of the total—were "stranded or migratory," destitute and unable to make a living. The Montana planning board, surveying rehabilitation possibilities, found that even with expensive irrigation development only about half of these families could subsist in that county. The rest, said the planning board, are "surplus."

And what of the Lebecks, the Grices, and the Moores—those hopeful Dawson County Joads of three decades ago?

Some of their neighbors are included in that "surplus"; of these particular individuals, however, there remains no trace. The Grices stuck it out until a few years ago, then moved away; friends reported they had gone back to the Ozarks. Moores, who valued his dry-land farm of 88 cultivated acres at $8,000, abandoned it in the cropless '20's and moved to California. Good farm land, better than his, today is worth in that district about $10 an acre—a little more than a tenth of what Moores thought his place was worth.

Last Page Out of Homer[1]

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

IT WAS THE brightest and the bluest day of the blue-and-golden October of 1874, October 27. The sun was as clear as a ball of solid gold in a sky without a cloud. The last terrific yellow flames of Fall were burning among the birches, and the maples were still burning red in the swamps.

The old Twelve-Rod Road out of Brunswick toward Maquoit was afire. Smoke went up from it from the town's end and down to where it forked to the left and went on to Middle Bays. It smoked along the high elms with the Pennell Brothers' houses behind them. It smoked right down to the dark blue bay at the shipyard.

It wasn't a common fire, though. It was the Fall dust being churned up in the sunlight by hundred of carriages. Everybody in town who owned or could borrow a buggy, a buckboard, a carryall, or even a gig, was there. And lots who couldn't on foot. Everybody who was anybody was on the road. And some who weren't. There were horses that looked as if they had staggered out of the ark and buggies built before the Flood. There were horses that were all nervousness and breeding so exquisite that it hurt them like horseflies and they couldn't keep still. There were new buckboards which put people's eyes out with their blazing on their bright new black-and-gold, black-and-red wheels in the sun. There were old ladies with snowy hair and bonnets no bigger than a teacup with strings that tied under the chin, ladies so delicate that the breeze might break them into shining splinters any minute. There were huge fathers of families, huge as only the men in our fathers' day could grow, wide in the beam, with moustaches that swept like a mass of golden wire away back to their ears, half buried in spite of their bigness under a baker's dozen of children in striped stockings, velvet dresses, or pants with bursting seams and pearl buttons at the knee. There were big bugs and little bugs, and all the bugs in between. There were girls like bouquets of flowers tied up with flying ribbons. Boys as dangerous as dynamite, sitting in farmers' express wagons and jolting along with their legs hanging down over the tailboard. They had innocent eyes of angels, but they might go off any minute and strew destruction over the earth. There were farmers' wives who had put all the nice things they had in the house on their backs. The livery stables of Brunswick and Topsham stood empty as last year's crows' nests. Every horse was hired for the day. People had

[1] From Robert P. Tristram Coffin: *Captain Abby and Captain John* Copyright 1939 by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

come by the steam cars from Portland and Bath. They had even come from Boston.

A page in the history of Brunswick was about to be turned, and all the town was going down to Middle Bays to see it go over.

At the end of the road, the carriages were turning into the field which swept up to the headland. Charles Pennell's yard was crowded, and Ben's. The shore was alive with people.

Up in the house of Charles the Great, tables were spread and waiting. Tables were spread out on the lawns, too, and in under the apple trees. The white linen cloths were held down by round pebbles to keep them from ruffling in the wind. Glass pitchers were there, green with lemonade and red with raspberry shrub. Platters of cold tongue and beef and chicken breasts. Caraway cookies and cinnamon cookies and pumpkin pies big as the Fall sun, apple pies, mince. Turkey meat and cranberry sauce around it. Tarts heaped with red jelly. Swarms of late bees burned in the sun over dishes of strawberry jam. The feast was ready.

And over the heads of stout fathers sitting on the dry grass and being careful of the seats of their pants and boys and girls careless of theirs, in the midst of them all, the largest ship ever built in the town of Brunswick lay quiet above the billows of Queen Anne's lace. Twenty-four feet high, 218 feet of curved beauty, 1433 tons of solid and honest Maine oak. The ship *Benjamin Sewall,* built by the Pennell Brothers, waiting the word to go out on the Atlantic and around the world! She was the last word in loveliness and strength, "the finest ship ever launched," all finished in her cabins with solid mahogany. She was alive with pennons from her noble stem under Charles the Great's parlor windows to her stern over the thatch and dead sea lavender of Middle Bay. It was the peak in the history of the Pennells and of Middle Bays. It was a peak in the life story of Brunswick.

It was close to twelve o'clock. It was tip-top high-water mark of the highest-run neap tide of the year. And even so, the bay had been dredged out for the ship's coming. The air ran with excitement. A thousand voices were murmuring under the hill. All eyes were on the ship. It was the moment of a lifetime.

There was a knot of people high overhead on the ship's topgallant forecastle, under a cloud of flags. Benjamin Sewall himself was there, the business man from Boston for whom the ship was named. He was eighty years old, but his eyes were like those of a boy who has skipped school, or is at least running away to sea. The President of Bowdoin College was there, General Joshua L. Chamberlain, who kept the Stars and Bars off Little Round Top and so off the Capitol at Washington, that bloody Second Day at Gettysburg. Reverend Professor John S. Sewall of Bowdoin was there. The Honorable Charles J. Gilman, head of the Republican party and civic righteousness at Brunswick.

And three other people stood on top of the ship. On top of their world. On top of the highest moment in their life together, Captain John D. Pennell, Abby, and the boy, Arthur, born in the Pacific, up to his father's shoulder now. And maybe another boy, two years taller by measure of earthly years, whom nobody but Abby could see, with the face of an angel, the boy who had been cradled at a mainmast and who had sailed there around half the globe and back. Abby and John were standing on their ship, the ship John had designed, the ship they had dreamed of all their life together.

But the third boy in the family was down in the crowd under the lofty prow, among the common run of cousins and uncles, and he was crying as if his heart would break. Freddie could see his mother and father and brother up there on the sky, and he thought they were going to go away and leave him for good with the thousand strangers around him. He sobbed and sobbed. He was only four years old. His cheeks were rivers of tears. And up in Charles the Great's apple tree, the young daughter of Charles the Great, Helen Pennell, was crying bitterly behind the bandage over her eyes that was going to keep her from seeing what would have made her weep to see anyway. Helen had sore eyes, and she had to be in darkness

this greatest day in the life of the Pennell family!

Helen and Freddie, as Sancho to her blindness, had raided the bathtub up in Helen's house filled with sickel pears put there against the coming feast. They had filled their blouses with the fruit. Helen had eaten many of them, but her clothes were still bulged out with pears here and there. But the raid and that feast had been half an hour ago. Her heart was breaking now, she knew. No one had noticed her and Freddie in their raid, because everybody was all excitement over the preparations. The raid had been too easy a one. Helen's heart was a long ways from it now. She was weeping internally, she felt, though her eyes were scalding under the bandage. Helen leaned on the tree trunk for comfort. She felt a pear give way. It was miserable.

All the Pennell brothers who were left were there under the ship's nose, with their wives and children. Widow Pennell with Master James's son, Carroll, thirteen years old and gorgeous in a new blue sailor suit with a real sailor cap and tie. James Henry was missing. But perhaps his father was there for one moment, on the spot where he had fallen to his death nine years before. Old Jacob was there. And Robert and Joseph. But Job of the unhandsome hare lip and the handsome child and Ben and old Deborah were all up under their marble stones a mile away, and could not come.

General Chamberlain was saying something high up on the sky. Too high to hear. And people were talking. The General's long white hair and moustache flowed out back from his face in the light breeze and burned with ineffable brightness in the sun. Then Professor Sewall raised his two hands against the blue, and bowed his head. A hush came over the crowd. The thousand heads there bowed, too. The prayer floated out half-heard and was lost in the wind and sunlight. Something about God's holding the ocean and ships in the hollow of his hand. In the hush people could hear the seagulls calling out over the bay clearer than the words of the prayer.

The preacher's head went back. The mauls and hammers began. The hard, seasoned supporting beams rang like bells in their fibres. The whoa-haish! the gee-haw! of the bearded men goading their oxen and dragging away the fallen beams. Cries of sweaty men. The sound swept up like a sudden gale. The people drew back in their best clothes from the dust and the sounds. Higher and faster the sounds crowded, quickening and quickening up to a terrific crescendo. And then they stopped as if they had been cut off by scissors in the air. All the blows on metal and wood stopped at once. The sudden silence hurt the ears. An instant of utter stillness. Every man drew in his breath. It was like something at the very core of the process of being a man and creating man's kind. Then there was a last small and inadequate-seeming blow. Like a great bowstring, maybe, snapping somewhere out beyond the headland to the south.

"There she goes!"

No one believed it for a moment. The ship seemed as still and dead as ever. But there was something different. And then the ship came slowly to life, as a planet might come to life, gathered her strength upon her, gathered speed, went on her way, lonely, independent, went on her way from out of the people's midst. Down the ways and into the high water. Two long and lovely ripples curled up each side, turning to green gold in the sunlight. John and Abby and their son rode backward into the bay, a handsome family, their faces to their brothers and the people on the shore, their faces turned up and full of sun.

But their other boy, the four-year-old, broke from his aunts and ran after them, ran after the ship that was taking his parents away. He held up his hands and sobbed deep as they went, as a man might, wounded deep. He cried to them to stop, to wait for him. But the ship went away. He saw it glide half the width of the world away on the water. He fell on his face in the grass. No one heard his sobs any more. And the little girl up in the apple tree felt the tears hot on her bandage. The *Benjamin Sewall* stood up suddenly

tall and comely on the bay, even and straight, as she would stand up till the day she got her death.

It was finished.

The crowd gave three cheers. Everybody threw up his hat. Young Master Carroll Pennell seized his sailor hat to throw it into the air with the rest, with the hundreds of others there. But he had forgotten the elastic under his chin. The hat snapped back upon him and covered his face and eyes. He swore the first oath of his life. "God damn the thing!" His mother did not hear him. Nobody heard him. Nobody heard young Freddie Pennell crying on his face where the ship had been. Everybody was cheering, cheering. The only sound was joy.

Nobody could hear the sound of waves rolling in upon rocky Formosa where this ship would break her heart and leave her ribs to bleach among the wicked rocks in the sun. It was too far to hear those waves, for the thickness of the world was between them and the people. Nobody heard an even lower sound, something like a whisper about her captain's lying cold and still in far-away Rio de Janeiro. And not one there heard the whisper, as low as the faint Fall wind that day, that this, the loveliest Pennell ship and the greatest, was the last. The line had stretched out for a century. But this was the last ship of them all.

The page of history had turned over. The people of Brunswick had seen a sight that would be like a page out of Homer in a handful of years.

9

Opinion and Points of View

At Oxford University in the fall of 1810, two freshmen got into an argument over the relative merits of German and Italian literature. For some time they continued to make decided and sweeping assertions. Suddenly these two young men—Percy Bysshe Shelley and Thomas Jefferson Hogg—agreed it was sensible to drop the discussion entirely. For both confessed that they knew next to nothing about either literature and had not thought much about what they did know. Years later, Hogg remarked: "It is upon such scanty data that young men reason; upon such slender materials do they build up their opinions." One doubts whether this tendency is confined to young people. Moreover, these two men were unusual in being wise enough to stop. As altogether too few do, they had seen that opinion without sufficient knowledge and without satisfactory contemplation has little value beyond revealing one's own shortcomings.

But how much knowledge and how much thought are needed before one's opinion will be worth listening to or reading? An examination of writings of this sort will shortly convince us there is no sure yardstick and that it is dangerous to employ a merely quantitative judgment. Still, when a man or woman has been for years a devoted student of a subject, a worker in a special area, a leader in a particular profession, we have a greater initial curiosity and respect for what he will say. If we know anything at all of William Allen White, the

title "Good Newspapers and Bad" will doubly interest us because his name is attached to it. Here is a man, we say, who spent years with newspapers, who owned and edited a famous one—he must have had to do much thinking about the good and bad in newspapers over a long period of time. Surely, then, whatever the point of view from which he distinguishes between "good" and "bad," this will be the voice of long experience and contemplation. With much the same attitude we begin a piece about some aspect of education by a man long in the field, like Howard Mumford Jones.

Of course, we may know nothing at all about our writer. There is always the question whether it is good or bad to have such knowledge before we start to read. Actually it usually takes but a few sentences to tell us whether or not this is the voice of experience.

One thing is sure, the *amount* of thinking that has preceded the writing and the *quality* of the outcome, are matters to decide on finally only when we have read an essay through. Even then, it will be a matter of personal judgment. One great aid in making such judgments is Randolph Bourne's "What Is Opinion?" In the estimate of quality one should always consider the *scope* of the point of view. Do special knowledge and long concentration on particular occupations sometimes breed narrowness and not the comprehensive mind? One should always be mindful of such a possibility. From *our* point of view, as editors, three authors represented here deserve particular attention from this angle. One is Edward J. Flynn. As one of the most experienced and successful political bosses in the United States, he should know what he is talking about and must have had to do considerable thinking about the problems involved. From the point of view of the boss he gives his opinion in "Bosses and Machines." Again, Eleanor Wembridge worked for years with morons before expressing an opinion about them, in fact, her book is entitled *Life Among the Lowbrows.* This is the point of view of the social worker—is it more? Subtlest of all is C. S. Lewis's examination of "What Christians Believe." Is it mere explanation, or a defense by a devoted Christian, or an attack on Christian narrowness and shortcomings? Is it—whatever its point of view—rigid, dogmatic, and inflexible, and so out of the pale of Randolph Bourne's approval?

There is another aspect to Bourne's definition. Opinion must be held provisionally until modified by further knowledge and experience. But it must really be *held;* it must be not flabby, but firm. It has to be firm, says Bourne, to have any quality at all. In "Who is Loyal to America" Henry Steele Commager exhibits this commendable firmness. Commager's special knowledge of the United States and his point of view as historian have affected his approach and given variety to his illustrations. He has had certain phenomena of our time on his mind for a long while. In addition to these observations, we can perceive that Professor Commager's mind and emotions are determined at the time of writing; he believes that his logic is sound and his emotions well-considered. If no "opinion" has merit without this resolution, how imperative is the demand when dealing with the so-called "controversial"!

Analysis of any good expression of opinion takes us back quickly to first principles, to the writer's active philosophy. A few words of commentary may reveal not only the direction of a whole life, but the very culture of which it is an expression. In the history of thinking many plans for education have been developed and many have been put into effect. To learn how men have wished to "educate" the young and guide the newer generations is one of the

best ways of understanding these men—even to seeing deeply into them and their times. So with Thomas Jefferson's plan for the good American education; it is not something casual, done in passing and superficial. Here Jefferson reveals a point of view toward life as another might disclose his point of view through a plan for housing or some ideas about recreation.

The revelation may come through reporting. At first glance Rebecca West's "The Insane Root" might seem wholly unlike the plan of Jefferson. But in one respect it is closely related: it too expresses a whole culture. Reporting is there, and pertinent biography. In addition this is the expression of profound disturbance in the writer; it begins with the words "insane root" and continues throughout. It is a tribute to the style of Rebecca West that she writes so well despite the agitation. For it is a philosophy that is shaken, an idea of what is credible and predictable and sane. Here in the words and deeds of John Amery, the traitor, the only pattern is fearful and "insane," for that is the only point of view one can take and remain balanced himself. This is hardly the confident forward-looking trust of Jefferson, but both express the point of view of much more than their private selves.

This group of authors all share one abiding faith—that as responsible and thinking people they not only have the right to state their views but are happy in so doing. It is significant that of them all only Thomas Paine had difficulties in getting his opinions made public. Unlike Galileo, no one of them here claims to make a scientific utterance, no one has anything to *prove*. But at the time they speak, mostly out of experience in fact and thinking, they would say easily and well what they vigorously believe to be stupid or wise, good or not good, responsible or irresponsible, in a society of free and active minds. It is (to offer another opinion of our own) good to be able to have a section of non-fiction prose entitled "Opinion and Points of View." This is part of the heritage of a free society.

What Is Opinion?[1]

RANDOLPH BOURNE

A JOURNAL OF OPINION has always to face the attack of the practical man that it is a mere vehicle for dilettantism, which wastes in expressing sentiments the energy which should go to the presentation of sober fact and sound data. There is far too much opinion at large in the world already, he thinks. What he wants is not more opinion, but a guide out of the fog bank into some clear light.

Such a practical man flatters too highly most of that comment which passes for opinion in the journals of the day. Most current reactions to the war, have been, for example, not opinion at all, but mere batteries of guns in an emotional warfare. In all the discussion little emerges that is not articulate emotion or articulate group interest. This variedly articulate anger, disgust, prejudice, moral reaction, has little more right to be termed opinion than the start one gives when one meets a bear. It is instinctive response clothed with words.

Our molders of opinion—our preachers and politicians and editors and publicists—are not speaking in order so much to convince us as to make us act or vote or feel with them.

[1] From *The New Republic*, September, 1915, and used with the permission of the editors.

Their words are chains of phrases strung together almost undesignedly with a view to pulling us to the cause or party or idea they are supporting. It is a curious delusion that words express thought. The object of most words is to short-circuit thought. Phrases like democracy, liberty, militarism, the principles of justice and humanity, are not primarily meanings at all. They are epithets hurled at us to arouse some desired resentment, or they are spotlights guaranteed to create certain warm emotional glows of assent in the mind which receives them. It is the reaction they touch off that makes them significant, not their meaning. Words are such deadly things not because they mean something. but because they get wrapped up with our emotion and pull it out with them when they are seized. In support of the articulate emotion there may be any number of highly rational arguments. But it is not the arguments which have come first. It is the antagonism or the glow of approval, while the evidence has grown almost vegetatively around the emotion. The world is always willing to be fooled in this way. It is always willing to take the ideas at their face value, instead of going straight to the emotional core and discovering the animus that directed the collection of the ideas. The constant danger to the mind that would be intellectual, that would "have opinions," is that it is willing to identify itself or indolently let itself be identified with groups that are not expressing opinion at all, but only articulating their emotion.

Genuine opinion is neither cold, logical judgment nor irrational feeling. It is scientific hypothesis, to be tested and revised as experience widens. Opinion is a view of a situation based on grounds short of proof. In a valid opinion they must be *just* short of proof. Good opinion is not spasmodic. The mind must have made a very wide sweep, made the complete circuit of the compass. It must first have hunted down the predisposing prejudice and neutralized it, and then bent itself to discovering all the factors that converge upon the situation. A good opinion places the event or person or idea it is judging firmly in a scheme of things. You get its position in a spreading field as well as in a historical chain.

But good opinion is not flabby and uncertain. It is not a "much to be said on both sides." It is a provisional conviction to be held as a conviction until new light alters it. It is an interpretation with a definite slant and bias. But it presses hotly for proof. It strains constantly towards the accuracy of truth. Good opinion, although firm, is the direct opposite of dogma. Dogma is hard and unyielding, a sort of petrified emotion. It is constantly masquerading as proof, as genuine opinion never does. You do not revise dogmas. You smash them. But opinion is flexible and gracious. It does not object to examining itself, to publishing the source of its interpretations. It takes you freely behind the scenes. It is not afraid to show you the foundations of the categories and terms in which it is expressed. It will let the bony framework of its presuppositions stand out rather boldly at times. It invites criticism. It has the scientist's disinterestedness in its own conviction. What it wants is to understand, to get the thing it is judging rightly placed, to grasp its true meaning in the world.

Opinion, however, aims not at a mere static comprehension. It does not merely survey the field with serene Olympian gaze. It is a force, and the only force that can be relied upon in the long run to fortify the will and clear the vision. Conviction, gripped after the widest possible survey of the field, is what we must act upon if we are to effect those social changes which most of us desire. The world has generally preferred to act from logical consistency or from the high elation of feeling rather than upon daring and clear-sighted experiment. The idea of a social and political opinion which, free from moral prejudice, strains towards scientific proof, as the hypotheses of the physicist strain towards physical laws, is still very new, but it is already playing havoc with the old crusted folkways.

If such opinion is to be this force of the future, there cannot be too much of its guiding thread. Yet it constantly becomes not easier but harder to form valid opinions. We

are stunned by the volume of what there is to know in the human world. We are overwhelmed by the mass of sociological data, and brought to despair even more by the great gaps which must be filled. We have every day set before us infinitely more than we can possibly digest. We run the constant risk of missing completely the relevant and the important. Opinion never had a better chance of being based on substrata of quite meaningless facts. The result is often an excessive caution among those whose business it is to know. The universities remain esoteric through the refusal of those who have the wide survey to commit themselves. Those who have the "grounds just short of proof" will not form opinions. Those who will loosely express their opinions have not the grounds. This treason of the intellectual class has neutralized the expected effects of public education. Discussion and universal reading have not really made popular opinion any more intelligent or reliable. They have merely made great masses emotionally articulate, rendered prejudice more vociferous and varied. The need for interpreters, for resolute expressers of opinion, becomes therefore more urgent. Even if real opinion is a Utopian ideal, and no mind can ever make the wide survey and go through the stringent processes necessary to form it, the brave effort must always be made. Its best will not be valueless. To work at breaking up the cake of intellectual custom, at setting the new terms and values that current society needs, at judging events in the light of the larger conceptions of science and the most fruitful social tendencies, will be not to remain entirely futile in the modern world. Quixotic as the enterprise may seem, it is the formation of opinion and not dusty scholarship and solemn cant that will enlist the good will and best endeavors of those who aim to think worthily.

What Christians Believe[1]

C. S. LEWIS

I

I HAVE BEEN ASKED to tell you what Christians believe, and I am going to begin by telling you one thing that Christians don't need to believe. If you are a Christian you don't have to believe that all the other religions are simply wrong all through. If you are an atheist you do have to believe that the main point in all the religions of the whole world is simply one huge mistake. If you are a Christian, you are free to think that all these religions, even the queerest ones, contain at least some hint of the truth. When I was an atheist I had to try to persuade myself that the whole human race were pretty good fools until about one hundred years ago; when I became a Christian I was able to take a more liberal view. But, of course, being a Christian does mean thinking that where Christianity differs from other religions, Christianity is right and they are wrong. Like in arithmetic—there's only one right answer to a sum, and all other answers are wrong: but some of the wrong answers are much nearer being right than others.

The first big division of humanity is into the majority, who believe in some kind of God or gods, and the minority who don't. On this point, Christianity lines up with the majority—lines up with ancient Greeks and Romans, modern savages, Stoics, Platonists, Hindoos, Mohammedans, etc., against the modern Western European materialist. There are all sorts of different reasons for believing in God, and here I'll mention only one. It is this. Supposing there was no intelligence behind the universe, no creative mind. In that case nobody designed my brain for the purpose of thinking. It is merely that when the

[1] From *The Case for Christianity* by C. S. Lewis. Used with permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers in the United States. Circulated in Canada by permission of Geoffrey Bles, Ltd.

atoms inside my skull happen for physical or chemical reasons to arrange themselves in a certain way, this gives me, as a by-product, the sensation I call thought. But if so, how can I trust my own thinking to be true? It's like upsetting a milk-jug and hoping that the way the splash arranges itself will give you a map of London. But if I can't trust my own thinking, of course I can't trust the arguments leading to atheism, and therefore have no reason to be an atheist, or anything else. Unless I believe in God, I can't believe in thought: so I can never use thought to disbelieve in God.

Now I go on to the next big division. People who all believe in God can be divided according to the sort of God they believe in. There are two very different ideas on this subject. One of them is the idea that He is beyond good and evil. *We* call one thing good and another thing bad. But according to some people that's merely our human point of view. These people would say that the wiser you become the less you'd want to call anything good or bad, and the more clearly you'd see that everything is good in one way and bad in another, and that nothing could have been different. Consequently, these people think that long before you got anywhere near the divine point of view the distinction would have disappeared altogether. We call a cancer bad, they'd say, because it kills a man; but you might just as well call a successful surgeon bad because he kills a cancer. It all depends on the point of view. The other and opposite idea is that God is quite definitely "good" or "righteous," a God who takes sides, who loves love and hates hatred, who wants us to behave in one way and not in another. The first of these views—the one that thinks God beyond good and evil—is called Pantheism. It was held by the great Prussian philosopher Hegel and, as far as I can understand them, by the Hindoos. The other view is held by Jews, Mohammedans, and Christians.

And with this big difference between Pantheism and the Christian idea of God, there usually goes another. Pantheists usually believe that God, so to speak, animates the universe as you animate your body: that the universe almost *is* God, so that if it didn't exist He wouldn't exist either, and anything you find in the universe is a part of God. The Christian idea is quite different. They think God *made* the universe—like a man making a picture or composing a tune. A painter isn't a picture, and he doesn't die if his picture is destroyed. You may say, "He's put a lot of himself into it," but that only means that all its beauty and interest have come out of his head. His skill isn't in the picture in the same way that it's in his head, or even in his hands. I expect you see how this difference between Pantheists and Christians hangs together with the other one. If you don't take the distinction between good and bad very seriously, then it's easy to say that anything you find in this world is a part of God. But, of course, if you think some things really bad, and God really good, then you can't talk like that. You must believe that God is separate from the world and that some of the things we see in it are contrary to His will. Confronted with a cancer or a slum the Pantheist can say, "If you could only see it from the divine point of view, you would realise that this also is God." The Christian replies, "Don't talk damned nonsense."[2] For Christianity is a fighting religion. It thinks God made the world—that space and time, heat and cold, and all the colours and tastes, and all the animals and vegetables, are things that God "made up out of His head" as a man makes up a story. But it also thinks that a great many things have gone wrong with the world that God made and that God insists, and insists very loudly, on our putting them right again.

And, of course, that raises a very big question. If a good God made the world why has it gone wrong? And for many years I simply wouldn't listen to the Christian answers to this question, because I kept on feeling "whatever you say, and however clever your arguments are, isn't it much simpler and easier to say that the world was

[2] One listener complained of the word *damned* as frivolous swearing. But I mean exactly what I say—nonsense that is *damned* is under God's curse, and will (apart from God's grace) lead those who believe it to eternal death.

not made by any intelligent power? Aren't all your arguments simply a complicated attempt to avoid the obvious?" But then that threw me back into those difficulties about atheism which I spoke of a moment ago. And soon I saw another difficulty.

My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of *just* and *unjust?* A man doesn't call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust? If the whole show was bad and senseless from A to Z, so to speak, why did I, who was supposed to be part of the show, find myself in such violent reaction against it? A man feels wet when he falls into water, because man isn't a water animal: a fish wouldn't feel wet. Of course I could have given up my idea of justice by saying it was nothing but a private idea of my own. But if I did that then my argument against God collapsed too—for the argument depended on saying that the world was really unjust, not that it just didn't happen to please my private fancies. Thus in the very act of trying to prove that God didn't exist—in other words, that the whole of reality was senseless—I found I was forced to assume that one part of reality—namely my idea of justice—was full of sense. Consequently atheism turns out to be too simple. If the whole universe has no meaning, we should never have found out that it has no meaning: just as if there were no light in the universe and therefore no creatures with eyes we should never know it was dark. *Dark* would be a word without meaning.

II

Very well then, atheism is too simple. And I'll tell you another view that is also too simple. It's the view I call Christianity-and-water, the view that just says there's a good God in Heaven and everything is all right—leaving out all the difficult and terrible doctrines about sin and hell and the devil, and the redemption. Both these are boys' philosophies.

It is no good asking for a simple religion. After all, real things *aren't* simple. They *look* simple, but they're not. The table I'm sitting at looks simple: but ask a scientist to tell you what it's really made of—all about the atoms and how the light waves rebound from them and hit my eye and what they do to the optic nerve and what it does to my brain—and, of course, you find that what we call "seeing a table" lands you in mysteries and complications which you can hardly get to the end of. A child, saying a child's prayer, looks simple. And if you're content to stop there, well and good. But if you're not—and the modern world usually isn't—if you want to go on and ask what's really happening—then you must be prepared for something difficult. If we ask for something more than simplicity, it's silly then to complain that the something more isn't simple. Another thing I've noticed about reality is that, besides being difficult, it's odd: it isn't neat, it isn't what you expect. I mean, when you've grasped that the earth and the other planets all go round the sun, you'd naturally expect that all the planets were made to match—all at equal distances from each other, say, or distances that regularly increased, or all the same size, or else getting bigger or smaller as you go further from the sun. In fact, you find no rhyme or reason (that we can see) about either the sizes or the distances; and some of them have one moon, one has four, one has two, some have none, and one has a ring.

Reality, in fact, is always something you couldn't have guessed. That's *one* of the reasons I believe Christianity. It's a religion you couldn't have guessed. If it offered us just the kind of universe we'd always expected, I'd feel we were making it up. But, in fact, it's not the sort of thing anyone would have made up. It has just that queer twist about it that real things have. So let's leave behind all these boys' philosophies—these over-simple answers. The problem isn't simple and the answer isn't going to be simple either.

What is the problem? A universe that contains much that is obviously bad and apparently meaningless, but containing creatures like ourselves who know that it is bad and meaningless. There are only two views

that face all the facts. One is the Christian view that this is a good world that has gone wrong, but still retains the memory of what it ought to have been. The other is the view called Dualism. Dualism means the belief that there are two equal and independent powers at the back of everything, one of them good and the other bad, and that this universe is the battlefield in which they fight out an endless war. I personally think that next to Christianity Dualism is the manliest and most sensible creed on the market. But it has a catch in it.

The two powers, or spirits, or gods—the good one and the bad one—are supposed to be quite independent. They both existed from all eternity. Neither of them made the other, neither of them has any more right than the other to call itself God. Each presumably thinks it is good and thinks the other bad. One of them likes hatred and cruelty, the other likes love and mercy, and each backs its own view. Now what do we mean when we call one of them the Good Power and the other the Bad Power? Either we're merely saying that we happen to prefer the one to the other—like preferring beer to cider—or else we're saying that, whatever *they* say about it, and whichever *we* happen to like, one of them is actually wrong, actually mistaken, in regarding itself as good. Now if we mean merely that we happen to prefer the first, then we must give up talking about good and evil at all. For good means what you ought to prefer quite regardless of what you happen to like at any given moment. If "being good" meant simply joining the side you happened to fancy, for no real reason, then good wouldn't *be* good. So we must mean that one of the two powers is actually wrong and the other actually right.

But the moment you say that, you are putting into the universe a third thing in addition to the two Powers: some law or standard or rule of good which one of the powers conforms to and the other fails to conform to. But since the two powers are judged by this standard, then this standard, or the being who made this standard, is farther back and higher up than either of them, and He will be the real God. In fact, what we meant by calling them good and bad turns out to be that one of them is in a right relation to the real ultimate God and the other in a wrong relation to Him.

The same point can be made in a different way. If Dualism is true, then the Bad Power must be a being who likes badness for its own sake. But in reality we have no experience of anyone liking badness just because it is bad. The nearest we can get to it is in cruelty. But in real life people are cruel for one of two reasons—either because they are sadists, that is, because they have a sexual perversion which makes cruelty a cause of sensual pleasure to them, or else for the sake of something they are going to get out of it—money, or power, or safety. But pleasure, money, power, and safety are all, as far as they go, good things. The badness consists in pursuing them by the wrong method, or in the wrong way, or too much. I don't mean, of course, that the people who do this aren't desperately wicked. I do mean that wickedness, when you examine it, turns out to be the pursuit of some good in the wrong way. You can be good for the mere sake of goodness: you can't be bad for the mere sake of badness. You can do a kind action when you're not feeling kind and when it gives you no pleasure, simply because kindness is right; but no one ever did a cruel action simply because cruelty is wrong—only because cruelty was pleasant or useful to him. In other words, badness can't succeed even in being bad *in the same way* in which goodness is good. Goodness is, so to speak, itself: badness is only spoiled goodness. And there must be something good first before it can be spoiled. We called Sadism a sexual perversion; but you must first have the idea of a normal sexuality before you can talk of it being perverted; and you can see which is the perversion, because you can explain the perverted from the normal, and can't explain the normal from the perverted. It follows that the Bad Power, who is supposed to be on an equal footing with the Good Power, and to love badness in the same way as the good one loves goodness, is a mere bogey. In order to be bad he must have good things to want and then to pursue in the wrong way: he

must have impulses which were originally good in order to be able to pervert them. But if he is bad he can't supply himself either with good things to desire or with good impulses to pervert. He must be getting both from the Good Power. And if so, then he is not independent. He is part of the Good Power's world: he was made either by the Good Power or by some power above them both.

Put it more simply still. To be bad, he must exist and have intelligence and will But existence, intelligence, and will are in themselves good. Therefore he must be getting them from the Good Power: even to be bad he must borrow or steal from his opponent. And do you now begin to see why Christianity has always said that the devil is a fallen angel? That isn't a mere story for the children. It's a real recognition of the fact that evil is a parasite, not an original thing. The powers which enable evil to carry on are powers given it by goodness. All the things which enable a bad man to be effectively bad are in themselves good things—resolution, cleverness, good looks, existence itself. That's why Dualism, in a strict sense, won't work.

But I want to say that real Christianity (as distinct from Christianity-and-water) goes much nearer to Dualism than people think. One of the things that surprised me when I first read the New Testament seriously was that it was always talking about a Dark Power in the universe—a mighty evil spirit who was held to be the Power behind death and disease, and sin. The difference is that Christianity thinks this Dark Power was created by God, and was good when he was created, and went wrong. Christianity agrees with Dualism that this universe is at war. But it doesn't think this is a war between independent powers. It thinks it's a civil war, a rebellion, and that we are living in a part of the universe occupied by the rebel.

Enemy-occupied territory—that's what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed, you might say landed in disguise, and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage. When you go to church you're really listening in to the secret wireless from our friends: that's why the enemy is so anxious to prevent us going. He does it by playing on our conceit and laziness and intellectual snobbery. I know someone will ask me, "Do you really mean, at this time of day, to re-introduce our old friend the devil—hoofs and horns and all?" Well, what the time of day has to do with it I don't know. And I'm not particular about the hoofs and horns. But in other respects my answer is, "Yes, I do." I don't claim to know anything about his personal appearance. If anybody really wants to know him better I'd say to that person, "Don't worry. If you really want to, you will Whether you'll like it when you do is another question."

III

Christians, then, believe that an evil power has made himself for the present the Prince of this World. And, of course, that raises problems. Is this state of affairs in accordance with God's will or not? If it is, He's a strange God, you'll say: and if it isn't, how *can* anything happen contrary to the will of a being with absolute power?

But anyone who has been in authority knows how a thing can be in accordance with your will in one way and not in another. It may be quite sensible for a mother to say to the children, "I'm not going to go and make you tidy the school-room every night. You've got to learn to keep it tidy on your own." Then she goes up one night and finds the Teddy bear and the ink and the French Grammar all lying in the grate. That's against her will. She would prefer the children to be tidy. But on the other hand, it is her will which has left the children free to be untidy. The same thing arises in any regiment, or trades union, or school. You make a thing voluntary and then half the people don't do it. That isn't what you willed, but your will has made it possible.

It's probably the same in the universe. God created things which had free will. That means creatures which can go wrong *or* right. Some people think they can imagine a creature which was free but had no possibility of going wrong, but I can't. If a thing

is free to be good it's also free to be bad. And free will is what has made evil possible Why, then, did God give them free will? Because free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having. A world of automata—of creatures that worked like machines—would hardly be worth creating. The happiness which God designs for His higher creatures is the happiness of being freely, voluntarily united to Him and to each other in an ecstasy of love and delight compared with which the most rapturous love between a man and a woman on this earth is *mere milk and water.* And for that they've got to be free.

Of course God knew that would happen if they used their freedom the wrong way: apparently He thought it worth the risk. Perhaps we feel inclined to disagree with Him. But there's a difficulty about disagreeing with God. He is the source from which all your reasoning power comes: you couldn't be right and He wrong any more than a stream can rise higher than its own source. When you are arguing against Him you're arguing against the very power that makes you able to argue at all: it's like cutting off the branch you're sitting on. If God thinks this state of war in the universe a price worth paying for free will—that is, for making a *real* world in which creatures can do real good or harm and something of real importance can happen, instead of a toy world which only moves when He pulls the strings —then we may take it it *is* worth paying.

When we've understood about free will, we shall see how silly it is to ask, as somebody once asked me: "Why did God make a creature of such rotten stuff that it went wrong?" The better stuff a creature is made of—the cleverer and stronger and freer it is —then the better it will be if it goes right, but also the worse it will be if it goes wrong. A cow can't be very good or very bad; a dog can be both better and worse; a child better and worse still; an ordinary man, still more so; a man of genius, still more so; a superhuman spirit best—or worst—of all.

How did the Dark Power go wrong? Well, the moment you have a self at all, there is a possibility of putting yourself first—wanting to be the centre—wanted to *be* God, in fact. That was the sin of Satan: and that was the sin he taught the human race. Some people think the fall of man had something to do with sex, but that's a mistake. What Satan put into the heads of our remote ancestors was the idea that they could "be like gods" —could set up on their own as if they had created themselves—be their own masters—invent some sort of happiness for themselves outside God, apart from God. And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history—money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery—the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.

The reason why it can never succeed is this. God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on petrol, and it won't run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There isn't any other. That's why it's just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God can't give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it isn't there. There's no such thing.

That is the key to history. Terrific energy is expended—civilisations are built up—excellent institutions devised; but each time something goes wrong. Some fatal flaw always brings the selfish and cruel people to the top and it all slides back into misery and ruin. In fact, the machine konks. It seems to start up all right and runs a few yards, and then it breaks down. They're trying to run it on the wrong juice. That's what Satan has done to us humans.

And what did God do? First of all He left us conscience, the sense of right and wrong: and all through history there have been people trying (some of them very hard) to obey it. None of them ever quite succeeded. Secondly, He sent the human race what I call good dreams: I mean those queer stories scattered all through the heathen religions

about a god who dies and comes to life again and, by his death, has somehow given new life to men. Thirdly, He selected one particular people and spent several centuries hammering into their heads the sort of God He was—that there was only one of Him and that He cared about right conduct. Those people were the Jews, and the Old Testament gives an account of the hammering process.

Then comes the real shock. Among these Jews there suddenly turns up a man who goes about talking as if He was God. He claims to forgive sins. He says He has always existed. He says He is coming to judge the world at the end of time. Now let us get this clear. Among Pantheists, like the Indians, anyone might say that he was a part of God, or one with God: there'd be nothing very odd about it. But this man, since He was a Jew, couldn't mean that kind of God. God, in their language, meant the Being outside the world Who had made it and was infinitely different from anything else. And when you've grasped that, you will see that what this man said was, quite simply, the most shocking thing that has ever been uttered by human lips.

I'm trying here to prevent anyone from saying the really silly thing that people often say about Him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God." That's the one thing we mustn't say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn't be a great moral teacher. He'd either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he's a poached egg—or else he'd be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool; you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But don't let us come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He hasn't left that open to us. He didn't intend to.

A Plan for Education[1]

THOMAS JEFFERSON

ANOTHER OBJECT of the revisal is to diffuse knowledge more generally through the mass of the people. The bill proposes to lay off every county into small districts of five or six miles square, called hundreds, and in each of them to establish a school for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic. The tutor to be supported by the hundred, and every person in it entitled to send their children three years gratis, and as much longer as they please, paying for it. These schools to be under a visitor, who is annually to choose the boy of best genius in the school, of those whose parents are too poor to give them further education, and to send him forward to one of the grammar schools, of which twenty are proposed to be erected in different parts of the country, for teaching Greek, Latin, Geography and the higher branches of numerical arithmetic.

Of the boys thus sent in one year, trial is to be made at the grammar schools one or two years, and the best genius of the whole selected, and continued six years, and the residue dismissed. By this means twenty of the best geniuses will be raked from the rubbish annually, and be instructed at the public expense so far as the grammar schools go. At the end of six years' instruction, one half are to be discontinued (from among whom the grammar schools will probably be supplied with future masters); and the other half, who are to be chosen for the superiority of their parts and disposition, are to be sent and continued three years in the study of such sciences as they shall choose, at William

[1] From *Notes on the State of Virginia.* Paris, 1784-1785.

and Mary college, the plan of which is proposed to be enlarged, as will be hereafter explained, and extended to all the useful sciences. The ultimate result of the whole scheme of education would be the teaching all the children of the state reading, writing, and common arithmetic: turning out ten annually, of superior genius, well taught in Greek, Latin, Geography, and the higher branches of arithmetic: turning out ten others annually, of still superior parts, who, to those branches of learning, shall have added such of the sciences as their genius shall have led them to: the furnishing to the wealthier part of the people convenient schools at which their children may be educated at their own expense.

The general objects of this law are to provide an education adapted to the years, to the capacity, and the condition of every one, and directed to their freedom and happiness. Specific details were not proper for the law. These must be the business of the visitors entrusted with its execution. The first stage of this education being the schools of the hundreds, wherein the great mass of the people will receive their instruction, the principal foundations of future order will be laid here. Instead therefore of putting the Bible and Testament into the hands of the children at an age when their judgments are not sufficiently matured for religious enquiries, their memories may here be stored with the most useful facts from Grecian, Roman, European and American history. The first elements of morality too may be instilled into their minds; such as, when further developed as their judgments advance in strength, may teach them how to work out their own greatest happiness, by showing them that it does not depend on the condition of life in which chance has placed them, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation, and freedom in all just pursuits.

Those whom either the wealth of their parents or the adoption of the state shall destine to higher degrees of learning, will go on to the grammar schools, which constitute the next stage, there to be instructed in the languages. The learning Greek and Latin, I am told, is going into disuse in Europe. I know not what their manners and occupations may call for, but it would be very ill-judged in us to follow their example in this instance. There is a certain period of life, say from eight to fifteen or sixteen years of age, when the mind like the body is not yet firm enough for laborious and close operations. If applied to such, it falls an early victim to premature exertion: exhibiting, indeed, at first, in these young and tender subjects, the flattering appearance of their being men while they are yet children, but ending in reducing them to be children when they should be men. The memory is then most susceptible and tenacious of impressions; and the learning of languages being chiefly a work of memory, it seems precisely fitted to the powers of this period, which is long enough too for acquiring the most useful languages ancient and modern.

I do not pretend that language is science. It is only an instrument for the attainment of science. But that time is not lost which is employed in providing tools for future operation: more especially as in this case the books put into the hands of the youth for this purpose may be such as will at the same time impress their minds with useful facts and good principles. If this period be suffered to pass in idleness, the mind becomes lethargic and impotent, as would the body it inhabits if unexercised during the same time. The sympathy between body and mind during their rise, progress and decline, is too strict and obvious to endanger our being misled while we reason from the one to the other.

As soon as they are of sufficient age, it is supposed they will be sent on from the grammar schools to the university, which constitutes our third and last stage, there to study those sciences which may be adapted to their views. By that part of our plan which prescribes the selection of the youths of genius from among the classes of the poor, we hope to avail the state of those talents which nature has sown as liberally among the poor as the rich, but which perish without use, if not sought for and cultivated.

But of the views of this law none is more important, none more legitimate, than that

of rendering the people safe, as they are the ultimate guardians of their own liberty. For this purpose the reading in the first stage, where they will receive their whole education, is proposed, as has been said, to be chiefly historical. History by apprising them of the past will enable them to judge of the future; it will avail them of the experience of other times and other nations; it will qualify them as judges of the actions and designs of men; it will enable them to know ambition under every disguise it may assume; and knowing it, to defeat its views. In every government on earth is some trace of human weakness, some germ of corruption and degeneracy, which cunning will discover, and wickedness insensibly open, cultivate and improve. Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves therefore are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree.

This indeed is not all that is necessary, though it be essentially necessary. An amendment of our constitution must here come in aid of the public education. The influence over government must be shared among all the people. If every individual which composes their mass participates of the ultimate authority, the government will be safe, because the corrupting the whole mass will exceed any private resources of wealth, and public ones cannot be provided but by levies on the people. In this case every man would have to pay his own price. The government of Great Britain has been corrupted, because but one man in ten has a right to vote for members of parliament. The sellers of the government therefore get nine-tenths of their price clear. It has been thought that corruption is restrained by confining the right of suffrage to a few of the wealthier of the people; but it would be more effectually restrained by an extension of that right to such numbers as would bid defiance to the means of corruption.

The Attractions of Stupidity[1]

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

THE OBJECT of a college education is supposed to be the training of the mind. We hold that a student who presents himself at the door of one of our institutions and who remains with us long enough, is bound to go out that door a better and brainier man than when he went in. He is supposed, among other things, to be better prepared to enter upon the profession or occupation of his choice.

But it is curious that those who pursue such an occupation—let us say, journalism—though they may acclaim the virtues of college education in other fields, are sceptical about it in their own, and hold to the philosophy that the young graduate, once he has had the nonsense knocked out of him, may amount to something in spite of his college education. Or they argue that, to be sure, a B.S. in blacksmithing is better than no B.S. at all; but better than a B.S. in blacksmithing is a bachelor's degree in nothing in particular. They argue this way because they suppose that a college education gives a general training to the mind superior to specific training in skills.

When you try to pin these people down to what it is that is learned in college, they elude you. Will a course in chemistry give you this mysterious general training? Well, they say, a course in chemistry is a very good thing in its way, but of course unless you are going to be a professional chemist, you will soon forget your chemistry. Well, you ask, is a course in English desirable? Yes, they will respond, a course in literature

[1] Reprinted from *The Tuftonian* by permission.

is a very good thing. Of course, people don't generally read the classics except when they have to, so that, if you are going to lead a busy life, you had better read the classics in college, for otherwise you will never read them. If you press the point, if you ask some alumnus whether he still reads the classics, he will look uncomfortable, and probably say something about enjoying Professor So-and-So's course in Shakespeare—but he hasn't kept up his reading, though he remembers the course with pleasure.

All this suggests that no specific subject furnishes the essence of what people get out of college. Is there, then, some residue which courses leave in the mind and which constitutes a general education? What is this residue? There are the pleasant memories of Professor So-and-So's course which the alumnus retains. Unfortunately one doesn't have to go to college to acquire pleasant memories, since there are more interesting people outside college walls than there are in them. Is there some mysterious effect upon the mind, some impalpable essence engendered in college, some thing of which everybody admits the existence, though nobody knows its definition? If there be such a thing, it will scarcely help us, since one cannot define the indefinable. Moreover, as we look about among our friends on the campus, few of them seem distinguished by any impalpable essence, or, for that matter, any extraordinary amount of intellect. There are always a few who prefer books to activity, but the general run of students pay only that decent regard to their lessons which represents the last-ditch stand of the faculty. In truth, if a college education means no more than is represented by an alumni meeting, why bother about it? Perhaps we are in the center of a good-natured conspiracy in which everybody refuses to call things by their right names.

Now I am going to venture upon an explanation of this dilemma. I have lately been reading the essays of Walter Bagehot, and in his letters on the *coup d'etat* of Louis Napoleon, Bagehot suggests that the English people are protected against any such violent upheavals as a French revolution by their superior stupidity. He compares the English to the Romans as a great political people. Of the Romans he says: "is not a certain dullness of mind their most visible characteristic? What is the history of their speculative mind? A blank. What their literature? A copy. They have not left a single discovery in any abstract science, not a single perfect or well-formed work of high imagination." He points out that the Greeks, in contrast, who invented almost everything worth inventing, succumbed to the Romans at last, and that in general the stupid people win and the clever people lose. Such are the attractions of stupidity.

This is an illuminating theory. It sheds a good deal of light on the colleges. Take, for example, the classroom. The classroom may be described as a scene of polite warfare between the professors and the undergraduates. A hundred years ago that warfare often broke out in actual violence, but we have changed to more civilized forms of conflict. In that warfare the faculty are on the side of the Greeks and the students are on the side of the Romans. It is the business of the faculty to transmit to the students a body of culture, and it is the business of the Romans to resist as long as they can. It is obvious, on Bagehot's theory, that the Romans—that is to say, the stupid majority—will always win. That they do win is amply evident. For example, the faculty has to bring instruction down to the level of the students, they seldom succeed in lifting the students up to the level of the Greeks. Again, the standards set in any college are inevitably the standards of the average—that is to say, of the great middle body of the stupid as compared with the minority of clever people. If you raise the standard too high, you fail almost everybody, and the trustees complain; if you sink them too low, you let almost everybody in.

Perhaps there is a great law of nature at work in these matters, against which we struggle in vain. There is something fresh, sound, and admirable about stupidity. This has been remarked by numerous philosophers, including Carlyle, and confirmed in our time by mental tests invented by edu-

cators. Not to know too much, not to think too much, not to ask too many questions—these are the conditions of a normal or median existence. Let us have men about us who are fat, sleek-headed men, and men that sleep o'night. Perhaps the great body of American undergraduates are following right instinct in resisting instruction as capably as they do. Last year I taught freshmen and sophomores, and I was delighted to find them writing the same hazy ideas in the same bad sentences they used when I began teaching 25 years ago. There was something refreshing in this discovery. Time stood still while I renewed my youth.

On the other hand, the colleges have set their faces against the universal law. They continue to battle on the side of the Greeks. They seem to think the great law of the survival value of stupidity can somehow be got around. When they can lure a student into deserting the Romans for the Greeks, they are quite shameless in their treason. This suggests that the student may, if he likes, desert the ranks of the Romans; and because the ranks of the Romans are so large, perhaps he is not missed. What attracts the student to this remarkable act of treason?

If he remain among the Romans, who were, you will recall, a great political people, he will have the solid satisfaction of belonging to a large majority. If he looks around him in college, he will discern, as far as the eye can see, the serried ranks of the Roman battalions drawn up to protect him and themselves from the inroads of the Greeks. When he graduates, he will graduate into the world of the Romans—a world of comfortable conformity, of conventional interests, of tried and solid satisfactions. He will become one of the great average of American citizens, good, respectable, worthy; he will marry and rear his children in the way of the Romans; he may join a luncheon club and a country club, living very much as his father did. It will not be an exciting life—at least from the Greek point of view—but it will be a natural, conformable sort of existence.

What have the Greeks to offer? Not very much. In the first place, the student will have to abandon his natural place in the ranks of the Romans, and strike out for himself. From the Roman point of view, he is a deserter, and stupidity is always expert in this, that it knows how to punish desertion. If he gives himself up to intellectual adventure, if he tries to do his own thinking, if he attempts to reach conclusions for himself, if he announces and stands by his convictions, he may rest assured his friends will begin by looking at him askance, and probably end by abandoning him altogether. He may find a few acquaintances among the Greeks, but the Greeks have ever been a queer sort of people, more remarkable for their eccentricities than otherwise. They hold to the philosophy (I do not say they practise it) that every tub should stand on its own bottom. The undergraduate who deserts the ranks of the stupid has, from the Roman point of view, queered himself. He fits into no campus pigeon hole. The Romans cannot think of him as a member of the faculty, for he is clearly of an age with themselves; and they cannot think of him as one of themselves, for he thinks, in some respects like a member of the faculty.

Our young friend is, then, likely to have a painful time. He will find even the faculty unsympathetic, for the Greeks have a polity of their own, which has no assured place for the converted barbarian. He will read books, and disagree with them; he will take courses, and find the courses designed and taught for the Romans. If he writes out what he thinks, he will discover that nobody has much patience with manuscripts. And when he graduates, he will graduate into the world of the Romans,, which has no use for non-Romans except to assimilate them.

Will he have any durable satisfactions? I can think of only one. He will be master of his own intellectual house. His thoughts will be his own thoughts, and not borrowed ones —the Romans, you remember, were great borrowers. He will have his own point of view, his own scale of values, his own philosophy. And he is headed for an interesting, if painful, life, a life of incessant conflict with the ideas and standards of the Romans. The Apostle Paul, who was something of a

Greek, wrote to the church in Corinth that he had been "in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings." He led, in other words, the life of a nonconformist. The incessant struggle of the mind to be true to itself, to absorb new truths, to grow, to overcome pressures—these are the painful portion of the independent thinker. Almost his sole reward is the satisfaction of integrity.

He may not even have that—as the Romans have it. The Calvinists used to struggle with themselves to discover whether they were saved; just when they had a comforting sense of salvation, a voice whispered that this satisfaction might be a lure of the old deluder. The kind of intellectual integrity the Greeks have is of this sort. It does not generalize from insufficient instances. When it receives proof that an opinion is false, it yields. It is humble before the vast ocean of ignorance, and modest in respect to its own minute attainments. It allows a considerable margin for the possibility of being self-deceived. On one point, and on one point only, it continually insists: its thoughts are its own thoughts, its conclusions its own conclusions, based upon information, analysis, and belief.

Despite the superior attractions of stupidity, it happens from time to time that college students really choose the difficult way of intellectual life. I suppose it is due in some degree to the lamentable influence of the faculty upon them. I suppose it is due to the lingering truth of John Stuart Mill's statement that it is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied. Whatever the cause, it is the occasional appearance of a convert to the Greeks that causes these flutters of alarm among the solid and conservative members of the community. They awake to the fact that colleges do really offer an opportunity to live the intellectual life provided anybody wants to live it.

I do not know how many at Tufts College have chosen the Roman, and how many have chosen the Greek, way of life in this unhistorical history, but I seem to see a number of the Greek persuasion before me; and if there are others present, if there are those who are wavering, let me quote to you and to them in conclusion this famous quatrain of Montrose:

> He either fears his faith too much
> Or his deserts are small
> Who fears to put it to the touch,
> To win or lose it all.

If you have any capacity which may fit you for the life of the Greeks, and should you choose to conceal it and live among the Romans, nobody will be any the wiser. Even if you elect the Greek way, your choice may be wrong because you may lack the intellectual fortitude to go it alone. But if your choice is made, if you have deserted the Romans, I can at least promise you an uncertain, an uncomfortable, possibly an inglorious, but most surely and emphatically a crowded, interesting, and exciting career.

Of the Old and New Systems of Government[1]

THOMAS PAINE

NOTHING CAN APPEAR more contradictory than the principles on which the old governments began, and the condition to which society, civilization, and commerce, are capable of carrying mankind. Government on the old system is an assumption of power for the aggrandizement of itself; on the new, a delegation of power for the common benefit of

[1] *Rights of Man*, Part II, Chapter 3, written in 1791 and 1792.

society. The former supports itself by keeping up a system of war; the latter promotes a system of peace as the true means of enriching a nation. The one encourages national prejudices; the other promotes universal society as the means of universal commerce. The one measures its prosperity by the quantity of revenue it extorts; the other proves its excellence by the small quantity of taxes it requires.

Mr. Burke has talked of old and new whigs. If he can amuse himself with childish names and distinctions, I shall not interrupt his pleasure. It is not to him, but to the Abbé Sièyes, that I address this chapter. I am already engaged to the latter gentleman to discuss the subject of monarchical government; and as it naturally occurs in comparing the old and new systems, I make this the opportunity of presenting to him my observations. I shall occasionally take Mr. Burke in my way.

Though it might be proved that the system of government now called the *new* is the most ancient in principle of all that have existed, being founded on the original inherent rights of man: yet, as tyranny and the sword have suspended the exercise of those rights for many centuries past, it serves better the purpose of distinction to call it the *new* than to claim the right of calling it the old.

The first general distinction between those two systems is that the one now called the old is *hereditary*, either in whole or in part; and the new is entirely *representative*. It rejects all hereditary government:

1st, As being an imposition on mankind.

2d, As inadequate to the purposes for which government is necessary.

With respect to the first of these heads, it cannot be proved by what right hereditary government could begin; neither does there exist, within the compass of mortal power, a right to establish it. Man has no authority over posterity in matters of personal right; and therefore no man or body of men had, or can have, a right to set up hereditary government. Were even ourselves to come again into existence, instead of being succeeded by posterity, we have not now the right of taking from ourselves the rights which would then be ours. On what ground, then, do we pretend to take them from others?

All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. A heritable crown, or a heritable throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.

With respect to the second head, that of being inadequate to the purposes for which government is necessary, we have only to consider what government essentially is and compare it with the circumstances to which hereditary succession is subject.

Government ought to be a thing always in full maturity It ought to be so constructed as to be superior to all the accidents to which individual man is subject; and therefore, hereditary succession, by being *subject to them all*, is the most irregular and imperfect of all the systems of government.

We have heard the *rights of man* called a *leveling* system; but the only system to which the word *leveling* is truly applicable is the hereditary monarchical system. It is a system of *mental leveling*. It indiscriminately admits every species of character to the same authority. Vice and virtue, ignorance and wisdom, in short, every quality, good or bad, is put on the same level. Kings succeed each other, not as rationals, but as animals. Can we then be surprised at the abject state of the human mind in monarchical countries, when the government itself is formed on such an abject leveling system? It has no fixed character. Today it is one thing; and tomorrow it is something else. It changes with the temper of every succeeding individual, and is subject to all the varieties of each. It is government through the medium of passions and accidents. It appears under all the various characters of childhood, decrepitude, dotage, a thing at nurse, in leading strings, or on crutches. It reverses the wholesome order of nature. It occasionally puts children over men, and the conceits of non-age over wisdom and experience. In short, we cannot conceive a more ridiculous figure of govern-

ment than hereditary succession, in all its cases, presents.

Could it be made a decree in nature, or an edict registered in heaven, and man could know it, that virtue and wisdom should invariably appertain to hereditary succession, the objections to it would be removed; but when we see that nature acts as if she disowned and sported with the hereditary system; that the mental characters of successors, in all countries, are below the average of human understanding; that one is tyrant, another an idiot, a third insane, and some all three together, it is impossible to attach confidence to it, when reason in man has power to act.

It is not to the Abbé Sièyes that I need apply this reasoning; he has already saved me that trouble by giving his own opinion upon the case. "If it be asked," says he, "what is my opinion with respect to hereditary right, I answer, without hesitation that, in good theory, an hereditary transmission of any power or office can never accord with the laws of true representation. Hereditaryship is, in this sense, as much an attaint upon principle as an outrage upon society. But let us," continues he, "refer to the history of all elective monarchies and principalities, is there one in which the elective mode is not worse than the hereditary succession?"

As to debating on which is the worst of the two, is admitting both to be bad; and herein we are agreed. The preference which the abbé has given, is a condemnation of the thing he prefers. Such a mode of reasoning on such a subject is inadmissible, because it finally amounts to an accusation of providence, as if she had left to man no other choice with respect to government than between two evils, the best of which he admits to be *"an attaint upon principle, and an outrage upon society."*

Passing over, for the present, all the evils and mischiefs which monarchy has occasioned in the world, nothing can more effectually prove its uselessness in a state of *civil government* than making it hereditary. Would we make any office hereditary that required wisdom and abilities to fill it? And where wisdom and abilities are not necessary, such an office, whatever it may be, is superfluous or insignificant.

Hereditary succession is a burlesque upon monarchy. It puts it in the most ridiculous light by presenting it as an office which any child or idiot may fill. It requires some talents to be a common mechanic; but to be a king requires only the animal figure of man—a sort of breathing automaton. This sort of superstition may last a few years more, but it cannot long resist the awakened reason and interest of man.

As to Mr. Burke, he is a stickler for monarchy, not altogether as a pensioner, if he is one, which I believe, but as a political man. He has taken up a contemptible opinion of mankind, who, in their turn, are taking up the same of him. He considers them as a herd of beings that must be governed by fraud, effigy, and show; and an idol would be as good a figure of monarchy with him, as a man. I will, however, do him the justice to say that, with respect to America, he has been very complimentary. He always contended, at least in my hearing, that the people of America were more enlightened than those of England, or of any country in Europe; and that therefore the imposition of show was not necessary in their governments.

Though the comparison between hereditary and elective monarchy which the abbé had made, is unnecessary to the case, because the representative system rejects both; yet were I to make the comparison, I should decide contrary to what he has done.

The civil wars which have originated from contested hereditary claims are more numerous, and have been more dreadful, and of longer continuance than those which have been occasioned by election. All the civil wars in France arose from the hereditary system; they were either produced by hereditary claims, or by the imperfection of the hereditary form, which admits of regencies, or monarchy at nurse. With respect to England, its history is full of the same misfortunes. The contests for succession between the houses of York and Lancaster lasted a whole century; and others of a similar nature have renewed themselves since that period. Those of 1715

and 1745 were of the same kind. The succession-war for the crown of Spain embroiled almost half of Europe. The disturbances in Holland are generated from the hereditaryship of the stadtholder. A government calling itself free, with an hereditary office, is like a thorn in the flesh that produces a fermentation which endeavors to discharge it.

But I might go further, and place also foreign wars, of whatever kind, to the same cause. It is by adding the evil of hereditary succession to that of monarchy that a permanent family interest is created, whose constant objects are dominion and revenue. Poland, though an elective monarchy, has had fewer wars than those which are hereditary; and it is the only government that has made a voluntary essay, though but a small one, to reform the condition of the country.

Having thus glanced at a few of the defects of the old, or hereditary systems of government, let us compare it with the new, or representative system.

The representative system takes society and civilization for its basis; nature, reason, and experience for its guide.

Experience, in all ages and in all countries, has demonstrated that it is impossible to control nature in her distribution of mental powers. She gives them as she pleases. Whatever is the rule by which she, apparently to us, scatters them among mankind, that rule remains a secret to man. It would be ridiculous to attempt to fix the hereditaryship of human beauty, as of wisdom.

Whatever wisdom constituently is, it is like a seedless plant; it may be reared when it appears; but it cannot be voluntarily produced. There is always a sufficiency somewhere in the general mass of society for all purposes; but with respect to the parts of society, it is continually changing its place. It rises in one today, in another tomorrow, and has most probably visited in rotation every family of the earth, and again withdrawn.

As this is the order of nature, the order of government must necessarily follow it, or government will, as we see it does, degenerate into ignorance. The hereditary system, therefore, is as repugnant to human wisdom as to human rights; and is as absurd as it is unjust.

As the republic of letters brings forward the best literary productions by giving to genius a fair and universal chance; so the representative system of government is calculated to produce the wisest laws by collecting wisdom where it can be found. I smile to myself when I contemplate the ridiculous insignificance into which literature and all the sciences would sink, were they made hereditary; and I carry the same idea into governments. An hereditary governor is as inconsistent as an hereditary author. I know not whether Homer or Euclid had sons, but I will venture an opinion that if they had, and had left their works unfinished, those sons could not have completed them.

Do we need a stronger evidence of the absurdity of hereditary government than is seen in descendants of those men, in any line of life, who once were famous? Is there scarcely an instance in which there is not a total reverse of the character? It appears as if the tide of mental faculties flowed as far as it could in certain channels, and then forsook its course and arose in others. How irrational then is the hereditary system which establishes channels of power in company with which wisdom refuses to flow! By continuing this absurdity, man is perpetually in contradiction with himself; he accepts, for a king, or a chief magistrate, or a legislator, a person whom he would not elect for a constable.

It appears to general observation that revolutions create genius and talents; but those events do no more than bring them forward. There exists in man a mass of sense lying in a dormant state, and which, unless something excites it to action, will descend with him, in that condition, to the grave. As it is to the advantage of society that the whole of its faculties should be employed, the construction of government ought to be such as to bring forward, by a quiet and regular operation, all that extent of capacity which never fails to appear in revolutions.

This cannot take place in the insipid state of hereditary government, not only because it prevents, but because it operates to be-

numb. When the mind of a nation is bowed down by any political superstition in its government, such as hereditary succession is, it loses a considerable portion of its powers on all other subjects and objects. Hereditary succession requires the same obedience to ignorance as to wisdom; and when once the mind can bring itself to pay this indiscriminate reverence, it descends below the stature of mental manhood. It is fit to be great only in little things. It acts a treachery upon itself, and suffocates the sensations that urge to detection.

Though the ancient governments present to us a miserable picture of the condition of man, there is one which above all others exempts itself from the general description. I mean the democracy of the Athenians. We see more to admire and less to condemn, in that great, extraordinary people, than in anything which history affords.

Mr. Burke is so little acquainted with constituent principles of government that he confounds democracy and representation together. Representation was a thing unknown in the ancient democracies. In those the mass of the people met and enacted laws (grammatically speaking) in the first person. Simple democracy was no other than the common hall of the ancients. It signifies the *form* as well as the public principle of the government. As these democracies increased in population, and the territory extended, the simple democratical form became unwieldly and impracticable; and as the system of representation was not known, the consequence was they either degenerated convulsively into monarchies or became absorbed into such as then existed. Had the system of representation been then understood, as it now is, there is no reason to believe that those forms of government now called monarchical or aristocratical would ever have taken place. It was the want of some method to consolidate the parts of society after it became too populous and too extensive for the simple democratical form, and also the lax and solitary condition of shepherds and herdsmen in other parts of the world, that afforded opportunities to those unnatural modes of government to begin.

As it is necessary to clear away the rubbish of errors into which the subject of government has been thrown, I shall proceed to remark on some others.

It has always been the political craft of courtiers and court governments to abuse something which they called republicanism; but what republicanism was, or is, they never attempt to explain. Let us examine a little into this case.

The only forms of government are the democratical, the aristocratical, the monarchical, and what is now called the representative.

What is called a *republic* is not any *particular form* of government. It is wholly characteristical of the purport, matter, or object for which government ought to be instituted, and on which it is to be employed, *res-publica,* the public affairs, or the public good; or, literally translated, the *public thing.* It is a word of good original, referring to what ought to be the character and business of government; and in this sense it is naturally opposed to the word *monarchy,* which has a base original signification. It means arbitrary power in an individual person; in the exercise of which, *himself,* and not the *res-publica,* is the object.

Every government that does not act on the principle of a republic, or, in other words, that does not make the *res-publica* its whole and sole object, is not a good government. Republican government is no other than government established and conducted for the interest of the public, as well individually as collectively. It is not necessarily connected with any particular form, but it most naturally associates with the representative form, as being best calculated to secure the end for which a nation is at the expense of supporting it.

Various forms of government have affected to style themselves republics. Poland calls itself a republic, but is in fact an hereditary aristocracy, with what is called an elective monarchy. Holland calls itself a republic, which is chiefly aristocratical, with an hereditary stadtholdership. But the government of America, which is wholly on the system of representation, is the only real republic

in character and practice that now exists. Its government has no other object than the public business of the nation, and therefore it is properly a republic; and the Americans have taken care that *this*, and no other, shall be the object of their government, by their rejecting everything hereditary and establishing government on the system of representation only.

Those who have said that a republic is not a *form* of government calculated for countries of great extent mistook, in the first place, the *business* of a government for a *form* of government; for the *res-publica* equally appertains to every extent of territory and population. And in the second place, if they meant anything with respect to form, it was the simple democratical form, such as was the mode of government in the ancient democracies, in which there was no representation. The case, therefore, is not that a republic cannot be extensive, but that it cannot be extensive on the simple democratic form; and the question naturally presents itself; remedying at once the defects of the simple democracy as to form, and the incapacity of the other two with regard to knowledge.

Simple democracy was society governing itself without the use of secondary means. By ingrafting representation upon democracy, we arrive at a system of government capable of embracing and confederating all the various interests and every extent of territory and population; and that also with advantages as much superior to hereditary government as the republic of letters is to hereditary literature.

It is on this system that the American government is founded. It is representation ingrafted upon democracy. It has settled the form by a scale parallel in all cases to the extent of the principle. What Athens was in miniature, America will be in magnitude. The one was the wonder of the ancient world—the other is becoming the admiration and model of the present. It is easiest of all forms of government to be understood and the most eligible in practice; and excludes at once the ignorance and insecurity of the hereditary mode and the inconvenience of the simple democracy.

It is impossible to conceive a system of government capable of acting over such an extent of territory, and such a circle of interests, as is produced by the operation of representation. France, great and populous as it is, is but a spot in the capaciousness of the system. It adapts itself to all possible cases. It is preferable to simple democracy even in small territories. Athens, by representation, would have surpassed her own democracy.

That which is called government, or rather that which we ought to conceive government to be, is no more than some common center in which all the parts of society unite. This cannot be established by any method so conducive to the various interests of the community as by the representative system. It concentrates the knowledge necessary to the interests of the parts and of the whole. It places government in a state of constant maturity. It is, as has been already observed, never young, never old. It is subject neither to nonage nor dotage. It is never in the cradle nor on crutches. It admits not of a separation between knowledge and power, and is superior, as government ought always to be, to all the accidents of individual man, and is therefore superior to what is called monarchy.

A nation is not a body, the figure of which is to be represented by the human body; but is like a body contained within a circle, having a common center in which every radius meets; and that center is formed by representation. To connect representation with what is called monarchy is eccentric government. Representation is of itself the delegated monarchy of a nation, and cannot debase itself by dividing it with another.

Mr. Burke has two or three times in his parliamentary speeches, and in his publications, made use of a jingle of words that convey no ideas. Speaking of government, he says, "It is better to have monarchy for its basis, and republicanism for its corrective, than republicanism for its basis, and monarchy for its corrective." If he means that it is better to correct folly with wisdom

than wisdom with folly, I will no otherwise contend with him than to say it would be much better to reject the folly altogether.

But what is this thing which Mr. Burke calls monarchy? Will he explain it—? all mankind can understand what representation is; and that it must necessarily include a variety of knowledge and talents. But what security is there for the same qualities on the part of monarchy? Or, when this monarchy is a child, where then is the wisdom? What does it know about government? Who then is the monarch? Or where is the monarchy? If it is to be performed by regency, it proves it to be a farce. A regency is a mock species of republic, and the whole of monarchy deserves no better appellation. It is a thing as various as imagination can paint. It has none of the stable character that government ought to possess. Every succession is a revolution, and every regency a counter-revolution. The whole of it is a scene of perpetual court cabal and intrigue, of which Mr. Burke is himself an instance.

Whether I have too little sense to see, or too much to be imposed upon; whether I have too much or too little pride, or of anything else, I leave out of the question; but certain it is that what is called monarchy always appears to me a silly, contemptible thing. I compare it to something kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of bustle and fuss, and a wonderful air of seeming solemnity; but when, by any accident, the curtain happens to be open and the company see what it is, they burst into laughter.

In the representative system of government, nothing like this can happen. Like the nation itself, it possesses a perpetual stamina as well of body as of mind, and presents itself on the open theater of the world in a fair and manly manner. Whatever are its excellencies or its defects, they are visible to all. It exists not by fraud and mystery; it deals not in cant and sophistry; but inspires a language that, passing from heart to heart, is felt and understood.

We must shut our eyes against reason, we must basely degrade our understanding, not to see the folly of what is called monarchy. Nature is orderly in all her words; but this is a mode of government that counteracts nature. It turns the progress of the human faculties upside down. It subjects age to be governed by children, and wisdom by folly.

On the contrary, the representative system is always parallel with the order and immutable laws of nature, and meets the reason of man in every part. For example:

In the American federal government, more power is delegated to the President of the United States, than to any other individual member of congress. He cannot, therefore, be elected to this office under the age of thirty-five years. By this time the judgment of man becomes matured, and he has lived long enough to be acquainted with men and things, and the country with him. But on the monarchical plan (exclusive of the numerous chances there are against every man born into the world, of drawing a prize in the lottery of human faculties), the next in succession, whatever he may be, is put at the head of a nation, and of a government, at the age of eighteen years. Does this appear like an act of wisdom? Is it consistent with the proper dignity and the manly character of a nation? Where is the propriety of calling such a lad the father of the people? In all other cases, a person is a minor until the age of twenty-one years. Before this period he is not trusted with the management of an acre of land, or with the heritable property of a flock of sheep, or a herd of swine; but wonderful to tell! he may at the age of eighteen years be trusted with a nation.

That monarchy is all a bubble, a mere court artifice to procure money, is evident (at least to me) in every character in which it can be viewed. It would be almost impossible, on the rational system of representative government, to make out a bill of expenses to such an enormous amount as this deception admits. Government is not of itself a very chargeable institution. The whole expense of the federal government of America, founded, as I have already said, on the system of representation, and extending over a country nearly ten times as large as Eng-

land, is but six hundred thousand dollars, or one hundred and thirty thousand pounds sterling.

I presume that no man in his sober senses will compare the character of any of the kings of Europe, with that of General Washington. Yet, in France, and also in England, the expense of the civil list only, for the support of one man, is eight times greater than the whole expense of the federal government of America. To assign a reason for this appears almost impossible. The generality of people in America, especially the poor, are more able to pay taxes than the generality of people either in France or England.

But the case is that the representative system diffuses such a body of knowledge throughout the nation, on the subject of government, as to explode ignorance and preclude imposition. The craft of courts cannot be acted on that ground. There is no place for mystery; nowhere for it to begin. Those who are not in the representation know as much of the nature of business as those who are. An affectation of mysterious importance would there be scouted. Nations can have no secrets; and the secrets of courts, like those of individuals, are always their defects.

In the representative system, the reason for everything must publicly appear. Every man is a proprietor in government, and considers it a necessary part of his business to understand. It concerns his interest because it affects his property. He examines the cost, and compares it with the advantages; and above all, he does not adopt the slavish custom of following what in other governments are called *leaders.*

It can only be by blinding the understanding of man, and making him believe that government is some wonderful mysterious thing, that excessive revenues are obtained. Monarchy is well calculated to ensure this end. It is the popery of government; a thing kept up to amuse the ignorant, and quiet them into paying taxes.

The government of a free country, properly speaking, is not in the persons, but in the laws. The enacting of those requires no great expense, and when they are administered, the whole of civil government is performed—the rest is all court contrivance.

Bosses and Machines[1]

EDWARD J. FLYNN

1

"THE MEETING will come to order. The Chair recognizes Mr. Brown."

Mr. Brown: "I offer the following resolution and move its adoption."

The Chairman: "The Secretary will read."

The Secretary: "*Resolved,* That the Executive Committee of the Democratic County Committee of Bronx County offer to the enrolled Democrats of Bronx County at the primary election to be held on July 31, 1945, the following named persons for the respective offices to be filled at the said primary:—

"For Mayor of the City of New York: William O'Dwyer.

For Comptroller of the City of New York: Lazarus Joseph.

For President of the Council: Vincent R. Impellitteri.

For President of the Borough of the Bronx: James J. Lyons.

For District Attorney, County of Bronx: Samuel J. Foley.

For Justices of the Municipal Court, 1st Municipal Court District, County of Bronx: William Lyman, Christopher C. McGrath, Charles A. Loreto.

For Justices of the Municipal Court, 2nd Municipal Court District, County of

[1] From *You're the Boss* by Edward J. Flynn. Copyright 1947 by The Viking Press, Inc. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc.

Bronx: Michael N. Delagi, Agnes M. Craig."

The Chairman: "All those in favor of the resolution will kindly so signify by saying 'Aye.' The motion is carried and the resolution is adopted. The Chair recognizes Mr. Buckley."

Mr. Buckley: "I move that the meeting adjourn."

The Chairman: "All those in favor of the motion to adjourn kindly so signify by saying 'Aye.' The meeting is adjourned."

These are the minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Democratic Party of Bronx County, New York. The meeting was called to present formally the Democratic organization's slate to the enrolled Democrats of that county.

The Executive Committee of the Democratic Party in Bronx County consists of thirty-three men and women, who are Executive Members of the County Committees. They are the heart of the Democratic organization in the county. They are presided over by the Chairman, who happens to be myself. There you have, very simply, what is known as a "machine."

It took only ten minutes to hold the meeting. There were no objections, for everything had been arranged in advance. The very smoothness of the proceedings exemplifies practical politics in action. For within the periphery of that meeting may be found, one by one, the axioms on which practical politics are based—beginning with the voter root and extending to the highest political office: the Presidency of the United States.

In discussing mechanism, and in trying to arrive at just what makes a political machine tick, I am calling on my own twenty-four years of political experience and the specific example of Bronx County. For more than a quarter of a century, Bronx County has elected only Democratic county officials. It has become, on percentage, the greatest Democratic county north of the Mason and Dixon Line.

Thus, by augmenting or reducing the model of Bronx County, and with due allowance for variations in state laws, one can get a picture of party working in almost any part of the United States, for political divisions are substantially the same in fundamentals all over the country.

Before the meeting described at the beginning of this article, the nominations for the city-wide offices had already been agreed upon by the five County Leaders of the City of New York. Nominations for Bronx County offices were agreed to after a series of conferences between the Executive Members and the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

How, then, were these nominations actually arrived at? As Chairman of the Executive Committee, I am the controlling force, and any action I take must be one which I believe will benefit the people of the Bronx first and enhance the prestige of the organization second. I mention the people first because it is one of our political legends that bosses never pay any attention to the public. Of course the legend will not stand analysis, for obviously a political boss can survive only so long as he wins elections—and the only way to win elections year after year is to know what the voters want and give it to them.

The slate I gave at the beginning is an example. James J. Lyons was renominated for President of the Borough of the Bronx. He had been elected three times and was looking toward his fourth term. From the standpoint of the people generally, he had done a good job. There had been no scandals connected with his office, and the people believed him to be an honest official. For that reason, it was expedient for the organization to renominate him. If, however, he had been a failure, or if there had been any scandals in his administration, the organization and I, without any qualms, would have turned him down for renomination. For always the primary purpose is to win an election.

In the same resolution, Samuel J. Foley was offered as a candidate for re-election as Bronx County District Attorney. His office had a splendid reputation. Foley himself had been praised highly in many New York newspapers for the conduct of his office. In

fact, rackets had been stopped in Bronx County long before the term "racket-buster" was invented. The criminal element knew that they could not exert political influence in the Bronx, and so they fought shy of the county. One instance will illustrate my point. Terrenova, one of the most notorious racketeers of his time, lived in Westchester County. Now one cannot reach Manhattan from Westchester without crossing the Bronx or crossing either the Hudson River twice or Long Island Sound and the East River. Yet Terrenova chose to cross the Hudson twice—over to New Jersey and back again—rather than risk being picked up in the Bronx. So it was to the advantage of the organization to offer Foley to the people again.

Four of the five Municipal Court Judges were also seeking re-election. The records of Lyman, McGrath, Delagi, and Craig were good, and they were re-nominated. The fifth, Charles A. Loreto, was being presented as a candidate for the first time. His nomination was agreed upon at a series of conferences between myself and some of the members of the Executive Committee.

2

What factors were taken into consideration in this nomination?

The Bronx is a cosmopolitan place. The Jewish and Italian populations are large. There are also many Roman Catholics. These three groups make up the largest portions of the county. Therefore, when the organization is forming a ticket to present to the people, it is important that the candidates represent and come from these three large groups. It is curious how some "reformers" labor this point, arguing that it is "pandering to racial and religious blocs." Our whole system of government is based on proportional representation. But of course the "reformers" in question are not always consistent, for just now they see nothing wrong with special appeals to organized labor, to take one example. (Neither do I—but the distinction is that I am consistent in my belief that special-interest groups have a perfect right to be represented in the bodies that govern us all.)

Today, there are more Jewish than Irish Catholic voters in the Bronx. Yet there is no such thing as a "Jewish bloc"—as Governor Dewey discovered in the last New York mayoral election. Dewey thought that by nominating Judge Jonah Goldstein, a one-time Tammany Democrat, for Mayor on the Republican ticket, he could ensure the Jewish vote of the city in his own gubernatorial race a year later. Goldstein had everything a Jewish candidate should have—except that not all Jews thought him the better-qualified candidate. The Jew is a discriminating individualist.

In the vacancy which Loreto was a candidate to fill, it was important to name a man of Italian extraction. This was so because Lazarus Joseph, candidate for Comptroller, was Jewish and came from the Bronx. Beyond this, it was important that every geographical section of the Bronx be represented. Neighborhood feeling carries great weight with a political organization. Men and women who are prominent in their own localities are recognized by being placed in public office.

Before the meeting I have described, I consulted with members of the Executive Committee who were from that particular part of the county and asked them to suggest names. Various leaders suggested different persons. The abilities and political strengths of each were looked into. Finally I myself decided that Loreto was the man.

Hence our ticket shaped up a well-rounded one: Lyons and Foley were Catholics, Joseph and Lyman were Jewish, Delagi and Loreto were of Italian descent.

"Cynical!" the "reformers" will say. "Shocking!" "Calculating!" "So this is how a machine functions!"

Yes, this is the way a machine functions. How else could it function in the interests of all the people? It should be remembered that we were offering these names to the enrolled Democrats of Bronx County in a Democratic primary. It did not mean that there could be no opposition to them. Any person who wished to dispute our judgment had that right in the primary polling booth, where none could see him.

True, scattered individuals cannot successfully challenge the decisions of a machine. But if the machine is a bad one—if it deserves to be beaten because of its offensive political activities or because of the caliber of the men it nominates—opposition can be organized to fight out the issues in the primaries. I'll admit it is not easy. It takes time, patience, money, and a lot of hard work to beat a machine in this way. Nor am I attempting to say that this is the best method. It just happens to be the only one provided under the election laws of the State of New York.

3

I have been Chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee of Bronx County for a quarter century. In order to remain in that position, I must always have the Committee votes to support me. My control is entirely dependent upon this support. If a majority of the Committee decided they no longer wanted me, they could call a meeting tomorrow and supplant me. But during my entire service as Chairman, there has never been any serious threat to my leadership. There has been occasional scattered opposition, but never any real danger.

How do I maintain the majority support of the Executive Committee? To begin with, I always see to it that the key party workers have exempt positions, if they want them. Some of the salaries are small (particularly those given to women). They run from $2500 to $5000, with only one at $10,000. Still, to use the political parlance, all the District Leaders have been "taken care of" during my entire term as County Leader. In New York County, by contrast, there have been many changes among the District Leaders during the same period—because they were not put into exempt positions. The biggest turnover came about when the Democrats lost the county and borough offices in the Fusion heyday. Bronx County is the only county within the city that has never been defeated either for county or for borough offices.

The families also—sons, daughters, husbands, wives—of the District Leaders are taken care of in some way or other. Sometimes they are given exempt positions, and sometimes they get help from us in the line of civil service promotion. It is rather difficult to say if this is the real reason why I have had their support down through the years, but I cannot deny that it has been extremely important to my remaining as leader.

There is one other important factor in retaining the support of the Executive Committee, and although it has never been put to test, I am confident that it could be with perfect safety. I have the final word about who should be appointed to positions which control exempt jobs. The County Committeemen who elect the Executive Members know this. Also, it is inevitable that during the years of my leadership I have come to know these Committeemen well, and they in turn to know me. I feel sure that should I express to them a desire to have a District Leader removed, a new Leader would be selected immediately. Thus not only my long association with the party, but my absolute control of exempt positions, is a powerful influence in my control.

The importance of this business of patronage in the success of a party and a leader may be seen by studying the strengthening of the Democratic Party during Roosevelt's terms as Governor of New York and his first terms in the White House. Because he paid attention to his leaders and made the party appointments they recommended (always after previously investigating the candidate's abilities) Roosevelt built up the greatest vote-getting machine, both state and Federal, that has ever been known. When he began to accept the recommendation of the New Dealers of "non-political" appointments, there was a falling away of his vote-getting ability. However, by that time Roosevelt's name had such magic that he was able, notwithstanding, to maintain his leadership.

After so many years, the machine had become a more or less personal one. For several years past I have seriously considered resigning. The detail work in a county organization no longer has any appeal to me. Financially,

the job has been expensive, for I myself contribute to the support of the party. But there is another item which can hardly be classed as a party contribution, but which goes hand in hand with the party job I hold. Whenever a member of the organization is in financial difficulty and comes to me for assistance, I usually lend him money. Some of these loans have even been paid back.

Because of my long association, however, I naturally feel responsible to men who have loyally supported me down through the years. If I resigned, these men would be left out in the cold. I do not say it in any spirit of vanity, but it is perfectly logical to suppose that an organization which has been kept so compact through all these years would disintegrate if the moving spirit died or resigned. This did happen in the case of Tammany Hall after the death of Charles F. Murphy. Tammany has never since been able to occupy the place it did under his leadership. There have been constant change and constant squabbling for power among the leaders. Undoubtedly the same situation would develop in the Bronx if I resigned.

4

I have said that I never had any serious opposition. There is always some opposition. There is a group at the present time in Bronx County that has, for years, been seeking to unseat me as County Chairman. They have tried to do so in primaries, in the election of County Committeemen and Leaders, and in the election of candidates other than those named by the organization. But because of the closeness with which the organization is held together, they have not yet been able to score a single triumph.

Victory is easier for the organization than for the insurgent. The organization at all times has its own personnel in each small unit. An insurgent who questions the decisions of the machine must first place a man and woman Captain in every Election District. This is not an easy task. It is difficult to build up in two or three months what it has taken the organization years to achieve. Furthermore, under a good administration, it is not easy to find enough people who will disagree with the machine.

At various times, candidates for the Legislature have challenged the nominees of the organization. There have been primary fights. But in every instance, the organization has won, because all its forces could be centered in the troublesome district. The result has been that the insurgent not only was defeated, but overwhelmingly so.

Once a person who has been a member of the organization turns against it in a primary election, he is forever barred from any political preferment. Since most people who feel like fighting the organization have hopes for political advancement, their assignment to organization Coventry makes their political futures dubious, to say the least. This discipline inevitably turns up some malcontents who will stoop to anything to bring disrepute to the organization. There have been leveled against the organization in Bronx County—and perhaps always will be—charges of illegal registration and illegal voting. Some thirty years ago, such charges undoubtedly had some basis in fact. In those days, there was considerable laxity. Elections were not watched or checked as they are today, when each political party has its own poll watchers as well as its members on the Board of Elections.

Since we are speaking of the Bronx, let us consider the possibility that such a thing might take place. What would be the result? The total number of votes cast in the Bronx averages from 450,000 to 500,000. Should the Democratic organization attempt to conduct a campaign for illegal registration, it would have to be done within each Election District. In every Election District, there are one Republican man and one Republican woman Captain, and also a Republican man and a Republican woman member on the Board of Elections. Assuming the cleverest organization one could imagine, there could not be more than about five illegal registrations in each Election District without attracting attention. Certainly the Republican Captains and Inspectors of Elections would know of even that small number.

Suppose, however, they didn't. There are 850 Election Districts in Bronx County. Multiplying the number of Election Districts by 5, you get a total of 4250 votes. At no time in my experience would even 10,000 votes have been enough to change the outcome of an election in Bronx County. Most certainly there would be no advantage to the organization in this type of campaign. It would not change the result.

There have also been charges that in many instances persons have been brought to places outside the districts in which they reside to take the literacy test required of first voters in New York State. First of all, most of the people who apply for literacy tests have recently become naturalized and admitted by the courts as citizens of the United States. It is very true that the organization will take these new voters to places where the test is not so severe as it might be in other places. Every other organization throughout the country does precisely the same thing. Indeed, an excellent argument can be advanced against requiring a literacy test. To begin with, the New York law presumes that anyone who cannot write English is illiterate, even if he holds a dozen degrees and is quite proficient in any number of other languages. Moreover, illiteracy is no excuse from paying taxes, and if there is anything to the business of "taxation without representation" being an evil, it can be argued that anyone who pays taxes is entitled to vote.

In any event, the record of the Bronx County Democratic organization is open for all to see. That the members of the party support it overwhelmingly is shown by its success, year after year, at the polls. That they take pride in its achievements, not only individually but as a whole, is beyond doubt.

A political leader or "boss," however, must not only be able to pick his men, but he must be able to "guess right." During my leadership, I have been lucky enough to do this in many political situations. The first big decision I had to make "on my own" was on the question of displacing Hylan as Mayor of New York City. I was lucky enough to be one of the two leaders who supported Walker. Had Walker lost, my reward would have been political oblivion. I supported Roosevelt when he was nominated and became Governor of New York, and when I was his Secretary of State (New York). In Chicago, I supported him again when he was nominated, and when he became President. In Albany, I supported Lehman, and he was nominated and elected. In each case, I risked the penalty for guessing wrong.

All these things together have helped to build up my strength as a leader. My District Leaders realize that I have usually guessed right. It has put the Bronx organization in the forefront in various campaigns, and my Leaders have taken pride in the fact that because of my friendship with Roosevelt I have become a national figure in the Democratic Party.

5

The impression of secrecy which seems to veil the position of political boss exists for no other reason than that the idea has been handed down by one political generation to another. Most of the appearance of secrecy arises from the fact that the leader himself cannot make up his mind as to what course to pursue—or more often, because it is not propitious to announce his decision at the precise moment the newspapers clamor for it.

Political skill is mostly built on proper timing. The correct time to announce a candidacy or the support of a particular candidate is as important as the announcement itself. If it is badly timed, the whole effect can be lost. In this connection, Roosevelt often resorted to the "trial balloon"—that is, letting someone other than himself make a statement to see how it would be received by the public. If the time was not right, the statement would be criticized severely. If it was well received, Roosevelt would step in and "carry the ball." I myself have never been completely convinced that this is a good thing to do, but I am considerably in the minority in that opinion.

Should a man announce his candidacy too far in advance of a convention or primary, he can easily kill himself off through the

opposition which will tend to develop and crystallize. Therefore, in practical politics an announcement is delayed as long as practicable, to prevent such a situation. It is usually thoroughly understood between a candidate and a leader just what the leader intends to do, and the leader very seldom lets the cat out of the bag until it is absolutely necessary to do so.

In the case of Presidential candidates, this is particularly important. Albert Ritchie of Maryland became known as a "perennial" candidate. He was always campaigning for the nomination, and although his background was good and his record as Governor of Maryland was excellent, he was never nominated because he came to be "old stuff."

In the Republican Party, General Wood and Governor Lowden of Illinois were two candidates who destroyed each other by their too early timing of announcements and their long campaigns before the 1920 convention. This permitted a situation to develop which prevented the convention from naming either one. The resultant nomination was of Harding. The same thing happened to Smith and McAdoo in the 1924 Democratic convention, when John W. Davis finally emerged as the nominee.

Even in state politics, there is a concrete example of what bad timing does to a candidate. When John Lyons was Secretary of State of New York, he campaigned actively for the Republican gubernatorial nomination. By the time the convention rolled around, he had worn himself out and nullified any chance he might have had. The time is short between a primary or convention and the general election. But it is time enough to destroy a candidate. If he adds to that period a pre-primary or pre-convention campaign, his risk increases. The candidate gets shopworn.

Roosevelt was a master at timing, and in every case he made the most of this gift. Even though, to the average person, his timing of announcements for both his third and fourth terms may have seemed late (and admittedly this was partly due to the fact that he had not made up his mind), they were perfect under the conditions then prevailing.

Conversely, Governor Smith's announcement in 1932 was too late in view of conditions. When Roosevelt first announced his candidacy, Smith persisted in his position that he would not be a candidate under any circumstances. Thus many delegates were pledged to Roosevelt who might otherwise have gone to Smith, had he been an avowed candidate at the time. This was particularly true in Bronx County and other counties in New York that were pledged to Roosevelt in the primaries.

Smith told me later that in his opinion it made no difference how the delegates were pledged in the primary—they should have changed their minds when his candidacy was announced. I did not agree. I told Smith that so far as the Bronx delegates were concerned, they were pledged to Roosevelt and they would "stay hitched." The people of the Bronx know that once I pledge myself and the organization to a candidate, that pledge holds. I have maintained this attitude throughout my leadership. And it is because the majority of the Executive Committee agree with these principles that they continue to back my leadership.

6

As long as we have a two-party system of government, we shall have machines Whether they will be good or bad depends upon the interest of citizens in their party government, and upon whether that interest is just as strong and unflagging as their interest in their local, state, and Federal governments.

The reason more people do not accept the inevitability of machine politics is that whenever they think of machines and bosses, they seem to think only of the successful ones. In every county in New York City there is and always has been a Republican machine. To be sure, they call themselves "organization," but they are as truly machines as their Democratic counterparts in every respect save that of success at the polls. The nominations for the various offices in the Republican Party

are dictated by the Republican County Leaders, who are, of course, the Republican county bosses.

The present Governor of New York, Thomas E. Dewey, accepts advice and even dictation from the Republican bosses in the various counties throughout the state. The newspapers favorable to Dewey (or to the Republican Party generally) describe this as "receiving suggestion from the leaders of the party." It is only the "leader" you don't like who is a "boss," and the "organization" you don't like that is a "machine."

This is equally true throughout the United States. In practically every city and every state, there are a Republican machine and a Democratic machine, and there is always one man who is the boss of the machine. The final responsibility for nominations is wholly in his hands. Thus, when you condemn the "boss system" you condemn both major parties and indeed all political parties, because all operate in exactly the same way.

This system is a direct result of the election laws not only in the State of New York but in every state of the Union. The election laws provide the method under which parties are organized. The same laws that apply to the Democratic Party apply to the Republican Party.

If this is true, then what can be done and what should be done? One must work with the tools at hand. If a machine is bad, it can be reformed only by the members of the party concerned. Many people criticize government—and then announce that they are not affiliated with either of the major parties. This is ridiculous. They can never hope, through unorganized mass, to accomplish anything. If they wish to cure a situation, they must do it through the machinery that is set up by the election laws.

I do not want to minimize how difficult a job this is. It is difficult because in a successful machine the leaders have so well fortified themselves that it takes time to upset them. It cannot be done in a year. In some cases, it cannot be done for many years. But if the start is made, eventually the vicious element in an organization can be removed. Those who have the courage and persistence to survive early discouragements win out in the end.

An instance of this that probably is fresh in the minds of most is the so-called "Pendergast machine" in Kansas City, Missouri. This organization got so bad the Pendergast and others connected with it went to prison. This did not mean the end of Democratic organizations in Kansas City. There is still a machine there. It is a better machine because of the exposures that purged it, but it is still a machine. Its legal structure is exactly the same as before. But because the decent Democrats of Kansas City finally became sufficiently aroused to take part in the primaries and in the selection of County Committeemen and District Leaders, the Pendergast machine, as such, was destroyed.

There is no use periodically electing "Fusion" or "Good Government" candidates. They will either stay in power a short time, or they will set up their own machines, or—what is far more likely—they will merge back into one or the other of the two major parties. The Republican and Democratic parties have survived a good many "reform" movements in the form of third parties, the one over a period of ninety years, the other over a period of nearly a century and a half. Third-party movements have never succeeded nationally. They have succeeded about once in fifty times in the states. They have succeeded, all too briefly, about once in twenty times in the cities. These figures speak for themselves.

If we are to have uniformly good government, local, state, and national, I am afraid a lot of men and women will have to get down off their high horses and grub around in practical politics as active members of a party. I wish we had in our school systems required courses of training in citizenship which would send forth graduates by the hundreds of thousands who would assume such responsibilities as readily and as naturally as they assume the responsibility of earning a living. So far as I can see, the emphasis in whatever practical politics is taught is placed upon elections, rather than

primaries. The so-called "independent" voter is all but deified, when he ought to be condemned as a shirker.

Waiting until after the candidates are nominated is waiting until you have missed the boat. Whatever is to be done must be done before the nominations are made. There is no machine—I do not care how powerful and well-intrenched it appears to be—that would dare to nominate a candidate for office it knew its own people did not want. Many poor candidates are named because of the fact that the so-called boss of the organization knew that the great majority of the members of his party would take no interest in the primary election anyway. Bosses get away with a good deal by default—your default.

7

Today, much criticism is being leveled at the Political Action Committee, because of the fact that it is taking an active part in the primaries of the Republican and Democratic parties, seeking to have named on both sides candidates who are friendly to PAC—which is to say, to organized labor. PAC has become a very potent factor in national politics. In states like New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, Massachusetts, and some border states, its intensive work undoubtedly helped in the election of President Roosevelt in 1940 and 1944.

It is significant, I think, for the student of politics that PAC did not set out to form a third party and thus far has resisted the temptation to do so on a national scale. The tactics are fundamentally the same as those of people who choose to work within one of the older parties, in that the aim is to influence the selection of candidates before the choice has narrowed to two. That the results are sometimes more meager than those obtained by Republican and Democratic "regulars," at least in New York City, has been indicated in several recent elections there.

In the last municipal election in New York City, for example, the Bronx Democratic organization did not accept the endorsement of the American Labor Party, which is a part of the PAC organization, although the other four counties did. In the Bronx, therefore, there were four tickets in the field: Democratic, Republican, American Labor, and Liberal. Each had its own slate of candidates. The Democratic Party made a better showing than ever before. Thus it will be seen that, to be successful at the polls, PAC usually has to make common cause with one or the other of the old-line parties and vote for its candidates.

A great deal has been made of this "balance of power" theory, and it is a fact that in many instances the endorsement of PAC has brought about the election of Democratic candidates who might not otherwise have won. But as far as New York is concerned, the American Labor Party's claim to a "balance of power" role is at least open to question. For example, if Mayor O'Dwyer had run on the Democratic ticket alone in the last mayoral election, he still would have been overwhelmingly elected.

If the citizens whose interests are different from or broader than those championed by PAC would take as much pains to protect those interests as labor is taking to protect its interests, the story might be an entirely different one. Certainly there is no point in condemning PAC-endorsed candidates because of their obligation to organized labor. Unfortunately, however, the citizen with broad interests is rarely a party worker, or even an active citizen. Why, therefore, should he be surprised that more "independent" candidates are not elected to office? It would be a fine thing if all officeholders felt under obligation to all types of citizens, and hence based their judgments on the rule of the greatest long-term good for the greatest number. But we shall never reach that Utopia unless or until all the citizens resolve to work 365 days a year at being citizens.

There, then, is the machine and its boss. While bosses are inevitable under our system of government, bad bosses are not. For, in the last analysis, the real boss is you.

Good Newspapers and Bad[1]

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

I

NEWS VENDING has become highly diversified in the modern world. Of old, the town crier and the beggar going from European village to village purveyed the news. Their companion in commerce was the peddler of oddments with his pack on his back. The town crier was more or less a subsidized news merchant. The beggar was a free agent, except that the better his story, the better bed and board he got. Thus lying early became highly profitable in merchandising the news. But after the peddler put down his pack and opened a store he found beside him the town crier or the beggar, or both, running a printing office. The peddler's store developed departments. The mendicant printer and the town crier became editors, selling opinions with the news.

Two or three generations back, in the English-speaking countries, the editor, who had prospered partly by mendacity and partly by blackmail, who until then would crook a knee to a patron and pull a forelock to his betters, suddenly began to brace up. The merchant prince, grandson of the peddler, was using the printer and editor to promote merchandising. In the early part of the last quarter of the old century, in the English-speaking world the sums paid to publishers for advertising began to outstrip the sums paid to editors for subscriptions. Advertising directed the course of development of the newspaper. In continental Europe, where such advertising as we know in the English-speaking democracies is considered unethical, the press remains a pamphlet—more or less. It is subsidized. It is still the town crier with a louder voice than his knee-breeched great-grandfather had.

But in the English-speaking world the domination of advertising in the printer's revenue has developed a new profession. The journalist is a hybrid—partly business man, partly sleuth, partly professional worker, partly publicist, carrying traces here and there of showman, philosopher, scavenger, and charlatan. In different newspapers different qualities take precedence, coloring the product of the different presses. Broadly speaking, however, American journalism divides along one line, an ancient line, the line which marks the precedence of the business office over the editorial department. Speaking broadly again and allowing for many notable exceptions, this is the truth—that the more definitely the business office dominates a newspaper and makes it conspicuously profitable, the less valuable the newspaper is to its community. Like all simplifications, this one should be distrusted, because it implies a connection between dishonesty and prosperity in a newspaper which is not always warranted by the facts. Yet, while obvious venality and a lust for profits are evidences of dishonesty, a newspaper may prosper tremendously and yet be incorruptible. Possibly its dishonesty is intellectual. Or maybe its dishonesty is imaginary—a matter of good taste or bad.

Now that matter of good taste or bad brings us down to another subdivision in the newspaper business. This subdivision separates newspapers that appeal to the higher strata of intelligence in their potential readers from those that appeal to the lower strata of intelligence. Similarly, churches in our urban centres attract their members from men and women living upon a certain economic standard, and hence, presumably, of a similar grade of intelligence. At any rate, different newspapers in many communities are directed at different reader groups up and down the spectrum of intellectual capacity in their communities. In general, a newspaper that tries to give its community

[1] From *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. CLIII, 1934. Reprinted by permission.

complete coverage has a hard task, especially in our great metropolitan areas.

Now these different kinds of newspapers appealing to different classes of readers would seem to have different standards of morals. Thus one speaks loosely of certain newspapers which appeal to the more literate, the more reasonable, and the more comfortable classes of society as good newspapers. Similarly, one refers to newspapers that pander to the ignorant, to the underprivileged, to the men and women of clouded vision and low I.Q., as bad newspapers. Possibly, indeed probably, the terms used thus are unjustfied. New Yorkers, for instance, who buy either type of newspaper regard the other as mercenary and wicked. The subscriber who invests in the tabloid and in the gutter sheet regards the *Times* as corrupt and class-conscious, and what the readers of the *Times* think of the newspapers that appeal blatantly or even unconsciously to their less fortunate neighbors fills the *Times* readers with emotion inexpressible in their polite vocabulary.

II

Two books appeared last autumn significantly telling the stories of these differences in objective so often manifest in American newspapers. *Watching the World Go By* is the autobiography of Willis J. Abbot, long-time editor of the *Christian Science Monitor,* now member of its Editorial Board. *Timber Line,* by Gene Fowler, is the chronicle of the professional careers, with more or less of the private lives, of H. H. Tammen and F. G. Bonfils, who made the *Denver Post,* which proclaimed itself at its masthead the "paper with a heart and soul"—and, added its unfair enemies, a price. It may be worth while for a moment to consider two opposite careers in American journalism. For in these books the lives, aims, and achievements of Willis Abbot and the Denver editors dramatize broad differences of character and purpose in our journalism.

Mr. Abbot's story recalls a well-born youth with average American college education setting forth in the newspaper profession to find his Holy Grail: this being, first, distinction through services; second, security in his person; third, a modicum of honor; and finally, but above all, well-grounded self-respect. He begins as a reporter in New Orleans, tries his hand at establishing an evening paper in Kansas City and fails like a gentleman, turns up in Chicago, capitalizes his experience, becomes managing editor and editor-in-chief of a number of journals in the interior metropolis, moves up and on in his profession until he finds himself seated in the editorial chair of the *Christian Science Monitor.* That journal has been established by Mrs. Eddy, prophetess of the Christian Science Church. The *Monitor* is to be a newspaper appealing to readers who are not interested in sensations, who do not demand the news of crimes, of sex, or of violence. Under the guidance of Mr. Abbot the ideals of the founder are mantained. After a generation of hard, intelligent work, a successful newspaper appears, a newspaper known all over the world, a model for newspaper men who are counted leaders of the upper middle class. Mr. Abbott has achieved success. He is not without honor, he has personal and economic security, he may well take pride in his life.

His career exemplifies a typical American journalist of, let us say for euphony, the best type. He has sought for rewards in realities, asking of Fate only incidentally fame and money and power. He has made a lifelong appeal to newspaper readers of good taste, men and women of discernment and of a certain sophisticated perspicacity, who are not fooled by flash and blare and boasting—solid upper-middle-class citizens, the solid basis of a burgeois civilization, citizens who like to feel that they form our ruling class. Indeed, in the long run, probably they do dominate America and finally have their say, considering American life in terms of decades.

III

Behold now the shining contrast. Let us open the book *Timber Line,* wherein Gene Fowler tells the story of Tammen and Bonfils, owners and editors of the *Denver Post.*

Harry Tammen was a barkeeper in Denver in the eighties. Fred Bonfils in the early nineties was running what is commonly known as a policy game—a lottery device that did not use the mails, but appealed to the proletarian submerged tenth around the packing houses of Kansas City. Many of his patrons were the Negroes who had come from the South in the exodus of the seventies. Tammen was a child of the streets, a Dutch immigrant boy who had drifted from the Atlantic Coast to the Rocky Mountains, and then in his twenties knew that life was a merciless, cruel game, in which the winner was a fool if he hesitated to deal from the bottom or run in cards from another deck.

Tammen and Bonfils bought the *Denver Evening Post* during the depression of the middle 1890's. They ran it for forty years on Showman Barnum's theory that a sucker was born every minute. Tammen also was a showman. Every thimblerigger's trick, every form of ballyhoo, every cheap device to attract cheap people, Tammen used as a publisher. Bonfils was the editor of the *Post*. He had been exposed to a West Point education, was an able abettor of the showman in baiting the hook with a certain flashy elegance which attracted the vulgar.

Denver, in the 1890's, was the capital of a pure plutocracy. Colorado was a mining state in those days. Hard metal, chiefly gold and silver, came out of the Colorado hills. Great fortunes fell into the laps of pick-and-shovel miners, men frankly seeking raw wealth for its raw sake. This wealth, when it came, being ignorant, was arrogant and purse-proud and an easy mark for swindlers. Colorado politics were full of violence and sudden death. The chief end of man was the immediate dollar and no questions asked.

In such a society the *Denver Post* "waxed fat and kicked"! Its antics seemed to give shrewd encouragement to the gossip that some part of the *Post's* revenues came from blackmail. Probably reputation brought more revenues than actual achievement in blackmail, if it was ever tried. Yet, as the harlot insists upon being called a lady, so the *Post* advertised its honor, its devotion to the common people. With their profits Tammen and Bonfils built a newspaper office building and emblazoned on the portals, "Let Justice, When Denied Another Home, Find Refuge Here." Bonfils, who wrote the editorials wrote under the caption, "So the People May Know." Money rolled into the coffers of the *Post* in a steady golden stream.

With money came power, with power came a certain prestige that was almost respectability. Politicians doffed their hats and smirked when they crossed the threshold of the Red Room where the editors presided. Circulation spread their sphere of influence all over Colorado, into New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming, and Utah. Famed hack writers, whom money would tempt, were promised and sometimes paid fabulous prices to contribute special articles or run departments for the *Post*. Naturally, as the circulation widened and included practically all of the gullibles within two hundred miles of Denver, the *Post* became a braggart. It swaggered. It sought to imitate gentility. In the meanwhile, irate subscribers called with their firearms and chased the editors around the Red Room, and Bonfils retaliated with assault and battery.

Here were scenes that would have pleased Dickens. Yet for all the obviousness of its vulgarity, for all the plain evidences of its quackery, if not venality, its profits mounted steadily. The sucker born every minute seemed to be hurrying with his pennies to the office of the *Post*. It reigned over and more or less ruled a region of America. Its rich owners were able to demand baksheesh from oil men who were "cutting melons" in this region. They were to be seen on presidential trains—on Harding's train, for instance. They had congress with statesmen of sorts. Yet, in the newspaper profession, among editors who held fast to certain old American ideals, Bonfils and Tammen were not names to conjure with. They were outcasts in higher journalistic circles—perhaps Pecksniffian circles, but nevertheless quarters that are highly esteemed.

IV

While Bonfils and Tammen caricatured a type of American journalist which has infested our urban population, and while they emphasized its meaner points, they still did represent the virtues of their type. They and their kind represent today the only sort of journalism that the newly literate moron in American life can understand and enjoy. This moron's name is Legion. He spawns by the millions in our high schools and on the campuses of our colleges. In flashy raiment he runs over the great stadia. He roars through the fraternity houses, at football games, not half so drunk as he pretends to be. He is moved by catchwords, slogans; talks in the short, monosyllabic headline language of the first-page screamer. His wife, his sisters, and his daughters get their art from the dime store, their intellectual stimulus from bridge, and their morals from the movies. The members of this branch of the Legion family form mobs, mass movements. They follow phantoms, and in vast schools go darting hither and yon on the surface of the times, attracted by the shibboleth of the hour. These mobs set their heroes on thrones, adore them for an hour, and forget them. They seem to have no memories, no capacity for logical processes. They are shallow and rather shameless in their inconsistencies. That Tammen and Bonfils ruled the mobs of Rocky Mountain region and so held sway there for three decades indicates certain substantial qualities in these two merry monarchs of mendacity.

It is a long, genealogical jump from the town crier's rival, the beggar, to editors of the sensational press. Yet the line comes down without a break, and collateral lines reach into every American city of over 200,000, where some editor, either on his own or operating upon a transcontinental or a regional chain, is spreading his net for the same shoal of suckers that are fattening the vats of our American journalistic garbage refiners. And always remember that they generally die after attaining success, according to their lights and leadings.

And who shall gainsay their success according to their lights? They serve their clients. They give the multitude the sort of newspaper that the multiude can read and understand. Wherever a newspaper thrives which makes a low appeal, other newspapers which are intelligent and apparently honest are offered to the public. But the readers who support the sensational press will not have the other type of paper.

In every community this human stratum exists. It is one of our modern problems rising out of universal education. We are teaching the mentally submerged and sluggish how to read and write. We are giving them all they will take of education in high schools and colleges. They remain what they were. Happily, they do not always breed their kind. Probably, as their environment improves, each generation moves up a peg in its I.Q. But today they make our different kinds of lynching mobs. They exalt our movie heroes, our baseball and football stars.

Occasionally some sharp demagogue is able to segregate this group into one voting unit when more intelligent groups are dividing. Thus for the hour he has power. But we have always had demagogues. They thrive as they have always thrived, sporadically, by uniting dupes who ordinarily may be depended upon to divide in political matters. Yet if they are more in evidence than in other days and times, they are probably not numerically greater, nor much more important politically, than they have been before in human history.

V

About so many of us are dumb, so many of us are keen, and so many of us are nondescript—which means that, being between poles, so many of us are the salt of the earth. And alas, those who are smart about one thing are dumb about other things. Genius and stupidity often walk under the same hat. Those who know good books, good pictures, and so-called good newspapers, are often easily fooled in statesmen. The philosopher is easily misled in business. Those in the middle crowd, the average mill run

of persons, have always had this problem of their betters and their inferiors. Or they think so. Generally speaking, they seem to run the world. But often their smarter friends become antisocial, develop into great scoundrels, unscrupulous rulers, dishonest financiers; whereupon the common man curbs them and sometimes cuts off their heads. Sometimes he puts them in jails or banishes them and knocks them about rather roughly. Very likely the other group—lower or upper—breaks out only in crises. The abnormals frequently have menaced the ordinary processes of civilization. But apparently here in America they have been growing more vocal than formerly, more noisy, more arrogant. They insist more ruthlessly on ruling the roost, on vulgarizing the country. Their united support of a man or an institution like a flashy newspaper or the movie industry presents really grave difficulties in social progress.

What are we going to do about them—"we" meaning the average citizen, "them" meaning these literate millions who make the intellectual underworld? "They" are pious, God-fearing Americans, many of them well-to-do; most of them live within a fairly stable economic status. They are by no means the underprivileged and the dispossessed. They are the dumb, brash, noisy, opinionated hillbillies of our cities, our country towns, our rural communities, led by the smart ones with highly developed instincts for money or power for antisocial leadership. They are here, those feckless followers of humbugs. We cannot pop off their heads, banish them, or put out poison for them as we do for our antisocial gamins who turn crooked or get too much financial or economic power. The overcredulous, who are also oversuspicious, must have diversion and amusement. They must have their *Denver Posts*, which call for more Bonfils and Tammens. In the meantime, men like Willis Abbot continue to make their private opinion public opinion, and so govern the land.

Now this issue in American life between those of the low intelligence quotient and those with a normal degree of intellectual capacity would seem to point to stratification. But no—they do not stratify. In the blood strain of our national life the genes which carry the thing, whatever it is, called brains, or the lack of it, are liable to occur in any grade, step, or stratum of our social, economic, or intellectual life. We are likely to go from moron to genius in a generation, and from genius to moron in the next generation. The same parents breed children of widely different qualities, so completely have we mixed our social classes here in the last three hundred years. There can be no hereditary ruling class because of this pied blood stream of ours—which fact brings some comfort.

But here and now abide these two entirely different careers, each successful according to its kind and its aim. A career like that of Willis Abbot appeals bravely, courageously, with chivalry and distinction in all its attitudes, to one type of our citizenship. And there are the *Denver Post* and its kind, the tabloids, the cheap chain newspapers, with their flashy features, their emphasis on crime, smearing sex across their front pages in dirty headlines, making money, making even ideals of a sort, crystallizing vulgarity into institutions. And what does it mean? Where are we going? Who knows the answer?

Moronia [1]

ELEANOR ROWLAND WEMBRIDGE

IT WAS THE custom during the Middle Ages, when human nerves and tastes were more robust than they are now, to entertain one's guests with the antics of dwarfs and cripples. The philosophy behind the court jester evidently was this: If a man is so absurd as to choose to be awkward and misshapen, he deserves to be laughed at. We have now passed beyond this stage of humor, and such afflictions as palsy or a malfunctioning pituitary body are no longer considered amusing. But the individual with the crippled intelligence is still a target for derisive laughter. He (and even more inevitably, she) is the court jester and the whipping-boy for our highly geared and very clever world.

The current idea that a person must be either normally intelligent or a sheer imbecile is, of course, as untrue as the notion that one must be either perfectly healthy or sick unto death. There are all stages of rheumatism, indigestion, and inflamed tonsils. And there are also all stages of skill or lack of skill at reasoning, and all sorts of facilities with numbers and with words. Only by the sum total of these aptitudes and defects can we judge the individual. If the total is just a trifle too meager for the complex demands of modern life, and cannot be made to develop further, we are confronted with the moron, the borderline feeble-minded, the dull, and the retarded. All these terms designate weak but often likable individuals, who have been born to stagger helplessly under a social load too heavy for them.

In exposing their mental helplessness and the grotesque gropings of their minds, I cannot but feel that I have descended to the humane level of those medieval worthies who may have said, "Isn't the gait of that club-footed child amusing? Let's chase him and have a good laugh when he trips." That the mental operations of those of low intelligence are absurd, there can be no doubt. But the defense which seems the most appropriate for them, when one more job has been lost because of stupidity, or one more arrest made because of suggestibility, or one more child got into its coffin by gullibility, is the speech of Shylock with but a few words changed: "I am a moron. Hath not a moron eyes? Hath not a moron hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed by the same Winter and Summer as the intelligent are? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that—the villainy you teach us, we will execute, and it shall go hard, but we will better the instruction." No words could better fit the moron, who must lead a citizen's life without a citizen's equipment, and the somber concluding threat is no less ominous because no moron would have the wit to make it.

From which preamble I descend to the concrete fact of Flora's wedding. For Chuck had met Flora on the street and said, "How about a show, Blondey?" to which she had replied, "O Boy!" With this introduction matters had gone far before she even knew his last name—a name which she was now to assume under a wedding bell of Easter lilies. We did not approve of the wedding any more than we had approved of others about which our opinion had not been asked. But both high contracting parties were of legal age, however low their mental ages might be

[1] From *Life Among the Lowbrows* by Eleanor Rowland Wembridge, 1931. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

(Flora's was between ten and eleven as it happened, and Chuck, who was very dull but not quite so feeble, scored a scant year higher), and they wanted to marry, so there was nothing to do but ring the wedding bells, turn on the "Lohengrin" record, throw rice and old shoes, and wait for the inevitable. Incidentally, let no one underestimate the value of an elaborate wedding for morons, if wedded they must be. The mere signing of of a license is essentially too abstract and trivial a formality for those who cannot grasp the idea of law. It takes more than a scrap of paper to hold the family together after a quarrel. But if the veil is long enough, enough jokes are made by the best man, and enough shrieks uttered by the bridesmaids, the impression is made upon the dimly endowed pair that something really important socially has taken place. They are helped thereby to remember that somehow the clergy and the police will see to it that the bride does not sell the household furniture behind her husband's back, and that he will not leave her with the rent to pay. So Flora married Chuck on twenty dollars a week, and they went to housekeeping in two furnished rooms.

Flora had been getting twelve dollars and her lunches as a dishwasher in a restaurant, but that could not continue for long. The aspect of the case, however, was not discussed very much, for Chuck seemed genuinely fond of his Flora, and was marrying her under no outside pressure. Ultimately, therefore, Flora must budget his twenty dollars a week to cover rent, food, clothes, movies, gas, tobacco, lipstick, chewing gum, and layette. To do this required addition, subtraction, and even multiplication, and these processes must be accurate and rapid enough to count the change before the peddler walked away with the extra dollar.

Furthermore, a certain ability to use and to understand language was necessary, because the only callers at Flora's door would be agents for hosiery, vacuum cleaners, vanishing creams and cleaning fluids, veterans selling needles, and children raffling sofa pillows for a fair. It was a good deal of strain for Flora, used to the sociability of a café kitchen, to reconcile herself to the solitude of her own, and her hospitality never could resist letting persistent agents in for an exposition of their wares. She had consorted pleasantly with Chuck and with her other acquaintances, both girls and boys, without much recourse either to her vocabulary or to her arithmetic. She had always spent her money until she was broke, and then got herself fed by her escort of the period until the next payday. Her conversation was about as follows: If Chuck remarked, "There goes a white horse," she shouted with laughter, and said, "Hot dog!" If he said, "There's a Ford," she agreed, murmuring, "You said it," and snuggled closer. She could also say, "Ain't it so?" "You're a fright," "I'll say!" "Hell's bells," and "You're crazy with the heat." She could, moreover, giggle and say nothing, which worked quite as well. She was healthy and good-natured, she liked company, and was normal in all but mind.

To come back to the agents who were so voluble, and whose living depended upon selling goods, could anyone expect Flora to be a match for them? "Start a home library with *Flames of Fervor*," urged one. "Greatest deeds done, and who done 'em—for less than a cent a page." Flora was dazzled—less than a cent a page for so much print! She made a five-dollar installment payment, and had nothing left to pay on the grocer's weekly bill, for she had paid a like amount toward a fur coat, the same on rent, and Chuck had retained five dollars for his own use. Four times five makes twenty—surely not difficult for a normal mind. But a moron cannot grasp its significance rapidly enough to come to a decision before the agent has disappeared around the block.

You recall, no doubt, the standard example in arithmetic which every fourteen-year-old school-child is supposed to be able to solve: If two pencils cost five cents, how many can you get for fifty cents? Not only pencils, but doughnuts, dill-pickles, apples, and cotton handkerchiefs are bought at about this price. But neither Flora nor any of her moron friends could master the problem. We knew they could not because we had asked them. Flora's answer was twenty-five because two

into fifty was twenty-five. Her friend Lucille's, on the other hand, was a hundred, because two times fifty is a hundred. (Lucille's husband is in the penitentiary for stealing motor-cars—he had to steal *something* to keep ahead of her shopping.) Another friend, Annie, ventured a still more generous estimate. She said: "Five times fifty, because five cents times fifty cents is five times fifty—whatever that is." Chuck himself answered ten, because "You get two for five, and two times five is ten." It will be observed that all of them knew that *something* must be done in the way of arithmetic, and that their arithmetic was generally correct—except for the fact that they could not select the right process to employ. A simple problem was to them as Relativity is to the rest of us. If our household accounts depended upon a real understanding of Relativity, we should be precisely in Flora's case, for her capacity to live within her income depends upon simple arithmetical analysis. If she and her friends had been low-grade feeble-minded, they could not even have multiplied their twos and fives. But they were only morons.

It was certainly essential that Flora, out of Chuck's weekly twenty dollars, should save a little for the future, so another example suitable for a fourteen-year-old was set for her. "If you have twenty dollars a week, and spend fourteen a week, how long will it take you to save three hundred dollars?" Flora, who had a sense of humor, could not at first get past the joke that she should ever save anything. "A lifetime," she answered—" and a long lifetime." Then, "three hundred times fourteen." "Three hundred times fourteen what?" we persisted, and Flora answered "dollars." The example was written out for her, but she had completely lost the connection, and when she was again reminded, "But how long a time would it take to save it?" she answered, as if through the telephone, "2025." What she meant by that we shall never know. We know only that the firms equipped to solicit business with the mentally unsound will find Flora out and use the courts to collect their bills. We know also that with such arithmetical equipment her savings account will never be large.

Flora's good nature had often led her into difficulties, not only with agents in the way of rash purchases, but with friends in the way of picking up joy-rides, calling out of the windows to people she did not know, wearing ultra-conspicuous dress when she and Lucille (whom she soon took as a boarder) went shopping, and overindulgence in matinées which neither could afford, and in which her flirtations with the trombonist made Chuck very jealous. Lucille, as a temporary widow, felt that she had a right to flirt with whom she chose, and Flora, from long habit, followed her example. In what words shall one urge the laws of morals and good taste upon a moron of flaming cheeks and healthy appetites, whose inclinations are those of an adult body with a child's mind? Unfortunately, there is no value in exhortations unless one's auditor understands the words in which they are phrased, and what do Flora or Lucille (or Chuck, for that matter) understand? All of them stuck in the fifth or sixth grade in school until they were so large that they were ashamed to be seen with the smaller children, and were tired of being scolded for not getting their lessons. Then they quit, and went to work. It is hard, indeed, to discover just what words convey to morons with such a background. Flora when questioned says that "lecture" means "getting hanged," while Lucille says, "It's the chair." The fact that the latter's husband is in the penitentiary, perhaps explains why both girls should associate the word "electric." Flora says skill is "You do it," which isn't so bad. Lucille says, "You do it to fish." "Not scale, but skill," we repeat. "In your head," she answers, which seems perhaps on the right track, until she adds "a bone." "Not skull, but skill," we insist patiently. "Fry in it," she tries again, and we give it up. For purposes of ordinary conversation, words of that abstraction are too hazy for Lucille.

Of course, uneducated people necessarily have smaller vocabularies than the highly trained. But on the other hand, children taught in American schools and confronted

by the newspapers have been exposed to a good many words, and the meanings of a few of them have got to penetrate if any sermon on behavior is to be intelligible. Moreover, it is impossible for good advice to be couched entirely in words devoid of some degree of abstraction. So we ask—"What is pity?" That seems easy: "You're sorry." Encouraged, we proceed, "What is justice?" "Peace," answers Lucille. "I got married by one." Envy is "enemy" or "You like them" or (hesitating), "You *don't* like them." Insure, to Flora, means "sure," or, "You get it when you're dead," or, "They get it at the house," or, "It's in the company like," or, "It's when you get hurt." So much for Flora grasping the insurance principle when some new agent at the door wheedles her out of a first installment, never to be followed by a second!

Cotton is "wood-like," to Flora, but "comes from animals" to Lucille. ("Like coal," she adds, to make it more clear.) Chuck, however, says with a flourish that "it can be viewed from a perspective point," and Flora is silenced with admiration. Brunette, says Flora, means "blondes"; regard means "guard-like"; civil is "civilized" or "big." "Why big?" "Because the Civil War was big." Another venture was "with knives"—because the war was fought with knives! In what words, then, shall we express to Flora, "You must learn to keep an account of your money, not spend more than you have, and be faithful to Chuck," when she has already told us that charity is "Don't be silly," faith is "You do it," and when, to a question requiring the answer "thirty-five cents," she has answered, "eighteen hundred weeks"? When it is possible to say that control means "wagon" and chastity means "tricks," what hodge-podge of ideas has one's sermon produced in the good-natured mind of the moron bride, who probably has not been listening in any case, but has only been wondering whether her hair would look better in bangs or with a marcel?

Chuck, who was a barber, specializing in the haircuts of sailors along the lake-front, had a curious facility for words, which always made a profound impression on Flora and on his other friends, and left one in doubt as to how much of what he was saying he understood himself. It was to be expected, of course, that as soon as the sprightly Lucille was accepted as a boarder, complications would arise. Flora wanted Lucille for the sake of her company. But so, unfortunately, did Chuck. He would not have sought her out, and neither, perhaps, would she have angled for him. But both being there, in somewhat crowded quarters (when entertaining guests they always slept three in a bed), jealousies soon arose, and a lawsuit pended.

Lucille had twice before held the proud distinction of being a newspaper headliner. When Joe was sentenced, she had had her picture taken with her arms around him, and a dotted line issuing from her mouth enclosed the legend, "I'll be so lonely without my Buddy." Then there had been a dingy fracas later on, when Lucille charged unknown ruffians with tattooing her shoulder-blade, and that, of course, made a magnificent picture for the evening paper Lucille's friends regarded the tattooing episode with their tongues in their cheeks—but no one could deny that her pictures had decorated the pictorial section, and that she had twice been presented to one hundred thousand readers, first as "Pretty Girl-Wife Waits for Thug," and then as "Flapper Tattooed. Is Chivalry Dead?" It was natural that Flora, equally ambitious for fame, should look about her for some path to glory. The easiest way was to start a lawsuit against Lucille for the alienation of Chuck's affections.

We had long arguments with Chuck at this turn of events, and were, of course, dazzled by his vocabulary, as no one could fail to be. Since simple language was only a haze to him, we tried the experiment of teaching him virtue through fables, in a manner that has been popular since Aesop, and which is apparently still dear to the public, for no movie program is complete without its pictured symbolic moral. Chuck was fond of fables and read them fluently. But the question was: What lesson, if any, did he learn from them? We soon found out. From the fable of the man who called to Hercules for

help, and was advised by him to put his own shoulder to the wheel, he derived the lesson, "Always do the same to them." He laughed appreciatively at the girl who counted her chickens before they hatched and said, "It pays to be broad-minded." He sighed over the crow who was flattered into dropping her meat in order to sing, and said, "That's like Lucille. These flappers. It don't pay to be led by flappery." Of the miller and his son who took everyone's advice about their donkey instead of using their own judgment, he said, "They're so backward, these dumb animals. Too backward, much more backward than human beings!"

Despite these responses from Chuck, the alienation suit went on, and so, joy of joys, Flora's picture got into the paper with the caption, "Bride Sobs, I Loved Him So!" This eminence, of course, nettled Lucille, but pleased Chuck as well as Flora, and the resulting letter from him to his wife effected a reconciliation. "I have thought this thing out pretty thoroughly," he wrote, "and I have done this according to the balance method of applied logic. As a result, I am convinced that you are wrong. Not only that, but I have analyzed you psychologically, and checked up on the results. You have heard of psychoanalysis, of course. The results upon synthesis tallied with the facts." This astonishing letter was correctly spelled, written on pink paper, and delivered in person! We helped Flora to read it, and with the concrete suggestion added by us, that Lucille board elsewhere, the home life of Chuck and Flora was resumed.

I should feel more sure of the reconciliation being permanent if Flora's picture had been as conspicuously placed in the papers as that of her friend had been. Alas, it was not, and Lucille has not hesitated to point out the distinction. We'd all be easier in our minds if Flora had sobbed upon the front page instead of the ninth. As for the lawyer in the case, he may now join the grocer and the rest of the bill collectors in trying to squeeze blood from two little turnips.

If the thought processes of our moron friends are analyzed, it is evident that in almost every case one may determine, by vague word associations, why they say what they do. Through a hazy mist of associations they see a vague outline of what is being discussed, and because of the sound of a word, or some more or less intangible link, they clutch at a memory which prompts a response of some appropriateness. Having these vague associations, they escape downright imbecility, but never, except in the simplest of concrete sentences, do they clearly understand what is being said. Their own language is largely Greek to them. They never can make out why it is that other people make so many and such violent distinctions, or why they take such determined stands.

Chuck and Flora will now resume their interrupted domestic life as if nothing had happened, and Lucille will rejoin Joe when he emerges from the penitentiary, or will elope with Micky. Flora on a later occasion will flirt with Tony, and Chuck will make love to Sadie, and they will again make up, or will *not* make up, as the case may be. But in either case, Flora will merely smile, and pat her collar and fidget until we are done scolding, and Chuck will continue to shave the sailors, and nod his head over their "interogeneous accounts of reserved times." They will hurl obscene abuse at each other when they are angry (with as little grasp of its meaning as they have of any other words). Much of this abuse may be justified, but they will hurl it as readily when it is not. Many an exasperated moron mother addresses her own daughter as "*son* of a bitch." She uses the term, regardless of its sense, merely because it registers disapproval, as we murmur "how interesting" to the statistician's explanation which we have not in the least understood.

In the same manner the moron daughter will agree to some admonition with a tittering, "That's an earful." Because her answer has a vestige of relevance, the enraged employer, the overtrustful merchant, or some other victim, will be convinced that all morons are in complete possession of normal reasoning powers, or as, in his heat, he tends so aptly to express it, "They're exactly as

bright as I am." Because to the question "How much does seven feet of cloth cost at fifteen cents a yard?" they can answer, "Arithmetic," or "You got me—more money than I got," or "Somewhere around a coupla dollars," the inference is that they are capable of providing for their families. Because, though twenty-one and voters, their answer to "What is the difference between a President and a King?" is "Presidents are better," or "Kings are stuck up and want lotsa service," or "Generally kill you, Kings do, at least *some* don't," it is assumed that the vote they cast has an opinion behind it. I have known many a citizen who voted the straight —well, anyhow, who voted *a* straight ticket, whose only answer to the above question was some variation of "They *sit* different—on thrones, but a President wears regular clothes."

There must be no sweeping inference from this that all troublemakers are morons, or that all morons are trouble-makers. Far from it! It is a marvel what can be done with a good disposition and small mental equipment, if the training is good, the surroundings simple, and the social standards high. Not much real thought is required if one is protected and lives with intelligent friends. A well-trained moron boy, who has enough of a way with him to get a smart girl to marry him, is often in clover. His little shop is run well, his wife sees to it that he has tobacco and that his dinners are good. She brings up the children and there is nothing left for him to do but to praise her in the city gates. Also an intelligent man with a moron wife can get along pretty well if she has learned good manners at boarding-school, and he has money enough to pay her debts. Unfortunately, both will get into difficulties with their children. Nature slipped when she made an intelligent mother a necessity for successful children, and yet allowed so many men to be attracted by defective mates. The fact that the dull girl cannot realize how dull she is, and that the ineffective father cannot know how little he is to blame for his failures, makes the ensuing catastrophes no less pathetic. On the contrary, their profuse excuses, their stories so wide of the point, their miscellaneous and irrelevant conversation, their fate always dogging them, but never understood, provide all the essentials of tragedy, for the comic is never absent.

It was my duty at one time to interview a young man, Flora's mental counterpart, on trial for the murder of a policeman. The little fellow had been part of a hold-up party, in which he was either the cat's paw for cleverer members of the group, or had misunderstood directions, or was too drunk to know what he was doing—or any one of several explanations, none of which could he give himself. He was gentle and good-natured, simple and entirely vague as to the whole affair, for which he was later electrocuted. Even the bailiff, inclined to be severe over the murder of an officer on duty, looked at the mild little murderer with some misgivings.

"It seems hard that policemen must be at the mercy of stupid little fellows like David, and hard that the first notice anyone takes of David is to electrocute him," I remarked.

The bailiff peered at him in doubt. "Can I do anything for ya, Dave?" he inquired gently, but murmured in an aside, "He ain't got a chancet. He shot him all right and before witnesses, and that gets the chair."

Then he puffed away down the corridor, shaking his head, while David smiled pleasantly, and remarked, "I'm off the booze, all right. Excuse my necktie." The policeman's widow, and Dave's widow, the policeman's orphans and Dave's orphans, the arrest, the trial, the chair—all because Dave could not exercise the foresight and imagination which he did not possess, respect the law which he could not grasp, and think quickly in a new emergency when he could not think at all. His children will go through the same routine, and we all foresee it—all but Dave. He meditates upon his necktie, and then is seen no more.

Of course, the real victims of such tragedies are the children. Many are the remedies that have been suggested—none, perhaps, adequate. Certainly none has been adequately tried. Early discovery of morons is granted as desirable, but what then? Reduc-

tion of the number of their offspring is also regarded by most people as desirable. But by what means? Segregation? That means money from the taxpayers. Sterilization? That means fright, opposition, and general panic. No granting of marriage licenses? That means the elimination of something which the moron is only too ready to do without. Birth control? Illegal, or morons cannot understand it, or it is irreligious—or what you will. Education of the feebleminded for unskilled labor? Does that solve the problem of the delinquent tendencies of children reared by a moron mother? And so it goes. In the meantime they multiply. Today they compose from five to ten per cent of the population of the United States—according to how dull they must be to be included.

As Flora, Lucille, and Chuck advance in age from twenty to forty, their escapades become less amusing, and even the most callous reporter does not consider them suitable for his pages. They are doing as well as they can, considering their training, their talents, their temptations, and the heavy burdens laid on their weak shoulders. But they and their pale babies are recognized as disasters. They are still subject to the same diseases and healed by the same means as we. Their children die from epidemics like flies, but they pass their germs on to our children before they go. Their children see ours in automobiles, and steal them from us. Our girls must dress in fashion, and so must theirs, even though our boys pay the bills. All of them flock gladly toward any frivolity or indecency which we commercialize. And ever the grim chorus chants monotonously in the background—"The villainy you teach us we will execute, and it shall go hard but we will better the instruction."

It is too dreadful and too stern a refrain for such frail little clowns as Chuck and Flora, and their children. And in the final tragedy, who are the villains and who the victims—They or We?

Who Is Loyal to America?[1]

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER

ON MAY 6 [1947] a Russian-born girl, Mrs. Shura Lewis, gave a talk to the students of the Western High School of Washington, D. C. She talked about Russia—its school system, its public health program, the position of women, of the aged, of the workers, the farmers, and the professional classes—and compared, superficially and uncritically, some American and Russian social institutions. The most careful examination of the speech—happily reprinted for us in the *Congressional Record*—does not disclose a single disparagement of anything American unless it is a quasi-humorous reference to the cost of having a baby and of dental treatment in this country. Mrs. Lewis said nothing that had not been said a thousand times, in speeches, in newspapers, magazines, and books. She said nothing that any normal person could find objectionable.

Her speech, however, created a sensation. A few students walked out on it. Others improvised placards proclaiming their devotion to Americanism. Indignant mothers telephoned their protests. Newspapers took a strong stand against the outrage. Congress, rarely concerned for the political or economic welfare of the citizens of the capital city, reacted sharply when its intellectual welfare was at stake. Congressmen Rankin and Dirksen thundered and lightened; the District of Columbia Committee went into a huddle; there were demands for housecleaning in the whole school system, which was obviously shot through and through with Communism.

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All this might be ignored, for we have learned not to expect either intelligence or understanding of Americanism from this element in our Congress. More ominous was the reaction of the educators entrusted with the high responsibility of guiding and guarding the intellectual welfare of our boys and girls. Did they stand up for intellectual freedom? Did they insist that high-school children had the right and the duty to learn about other countries? Did they protest that students were to be trusted to use intelligence and common sense? Did they affirm that the Americanism of their students was staunch enough to resist propaganda? Did they perform even the elementary task, expected of educators above all, of analyzing the much-criticized speech?

Not at all. The District Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Hobart Corning, hastened to agree with the animadversions of Representatives Rankin and Dirksen. The whole thing was, he confessed, "a very unfortunate occurrence," and had "shocked the whole school system." What Mrs. Lewis said, he added gratuitously, was "repugnant to all who are working with youth in the Washington schools," and "the entire affair contrary to the philosophy of education under which we operate." Mr. Danowsky, the hapless principal of the Western High School, was "the most shocked and regretful of all." The District of Columbia Committee would be happy to know that though he was innocent in the matter, he had been properly reprimanded!

It is the reaction of the educators that makes this episode more than a tempest in a teapot. We expect hysteria from Mr. Rankin and some newspapers; we are shocked when we see educators, timid before criticism and confused about first principles, betray their trust. And we wonder what can be that "philosophy of education" which believes that young people can be trained to the duties of citizenship by wrapping their minds in cotton-wool.

Merely by talking about Russia Mrs. Lewis was thought to be attacking Americanism. It is indicative of the seriousness of the situation that during this same week the House found it necessary to take time out from the discussion of the labor bill, the tax bill, the International Trade Organization, and the world famine, to meet assaults upon Americanism from a new quarter. This time it was the artists who were undermining the American system, and members of the House spent some hours passing around reproductions of the paintings which the State Department had sent abroad as part of its program for advertising American culture. We need not pause over the exquisite humor which congressmen displayed in their comments on modern art: weary statesmen must have their fun. But we may profitably remark the major criticism which was directed against this unfortunate collection of paintings. What was wrong with these paintings, it shortly appeared, was that they were un-American. "No American drew those crazy pictures," said Mr. Rankin. Perhaps he was right. The copious files of the Committee on Un-American Activities were levied upon to prove that of the forty-five artists represented "no less than twenty were definitely New Deal in various shades of Communism." The damning facts are specified for each of the pernicious twenty; we can content ourselves with the first of them, Ben-Zion. What is the evidence here? "Ben-Zion was one of the signers of a letter sent to President Roosevelt by the United American Artists which urged help to the USSR and Britain after Hitler attacked Russia." He was, in short, a fellow-traveler of Churchill and Roosevelt.

The same day that Mr. Dirksen was denouncing the Washington school authorities for allowing students to hear about Russia ("In Russia equal right is granted to each nationality. There is no discrimination. Nobody says, you are a Negro, you are a Jew") Representative Williams of Mississippi rose to denounce the *Survey-Graphic* magazine and to add further to our understanding of Americanism. The *Survey-Graphic*, he said, "contained 129 pages of outrageously vile and nauseating anti-Southern, anti-Christian, un-American, and pro-Communist tripe, ostensibly directed toward the elimination of

the custom of racial segregation in the South." It was written by "meddling un-American purveyors of hate and indecency."

All in all, a busy week for the House. Yet those who make a practice of reading their *Record* will agree that it was a typical week. For increasingly Congress is concerned with the eradication of disloyalty and the defense of Americanism, and scarcely a day passes that some congressman does not treat us to exhortations and admonitions, impassioned appeals and eloquent declamations, similar to those inspired by Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Ben-Zion, and the editors of the *Survey-Graphic*. And scarcely a day passes that the outlines of the new loyalty and the new Americanism are not etched more sharply in public policy.

And this is what is significant—the emergency of new patterns of Americanism and of loyalty, patterns radically different from those which have long been traditional. It is not only the Congress that is busy designing the new patterns. They are outlined in President Truman's recent disloyalty order, in similar orders formulated by the New York City Council and by state and local authorities throughout the country; in the programs of the D.A.R., the American Legion, and similar patriotic organizations, in the editorials of the Hearst and the McCormick-Patterson papers, and in an elaborate series of advertisements sponsored by large corporations and business organizations. In the making is a revival of the red hysteria of the early 1920's, one of the shabbiest chapters in the history of American democracy; and more than a revival, for the new crusade is designed not merely to frustrate Communism but to formulate a positive definition of Americanism, and a positive concept of loyalty.

What is the new loyalty? It is, above all, conformity. It is the uncritical and unquestioning acceptance of America as it is—the political institutions, the social relationships, the economic practices. It rejects inquiry into the race question or socialized medicine, or public housing, or into the wisdom or validity of our foreign policy. It regards as particularly heinous any challenge to what is called "the system of private enterprise," identifying that system with Americanism. It abandons evolution, repudiates the once popular concept of progress, and regards America as a finished product, perfect and complete.

It is, it must be added, easily satisfied. For it wants not intellectual conviction nor spiritual conquest, but mere outward conformity. In matters of loyalty it takes the word for the deed, the gesture for the principle. It is content with the flag salute, and does not pause to consider the warning of our Supreme Court that "a person gets from a symbol the meaning he puts into it, and what is one man's comfort and inspiration is another's jest and scorn." It is satisfied with membership in respectable organizations and, as it assumes that every member of a liberal organization is a Communist, concludes that every member of a conservative one is a true American. It has not yet learned that not everyone who saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven. It is designed neither to discover real disloyalty nor to foster true loyalty.

II

What is wrong with this new concept of loyalty? What, fundamentally, is wrong with the pusillanimous retreat of the Washington educators, the barbarous antics of Washington legislators, the hysterical outbursts of the D.A.R., the gross and vulgar appeals of business corporations? It is not merely that these things are offensive. It is rather that they are wrong—morally, socially, and politically.

The concept of loyalty as conformity is a false one. It is narrow and restrictive, denies freedom of thought and of conscience, and is irremediably stained by private and selfish considerations. "Enlightened loyalty," wrote Josiah Royce, who made loyalty the very core of his philosophy,

> means harm to no man's loyalty. It is at war only with disloyalty, and its warfare, unless necessity constrains, is only a spiritual warfare. It does not foster class hatreds; it knows of

nothing reasonable about race prejudices; and it regards all races of men as one in their need of loyalty. It ignores mutual misunderstandings. It loves its own wherever upon earth its own, namely loyalty itself, is to be found.

Justice, charity, wisdom, spirituality, he added, were all definable in terms of loyalty, and we may properly ask which of these qualities our contemporary champions of loyalty display.

Above all, loyalty must be to something larger than oneself, untainted by private purposes or selfish ends. But what are we to say of the attempts by the NAM and by individual corporations to identify loyalty with the system of private enterprise? Is it not as if officeholders should attempt to identify loyalty with their own party, their own political careers? Do not those corporatons which pay for full-page advertisements associating Americanism with the competitive system expect, ultimately, to profit from that association? Do not those organizations that deplore, in the name of patriotism, the extension of government operation of hydroelectric power expect to profit from their campaign?

Certainly it is a gross perversion not only of the concept of loyalty but of the concept of Americanism to identify it with a particular economic system. This precise question, interestingly enough, came before the Supreme Court in the Schneiderman case not so long ago—and it was Wendell Willkie who was counsel for Schneiderman. Said the Court:

> Throughout our history many sincere people whose attachment to the general Constitutional scheme cannot be doubted have, for various and even divergent reasons, urged differing degrees of governmental ownership and control of natural resources, basic means of production, and banks and the media of exchange, either with or without compensation. And something once regarded as a species of private property was abolished without compensating the owners when the institution of slavery was forbidden. Can it be said that the author of the Emancipation Proclamation and the supporters of the Thirteenth Amendment were not attached to the Constitution?

There is, it should be added, a further danger in the willful identification of Americanism with a particular body of economic practices. Many learned economists predict for the near future an economic crash similar to that of 1929. If Americanism is equated with competitive capitalism, what happens to it if competitive capitalism comes a cropper? If loyalty and private enterprise are inextricably associated, what is to preserve loyalty if private enterprise fails? Those who associate Americanism with a particular program of economic practices have a grave responsibilty, for if their program should fail, they expose Americanism itself to disrepute.

The effort to equate loyalty with conformity is misguided because it assumes that there is a fixed content to loyalty and that this can be determined and defined. But loyalty is a principle, and eludes definition except in its own terms. It is devotion to the best interests of the commonwealth, and may require hostility to the particular policies which the government pursues, the particular practices which the economy undertakes, the particular institutions which society maintains. "If there is any fixed star in our Constitutional constellation," said the Supreme Court in the Barnette case, "it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion, or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein. If there are any circumstances which permit an exception they do not now occur to us."

True loyalty may require, in fact, what appears to the naïve to be disloyalty. It may require hostility to certain provisions of the Constitution itself, and historians have not concluded that those who subscribed to the "Higher Law" were lacking in patriotism. We should not forget that our tradition is one of protest and revolt, and it is stultifying to celebrate the rebels of the past—Jefferson and Paine, Emerson and Thoreau—while we silence the rebels of the present. "We are a rebellious nation," said Theodore Parker,

known in his day as the great American Preacher, and went on:

> Our whole history is treason; our blood was attained before we were born; our creeds are infidelity to the mother church; our constitution, treason to our fatherland. What of that? Though all the governors in the world bid us commit treason against man, and set the example, let us never submit.

Those who would impose upon us a new concept of loyalty not only assume that this is possible, but have the presumption to believe that they are competent to write the definition. We are reminded of Whitman's defiance of the "never-ending audacity of elected persons." Who are those who would set the standards of loyalty? They are Rankins and Bilbos, officials of the D.A.R. and the Legion and the NAM, Hearsts and McCormicks. May we not say of Rankin's harangues on loyalty what Emerson said of Webster at the time of the Seventh of March speech: "The word honor in the mouth of Mr. Webster is like the word love in the mouth of a whore."

What do men know of loyalty who make a mockery of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, whose energies are dedicated to stirring up race and class hatreds, who would straitjacket the American spirit? What indeed do they know of America—the America of Sam Adams and Tom Paine, of Jackson's defiance of the Court and Lincoln's celebration of labor, of Thoreau's essay on Civil Disobedience and Emerson's championship of John Brown, of the America of the Fourierists and the Come-Outers, of cranks and fanatics, of socialists and anarchists? Who among American heroes could meet their tests, who would be cleared by their committees? Not Washington, who was a rebel. Not Jefferson, who wrote that all men are created equal and whose motto was "rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." Not Garrison, who publicly burned the Constitution; or Wendell Phillips, who spoke for the underprivileged everywhere and counted himself a philosophical anarchist; not Seward of the Higher Law or Sumner of racial equality. Not Lincoln, who admonished us to have malice toward none, charity for all; or Wilson, who warned that our flag was "a flag of liberty of opinion as well as of political liberty"; or Justice Holmes, who said that our Constitution is an experiment and that while that experiment is being made "we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death."

III

There are further and more practical objections against the imposition of fixed concepts of loyalty or tests of disloyalty. The effort is itself a confession of fear, a declaration of insolvency. Those who are sure of themselves do not need reassurance, and those who have confidence in the strength and the virtue of America do not need to fear either criticism or competition. The effort is bound to miscarry. It will not apprehend those who are really disloyal, it will not even frighten them; it will affect only those who can be labeled "radical." It is sobering to recall that though the Japanese relocation program, carried through at such incalculable cost in misery and tragedy, was justified to us on the ground that the Japanese were potentially disloyal, the record does not disclose a single case of Japanese disloyalty or sabotage during the whole war. The warning sounded by the Supreme Court in the Barnette flag-salute case is a timely one:

> Ultimate futility of such attempts to compel obedience is the lesson of every such effort from the Roman drive to stamp out Christianity as a disturber of pagan unity, the Inquisition as a means to religious and dynastic unity, the Siberian exiles as a means to Russian unity, down to the fast-failing efforts of our present totalitarian enemies. Those who begin coercive elimination of dissent soon find themselves exterminating dissenters. Compulsory unification of opinion achieves only the unanimity of the graveyard.

Nor are we left to idle conjecture in this matter; we have had experience enough. Let us limit ourselves to a single example, one

that is wonderfully relevant. Back in 1943 the House Un-American Activities Committee, deeply disturbed by alleged disloyalty among government employees, wrote a definition of subversive activities and proceeded to apply it. The definition was admirable, and no one could challenge its logic or its symmetry:

> Subversive activity derives from conduct intentionally destructive of or inimical to the Government of the United States—that which seeks to undermine its institutions, or to distort its functions, or to impede its projects, or to lessen its efforts, the ultimate end being to overturn it all.

Surely anyone guilty of activities so defined deserved not only dismissal but punishment. But how was the test applied? It was applied to two distinguished scholars, Robert Morss Lovett and Goodwin Watson, and to one able young historian, William E. Dodd, Jr., son of our former Ambassador to Germany. Of almost three million persons employed by the government, these were the three whose subversive activities were deemed the most pernicious, and the House cut them off the payroll. The sequel is familiar. The Senate concurred only to save a wartime appropriation; the President signed the bill under protest for the same reason. The Supreme Court declared the whole business a "bill of attainder" and therefore unconstitutional. Who was it, in the end, who engaged in "subversive activities"—Lovett, Dodd, and Watson, or the Congress which flagrantly violated Article One of the Constitution?

Finally, disloyalty tests are not only futile in application, they are pernicious in their consequences. They distract attention from activities that are really disloyal, and silence criticism inspired by true loyalty. That there are disloyal elements in America will not be denied, but there is no reason to suppose that any of the tests now formulated will ever be applied to them. It is relevant to remember that when Rankin was asked why his Committee did not investigate the Ku Klux Klan he replied that the Klan was not un-American, it was American!

Who are those who are really disloyal? Those who inflame racial hatreds, who sow religious and class dissensions. Those who subvert the Constitution by violating the freedom of the ballot box. Those who make a mockery of majority rule by the use of the filibuster. Those who impair democracy by denying equal educational facilities. Those who frustrate justice by lynch law or by making a farce of jury trials. Those who deny freedom of speech and of the press and of assembly. Those who press for special favors against the interest of the commonwealth. Those who regard public office as a source of private gain. Those who would exalt the military over the civil. Those who for selfish and private purposes stir up national antagonisms and expose the world to the ruin of war.

Will the House Committee on Un-American Activities interfere with the activities of these? Will Mr. Truman's disloyalty proclamation reach these? Will the current campaigns for Americanism convert these? If past experience is any guide, they will not. What they will do, if they are successful, is to silence criticism, stamp out dissent—or drive it underground. But if our democracy is to flourish it must have criticism, if our government is to function it must have dissent. Only totalitarian governments insist upon conformity and they—as we know—do so at their peril. Without criticism abuses will go unrebuked; without dissent our dynamic system will become static. The American people have a stake in the maintenance of the most thorough-going inquisition into American institutions. They have a stake in nonconformity, for they know that the American genius is non-conformist. They have a stake in experimentation of the most radical character, for they know that only those who prove all things can hold fast that which is good.

IV

It is easier to say what loyalty is not than to say what it is. It is not conformity. It is not passive acquiescence in the status quo.

It is not preference for everything American over everything foreign. It is not an ostrich-like ignorance of other countries and other institutions. It is not the indulgence in ceremony—a flag salute, an oath of allegiance, a fervid verbal declaration. It is not a particular creed, a particular version of history, a particular body of economic practices, a particular philosophy.

It is a tradition, an ideal, and a principle. It is a willingness to subordinate every private advantage for the larger good. It is an appreciation of the rich and diverse contributions that can come from the most varied sources. It is allegiance to the traditions that have guided our greatest statesmen and inspired our most eloquent poets—the traditions of freedom, equality, democracy, tolerance, the tradition of the higher law, of experimentation, co-operation, and pluralism. It is a realization that America was born of revolt, flourished on dissent, became great through experimentation.

Independence was an act of revolution; republicanism was something new under the sun; the federal system was a vast experimental laboratory. Physically Americans were pioneers; in the realm of social and economic institutions, too, their tradition has been one of pioneering. From the beginning, intellectual and spiritual diversity have been as characteristic of America as racial and linguistic. The most distinctively American philosophies have been transcendentalism—which is the philosophy of the Higher Law—and pragmatism—which is the philosophy of experimentation and pluralism. These two principles are the very core of Americanism: the principle of the Higher Law, or of obedience to the dictates of conscience rather than of statutes, and the principle of pragmatism, or the rejection of a single good and of the notion of a finished universe. From the beginning Americans have known that there were new worlds to conquer, new truths to be discovered. Every effort to confine Americanism to a single pattern, to constrain it to a single formula, is disloyalty to everything that is valid in Americanism.

The Insane Root[1]

REBECCA WEST

THE FIRST PEOPLE to come into Room No. 1 of The Central Criminal Court, where John Amery was to be tried for high treason, were two American officers, who sat and stared about them for some moments before any came to join them, drab figures in a court sallow with November. They were the soberer sort of soldier, their faces lined and greyish with the prolonged overwork that led up to and away from D-day. There arrived next the Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir Theobald Mathew, a long-headed, tall slender Irishman with jutting eyebrows. He watched his clerk set down an enormous file at the counsel's table and turned away, moving as if he had reason to feel something like pleasure: better put it down as unusually acute interest. Then the regular personnel of the court filtered in. First came the chief prosecuting counsel, the Attorney-General, Sir Hartley Shawcross, just home from the trial of the war criminals at Nuremberg. The fall of those desperate men to their last place in the pit can also be looked at from another point of view: a creditably conducted incident in a sunnily successful career. There is nothing callous or even smug about him, he has indeed the gentlest and most charitable of tempers; but he is fortunate, visibly fortunate. Had Pippa passed him she would have added him to her list of proofs that all's right with the world. He was followed

[1] From *The Meaning of Treason* by Rebecca West. Copyright 1945, 1947 by Rebecca West. Originally published in *The New Yorker Magazine;* reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

by the counsel for the defence: Gerald Osborne Slade, who was counsel for Joyce, who pecks at his cases like a sparrow, as tireless and as careful of the smallest grain; and his assistant, John Foster, he who spent the first years of the war at the British Embassy in Washington, dark and high-coloured and genially menacing, like a Renaissance bravo.

The three long tables in front of the judge's bench were soon filled up with lawyers and those two strongly contrasted types who had to be present at all the trials—the men with iron faces who belong to the special police, and the Military Intelligence officers, who are usually of notably mild appearance, having been detached from the ordinary army service because of their clerkly gifts. Indeed the court looked very much as it was during the trial of William Joyce except for the spectators. When Joyce was being tried, the court became a background for him and his followers, who, though they were scattered in twos or threes, achieved by their emotions an effect of unity, so that the remembered scene has the quality of a chapter in a legend of martyrdom. The people who had come to see John Amery tried were drawn by an interest in the treason laws, or by a recollection of his broadcasts, or by curiosity about the black sheep of a deeply respected family; but there were no apostles, for there was no leader. The eyes turned towards the dock that day were certain to be dry. The trial of John Amery was the end of a long story dessicating to the heart.

It began years ago in the Augustan age, among children of promise. Some time in the 'eighties, the impudent red-haired son of the brilliant politician Lord Randolph Churchill was sent to the famous public school Harrow. Exploring the possibilities of the establishment, he came on the swimming bath and found a very small boy standing, fully dressed, at its edge. He fell to the obvious temptation, but he realized, as the victim turned about in the water and struck out for the side, that it was one of the lions of Harrow, Leopold Amery, who, though small in stature, was older than his assailant and of awesome accomplishment both as a scholar and an athlete. Obviously the situation was awkward. The young Winston's first attempt to put matters right was not inspired. "I am very sorry," he said. "I mistook you for a fourth-form boy. You are so small." But his guardian daemon came to save him in the end. "My father," he added, "who is a great man, is also small." This was the beginning of a lifelong, bickering, and unbreakable friendship.

Leopold Amery never grew much in inches. In any gathering he can be easily picked out, the small and stocky protagonist with the fighting look that little men often have, but not tetchy: on the contrary, happy with the happiness enjoyed by those whose bodies are in good shape. All his life he has kept up his skiing and sailing, and his mountaineering to the extent of climbing the Matterhorn just once again, for old times' sake, when he was sixty-five; and he, who was born in 1873, is still notably neat-footed and buoyant of tread. In mind he grew as he did not in body. He worked well at Oxford, took a first in Greats, the combined course in classics and philosophy which attracts the best minds, and was elected a Fellow of All Soul's College. This is a curious institution which, unlike other colleges, does not undertake the teaching of undergraduates, but tries to bridge the gulf eternally existing between thinkers and men of action by housing together some of the one and some of the other. Thus, graduates who are engaged in scholarly pursuits, whether in literature or history or law, mingle with graduates who are engaged in public affairs. Only the first-rate get these fellowships, and Amery, if not a first-rate intellectual, was a first-rate man.

During the past fifty years, Amery has spun a triple thread of the law, journalism, and politics, and there are few knots in it. He filled various administrative posts during the South African War and the two world wars and in the intervening times of peace in Parliament and out of it. Sometimes he found himself in the same cabinet as Winston, and then there were tremendous fallings out and making up. His particular in-

terest has been the economic development of the Empire, which he has regarded as the instrument for extending the rule of law over the earth. For that reason the left sees him as a jingo. But nobody, left or right, has ever seen him as anything but an honest man; the worst that his enemies have ever discovered about him is that he holds (or held) shares in a company manufacturing a purgative which is perhaps not so physically redemptive as its makers claim. As politicians go this is not a grave fault; and people like him for the perpetual intrusion of his schoolboy toughness. In 1927, because he was Secretary of State for Dominion affairs, the Canadian government by way of compliment christened an eleven-thousand-foot peak Mount Amery, and thought no more about it. They were enchanted when, two years later, he came over and put blood into this paper courtesy by making the first ascent of the peak, being then fifty-six years old. But there is more in Leopold Amery than the public servant and the athlete. These might be the virtues that spring from insularity and run in grooves. But Leopold Amery has a taste for the whole world. He has travelled everywhere, and not only officially, but in shirt sleeves with a rucksack, finding a quick way into foreign lives by his remarkable linguistic gifts, enormously enjoying any festival he may come across, a wedding or a chistening or a harvest supper. Whatever is pleasant and of good repute, he has sought it.

Fairly late in life, going out of his thirties, Leopold Amery married a beautiful young woman. She was the sister of Hamar Greenwood, a Canadian who came over to England and, becoming involved with Lloyd George, entered politics and reached cabinet rank. He was remarkable only for his unpopularity. Twenty-five years ago he was Secretary for Ireland and was held responsible for some of the ungodlier passages in the severance of England and Ireland. It was he who let loose the Black and Tans, the English troops recruited and trained in a spirit alien from the modern tradition of the British army which envenomed the last year of the union. But in that unpopularity his sister had no share. It is conceded by all that Mrs. Amery is as good and kind as a woman may be, and that if she had a fault it lay in her idolization of her two sons. It is said that she made the lives of their pastors and masters burdensome with her urgent effort to ensure that they should be happy and respected and long-lived. The younger son was Julian Amery, who, if one may go by such signs as are visible in the twenties, rewarded her obsession. Authority gave him important work in this war and it is said he performed it well. He is certainly delightful in appearance and manner. The other was John Amery, who at the time of his trial had lived thirty-three years and had been in trouble for most of them.

John Amery was not insane, he was not evil, but his character was like the kind of automobile that will not hold the road. As a child, he would be taken by his parents to a hotel at some holiday resort and would be discovered in a corner of the gardens or in the lounge, after dinner, amusing the guests with some mimicry or musical fooling. But the entertaining monologue would become a dribble of nonsense, the dance would go on too long, and there would break in a hint of frenzy. The child would turn from a pet to a pest, and sooner or later there would be trouble, trouble of an odd unpredictable kind which could not be guarded against, which was not cruel or cowardly but slapped the normal human process in the face. What is one to do with a boy of fifteen who from school issues prospectuses for a film-producing company and collects money from investors, not with the intention of embezzling it but inevitably with that effect? What is one to do with him when he is so really or apparently delicate that it is not possible to subject him to the discipline of work? One can but say hopefully that he will not always be fifteen. This is, however, not necessarily true. There are some who are always fifteen. John Amery continued, into his twenties and thirties, to like glossy, costly automobiles as an adolescent likes them, and as an adolescent he liked glossy, costly women, disregarding the plainest whorishness. And in such automobiles and

with such women he delighted to visit those grandiose hotels which delight the immature and revolt the mature as the very antithesis of home.

But on these adolescent appetites was superimposed a wholly individual gift for complication. He was convicted seventy-four times for automobile offences which for the most part were not just breaches of regulations but quite unforseen embroideries on the commonplace process of travelling from point to point aided by a combustion engine. He fell in very public and generous love with a well-known prostitute, whose identity could not be disguised because she had for most evenings during many years stood in the most conspicuous spot in Piccadilly. He stripped concubinage of the simplicity which is its undoubted advantage, marriage, always so much more complicated, he made into a game like snakes-and-ladders, with his family and himself playing against each other. He fell in love with a lady older than himself, and when his family had employed the most recondite legal means to prevent their union, circumvented them by marrying her in an Orthodox church in Athens, a place not covered by their strategy. As for those hotels, credit was to him what orchestral tone is to a conductor. In business, an obsession with films led him to some honourable though brief connexions with the industry, but also to participation, perhaps innocent, in a firm which bribed clerks in the offices of reputable motion picture companies to tell them when any directors were thinking of engaging young and unknown actors and actresses. The heads of the firm would then rush out and engage these actors and actresses to work in imaginary films on long contracts with low salaries, and then sublet them to the reputable motion picture companies at a large profit. He also stranded an entire motion picture outfit in Africa in extraordinary circumstances. Nobody could imagine how he had got the credit to take them out there; but there they were, in quite the wrong continent.

When John Amery was only twenty-four his loyal but exhausted family had to let him become bankrupt. He failed for five thousand pounds, with assets nil. That was in the autumn of 1936. The following summer he evoked a yelp of protest, oddly passionate for official proceedings, from the receiver in charge of his estate, though such men are usually inured to the financial optimism which soars like a lark from the heart of the imbecile. Amery had asked for a discharge from bankruptcy, so that he could add another and crazier story to the crazy edifice of credit which he had built on the site where, given his nurture, a more noble structure might have been raised. Did there always have to be equivocation added to fatuity, and risk joined to inconsequence? The answer, through the years, in various sorts of court, was that there seemed indeed to be some such necessity. Nothing in John Amery's life was simple, nothing was of good repute. After his bankruptcy he left England, his family giving him an allowance. Let this exile not be counted as unkindness on their part. Under English law it is an offence for a bankrupt to obtain goods on credit without disclosing his situation, and he could not possibly have fulfilled this obligation. The new, immensely long, and shark-nosed automobile would have been too tempting, another hotel might have been opened in London. He would have had to go to jail.

Once abroad, John Amery was absorbed into a bath of purity which was washing clean many a poor tarnished body. At that time the Spanish Civil War obviously offered a theatre for left-wing gallants, and so generously did they play their roles that the labour movement in every country in Europe is the poorer for the young men who died there. But the war also offered an asylum to certain persons who, if of no definite political faith, knew that they were failures, refused to recognize that they had failed from inability to achieve the average standard, and preferred to think that they were natural leaders who had been trodden down by the inferiors. These found new hope in Franco's fascism. It is true that there was some genuine pro-Franco feeling in all countries, but it is also true that there was at this time a great deal of money flowing out of

Spain. Never before did corruption so slime the British press. There was honest and intelligent Roman Catholic support of Franco. Letters to the newspapers constantly appeared stating, and of course truly, that nuns should not be raped, and many of them were written by old journalists of the baser sort, who, to take the pence and write the piece, had had to push back the garbage can behind which they had been sleeping for the last ten years. There were other more demanding and more lucrative tasks laid before the enterprising. There was gun-running. Many right-wing ne'er-do-wells were drawn to Franco by greed, love of adventure, and the hope of being accorded a value which, till then, all societies had denied them. John Amery was irresistibly attracted by the hope of attaining this triple gratification which had always been denied him by his loving but so conventional family, with their excessive lamentations over trifling automobile accidents that might have happened to anyone, and over hotel bills which could have easily been settled if hide-bound officials had been able to see that there was no reason, just because one had promoted six companies, that one should not promote a seventh.

John Amery was not an unsuccessful aide to Franco. It is claimed that he held a commission in his army and was in the fighting-line. In any case, he had a fairly continuous career as a gun-runner and as a liaison officer with the French Cagoulards; and in these capacities received a *laissez-passer* which gave him as much right to come and go as a Franco Spaniard. But he had no place of honour in Franco's Spain. In any state that cried for survival, his type would be rejected.

When the Second World War broke out, John Amery was living on the borders of Spain, at San Sebastian. He crossed over to France, possibly under orders, and lived with a Cagoulard group, knowing or at least meeting the French Fascist leaders Jacques Doriot and Marcel Déat. Among the Cagoulards were a certain number of enthusiastic and shapely young women. With one of them, Jeannine Barde, John Amery contracted a permanent relationship. Sometimes he said he had married her. Mark now the peculiarly flimsy silliness which does not know enough to come in out of the rain, which, indeed, stays outside while it is raining and, when it stops, goes inside just as the ceiling is falling. John Amery remained inactive throughout 1940 and 1941, when there was a very good chance that Germany might win the war. He was called into activity by the Germans when they wanted some person who would catch European attention to conduct an anti-Russian campaign at a time when they were making peace overtures to the Russians, but it is unlikely that the idea of using him would have come into the Germans' heads had not Amery himself, instead of quietly drinking himself to death in a Savoy village, repeatedly volunteered for service with the Germans. So in 1942, when it was becoming obvious that the Allies had at least a chance of winning, he began to broadcast from Berlin. In 1943, when the Allies' position was improving daily, he went into a camp of British internees at St. Denis, near Paris, and attempted to raise an anti-Bolshevik Free Corps to fight with the Germans against the Russians. This is the classic type of treachery which every educated person knows at once for the base and fatal act it is, for Sir Roger Casement committed it during the last war and was hanged for it. In 1944, when it was practically certain that the Axis was defeated, the poor young idiot travelled all over Europe, visiting Norway, France, Yugoslavia, and Belgium, and talking to large audiences which inevitably contained many members of the resistance movements. It is not true that he was caught up in the machine and could not break loose. If he had been a little more drunken the Germans would have let him go back into obscurity. They found him almost impossible to handle as it was, and conceived a lasting hatred for him which was to find expression after the end of the war. But, like a child who tries to obey an angry nanny, Amery tried to keep sober, and kept sober enough to carry on this job long enough to leave no possible loophole for his safety.

Again and again throughout John Amery's life his family must have said to themselves,

"He can't be doing that, but, my God, he is!" They must have said it to themselves with unimaginable agony when they heard him speak on the radio; for in this supreme folly was disclosed his private sweetness that forbade them ever to free themselves of their love for him. His voice was young and eager and honest and good-natured, and he sounded like a crusader when he talked anti-Semitic nonsense and declared that London was in a state of shame because the Lord Mayor was a Jew (and so he was; and a very decent body too). There could be seen the city of his desire, rising in the radiance of unspotted honour, its purity a fitting casket for his own, for he was one of those who are reborn every day no matter what the night has brought. It is a curious example of the fatuity of German propaganda that these broadcasts should have been widely announced as by the elder son of the Secretary of State for India; the public felt a wave of sympathy for the Amery family, and an increased disgust at the Nazis.

At the end of the war John Amery was captured by the partisans in Italy; and when he was questioned by a British Military Intelligence Officer he asked for a typewriter and proceeded to type a statement some thousands of words long, which was brilliantly composed, put the noose around his neck, and gave the history of two different people. One of these was a wise young man of lofty principles who sought to reconcile England and Germany in order that together they might fight the rising tide of communism, and to that end travelled about Europe, a weary Titan urging common sense on statesmen who for some reason would not heed the voice of sanity; the other was a crazy harlequin enmeshed in unfortunate adventure. "After a few days in Paris and travelling under the names of Mr. and Mrs. Browne, I arrived in Berlin early in October 1942," he wrote. For a time this inveterately companionate "I," who was always travelling under the names of Mr. and Mrs. Somebody, was to be alone. "On April 7-8," he wrote, "my beloved friend and political revolutionary, Jeannine Barde, died." The poor creature's death was said not to be natural. By some accounts she killed herself, life being rendered unendurable by the sour flavour of treachery, the air raids, the humiliations of life dragged out in dependence on the Nazis who knew that these two had no alternative employers. By other accounts she died because of a blow received at a wild party. The circumstances of her death, whatever they were, increased the Germans' distaste for Amery; and their feeling for etiquette was further outraged by his failure to attend her funeral, though as like as not it was through unbridled grief that he absented himself. But to the wandering wit sorrow is no prison. In no time he was on his feet again. "In the end of September," he wrote, "I returned to Paris. Once more much political talk, and on October 4 I remarried at the German Consulate. Politically, the situation remained almost unchanged." And at the end of the statement comes Harlequin's supreme antic. This man awaiting a capital charge writes: "Moreover, the colonel commanding the Piazza di Milano, who brought me from Sarono to Milan, undertook at the time to have returned my property that was seized by the partisans when they arrested me. Of this nothing has so far been seen. It consists of one suitcase (important documents and personal effects), one overcoat, one fur coat, and two silver foxes, a 20-litre petrol tin, full, one Lancia Aprilia motorcar No. 78410 MICDI."

When John Amery was brought to England, it was widely believed that he was not going to die. His case was postponed several times in order that evidence might be collected for his defence, which rested on a claim that he had become a naturalized Spanish citizen, and it was known that his brother Julian had gone to Spain to collect evidence in proof of that claim. It seemed quite certain, when the court assembled, that the search had been successful, for nearly a whole side of one of the three tables in front of the bench was taken up by a number of trim and plump and florid young men who were said to be Spanish lawyers. Before them there appeared presently that famous figure of the courts, Mr. Salcedo the interpreter, a Spanish Jew, lean and brown and

white-haired and antique in courtesy, who passed around the table shaking hands with his compatriots, not perfunctorily but as if they would presently be engaged in a considerable enterprise together. Julian Amery, his young face sleepy with the extreme of strained reserve, his slender body lounging in a dogged attempt at ease, was talking to the defence counsel, and it was said that he was to be the principal witness for the defence. This could hardly be, unless his search for evidence of his brother's naturalization had been successful. There had been distress among the kindly officials of the court because Mrs. Amery had applied for a seat. It might be that they had no reason for perturbation; she might joyfully witness her son's acquittal.

But if there was a wealth of Spanish lawyers, there were lacking some of the court's most usual features. There was no judge, there was no jury, there was no prisoner. The Lord Mayor and two aldermen, in their fine black gowns and jewelled chains, took their places on the bench, but the chair under the sword of justice was empty. In the jury box, leaflets of instruction lay yellow on the dark wood at each juror's place, but there was none to pick them up. The kitchen chairs in the dock were naked in their discomfort. (Surely that is the last ungraciousness of society, that it should make its failures learn their doom sitting on a hard wooden chair.) Half-past ten had passed, though that was the hour at which the trial should have begun, and one could set one's watch by the law courts. Half an hour passed, and still there was no judge, no jury, no prisoner.

Just after eleven a messenger came to the lawyers' table and spoke to John Amery's counsel. The dock is a shallow square box without a lid, with glass walls rising on all sides except the side which faces the judge. A staircase runs down from the dock to the cells where the prisoners are kept from the time of their arrival in the prison van at the court till they are brought up for trial. From the gallery of the court, one can look down into the staircase, which is lined with those obscene creations, white sanitary tiles. There was seen a sight rare in the courts: the counsel going through a door in the glass walls of the dock and down the stairway to the cells. They looked like ravens in their black gowns, stooping as they gathered up their skirts. While they were gone, people in the court, particularly the lawyers, began to laugh a great deal as they talked among themselves. This had nothing to do with anything they were thinking or feeling about the trial of Amery. It was a collective nervous reaction, like the storm of coughing that sometimes sweeps through a theatre when a play is going badly. After twenty-five minutes, Amery's counsel returned. There was talk with Sir Hartley Shawcross, from whose look of gentle, reflective well-being nothing could be learned, and with the Director of Public Prosecutions, who nodded as if something had happened which he had foreseen. There was a flurry of messengers. The trial began.

The Judge entered in shrivelled and eccentric majesty. It was Mr. Justice Humphries, a very old man whose age was crisp as a fine winter night, with a fierce wit on his tongue and a fiercer wit on his face, where there is often written what he will not let himself say lest necessary institutions fall. He had a son whom he named Christmas, who grew up to be president of the Buddhist Society and the Ballet Guild. To such a fantastical world, resembling Peacock's novels, does Mr. Justice Humphries belong. He made a little, stiff, old man's bow to the court and sat down, small in the depth of his red-and-purple robes, to try the poor shadow who had been brought into the dock. It had been said that John Amery was deeply diseased with tuberculosis. There was no truth in it. The prison doctors, who are nowadays able men, pronounced him free of this or any other disease. But it was with his body as with his mind. He was, judged by any accepted standard, not mad, but he was not sane. He was free from disease but it would have been absurd to call him healthy. His skin was yellow and grooved round the small bones of his face by long exhaustion and fear and the immediate strain of the moment, which was evidently frightful to him. His face was the muzzle of a little monkey; and

it could be seen that in youth there must have been here much animal vitality and charm, as well as an animal secretiveness that would make him incomprehensible. He wore an overcoat that was the colour of the bloom on grapes, and a black-and-lime scarf of the heavy and subtly coloured sort that used to be sold at the expensive shops on the Croisette at Cannes. The weight of these good clothes was too much for the worn trifle of his body. He leaned on the ledge of the dock, his small, bare hands very white and limp. By his appearance he made, as prisoners so often do, the ultimate appeal against human justice. It is not fair that some vessels should be made for honour and some for dishonour. The lawyers in front of him seemed guilty of a kind of theft in having so much prospering vitality while this creature had none. The two American officers who had been the first in the court seemed grasping in having secured those lines on their faces which spoke of fatiguing service of an honoured sort.

Again the kitchen chair in the dock seemed monstrous, and it could hardly be imagined that John Amery would be able to sit through the trial upright on this bleak piece of carpentry. But such anxiety was immediately proved unnecessary. They read out the indictments against him, charging him with having made treasonable broadcasts and speeches and having attempted to seduce British subjects from their allegiance, and asked him whether he pleaded guilty or not guilty. It had been supposed that he would answer "Not guilty." Then the jurors would have been called in and sworn, and the counsel would have addressed the Court, and the routine would have rolled on for perhaps as long as four days. But when the question was put to him he answered, "I plead guilty to all counts," and the trial lasted eight minutes. A murmur ran through the court which was horrified, which was expostulatory, which was tinged with self-pity, for this was suicide. If he pleaded guilty he must be sentenced to death. There is no alternative sentence for treason. It is not in the power of any judge to substitute imprisonment, and there is no appeal. There is only the possibility that the Home Secretary may advise the Crown to reprieve the condemned man; and this happens only in certain circumstances, not to be found by any eye in the case of John Amery. In effect, the young man was saying, "I insist on being hanged by the neck in three weeks' time," and the strength of his desire to die was forcing his weak voice through his shuddering lips and ignoring his pain, which was great, for he was blasted by what he did. He was like an insect that falls on a hot stove and is withered, and what he did felt like an act of cruelty to the whole court. It rejected the life that was in all of us. It could be perceived that the legal tradition whereby a man under a capital charge must be urged by every possible means to plead not guilty is no meddling excess of humanitarianism but is an expression of the fundamental belief of living things in life. It relates to that saying of Charles Dickens which so profoundly impressed Tolstoy, that whatever power gave us life, and for whatever purpose, he was sure it was given to us on the understanding that we defend it to the last breath. It is true, of course, that there are conditions in which a man can die without betraying his life, because his death will give it the spiritual value without which material existence is worthless, but these conditions do not usually arise in the criminal courts, which practise on the plane of simplication.

The old Judge leaned forward and said to the clerk of the court, "Before that is recorded . . ." and broke off. Then he said to Mr. Slade, "I never accept a plea of guilty on a capital charge without assuring myself that the accused thoroughly understands what he is doing and what the immediate result must be, and that he is in accord with his legal advisers in the course he has taken." Mr. Slade stood up and answered, no longer like a bird but speaking with obvious careful fidelity to a prepared model, "I can assure you of that, my lord. I have explained the position to my client and I am satisfied that he understands it." This passage had the quietness of the worst sort of nightmare. It was as if he had said, "Yes, this man chooses to be walled

up, and all proper arrangements have been made to get suitable bricks." The old Judge's eyebrows and the corners of his mouth made a queer pattern. Yes, life has to be defended to the last ditch, but what a damned thing it is! He said, "Right. Let it be recorded." Then the clerk of the court asked John Amery if he had anything to say. The young man answered, weakly and politely, "No, thank you." The attendant placed the square of black cloth on the Judge's head, but the Judge did not deliver the death sentence. Instead he leaned forward and asked, "You do not want to say anything?" Still in the same well-bred and dying voice, the young man said, "No, thank you, sir." It was quite clear that he was morally satisfied and that he was congratulating himself on having at last, at the end of his muddled and frustrated existence, achieved an act crystalline in its clarity, an act which fulfils the conditions in which a man can choose to die without betraying life. Yet none of the many people who were watching him with the intensest interest had the faintest idea what that act was, with perhaps the exception of the lawyers, who were bound by professional etiquette to keep silent.

It was immediately spread about that John Amery had suddenly insisted on pleading guilty for the sake of his family, to spare them the prolonged humiliation of his trial. That would have provided a simple explanation had it not been for the Spanish lawyers. They must have attended to give testimony in support of John Amery's story that he had been naturalized as a Spanish citizen; and their testimony must have been previously examined by Amery's counsel and judged to be conclusive. Had it been so, then he would have been acquitted, and by that his family would have been spared much of the pain and humiliation inherent in his case. And if John Amery's motive for pleading guilty was really concern for his family, it was odd that his counsel did not mention it when the Judge questioned him about the pleas, thus softening what was an oddly stark statement. There was also the suggestion that he pleaded guilty simply because he wanted to die as quickly as possible, without enduring the slow torture of the trial, but the impression given by his flinching flesh was that he wanted very much to live, and there was that in his air which suggested that by his conduct he was serving more than himself. It is, of course, possible that his counsel did not know his motive. That animal secretiveness may have made him put forward nothing to them but some babbling nonsense such as used to break his teachers' hearts, or he may have been cut off from their comprehension and their kindness by his old gift for complication. His inhabiting devil may have long ago set forces working which had produced an event so monstrous that it was almost as hard to grasp as it would have been to foresee, so monstrous that even he would have recognized it as intractable and surrendered to despair. In any case, his end was as his beginning. What should have been light was dark. There never was a more turbid martyrdom.

Perhaps there was a clue to the nature of that monstrous event that day in court. It could be seen by those who looked about them during that period of waiting that the Spanish lawyers did not all belong to one party. They seemed to be split into two groups. Perhaps one group had come to put forward papers in support of John Amery's claim to be a naturalized Spaniard, and the other to prove that those papers were forged. How that situation might have arisen was indicated some months later to a traveller in Spain who found himself at a dinner with a member of the Franco government. This traveller remembered that Julian Amery had gone out to Spain with letters from the British authorities asking the Spanish authorities to give all facilities for searching the records for proofs of his brother's claim, and that shortly afterwards a British law officer, bearing credentials from the same fount of authority as Julian Amery, had also gone out to Spain, apparently on some errand of investigation. It occurred to the traveller that perhaps the Spanish politician might have met one of these visitors, and he mentioned their names. "Now, tell me," said the Spaniard, "just what happened in that case. What made the British government change

their minds about John Amery?" "Change their minds?" echoed the traveller. "Yes," said the Spaniard petulantly. "First they wanted not to hang him, and then the next thing we knew they wanted to hang him."

It must be remembered that John Amery probably believed that he was a Spanish subject. Once he heard of the defence that William Joyce was raising, his feather wits would easily convert the *laissez-passer* he had received from Franco when he was a gun-runner into a certificate of naturalization. His brother must have gone to Spain to look for the evidence of that naturalization in the belief that it existed, and unprepared for complaisance. It would not have crossed his mind that any Spanish official would misinterpret the request of the British authorities that he should be given facilities for such a search, since such a request would have been made on behalf of any reputable person in a like position. In good faith he must have brought back the evidence of his brother's Spanish citizenship, in good faith his parents and their legal advisers must have accepted it, and John Amery, in his mental twilight, would not have been surprised that his myth had become a fact. But by then Amery's private papers had fallen into the hands of British Intelligence Officers. It was unlikely that a Spanish official, however willing to oblige, would invent a date on which an imaginary ceremony of naturalization was performed which would fit into the accounts of his life contained in these papers. It was inevitable that the deception should bemuse the Amery family, inevitable that it should be uncovered by the prosecution. It is not possible to think how life must have appeared to the Amery family at the moment of the disclosure. A persecuting destiny had for long inhabited their older son's body, inextricably confused with what they loved. They had conquered it, for it had never made them fail their son. Now it must have seemed to them to have broken loose and ranged the earth, acting at a great distance, acting through men so stupid that they were dangerous even when they meant to please —that they could not recognize what pleases the civilized; acting through the supposed neutrality of inanimate objects, through volumes in the shelves of a registry office, which could have been judged eternally innocuous through dedication to uninteresting fact. The Amery family stood together under the shadow of this astonishing doom; but were not together, for John went from them. He escaped into another fantasy. Now he saw himself as a martyr in the Fascist cause, and swaggered as he had done when he drove the high-powered automobile he had not paid for at ninety miles an hour on the wrong side of the road to the hotel where he would not be able to meet the bill. That was the source of his faintly consequential air in the dock, his air of knowing something.

The Judge spoke some words to him before passing sentence, expressing hatred of his crime. Many people thought the Judge heartless, forgetting that a very old man might well feel himself on an equality with a prisoner under sentence of death, and might even think that the prisoner would find a precise evaluation of his position more interesting than tenderness from a stranger. Also the Judge seemed baffled, like the rest of us, and there was a certain ineptness in his enlargement on a passage in the depositions which described how John Amery had visited the camp at St. Denis to enlist internees for his renegade British Free Corps and had been warned by some of the men that he was committing high treason but had taken no notice. It was not a point worth making, so far as Amery was concerned, for by that time his magic circle was sealed, and he must have thought that he was giving the internees an opportunity to join the winning side. Yet, if what the Judge said had little application to Amery, he seemed to say it because his mind had been shocked into flight underground to some place near the sources of our general destiny. The Judge said slowly, with accusation and querulous wonder in his voice, "They called you traitor and you heard them." It was as if he spoke to all men, marvelling at their knowledge of good and evil and their preference for evil, and looking at his own heart from far away that he might see the cause.

10

Problems and the Future

The range of human interest is both broad and deep. Curiosity about the past seems never to stop, but rather to increase with each new discovery. Does what we call "the present" seem hard to understand? Then we bend every resource to dig the deeper, for better understanding and wiser doing. And every man will have his big or little guesses about the future. Whence did we come? Where are we going? Why are we here? and What shall we think and do now? Restless man has propounded these questions to himself for a long time now, and many an answer has come and gone. Some few have agreed with the poet of the *Rubáiyát*:

> 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 where in I went.—

or have summed it up much as the sage in *Ecclesiastes*: all is vanity; love God and keep his commandments from day to day. But the desires and fears and imagination of man persist, and the answers to the questions keep on coming.

It is not true that all the old answers have faded and gone. Many of them are the bedrock of faith and the mainstay of millions of believers. This has been one of the principal reasons for the persistence into our times of many writings, including the sacred books and particularly the Bible. Ethical teachings of a great order endure, and so do those which deal with deity and the extra-mundane.

But the course of man's thinking and discovery in the last few centuries has been such as to promote wonder about the present and future of man on this planet. From whatever approach, it seems to be a concern with man among his fellows, working out or trying to work out a kind of salvation on earth. Knowledge grows, experience makes us wiser (we devoutly hope), and it seems to be our destiny to be not passive but ever active and searching. Hence arises the idea of progress for men like Dean Inge to examine critically, and it seems not impious to consider with Kirtley Mather the future of man at least as an inhabitant of earth. Out on the keen edge of living men cope with the mysteries of energy and space and reproduction, and always to some extent with the translation of tremendous new knowledge into human action. It is this translation that seems to constitute the greatest problem of our time. Even as late as the twenties in our century Charles Beard could speak in *Whither Mankind?* with comparative calm and assurance. Then like Prometheus we stole our fire from heaven in producing atomic fission, and the first bomb fell on Hiroshima!

So the old words in *Ecclesiastes* seem almost to leap up from the page: "And I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also was a striving after wind. For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." Or these words might come from one who had followed the course of John Hersey: "Then I returned and saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead that have been long dead more than the living that are yet alive; yea, better than them both did I esteem him that hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun."

And since such a speaker nowadays might be merely dubbed a "sentimentalist," one handicapped by an archaic humanitarianism, the modern problem might seem to be pre-eminently one of moral philosophy, a matter of ethical judgment and action, human control of all this power so often predicted and now in man's possession. It would appear to be what Albert Einstein endeavors to answer when he says "The Real Problem is in the Hearts of Men." New predictions of the future must certainly recognize the question of what moral bases the society of the future shall rest upon, if any. Whether Alexander Weinstein is right or not in his analysis of one proposal by science with reference to controlled society in the future, he seems to rely upon a modicum of the rational and the co-operative in man. We are given to wonder today about the validity of such a premise, to wonder even whether man, at least as an inhabitant of the earth, has any future.

For here is the story of Hiroshima, given to us in one of the greatest pieces of reporting we have ever had, since it is so much more than mere reporting. And if it is not filled with cosmic ironies, they do not fall far short of the cosmic. Of one Mr. Tanimoto Hersey remarks: "He had nothing to work with except his own energy, and that was not what it had been." But in our absorption with the story we must not forget the image of John Hersey, who ranged to the Orient and by the intensity and penetration of his interest revealed the problem of our time and the uncertain shape of things to come.

Ecclesiastes[1]

CHAPTER 1

1. ¶The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

2. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

3. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

4. One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

5. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arise.

6. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

7. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

[1] From the Bible, according to the Version of King James I.

8. All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

9. The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

10. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

11. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.

12.¶I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.

14. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

15. That which is crooked cannot be made straight. and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

16. I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

17. And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

18. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

CHAPTER 2

1.¶I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity.

2. I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?

3. I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.

4. I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

5. I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits:

6. I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

7. I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:

8. I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

9. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem. also my wisdom remained with me.

10. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

12.¶And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done.

13. Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

14. The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.

15. Then I said in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me, and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.

16. For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool.

17. Therefore I hated life; because the

work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

18.¶Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

19. And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.

20. Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.

21. For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.

22. For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

23. For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

24.¶There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.

25. For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I?

26. For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

CHAPTER 3

1.¶To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

2. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

3. A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4. A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5. A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6. A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

7. A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8. A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

9. What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

10. I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

11. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

12. I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

13. And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.

14. I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

15. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.

16.¶And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.

17. I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.

18. I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

19. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preëminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

20. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

21. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

22. Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

CHAPTER 4

1.¶So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.

2. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

3. Yea, better is he than both they which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

4.¶Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

5. The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

6. Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.

7.¶Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.

8. There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail.

9.¶Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

11. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

12. And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13.¶Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

14. For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.

15. I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

16. There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

CHAPTER 12

1.¶Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

2. While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3. In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4. And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low;

5. Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6. Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

8.¶Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.

9. And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.

10. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

11. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

12. And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

13. ¶Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

14. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

The Idea of Progress [1]

WILLIAM RALPH INGE

THE BELIEF in Progress, not as an ideal but as an indisputable fact, not as a task for humanity but as a law of Nature, has been the working faith of the West for about a hundred and fifty years. Some would have us believe that it is a long neglected part of the Christian revelation, others that it is a modern discovery. The ancient Pagans, we are told, put their Golden Age in the past; we put ours in the future. The Greeks prided themselves on being the degenerate descendants of gods, we on being the very creditable descendants of monkeys. The Romans endeavoured to preserve the wisdom and virtue of the past, we to anticipate the wisdom and virtue of the future. This, however, is an exaggeration. The theory of progress and the theory of decadence are equally natural, and have in fact been held concurrently wherever men have speculated about their origin, their present condition, and their future prospects. Among the Jews the theory of decadence derived an inspired authority from Genesis, but the story of the Fall had very little influence upon the thought of that tenaciously optimistic race. Among the Greeks, who had the melancholy as well as the buoyancy of youth, it was authorized by Hesiod, whose scheme of retrogression from the age of gold to the age of iron was never forgotten in antiquity. Sophocles, in a well-known chorus imitated by Bacon, holds that the best fate for men is "not to be born, or being born to die." Aratus develops the pessimistic mythology of Hesiod. In the Golden Age Dike or Astraea wandered about the earth freely; in the Silver Age her visits became fewer, and in the Brazen Age she set out for heaven and became the constellation Virgo. Perhaps Horace had read the lament of the goddess: "What a race the golden sires have left—worse than their fathers; and your offspring will be baser still." In the third century after Christ, when civilization was really crumbling, Pagans and Christians join in a chorus of woe. On the other side, the triumphs of man over Nature are celebrated by the great tragedians, and the Introduction to the First Book of Thucydides sketches the past history of Greece in the spirit of the nineteenth century. Lucretius has delighted our anthropologists by his brilliant and by no means idealized description of savage life, and it is to him that we owe the blessed word Progress in its modern sense.

> Usus et impigrae simul experientia mentis
> paulatim docuit pedetemtim *progredientes*.
> sic unum quicquid paulatim protrahit aetas
> in medium, ratioque in luminis erigit oras.

[1] From *Outspoken Essays: second series*. Copyright 1922, and reprinted by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., publishers.

Pliny believes that each age is better than the last. Seneca, in a treatise, parts of which were read in the Middle Ages, reminds us that "not a thousand years have passed since Greece counted and named the stars, and it is only recently that we have learned why the moon is eclipsed. Posterity will be amazed that we did not know some things that will be obvious to them." "The world," he adds, "is a poor affair if it does not contain matter for investigation for men in every age. We imagine that we are initiated into the mysteries of Nature; but we are still hanging about her outer courts." These last are memorable utterances, even if Seneca confines his optimism to the pleasure of exploring Nature's secrets. The difference between Rousseau, who admired the simple life, and Condorcet, who believed in modern civilization, was no new one; it was a common theme of discussion in antiquity, and the ancients were well aware that the same process may be called either progress or decline. As Freeman says, "In history every step in advance has also been a step backwards." (The picture is a little difficult to visualize, but the meaning is plain.) The fruit of the tree of knowledge always drives man from some paradise or other, and even the paradise of fools is not an unpleasant abode while it is habitable. Few emblematic pictures are more striking that the Melencolia (as he spells it) of Dürer, representing the Spirit of the race sitting mournfully among all her inventions: and this was at the *beginning* of the age of discovery! But the deepest thought of antiquity was neither optimistic nor pessimistic. It was that progress and retrogression are only the incoming and outgoing tide in an unchanging sea. The pulse of the universe beats in an alternate expansion and contraction. The result is a series of cycles, in which history repeats itself. Plato contemplates a world-cycle of 36,000 solar years, during which the Creator guides the course of events; after which he relaxes his hold of the machine, and a period of the same length follows during which the world gradually degenerates. When this process is complete the Creator restores again the original conditions, and a new cycle begins. Aristotle thinks that all the arts and sciences have been discovered and lost "an infinite number of times." Virgil in the Fourth Eclog tries to please Augustus by predicting the near approach of a new Golden Age, which, he says, is now due. This doctrine of recurrence is not popular to-day; but whether we like it or not, no other view of the macrocosm is even tenable. Even if those physicists are right who hold that the universe is running down like a clock, that belief postulates a moment in past time when the clock was wound up; and whatever power wound it up once may presumably wind it up again. The doctrine of cycles was held by Goethe, who in reply to Eckermann's remark that "the progress of humanity seems to be a matter of thousands of years," answered:

> Perhaps of millions. Men will become more clever and discerning, but not better or happier, except for limited periods. I see the time coming when God will take no more pleasure in our race, and must again proceed to a rejuvenated creation. I am sure that the time and hour in the distant future are already fixed for the beginning of this epoch. But we can still for thousands of years enjoy ourselves on this dear old playground of ours.

Nietzsche also maintained the law of recurrence, and so did the Danish philosophic theologian Kierkegaard. Shelley's fine poem, "The world's great age begins anew," is based upon it. Still, I must admit that on the whole the ancients did tend to regard time as the enemy: *damnosa quid non imminuit dies?* They would have thought the modern notion of human perfectibility at once absurd and impious.

The Dark Ages knew that they were dark, and we hear little talk about progress during those seven centuries which, as far as we can see, might have been cut out of history without any great loss to posterity. The Middle Ages (which we ought never to confuse with the Dark Ages), though they developed an interesting type of civilization, set their hopes mainly on another world. The Church has never encouraged the belief that this

world is steadily improving; the Middle Ages, like the early Christians, would have been quite content to see the earthly career of the race closed in their own time. Even Roger Bacon, who is claimed as the precursor of modern science, says that all wise men believe that we are not far from the time of Antichrist, which was to be the herald of the end The Renaissance was a conscious recovery from the longest and dreariest setback that humanity has ever experienced within the historical period—a veritable glacial age of the spirit. At this time men were too full of admiration and reverence for the newly recovered treasures of antiquity to look forward to the future In the seventeenth century a doctrine of progress was already in the air, and a long literary battle was waged between the Ancients and the Moderns. But it was only in the eighteenth century that Western Europe began to dream of an approaching millennium without miracle, to be gradually ushered in under the auspices of a faculty which was called Reason. Unlike some of their successors, these optimists believed that perfection was to be attained by the self-determination of the human will; they were not fatalists. In France, the chief home of this heady doctrine, the psychical temperature soon began to rise under its influence, till it culminated in the delirium of the Terror. The Goddess of Reason hardly survived Robespierre and his guillotine; but the belief in progress, which might otherwise have subsided when the French resumed their traditional pursuits—*rem militarem et argute loqui*—was reinforced by the industrial revolution, which was to run a very different course from that indicated by the theatrical disturbances at Paris between 1789 and 1794, the importance of which has perhaps been exaggerated. In England above all, the home of the new industry, progress was regarded (in the words which Mr. Mallock puts into the mouth of a nineteenth-century scientist) as that kind of improvement which can be measured by statistics. This was quite seriously the view of the last century generally, and there has never been, nor will there ever be again, such an opportunity for gloating over this kind of improvement. The mechanical inventions of Watt, Arkwright, Crompton, Stephenson, and others led to an unparalleled increase of population. Exports and imports also progressed, in a favorite phrase of the time, by leaps and bounds. Those who, like Malthus, sounded a note of warning, showing that population increases, unlike the supply of food, by geometrical progression, were answered that compound interest follows the same admirable law. It was obvious to many of our grandparents that a nation which travels sixty miles an hour must be five times as civilized as one which travels only twelve, and that, as Glanvill had already declared in the reign of Charles II, we owe more gratitude to the inventor of the mariner's compass "than to a thousand Alexanders and Cæsars, or to ten times the number of Aristotles." The historians of the time could not contain their glee in recording these triumphs. Only the language of religion seemed appropriate in contemplating so magnificent a spectacle. If they had read Herder, they would have quoted with approval his prediction that "the flower of humanity, captive still in its germ, will blossom out one day into the true form of man like unto God, in a state of which no man on earth can imagine the greatness and the majesty." Determinism was much in vogue by this time; but why should determinism be a depressing creed? The law which we cannot escape is the blessed law of progress—"that kind of improvement that can be measured by statistics." We had only to thank our stars for placing us in such an environment, and to carry out energetically the course of development which Nature has prescribed for us, and to resist which would be at once impious and futile.

Thus the superstition of progress was firmly established. To become a popular religion, it is only necessary for a superstition to enslave a philosophy. The superstition of progress had the singular good fortune to enslave at least three philosophies—those of Hegel, of Comte, and of Darwin. The strange thing is that none of these philosophies is really

favourable to the belief which it was supposed to support. Leaving for the present the German and the French thinkers, we observe with astonishment that many leading men in Queen Victoria's reign found it possible to use the great biological discovery of Darwin to tyrannize over the minds of their contemporaries, to give their blessing to the economic and social movements of their time, and to unite determinism with teleology in the highly edifying manner to which I have already referred. Scientific optimism was no doubt rampant before Darwin. For example, Herschel says: "Man's progress towards a higher state need never fear a check, but must continue till the very last existence of history." But Herbert Spencer asserts the perfectibility of man with an assurance which makes us gasp. "Progress is not an accident but a necessity. What we call evil and immorality must disappear. It is certain that man must become perfect." "The ultimate development of the ideal man is certain—as certain as any conclusion in which we place the most implicit faith; for instance, that all men will die." "Always towards perfection is the mighty movement—towards a complete development and a more unmixed good."

It has been pointed out by Mr. Bradley that these apocalyptic prophecies have nothing whatever to do with Darwinism. If we take the so-called doctrine of evolution in Nature as a metaphysics of existence, which Darwin never intended it to be, "there is in the world nothing like value, or good, or evil. Anything implying evolution, in the ordinary sense of development or progress, is wholly rejected." The survival of the fittest does not mean that the most virtuous, or the most useful, or the most beautiful, or even the most complex survive: there is no moral or æsthetic judgment pronounced on the process or any part of it.

Darwinism [Mr. Bradley goes on to say] often recommends itself because it is confused with a doctrine of evolution which is radically different. Humanity is taken in that doctrine as a real being, or even as the one real being, and humanity (it is said) advances continuously. Its history is development and progress toward a goal, because the type and character in which its reality consists is gradually brought more and more into fact. That which is strongest on the whole must therefore be good, and the ideas which come to prevail must therefore be true. This doctrine, though I certainly cannot accept it, for good or evil more or less dominates or sways our minds to an extent of which most of us perhaps are dangerously unaware. Any such view of course conflicts radically with Darwinism, which only teaches that the true idea is the idea which prevails, and this leaves us in the end with no criterion at all.

It may further be suggested that Spencer's optimism depends on the transmissibility of acquired characters; but this is too dangerous a subject for a layman in science to discuss.

Although the main fact of cosmic evolution, and the main course of human history from pithecanthropus downwards, are well know to all my hearers, and to some of them much better than to myself, it may be worth while to recall to you in bald and colourless language, what science really tells us about the nature and destiny of our species. It is so different from the gay colours of the rhapsodists whom I have just quoted, that we must be amazed that such doctrines should ever have passed for scientific. Astronomy gives us a picture of a wilderness of space, probably boundless, sparsely sown with aggregations of elemental particles in all stages of heat and cold. These heavenly bodies are in some cases growing hotter, in other cases growing colder; but the fate of every globe must be, sooner or later, to become cold and dead, like the moon. Our sun, from which we derive the warmth which makes our life possible, is, I believe, an elderly star, which has long outlived the turbulent heats of youth, and is on its way to join the most senile class of luminiferous bodies, in which the star 19 Piscium is placed. When a star has once become cold, it must apparently remain dead until some chance collision sets the whole cycle going again. From time to time a great conflagration in the heavens, which occurred perhaps in the seventeenth century, becomes visible from this earth; and we may imagine, if we will,

that two great solar systems have been reduced in a moment to incandescent gas. But space is probably so empty that the most pugnacious of astral knights-errant might wander for millions of years without meeting an opponent worthy of its bulk. If time as well as space is infinite, worlds must be born and die innumerable times, however few and far between their periods of activity may be. Of progress, in such a system taken as a whole, there cannot be a trace. Nor can there be any doubt about the fate of our own planet. Man and all his achievements will one day be obliterated like a child's sand-castle when the next tide comes in. Lucretius, who gave us the word progress, has told us our intimate fate in sonorous lines:

Quorum naturam triplicem, tria corpora, Memmi,
tres species tam dissimiles, tria talia texta,
una dies dabit exitio, multosque per annos
sustentata ruet moles et machina mundi.

The racial life of the species to which we happen to belong is a brief episode even in the brief life of the planet. And what we call civilization or culture, though much older than we used to suppose, is a brief episode in the life of our race. For tens of thousands of years the changes in our habits must have been very slight, and chiefly those which were forced upon our rude ancestors by changes of climate. Then in certain districts man began, as Samuel Butler says, to wish to live beyond his income. This was the beginning of the vast series of inventions which have made our life so complex. And, we used to be told, the "law of all progress is the same, the evolution of the simple into the complex by successive differentiations." This is the gospel according to Herbert Spencer. As a universal law of nature it is ludicrously untrue. Some species have survived by becoming more complex, others, like the whole tribe of parasites, by becoming more simple. On the whole, perhaps the parasites have had the best of it. The progressive species have in many cases flourished for a while and then paid the supreme penalty. The living dreadnoughts of the Saurian age have left us their bones, but no progeny. But the microbes, one of which had the honour of killing Alexander the Great at the age of thirty-two, and so changing the course of history, survive and flourish. The microbe illustrates the wisdom of the maxim, λάθε Βιώσας. It took thousands of years to find him out. Our own species, being rather poorly provided by nature for offence and defence, had to live by its wits, and so came to the top. It developed many new needs, and set itself many insoluble problems. Physiologists like Metchnikoff have shown how very ill-adapted our bodies are to the tasks which we impose upon them; and in spite of the Spencerian identification of complexity with progress, our surgeons try to simplify our structure by forcibly removing various organs which they assure us that we do not need. If we turn to history for a confirmation of the Spencerian doctrine, we find, on the contrary, that civilization is a disease which is almost invariably fatal, unless its course is checked in time. The Hindus and Chinese, after advancing to a certain point, were content to mark time; and they survive. But the Greeks and Romans are gone; and aristocracies everywhere die out. Do we not see today the complex organization of the ecclesiastic and college don succumbing before the simple squeezing and sucking apparatus of the profiteer and trade-unionist? If so-called civilized nations show any protracted vitality, it is because they are only civilized at the top. Ancient civilizations were destroyed by imported barbarians; we breed our own.

It is also an unproved assumption that the domination of the planet by our own species is a desirable thing, which must give satisfaction to its Creator. We have devastated the loveliness of the world; we have exterminated several species more beautiful and less vicious than ourselves; we have enslaved the rest of the animal creation, and have treated our distant cousins in fur and feathers so badly that beyond doubt, if they were able to formulate a religion, they would depict the Devil in human form. If it is progress to turn the fields and woods of Essex into East and West Ham, we may be thankful that

progress is a sporadic and transient phenomenon in history. It is a pity that our biologists, instead of singing pæons to Progress and thereby stultifying their own researches, have not preached us sermons on the sin of racial self-idolatry, a topic which really does arise out of their studies. *L'anthropolatrie, voilà l'ennemi,* is the real ethical motto of biological science, and a valuable contribution to morals.

It was impossible that such shallow optimism as that of Herbert Spencer should not arouse protests from other scientific thinkers. Hartmann had already shown how a system of pessimism, resembling that of Schopenhauer, may be built upon the foundation of evolutionary science. And in this place we are not likely to forget the second Romanes Lecture, when Professor Huxley astonished his friends and opponents alike by throwing down the gauntlet in the face of Nature, and bidding mankind to find salvation by accepting for itself the position which the early Christian writer Hippolytus gives as a definition of the Devil—"he who resists the cosmic process" (ὁ ἀντιτάττων τοῖς κοσμικοῖς). The revolt was not in reality so sudden as some of Huxley's hearers supposed. He had already realized that "so far from gradual progress forming any necessary part of the Darwinian creed, it appears to us that it is perfectly consistent with indefinite persistence in one state, or with a gradual retrogression. Suppose, *e.g.*, a return of the glacial period or a spread of polar climatical conditions over the whole globe." The alliance between determinism and optimism was thus dissolved; and as time went on, Huxley began to see in the cosmic process something like a power of evil. The natural process, he told us in this place, has no tendency to bring about the good of mankind. Cosmic nature is no school of virtue, but the headquarters of the enemy of ethical nature. Nature is the realm of tiger-rights; it has no morals and no ought-to-be; its only rights are brutal powers. Morality exists only in the "artificial" moral world: man is a glorious rebel, a Prometheus defying Zeus. This strange rebound into Manicheism sounded like a blasphemy against all the gods whom the lecturer was believed to worship, and half-scandalized even the clerics in his audience. It was bound to raise the question whether this titanic revolt against the cosmic process had any chance of success. One recent thinker, who accepts Huxley's view that the nature of things is cruel and immoral, is willing to face the probability that we cannot resist it with any prospect of victory. Mr. Bertrand Russell, in his arresting essay, "A Free Man's Worship," shows us Prometheus again, but Prometheus chained to the rock and still hurling defiance against God. He proclaims the moral bankruptcy of naturalism, which he yet holds to be forced upon us.

> That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves, and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms, that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual beyond the grave, that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built.

Man belongs to "an alien and inhuman world," alone amid "hostile forces." What is man to do? The God who exists is evil; the God whom we can worship is the creation of our own conscience, and has no existence outside it. The "free man" will worship the latter; and, like John Stuart Mill, "to hell he will go."

If I wished to criticize this defiant pronouncement, which is not without a touch of bravado, I should say that so complete a separation of the real from the ideal is impossible, and that the choice which the writer offers us, of worshiping a Devil who exists

or a God who does not, is no real choice, since we cannot worship either. But my object in quoting from this essay is to show how conpletely naturalism has severed its alliance with optimism and belief in progress. Professor Huxley and Mr. Russell have sung their palinode and smashed the old gods of their creed. No more proof is needed, I think, that the alleged law of progress has no scientific basis whatever.

But the superstition has also invaded and vitiated our history, our political science, our philosophy, and our religion.

The historian is a natural snob; he sides with the gods against Cato, and approves the winning side. He lectures the vanquished for their wilfulness and want of foresight, sometimes rather prematurely, as when Seeley, looking about for an example of perverse refusal to recognize facts, exclaims "Sedet, æternumque sedebit unhappy Poland!" The nineteenth-century historian was so loath to admit retrogression that he liked to fancy the river of progress flowing underground all through the Dark Ages, and endowed the German barbarians who overthrew Mediterranean civilization with all the manly virtues. If a nation, or a religion, or a school of art dies, the historian explains why it was not worthy to live.

In political science the corruption of the scientific spirit by the superstition of progress has been flagrant. It enables the disputant to overbear questions of right and wrong by confident prediction, a method which has the double advantage of being peculiarly irritating and incapable of refutation. On the theory of progress, what is "coming" must be right. Forms of government and modes of thought which for the time being are not in favor are assumed to have been permanently left behind. A student of history who believed in cyclical changes and long swings of the pendulum would take a very different and probably much sounder view of contemporary affairs. The votaries of progress mistake the flowing tide for the river of eternity, and when the tide turns they are likely to be left stranded like the corks and scraps of seaweed which mark the high-water line. This has already happened, though few realize it. The praises of Liberty are mainly left to Conservatives, who couple it with Property as something to be defended, and to conscientious objectors, who dissociate it from their country, which is not to be defended. Democracy—the magic ballot-box—has few worshipers any longer except in America, where men will still shout for about two hours—and indeed much longer—that she is "great." But our pundits will be slow to surrender the useful words "progressive" and "reactionary." The classification is, however, a little awkward. If a reactionary is anyone who will not float with the stream, and a progressive anyone who has the flowing tide with him, we must classify the Christian Fathers and the French Encyclopedists as belonging to the same type, the progressive; while the Roman Stoics under the Empire and the Russian bureaucrats under Nicholas II will be placed together under the opposite title, as reactionaries. Or is the progressive not the supporter of the winning cause for the time being, but the man who thinks, with a distinguished Head of a College who, as I remember, affirmed his principles in Convocation, that "any leap in the dark is better than standing still"; and is the reactionary the man whose constitutional timidity would deter him from performing this act of faith when caught by a mist on the Matterhorn? Machiavelli recognizes fixed types of human character, such as the cautious Fabius and the impetuous Julius II, and observes that these qualities lead sometimes to success and sometimes to failure. If a reactionary only means an adherent of political opinions which we happen to dislike, there is no reason why a bureaucrat should not call a republican a reactionary, as Maecenas may have applied the name to Brutus and Cassius. Such examples of evolution as that which turned the Roman Empire into a principate and then into an empire of the Asiatic type, are inconvenient for those who say "It is coming," and think that they have vindicated the superiority of their own theories of government.

We have next to consider the influence

of the superstition of progress on the philosophy of the last century. To attempt such a task in this place is a little rash, and to prove the charge in a few minutes would be impossible even for one much better equipped than I am. But something must be said. Hegel and Comte are often held to have been the chief advocates of the doctrine of progress among philosophers. Both of them give definitions of the word—a very necessary thing to do, and I have not yet attempted to do it. Hegel defines progress as spiritual freedom; Comte as true or positive social philosophy. The definitions are peculiar; and neither theory can be made to fit past history, though that of Comte, at any rate, falls to the ground if it does not fit past history. Hegel is perhaps more independent of facts; his predecessor Fichte professes to be entirely indifferent to them. "The philosopher," he says, "follows the *a priori* thread of the world-plan which is clear to him without any history; and if he makes use of history, it is not to prove anything, since his theses are already proved independently of all history." Certainly, Hegel's dialectical process cannot easily be recognized in the course of European events; and, what is more fatal to the believers in a law of progress who appeal to him, he does not seem to have contemplated any further marked improvements upon the political system of Prussia in his own time, which he admired so much that his critics have accused him of teaching that the Absolute first attained full self-consciousness at Berlin in the nineteenth century. He undoubtedly believed that there has been progress in the past; but he does not, it appears, look forward to further changes; as a politician, at any rate, he gives us something like a closed system. Comte can only bring his famous "three stages" into history by arguing that the Catholic monotheism of the Middle Ages was an advance upon Pagan antiquity. A Catholic might defend such a thesis with success; but for Comte the chief advantage seems to be that the change left the Olympians with only one neck for Positive Philosophy to cut off. But Comte himself is what his system requires us to call a reactionary; he is back in the "theological stage"; he would like a theocracy, if he could have one without a God. The State is to be subordinate to the Positive Church, and he will allow "no unlimited freedom of thought." The connexion of this philosophy with the doctrine of progress seems very slender. It is not so easy to answer the question in the case of Hegel, because his contentment with the Prussian government may be set down to idiosyncrasy or to prudence; but it is significant that some of his ablest disciples have discarded the belief. To say that "the world is as it ought to be" does not imply that it goes on getting better, though some would think it was not good if it was not getting better. It is hard to believe that a great thinker really supposed that the universe as a whole is progressing, a notion which Mr. Bradley has stigmatized as "nonsense, unmeaning or blasphemous." Mr. Bradley may perhaps be interpreting Hegel rightly when he says that for a philosopher "progress can never have any temporal sense," and explains that a perfect philosopher would see the whole world of appearance as a "progress," by which he seems to mean only a rearrangement in terms of ascending and descending value and reality. But it might be objected that to use "progress" in this sense is to lay a trap for the unwary. Mathematicians undoubtedly talk of progress, or rather of progression, without any implication of temporal sequence; but outside this science to speak of "progress without any temporal sense" is to use a phrase which some would call self-contradictory. Be that as it may, popularized Hegelianism has laid hold of the idea of a self-improving universe, of perpetual and universal progress, in a strictly temporal sense. The notion of an evolving and progressing cosmos, with a Creator who is either improving himself (though we do not put it quite so crudely) or who is gradually coming into his own, has taken strong hold of the popular imagination. The latter notion leads straight to ethical dualism of the Manichean type. The theory of a single purpose in the universe seems to me untenable. Such a purpose, being infinite, could

never be accomplished. The theory condemns both God and man to the doom of Tantalus. Mr. Bradley is quite right in finding this belief incomparable with Christianity.

It would not be possible, without transgressing the limits set for lecturers on this foundation, to show how the belief in a law of progress has prejudicially affected the religious beliefs of our time. I need only recall to you the discussions whether the perfect man could have lived in the first, and not in the nineteenth or twentieth century —although one would have thought that the ancient Greeks, to take one nation only, have produced many examples of hitherto unsurpassed genius; the secularization of religion by throwing its ideals into the near future—a new apocalyptism which is doing mischief enough in politics without the help of the clergy; and the unauthorized belief in future probation, which rests on the queer assumption that, if a man is given time enough, he must necessarily become perfect. In fact, the superstition which is the subject of this lecture has distorted Christianity almost beyond recognition. Only one great Church, old in worldly wisdom, knows that human nature does not change, and acts on the knowledge. Accordingly, the papal syllabus of 1864 declares: "*Si quis dixerit*: Romanus pontifex potest ac debet cum progressu, cum liberalismo, et cum recenti civilitate sese reconciliare et componere, *anathema sit.*"

Our optimists have not made it clear to themselves or others what they mean by progress, and we may suspect that the vagueness of the idea is one of its attractions. There has been no physical progress in our species for many thousands of years. The Cro-Magnon race, which lived perhaps twenty thousand years ago, was at least equal to any modern people in size and strength; the ancient Greeks were, I suppose, handsomer and better formed than we are; and some unprogressive races, such as the Zulus, Samoans, and Tahitians, are envied by Europeans for either strength or beauty. Although it seems not to be true that the sight and hearing of civilized peoples are inferior to those of savages, we have certainly lost our natural weapons, which from one point of view is a mark of degeneracy. Mentally, we are now told that the men of the Old Stone Age, ugly as most of them must have been, had as large brains as ours; and he would be a bold man who should claim that we are intellectually equal to the Athenians or superior to the Romans. The question of moral improvement is much more difficult. Until the Great War few would have disputed that civilized man had become much more humane, much more sensitive to the sufferings of others, and so more just, more self-controlled, and less brutal in his pleasures and in his resentments. The habitual honesty of the Western European might also have been contrasted with the rascality of inferior races in the past and present. It was often forgotten that, if progress means the improvement of human nature itself, the question to be asked is whether the modern civilized man behaves better in the same circumstances than his ancestor would have done. Absence of temptation may produce an appearance of improvement; but this is hardly what we mean by progress, and there is an old saying that the Devil has a clever trick of pretending to be dead. It seems to me very doubtful whether when we are exposed to the same temptations we are more humane or more sympathetic or juster or less brutal than the ancients. Even before this war, the examples of the Congo and Putumayo, and American lynchings, proved that contact with barbarians reduces many white men to the moral condition of savages; and the outrages committed on the Chinese after the Boxer rebellion showed that even a civilized nation cannot rely on being decently treated by Europeans if its civilization is different from their own. During the Great War, even if some atrocities were magnified with amiable object of rousing a good-natured people to violent hatred, it was the well-considered opinion of Lord Bryce's commission that no such cruelties had been committed for three hundred years as those which the Germans practised in Belgium and France. It was startling to observe how easily

the blood-lust was excited in young men straight from the fields, the factory, and the counter, many of whom had never before killed anything larger than a wasp, and that in self-defence. As for the Turks, we must go back to Genghis Khan to find any parallel to their massacres in Armenia; and the Russian terrorists have reintroduced torture into Europe, with the help of Chinese experts in the art. With these examples before our eyes, it is difficult to feel any confidence that either the lapse of time or civilization has made the *bête humaine* less ferocious. On biological grounds there is no reason to expect it. No selection in favour of superior types is now going on; on the contrary, civilization tends now, as always, to an *Ausrottung der Besten*—a weeding-out of the best; and the new practice of subsidizing the unsuccessful by taxes extorted from the industrious is cacogenics erected into a principle. The best hope of stopping this progressive degeneration is in the science of eugenics. But this science is still too tentative to be made the basis of legislation, and we are not yet agreed what we should breed for. The two ideals, that of the perfect man and that of the perfectly organized State, would lead to very different principles of selection. Do we want a nation of beautiful and moderately efficient Greek gods, or do we want human mastiffs for policemen, human greyhounds for postmen, and so on? However, the opposition which eugenics has now to face is based on less respectable grounds, such as pure hedonism ("would the superman be any happier?"); indifference to the future welfare of the race ("posterity has done nothing for me; why should I do anything for posterity?"); and, in politics, the reflection that the unborn have no votes.

We have, then, been driven to the conclusion that neither science nor history gives us any warrant for believing that humanity has advanced, except by accumulating knowledge and experience and the instruments of living. The value of these accumulations is not beyond dispute. Attacks upon civilization have been frequent, from Crates, Pherecrates, Antisthenes, and Lucretius in antiquity to Rousseau, Walt Whitman, Thoreau, Ruskin, Morris, and Edward Carpenter in modern times. I cannot myself agree with these extremists. I believe that the accumulated experience of mankind, and his wonderful discoveries, are of great value. I only point out that they do not constitute real progress in human nature itself, and that in the absence of any real progress these gains are external, precarious, and liable to be turned to our own destruction, as new discoveries in chemistry may easily be.

But it is possible to approach the whole question of progress from another side, and from this side the results will not be quite the same, and may be more encouraging. We have said that there can be no progress in the macrocosm, and no single purpose in a universe which has neither beginning nor end in time. But there may be an infinite number of finite purposes, some much greater and others much smaller than the span of an individual life; and within each of these some Divine thought may be working itself out, bringing some life or series of lives, some nation or race or species, to that perfection which is natural to it—what the Greeks called its "nature." The Greeks saw no contradiction between this belief and the theory of cosmic cycles, and I do not think that there is any contradiction. It may be that there is an immanent teleology which is shaping the life of the human race towards some completed development which has not yet been reached. To advocate such a theory seems like going back from Darwin to Lamarck; but "vitalism," if it be a heresy, is a very vigorous and obstinate one; we can hardly dismiss it as unscientific. The possibility that such a development is going on is not disproved by the slowness of the change within the historical period. Progress in the recent millennia seems to us to have been external, precarious, and disappointing. But let this last adjective give us pause. By what standard do we pronounce it disappointing, and who gave us this standard? This disappointment has been a constant phenomenon, with a very few exceptions. What does it mean? Have those who reject

the law of progress taken it into account? The philosophy of naturalism always makes the mistake of leaving human nature out. The climbing instinct of humanity, and our discontent with things as they are, are facts which have to be accounted for, no less than the stable instincts of nearly all other species. We all desire to make progress and our ambitions are not limited to our own lives or our lifetimes. It is part of our nature to aspire and hope, even on biological grounds this instinct must be assumed to serve some function. The first Christian poet, Prudentius, quite in the spirit of Robert Browning, names Hope as the distinguishing characteristic of mankind.

Nonne hominum et pecudum distantia separat una?
quod bona quadrupedum ante oculos sita sunt, ego contra spero.

We must consider seriously what this instinct of hope means and implies in the scheme of things.

It is of course possible to dismiss it as a fraud. Perhaps this was the view most commonly held in antiquity. Hope was regarded as a gift of dubious value, an illusion which helps us to endure life, and a potent spur to action; but in the last resort an *ignis fatuus* A Greek could write for his tombstone:

I've entered port. Fortune and Hope, adieu!
Make game of others, for I've done with you.

And Lord Brougham chose this epigram to adorn his villa at Cannes. So for Schopenhauer hope is the bait by which Nature gets her hook in our nose, and induces us to serve her purposes, which are not our own. This is pessimism, which, like optimism, is a mood, not a philosophy. Neither of them needs refutation, except for the adherent of the opposite mood; and these will never convince each other, for the same arguments are fatal to both. If our desires are clearly contrary to the nature of things, of which we are a part, it is our wisdom and our duty to correct our ambitions, and, like the Bostonian Margaret Fuller, to decide to "accept the universe." "Gad! she'd better," was Carlyle's comment on this declaration. The true inference from Nature's law of vicarious sacrifice is not that life is a fraud, but that selfishness is unnatural. The pessimist cannot condemn the world except by a standard which he finds somewhere, if only in his own heart; in passing sentence upon it he affirms an optimism which he will surrender to any appearances.

The ancients were not pessimists; but they distrusted Hope. I will not follow those who say that they succumbed to the barbarians because they looked back instead of forward; I do not think it is true. If the Greeks and Romans had studied chemistry and metallurgy instead of art, rhetoric, and law, they might have discovered gunpowder and poison gas and kept the Germans north of the Alps. But St. Paul's deliberate verdict on pagan society, that it "had no hope," cannot be lightly set aside. No other religion, before Christianity, ever erected hope into a moral virtue. "We are saved by hope," was a new doctrine when it was pronounced. The later Neoplatonists borrowed St. Paul's triad, Faith, Hope, and Love, adding Truth as a fourth. Hopefulness may have been partly a legacy from Judaism; but it was much more a part of the intense spiritual vitality which was disseminated by the new faith. In an isolated but extremely interesting passage St. Paul extends his hope of "redemption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" to the "whole creation" generally. In the absence of any explanation or parallel passages it is difficult to say what vision of cosmic deliverance was in his mind. Students of early Christian thought must be struck by the vigour of hope in the minds of men, combined with great fluidity in the forms or moulds into which it ran. After much fluctuation, it tended to harden as belief in a supermundane future, a compromise between Jewish and Platonic eschatology, since the Jews set their hopes on a terrestrial future, the Platonists on a supermundane present. Christian philosophers still inclined to the Platonic faith, while popular belief retained the apocalyptic Jewish ideas under the form of

Millenarianism. Religion has oscillated between these two types of belief ever since, and both have suffered considerably by being vulgarized. In times of disorder and decadence, the Platonic ideal world, materialized into a supraterrestrial physics and geography, has tended to prevail: in times of crass prosperity and intellectual confidence the Jewish dream of a kingdom of the saints on earth has been coarsened into promises of "a good time coming." At the time when we were inditing the pæans to Progress which I quoted near the beginning of my lecture, we were evolving a Deuteronomic religion for ourselves even more flattering than the combination of determinism with optimism which science was offering at the same period. We almost persuaded ourselves that the words "the meek-spirited shall possess the earth" were a prophecy of the expansion of England.

It is easy to criticize the forms which Hope has assumed. But the Hope which has generated them is a solid fact, and we have to recognize its indomitable tenacity and power of taking new shapes. The belief in a law of progress, which I have criticized so unmercifully, is one of these forms; and if I am not mistaken, it is nearly worn out. Disraeli in his detached way said, "The European talks of progress because by the aid of a few scientific discoveries he has established a society which has mistaken comfort for civilization." It would not be easy to sum up better the achievements of the nineteenth century, which will be always remembered as the century of accumulation and expansion. It was one of the great ages of the world; and its greatness was bound up with that very idea of progress which, in the crude forms which it usually assumed, we have seen to be an illusion. It was a strenuous, not a self-indulgent age. The profits of industry were not squandered, but turned into new capital, providing new markets and employment for more labour. The nation, as an aggregate, increased in wealth, numbers, and power every day; and public opinion approved this increase, and the sacrifices which it involved. It was a great century; there were giants in the earth in those days I have no patience with the pygmies wh gird at them. But, as its greatest and mos representative poet said:

God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world

The mould in which the Victorian age cas its hopes is broken. There is no law of prog ress; and the gains of that age now seem t some of us to have been purchased to high, or even to be themselves of doubtfu value. In Clough's fine poem, beginnin "Hope evermore and believe, O man," a poen in which the ethics of Puritanism find thei perfect expression, the poet exhorts us:

Go! say not in thine heart, And what then were it accomplished,
Were the wild impulse allayed, what were th use and the good?

But this question, which the blind Purita asceticism resolutely thrust on one side, ha begun to press for an answer. It had begu to press for an answer before the grea cataclysm, which shattered the material sym bols of the cult which for a century and half had absorbed the chief energies of man kind. Whether our widespread disconten is mainly caused, as I sometimes think, b the unnatural conditions of life in larg towns, or by the decay of the ideal itself, i not easy to say. In any case, the gods o Queen Victoria's reign are no longer wor shiped. And I believe that the dissatisfactio with things as they are is caused not onl by the failure of nineteenth-century civiliza tion, but partly also by its success. We n longer wish to progress on those lines if w could. Our apocalyptic dream is vanishin into thin air. It may be that the industria revolution which began in the reign o George III has produced most of its fruits and has had its day. We may have to loo forward to such a change as is imagined b Anatole France at the end of his *Isle of th Penguins*, when, after an orgy of revolutio and destruction, we shall slide back int the quiet rural life of the early moder

period. If so, the authors of the revolution will have cut their own throats, for there can be no great manufacturing towns in such a society. The race will have tried a great experiment, and will have rejected it as unsatisfying. We shall have added something to our experience. Fontenelle exclaimed, "How many foolish things we should say now, if the ancients had not said them all before us!" Fools are not so much afraid of plagiarism as this Frenchman supposed; but it is true that *Eventu rerum stolidi didicere magistro.*

There is much to support the belief that there is a struggle for existence among ideas, and that those tend to prevail which correspond with the changing needs of humanity. It does not necessarily follow that the ideas which prevail are better morally, or even truer to the law of Nature, than those which fail. Life is so chaotic, and development so sporadic and one-sided, that a brief and brilliant success may carry with it the seeds of its own early ruin. The great triumphs of humanity have not come all at once. Architecture reached its climax in an age otherwise barbarous; Roman law was perfected in a dismal age of decline; and the nineteenth century, with its marvels of applied science, has produced the ugliest of all civilizations. There have been notable flowering times of the Spirit of Man—Ages of Pericles, Augustan Ages, Renaissances. The laws which determine these efflorescences are unknown. They may depend on undistinguished periods when force is being stored up. So in individual greatness, the wind bloweth where it listeth. Some of our greatest may have died unknown, *careni quia vate sacro.* Emerson indeed tells us that:

> One accent of the Holy Ghost
> The careless world has never lost.

But I should like to know how Emerson obtained this information. The World has not always been "careless" about its inspired prophets; it has often, as Faust remarks, burnt or crucified them, before they have delivered all their message. The activities of the Race-Spirit have been quite unaccountable. It has stumbled along blindly, falling into every possible pitfall.

The laws of Nature neither promise progress nor forbid it. We could do much to determine our own future; but there has been no consistency about our aspirations, and we have frequently followed false lights, and been disillusioned as much by success as by failure. The well-known law that all institutions carry with them the seeds of their own dissolution is not so much an illustration of the law of cyclical revolution, as a proof that we have been carried to and fro by every wind of doctrine. What we need is a fixed and absolute standard of values, that we may know what we want to get and whither we want to go. It is no answer to say that all values are relative and ought to change. Some values are not relative but absolute. Spiritual progress must be within the sphere of a reality which is not itself progressing, or for which, in Milton's grand words, "progresses the dateless and irrevoluble circle of its own perfection, joining inseparable hands with joy and bliss in overmeasure for ever." Assuredly there must be advance in our apprehension of the ideal, which can never be fully realized because it belongs to the eternal world. We count not ourselves to have apprehended in aspiration any more than in practice. As Nicolas of Cusa says: "To be able to know ever more and more without end, this is our likeness to the eternal Wisdom. Man always desires to know better what he knows, and to love more what he loves; and the whole world is not sufficient for him, because it does not satisfy his craving for knowledge." But since our object is to enter within the realm of unchanging perfection, finite and relative progress cannot be our ultimate aim, and such progress, like everything else most worth having, must not be aimed at too directly. Our ultimate aim is to live in the knowledge and enjoyment of the absolute values, Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. If the Platonists are right, we shall shape our surroundings more effectively by this kind of idealism than by adopting the creed and the methods of sec-

ularism. I have suggested that our disappointments have been very largely due to the unworthiness of our ideals, and to the confused manner in which we have set them before our minds. The best men and women do not seem to be subject to this confusion. So far as they can make their environment, it is a society immensely in advance of anything which has been realized among mankind generally.

If any social amelioration is to be hoped for, its main characteristic will probably be simplication rather than further complexity. This, however, is not a question which can be handled at the end of a lecture.

Plato says of his ideal State that it does not much matter whether it is ever realized on earth or not. The type is laid up in heaven, and approximations to it will be made from time to time, since all living creatures are drawn upwards towards the source of their being. It does not matter very much, if he was right in believing—as we too believe—in human immortality. And yet it does matter; for unless our communing with the eternal Ideas endows us with some creative virtue, some power which makes itself felt upon our immediate environment, it cannot be that we have made those Ideas in any sense our own. There is no alchemy by which we may get golden conduct out of leaden instincts—so Herbert Spencer told us very truly; but if our ideas are of gold, there is an alchemy which will transmute our external activities, so that our contributions to the spiritual temple may be no longer "wood, hay, and stubble," to be destroyed in the next conflagration, but precious and durable material.

For individuals, then, the path of progress is always open; but, as Hesiod told us long before the Sermon on the Mount, it is a narrow path, steep and difficult, especially at first. There will never be a crowd gathered round this gate; "few there be that find it." For this reason, we must cut down our hopes for our nation, for Europe, and for humanity at large, to a very modest and humble aspiration. We have no millennium to look forward to; but neither need we fear any protracted or widespread retrogression. There will be new types of achievement which will enrich the experience of the race, and from time to time, in the long vista which science seems to promise us, there will be new flowering-times of genius and virtue, not less glorious than the age of Sophocles or the age of Shakespeare. They will not merely repeat the triumphs of the past, but will add new varieties to the achievements of the human mind.

Whether the human type itself is capable of further physical, intellectual, or moral improvement, we do not know. It is safe to predict that we shall go on hoping, though our recent hopes have ended in disappointment. Our lower ambitions partly succeed and partly fail, and never wholly satisfy us; of our more worthy visions for our race we may perhaps cherish the faith that no pure hope can ever wither, except that a purer may grow out of its roots.

Whither Mankind?[1]

CHARLES A. BEARD

ANXIETY ABOUT the values and future of civilization is real. It has crept out of the cloister and appears in the forum and market place. It will not pass; it will endure and increase. Forces as potent as the struggle for existence—economic, racial, and nationalistic—will continue to feed it. But while the controversy becomes more intense, the very diversity of the collisions that keep it alive lends confusion to all discussions bearing on the nature

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and destiny of civilization. So while our library shelves sink under the weight of books on the subject, ambiguity rather than clarity and frankness mark the trend of their arguments. Civilization, like politics, makes strange bedfellows.

In various places in Europe, for example, we find Marxian communists, Roman Catholics, and violent Chauvinists united in condemning the megalopolitan civilization of modern capitalism, all for different reasons, and certain to divide savagely on the nature and work of the order which they would substitute for it. In Germany, the Nationalists turn against science, machine, and industrialism all the sentiments, religious, patriotic, and class, that spring from their practical situation. In England and America, a school of anti-imperialists, disgusted with the slums and sooty towns of the machine, imagine that the kingdom of heaven must be in the Orient and, under the guise of Oriental wisdom, assail the evils of capitalism at home.

This psychology, of course, is not new. The account of Germany which Tacitus gave to the Romans nearly two thousand years ago may have been designed to hold up the mirror to Roman vices rather than to present a true picture of the tribes beyond the Rhine. The war which Rousseau waged on the civilization of science and reason was conducted in the name of nature, the noble savage, and agriculture. When all the metaphysics and verbiage of Spengler's "Decline of the West" are put aside and the heart of the matter is revealed, it becomes evident that the author is really aiming to glorify an agricultural, as contrasted with a metropolitan, civilization. What really gives him distress and causes him to think that the West is declining is the fact that the city is overcoming the country. "In place of a people true to type," he says, "springing from the soil and reared on it, there now appears a new kind of nomad, loosely cooperating with instable and changing masses, the parasitical city-dweller, without traditions, without religion, concerned only with matters of fact; clever, sterile, and profoundly contemptuous of the countryman, in particular that highest type of agriculturalist, the country gentleman." Stripped of rhetorical paint, this merely reflects the grudge of the Prussian landed-proprietor against the Berlin or Hamburg banker, merchant, and manufacturer.

Nor is the confusion that exists among the contestants over the merits of particular "cultures" cleared up by those who speak either glibly or profoundly about the downfall of civilizations. Just what happened when Rome "fell" is nowhere clearly set forth in the immortal pages of Gibbon. It is true, he shows us the unitary state (if a state ever beset by social war deserves the name) dissolving and great artists in letters giving place to sophists and stylists; but whether Roman civilization perished or merely passed over into the next period he leaves for the scholars to debate, whether the masses of the Roman empire, even those upstanding Roman citizens who lived like rabbits in the slums of the Eternal City and were sustained by bread and circuses, were happier, stronger, wiser, and nobler than the people of the so-called "dark-ages" which followed the blaze of Augustan days is nowhere made plain by the philosopher of London and Lausanne.

And it must be confessed that the case presented by Spengler is not much better on the side of explications. He does, no doubt, speak of the coming "transition from constitutional systems to the informal sway of individuals," of "wars of annihilation," of "imperialism," and of "primitive human conditions thrusting themselves upward into high civilized modes of living"; but just how this represents a "decline" and why it presents features more alarming those those of the ages past cannot be discerned from the text of his argument.

Given the liveliness of the present discussion about civilization and the confusion that reigns among those engaged in inquiries respecting the subject, it seems worth while and pertinent to the thinking of our age to take stock, to clarify our notions by defini-

tions and specifications, to invite those who talk with facility about it to deliver a bill of particulars. . . .

At the outset, certain questions seem relevant. What is meant intrinsically by the contrast between Western and Oriental civilizations? By the contrast between the modern, mediaeval, and classical civilizations? What is "the West" that is threatened with a decline? What does a decline imply in terms of population, economy, art, government, literature, and life in general? Is the assumption supported by data or is it a mere hypothesis born of temperament and certain psychological situations induced by outward events such as defeats, disappointments, and adversities in general? If the decline is really imminent, can anything be done about it? If not, must philosophy despair and assume that the universe is meaningless, that the force which carries nations to high pinnacles will shortly become bankrupt itself?

Conceivably a master mind, a modern Aristotle, equipped with all the sciences of the time, could attempt the solution of this riddle, but the intense specialization of our age, the enormous mass of accumulated knowledge precludes any such unitary treatment. Hence the concurrence of many minds is necessary if any progress is to be made.

Beyond yielding the fruits of co-operation, such concurrence itself may be a contribution of some consequence to civilization. "The various forms of intellectual activity which together make up the culture of an age," remarks Walter Pater, "move for the most part from different starting points and by unconnected roads. . . . There come, however, from time to time, eras of more favorable conditions, in which the thoughts of men draw nearer together than is their wont and the many interests of the intellectual world combine in one complete type of culture. The fifteenth century in Italy is one of these happier eras, and what is sometimes said of the age of Pericles is true of that of Lorenzo: it is an age productive in personalities, many-sided, centralized, complete. Here artists and philosophers and those whom the action of the world has elevated and made keen do not live in isolation but breathe a common air and catch light and heat from each other's thought. There is a spirit of general elevation and enlightenment in which all alike communicate."

If Pater's thesis is sound, and it seems to be, then a search for the essence of civilization ought to advance all the arts of the good life, reduce the social friction based upon misconceptions, illuminate the roads before us, and serve humanity in its struggle to get possession of the helm. A symposium on civilization, therefore, appears to be timely and it might possibly be a contribution of something to itself, if that is not an incredible paradox.

But a symposium may readily end in confusion rather than clarification, darkness rather than light, especially if no target is set up to give a general direction to the work of the participants. There is truth in the saying of the poet that everything written is in the nature of a confession. Nothing is more futile than a pretense to a kind of divine omniscience that leads readers by secret passages to predetermined ends.

The purpose of this book is, therefore, publicly admitted. It is not designed to bolster up the arguments of any economic, racial, religious, or nationalist school. It attempts to set forth clearly indubitable facts relevant to the consideration of the subject in hand. It proceeds from the conviction that history reveals no golden age in the past and the additional belief that the achievements of the past three hundred years, good and bad, are not the deeds of willful men and women who have perverted the perfection offered by the middle ages. While laying a firm emphasis on certain aspects of the problems before us, the book is not dominated by any facile optimism. It frankly concedes the force of numerous items in the bill of indictment lodged by critics against modern civilization —its darker and more dangerous features— without condemning it wholesale as a terrible error made through the neglect of the superlative wisdom of other times and places. At any rate, density seems to point to the future —not to the past.

With these preliminary admissions duly made, let us begin the discussion by recalling that a standard dictionary defines civilization as "the state of being reclaimed from the rudeness of savage life and advanced in the arts and learning." In origin, it derives immediately from the Latin word *civitas*, meaning in its concrete usage the rights and privileges of a Roman citizen, and figuratively a body of citizens, the state, commonwealth, or city. Now the rights and privileges of Roman citizens, as over against slaves and subject peoples, were realistic and economic, and it is of more than passing interest to note that in its deeper roots *civitas* comes from *quies*, repose from labor, perhaps that leisure enjoyed by ruling orders. Aside from all philological subtleties, civilization in its strict sense includes all these implements, devices, and practices by which men and women lift themselves above savages—the whole economic order, the system of leisure built upon it, the employment of that leisure, and all manifestations of religion, beauty, and appreciation.

Since the substructure of any civilization is the material fabric that frees mankind from the status of the savage, it follows that every civilization must depend in a large measure upon its geographical environment—rivers, mountains, seas, and natural resources—the state of its tools and industries, the occupations of the people, and the organization of society for the direction of industry. Civilization, therefore, is not a garment that can be put on or off by intellectuals at pleasure, transferred from a Frenchman or an Englishman to a Matabele or Zulu over night. Except for some of the minor decorative arts, a civilization cannot be borrowed without reproducing the accompanying economic order. And economic orders are not arrangements which nations can take on or discard at will without reference to their geographical situation or the competition of their neighbors. Japan, for example, if she is to survive, has no choice but the extensive adoption of the machinery and science employed by her rivals, and with that adoption go its social and artistic habiliments.

If this pattern of thought conforms with the facts, then the classification of civilizations by mere reference to longitude or to chronology is hardly short of absurd. The cultural status of a people is not determined by the element of time or by its position east or west of Greenwich. Many primitive societies have remained in substantially the same condition for thousands of years; where the modes of acquiring a living remain practically static, civilization preserves the same social designs. In the backward places of Europe are to be found numerous village communities which have carried forward into the twentieth century the whole cultural outfit of the middle ages. Hence the distinction between modern and mediæval civilizations, considered as the simple products of time, is intrinsically without meaning.

Nor is the geographical case much better —making astronomy rather than time the basis of calculation. In origin, the terms East and West are mere references to the dawning sun and its dusky resting place. Realistically considered, China and Japan, when compared with Europe of the fourteenth or fifteenth century, reveal more similarities than contrasts. Indeed early Christian missionaries in the Orient were so struck by the resemblance between Buddhist religious ceremonies and their own that they ascribed the former to the devices of the Devil. No doubt a meticulous scholar can discover many fine points of distinction between the feudalism of Japan and that of mediæval Europe, but for practical purposes the substance of the two orders was the same; the fighting men held the same supremacy in both geographical areas. There were differences between the lines and colors of the castle at Osaka and the castle at Warwick but they were both built of stone, their purposes were fundamentally the same, and the mode of life of their inhabitants strangely alike.

Proceeding from the definition given above and the argument thus sketched, it seems to follow that civilizations, apart from tribal and nomadic orders, when considered intrinsically, fall into three general types:

Agricultural-slave, feudal, peasant, or freehold.
Pre-machine urban-handicraft, mercantile, and political capitals.
Mechanical and scientific.

If it be urged that this is merely an economic classification which leaves out of account arts, religion, and learning, the reply is that these things are themselves bent to the order in which they thrive and have meaning and vitality only in relation to their economic substructure. Traces of previous orders no doubt survive or thrust themselves upward into new orders, but they thrive only in so far as they carry with them the soil that originally nourished them. Certainly there are more fundamental resemblances between the culture of a peasant in a remote village in Spain and that of a peasant in a remote village of Japan than between the culture of a Christian priest of the upper Pyrenees and that of a Baptist clergyman in a thriving manufacturing town in Illinois. A Buddhist monk from Horiugi would feel perfectly at home with a Catholic monk from Ravena; but neither of them would enjoy the hospitality or approve the religion of a Methodist parson in Zenith.

What is called Western or modern civilization by way of contrast with the civilization of the Orient or mediæval times is at bottom a civilization that rests upon machinery and science as distinguished from one founded on agriculture or handicraft commerce. It is in reality a technological civilization. It is only about two hundred years old, and, far from shrinking in its influence, is steadily extending its area into agriculture as well as handicrafts. If the records of patent offices, the statistics of production, and the reports of laboratories furnish evidence worthy of credence, technological civilization, instead of showing signs of contraction, threatens to overcome and transform the whole globe.

Considered with respect to its intrinsic nature, technological civilization presents certain precise characteristics. It rests fundamentally on power-driven machinery which transcends the physical limits of its human directors, multiplying indefinitely the capacity for the production of goods. Science in all its branches—physics, chemistry, biology, and psychology—is the servant and upholder of this system. The day of crude invention being almost over, continuous research in the natural sciences is absolutely necessary to the extension of the machine and its market, thus forcing continuously the creation of new goods, new processes, and new modes of life. As the money for learning comes in increasing proportions from taxes on industry and gifts by captains of capitalism, a steady growth in scientific endowments is to be expected, and the scientific curiosity thus aroused and stimulated will hardly fail to expand—and to invade all fields of thought with a technique of ever-refining subtlety. Affording the demand for the output of industry are the vast populations of the globe, hence mass production and marketing are inevitable concomitants of the machine routine.

For the present, machine civilization is associated with capitalism, under which large-scale production has risen to its present stage, but machine civilization is by no means synonymous with capitalism—that ever-changing scheme of exploitation. While the acquisitive instinct of the capitalist who builds factories and starts mass production is particularly emphasized by economists and is, no doubt, a factor of immense moment, it must not be forgotten that the acquisitive passion of the earth's multitudes for the goods, the comforts, and the securities of the classes is an equal, if not a more important, force, and in any case is likely to survive capitalism as we know it. Few choose nakedness when they can be clothed, the frosts of winter when they can be warm, or the misery of bacterial diseases when sanitation is offered to them. In fact, the ascetics and flagellants of the world belong nowhere in the main stream of civilization—and are of dubious utility and service in any civilization.

Though machine civilization has here been treated as if it were an order, it in fact differs from all others in that it is highly dynamic, containing within itself the seeds

of constant reconstruction. Everywhere agricultural civilizations of the pre-machine age have changed only slowly with the fluctuations of markets, the fortunes of governments, and the vicissitudes of knowledge, keeping their basic institutions intact from century to century. Pre-machine urban civilizations have likewise retained their essential characteristics through long lapses of time. But machine civilization based on technology, science, invention, and expanding markets must of necessity change—and rapidly. The order of steam is hardly established before electricity invades it; electricity hardly gains a fair start before the internal combustion engine overtakes it. There has never been anywhere in the world any order comparable with it, and all analogies drawn from the middle ages, classical antiquity, and the Orient are utterly inapplicable to its potentialities, offering no revelations as to its future.

Granted that these essential characteristics of so-called Western civilization, namely, its mechanical and scientific foundations, are realistic, is it a mere "flash in the pan," a historical accident destined to give way to some other order based upon entirely different modes of life, lifting mankind "above the rudeness of the savage"? Now, if the term "decline" in this connection means anything concrete, it signifies the gradual or rapid abandonment of the material modes of production prevailing in any particular age and the habits and arts associated with them. Conceivably the Prussianism of the Hohenzollerns described so well in Spengler's "Prussianism and Socialism," may decline—is declining. It is highly probable that the petty tenure system of the French peasantry, the now sadly diluted aristocracy inherited from the eighteenth century, the church of little mysteries and miracles may decline, but these things are not the peculiar characteristics of the West. They are the remnants of the agricultural complex which the machine is everywhere steadily subduing. The real question is this: can and will machine society "decline"?

It is generally agreed among historians that the decay of agriculture, owing to the lack of scientific management and fertilization, was one of the chief causes for the breakdown of the Roman state. Is it to be supposed that the drive of the masses of mankind for machine-made goods will fail, that large-scale production will be abandoned, that the huge literature of natural science will disappear in the same fashion as most of the literature of ancient Egypt, that the ranks of scientific men will cease in time to be recruited, that the scientific power to meet new situations will fail? An affirmative answer requires a great deal of hardihood. The scientific order is not recruited from a class, such as the patricians of ancient Rome; nor is scientific knowledge the monopoly of a caste likely to dissolve. Unless all visible signs deceive us, there is no reason for supposing that either machinery or science will disappear or even dwindle to insignificance. And they are the basis of the modern civilization.

If Western civilization does not break down from such internal causes, is there good reason for supposing that any of the races now inhabiting Asia or Africa could overcome the machine order of the West by any process, peaceful or warlike, without themselves adopting the technical apparatus of that order? No doubt, some of them are already borrowing various features of machine society, but slowly and with indifferent success. The most efficient of them, the Japanese, still rely largely upon the West for a substantial part of their mechanical outfit—for inventiveness and creative mechanical skill. Unless there is a material decline in Western technology—and no evidence of such a slump is now in sight—then it may be safely contended that none of the agricultural civilizations of Asia or Africa will ever catch up with the scientific development of the West. As things stand at present, none of them gives any promise of being able to overrun the West as the conquerors of Rome overran the provinces of that Empire. Certainly there is not likely to be, in any future that we can foresee, such an equality of

armaments as existed between the best of the Roman legions and the forces of their conquerors. Hence the downfall of the West through conquest may fairly be ruled out of the possibilities of the coming centuries. If, in due time, the East smashes the West on the battlefield, it will be because the East has completely taken over the technology of the West, gone it one better, and thus become Western in civilization. In that case machine civilization will not disappear but will make geographical shift.

Defining civilization narrowly in terms of letters and art, are the probabilities of a "decline" more numerous? Here we approach a more debatable, more intangible, topic. With reference to letters, taking into account the evidence of the last fifty years, there is no sign of a decay—at all events, a decay like that which occurred between the first and the sixth centuries in Roman history. Indeed, there are many cautious critics who tell us that the writers of the past hundred years, with the machine system at a high pitch, may be compared in number, competence, and power without fear with the writers of any century since the appearance of the Roman grand style. Granted that we have no Horace, Shakespeare, or Goethe, we may reasonably answer that literature of their manner has little meaning for a civilization founded on a different basis. Considered in relation to their environment rather than some fictitious absolute, the best of modern writers, it may well be argued, rank with the best of the middle ages and antiquity. If poetry sinks in the scale and tragedy becomes comical, it may be because the mythology upon which they fed is simply foreign to the spirit of the machine age—not because there has been a dissolution of inherited mental powers. The imagination of an Einstein, a Bohr, or a Millikan may well transcend that of a Milton or a Virgil. Who is to decide?

The case of the arts is on a similar footing. For the sake of the argument, it may be conceded that the machine age has produced nothing comparable with the best of the painting, sculpture, and architecture of antiquity and the middle ages. What does that signify? Anything more than a decline in the arts appropriate to an agricultural and market-city era? The machine age is young. As yet it can hardly be said to have created an art of its own, although there are signs of great competence, if not genius, about us —signs of a new art appropriate to speed, mechanics, motion, railway stations, factories, office buildings, and public institutions. Using the lowest common denominator in the reckoning, there is no evidence of a decay in artistic power such as appears in the contrast between the Pantheon of Agrippa and the rude churches of Saxon England. To say that the modern age has produced no ecclesiastical architecture comparable with that of the middle ages is to utter a judgment as relevant to our situation as a statement that the mediæval times can show no aqueducts or baths equal to the noblest structures of pagan Rome. It may be that the machine age will finally prove to be poor in artistic genius—a debatable point—but it can hardly be said that it has produced its typical art, from which a decline may be expected.

Passing to a more tangible subject, is it possible that machine civilization may be destroyed by internal revolutions or civil wars such as have often wrecked great states in the past? That such disturbances will probably arise in the future from time to time cannot be denied, and the recent Bolshevik revolution in Russia is often cited as a warning to contemporary statesmen. If the revolutions of antiquity be taken as illustrations, it must be pointed out that the analogies are to be used with extreme care in all applications to the machine age. When the worst has been said about the condition of the industrial proletariat, it must be conceded that as regards material welfare, knowledge, social consideration, and political power, it is far removed from the proletariat of Rome or the slaves of a more remote antiquity. The kind of servile revolt that was so often ruinous in Greece and Rome is hardly possible in a machine civilization, even if economic distress were to pass anything yet experienced since the eighteenth century. The most radical of the modern proletariat

want more of the good things of civilization —not a destruction of technology. If the example of Russia be pressed as relevant, the reply is that Russia possessed not a machine, but an agricultural civilization of the crudest sort; peasant soldiers supplied the storm troops of the November revolution, and the Bolsheviki are straining every nerve to maintain their position by promising the peasants and urban dwellers that the benefits of a machine order will surely come. There will be upheavals in machine civilizations, no doubt, and occasional dictatorships like that in the United States between 1861 and 1865, but the triumph of a party dedicated to a deliberate return to pre-machine agriculture with its low standards of life, its diseases, and its illiteracy is beyond the imagination.

Finally, we must face the assertion that wars among the various nations of machine civilization may destroy the whole order. Probably terrible wars will arise and prove costly in blood and treasure, but it is a strain upon the speculative faculties to conceive of any conflict that could destroy the population and mechanical equipment of the Western world so extensively that human vitality and science could not restore economic prosperity and even improve upon the previous order. According to J. S. Mill, the whole mechanical outfit of a capitalistic country can be reproduced in about ten years. Hence the prospect of repeated and costly wars in the future need not lead us to the pessimistic view that suicide is to be the fate of machine civilization. We may admit the reality of the perils ahead without adopting the counsel of despair. If Europe and America were absolutely devastated, Japan with her present equipment in libraries, laboratories, and technology could begin the work of occupying the vacant areas, using the machine process in the operation.

For the reasons thus adduced it may be inferred: that modern civilization founded on science and the machine will not decline after the fashion of older agricultural civilizations; that analogies drawn from ages previous to technology are inapplicable; that according to signs on every hand technology promises to extend its area and intensify its characteristics; that it will afford the substance with which all who expect to lead and teach in the future must reckon.

Such appears to be the promise of the long future, if not the grand destiny of what we call modern civilization—the flexible framework in which the human spirit must operate during the coming centuries. Yet this view by no means precludes the idea that the machine system, as tested by its present results, presents shocking evils and indeed terrible menaces to the noblest faculties of the human race. By the use of material standards for measuring achievement, it is in danger of developing a kind of ignorant complacency that would make Phidias, Sophocles, Horace, St. Augustine, Dante, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Lord Bacon, Newton, Goethe, Ruskin, and Emerson appear to be mere trifling parasites as compared with Lord Beaverbrook, Hugo Stinnes, John Pierpont Morgan, and Henry Ford. To deny the peril that lies in any such numerical morality would be a work of supererogation. More perilous still is the concentration on the production of goods that will sell quickly at the best price the traffic will bear and fall to pieces quickly—mass production of cheap goods—rather than concentration on the manufacture and exchange of commodities with the finest intrinsic values capable of indefinite endurance. What the creed of "give as little as you can for as much as you can get" will do to the common honesty of mankind, if followed blindly for centuries, can readily be imagined. Finally, it must be admitted that the dedication of the engines of state, supported by a passionate and uninformed chauvinism, to the promotion and sale of machine-made goods is creating zones of international rivalry likely to flame up in wars more vast and destructive than any yet witnessed.

To consider for the moment merely the domestic aspects of the question, the machine civilization is particularly open to attack from three sides.

On æsthetic grounds, it has been assailed for nearly a hundred years, England, the

classical home of the industrial revolution, being naturally enough the mother of the severest critics—Ruskin, Carlyle, Kingsley, and Matthew Arnold. The chief article in their indictment, perhaps, is the contention that men who work with machinery are not creative, joyous, or free, but are slaves to the monotonous routine of the inexorable wheel. In a sense it is true that, in the pre-machine age, each craftsman had a certain leeway in shaping his materials with his tools and that many a common artisan produced articles of great beauty.

Yet the point can be easily overworked. Doubtless the vast majority of mediæval artisans merely followed designs made by master workmen. This is certainly true of artisans in the Orient today. With respect to the mass of mankind, it is safe to assume that the level of monotony on which labor is conducted under the machine régime is by and large not lower but higher than in the handicraft, servile, or slave systems of the past. Let anyone who has doubts on this matter compare the life of laborers on the latifundia of Rome or in the cities of modern China with that of the workers in by far the major portion of machine industries. Those who are prepared to sacrifice the standard of living for the millions to provide conditions presumably favorable to the creative arts must assume a responsibility of the first magnitude.

Indeed, it is not certain, so primitive as yet are the beginnings of machine civilization, that there can be no substitute for the handicrafts as æsthetic stimulants, assuming that mechanical industry is not favorable to the creative life. The machine régime does not do away with the necessity for designing or reduce the opportunities for the practice of that craft: it transfers the operation from the shop to the laboratory; and it remains to be seen whether great æsthetic powers will not flourish after the first storm of capitalism has passed. In any case, it must be admitted that the "cheap and nasty" character of machine-made goods, so marked everywhere, may really be due to the profit-making lust and the desire of the multitude to have imitations of the gewgaws loved by the patricians, not to the inherent nature of machine industry. Possibly what is lost in the merits of individual objects of beauty may be more than offset by city and community planning, realizing new types of æsthetic ideals on a vast, democratic basis. Certainly the worst of the æsthetic offences created by the machine—the hideous factory town—can be avoided by intelligent co-operative action, as the garden-city movement faintly foreshadows. In a hundred years the coal-consuming engine may be as obsolete as the Dodo, and the Birminghams, Pittsburghs, and Essens of the modern world live only in the records of the historians. However this may be, the æsthetes of the future will have to work within the limitations and opportunities created by science and the machine, directed, it may be hoped, by a more intelligent economy and nobler concepts of human values.

Frequently affiliated with æsthetic criticism of the machine and science is the religious attack. With endless reiteration, the charge is made that industrial civilization is materialistic. In reply, the scornful might say, "Well, what of it?" But the issue deserves consideration on its merits, in spite of its illusive nature. As generally used, the term "materialistic" has some of the qualities of moonshine; it is difficult to grasp. It is the fashion of certain Catholic writers to call Protestantism materialistic, on account of its emphasis on thrift and business enterprise—a fashion which some radicals have adopted: Max Weber in Germany and R. H. Tawney in England, for example. With something akin to the same discrimination, Oswald Spengler calls all England materialistic, governed by pecuniary standards—as contrasted with old Prussia where "duty," "honor," and "simple piety" reigned supreme. More recently, André Siegfried, following a hundred English critics, with Matthew Arnold in the lead, has found materialism to be one of the chief characteristics of the United States, as contrasted with the richer and older civilizations of Europe, particularly France. And Gandhi consigns every one of them—England, Prussia, France, and America—to the same bottomless pit of industrial materialism.

When all this verbiage is sifted, it usually means that the charge arises from emotions that have little or no relation to religion or philosophy—from the quarrels of races, sects, and nations.

If religion is taken in a crude, anthropomorphic sense, filling the universe with gods, spirits, and miraculous feats, then beyond question the machine and science are the foes of religion. If it is materialistic to disclose the influence of technology and environment in general upon humanity, then perhaps the machine and science are materialistic. But it is one of the ironies of history that science has shown the shallowness of the old battle between materialist and spiritist and through the mouths of physicists has confessed that it does not know what matter and force are. Matter is motion; motion is matter; both elude us, we are told. Doubtless science does make short shrift of a thousand little mysteries once deemed as essential to Christianity as were the thousand minor gods to the religion of old Japan, but for these little mysteries it has substituted a higher and sublimer mystery.

To descend to the concrete, is the prevention of disease by sanitation more materialistic than curing it by touching saints' bones? Is feeding the multitude by mass production more materialistic than feeding it by a miracle? Is the elimination of famines by a better distribution of goods more materialistic than prevention by the placation of the rain gods? At any rate, it is not likely that science and machinery will be abandoned because the theologian (who seldom refuses to partake of their benefits) wrings his hands and cries out against materialism. After all, how can he consistently maintain that Omnipotent God ruled the world wisely and well until the dawn of the modern age and abandoned it to the Evil One because Henry VIII or Martin Luther quarrelled with the Pope and James Watt invented the steam engine?

Arising, perhaps, from the same emotional source as æsthetic and religious criticisms, is the attack on the machine civilization as lacking in humanitarianism. Without commenting on man's inhumanity to man as an essential characteristic of the race, we may fairly ask on what grounds can anyone argue that the masses were more humanely treated in the agricultural civilization of antiquity or the middle ages than in the machine order of modern times. Tested by the mildness of its laws (brutal as many of them are), by its institutions of care and benevolence, by its death rate (that tell-tale measurement of human welfare), by its standards of life, and by every conceivable measure of human values, machine civilization, even in its present primitive stage, need fear no comparison with any other order on the score of general well-being.

Under the machine and science, the love of beauty, the sense of mystery, and the motive of compassion—sources of æsthetics, religion, and humanism—are not destroyed. They remain essential parts of our nature. But the conditions under which they must operate, the channels they must take, the potentialities of their action are all changed. These ancient forces will become powerful in the modern age just in the proportion that men and women accept the inevitability of science and the machine, understand the nature of the civilization in which they must work, and turn their faces resolutely to the future.

The Future of Man as an Inhabitant of the Earth[1]

KIRTLEY F. MATHER

DURING the first decade or two of the current century, geologists, astronomers, and physicists engaged in many discussions concerning the future of the earth as an abode for life. Some believed that "the end of the world" was relatively close at hand; others, that the prospect for the future was to be measured in terms of hundreds of thousands if not of millions of years. As usual in scientific circles, there has emerged from the conflict of ideas during the years of discussion a general unanimity of opinion, and today the geologic outlook for the future of the earth is quite clear.

Since the turn of the century new methods of measuring the length of geologic time have been discovered and applied. New concepts of the nature and sources of energy have been proposed and tested. New data concerning astronomic space and the distribution of the stars have been obtained. Innumerable details of earth history have been deciphered to give a trustworthy record of the changes that the earth and its inhabitants have undergone in the past. The key to unlock the secrets of the future is now available in this knowledge of the past, and with our present understanding of the processes of nature that key may be intelligently used. All the evidence combines to lead us unmistakably to the conclusion that for many scores, if not for hundreds of millions of years to come, the earth will continue to be a comfortably habitable abode for creatures like ourselves.

Surface temperatures of the earth, the most important item in any consideration of its long-range habitability, are determined by the receipt of solar energy distributed through atmospheric agencies. For any given area of land the annual contribution of heat from the earth's interior, hot though it may be, is just about equal to the warmth received from the sun in 20 minutes by an equal area in equatorial latitudes under a clear sky at midday. The nineteenth-century picture of an earth, initially fiery hot but progressively cooling so that yesterday it displayed a glacial climate and tomorrow it will be too frigid to support life, may now be thrown into the discard. The earth will "grow old and die" only as a result of failure to receive adequate supplies of radiant energy from the sun. The prospect that the sun will "burn itself out" in a decrepit old age is so remote as to baffle all attempts to date that untoward event even by those who are expert in manipulating astronomic figures. Nor is there any likelihood that the space relations between earth and sun will change appreciably within scores of millions of years and put the earth either too close to the sun or too distant from it for comfort.

The lurid pictures of a sudden catastrophic debacle resulting from collision with some other heavenly body—comet, planet, star, or what you will—are products of a vivid imagination wholly without foundation in astronomic fact or theory.

The only plausible alternative to the conclusion that earth and sun will continue the even tenor of their ways for an inconceivably long period of time is that the sun will some day imitate the supernovae occasionally detected among the stars and terminate the existence of the entire solar system by a gigantic explosion. Precisely one such supernova has been observed within the galaxy

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of the Milky Way and several such in all the other galaxies of stars during the past few decades. The astronomers could, therefore, calculate for us the chances on a statistical basis that any individual star—the sun, for example—would suffer such a fate within any given period of time. The result would be a figure so infinitesimal as to set at rest the mind of even the most jittery of questioners. Pending the discovery of the kind of premonitory symptoms displayed by stars about to blow themselves to atoms, the best that can be done is to rest content in history. Since the earliest records of living creatures were left as fossils, if not indeed since the earliest sedimentary rocks were formed, the sun has faithfully maintained its energy output within a fairly narrow range and has given no evidence of any fluctuations that might suggest any significant change in its behavior.

The geologist may, therefore, turn with confidence from the long perspective of geologic past with its 1½ to 2 billion years of recorded earth history to a similarly long prospect for the future. Time is one of the most overwhelming resources of our universe.

It should not be inferred, however, that the earth will continue in the future to display the same environmental conditions as those which we enjoy today. The history of mankind thus far has been enacted against a background that in the full perspective of earth history is truly extraordinary. The geologic period in which we live is a time of unusually rugged and extensive lands, with notably varied climate ranging from the glacial cold of Greenland and Antarctica to the oppressive warmth and humidity of certain equatorial regions. Such conditions have apparently recurred many times at long-spaced intervals since the oldest known rocks were formed, but added together the time thus represented cannot be as much as a fourth of geologic time. Much more characteristic of earth history as a whole have been the conditions illustrated by those periods when corals thrived in shallow seas occupying the site of Baffin Land and North Greenland, and coal-forming plants flourished on Antarctica. The probability is strong that eventually, say in 5 or 10 million years, the earth will display again the physical conditions of many past geologic periods that were characterized by broad low lands, wide shallow seas, and uniform genial climate.

But most of us have a greater interest in the next few centuries than in the subsequent millions of years. Minor changes in climate will doubtless occur just as they have in the last few thousand years. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, there is no basis for prediction concerning their nature, whether for better or for worse. There is really no good reason for referring to the present as "a post-glacial epoch"; it may prove to be an interglacial epoch. But our ancestors weathered ice ages in the past, and presumably we are better equipped for such contingencies than they were. Should the average annual temperature of the earth as a whole be reduced something like 10° F. and remain at that lower level for a few millennia, it is likely that once more the greater part of Canada, the northern United States, and the Scandinavian countries would be buried beneath great ice sheets. But in consequence of the removal of water from the sea as vapor to form the snow to produce the glacial ice, considerable areas now shallowly submerged along the coast lines in middle and equatorial latitudes would emerge as dry land. Indeed, it is likely that the area of land suitable for human abode would be nearly or quite as great at the climax of a glacial period as it is today.

By the same token, the disappearance of existing bodies of glacial ice as a result of rapid amelioration of climate in the not-distant future would, if it occurred, be a decidedly mixed blessing. Return to the sea the water now imprisoned in the ice on the Arctic islands, Greenland and Antarctica without any compensating changes in crustal elevation, and sea level would be raised 150 to 160 feet the world around. Considering the number of people who now work or sleep in buildings in metropolitan communities not over 150 feet above sea level, the importance of such a change is readily apparent. But from the geologists' point of view these are

relatively trivial matters. With due deference to the nature of the climatic variations and geologic changes which are certain to occur in the next few thousand years, there is nothing to be expected from such sources that would seriously deter the human species from maintaining a comfortable existence on the surface of the earth for an indefinitely long period of time—a period to be measured in millions rather than in mere thousands of years.

2

At last, it is generally understood that man is a part of nature. He may be something more than an animal (that depends largely upon definition), but he is none the less truly a part of the animal world. Like the other inhabitants of the earth, man is a product of evolutionary processes operating on this particular planet.

We may be the latest product of the creative forces displaying themselves in the organic development taking place in this particular portion of the cosmos, but we have no reason to assume that we are the last achievement of those forces. Nor does the fact that man has arisen from a lowly origin through processes of evolution validate the optimistic inference that he will necessarily continue his progress to ever higher levels of activity. Evolution does not guarantee progress; it merely guarantees change. The change may be for the better or the worse, depending upon the conditions of time and place and the vitality of the individuals concerned.

The pages of Mother Earth's diary reveal an amazing and thought-provoking record of the progress of living creatures throughout the long eras of earth history. Again and again, in the procession of the living, dynasties of animals or plants have arisen from a humble origin to a position of world supremacy, maintained for a comparatively brief period and then lost forever. Some have disappeared entirely as their paths have led them off into blind alleys. Others have sunk to a low level and have continued a degenerate existence to the present day. A few have given rise to other and more efficient forms of life that superseded their predecessors as leaders in the procession. Gradually we are discovering some of the reasons for success and failure along the path of life. Beyond question, man may profit from these experiences of the past, if he uses the intellectual and moral resources which are available for him.

From the point of view attained through knowledge of geologic life development, man has today a unique opportunity to gain continuing security for himself and his progeny on the face of the earth, but whether or not he takes advantage of that opportunity is to be determined largely by himself. So far as we can tell, man is the first animal possessing the power to determine his own evolutionary destiny, but there is nothing in the record which guarantees that he will use that power wisely.

The animal species that in the past have been able to maintain their existence for more than 2 or 3 million years are relatively few in number. Most of them were comparatively simple types belonging to the less highly organized branches or phyla of the animal kingdom. Many were inhabitants of the sea where environmental conditions were remarkably stable throughout long periods of time. Among placental mammals, the major subdivision of the vertebrates to which man belongs, there is no similar record of longevity. Except under extraordinary conditions of geographic isolation, no species of placental mammal has persisted more than 2 or 3 million years. No matter how successful it may have been temporarily in multiplying and spreading over the face of the earth, each has become extinct in a geologically brief span of time. Perhaps a half million years might appropriately be taken as the average "life" of a species in this group of highly organized and notably complex creatures.

But extinction does not necessarily mean failure; it has frequently indicated the acme of achievement. For example, some of the now extinct three-toed horses and four-toed camels passed on "the torch of progress" to

their descendants, the one-toed horses and two-toed camels, and thus gained long-continuing security for their kind.

What then does the future hold for mankind? Genus *Homo* has already existed for 3 or 4 hundred thousand years; the species *Homo sapiens* has about 50 thousand years to its credit. If the average applies, we may expect nearly or quite a half million years more of existence for our kind and then either oblivion as we reach the end of a blind alley or progressive development into some type of descendant better adjusted than we to the total environmental factors of the time.

3

But does the average apply? Must man exit from the scene through either of the doors, that which closed behind the dinosaurs and titanotheres or that which opened before the three-toed horses and notharctines?

Most creatures have gained security by specializing in adjustment of structure and habit to particular environmental conditions, whereas man is a specialist in adjustability of structures and habits to a variety of environments. No other vertebrate can live as can he on Antarctic ice cap, in Amazonian jungle, beneath the surface of the sea, or high in the air.

Furthermore, man is the world's foremost specialist in transforming environments to bring them within the range of his powers. Far more efficient than the beaver or the mound-building ant, he drains the swamp, irrigates the desert, tunnels the mountain, bridges the river, digs the canal, conditions the air in home, factory, and office.

As a matter of fact, adjustability to environment is accomplished more by controlling surroundings than by modifying internal organs or essential functions of the body. When we ascend with Major Stevens into the stratosphere, or dive with Dr. Beebe 500 fathoms deep off Bermuda, or live with Admiral Byrd through the long night of Little America, we take along with us a sample of sea-level atmosphere and temperate climate that is our real environment in a situation otherwise unbearable. Fur-lined parkas and tropical linen suits are but a medium for ensuring an immediate environment as nearly as possible like that of middle latitudes when living in polar or equatorial surroundings.

But regardless of interpretation of procedure, the result is clear. Man has placed himself in control of external conditions to an extent immeasurably greater than any other creature. He has practically "drawn the teeth" of environment.

Although we know little of the details, it is certain that most of the creatures of the past, who "have had their day and ceased to be," were forced into extinction by changes of one sort or another in their environment, changes which came with such relative speed that they were unable to make adjustment to them in time. Man need have no fear on that score.

4

It is, however, immediately apparent that man's conquest of his surroundings has resulted from his clever use of things. Unless there is a ceaseless flow of cotton, flax, and wool, of coal, iron, and petroleum, of copper, lead, and tin, from ground to processing plant to consumer, he becomes a puny weakling. It is because he uses certain resources provided by his environment that he is freed from slavery to his environment. Are these resources adequate to keep him supplied with what he needs to maintain indefinitely the sort of existence to which he has accustomed himself?

There are two fundamental sources of the goods and the energy that man uses in the grim business of obtaining the sort of living that he apparently desires. On the one hand there is the farm and the waterfall, on the other there is the mine and the quarry. Things which grow in the field or forest, and power produced by falling water are in the category of annual income. Now that scientific research has made available the limitless quantity of nitrogen in the air for use as fertilizer, the resources of the plant and animal kingdoms are renewable; we use them,

but we need never use them up. In startling contrast, the resources of the mineral kingdom are nonrenewable; they are in the category of accumulated capital. Petroleum and coal, copper and iron, lead and vanadium, these and many other prerequisites of modern civilization have been accumulated by nature through hundreds of millions of years of geologic activity. Thanks to scientific research, man is exhausting that store of mineral wealth in a few hundred, or at most a few thousand, years. That inescapable fact is at rock bottom one of the most fundamental causes of economic distress, of war between nations, and of strife between classes.

Fairly accurate estimates of the world stores of many nonrenewable resources are now available. Take petroleum as an illustration. The known available reserves of petroleum beneath the surface of the United States total at present approximately 17 billion barrels. Experts differ in their guesses as to the quantity of petroleum that may be discovered in the future in areas that have not yet been adequately explored with the drill, or in known fields by discovery of deeper reservoirs not yet reached by the deepest wells in those fields. There are also many varying shades of optimism and pessimism concerning the possibility of increasing materially the percentage of recovery of the oil present in a reservoir rock when penetrated by drilling operations. Estimates of the quantity to be added to our petroleum reserves from those two sources range from 7 or 8 billion barrels to 15 or 20 billion. I would incline toward the larger figures, considering them as maxima that are extremely unlikely to be exceeded. On that basis, the present store of available petroleum beneath the surface of the United States is 25 to 35 billion barrels. That is only about 30 times the annual domestic consumption of petroleum in recent years. The average annual production of petroleum in the United Staes during the 5 years from 1934 through 1938 was almost 1 billion 100 million barrels, and the 1939 production exceeds 1¼ billion barrels. At the present rate of withdrawal, the domestic stores of this essential raw material would, therefore, be exhausted in less than a third of a century.

Data are not nearly so precise for the majority of foreign countries as for the United States. It is, however, fairly safe to conclude that the world stores of petroleum will last only something like 75 years at the present rate of withdrawal. With the possible exception of Mexico, no other country has been as successful as the United States in the attempt to exhaust its petroleum resources in the shortest possible period of time, but rapid progress toward that result is now being made in many regions.

Lest we become too pessimistic in response to such unwelcome figures, we should promptly note that substitutes for petroleum are already known. Gasoline, fuel oil, and lubricating oil can now be manufactured from coal and other rocks rich in carbon, by processes of hydrogenation and polymerization. These are expensive processes and their products cannot now compete with the products from petroleum even in countries far removed, both geographically and psychologically, from the more productive oil fields. They will, however, come into use more and more in the next few decades.

Enough bituminous and subbituminous coal is known to be available within the United States to meet the present annual demand for coal, plus enough to manufacture gasoline and fuel oil in sufficient quantity to meet current demands for at least 2,000 years. In addition there is enough oil shale—a rock rich in carbon but containing little or no oil—to meet present needs for petroleum products for at least 3,000 or 4,000 years.

Although petroleum affords an excellent illustration of the relation of nonrenewable resources to the activities of man, it is by no means typical of the items comprising nature's accumulated capital. For nearly all of the important nonrenewable resources, the known world stores are thousands of times as great as the annual world consumption instead of less than a hundred times. But for the few which like petroleum are not known to be available in such vast quantities, the story is much the same. Substitutes are

already known, or potential sources of alternative supply are already at hand, in quantities adequate to meet our current needs for at least 2,000 or 3,000 years. There is, therefore, no prospect of the imminent exhaustion of any of the essential raw materials, so far as the world as a whole is concerned, provided our demands for them are not multiplied rapidly in the future.

That, of course, raises another question. Will the demand for nonrenewable resources increase materially in the future and thus hasten their exhaustion? Recalling the fact that the human population of the earth has increased almost fivefold in number in the last 300 years, we might well be fearful on that score. The study of current population trends, however, makes it readily apparent that the next few hundred years will by no means duplicate that record of the past. If present trends continue, the all-time maximum population of the United States will be attained about the year 1970 and will total little more than 150 million souls. Thereafter, except for possible influx of immigrants from other countries, no further increase in numbers is to be expected.

Accurate figures are available for only a few other countries, such as England, France, and Germany, but there is a strong probability that the all-time maximum for the white races will be reached during the last third of the twentieth century and for the entire population of the earth before the end of the twenty-first century. Although the human family has doubled its numbers since 1860, it is extremely unlikely that it will ever reach twice its present number of approximately 2 billion. The pressure of demand for nonrenewable resources will not, therefore, become acute because of the increase in population in the near future. Mother Earth is a very wealthy benefactress, and our heritage of physical resources is far greater than ordinarily supposed.

There is, however, another reason why current consumption of nonrenewable resources cannot be taken as the basis for computing the "life" of such stores of basic materials. The demand for automobiles, telephones, radios, airplanes, and zippers, is today very unevenly distributed. Only a small fraction of the human population uses such things in any large amount. Other peoples are beginning to demand them and will do so increasingly as they become acquainted with the "benefits of civilization." In a few decades, unless we return to savagery, the world demand for many nonrenewable resources will be twice or thrice that of today.

Taking all these things into consideration, it would appear that world stores of needed natural resources are adequate to supply a basis for the comfortable existence of every human being who is likely to dwell anywhere on the face of the earth for something like a thousand years to come.

Even so, there may be found here an excuse for the policy of "grabbing while the grabbing is good" which motivates many individuals and nations at the present time. That excuse might, of course, be offset by the suggestion that there is no need to take thought for a morrow a thousand years hence, if we have any respect for the ingenuity of our remote offspring. There is, however, another phase of current trends in human history that should not be overlooked in this connection.

One hundred years ago, something like 80 per cent of all the things man used had their source on farms; most of the energy used to do the work of the world came from the muscles of living beings and from falling water. Today only about 30 per cent of the things man uses come from things that grow; most of the energy with which work is done comes from petroleum and coal. For a century or more, the policy has been to use relatively less of the annual income and more of the stored capital.

Now comes the change. Automobile steering wheels are made from soy beans; piano keys from cottage cheese; innumerable articles fashioned of plastics are produced in part from corncobs and alfalfa; multitudinous metal and rubber substitutes are synthesized from various farm crops. Energy is transmitted at high voltages for hundreds of miles from hydro-electric turbines. A considerable

portion of the annual budget for research is being devoted to progress in the direction of using more of the renewable resources—man's annual income, and less of the nonrenewable resources—nature's stored capital.

What this new policy will mean is readily apparent. With progress along such lines, the pressure for political control of metalliferous ore deposits, coal fields, and oil pools is lessened. Much of the physical basis for international jealousy is liquidated. At last the intelligence of science may make it truly practical to beat our "swords into ploughshares, our spears into pruning hooks."

Again comes the insistent question from the pessimistic critic. Is there land enough? Is there sufficient fertile soil to provide adequate food and in addition the plant materials for the ever-expanding chemical industries? And again we hear the same reply. Yes, there is enough and to spare. J. D. Bernal computes from apparently valid data that the cultivation of 2 billion acres of land by the methods now in vogue in Great Britain would provide an optimum food supply for the entire population of the earth. "Two billion acres is less than half the present cultivated area of 4 billion 200 million acres, itself hardly 12 per cent of the land surface of the earth." And in this calculation no account is taken of the increased yields that may confidently be expected from the continuing research of agronomists, plant breeders, and experts in animal husbandry, not to mention recent developments in the new science of the soilless growth of plants. Evidently, the predictions of Malthus notwithstanding, mankind need have no fear that increasing populations will place an impossible burden upon the available sources of food. Human ingenuity, intelligent use of renewable resources, wise adjustment of structures and habits to environmental conditions, seem competent to dispel that dread shadow.

But these optimistic conclusions concerning the relation of man to the nonrenewable and renewable resources essential for comfortable existence are based upon world statistics. Obviously they do not apply with equal force to the economy of individual nations. No nation, not even the Soviet Union, Brazil, or the United States of America, embraces within its political frontiers a sufficient variety of geologic structures to give it adequate supplies of all the various metalliferous ores necessary as raw materials for modern industrial operations. The United States, for example, must import nickel, tin, antimony, chromium, and platinum if American manufacturers are to use those metals in the fabrication of articles essential to what we are pleased to call the civilized way of life. Likewise, no nation enjoys a sufficient variety of climatic conditions to permit all kinds of foodstuffs to be grown on its farms and fields or gathered from its forests, and to allow the growth of all the various plants contributing raw materials to industry. The United States, again the most significant example for us, is forced to import all the bananas, coffee, tea, camphor, coconuts, flax, jute, quinine, rubber, and shellac consumed in this country, either from foreign countries or its own overseas possessions. It is entirely possible that, within a few decades, substitutes of domestic origin may be available to take the place of many, or even all, of such commodities or that plant breeders and agronomists may find a practical way of extending the geographical limits of some of the plants whose products are considered essential so that any nation occupying a large fraction of any continent may actually be self-sufficient. But for the present and probably for a long time to come it is evident that every nation is dependent upon many other nations for the raw materials that it needs for its own industrial prosperity.

Perhaps the most important fact concerning the life of man today is this fact of interdependence. No nation, community, or individual can gain any lasting measure of security without taking that fact into consideration. The resources that man must utilize, if he wishes to escape the fate of his less intelligent relatives now known only by their fossil remains, are unevenly distributed and locally concentrated. The techniques of discovering and utilizing them are now fairly

well known, but satisfactory procedures for making them and their products available to all members of the human family are not close at hand.

The very solution of the physical problems which man encounters in his attempt to maintain his foothold upon the earth brings him all the more forcefully into bruising contact with physical and spiritual problems that must also be solved if he is to continue his existence on this planet. The critical question for the twentieth century is: How can 2 or 3 billion human beings be satisfactorily organized for the wise use and equitable distribution of resources that are abundant enough for all, but are unevenly scattered over the face of the earth? Clearly, the future of man depends upon finding and applying the correct answer to the specific but far-reaching question.

Man is not only a specialist in the art of coordinated activity, but the trend toward organization is recognizable in the entire development of cosmic administration. Electrons, neutrons, and protons are organized into atoms, atoms into molecules, molecules into compounds. Some of the compounds prove to be cells, and these are organized to form individual plants and animals. Latest of all in the history of creative evolution certain individuals have been organized into societies. Transcending all that has gone before is the development of human society, obviously the most difficult, but at the same time potentially the most glorious organization yet attempted.

Two antagonistic alternatives present themselves as possible bases for this organization. The issue between the two has never before been so clearly drawn as it is today. The social group, whether it be the family, the industrial or commercial company, or the political unit, may be organized on the principle of regimentation, or it may be developed according to democratic principles. Both methods are being tried under a variety of conditions, and each has something to be said in its favor. But both cannot be equally conducive to the continuing existence of mankind. One or the other must be selected as the basis for the future security of man.

If regimentation be the choice, then the great mass of humankind must be trained for obedience—blind, unquestioning, but superbly skillful obedience. The educator becomes the intellectual and spiritual counterpart of the drill sergeant in the army. This is no menial task, nor is its objective a mean one. Skill is a commodity of which there is never likely to be an oversupply. On the other hand, if democracy be the choice, the great mass of humankind must be trained for wise, self-determined cooperation. Precisely those qualities of mind and heart which have long been extolled in Christian doctrine must be developed to the fullest possible extent. Not only skill but also the ability to govern oneself, the eternal prerequisite for freedom, must be developed in each member of the group.

Insofar as physical existence is concerned, there would seem to be little or no choice between these alternatives. Human nature being what it is today, perhaps the regimentation of society may temporarily be the more efficient method. But the full circle of organic law embraces more than mere existence. From the continuity of the evolutionary process, there has emerged a creature who is aware of vivid values in life that may be found beyond the goods necessary for comfortable existence. Ideas and ideals are powerful determining factors in the world today, and among them the ideal of freedom for the individual in the midst of social restraint is the most vital and compelling of all. Though it baffle our scientific tools for measurement, it is nonetheless a reality.

It is in the yearning for freedom, the love of beauty, the search for truth, the recognition of moral law and in the awareness of spiritual forces that human nature is distinguished from all other sorts of nature. Man shares with other animals the need for satisfactory economics, for adequate food and shelter, for the goods essential to existence, but his needs transcend these physical factors because his nature differs from theirs. Probably nine-tenths of all the words that

have been used since the dawn of speech in reference to "human nature" have referred to those elements in the nature of man that are shared with other animals rather than to those that are man's unique possession. It would be far better to concentrate upon the latter and thus to distinguish human nature from animal nature.

Regimentation may be good for man as an animal; through that type of social organization his need for goods may be efficiently supplied. But regimentation is certainly not good for human nature as thus distinguished. Experience verifies what wisdom foresees; regimentation stultifies the spirit, destroys personality, standardizes thought and action. Worst of all, regimentation means stagnation of the creative process and, as we have seen, stagnation among the more complexly organized vertebrates has led inevitably to extinction. If man attempts to live by bread alone, mankind commits collective suicide. Apparently the best and perhaps the only chance for mankind to succeed in the quest for security is through progress in the art of living on a high spiritual plane rather than through exclusive attention to the science of existence on a purely physical level.

5

To put this same thought in more specific terms, it means that coordinated activity directed toward efficient organization of individuals must become cooperative activity directed toward the enrichment of personality within an efficiently organized society. This requires both intelligence and good will.

Fortunately, these characteristics are uniquely developed in the species of placental mammal with which we are pre-eminently concerned. Man is a specialist in the use of both. The trend of the past 5,000 years may well continue, despite numerous temporary setbacks, throughout the next few centuries at least.

It is sometimes suggested that because man has specialized in brains, brains may cause his downfall, just as presumably the overspecialization in external armament contributed to the downfall of certain herbivorous dinosaurs. That argument by analogy is, however, heavily punctuated with fallacies. There is as yet no evidence that mankind is weighted down with a superabundance of intelligence. On the contrary, it is failure to act intelligently that endangers individuals and groups in the midst of competition. To see in advance the remote consequences of contemplated action is an ability that ought to be increasingly cultivated rather than scouted as a menace.

There seems to be no good reason why a sound mind should not be accompanied by a sound body. If the number of psychopathic individuals is increasing in this high-speed, technologic age, it is a challenge to be met not by bemoaning the imminent collapse of civilization but by intelligent adjustment of habits and activities to the new demands of the new times.

Once the commitment is made to the belief that the cooperative way of life offers the best chance for the future security of man as an inhabitant of the earth, the need is greater for intelligence to be used as a guide for good will, rather than for good will to be applied as a brake on any possible increase in intelligence.

The roots of self-centered individualism may be traced backward for at least 600 million years in the record of geologic life development, whereas our heritage of social consciousness dates from a time only about 60 million years ago when gregarious instincts became clearly evident among placental mammals. That trend is, however, especially apparent in the group from which mankind has stemmed.

Man is still in the stage of specific youth. His golden age, if any, is in the future rather than in the past. Human nature is still sufficiently plastic and pliable to permit considerable change, notably in this important area of attitudes and relationships wherein the increase of good will as a motive for action seems most likely to result in beneficial adjustments to the new factors in the environment.

In thus seeking a satisfactory coordination

of intelligence and good will, it becomes necessary for research scientists to give more thought than has been customary in the past to the social consequences of their work. They share with statesmen, politicians, educators, and all molders of public opinion the responsibility for determining the uses to which the new tools provided by scientific research are put. As scientists, they should continue to seek truth regardless of its consequences and to increase human efficiency in every possible way, but as members of society, as individual representatives of a species seeking future security as inhabitants of the earth, they must also do their utmost to ensure wise use of knowledge and constructive application of energy.

There is a real difference between the so-called social sciences and the natural and physical science that has an important bearing here. It is not that there is anything unnatural about the social sciences. Man is a part of nature, and the study of human society is just as truly natural science in the real sense of the term as any other study. The difference arises from the peculiar factors and particular functions pertaining to the cooperative way of life. Whereas the scientific use of things may be achieved through the efforts of a very small minority of the citizens, provided with adequate facilities for research, the scientific organization of society in a democracy can be achieved only when the majority of its citizens have the scientific attitude toward social problems and act in accordance with that attitude of mind. In other words, only a few physicists, chemists, and technologists are required for the mastery of our physical environment, but for victory in the struggle with ourselves every man must be his own sociologist.

Although this places upon the forces of education a Herculean task, it is not nearly so impossible an assignment as at a first glance it might appear to be. In the first place, the responsibility upon the individual citizen is rarely that of designing a new social structure or charting a new program for society. Almost invariably it is his duty merely to select from many plans, programs, or proposals the one that seems to him most likely to produce the most desirable results for all concerned. In the second place, scientific habits of mind have already been developed to a greater extent than is ordinarily recognized. The garage mechanic attacks the problem of a balky automobile in a truly scientific manner. The salesman uses psychology in planning his approach to a difficult prospect. The housewife thinks scientifically when about to concoct a new dessert or redecorate the living room. In most cases, it is only necessary to apply in the area of social relationships the same habits of mind that have been followed in the area of individual behavior.

6

In conclusion, the outlook for the future of man as an inhabitant of the earth is far from pessimistic. If certain tendencies already developing are encouraged and certain resources already available are capitalized to the full, there is good reason to expect that mankind will maintain existence and even live happily for an indefinitely long period of time. The opportunity is his to demonstrate the intrinsic worth of biologic phenomena and thus to justify the vast expenditure of time and energy involved in organic evolution. With greater emphasis upon the development of intelligence and good will, he may achieve that which the temporarily triumphant dynasties of the past have failed to achieve. Thus the geologist may turn from the long perspective of geologic history to the enticing vista of the geologic future of earth and man with high hope and even with confident assurance.

Palamedes [1]

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THE ADVANCE OF SCIENCE, which formerly inspired mankind with confidence, has in recent years resulted in diffidence and even despair. In ancient times Archimedes could boast, "Give me where to stand and I will move the earth"; at the beginning of the modern era Francis Bacon took the whole world for his province. Newton's discoveries (so Halley said) raised man to the level of the gods; and subsequent discoveries raised him above divinity. Laplace found God an unnecessary hypothesis in astronomy, Lyell in geology, Darwin in biology. Thus the drama of Eden was reenacted on a larger stage and with the roles reversed: God was banished from both heaven and earth, while Huxley remarked in a satanic and audible aside that man had created God in his own image, and Swinburne sang like an archangel:

Glory to Man in the Highest! for Man is the master of things.

There was, toward the end of the nineteenth century, a general impression that through science man had indeed conquered the external world and laid down its laws once and for all. There seemed nothing more to do but to turn science inward on ourselves; and that was what Galton proposed in his program of eugenics. The human species had outstripped all others in the evolutionary race; could it not go still farther? Could not men

> rise on stepping stones
> of their dead selves to higher things?

Somehow this boasting is out of tune with the temper of today. The external world appears much more complicated than it did in the last century; and the foundations on which it rested securely are everywhere giving way beneath it. No longer do we stand firmly on the earth and raise our heads proudly among the stars; rather we totter precariously on shifting sands and peer tremulously into the darkness. Whether or not one shares this attitude, one cannot help realizing its prevalence.

To the loss of self-confidence there have been three different reactions. One is an attempt to turn away from science and go back to a prescientific mode of living. This has been the program of the romanticists and the advocates of a simple life; of Samuel Butler in his proposal to abolish machines and of his numerous successors who cry out against the machine age today. The suggestion has even been put forward that for a time we suspend research and take a holiday from science. This revolt against civilization has often been inspired by a love of nature, and there is something in it that would appeal to a society of naturalists; but on the whole it is of course an avoidance of the problem rather than a solution. A second proposal is to continue the scientific transformation of the environment to the utmost, and so make the world a better place to live in. This is the solution most generally advocated, particularly by scientists, who have already done so much to transform the world. But even those who realize its necessity are beginning to doubt whether such a transformation is a sufficient solution of the problem. The human race, or at any rate a large part of it, seems incapable of coping with the complexities of the civilization which it has itself devised; how will it control a civilization still more complicated? There seems to be a real need for an increase in man's inborn capacities. Thus a third proposal is to adopt the program

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of eugenics; and even to those who are not entirely convinced of its necessity, the improvement of future generations has a moral and an esthetic appeal.

If we are to make a better breed of men, we must first decide what we mean by "better" and by "good." Thus scientists found themselves confronted with a problem in ethics; this, too, at a time when they had been congratulating themselves on having finally and irrevocably banished from their outlook the moral considerations so common in ancient and medieval science. Moreover, the scientist could not, like the philosopher, approach the problem in leisurely fashion; he had to take it in his stride and solve it quickly as a mere preliminary to a problem of his own. A way out of the difficulty seemed to be indicated by a suggestion of Galton's: could we not discover the direction in which evolution is tending and accelerate its progress? It appeared obvious that as evolution had transformed amoeba into man, so it would transform man into superman. To many it seemed obvious also that within the human species the victor in the evolutionary struggle was the white race: "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay." And within the white race the most successful were obviously the upper classes. If we selected from these we should be helping evolution along—giving the inevitable a shove in the right direction.

But the inevitable refused to be shoved. The upper classes, far from supplanting the others, were themselves found to be dying out because of their low birth rate. It was even said that the very existence of the white race was threatened by the prolificity of others; and while politicians spoke of the yellow peril there was talk in biological circles of the rising tide of color. The logical conclusion from all this was of course that the white race and particularly its upper classes are not the fittest in an evolutionary sense; but this conclusion was distasteful to the eugenists, who were themselves largely upper-class whites. They decided instead that the law of the survival of the fittest was being broken and began to cry aloud for its enforcement: they wanted conditions made such that the existence of the upper classes would be guaranteed.

Whatever we may think of such a procedure, its justification is no longer in evolution but in our own preferences; and if our preferences are to have any objective validity, we must be certain first that race and class differences are genetic, and second that the qualities we prefer are really superior.

The hypothesis that all race and class differences are genetic is often based on views attributed to Galton; it is commonly believed that as a result of his researches he came to the conclusion that nature prevails enormously over nurture. Most biologists would probably consider it a travesty to say what Galton proved was that differences in heredity are more potent than differences in environment when the differences in environment are not too great; and that is the meaning of Galton's own summaries of his results. "The evidence was overwhelming that the power of nature was far stronger than that of nurture, when the nurtures of the persons compared were not exceedingly different." "There is no escape from the conclusion that nature prevails enormously over nurture when the differences of nurture do not exceed what is commonly to be found among persons of the same rank of society and in the same country." Obviously this does not mean that environmental differences between races or classes can be neglected.

Galton himself believed that the environment affects many traits:

> Different aspects of the multifarious character of man respond to different calls from without, so that the same individual, and, much more, the same race, may behave very differently at different epochs. There may have been no fundamental change of character, but a different phase or mood of it may have been evoked by special circumstances, or those persons in whom that mood is naturally dominant may through some accident have the opportunity of acting for the time as representatives of the race . . . Sudden eras of great intellectual progress can not be

due to any alteration in the natural faculties of the race, because there has not been time for that, but to their being directed in productive channels.

It is often said that savages differ fundamentally from civilized peoples in being conservative and unenterprising. Even this difference Galton explained environmentally. To a civilized man, he said, change is easy because of the abundance of his material resources; whereas to a savage, whose resources are small, change is difficult so that "he is perforce taught to be conservative, his ideas are fixed, and he becomes scandalized even at the suggestion of change."

Differences within the same race and social class were also attributed by Galton to environment. He thought that it was "owing to the favourable conditions of their early training, that an unusually large proportion of the sons of the most gifted men of science become distinguished in the same career." He ascribed the choice of a scientific or of a church career to the influence of the mother in early childhood. Galton held such strong views on the persistence of childhood impressions that it is surprising he has not been adopted by the Freudians.

> The furniture of a man's mind [he wrote] chiefly consists of his recollections and the bonds that unite them. As all this is the fruit of experience, it must differ greatly in different minds according to their individual experiences. I have endeavoured to take stock of my own mental furniture in the way described in the next chapter, in which it will be seen how large a part consists of childish recollections, testifying to the permanent effect of many of the results of early education. The same fact has been strongly brought out by the replies from correspondents whom I had questioned on their mental imagery. It was frequently stated that the mental image invariably evoked by certain words was some event of childish experience or fancy. . . .
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> Our abstract ideas being mostly drawn from external experiences, their character also must depend upon the events of our individual histories. . . . The character of our abstract ideas, therefore, depends, to a considerable degree, on our nurture.

I have quoted Galton in some detail because he is generally misrepresented, and because his views, while not necessarily correct, were based on a careful and penetrating examination of much evidence. Occasionally, it is true, his words can be interpreted to mean that the power of heredity is overwhelming and the influence of environment negligible; but only, I think, because he has neglected to say explicitly that he is speaking not of environment in general, but of "Nurture within the limited range that I have been careful to assign to the latter."

Galton's successors, the biometricians, have found that the extent to which a character is correlated with the same character in related individuals is often greater than the extent to which it is correlated with some aspect of the environment. These correlations however do not necessarily measure the strength of heredity and of environment respectively. On the one hand, the similarity of related individuals may be due to environment, as in language or in infectious or nutritional diseases. On the other hand, the fact that a character is independent of some aspects of the environment does not demonstrate its independence of other aspects. Moreover, the correlations worked out were not very numerous, certainly not numerous enough to warrant a generalization as to the stability of all characters.

The last difficulty was apparently met by Mendelian studies; for of the numerous traits found to be inherited in Mendelian fashion, relatively few were influenced by environment. The traits studied however, although numerous, are not representative: they are used as indicators of the presence of genes; and traits that vary with environment, being poor indicators, are discarded as bad characters. It is because geneticists have concerned themselves mostly with constant traits that the traits they have studied have turned out to be constant. This is not the first time that scientists have mistaken limitation arbitrarily imposed by themselves for laws of nature.

Despite the unrepresentative character of the material, many Mendelian traits have been found which are affected by environ-

ment as much as by heredity, or even more; a result borne out by the differences observed by Professor Muller and Professor Newman in identical twins reared apart. Physiologists also have discovered many differences in growth, development and behavior produced by small and hitherto unsuspected differences in food, air or sunlight. Professor Pavlov found his experimental animals sensitive to minute stimuli. The "slightest movements [of the experimenter]—blinking of the eyelids or movement of the eyes, posture, respiration and so on—all acted as stimuli which, falling upon the dog, were sufficient to vitiate the experiments by making exact interpretation of the results extremely difficult . . . the experimenter . . . had to be stationed outside the room in which the dog was placed, and even this precaution proved unsuccessful in laboratories not specially designed for the study of these particular reflexes. . . . To get over all these disturbing factors a special laboratory was built. . . ."

Such precautions are taken as a matter of course in experiments with animals. Yet, although man's behavior is known to be more modifiable than that of other species, it is often assumed to be unaffected by the conditions under which different races or classes live. A prominent psychologist who tried to test the ingenuity of cats by using hunger as a stimulus was criticized for basing conclusions about cats in general on hungry specimens. Many eugenists, however, write as if the educability of poor children is not influenced by lack of food.

There is a wide-spread belief that races differ greatly in mental capacity and that the differences are genetic. Both of these propositions are open to serious doubt. It is true that peoples may be very dissimilar in what they attend to or how they express themselves or how they behave; but when the thought processes underlying these diverse activities are examined, they are found to be essentially alike. The general impression that savages are unreasonable is due to a lack of acquaintance with their motives; for the civilized men who visit savages or live among them are generally ignorant of their language and customs. It is notorious that travelers often give very erroneous impressions of the customs and ideas even of civilized nations closely related to their own.

Even knowledge, however, is not a guaranty against prejudice; and it is well to remember the words written by Herodotus some 2,400 years ago:

> If it were proposed to all nations to choose which seemed best of all customs, each, after examination made, would place its own first; so well is each persuaded that its own are by far the best.

Galton, despite his realization of the importance of environment, nevertheless attributed to heredity many racial differences in mentality; and he argued for the superiority of the white over savage races. He adduced however no cogent evidence for these views, and sometimes his statements are curiously naive. "It is seldom," he wrote, "that we hear of a white traveller meeting with a black chief whom he feels to be the better man." Travelers are not noted for any tendency to admit their inferiority to the people among whom they travel, and they would scarcely be likely to make an exception in favor of savages. Moreover, a traveler who is not a better man than the chiefs he visits might never return to tell any tale at all.

So similar are the essential thought processes of savages and civilized peoples that anthropological accounts often read like traversties of civilized customs; this in fact explains much of the charm of anthropological literature and why among laymen anthropology is one of the most popular sciences. And (to put the shoe on the other foot) satirists have never had any difficulty in rendering civilization ludicrous by merely describing without comment the actions of civilized nations.

It is sometimes said that savage races would have achieved civilization if they had been capable of it. To substantiate such an argument, however, we should have to know

why they did not achieve it and why we did; and this would require a far greater knowledge of the processes of cultural history than we possess. It is significant in this connection that even races often considered savage have made great cultural achievements (for example the Maya Indians, who developed a system of writing and a calendar superior to the European calendar of the time); that races once civilized have sunk to a lower stage of culture; and that the relative cultural standing of peoples has often changed in the course of history.

Comparisons have also been made between different races living together; for example, Negroes and whites in the United States. But these races are far from having the same environment. The housing and hygienic conditions and the educational facilities of the Negroes are much inferior to those of the whites; and there are besides the dissimilarities in tradition and the effects of race prejudice. To disregard environment in such comparisons is to shut one's eyes to plain facts. Some psychologists have attempted to devise mental tests that would measure only genetic traits; but attempts of this kind are futile, for no traits are purely genetic and mental traits in particular are susceptible to environmental influences. Professor Garth, who says that "his first investigations in the field of race psychology were accompanied by a silent conviction that he would find clear cut racial differences in mental processes," finally concluded, on the basis of his own work and that of others, that "we have never, with all our searching, found indisputable evidence for belief in mental differences which are essentially racial."

It might be considered unlikely that evolution should have produced morphological racial differences without having produced psychological ones as well. It is true that the observed structural racial differences are not known to influence mentality; but, it might be said, there must be others that do. The argument, however, overlooks an essential distinction. Physical traits, if unimportant, will vary at random, unchecked by natural selection; and if important will vary by becoming adapted to different environments through natural selection. Mentality, however, being important, will not vary at random; in all environments it will tend, through natural selection, to become rational and hence uniform; for logic is logic from China to Peru and from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand.

Even if evolution in the past had separated out diverse mental types, we should scarcely expect to find such differences characterizing large groups to-day, for throughout history there has been a continual mixture of races. In the oldest civilization known, that of Egypt, there was in the nineteenth century B. C. a royal edict against the coming of Negroes down the Nile. Wherever there is a prohibition there must be something to prohibit; and we can draw the conclusion that Negroes must have entered Egypt before the edict and probably after. In fact the very Pharaoh who issued the law boasted in another inscription that he had raided the lands of the Negroes and carried off their women. In the next oldest civilization known, that of Mesopotamia, we find at the opening of history at least two different races and probably more. The same is true of China, of Greece and of Italy. Early in her history Rome was invaded by barbarians from the north; and this continued with relatively slight intermissions until her fall. Even when there were no invasions, there was a continual importation of slaves from many lands. In prehistoric times and throughout history migrations and wars, exploration, commerce and slavery have transported large numbers of people and often entire nations across all natural barriers. In view of facts like these, claims to racial purity on the part of nations are without genetic value. So-called national characteristics are much more likely to have their origin in environment or tradition than in hereditary constitution; they are perhaps still more likely to be inventions of historians.

The decline of nations is often attributed to an influx of alien blood. This argument has been applied particularly to Rome; but as a

matter of fact much of Rome's greatness was due to foreigners. Her earliest writers were Greek slaves; her last great writer, Claudian, an Egyptian. Terence was a Carthaginian slave; Catullus and Livy came from Cisalpine Gaul; Seneca, Lucan, Martial from Spain. Of Roman poets perhaps the most typical were Virgil and Horace. Yet Virgil is not known to have had any Roman blood: he came from beyond the Po and was legally a Gaul until after he had attained manhood, when his province was enfranchised. Horace was not of Roman ancestry at all, as he was born in southern Italy, the son of an emancipated slave. When all roads lead to Rome, the able and ambitious tend to congregate there. Smaller communities also owe much to foreigners. Galton wrote: "It is very remarkable how large a proportion of the eminent men of all countries bear foreign names, and are the children of political refugees,—men well qualified to introduce a valuable strain of blood." It would, I think, be nearer the truth to ascribe the greatness of nations rather than their decline to foreigners.

These facts militate strongly against the oft-repeated assertion that race mixture in itself produces degeneration. Such a result would be expected on genetic theory only in special cases; race mixture in general should produce new combinations of genes, some doubtless worse but others even better than the original ones.

Differences between classes are not so great as those between races; but they have been more minutely studied because they are of great practical importance. There are many persons, such as society leaders, editors of society columns, butlers, footmen, hotel clerks, and shopkeepers, who are as expert at distinguishing classes as anthropologists are at distinguishing races. Class distinctions, moreover, have been popularized by novelists. The aristocrat is proverbially tall, thin, and handsome. In England he used to have a dark complexion—a mark of his Norman blood; but this may now be altered by the popularity of the Nordic theory. He is well-dressed and has a characteristic manner; he is more sensitive than other people; he is interested in war and hunting. I am not aware that these distinctions have ever been studied statistically but they are generally supposed to be valid.

It used to be widely believed that a person of gentle blood could be recognized as such even if unaware of his ancestry and brought up among peasants and slaves. Herodotus tells such a story about Cyrus, king of the Persians; and many romances have turned on the same theme. I know of no experimental evidence that the distinctions are really genetic, unless we accept Hans Christian Andersen's account of the princess who was recognized as of royal blood because she was sensitive enough to feel a pea through a thickness of twenty mattresses and twenty featherbeds. There is, however, evidence against the genetic view of class distinctions. In Tudor England the costume of every social class, from nobility to laborers, was regulated by law; and in colonial America the lower classes were sometime forbidden to dress too well, presumably lest they be mistaken for gentry. We know now that physical traits can be affected by nutrition and hygiene, and behavior by governesses and finishing schools; and our dictionaries define "breeding" as "the result of training." Nevertheless, the belief in the genetic nature of class distinctions has been held even by scientific men; and a German gynecologist has asserted that while the sexual impulse is instinctive in women of the lower classes it is acquired in those of the upper classes.

Such beliefs have waned with the spread of democracy; but even in democratic countries it is still said that the upper classes are abler and more intelligent than the lower, that they alone know how to govern, that from their ranks come the great artists and writers and scientists. If a poor man becomes famous, the genealogists immediately begin to look for forgotten or illegitimate ancestors; a familiar instance is the attempt to trace Lincoln's pedigree to Chief Justice Marshall. What used to be considered romance now passes for eugenics.

It is of course true that the richer classes

have contributed proportionally a greater number of eminent men than have the poor. But this is due in part at least to their better opportunities and there is no evidence that it is due to anything else. In a country like ours, where we hear equality spoken of so often, we come to believe that rich and poor have essentially the same chance of success. The belief is facilitated by the fact that rich and poor rarely know each other's life with any intimacy; hence the rich do not realize the obstacles confronting a poor man who would undertake an intellectual career, and the poor do not realize the extent to which these obstacles would disappear in an environment of wealth. The misunderstanding is increased by the fact that very few people of any class have an adequate comprehension of the psychology of creative intellectual work. There is a wide-spread notion that great ideas come as inspirations and that their coming can not be controlled or even predicted. It is true that great ideas often come an unexpected moments; but I doubt whether they ever come without preparation. They are the result of long intensive work, of complete absorption in a subject. Often the idea does not come until after the worker has rested from his labor; and this inactive period is probably the source of the opinion that labor is unnecessary. Now, obviously, complete absorption in a subject is possible only where there is leisure; and this means that it is all but impossible for a really poor man, who has no leisure, to do great creative work. The sciences are now so complicated that years of preparation are required even to understand the important problems, and often years more of steady work for any solution.

In the arts the situation is often considered different. But although poets are born they must also be made, or at least they must not be unmade. Let me quote in this connection a passage from Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch:

> What are the great poetical names of the last hundred year or so? Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Landor, Keats, Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Morris, Rossetti, Swinburne—we may stop there. Of these, all but Keats, Browning, Rossetti were university men; and of these three Keats, who died young, cut off in his prime, was the only one not fairly well-to-do. It may seem a brutal thing to say, and it is a sad thing to say; but, as a matter of hard fact, the theory that poetical genius bloweth where it listeth, and equally in poor and rich, holds little truth. As a matter of hard fact, nine out of those twelve were university men; which means that somehow or other they procured the means to get the best education England can give. As a matter of hard fact, of the remaining three you know that Browning was well-to-do, and I challenge you that, if he had not been well-to-do, he would no more have attained to writing *Saul* or *The Ring and the Book* than Ruskin would have attained to writing *Modern Painters* if his father had not dealt prosperously in business. Rossetti had a small private income; and, moreover, he painted. There remains but Keats, whom Atropos slew young, as she slew John Clare in a madhouse, and James Thompson by the laudanum he took to drug disappointment. These are dreadful facts, but let us face them. It is—however dishonouring to us as a nation—certain that, by some fault in our commonwealth, the poor poet has not in these days, nor has had for two hundred years, a dog's chance. Believe me—and I have spent a great part of the last ten years in watching some 320 elementary schools—we may prate of democracy, but actually a poor child in England has little more hope than had the son of an Athenian slave to be emancipated into that intellectual freedom of which great writings are born.

This is the statement not of a politician or a propagandist but of the King Edward VII professor of English literature at the University of Cambridge.

There is a wide-spread notion that the really able will succeed, despite all obstacles. This involves a statistical fallacy: it might under certain circumstances be true if our lives were indefinitely long, but it does not apply to finite lifetimes. There is also a confusion between the fate of an idea and of its advocates. A true idea is perhaps bound to survive; but so far is this from applying to its discoverers or supporters that the best way to insure the survival of an idea is to undergo martyrdom for its sake.

Another common belief, expressed by Galton and others, is that the best strains of the lower classes have been drained into the upper classes. This involves two separate propositions: (1) that people have risen in the social scale, (2) that those who have risen are the most desirable. The first proposition is true, although it must not be forgotten that in the past the surmounting of class barriers has often been difficult or impossible. The second proposition is usually treated as self-evident; to most people it seems obvious that economic success depends upon intellectual ability. Thus a well-known eugenist said twenty years ago that good working men do not lose their jobs, that only incompetent men are unemployed. This showed a lack of historical knowledge, for economic conditions have in the past caused wide-spread unemployment. Only recently, however, another prominent eugenist said that the present depression would have a good effect by weeding out the unfit.

Now in spite of the fact that in times like the present the economic system picks largely at random, it may well be that at other times the people who became rich were selected to some extent at least on the basis of genetic traits. But are these traits the desirable ones? They have not always been so considered. The aristocratic classes have always looked down on those who become wealthy through their own efforts. The Catholic Church, in the middle ages and during the reformation, objected to the ordinary practices involved in business, such as lending money at interest; so, too, did Luther and other Protestant leaders. Modern liberals and radicals echo these objections, or carry them to their logical conclusion as in Proudhon's statement that "property is theft." Such views have received some support from Francis Galton, who in his "Memories" expressed a fear that marriages of English peers with daughters of millionaires might result in a lowering of the standards of commercial probity of the House of Lords in future generations. He might have added that many of the newer peerages have been conferred for success in business and many older peerages for services that can not be considered honest.

Francis Bacon, who was a man of wide experience and neither a visionary nor a radical, said that "there is rarely any rising but by a commixture of good and evil arts"; a very mild opinion in comparison with that of Machiavelli, who had already explained how to rise without recourse to good arts at all. Machiavelli's ideas have been denounced ever since they were published, but only, I think, because they gave away the game; they have never been refuted, and the "Prince" is still the best handbook for getting along in the world. Plato and Machiavelli are not usually bracketed together; but a passage in the "Republic" says that if there should ever be a perfectly just man, he would be crucified; while a perfectly unjust man would be successful in all his affairs, would be able to marry his children to whomever he pleased, and through his great riches could even propitiate heaven with splendid sacrifices, so that a better provision is made by both gods and men for the life of the unjust than for the life of the just. This passage reads as if it had been inspired by the fate of Socrates. The spectacle of Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne has brought about the widely prevalent sympathy with martyrdom and has been a powerful influence in the spread of Christianity.

Some eugenists, admitting that success often results from non-conformity to accepted moral standards, have concluded that the standards should be changed. They have advocated selfishness and ruthlessness, have justified war, and have proposed to breed a race devoid of kindness and sympathy. Such a code is not debatable if it is put forward as good in itself. If however the code is advocated as a means to ends which are generally considered good, then I think the arguments for it can be shown to be incorrect; if indeed a logical demonstration is still needed when the results of selfishness are evident all about us. Among eugenists the usual justification of selfish competition is that it has been responsible for evolutionary progress. But we are not bound by evolu-

tionary precedents; and if there is anything that evolution teaches it is the possibility of new modes of behavior. Kindness and cooperation, however, are not new: they were developed (as Darwin pointed out) in the struggle for existence and helped man to survive and advance in prehistoric times. Some eugenists base their codes on the behavior of other species; but even if we agreed to imitate other organisms, we could still justify almost any code we pleased by selecting the proper model: we could go to the ant, or consider the lilies of the field.

Many who admit that success does not imply ethical conduct maintain nevertheless that it does imply intelligence. For example, Mr. Edgar Schuster, who was the first research fellow of the Galton Eugenics Laboratory, wrote:

> It may be that the opportunities sometimes favour moral attributes of an anti-social kind, but they never favour a weak intellect; the predatory millionaire is perhaps ethically of the same standing as the burglar, but intellectually he far surpasses him.

If the intelligent and the dishonest have both been rising to the upper classes, the resulting intermarriages between them must have produced a tendency for the two traits to be associated. This would explain many of the ills of society. But it is doubtful whether the tendency is general, because the amount of intelligence required for rising in the social scale is not necessarily great, and in many situations too much intelligence is an impediment. At a convention of business men some years ago an executive said that although every one laments the lack of able assistants, yet any man who turns out to be unusually intelligent is certain to be discharged because his superiors are afraid of being supplanted by him. In politics, too, intelligence (beyond a certain modicum) is a drawback. The best-known example is the American presidency. It has been often remarked that a first-rate man rarely obtains his party's nomination and that presidential candidates are usually selected from among the less able contenders. The intelligent are always looked at askance; it is no compliment to a man to say that he lives by his wits.

The aristocracy have often been undoubtedly inferior to many members of the lower classes. In ancient Rome many of the slaves had been men of high social standing in their original homes and were better educated than their masters; in fact the earliest Roman intelligentsia was composed very largely of Greek slaves. The medieval barons looked down on those who could read and write.

Class distinctions have in fact been based largely on irrational grounds. The social esteem in which traits are held is often in inverse proportion to their intrinsic or social value. Manual labor is almost universally despised; and this has been carried so far that even scientific experimentation and artistic activity have been considered degrading. Plato objected to the introduction of mechanical methods into geometry; Archimedes considered his mechanical inventions unworthy of a scientist; and Lucian complained that even great sculptors were held in scorn.

> You may turn out a Pheidias or a Polycleitus, to be sure, and create a number of wonderful works; but even so, though your art will be generally commended, no sensible observer will be found to wish himself like you; whatever your real qualities, you will always rank as a common craftsman who makes his living with his hands.

Nor have class distinctions always been consistent. In ancient Greece actors might enjoy high social status, take an important part in the politics of their communities, and associate with kings. Shakespeare, as an actor, had in the eyes of the law the choice of becoming a retainer to a nobleman or being classed as a rogue and vagabond. Molière as an actor was not eligible for Christian burial. To-day actors may be knighted and actresses may marry noblemen or millionaires. When, in addition, we consider how much change in social position has resulted from causes beyond the control of single individuals (enslavement of pris-

oners of war, economic changes, etc.) it would be strange if class lines corresponded to genetic distinctions.

The strengthening of class barriers, which has been advocated by many eugenists, would therefore be eugenically useless and even harmful. For in so far as class distinctions are environmental, they make genetic differences harder to recognize; and in so far as they are genetic, the best qualities are not necessarily in the upper classes and there is even evidence that the reverse may be the case. It is a curious episode in the history of science that eugenists should have defended class distinctions; it is still more curious that they should have done so in the name of Galton. For Galton stated very emphatically the anti-eugenic effects of inherited wealth:

> The sickly children of a wealthy family have a better chance of living and rearing offspring than the stalwart children of a poor one. As with the body, so with the mind. Poverty is more adverse to early marriages than is natural bad temper, or inferiority of intellect. In civilized society, money interposes her aegis between the law of natural selection and very many of its rightful victims. Scrofula and madness are naturalized among us by tendencies of body or mind that might accumulate in a land where the law of primogeniture was general, and where riches were more esteemed than personal qualities.
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> The best form of civilization in respect to the improvement of the race, would be one in which society was not costly, where incomes were chiefly derived from professional sources, and not much through inheritance; where every lad had a chance of showing his abilities, and, if highly gifted, was enabled to achieve a first-class education and entrance into professional life, by the liberal help of the exhibitions and scholarships which he had gained in his early youth.

Darwin and Huxley realized that wealth might suspend or reverse natural selection. In Plato's eugenic commonwealth there was to be neither excessive riches nor poverty for ordinary citizens, and for superior individuals no private property at all. A still earlier eugenist, Theognis of Megara, who was like Plato of aristocratic family, explained that poverty led to race-degeneration by forcing people to marry for money instead of for good genetic qualities.

Even professed egalitarians do not always realize how thorough an equality of opportunity is required as a basis for eugenics. It is not enough (in the words of Anatole France) to "forbid rich and poor alike to slip under the bridges." There must be freedom of opportunity for all, and that too at all ages; because desirable qualities may manifest themselves at various periods of life. Even apart from any eugenic application, this is the only way in which man's genetic qualities can be studied; and geneticists should have the less hesitation in advocating it because they can shift the actual execution onto the shoulders of economists. All this, however, is only preliminary; there remains a much more difficult question: who is to recognize the superior individuals and select them for propagation?

This question has never been properly answered. Some have envisaged a system of eugenic committees elected democratically; but the failure of democracies to pick superior individuals would make this worse than useless. Many eugenists have turned to aristocracy. It should not be forgotten, however, that aristocracy has had its opportunity and failed more miserably than democracy. If we consider the politicians of the past whom we might be tempted to entrust with a scientific task, we can scarcely select one more enlightened than Francis Bacon. He was a scholar and a philosopher, and advocate of the experimental method and of the founding of scientific societies. In his time the greatest scientific advances were those connected with astronomy; yet he did not appreciate the work of Kepler or Galileo, who were his contemporaries, or even of Copernicus, who lived two generations earlier. William Harvey, who was his personal physician, said Bacon wrote science like a lord chancellor; and I am afraid that any future lord chancellor is likely to write it in the same way.

The distrust of politicians has caused many

to turn to non-political intellectuals. We have such a body in the electors of the Hall of Fame, who are entrusted with the task of drawing up a roll of honor of the country's most illustrious dead. Their decisions show the same preference for mediocrity: Willard Gibbs, generally accounted America's greatest scientist, has never been elected; Edgar Allan Poe, generally regarded as America's greatest man of letters, was not chosen until after many inferior writers.

But (you will say) it would be too much to expect all the electors to be well versed in thermodynamics or even in the principles of literary criticism; why not have experts in each field pick their own geniuses? That too has been tried. Perhaps the most famous body of experts among intellectuals is the Academie Française. I will refrain from reading you a list of the mediocrities whom it has honored with membership, but among those who have failed of election are Descartes, Pascal, Molière, LeSage, Diderot, Rousseau, Beaumarchais, André Chénier, Comte, Balzac, Stendhal, Dumas père, Gautier, Michelet, Flaubert, Maupassant, Daudet, Zola, Verlaine, Baudelaire, and many others. The Academy has excluded France's greatest philosophers, her greatest novelists, her greatest dramatist, and some of her greatest historians and poets. In artistic and literary competitions the prize is usually awarded to mediocre work; a fact so well known that it led eminent literary men to object to a recent proposal that the League of Nations establish prizes for the encouragement of young writers and artists.

The great scientific societies, which were originally founded to help the active prosecution of research, have come to confine themselves largely to honoring men who no longer do research. How far out of touch they are with important scientific developments is sometimes shown strikingly as in the rejection of Joule's paper by the Royal Society.

The record of universities is no better. After Plato's death the headship of the Academy fell not to Aristotle or to Heracleides of Pontus, but to mediocre men—Speusippus and Xenocrates. It is interesting in this connection that while Aristotle wrote, "Plato is dear but truth is dearer," Speusippus (who was Plato's nephew) spread the story that Plato was the son not of a mortal father but of Apollo. Modern universities were not hospitable to science when it began the advances that have transformed civilization; this is why scientific societies were founded. "Neither Copernicus, nor Bacon, nor Boyle, nor Huygens, nor Leeuwenhoek, nor Swammerdam, nor Van Helmont, nor Kepler, nor Guericke, nor Fermat, nor Napier, nor Stevin, nor Pascal, nor Descartes ever taught at any school or university." The universities have not even pretended to encourage literature. In Shakespeare's day, Oxford had so low an opinion of contemporary drama that the university authorities regularly paid visiting dramatic companies to depart without presenting any plays. When the third folio of Shakespeare's works was published, the Bodleian library at Oxford sold its only copy of the first folio, with other superfluous books, for £24, to repurchase it in 1905 for £3000. Shakespeare of course was not an Oxford man; but Oxford has had two great poets among her students. Of these Shelley was expelled, and Swinburne was quietly asked to leave, escaping expulsion only because his college feared to make itself ridiculous by a repetition of the Shelley episode.

To-day also unusual ability and originality fail to obtain recognition at universities; sometimes despite the most careful and conscientious attempts to discover them. This is illustrated by the wranglerships at Cambridge. Until recently all graduating students in mathematics were arranged in order of their success in the examinations, and it has been noticed that while the top man (Senior Wrangler) rarely became a great scientist, the Second Wranglers have contributed many of Cambridge's greatest mathematicians and physicists. It is obvious that the examiners did not know how to test for great originality. Whatever the reason, it is a well-known fact that most teachers prefer students who merely follow in their footsteps to those who

strike out new paths. It is rare for a university appointment to go to the logical candidate; usually the choice falls on some one less able. It is the fashion to blame this state of affairs on the autocratic interference of university presidents and trustees; but the great majority of selections are made by the faculty themselves and by the department concerned.

This regression toward inferiority is brought about by several causes. There is an economic factor. An associate or subordinate is often a competitor or a potential competitor for position or patronage, and to raise up an able rival involves an unnecessary risk. Sometimes the rivalry is personal. People wish to tower above their fellows; and if they can do it in no other way they can at least stand out because of the flatness of the surrounding country. This fact is very important because the great majority of people are lacking in altruism. A third cause is the difficulty of recognizing great achievements. We judge people by what intellectual standards we have; but the greatest men are those who transcend or overthrow old standards and set up new ones. They can not be judged until after their standards have been accepted; hence as long as there is intellectual advance the leaders of it will be misunderstood or not understood at all. A fourth cause is that great men may fail to accomplish anything commensurate with their ability. They attempt more tasks and greater tasks and on a grander scale. On the other hand, a mediocre man who merely follows in the footsteps of others is fairly certain to accomplish something and to be appreciated. Those who have undertaken great quests have often met with frustration; while many a man who has started out to seek his father's asses has found a kingdom.

The regularity and inevitability with which these forces work is not usually realized by those unfamiliar with the history of thought. Let us consider, for example, our own science of genetics, limiting ourselves, for obvious reasons, to geneticists of the past. Of these, none have contributed more than Mendel, Darwin, Galton, and Bateson. Mendel discovered the laws of heredity when they were being sought by many of the world's greatest biologists: but no one paid any attention to his discovery. He corresponded with Naegeli, one of the foremost authorities on the subject, and sent him seeds; yet Naegeli, although he wrote a treatise on heredity, did not so much as mention Mendel's work. Mendel failed even to obtain a regular teaching position at a gymnasium, although his students have testified that he was an unusually good teacher.

Darwin did not distinguish himself at school, or at the Universities of Edinburgh and Cambridge, Britain's foremost medical and scientific institutions. Neither he nor Galton, who also went to Cambridge, took a degree with honors, which a moderately clever undergraduate can do; and according to Galton some of the ablest undergraduates of his time failed to take honors. It is an interesting speculation what would have happened to Darwin and Galton if they had not been rich, or to Bateson if his father had not been master of St. John's College at Cambridge; for the headmaster of Bateson's school wrote to his father: "It is very doubtful whether so vague and aimless a boy will profit by University life." I think we may safely conclude that it takes a genius to catch a genius.

But, as I have said, genius is not enough. What is needed is not only intelligence but goodness as well; and unfortunately there is no evidence that the two are positively correlated. In some situations, in fact, the correlation is negative: an intelligent judge is more likely to recognize ability in others, but for this very reason is more likely to be jealous.

If those entrusted with a eugenic program are not good, it is better that they should not be intelligent either; for if they are intelligent they can recognize merit more easily and weed it out more certainly. Eugenics therefore is driven to a conclusion reached by all the great moralists: that the immediate need of the world is good men. Moralists, however, have made two great mistakes: they have attempted to base moral-

ity on theological sanctions, and they have tried to inculcate it by teaching. The first error has been often exposed; but the possibility of teaching virtue is still almost universally believed in, although I doubt whether history records a single instance of a real alteration in a person's moral quality. The constancy of moral traits may appear incompatible with the modifiability of other mental traits by environmental influences. I do not, however, claim that moral traits will remain constant under all circumstances whatsoever; it may be that some day goodness will be induced by vaccination or by injection. But the incentives to a moral life have not been essentially altered by social and economic changes in the past, and they are not likely to be altered by any changes that have been proposed for the future. If private property is abolished, men will still want power; if power is abolished (but that will be difficult) men will still want the approbation and esteem of their fellows. Even the greatest men have lapsed from honesty in order to enhance their reputations still further. So strong is the urge, that in order to be considered wise, men will act stupidly; and in order to be considered good, they will break every principle of morality.

Galton thought that eugenics might succeed if it became a religion; but the history of religious institutions reveals the same tendency to suppress merit as is found elsewhere. In the elections of popes, as in the nominations of American presidents, the leading candidate is rarely chosen. Religion has encouraged hypocrisy and has persecuted, imprisoned, tortured and killed men of independent mind; and Galton himself pointed out that in this way the genetic qualities of the human race have been greatly impaired.

The religion advocated by Galton was not theology, but a sense of obligation to one's fellow-men combined with an emotional fervor. Such an attitude is found in some types of patriotism (though not in all). Yet even when a nation is in danger, politicians and military men continue their usual intrigues, often in accentuated form; while in ordinary individuals a national crisis such as war evokes the worst instincts.

It might be objected that in patriotism there is an irrational factor that would be absent in a scientific gospel. Let us therefore examine science itself, which often inspires a feeling of duty to mankind, including future generations. Despite this, scientists are not (except in the minds of innocent laymen) unselfish individuals; it is a very exceptional scientist who will not sacrifice the future of science to his own personal interests.

The betrayal of science is facilitated by the very faith it inspires; any setback it receives is regarded as temporary because of the wide-spread notion that in the end truth will prevail. A setback for eugenics, however, involving the extinction of valuable strains, might be irreparable. For this reason, and because it deals with man and what may be considered man's essential nature—his genetic constitution—eugenics might be expected to inspire a more intense devotion. The eugenic movement has in fact taken on a religious fervor, as Galton hoped; but I can not believe that he would have approved either the ideals or the methods advocated by most eugenists. He stood for intellectual and moral enlightenment and for social justice; he looked upon eugenics as a method of doing away with the cruelty of natural selection. Many of those who speak in his name have advocated racial and religious prejudice and economic and political oppression. They have sought to furnish a quasi-scientific foundation for political reaction, especially in Germany; and in the United States their pronouncements are not easily distinguishable from those of the Ku Klux Klan.

There remains Galton's other suggestion, already alluded to, that we ascertain whither evolution is going and hasten its progress. This is tantamount to a deification of evolution, at any rate if God is defined (in the words of Matthew Arnold) as "a force, not ourselves, making for righteousness." Evolutionary theology has sometimes been ex-

tended by the conjuring up of an anti-evolutionary devil, as in Tennyson's lines:

Evolution always striving toward some ideal good,
And Reversion always dragging Evolution in the mud.

All this is, however, mere confusion of thought. Properly speaking evolution does not necessarily make for good, nor is it going anywhere in particular. Selection will alter the human race, but the direction of the change depends on the social environment, and this is fashioned by ourselves. The evolutionary God, like so many others, has been created in man's own image.

This is the crux of the eugenic problem. There is almost no limit to what man might make of himself by altering his genetic constitution; but these possibilities can be realized only if he first becomes more altruistic and intelligent, and he is not sufficiently altruistic or intelligent to take this first step. Hence an attempt to put eugenics into practice would defeat its own ends. Any group likely to be entrusted with a eugenic program would be too unintelligent to recognize merit and too selfish to select any merit they might recognize. They would pick out for propagation individuals of mediocre ability and of less than mediocre morality; that is, those stupid enough to have no independent ideas and those dishonest enough to pretend to have none. Shelley was deprived of his children by a court of law; a eugenic tribunal would have sterilized him. Barabbas is always preferred to Jesus, at any rate before Jesus is crucified.

Such reverse selection must have been going on throughout man's existence. It was remarked long ago that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; and since the writer of those words said that there is nothing new under the sun, the survival of undesirable traits must have been an old phenomenon in his day. Even in prehistoric times, as Darwin pointed out, the bravest and most unselfish individuals of a tribe were less likely to survive and to leave offspring. All this would help to account for the fact that there has been, so far as we can tell, no improvement in the innate mental qualities of mankind throughout history, or for that matter since the end of the Cro-Magnon period. This lack of advance must be due also to the fact that man no longer divided into small isolated groups; for the larger the population, the more difficult it is for a new trait to establish itself, especially if it is a trait like unselfishness.

There are even indications that a decline may have occurred: the Cro-Magnons were in many respects superior to the Neolithic men who succeeded them, and Galton rated the ancient Athenians above the modern English. It is possible that the conditions of civilization put too great a handicap on original and independent thinkers; that the best-adapted type is one with a less inquiring mentality, willing to abide by tradition and to follow routine without question.

The evidence for a genetic decline, particularly in the historic period, is not, however, conclusive. The selection making for a decline has not been rigorous, because of the large element played by chance in human affairs; and it has also been spurious to the extent that it has been based on non-genetic traits. Even where the qualities selected have been genetic, they have not always been perpetuated; for (1) successful individuals are likely to come of infertile strains since in these the families are smaller and the children get a better start in life; (2) even if the successful individual is not infertile he often marries an heiress who, being an only child, comes of an infertile stock and leaves few offspring; (3) successful individuals (the upper classes) limit their families more than the unsuccessful (the lower classes).

Thus there has been a protective mechanism by which the self-seeking and ruthless have been isolated in an upper class and sterilized; while desirable individuals have been kept in the lower classes where they were more likely to reproduce. In this way good genes and combinations of genes have

been preserved; but so they would have been if they had been propagated in tissue cultures. Man can not live by genes alone: life is the interaction of genes with the environment.

The extension of opportunity would allow good genotypes to express themselves; but it would not in itself solve the eugenic problem. The mechanism by which the self-seeking have been weeded out would no longer exist; and any attempt at deliberate eugenics would be more dangerous than under the present system since the superior individuals, being more easily recognizable, would be all the more certain to be eliminated. It would be tragic indeed if the human race should fail just when it had become aware of its possibilities, and in the very attempt to realize them.

There is perhaps one way out. Whatever may be true of the huge majority of mankind, there are a few whose instincts are good. If these banded together into a voluntary eugenic comradeship, they could ultimately supplant the others. Provided of course that the others would allow them. We may however be certain that such a project would not be tolerated and that those attempting it would be executed or sterilized. If it were done at all, it would have to be done secretly; there would have to be a eugenic conspiracy. Probably some day such a conspiracy will be organized; but there is no guaranty that it will be the only one. Other groups are just as likely to form similar conspiracies to insure the perpetuation of their traits; and we can not predict that intellect and good will triumph over intellect and evil—or over stupidity if the odds are too great.

I have been asked who Palamedes was and why this paper is entitled with his name. The question is a good illustration of my theme. Palamedes was the greatest of the Greeks who fought before Troy. He was a scientist and an engineer. He devised a system of writing and methods of arithmetic computation. He traced the movements of the heavenly bodies and used them for making the hours and for guidance in navigation. He fashioned weights and measures. He built the fortifications of the Greek camp. He even invented checkers and dice to keep the soldiers occupied when they were not fighting. Yet his name is unknown except to classical scholars, while every schoolboy is familiar with Agamemnon, who was only the titular commander-in-chief, and Achilles, who though brave and handsome was a good deal of a brute. And if any one is asked who was the wisest of the Greeks, he will say Nestor or Odysseus. Nestor, however, was wise only in the sense that being very old he could remember many things; and Odysseus was not wise at all but merely unscrupulous. Palamedes and Odysseus once measured wits against each other when Palamedes had been sent to persuade Odysseus to come to the war. Odysseus, unwilling to go, feigned madness and ploughed with an ox and an ass yoked together; but Palamedes placed Odysseus' infant son, Telemachus, before the plough, and Odysseus swerved aside, showing that he was not as mad as that. Odysseus accompanied the Greeks; but when he arrived before Troy he forged letters from the enemy, hid them in Palamedes' tent, and accused him of treason. The letters were found, and Palamedes was stoned to death.

It may be said that this is not a fair parable; that Palamedes displayed a want of intelligence in allowing such a plot to succeed. If he could foretell the movements of the stars, why could he not foresee the actions of Odysseus? The objection might be valid if the men had been older, for with experience we learn what our fellows are like; but when we are young each interprets others by himself, since he attributes to others the impulses he himself feels. Odysseus gauged others correctly not because he was wise but because he was evil and it so happened that in this respect most men resembled him. In a better world it is Palamedes who would have been the better judge of men. If we are to make a better world, we must breed people like Palamedes; the danger is that we shall breed people like Odysseus instead.

The Real Problem Is in the Hearts of Men[1]

ALBERT EINSTEIN

MANY PERSONS have inquired concerning a recent message of mine that "a new type of thinking is essential if mankind is to survive and move to higher levels."

Ofter in evolutionary processes a species must adapt to new conditions in order to survive. Today the atomic bomb has altered profoundly the nature of the world as we knew it, and the human race consequently finds itself in a new habitat to which it must adapt its thinking.

In the light of new knowledge, a world authority and an eventual world state are not just *desirable* in the name of brotherhood, they are *necessary* for survival. In previous ages a nation's life and culture could be protected to some extent by the growth of armies in national competition. Today we must abandon competition and secure cooperation. This must be the central fact in all our considerations of international affairs; otherwise we face certain disaster. Past thinking and methods did not prevent world wars. Future thinking *must* prevent wars.

Modern war, the bomb, and other discoveries or inventions present us with revolutionary circumstances. Never before was it possible for one nation to make war on another without sending armies across borders. Now with rockets and atomic bombs no center of population on the earth's surface is secure from surprise destruction in a single attack.

America has a temporary superiority in armament, but it is certain that we have no lasting secret. What nature tells one group of men, she will tell in time to any other group interested and patient enough in asking the questions. But our temporary superiority gives this nation the tremendous responsibility of leading mankind's effort to surmount the crisis.

Being an ingenious people, Americans find it hard to believe there is no foreseeable defense against atomic bombs. But this is a basic fact. Scientists do not even know of any field which promises us any hope of adequate defense. The military-minded cling to old methods of thinking and one Army department has been surveying possibilities of going underground, and in wartime placing factories in places like Mammoth Cave. Others speak of dispersing our population centers into "linear" or "ribbon" cities.

Reasonable men with these new facts to consider refuse to contemplate a future in which our culture would attempt to survive in ribbons or in underground tombs. Neither is there reassurance in proposals to keep a hundred thousand men alert along the coasts scanning the sky with radar. There is no radar defense against the V-2, and should a "defense" be developed after years of research, it is not humanly possible for any defense to be perfect. Should one rocket with atomic warhead strike Minneapolis, that city would look almost exactly like Nagasaki. Rifle bullets kill men, but atomic bombs kill cities. A tank is a defense against a bullet, but there is no defense in science against the weapon which can destroy civilization.

Our defense is not in armaments, nor in science, nor in going underground. Our defense is in law and order.

Henceforth, every nation's foreign policy must be judged at every point by one consideration: does it lead us to a world of law and order or does it lead us back toward

[1] Reprinted by permission of the *New York Times Magazine*, June 23, 1946, and of the author.

anarchy and death? I do not believe that we can prepare for war and at the same time prepare for a world community. When humanity holds in its hand the weapon with which it can commit suicide, I believe that to put more power into the gun is to increase the probability of disaster.

Remembering that our main consideration is to avoid this disaster, let us briefly consider international relations in the world today, and start with America. The war which began with Germany using weapons of unprecedented frightfulness against women and children ended with the United States using a supreme weapon killing thousands at one blow.

Many persons in other countries now look on America with great suspicion, not only for the bomb but because they fear she will become imperialistic. Before the recent turn in our policy I was sometimes not quite free from such fears myself.

Others might not fear Americans if they knew us as we know one another, honest and sober and neighbors. But in other countries they know that a sober nation can become drunk with victory. If Germany had not won a victory in 1870, what tragedy for the human race might have been averted!

We are now making bombs and the bombs are making hate and suspicion. We are keeping secrets and secrets breed distrust. I do not say we should now turn the secret of the bomb loose in the world, but are we ardently seeking a world in which there will be no need for bombs or secrets, a world in which science and men will be free?

While we distrust Russia's secrecy and she distrusts ours, we walk together to certain doom.

The basic principles of the Acheson-Lilienthal Report are scientifically sound and technically ingenious, but as Mr. Baruch wisely said, it is a problem not of physics but of ethics. There has been too much emphasis on legalisms and procedure; it is easier to denature plutonium than it is to denature the evil spirit of man.

The United Nations is the only instrument we have to work with in our struggle to achieve something better. But we have used U. N. and U. N. form and procedure to outvote the Russians on some occasions when the Russians were right. Yes, I do not think it is possible for any nation to be right all the time or wrong all the time. In all negotiations, whether over Spain, Argentina, Palestine, food or atomic energy, so long as we rely on procedure and keep the threat of military power, we are attempting to use old methods in a world which is changed forever.

No one gainsays that the United Nations Organization at times gives great evidence of eventually justifying the desperate hope that millions have in it. But time is not given to us in solving the problems science and war have brought. Powerful forces in the political world are moving swiftly toward crisis. When we look back to the end of the war it does not seem ten months—it seems ten years ago! Many leaders express well the need for world authority and an eventual world government, but actual planning and action to this end have been appallingly slow.

Private organizations anticipate the future, but government agencies seem to live in the past. In working away from nationalism toward a supra-nationalism, for example, it is obvious that the national spirit will survive longer in armies than anywhere else. This might be tempered in the United Nations military forces by mixing the various units together, but certainly not by keeping a Russian unit intact side by side with an intact American unit, with the usual inter-unit competition added to the national spirit of the soldiers in this world enforcement army. But if the military staffs of the U. N. are working out concrete proposals along these lines, for a true internationally minded force, I have yet to read of it.

Similarly, we are plagued in the present world councils over the question of representation. It does not seem fair to some, for example, that each small Latin-American nation should have a vote while much larger

nations are also limited to one vote. On the other hand, representation on a population basis may seem unfair to the highly developed states, because surely great masses of ignorant, backward peoples should not carry as much voice in the complicated technology of our world as those with greater experience.

Fremont Rider in an excellent book, "The Great Dilemma of World Organizations," discusses the idea of representation on the basis of education and literacy—number of teachers, physicians, and so on. Backward nations looking forward to greater power in the councils of men would be told, "To get more votes you must *earn* them."

These and a hundred other questions concerning the desirable evolution of the world seem to be getting very little attention. Meanwhile, men high in government propose defense or war measures which would not only compel us to live in a universal atmosphere of fear but would cost untold billions of dollars and ultimately destroy our American free way of life—even before a war.

To retain even a temporary total security in an age of total war, government will have to secure total control. Restrictive measures will be required by the necessities of the situation, not through the conspiracy of wilful men. Starting with the fantastic guardianship now imposed on innocent physics professors, outmoded thinkers will insidiously change men's lives more completely than did Hitler, for the forces behind them will be more compelling.

Before the raid on Hiroshima, leading physicists urged the War Department not to use the bomb against defenseless women and children. The war could have been won without it. The decision was made in consideration of possible future loss of American lives —and now we have to consider possible loss in future atomic bombings of *millions of lives*. The American decision may have been a fatal error, for men accustom themselves to thinking a weapon which was used once can be used again.

Had we shown other nations the test explosion at Alamogordo, New Mexico, we could have used it as an education for new ideas. It would have been an impressive and favorable moment to make considered proposals for world order to end war. Our renunciation of this weapon as too terrible to use would have carried great weight in negotiations and made convincing our sincerity in asking other nations for a binding partnership to develop these newly unleashed powers for good.

The old type of thinking can raise a thousand objections of "realism" against this simplicity. But such thought ignores the *psychological realities*. All men fear atomic war. All men hope for benefits from these new powers. Between the realities of man's true desires and the realities of man's danger, what are the obsolete "realities" of protocol and military protection?

During the war many persons fell out of the habit of doing their own thinking, for many had to do simply what they were told to do. Today lack of interest would be a great error, for there is much the average man can do about this danger.

This nation held a great debate concerning the menace of the Axis, and again today we need a great chain reaction of awareness and communication. Current proposals should be discussed in the light of the basic facts, in every newspaper, in schools, churches, in town meetings, in private conversations, and neighbor to neighbor. Merely reading about the bomb promotes knowledge in the mind, but only talk between men promotes feeling in the heart.

Not even scientists completely understand atomic energy, for each man's knowledge is incomplete. Few men have ever seen the bomb. But all men if told a few facts can understand that this bomb and the danger of war is a very real thing, and not something far away. It directly concerns every person in the civilized world. We cannot leave it to generals, Senators, and diplomats to work out a solution over a period of generations. Perhaps five years from now several nations will

have made bombs and it will be too late to avoid disaster.

Ignoring the realities of faith, good will, and honesty in seeking a solution, we place too much faith in legalisms, treaties, and mechanisms. We must begin through the U. N. Atomic Energy Commission to work for binding agreement, but America's decision will not be made over a table in the United Nations. Our representatives in New York, in Paris, or in Moscow depend ultimately on decisions made in the village square.

To the village square we must carry the facts of atomic energy. From there must come America's voice.

This belief of physicists promoted our formation of the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists, with headquarters at Princeton, N. J., to make possible a great national campaign for education on these issues, through the National Committee on Atomic Information. Detailed planning for world security will be easier when negotiators are assured of public understanding of our dilemmas.

Then our American proposals will be not merely documents about machinery, the dull, dry statements of a government to other governments, but the embodiment of a message to humanity from a nation of human beings.

Science has brought forth this danger, but the real problem is in the minds and hearts of men. We will not change the hearts of other men by mechanisms, but by changing *our* hearts and speaking bravely.

We must be generous in giving to the world the knowledge we have of the forces of nature, after establishing safeguards against abuse.

We must not be merely willing but actively eager to submit ourselves to binding authority necessary for world security.

We must realize we cannot simultaneously plan for war and peace.

When we are clear in heart and mind—only then shall we find courage to surmount the fear which haunts the world.

Hiroshima[1]

JOHN HERSEY

I. A NOISELESS FLASH

AT EXACTLY fifteen minutes past eight in the morning, on August 6, 1945, Japanese time, at the moment when the atomic bomb flashed above Hiroshima, Miss Toshiko Sasaki, a clerk in the personnel department of the East Asia Tin Works, had just sat down at her place in the plant office and was turning her head to speak to the girl at the next desk. At that same moment, Dr. Masakazu Fujii was settling down cross-legged to read the Osaka *Asahi* on the porch of his private hospital, overhanging one of the seven deltaic rivers which divide Hiroshima; Mrs. Hatsuyo Nakamura, a tailor's widow, stood by the window of her kitchen, watching a neighbor tearing down his house because it lay in the path of an air-raid-defense fire lane; Father Wilhelm Kleinsorge, a German priest of the Society of Jesus, reclined in his underwear on a cot on the top floor of his order's three-story mission house, reading a Jesuit magazine, *Stimmen der Zeit;* Dr. Terufumi Sasaki, a young member of the surgical staff of the city's large, modern Red Cross Hospital, walked along one of the hospital corridors with a blood specimen for a Wassermann test in his hand; and the Reverend

[1] Reprinted from *Hiroshima* by John Hersey by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright 1946 by John Hersey.

Mr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto, pastor of the Hiroshima Methodist Church, paused at the door of a rich man's house in Koi, the city's western suburb, and prepared to unload a handcart full of things he had evacuated from town in fear of the massive B-29 raid which everyone expected Hiroshima to suffer. A hundred thousand people were killed by the atomic bomb, and these six were among the survivors. They still wonder why they lived when so many others died. Each of them counts many small items of chance or volition—a step taken in time, a decision to go indoors, catching one streetcar instead of the next—that spared him. And now each knows that in the act of survival he lived a dozen lives and saw more death than he ever thought he would see. At the time, none of them knew anything.

The Reverend Mr. Tanimoto got up at five o'clock that morning. He was alone in the parsonage, because for some time his wife had been commuting with their year-old baby to spend nights with a friend in Ushida, a suburb to the north. Of all the important cities of Japan, only two, Kyoto and Hiroshima, had not been visited in strength by *B-san*, or Mr. B, as the Japanese, with a mixture of respect and unhappy familiarity, called the B-29; and Mr. Tanimoto, like all his neighbors and friends, was almost sick with anxiety. He had heard uncomfortably detailed accounts of mass raids on Kure, Iwakuni, Tokuyama, and other nearby towns; he was sure Hiroshima's turn would come soon. He had slept badly the night before, because there had been several air-raid warnings. Hiroshima had been getting such warnings almost every night for weeks, for at that time the B-29s were using Lake Biwa, northeast of Hiroshima, as a rendezvous point, and no matter what city the Americans planned to hit, the Superfortresses streamed in over the coast near Hiroshima. The frequency of the warnings and the continued abstinence of Mr. B with respect to Hiroshima had made its citizens jittery; a rumor was going around that the Americans were saving something special for the city.

Mr. Tanimoto is a small man, quick to talk, laugh, and cry. He wears his black hair parted in the middle and rather long; the prominence of the frontal bones just above his eyebrows and the smallness of his mustache, mouth, and chin give him a strange, old-young look, boyish and yet wise, weak and yet fiery. He moves nervously and fast, but with a restraint which suggests that he is a cautious, thoughtful man. He showed, indeed, just those qualities in the uneasy days before the bomb fell. Besides having his wife spend the nights in Ushida, Mr. Tanimoto had been carrying all the portable things from his church, in the close-packed residential district called Nagaragawa, to a house that belonged to a rayon manufacturer in Koi, two miles from the center of town. The rayon man, a Mr. Matsui, had opened his then unoccupied estate to a large number of his friends and acquaintances, so that they might evacuate whatever they wished to a safe distance from the probable target area. Mr. Tanimoto had had no difficulty in moving chairs, hymnals, Bibles, altar gear, and church records by pushcart himself, but the organ console and an upright piano required some aid. A friend of his named Matsuo had, the day before, helped him get the piano out to Koi; in return, he had promised this day to assist Mr. Matsuo in hauling out a daughter's belongings. That is why he had risen so early.

Mr. Tanimoto cooked his own breakfast. He felt awfully tired. The effort of moving the piano the day before, a sleepless night, weeks of worry and unbalanced diet, the cares of his parish—all combined to make him feel hardly adequate to the new day's work. There was another thing, too: Mr. Tanimoto had studied theology at Emory College, in Atlanta, Georgia; he had graduated in 1940; he spoke excellent English; he dressed in American clothes; he had corresponded with many American friends right up to the time the war began; and among a people obsessed with a fear of being spied upon—perhaps almost obsessed himself—he found himself growing increasingly uneasy.

The police had questioned him several times, and just a few days before, he had heard that an influential acquaintance, a Mr. Tanaka, a retired officer of the Toyo Kisen Kaisha steamship line, an anti-Christian, a man famous in Hiroshima for his showy philanthropies and notorious for his personal tyrannies, had been telling people that Tanimoto should not be trusted. In compensation, to show himself publicly a good Japanese, Mr. Tanimoto had taken on the chairmanship of his local *tonarigumi*, or Neighborhood Association, and to his other duties and concerns this position had added the business of organizing air-raid defense for about twenty families.

Before six o'clock that morning, Mr. Tanimoto started for Mr. Matsuo's house. There he found that their burden was to be a *tansu*, a large Japanese cabinet, full of clothing and household goods. The two men set out. The morning was perfectly clear and so warm that the day promised to be uncomfortable. A few minutes after they started, the air-raid siren went off—a minute-long blast that warned of approaching planes but indicated to the people of Hiroshima only a slight degree of danger, since it sounded every morning at this time, when an American weather plane came over. The two men pulled and pushed the handcart through the city streets. Hiroshima was a fan-shaped city, lying mostly on the six islands formed by the seven estuarial rivers that branch out from the Ota River; its main commercial and residential districts, covering about four square miles in the center of the city, contained three-quarters of its population, which had been reduced by several evacuation programs from a wartime peak of 380,000 to about 245,000. Factories and other residential districts, or suburbs, lay compactly around the edges of the city. To the south were the docks, an airport, and the island-studded Inland Sea. A rim of mountains runs around the other three sides of the delta. Mr. Tanimoto and Mr. Matsuo took their way through the shopping center, already full of people, and across two of the rivers to the sloping streets of Koi, and up them to the outskirts and foothills. As they started up a valley away from the tight-ranked houses, the all-clear sounded. (The Japanese radar operators, detecting only three planes, supposed that they comprised a reconnaissance.) Pushing the handcart up to the rayon man's house was tiring, and the men, after they had maneuvered their load into the driveway and to the front steps, paused to rest awhile. They stood with a wing of the house between them and the city. Like most homes in this part of Japan, the house consisted of a wooden frame and wooden walls supporting a heavy tile roof. Its front hall, packed with rolls of bedding and clothing, looked like a cool cave full of fat cushions. Opposite the house, to the right of the front door, there was a large, finicky rock garden. There was no sound of planes. The morning was still; the place was cool and pleasant.

Then a tremendous flash of light cut across the sky. Mr. Tanimoto has a distinct recollection that it travelled from east to west, from the city toward the hills. It seemed a sheet of sun. Both he and Mr. Matsuo reacted in terror—and both had time to react (for they were 3,500 yards, or two miles, from the center of the explosion). Mr. Matsuo dashed up the front steps into the house and dived among the bedrolls and buried himself there. Mr. Tanimoto took four or five steps and threw himself between two big rocks in the garden. He bellied up very hard against one of them. As his face was against the stone, he did not see what happened. He felt a sudden pressure, and then splinters and pieces of board and fragments of tile fell on him. He heard no roar. (Almost no one in Hiroshima recalls hearing any noise of the bomb. But a fisherman in his sampan on the Inland Sea near Tsuzu, the man with whom Mr. Tanimoto's mother-in-law and sister-in-law were living, saw the flash and heard a tremendous explosion; he was nearly twenty miles from Hiroshima, but the thunder was greater than when the B-29s hit Iwakuni, only five miles away.)

When he dared, Mr. Tanimoto raised his head and saw that the rayon man's house

had collapsed. He thought a bomb had fallen directly on it. Such clouds of dust had risen that there was a sort of twilight around. In panic, not thinking for the moment of Mr. Matsuo under the ruins, he dashed out into the street. He noticed as he ran that the concrete wall of the estate had fallen over—toward the house rather than away from it. In the street, the first thing he saw was a squad of soldiers who had been burrowing into the hillside opposite, making one of the thousands of dugouts in which the Japanese apparently intended to resist invasion, hill by hill, life for life; the soldiers were coming out of the hole, where they should have been safe, and blood was running from their heads, chests, and backs. They were silent and dazed. Under what seemed to be a local dust cloud, the day grew darker and darker.

At nearly midnight, the night before the bomb was dropped, an announcer on the city's radio station said that about two hundred B-29s were approaching southern Honshu and advised the population of Hiroshima to evacuate to their designated "safe areas." Mrs. Hatsuyo Nakamura, the tailor's widow, who lived in the section called Nobori-cho and who had long had a habit of doing as she was told, got her three children—a ten-year-old boy, Toshio, an eight-year-old girl, Yaeko, and a five-year-old girl, Myeko—out of bed and dressed them and walked with them to the military area known as the East Parade Ground, on the northeast edge of the city. There she unrolled some mats and the children lay down on them. They slept until about two, when they were awakened by the roar of the planes going over Hiroshima.

As soon as the planes had passed, Mrs. Nakamura started back with her children. They reached home a little after two-thirty and she immediately turned on the radio, which, to her distress, was just then broadcasting a fresh warning. When she looked at the children and saw how tired they were, and when she thought of the number of trips they had made in past weeks, all to no purpose, to the East Parade Ground, she decided that in spite of the instructions on the radio, she simply could not face starting out all over again. She put the children in their bedrolls on the floor, lay down herself at three o'clock, and fell asleep at once, so soundly that when planes passed over later, she did not waken to their sound.

The siren jarred her awake at about seven. She arose, dressed quickly, and hurried to the house of Mr. Nakamoto, the head of her Neighborhood Association, and asked him what she should do. He said that she should remain at home unless an urgent warning —a series of intermittent blasts of the siren —was sounded. She returned home, lit the stove in the kitchen, set some rice to cook, and sat down to read that morning's Hiroshima *Chugoku*. To her relief, the all-clear sounded at eight o'clock. She heard the children stirring, so she went and gave each of them a handful of peanuts and told them to stay on their bedrolls, because they were tired from the night's walk. She had hoped that they would go back to sleep, but the man in the house directly to the south began to make a terrible hullabaloo of hammering, wedging, ripping, and splitting. The prefectural government, convinced, as everyone in Hiroshima was, that the city would be attacked soon, had begun to press with threats and warnings for the completion of wide fire lanes, which, it was hoped, might act in conjunction with the rivers to localize any fires started by an incendiary raid; and the neighbor was reluctantly sacrificing his home to the city's safety. Just the day before, the prefecture had ordered all able-bodied girls from the secondary schools to spend a few days helping to clear these lanes, and they started work soon after the all-clear sounded.

Mrs. Nakamura went back to the kitchen, looked at the rice, and began watching the man next door. At first, she was annoyed with him for making so much noise, but then she was moved almost to tears by pity. Her emotion was specifically directed toward her neighbor, tearing down

his home, board by board, at a time when there was so much unavoidable destruction, but undoubtedly she also felt a generalized, community pity, to say nothing of self-pity. She had not had an easy time. Her husband, Isawa, had gone into the Army just after Myeko was born, and she had heard nothing from or of him for a long time, until, on March 5, 1942, she received a seven-word telegram: "Isawa died an honorable death at Singapore." She learned later that he had died on February 15th, the day Singapore fell, and that he had been a corporal. Isawa had been a not particularly prosperous tailor, and his only capital was a Sankoku sewing machine. After his death, when his allotments stopped coming, Mrs. Nakamura got out the machine and began to take in piecework herself, and since then had supported the children, but poorly, by sewing.

As Mrs. Nakamura stood watching her neighbor, everything flashed whiter than any white she had ever seen. She did not notice what happened to the man next door; the reflex of a mother set her in motion toward her children. She had taken a single step (the house was 1,350 yards, or three-quarters of a mile, from the center of the explosion) when something picked her up and she seemed to fly into the next room over the raised sleeping platform, pursued by parts of her house.

Timbers fell around her as she landed, and a shower of tiles pommelled her; everything became dark, for she was buried. The debris did not cover her deeply. She rose up and freed herself. She heard a child cry, "Mother, help me!," and saw her youngest—Myeko, the five-year-old—buried up to her breast and unable to move. As Mrs. Nakamura started frantically to claw her way toward the baby, she could see or hear nothing of her other children.

In the days right before the bombing, Dr. Masakazu Fujii, being prosperous, hedonistic, and at the time not too busy, had been allowing himself the luxury of sleeping until nine or nine-thirty, but fortunately he had to get up early the morning the bomb was dropped to see a house guest off on a train. He rose at six, and half an hour later walked with his friend to the station, not far away, across two of the rivers. He was back home by seven, just as the siren sounded its sustained warning. He ate breakfast and then, because the morning was already hot, undressed down to his underwear and went out on the porch to read the paper. This porch—in fact, the whole building—was curiously constructed. Dr. Fujii was the proprietor of a peculiarly Japanese institution: a private, single-doctor hospital. This building, perched beside and over the water of the Kyo River, and next to the bridge of the same name, contained thirty rooms for thirty patients and their kinfolk—for, according to Japanese custom, when a person falls sick and goes to a hospital, one or more members of his family go and live there with him, to cook for him, bathe, massage, and read to him, and to offer incessant familial sympathy, without which a Japanese patient would be miserable indeed. Dr. Fujii had no beds—only straw mats—for his patients. He did, however, have all sorts of modern equipment: an X-ray machine, diathermy apparatus, and a fine tiled laboratory. The structure rested two-thirds on the land, one-third on piles over the tidal waters of the Kyo. This overhang, the part of the building where Dr. Fujii lived, was queer-looking, but it was cool in summer and from the porch, which faced away from the center of the city, the prospect of the river, with pleasure boats drifting up and down it, was always refreshing. Dr. Fujii had occasionally had anxious moments when the Ota and its mouth branches rose to flood, but the piling was apparently firm enough and the house had always held.

Dr. Fujii had been relatively idle for about a month because in July, as the number of untouched cities in Japan dwindled and as Hiroshima seemed more and more inevitably a target, he began turning patients away, on the ground that in case of a fire raid he would not be able to evacuate them. Now he had only two patients left—a woman from

Yano, injured in the shoulder, and a young man of twenty-five recovering from burns he had suffered when the steel factory near Hiroshima in which he worked had been hit. Dr. Fujii had six nurses to tend his patients. His wife and children were safe; his wife and one son were living outside Osaka, and another son and two daughters were in the country on Kyushu. A niece was living with him, and a maid and a manservant. He had little to do and did not mind, for he had saved some money. At fifty, he was healthy, convivial, and calm, and he was pleased to pass the evenings drinking whiskey with friends, always sensibly and for the sake of conversation. Before the war, he had affected brands imported from Scotland and America; now he was perfectly satisfied with the best Japanese brand, Suntory.

Dr. Fujii sat down cross-legged in his underwear on the spotless matting of the porch, put on his glasses, and started reading the Osaka *Asahi*. He liked to read the Osaka news because his wife was there. He saw the flash. To him—faced away from the center and looking at his paper—it seemed a brilliant yellow. Startled, he began to rise to his feet. In that moment (he was 1,550 yards from the center), the hospital leaned behind his rising and, with a terrible ripping noise, toppled into the river. The Doctor, still in the act of getting to his feet, was thrown forward and around and over; he was buffeted and gripped; he lost track of everything, because things were so speeded up; he felt the water.

Dr. Fujii hardly had time to think that he was dying before he realized that he was alive, squeezed tightly by two long timbers in a V across his chest, like a morsel suspended between two huge chopsticks—held upright, so that he could not move, with his head miraculously above water and his torso and legs in it. The remains of his hospital were all around him in a mad assortment of splintered lumber and materials for the relief of pain. His left shoulder hurt terribly. His glasses were gone.

Father Wilhelm Kleinsorge, of the Society of Jesus, was, on the morning of the explosion, in rather frail condition. The Japanese wartime diet had not sustained him, and he felt the strain of being a foreigner in an increasingly xenophobic Japan; even a German, since the defeat of the Fatherland, was unpopular. Father Kleinsorge had, at thirty-eight, the look of a boy growing too fast—thin in the face, with a prominent Adam's apple, a hollow chest, dangling hands, big feet. He walked clumsily, leaning forward a little. He was tired all the time. To make matters worse, he had suffered for two days, along with Father Cieslik, a fellow-priest, from a rather painful and urgent diarrhea, which they blamed on the beans and black ration bread they were obliged to eat. Two other priests then living in the mission compound, which was in the Nobori-cho section—Father Superior LaSalle and Father Schiffer—had happily escaped this affliction.

Father Kleinsorge woke up about six the morning the bomb was dropped, and half an hour later—he was a bit tardy because of his sickness—he began to read Mass in the mission chapel, a small Japanese-style wooden building which was without pews, since its worshippers knelt on the usual Japanese matted floor, facing an altar graced with splendid silks, brass, silver, and heavy embroideries. This morning, a Monday, the only worshippers were Mr. Takemoto, a theological student living in the mission house; Mr. Fukai, the secretary of the diocese; Mrs. Murata, the mission's devoutly Christian housekeeper; and his fellow-priests. After Mass, while Father Kleinsorge was reading the Prayers of Thanksgiving, the siren sounded. He stopped the service and the missionaries retired across the compound to the bigger building. There, in his room on the ground floor, to the right of the front door, Father Kleinsorge changed into a military uniform which he had acquired when he was teaching at the Rokko Middle School in Kobe and which he wore during air-raid alerts.

After an alarm, Father Kleinsorge always went out and scanned the sky, and in this

instance, when he stepped outside, he was glad to see only the single weather plane that flew over Hiroshima each day about this time. Satisfied that nothing would happen, he went in and breakfasted with the other Fathers on substitute coffee and ration bread, which, under the circumstances, was especially repugnant to him. The Fathers sat and talked awhile, until, at eight, they heard the all-clear. They went then to various parts of the building. Father Schiffer retired to his room to do some writing. Father Cieslik sat in his room in a straight chair with a pillow over his stomach to ease his pain, and read. Father Superior LaSalle stood at the window of his room, thinking. Father Kleinsorge went up to a room on the third floor, took off all his clothes except his underwear, and stretched out on his right side on a cot and began reading his *Stimmen der Zeit.*

After the terrible flash—which, Father Kleinsorge later realized, reminded him of something he had read as a boy about a large meteor colliding with the earth—he had time (since he was 1,400 yards from the center) for one thought: A bomb has fallen directly on us. Then, for a few seconds or minutes, he went out of his mind.

Father Kleinsorge never knew how he got out of the house. The next things he was conscious of were that he was wandering around in the mission's vegetable garden in his underwear, bleeding slightly from small cuts along his left flank; that all the buildings round about had fallen down except the Jesuits' mission house, which had long before been braced and double-braced by a priest named Gropper, who was terrified of earthquakes; that the day had turned dark; and that Murata-*san,* the housekeeper, was nearby, crying over and over, "*Shu Jesusu, awaremi tamai!* Our Lord Jesus, have pity on us!"

On the train on the way into Hiroshima from the country, where he lived with his mother, Dr. Terufumi Sasaki, the Red Cross Hospital surgeon, thought over an unpleasant nightmare he had had the night before. His mother's home was in Mukaihara, thirty miles from the city, and it took him two hours by train and tram to reach the hospital. He had slept uneasily all night and had wakened an hour earlier than usual, and, feeling sluggish and slightly feverish, had debated whether to go to the hospital at all; his sense of duty finally forced him to go, and he had started out on an earlier train than he took most mornings. The dream had particularly frightened him because it was so closely associated, on the surface at least, with a disturbing actuality. He was only twenty-five years old and had just completed his training at the Eastern Medical University, in Tsingtao, China. He was something of an idealist and was much distressed by the inadequacy of medical facilities in the country town where his mother lived. Quite on his own, and without a permit, he had begun visiting a few sick people out there in the evenings, after his eight hours at the hospital and four hours' commuting. He had recently learned that the penalty for practicing without a permit was severe; a fellow-doctor whom he had asked about it had given him a serious scolding. Nevertheless, he had continued to practice. In his dream, he had been at the bedside of a country patient when the police and the doctor he had consulted burst into the room, seized him, dragged him outside, and beat him up cruelly. On the train, he just about decided to give up the work in Mukaihara, since he felt it would be impossible to get a permit, because the authorities would hold that it would conflict with his duties at the Red Cross Hospital.

At the terminus, he caught a streetcar at once. (He later calculated that if he had taken his customary train that morning, and if he had had to wait a few minutes for the streetcar, as often happened, he would have been close to the center at the time of the explosion and would surely have perished.) He arrived at the hospital at seven-forty and reported to the chief surgeon. A few minutes later, he went to a room on the first floor and drew blood from the arm of a man in order to perform a

Wassermann test. The laboratory containing the incubators for the test was on the third floor. With the blood specimen in his left hand, walking in a kind of distraction he had felt all morning, probably because of the dream and his restless night, he started along the main corridor on his way toward the stairs. He was one step beyond an open window when the light of the bomb was reflected, like a gigantic photographic flash, in the corridor. He ducked down on one knee and said to himself, as only a Japanese would, "Sasaki, *gambare!* Be brave!" Just then (the building was 1,650 yards from the center), the blast ripped through the hospital. The glasses he was wearing flew off his face; the bottle of blood crashed against one wall; his Japanese slippers zipped out from under his feet—but otherwise, thanks to where he stood, he was untouched.

Dr. Sasaki shouted the name of the chief surgeon and rushed around to the man's office and found him terribly cut by glass. The hospital was in horrible confusion: heavy partitions and ceilings had fallen on patients, beds had overturned, windows had blown in and cut people, blood was spattered on the walls and floors, instruments were everywhere, many of the patients were running about screaming, many more lay dead. (A colleague working in the laboratory to which Dr. Sasaki had been walking was dead; Dr. Sasaki's patient, whom he had just left and who a few moments before had been dreadfully afraid of syphilis, was also dead.) Dr. Sasaki found himself the only doctor in the hospital who was unhurt.

Dr. Sasaki, who believed that the enemy had hit only the building he was in, got bandages and began to bind the wounds of those inside the hospital; while outside, all over Hiroshima, maimed and dying citizens turned their unsteady steps toward the Red Cross Hospital to begin an invasion that was to make Dr. Sasaki forget his private nightmare for a long, long time.

Miss Toshiko Sasaki, the East Asia Tin Works clerk, who is not related to Dr. Sasaki, got up at three o'clock in the morning on the day the bomb fell. There was extra housework to do. Her eleven-month-old brother, Akio, had come down the day before with a serious stomach upset; her mother had taken him to the Tamura Pediatric Hospital and was staying there with him. Miss Sasaki, who was about twenty, had to cook breakfast for her father, a brother, a sister, and herself, and—since the hospital, because of the war, was unable to provide food—to prepare a whole day's meals for her mother and the baby, in time for her father, who worked in a factory making rubber earplugs for artillery crews, to take the food by on his way to the plant. When she had finished and had cleaned and put away the cooking things, it was nearly seven. The family lived in Koi, and she had a forty-five-minute trip to the tin works, in the section of town called Kannonmachi. She was in charge of the personnel records in the factory. She left Koi at seven, and as soon as she reached the plant, she went with some of the other girls from the personnel department to the factory auditorium. A prominent local Navy man, a former employee, had committed suicide the day before by throwing himself under a train—a death considered honorable enough to warrant a memorial service, which was to be held at the tin works at ten o'clock that morning. In the large hall, Miss Sasaki and the others made suitable preparations for the meeting. This work took about twenty minutes.

Miss Sasaki went back to her office and sat down at her desk. She was quite far from the windows, which were off to her left, and behind her were a couple of tall bookcases containing all the books of the factory library, which the personnel department had organized. She settled herself at her desk, put some things in a drawer, and shifted papers. She thought that before she began to make entries in her lists of new employees, discharges, and departures for the Army, she would chat for a moment with the girl at her right. Just as she turned her head away from the windows, the room was filled with a blinding light. She was para-

lyzed by fear, fixed still in her chair for a long moment (the plant was 1,600 yards from the center).

Everything fell, and Miss Sasaki lost consciousness. The ceiling dropped suddenly and the wooden floor above collapsed in splinters and the people up there came down and the roof above them gave way; but principally and first of all, the bookcases right behind her swooped forward and the contents threw her down, with her left leg horribly twisted and breaking underneath her. There, in the tin factory, in the first moment of the atomic age, a human being was crushed by books.

II. The Fire

Immediately after the explosion, the Reverend Mr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto, having run wildly out of the Matsui estate and having looked in wonderment at the bloody soldiers at the mouth of the dugout they had been digging, attached himself sympathetically to an old lady who was walking along in a daze, holding her head with her left hand, supporting a small boy of three or four on her back with her right, and crying, "I'm hurt! I'm hurt! I'm hurt!" Mr. Tanimoto transferred the child to his own back and led the woman by the hand down the street, which was darkened by what seemed to be a local column of dust. He took the woman to a grammar school not far away that had previously been designated for use as a temporary hospital in case of emergency. By this solicitous behavior, Mr. Tanimoto at once got rid of his terror. At the school, he was much surprised to see glass all over the floor and fifty or sixy injured people already waiting to be treated. He reflected that, although the all-clear had sounded and he had heard no planes, several bombs must have been dropped. He thought of a hillock in the rayon man's garden from which he could get a view of the whole of Koi—of the whole of Hiroshima, for that matter—and he ran back up to the estate.

From the mound, Mr. Tanimoto saw an astonishing panorama. Not just a patch of Koi, as he had expected, but as much of Hiroshima as he could see through the clouded air was giving off a thick, dreadful miasma. Clumps of smoke, near and far, had begun to push up through the general dust. He wondered how such extensive damage could have been dealt out of a silent sky; even a few planes, far up, would have been audible. Houses nearby were burning, and when huge drops of water the size of marbles began to fall, he half thought that they must be coming from the hoses of firemen fighting the blazes. (They were actually drops of condensed moisture falling from the turbulent tower of dust, heat, and fission fragments that had already risen miles into the sky above Hiroshima.)

Mr. Tanimoto turned away from the sight when he heard Mr. Matsuo call out to ask whether he was all right. Mr. Matsuo had been safely cushioned within the falling house by the bedding stored in the front hall and had worked his way out. Mr. Tanimoto scarcely answered. He had thought of his wife and baby, his church, his home, his parishioners, all of them down in that awful murk. Once more he began to run in fear—toward the city.

Mrs. Hatsuyo Nakamura, the tailor's widow, having struggled up from under the ruins of her house after the explosion, and seeing Myeko, the youngest of her three children, buried breast-deep and unable to move, crawled across the debris, hauled at timbers, and flung tiles aside, in a hurried effort to free the child. Then, from what seemed to be caverns far below, she heard two small voices crying, "*Tasukete! Tasukete!* Help! Help!"

She called the names of her ten-year-old son and eight-year-old daughter: "Toshio! Yaeko!"

The voices from below answered.

Mrs. Nakamura abandoned Myeko, who at least could breathe, and in a frenzy made the wreckage fly above the crying voices. The children had been sleeping nearly ten feet apart, but now their voices seemed to come from the same place. Toshio, the boy, apparently had some freedom to move, be-

cause she could feel him undermining the pile of wood and tiles as she worked from above. At last she saw his head, and she hastily pulled him out by it. A mosquito net was wound intricately, as if it had been carefully wrapped, around his feet. He said he had been blown right across the room and had been on top of his sister Yaeko under the wreckage. She now said, from underneath, that she could not move, because there was something on her legs. With a bit more digging, Mrs. Nakamura cleared a hole above the child and began to pull her arm. "*Itai!* It hurts!" Yaeko cried. Mrs. Nakamura shouted, "There's no time now to say whether it hurts or not," and yanked her whimpering daughter up. Then she freed Myeko. The children were filthy and bruised, but none of them had a single cut or scratch.

Mrs. Nakamura took the children out into the street. They had nothing on but underpants, and although the day was very hot, she worried rather confusedly about their being cold, so she went back into the wreckage and burrowed underneath and found a bundle of clothes she had packed for an emergency, and she dressed them in pants, blouses, shoes, padded-cotton air-raid helmets called *bokuzuki*, and even, irrationally, overcoats. The children were silent, except for the five-year-old Myeko, who kept asking questions: "Why is it night already? Why did our house fall down? What happened?" Mrs. Nakamura, who did not know what had happened (had not the all-clear sounded?), looked around and saw through the darkness that all the houses in her neighborhood had collapsed. The house next door, which its owner had been tearing down to make way for a fire lane, was now very thoroughly, if crudely, torn down; its owner, who had been sacrificing his home for the community's safety, lay dead. Mrs. Nakamoto, wife of the head of the local air-raid-defense Neighborhood Association, came across the street with her head all bloody, and said that her baby was badly cut; did Mrs. Nakamura have any bandage? Mrs. Nakamura did not, but she crawled into the remains of her house again and pulled out some white cloth that she had been using in her work as a seamstress, ripped it into strips, and gave it to Mrs. Nakamoto. While fetching the cloth, she noticed her sewing machine; she went back in for it and dragged it out. Obviously, she could not carry it with her, so she unthinkingly plunged her symbol of livelihood into the receptacle which for weeks had been her symbol of safety—the cement tank of water in front of her house, of the type every household had been ordered to construct against a possible fire raid.

A nervous neighbor, Mrs. Hataya, called to Mrs. Nakamura to run away with her to the woods in Asano Park—an estate, by the Kyo River not far off, belonging to the wealthy Asano family, who once owned the Toyo Kisen Kaisha steamship line. The park had been designated as an evacuation area for their neighborhood. Seeing fire breaking out in a nearby ruin (except at the very center, where the bomb itself ignited some fires, most of Hiroshima's citywide conflagration was caused by inflammable wreckage falling on cookstoves and live wires), Mrs. Nakamura suggested going over to fight it. Mrs. Hataya said, "Don't be foolish. What if planes come and drop more bombs?" So Mrs. Nakamura started out for Asano Park with her children and Mrs. Hataya, and she carried her rucksack of emergency clothing, a blanket, an umbrella, and a suitcase of things she had cached in her air-raid shelter. Under many ruins, as they hurried along, they heard muffled screams for help. The only building they saw standing on their way to Asano Park was the Jesuit mission house, alongside the Catholic kindergarten to which Mrs. Nakamura had sent Myeko for a time. As they passed it, she saw Father Kleinsorge, in bloody underwear, running out of the house with a small suitcase in his hand.

Right after the explosion, while Father Wilhelm Kleinsorge, S. J., was wandering around in his underwear in the vegetable garden, Father Superior LaSalle came around the corner of the building in the darkness. His body, especially his back, was bloody;

the flash had made him twist away from his window, and tiny pieces of glass had flown at him. Father Kleinsorge, still bewildered, managed to ask, "Where are the rest?" Just then, the two other priests living in the mission house appeared—Father Cieslik, unhurt, supporting Father Schiffer, who was covered with blood that spurted from a cut above his left ear and who was very pale. Father Cieslik was rather pleased with himself, for after the flash he had dived into a doorway, which he had previously reckoned to be the safest place inside the building, and when the blast came, he was not injured. Father LaSalle told Father Cieslik to take Father Schiffer to a doctor before he bled to death, and suggested either Dr. Kanda, who lived on the next corner, or Dr. Fujii, about six blocks away. The two men went out of the compound and up the street.

The daughter of Mr. Hoshijima, the mission catechist, ran up to Father Kleinsorge and said that her mother and sister were buried under the ruins of their house, which was at the back of the Jesuit compound, and at the same time the priests noticed that the house of the Catholic-kindergarten teacher at the front of the compound had collapsed on her. While Father LaSalle and Mrs. Murata, the mission housekeeper, dug the teacher out, Father Kleinsorge went to the catechist's fallen house and began lifting things off the top of the pile. There was not a sound underneath; he was sure the Hoshijima women had been killed. At last, under what had been a corner of the kitchen, he saw Mrs. Hoshijima's head. Believing her dead, he began to haul her out by the hair, but suddenly she screamed, "*Itai! Itai!* It hurts! It hurts!" He dug some more and lifted her out. He managed, too, to find her daughter in the rubble and free her. Neither was badly hurt.

A public bath next door to the mission house had caught fire, but since there the wind was southerly, the priests thought their house would be spared. Nevertheless, as a precaution. Father Kleinsorge went inside to fetch some things he wanted to save. He found his room in a state of weird and illogical confusion. A first-aid kit was hanging undisturbed on a hook on the wall, but his clothes, which had been on other hooks nearby, were nowhere to be seen. His desk was in splinters all over the room, but a mere papier-mâché suitcase, which he had hidden under the desk, stood handle-side up, without a scratch on it, in the doorway of the room, where he could not miss it. Father Kleinsorge later came to regard this as a bit of Providential interference, inasmuch as the suitcase contained his breviary, the account books for the whole diocese, and a considerable amount of paper money belonging to the mission, for which he was responsible. He ran out of the house and deposited the suitcase in the mission air-raid shelter.

At about this time, Father Cieslik and Father Schiffer, who was still spurting blood, came back and said that Dr. Kanda's house was ruined and that fire blocked them from getting out of what they supposed to be the local circle of destruction to Dr. Fujii's private hospital, on the bank of the Kyo River.

Dr. Masakazu Fujii's hospital was no longer on the bank of the Kyo River; it was in the river. After the overturn, Dr. Fujii was so stupefied and so tightly squeezed by the beams gripping his chest that he was unable to move at first, and he hung there about twenty minutes in the darkened morning. Then a thought which came to him—that soon the tide would be running in through the estuaries and his head would be submerged—inspired him to fearful activity; he wriggled and turned and exerted what strength he could (though his left arm, because of the pain in his shoulder, was useless), and before long he had freed himself from the vise. After a few moments' rest, he climbed onto the pile of timbers and, finding a long one that slanted up to the river-bank, he painfully shinnied up it.

Dr. Fujii, who was in his underwear, was now soaking and dirty. His undershirt was torn, and blood ran down it from bad cuts on his chin and back. In this disarray, he

walked out onto Kyo Bridge, beside which his hospital had stood. The bridge had not collapsed. He could see only fuzzily without his glasses, but he could see enough to be amazed at the number of houses that were down all around. On the bridge, he encountered a friend, a doctor named Machii, and asked in bewilderment, "What do you think it was?"

Dr. Machii said, "It must have been a *Molotoffano hanakago*"—a Molotov flower basket, the delicate Japanese name for the "bread basket," or self-scattering cluster of bombs.

At first, Dr. Fujii could see only two fires, one across the river from his hospital site and one quite far to the south. But at the same time, he and his friend observed something that puzzled them, and which, as doctors, they discussed: although there were as yet very few fires, wounded people were hurrying across the bridge in an endless parade of misery, and many of them exhibited terrible burns on their faces and arms. "Why do you suppose it is?" Dr. Fujii asked. Even a theory was comforting that day, and Dr. Machii stuck to his. "Perhaps because it was a Molotov flower basket," he said.

There had been no breeze earlier in the morning when Dr. Fujii had walked to the railroad station to see his friend off, but now brisk winds were blowing every which way; here on the bridge the wind was easterly. New fires were leaping up, and they spread quickly, and in a very short time terrible blasts of hot air and showers of cinders made it impossible to stand on the bridge any more. Dr. Machii ran to the far side of the river and along a still unkindled street. Dr. Fujii went down into the water under the bridge, where a score of people had already taken refuge, among them his servants who had extricated themselves from the wreckage. From there, Dr. Fujii saw a nurse hanging in the timbers of his hospital by her legs, and then another painfully pinned across the breast. He enlisted the help of some of the others under the bridge and freed both of them. He thought he heard the voice of his niece for a moment, but he could not find her; he never saw her again. Four of his nurses and the two patients in the hospital died, too. Dr. Fujii went back into the water of the river and waited for the fire to subside.

The lot of Drs. Fujii, Kanda, and Machii right after the explosion—and, as these three were typical, that of the majority of the physicians and surgeons of Hiroshima—with their offices and hospitals destroyed, their equipment scattered, their own bodies incapacitated in varying degrees, explained why so many citizens who were hurt went untended and why so many who might have lived died. Of a hundred and fifty doctors in the city, sixty-five were already dead and most of the rest were wounded. Of 1,780 nurses, 1,654 were dead or too badly hurt to work. In the biggest hospital, that of the Red Cross, only six doctors out of thirty were able to function, and only ten nurses out of more than two hundred. The sole uninjured doctor on the Red Cross Hospital staff was Dr. Sasaki. After the explosion, he hurried to a storeroom to fetch bandages. This room, like everything he had seen as he ran through the hospital, was chaotic—bottles of medicines thrown off shelves and broken, salves spattered on the walls, instruments strewn everywhere. He grabbed up some bandages and an unbroken bottle of mercurochrome, hurried back to the chief surgeon, and bandaged his cuts. Then he went out into the corridor and began patching up the wounded patients and the doctors and nurses there. He blundered so without his glasses that he took a pair off the face of a wounded nurse, and although they only approximately compensated for the errors of his vision, they were better than nothing. (He was to depend of them for more than a month.)

Dr. Sasaki worked without method, taking those who were nearest him first, and he noticed soon that the corridor seemed to be getting more and more crowded. Mixed in with the abrasions and lacerations which most people in the hospital had suffered, he

began to find dreadful burns. He realized then that casualties were pouring in from outdoors. There were so many that he began to pass up the lightly wounded; he decided that all he could hope to do was to stop people from bleeding to death. Before long, patients lay and crouched on the floors of the wards and the laboratories and all the other rooms, and in the corridors, and on the stairs, and in the front hall, and under the portecochère, and on the stone front steps, and in the driveway and courtyard, and for blocks each way in the streets outside. Wounded people supported maimed people; disfigured families leaned together. Many people were vomiting. A tremendous number of school-girls—some of those who had been taken from their classrooms to work outdoors, clearing fire lanes—crept into the hospital. In a city of two hundred and forty-five thousand, nearly a hundred thousand people had been killed or doomed at one blow; a hundred thousand more were hurt. At least ten thousand of the wounded made their way to the best hospital in town, which was altogether unequal to such a trampling, since it had only six hundred beds, and they had all been occupied. The people in the suffocating crowd inside the hospital wept and cried, for Dr. Sasaki to hear, "*Sensei!* Doctor!," and the less seriously wounded came and pulled at his sleeve and begged him to go to the aid of the worse wounded. Tugged here and there in his stockinged feet, bewildered by the numbers, staggered by so much raw flesh, Dr. Sasaki lost all sense of profession and stopped working as a skillful surgeon and a sympathetic man; he became an automaton, mechanically wiping, daubing, winding, wiping, daubing, winding.

Some of the wounded in Hiroshima were unable to enjoy the questionable luxury of hospitalization. In what had been the personnel office of the East Asia Tin Works, Miss Sasaki lay doubled over, unconscious, under the tremendous pile of books and plaster and wood and corrugated iron. She was wholly unconscious (she later estimated) for about three hours. Her first sensation was of dreadful pain in her left leg. It was so black under the books and debris that the borderline between awareness and unconsciousness was fine; she apparently crossed it several times, for the pain seemed to come and go. At the moments when it was sharpest, she felt that her leg had been cut off somewhere below the knee. Later, she heard someone walking on top of the wreckage above her, and anguished voices spoke up, evidently from within the mess around her: "Please help! Get us out!"

Father Kleinsorge stemmed Father Schiffer's spurting cut as well as he could with some bandage that Dr. Fujii had given the priests a few days before. When he finished, he ran into the mission house again and found the jacket of his military uniform and an old pair of gray trousers. He put them on and went outside. A woman from next door ran up to him and shouted that her husband was buried under her house and the house was on fire; Father Kleinsorge must come and save him.

Father Kleinsorge, already growing apathetic and dazed in the presence of the cumulative distress, said, "We haven't much time." Houses all around were burning, and the wind was now blowing hard. "Do you know exactly which part of the house he is under?" he asked.

"Yes, yes," she said. "Come quickly."

They went around to the house, the remains of which blazed violently, but when they got there, it turned out that the woman had no idea where her husband was. Father Kleinsorge shouted several times, "Is anyone there?" There was no answer. Father Kleinsorge said to the woman. "We must get away or we will all die." He went back to the Catholic compound and told the Father Superior that the fire was coming closer on the wind, which had swung around and was now from the north; it was time for everybody to go.

Just then, the kindergarten teacher pointed out to the priests Mr. Fukai, the secretary of

the diocese, who was standing in his window on the second floor of the mission house, facing in the direction of the explosion, weeping. Father Cieslik, because he thought the stairs unusable, ran around to the back of the mission house to look for a ladder. There he heard people crying for help under a nearby fallen roof. He called to passers-by running away in the street to help him lift it, but nobody paid any attention, and he had to leave the buried ones to die. Father Kleinsorge ran inside the mission house and scrambled up the stairs, which were awry and piled with plaster and lathing, and called to Mr. Fukai from the doorway of his room.

Mr. Fukai, a very short man of about fifty, turned around slowly, with a queer look, and said, "Leave me here."

Father Kleinsorge went into the room and took Mr. Fukai by the collar of his coat and said, "Come with me or you'll die."

Mr. Fukai said, "Leave me here to die."

Father Kleinsorge began to shove and haul Mr. Fukai out of the room. Then the theological student came up and grabbed Mr. Fukai's feet, and Father Kleinsorge took his shoulders, and together they carried him downstairs and outdoors. "I can't walk!" Mr. Fukai cried. "Leave me here!" Father Kleinsorge got his paper suitcase with the money in it and took Mr. Fukai up pickaback, and the party started for the East Parade Ground, their district's "safe area." As they went out of the gate, Mr. Fukai, quite childlike now, beat on Father Kleinsorge's shoulders and said, "I won't leave. I won't leave." Irrelevantly, Father Kleinsorge turned to Father LaSalle and said, "We have lost all our possessions but not our sense of humor."

The street was cluttered with parts of houses that had slid into it, and with fallen telephone poles and wires. From every second or third house came the voices of people buried and abandoned who invariably screamed, with formal politeness, *"Tasukete kure!* Help, if you please!" The priests recognized several ruins from which these cries came as the homes of friends, but because of the fire it was too late to help. All the way, Mr. Fukai whimpered, "Let me stay." The party turned right when they came to a block of fallen houses that was one flame. At Sakai Bridge, which would take them across to the East Parade Ground, they saw that the whole community on the opposite side of the river was a sheet of fire; they dared not cross and decided to take refuge in Asano Park, off to their left. Father Kleinsorge, who had been weakened for a couple of days by his bad case of diarrhea, began to stagger under his protesting burden, and as he tried to climb up over the wreckage of several houses that blocked their way to the park, he stumbled, dropped Mr. Fukai, and plunged down, head over heels, to the edge of the river. When he picked himself up, he saw Mr. Fukai running away. Father Kleinsorge shouted to a dozen soldiers, who were standing by the bridge, to stop him. As Father Kleinsorge started back to get Mr. Fukai, Father LaSalle called out, "Hurry! Don't waste time!" So Father Kleinsorge just requested the soldiers to take care of Mr. Fukai. They said they would, but the little, broken man got away from them, and the last the priests could see of him, he was running back toward the fire.

Mr. Tanimoto, fearful for his family and church, at first ran toward them by the shortest route, along Koi Highway. He was the only person making his way into the city; he met hundreds and hundreds who were fleeing, and every one of them seemed to be hurt in some way. The eyebrows of some were burned off and skin hung from their faces and hands. Others, because of pain, held their arms up as if carrying something in both hands. Some were vomiting as they walked. Many were naked or in shreds of clothing. On some undressed bodies, the burns had made patterns – of undershirt straps and suspenders and, on the skin of some women (since white repelled the heat from the bomb and dark clothes absorbed it and conducted it to the skin), the shapes of flowers they had had on their kimonos. Many, although injured themselves, sup-

ported relatives who were worse off. Almost all had their heads bowed, looked straight ahead, were silent, and showed no expression whatever.

After crossing Koi Bridge and Kannon Bridge, having run the whole way, Mr. Tanimoto saw, as he approached the center, that all the houses had been crushed and many were afire. Here the trees were bare and their trunks were charred. He tried at several points to penetrate the ruins, but the flames always stopped him. Under many houses, people screamed for help, but no one helped; in general, survivors that day assisted only their relatives or immediate neighbors, for they could not comprehend or tolerate a wider circle of misery. The wounded limped past the screams, and Mr. Tanimoto ran past them. As a Christian he was filled with compassion for those who were trapped, and as a Japanese he was overwhelmed by the shame of being unhurt, and he prayed as he ran, "God help them and take them out of the fire."

He thought he would skirt the fire, to the left. He ran back to Kannon Bridge and followed for a distance one of the rivers. He tried several cross streets, but all were blocked, so he turned far left and ran out of Yokogawa, a station on a railroad line that detoured the city in a wide semicircle, and he followed the rails until he came to a burning train. So impressed was he by this time by the extent of the damage that he ran north two miles to Gion, a suburb in the foothills. All the way, he overtook dreadfully burned and lacerated people, and in his guilt he turned to right and left as he hurried and said to some of them, "Excuse me for having no burden like yours." Near Gion, he began to meet country people going toward the city to help, and when they saw him, several exclaimed, "Look! There is one who is not wounded." At Gion, he bore toward the right bank of the main river, the Ota, and ran down it until he reached fire again. There was no fire on the other side of the river, so he threw off his shirt and shoes and plunged into it. In midstream, where the current was fairly strong, exhaustion and fear finally caught up with him—he had run nearly seven miles—and he became limp and drifted in the water. He prayed, "Please, God, help me to cross. It would be nonsense for me to be drowned when I am the only uninjured one." He managed a few more strokes and fetched up on a spit downstream.

Mr. Tanimoto climbed up the bank and ran along it until, near a large Shinto shrine, he came to more fire, and as he turned left to get around it, he met, by incredible luck, his wife. She was carrying their infant son. Mr. Tanimoto was now so emotionally worn out that nothing could surprise him. He did not embrace his wife; he simply said, "Oh, you are safe." She told him that she had got home from her night in Ushida just in time for the explosion; she had been buried under the parsonage with the baby in her arms. She told how the wreckage had pressed down on her, how the baby had cried. She saw a chink of light, and by reaching up with a hand, she worked the hole bigger, bit by bit. After about half an hour, she heard the crackling noise of wood burning. At last the opening was big enough for her to push the baby out, and afterward she crawled out herself. She said she was now going out to Ushida again. Mr. Tanimoto said he wanted to see his church and take care of the people of his Neighborhood Association. They parted as casually—as bewildered—as they had met.

Mr. Tanimoto's way around the fire took him across the East Parade Ground, which, being an evacuation area, was now the scene of a gruesome review: rank on rank of the burned and bleeding. Those who were burned moaned, "*Mizu, mizu!* Water, water!" Mr. Tanimoto found a basin in a nearby street and located a water tap that still worked in the crushed shell of a house, and he began carrying water to the suffering strangers. When he had given drink to about thirty of them, he realized he was taking too much time. "Excuse me," he said loudly to those nearby who were reaching out their hands to him and crying their thirst. "I have many people to take care of." Then he ran

away. He went to the river again, the basin in his hand, and jumped down onto a sandspit. There he saw hundreds of people so badly wounded that they could not get up to go farther from the burning city. When they saw a man erect and unhurt, the chant began again: "*Mizu, mizu, mizu.*" Mr. Tanimoto could not resist them; he carried them water from the river—a mistake, since it was tidal and brackish. Two or three small boats were ferrying hurt people across the river from Asano Park, and when one touched the spit, Mr. Tanimoto again made his loud, apologetic speech and jumped into the boat. It took him across to the park. There, in the underbrush, he found some of his charges of the Neighborhood Association, who had come there by his previous instructions, and saw many acquaintances, among them Father Kleinsorge and the other Catholics. But he missed Fukai, who had been a close friend. "Where is Fukai-*san*?" he asked.

"He didn't want to come with us," Father Kleinsorge said. "He ran back."

When Miss Sasaki heard the voices of the people caught along with her in the dilapidation at the tin factory, she began speaking to them. Her nearest neighbor, she discovered, was a high-school girl who had been drafted for factory work, and who said her back was broken. Miss Sasaki replied, "I am lying here and I can't move. My left leg is cut off."

Some time later, she again heard somebody walk overhead and then move off to one side, and whoever it was began burrowing. The digger released several people, and when he had uncovered the high-school girl, she found that her back was not broken, after all, and she crawled out. Miss Sasaki spoke to the rescuer, and he worked toward her. He pulled away a great number of books, until he had made a tunnel to her. She could see his perspiring face as he said, "Come out, Miss." She tried. "I can't move," she said. The man excavated some more and told her to try with all her strength to get out. But books were heavy on her hips, and the man finally saw that a bookcase was leaning on the books and that a heavy beam pressed down on the bookcase. "Wait," he said. "I'll get a crowbar."

The man was gone a long time, and when he came back, he was ill-tempered, as if her plight were all her fault. "We have no men to help you!" he shouted in through the tunnel. "You'll have to get out by yourself."

"That's impossible," she said. "My left leg . . ." The man went away.

Much later, several men came and dragged Miss Sasaki out. Her left leg was not severed, but it was badly broken and cut and it hung askew below the knee. They took her out into a courtyard. It was raining. She sat on the ground in the rain. When the downpour increased, someone directed all the wounded people to take cover in the factory's air-raid shelters. "Come along," a torn-up woman said to her. "You can hop." But Miss Sasaki could not move, and she just waited in the rain. Then a man propped up a large sheet of corrugated iron as a kind of lean-to, and took her in his arms and carried her to it. She was grateful until he brought two horribly wounded people—a woman with a whole breast sheared off and a man whose face was all raw from a burn—to share the simple shed with her. No one came back. The rain cleared and the cloudy afternoon was hot; before nightfall the three grotesques under the slanting piece of twisted iron began to smell quite bad.

The former head of the Nobori-cho Neighborhood Association to which the Catholic priests belonged was an energetic man named Yoshida. He had boasted, when he was in charge of the district air-raid defenses, that fire might eat away all of Hiroshima but it would never come to Nobori-cho. The bomb blew down his house, and a joist pinned him by the legs, in full view of the Jesuit mission house across the way and of the people hurrying along the street. In their confusion as they hurried past, Mrs. Nakamura, with her children, and Father Kleinsorge, with Mr. Fukai on his back, hardly saw him; he was just part of the general blur of misery through which they moved. His cries for

help brought no response from them; there were so many people shouting for help that they could not hear him separately. They and all the others went along. Nobori-cho became absolutely deserted, and the fire swept through it. Mr. Yoshida saw the wooden mission house—the only erect building in the area—go up in a lick of flame, and the heat was terrific on his face. Then flames came along his side of the street and entered his house. In a paroxysm of terrified strength, he freed himself and ran down the alleys of Nobori-cho, hemmed in by the fire he had said would never come. He began at once to behave like an old man; two months later his hair was white.

As Dr. Fujii stood in the river up to his neck to avoid the heat of the fire, the wind blew stronger and stronger, and soon, even though the expanse of water was small, the waves grew so high that the people under the bridge could no longer keep their footing. Dr. Fujii went close to the shore, crouched down, and embraced a large stone with his usable arm. Later it became possible to wade along the very edge of the river, and Dr. Fujii and his two surviving nurses moved about two hundred yards upstream, to a sandspit near Asano Park. Many wounded were lying on the sand. Dr. Machii was there with his family; his daughter, who has been outdoors when the bomb burst, was badly burned on her hands and legs but fortunately not on her face. Although Dr. Fujii's shoulder was by now terribly painful, he examined the girl's burns curiously. Then he lay down. In spite of the misery all around, he was ashamed of his appearance, and he remarked to Dr. Machii that he looked like a beggar, dressed as he was in nothing but torn and bloody underwear. Later in the afternoon, when the fire began to subside, he decided to go to his parental house, in the suburb of Nagatsuka. He asked Dr. Machii to join him, but the Doctor answered that he and his family were going to spend the night on the spit, because of his daughter's injuries. Dr. Fujii, together with his nurses, walked first to Ushida, where, in the partially damaged house of some relatives, he found first-aid materials he had stored there. The two nurses bandaged him and he them. They went on. Now not many people. walked in the streets, but a great number sat and lay on the pavement, vomited, waited for death, and died. The number of corpses on the way to Nagatsuka was more and more puzzling. The Doctor wondered: Could a Molotov flower basket have done all this?

Dr. Fujii reached his family's house in the evening. It was five miles from the center of town, but its roof had fallen in and the windows were all broken.

All day, people poured into Asano Park. This private estate was far enough away from the explosion so that its bamboos, pines, laurel, and maples were still alive, and the green place invited refugees—partly because they believed that if the Americans came back, they would bomb only buildings, partly because the foliage seemed a center of coolness and life, and the estate's exquisitely precise rock gardens, with their quiet pools and arching bridges, were very Japanese, normal, secure; and also partly (according to some who were there) because of an irresistible, atavistic urge to hide under leaves. Mrs. Nakamura and her children were among the first to arrive, and they settled in the bamboo grove near the river. They all felt terribly thirsty, and they drank from the river. At once they were nauseated and began vomiting, and they retched the whole day. Others were also nauseated; they all thought (probably because of the strong odor of ionization, an "electric smell" given off by the bomb's fission) that they were sick from a gas the Americans had dropped. When Father Kleinsorge and the other priests came into the park, nodding to their friends as they passed, the Nakamuras were all sick and prostrate. A woman named Iwasaki, who lived in the neighborhood of the mission and who was sitting near the Nakamuras, got up and asked the priests if she should stay where she was or go with them. Father Kleinsorge said, "I hardly know where the

safest place is." She stayed there, and later in the day, though she had no visible wounds or burns, she died. The priests went farther along the river and settled down in some underbrush. Father LaSalle lay down and went right to sleep. The theological student, who was wearing slippers, had carried with him a bundle of clothes, in which he had packed two pairs of leather shoes. When he sat down with the others, he found that the bundle had broken open and a couple of shoes had fallen out and now he had only two lefts. He retraced his steps and found one right. When he rejoined the priests, he said, "It's funny, but things don't matter any more. Yesterday, my shoes were my most important possessions. Today, I don't care. One pair is enough."

Father Cieslik said, "I know. I started to bring my books along, and then I thought, 'This is no time for books.' "

When Mr. Tanimoto, with his basin still in his hand, reached the park, it was very crowded, and to distinguish the living from the dead was not easy, for most of the people lay still, with their eyes open. To Father Kleinsorge, an Occidental, the silence in the grove by the river, where hundreds of gruesomely wounded suffered together, was one of the most dreadful and awesome phenomena of his whole experience. The hurt ones were quiet; no one wept, much less screamed in pain; no one complained; none of the many who died did so noisily; not even the children cried; very few people even spoke. And when Father Kleinsorge gave water to some whose faces had been almost blotted out by flash burns, they took their share and then raised themselves a little and bowed to him, in thanks.

Mr. Tanimoto greeted the priests and then looked around for other friends. He saw Mrs. Matsumoto, wife of the director of the Methodist School, and asked her if she was thirsty. She was, so he went to one of the pools in the Asanos' rock gardens and got water for her in his basin. Then he decided to try to get back to his church. He went into Nobori-cho by the way the priests had taken as they escaped, but he did not get far; the fire along the streets was so fierce that he had to turn back. He walked to the riverbank and began to look for a boat in which he might carry some of the most severely injured across the river from Asano Park and away from the spreading fire. Soon he found a good-sized pleasure punt drawn up on the bank, but in and around it was an awful tableau—five dead men, nearly naked, badly burned, who must have expired more or less all at once, for they were in attitudes which suggested that they had been working together to push the boat down into the river. Mr. Tanimoto lifted them away from the boat, and as he did so, he experienced such horror at disturbing the dead—preventing them, he momentarily felt, from launching their craft and going on their ghostly way—that he said out loud, "Please forgive me for taking this boat. I must use it for others, who are alive." The punt was heavy, but he managed to slide it into the water. There were no oars, and all he could find for propulsion was a thick bamboo pole. He worked the boat upstream to the most crowded part of the park and began to ferry the wounded. He could pack ten or twelve into the boat for each crossing, but as the river was too deep in the center to pole his way across, he had to paddle with the bamboo, and consequently each trip took a very long time. He worked several hours that way.

Early in the afternoon, the fire swept into the woods of Asano Park. The first Mr. Tanimoto knew of it was when, returning in his boat, he saw that a great number of people had moved toward the riverside. On touching the bank, he went up to investigate, and when he saw the fire, he shouted, "All the young men who are not badly hurt come with me!" Father Kleinsorge moved Father Schiffer and Father LaSalle close to the edge of the river and asked people there to get them across if the fire came too near, and then joined Tanimoto's volunteers. Mr. Tanimoto sent some to look for buckets and basins and told others to beat the burning underbrush with their clothes; when utensils were at

hand, he formed a bucket chain from one of the pools in the rock gardens. The team fought the fire for more than two hours, and gradually defeated the flames. As Mr. Tanimoto's men worked, the frightened people in the park pressed closer and closer to the river, and finally the mob began to force some of the unfortunates who were on the very bank into the water. Among those driven into the river and drowned were Mrs. Matsumoto, of the Methodist School, and her daughter.

When Father Kleinsorge got back after fighting the fire, he found Father Schiffer still bleeding and terribly pale. Some Japanese stood around and stared at him, and Father Schiffer whispered, with a weak smile, "It is as if I were already dead." "Not yet," Father Kleinsorge said. He had brought Dr. Fujii's first-aid kit with him, and he had noticed Dr. Kanda in the crowd, so he sought him out and asked him if he would dress Father Schiffer's bad cuts. Dr. Kanda had seen his wife and daughter dead in the ruins of his hospital; he sat now with his head in his hands. "I can't do anything," he said. Father Kleinsorge bound more bandage around Father Schiffer's head, moved him to a steep place, and settled him so that his head was high, and soon the bleeding diminished.

The roar of approaching planes was heard about this time. Someone in the crowd near the Nakamura family shouted, "It's some Grummans coming to strafe us!" A baker named Nakashima stood up and commanded, "Everyone who is wearing anything white, take it off." Mrs. Nakamura took the blouses off her children, and opened her umbrella and made them get under it. A great number of people, even badly burned ones, crawled into bushes and stayed there until the hum, evidently of a reconnaissance or weather run, died away.

It began to rain. Mrs. Nakamura kept her children under the umbrella. The drops grew abnormally large, and someone shouted, "The Americans are dropping gasoline. They're going to set fire to us!" (This alarm stemmed from one of the theories being passed through the park as to why so much of Hiroshima had burned: it was that a single plane had sprayed gasoline on the city and then somehow set fire to it in one flashing moment.) But the drops were palpably water, and as they fell, the wind grew stronger and stronger, and suddenly—probably because of the tremendous convection set up by the blazing city—a whirlwind ripped through the park. Huge trees crashed down; small ones were uprooted and flew into the air. Higher, a wild array of flat things revolved in the twisting funnel—pieces of iron roofing, papers, doors, strips of matting. Father Kleinsorge put a piece of cloth over Father Schiffer's eyes, so that the feeble man would not think he was going crazy. The gale blew Mrs. Murata, the mission housekeeper, who was sitting close by the river, down the embankment at a shallow, rocky place, and she came out with her bare feet bloody. The vortex moved out onto the river, where it sucked up a waterspout and eventually spent itself.

After the storm, Mr. Tanimoto began ferrying people again, and Father Kleinsorge asked the theological student to go across and make his way out to the Jesuit Novitiate at Nagatsuka, about three miles from the center of town, and to request the priests there to come with help for Fathers Schiffer and LaSalle. The student got into Mr. Tanimoto's boat and went off with him. Father Kleinsorge asked Mrs. Nakamura if she would like to go out to Nagatsuka with the priests when they came. She said she had some luggage and her children were sick—they were still vomiting from time to time, and so, for that matter, was she—and therefore she feared she could not. He said he thought the fathers from the Novitiate could come back the next day with a pushcart to get her.

Late in the afternoon, when he went ashore for a while, Mr. Tanimoto, upon whose energy and initiative many had come to depend, heard people begging for food. He consulted Father Kleinsorge, and they decided to go back into town to get some rice from Mr. Tanimoto's Neighborhood As-

sociation shelter and from the mission shelter. Father Cieslik and two or three others went with them. At first, when they got among the rows of prostrate houses, they did not know where they were; the change was too sudden, from a busy city of two hundred and forty-five thousand that morning to a mere pattern of residue in the afternoon. The asphalt of the streets was still so soft and hot from the fires that walking was uncomfortable. They encountered only one person, a woman, who said to them as they passed, "My husband is in those ashes." At the mission, where Mr. Tanimoto left the party, Father Kleinsorge was dismayed to see the building razed. In the garden, on the way to the shelter, he noticed a pumpkin roasted on the vine. He and Father Cieslik tasted it and it was good. They were surprised at their hunger, and they ate quite a bit. They got out several bags of rice and gathered up several other cooked pumpkins and dug up some potatoes that were nicely baked under the ground, and started back. Mr. Tanimoto rejoined them on the way. One of the people with him had some cooking utensils. In the park, Mr. Tanimoto organized the lightly wounded women of his neighborhood to cook. Father Kleinsorge offered the Nakamura family some pumpkin, and they tried it, but they could not keep it on their stomachs. Altogether, the rice was enough to feed nearly a hundred people.

Just before dark, Mr. Tanimoto came across a twenty-year-old girl, Mrs. Kamai, the Tanimoto's next-door neighbor. She was crouching on the ground with the body of her infant daughter in her arms. The baby had evidently been dead all day. Mrs. Kamai jumped up when she saw Mr. Tanimoto and said, "Would you please try to locate my husband?"

Mr. Tanimoto knew that her husband had been inducted into the Army just the day before; he and Mrs. Tanimoto had entertained Mrs. Kamai in the afternoon, to make her forget. Kamai had reported to the Chugoku Regional Army Headquarters—near the ancient castle in the middle of town—where some four thousand troops were stationed. Judging by the many maimed soldiers Mr. Tanimoto had seen during the day, he surmised that the barracks had been badly damaged by whatever it was that had hit Hiroshima. He knew he hadn't a chance of finding Mrs. Kamai's husband, even if he searched, but he wanted to humor her. "I'll try," he said.

"You've got to find him," she said. "He loved our baby so much. I want him to see her once more."

III. Details Are Being Investigated

Early in the evening of the day the bomb exploded, a Japanese naval launch moved slowly up and down the seven rivers of Hiroshima. It stopped here and there to make an announcement—alongside the crowded sandspits, on which hundreds of crowded lay; at the bridges, on which others were crowded; and eventually, as twilight fell, opposite Asano Park. A young officer stood up in the launch and shouted through a megaphone, "Be patient! A naval hospital ship is coming to take care of you!" The sight of the shipshape launch against the background of the havoc across the river; the unruffled young man in his neat uniform; above all, the promise of medical help—the first word of possible succor anyone had heard in nearly twelve awful hours—cheered the people in the park tremendously. Mrs. Nakamura settled her family for the night with the assurance that a doctor would come and stop their retching. Mr. Tanimoto resumed ferrying the wounded across the river. Father Kleinsorge lay down and said the Lord's Prayer and a Hail Mary to himself, and fell right asleep; but no sooner had he dropped off than Mrs. Murata, the conscientious mission housekeeper, shook him and said, "Father Kleinsorge! Did you remember to repeat your evening prayers?" He answered rather grumpily, "Of course," and he tried to go back to sleep but could not. This, apparently, was just what Mrs. Murata wanted. She began to chat with the exhausted priest. One of the questions she

raised was when he thought the priests from the Novitiate, for whom he had sent a messenger in midafternoon, would arrive to evacuate Father Superior LaSalle and Father Schiffer.

The messenger Father Kleinsorge had sent—the theological student who had been living at the mission house—had arrived at the Novitiate, in the hills about three miles out, at half past four. The sixteen priests there had been doing rescue work in the outskirts; they had worried about their colleagues in the city but had not known how or where to look for them. Now they hastily made two litters out of poles and boards, and the student led half a dozen of them back into the devastated area. They worked their way along the Ota above the city; twice the heat of the fire forced them into the river. At Misasa Bridge, they encountered a long line of soldiers making a bizarre forced march away from the Chugoku Regional Army Headquarters in the center of the town. All were grotesquely burned, and they supported themselves with staves or leaned on one another. Sick, burned horses, hanging their heads, stood on the bridge. When the rescue party reached the park, it was after dark, and progress was made extremely difficult by the tangle of fallen trees of all sizes that had been knocked down by the whirlwind that afternoon. At last—not long after Mrs. Murata asked her question—they reached their friends, and gave them wine and strong tea.

The priests discussed how to get Father Schiffer and Father LaSalle out to the Novitiate. They were afraid that blundering through the park with them would jar them too much on the wooden litters, and that the wounded men would lose too much blood. Father Kleinsorge thought of Mr. Tanimoto and his boat, and called out to him on the river. When Mr. Tanimoto reached the bank, he said he would be glad to take the injured priests and their bearers upstream to where they could find a clear roadway. The rescuers put Father Schiffer onto one of the stretchers and lowered it into the boat, and two of them went aboard with it. Mr. Tanimoto, who still had no oars, poled the punt upstream.

About half an hour later, Mr. Tanimoto came back and excitedly asked the remaining priests to help him rescue two children he had seen standing up to their shoulders in the river. A group went out and picked them up—two young girls who had lost their family and were both badly burned. The priests stretched them on the ground next to Father Kleinsorge and then embarked Father LaSalle. Father Cieslik thought he could make it out to the Novitiate on foot, so he went aboard with the others. Father Kleinsorge was too feeble; he decided to wait in the park until the next day. He asked the men to come back with a hand-cart, so that they could take Mrs. Nakamura and her sick children to the Novitiate.

Mr. Tanimoto shoved off again. As the boatload of priests moved slowly upstream, they heard weak cries for help. A woman's voice stood out especially: "There are people here about to be drowned! Help us! The water is rising!" The sounds came from one of the sandspits, and those in the punt could see, in the reflected light of the still-burning fires, a number of wounded people lying at the edge of the river, already partly covered by the flooding tide. Mr. Tanimoto wanted to help them, but the priests were afraid that Father Schiffer would die if they didn't hurry, and they urged their ferryman along. He dropped them where he had put Father Schiffer down and then started back alone toward the sandspit.

The night was hot, and it seemed even hotter because of the fires against the sky, but the younger of the two girls Mr. Tanimoto and the priests had rescued complained to Father Kleinsorge that she was cold. He covered her with his jacket. She and her older sister had been in the salt water of the river for a couple of hours before being rescued. The younger one had huge, raw flash burns on her body; the salt

water must have been excruciatingly painful to her. She began to shiver heavily, and again said it was cold. Father Kleinsorge borrowed a blanket from someone nearby and wrapped her up, but she shook more and more, and said again, "I am so cold," and then she suddenly stopped shivering and was dead.

Mr. Tanimoto found about twenty men and women on the sandspit. He drove the boat onto the bank and urged them to get aboard. They did not move and he realized that they were too weak to lift themselves. He reached down and took a woman by the hands, but her skin slipped off in huge, glove-like pieces. He was so sickened by this that he had to sit down for a moment. Then he got out into the water and, though a small man, lifted several of the men and women, who were naked, into his boat. Their backs and breasts were clammy, and he remembered uneasily what the great burns he had seen during the day had been like: yellow at first, then red and swollen, with the skin sloughed off, and finally in the evening, suppurated and smelly. With the tide risen, his bamboo pole was now too short and he had to paddle most of the way across with it. On the other side, at a higher spit, he lifted the slimy living bodies out and carried them up the slope away from the tide. He had to keep consciously repeating to himself, "These are human beings." It took him three trips to get them all across the river. When he had finished, he decided he had to have a rest, and he went back to the park.

As Mr. Tanimoto stepped up the dark bank, he tripped over someone, and someone else said angrily, "Look out! That's my hand." Mr. Tanimoto, ashamed of hurting wounded people, embarrassed at being able to walk upright, suddenly thought of the naval hospital ship, which had not come (it never did), and he had for a moment a feeling of blind, murderous rage at the crew of the ship, and then at all doctors. Why didn't they come to help these people?

Dr. Fujii lay in dreadful pain throughout the night on the floor of his family's roofless house on the edge of the city. By the light of a lantern, he had examined himself and found: left clavicle fractured; multiple abrasions and lacerations of face and body, including deep cuts on the chin, back, and legs; extensive contusions on chest and trunk; a couple of ribs possibly fractured. Had he not been so badly hurt, he might have been at Asano Park, assisting the wounded.

By nightfall, ten thousand victims of the explosion had invaded the Red Cross Hospital, and Dr. Sasaki, worn out, was moving aimlessly and dully up and down the stinking corridors with wads of bandage and bottles of mercurochrome, still wearing the glasses he had taken from the wounded nurse, binding up the worst cuts as he came to them. Other doctors were putting compresses of saline solution on the worst burns. That was all they could do. After dark, they worked by the light of the city's fires and by candles the ten remaining nurses held for them. Dr. Sasaki had not looked outside the hospital all day; the scene inside was so terrible and so compelling that it had not occurred to him to ask any questions about what had happened beyond the windows and doors. Ceilings and partitions had fallen; plaster, dust, blood, and vomit were everywhere. Patients were dying by the hundreds, but there was nobody to carry away the corpses. Some of the hospital staff distributed biscuits and rice balls, but the charnel-house smell was so strong that few were hungry. By three o'clock the next morning, after nineteen straight hours of his gruesome work, Dr. Sasaki was incapable of dressing another wound. He and some other survivors of the hospital staff got straw mats and went outdoors—thousands of patients and hundreds of dead were in the yard and on the driveway—and hurried around behind the hospital and lay down in hiding to snatch some sleep. But within an hour wounded people had found them; a complaining circle formed around them: "Doctors! Help us! How can you sleep?" Dr. Sasaki got up again

and went back to work. Early in the day, he thought for the first time of his mother, at their country home in Mukaihara, thirty miles from town. He usually went home every night. He was afraid she would think he was dead.

Near the spot upriver to which Mr. Tanimoto had transported the priests, there sat a large case of rice cakes which a rescue party had evidently brought for the wounded lying thereabouts but hadn't distributed. Before evacuating the wounded priests, the others passed the cakes around and helped themselves. A few minutes later, a band of soldiers came up, and an officer, hearing the priests speaking a foreign language, drew his sword and hysterically asked who they were. One of the priests calmed him down and explained that they were Germans—allies. The officer apologized and said that there were reports going around that American parachutists had landed.

The priests decided that they should take Father Schiffer first. As they prepared to leave, Father Superior LaSalle said he felt awfully cold. One of the Jesuits gave up his coat, another his shirt; they were glad to wear less in the muggy night. The stretcher bearers started out. The theological student led the way and tried to warn the others of obstacles, but one of the priests got a foot tangled in some telephone wire and tripped and dropped his corner of the litter. Father Schiffer rolled off, lost consciousness, came to, and then vomited. The bearers picked him up and went on with him to the edge of the city, where they had arranged to meet a relay of other priests, left him with them, and turned back and got the Father Superior.

The wooden litter must have been terribly painful for Father LaSalle, in whose back scores of tiny particles of window glass were embedded. Near the edge of town, the group had to walk around an automobile burned and squatting on the narrow road, and the bearers on one side, unable to see their way in the darkness, fell into a deep ditch. Father LaSalle was thrown onto the ground and the litter broke in two. One priest went ahead to get a handcart from the Novitiate, but he soon found one beside an empty house and wheeled it back. The priests lifted Father LaSalle into the cart and pushed him over the bumpy road the rest of the way. The rector of the Novitiate, who had been a doctor before he entered the religious order, cleaned the wounds of the two priests and put them to bed between clean sheets, and they thanked God for the care they had received.

Thousands of people had nobody to help them. Miss Sasaki was one of them. Abandoned and helpless, under the crude lean-to in the courtyard of the tin factory, beside the woman who had lost a breast and the man whose burned face was scarcely a face any more, she suffered awfully that night from the pain in her broken leg. She did not sleep at all; neither did she converse with her sleepless companions.

In the park, Mrs. Murata kept Father Kleinsorge awake all night by talking to him. None of the Nakamura family were able to sleep, either; the children, in spite of being very sick, were interested in everything that happened. They were delighted when one of the city's gas-storage tanks went up in a tremendous burst of flame. Toshio, the boy, shouted to the others to look at the reflection in the river. Mr. Tanimoto, after his long run and his many hours of rescue work, dozed uneasily. When he awoke, in the first light of dawn, he looked across the river and saw that he had not carried the festered, limp bodies high enough on the sandspit the night before. The tide had risen above where he had put them; they had not had the strength to move; they must have drowned. He saw a number of bodies floating in the river.

Early that day, August 7th, the Japanese radio broadcast for the first time a succinct announcement that very few, if any, of the people most concerned with its content, the survivors in Hiroshima, happened to hear:

"Hiroshima suffered considerable damage as the result of an attack by a few B-29s. It is believed that a new type of bomb was used. The details are being investigated." Nor is it probable that any of the survivors happened to be tuned in on a short-wave rebroadcast of an extraordinary announcement by the President of the United States, which identified the new bomb as atomic: "That bomb had more power than twenty, thousand tons of TNT. It had more than two thousand times the blast power of the British Grand Slam, which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare." Those victims who were able to worry at all about what had happened thought of it and discussed it in more primitive, childish terms—gasoline sprinkled from an airplane, maybe, or some combustible gas, or a big cluster of incendiaries, or the work of parachutists; but, even if they had known the truth, most of them were too busy or too weary or too badly hurt to care that they were the objects of the first great experiment in the use of atomic power, which (as the voices on the short wave shouted) no country except the United States, with its industrial know-how, its willingness to throw two billion gold dollars into an important wartime gamble, could possibly have developed.

Mr. Tanimoto was still angry at doctors. He decided that he would personally bring one to Asano Park—by the scruff of the neck, if necessary. He crossed the river, went past the Shinto shrine where he had met his wife for a brief moment the day before, and walked to the East Parade Ground. Since this had long before been designated as an evacuation area, he thought he would find an aid station there. He did find one, operated by an Army medical unit, but he also saw that its doctors were hopelessly overburdened, with thousands of patients sprawled among corpses across the field in front of it. Nevertheless, he went up to one of the Army doctors and said, as reproachfully as he could, "Why have you not come to Asano Park? You are badly needed there."

Without even looking up from his work, the doctor said in a tired voice, "This is my station."

"But there are many dying on the riverbank over there."

"The first duty," the doctor said, "is to take care of the slightly wounded."

"Why—when there are many who are heavily wounded on the riverbank?"

The doctor moved to another patient. "In an emergency like this," he said, as if he were reciting from a manual, "the first task is to help as many as possible—to save as many lives as possible. There is no hope for the heavily wounded. They will die. We can't bother with them."

"That may be right from a medical standpoint—" Mr. Tanimoto began, but then he looked out across the field, where the many dead lay close and intimate with those who were still living, and he turned away without finishing his sentence, angry now with himself. He didn't know what to do; he had promised some of the dying people in the park that he would bring them medical aid. They might die feeling cheated. He saw a ration stand at one side of the field, and he went to it and begged some rice cakes and biscuits, and he took them back, in lieu of doctors, to the people in the park.

The morning, again, was hot. Father Kleinsorge went to fetch water for the wounded in a bottle and a teapot he had borrowed. He had heard that it was possible to get fresh tap water outside Asano Park. Going through the rock gardens, he had to climb over and crawl under the trunks of fallen pine trees; he found he was weak. There were many dead in the gardens. At a beautiful moon bridge, he passed a naked, living woman who seemed to have been burned from head to toe and was red all over. Near the entrance to the park, an Army doctor was working, but the only medicine he had was iodine, which he painted over cuts, bruises, slimy burns, everything—and by now everything that he painted had pus on it. Outside the gate of the park, Father Kleinsorge found a faucet that still worked—part of the plumb-

ing of a vanished house—and he filled his vessels and returned. When he had given the wounded the water, he made a second trip. This time, the woman by the bridge was dead. On his way back with the water, he got lost on a detour around a fallen tree, and as he looked for his way through the woods, he heard a voice ask from the underbrush, "Have you anything to drink?" He saw a uniform. Thinking there was just one soldier, he approached with the water. When he had penetrated the bushes, he saw there were about twenty men, and they were all in exactly the same nightmarish state: their faces were wholly burned, their eyesockets were hollow, the fluid from their melted eyes had run down their cheeks. (They must have had their faces upturned when the bomb went off; perhaps they were anti-aircraft personnel.) Their mouths were mere swollen, pus-covered wounds, which they could not bear to stretch enough to admit the spout of the teapot. So Father Kleinsorge got a large piece of grass and drew out the stem so as to make a straw, and gave them all water to drink that way. One of them said, "I can't see anything." Father Kleinsorge answered, as cheerfully as he could, "There's a doctor at the entrance to the park. He's busy now, but he'll come soon and fix your eyes, I hope."

Since that day, Father Kleinsorge has thought back to how queasy he had once been at the sight of pain, how someone else's cut finger used to make him turn faint. Yet there in the park he was so benumbed that immediately after leaving this horrible sight he stopped on a path by one of the pools and discussed with a lightly wounded man whether it would be safe to eat the fat, two-foot carp that floated dead on the surface of the water. They decided, after some consideration, that it would be unwise.

Father Kleinsorge filled the containers a third time and went back to the riverbank. There, amid the dead and dying, he saw a young woman with a needle and thread mending her kimono, which had been slightly torn. Father Kleinsorge joshed her. "My, but you're a dandy!" he said. She laughed.

He felt tired and lay down. He began to talk with two engaging children whose acquaintance he had made the afternoon before. He learned that their name was Kataoka; the girl was thirteen, the boy five. The girl had been just about to set out for a barbershop when the bomb fell. As the family started for Asano Park, their mother decided to turn back for some food and extra clothing; they became separated from her in the crowd of fleeing people, and they had not seen her since. Occasionally they stopped suddenly in their perfectly cheerful playing and began to cry for their mother.

It was difficult for all the children in the park to sustain the sense of tragedy. Toshio Nakamura got quite excited when he saw his friend Seichi Sato riding up the river in a boat with his family, and he ran to the bank and waved and shouted, "Sato! Sato!"

The boy turned his head and shouted, "Who's that?"

"Nakamura."

"Hello, Toshio!"

"Are you all safe?"

"Yes. What about you?"

"Yes, we're all right. My sisters are vomiting, but I'm fine."

Father Kleinsorge began to be thirsty in the dreadful heat, and he did not feel strong enough to go for water again. A little before noon, he saw a Japanese woman handing something out. Soon she came to him and said in a kindly voice, "These are tea leaves. Chew them, young man, and you won't feel thirsty." The woman's gentleness made Father Kleinsorge suddenly want to cry. For weeks, he had been feeling oppressed by the hatred of foreigners that the Japanese seemed increasingly to show, and he had been uneasy even with his Japanese friends. This stranger's gesture made him a little hysterical.

Around noon, the priests arrived from the Novitiate with the handcart. They had been to the site of the mission house in the city and had retrieved some suitcases that had been stored in the air-raid shelter and had also picked up the remains of melted holy vessels in the ashes of the chapel. They now

packed Father Kleinsorge's papier-mâché suitcase and the things belonging to Mrs. Murata and the Nakamuras into the cart, put the two Nakamura girls aboard, and prepared to start out. Then one of the Jesuits who had a practical turn of mind remembered that they had been notified some time before that if they suffered property damage at the hands of the enemy, they could enter a claim for compensation with the prefectural police. The holy men discussed this matter there in the park, with the wounded as silent as the dead around them, and decided that Father Kleinsorge, as a former resident of the destroyed mission, was the one to enter the claim. So, as the others went off with the handcart, Father Kleinsorge said goodbye to the Kataoka children and trudged to a police station. Fresh, clean-uniformed policemen from another town were in charge, and a crowd of dirty and disarrayed citizens crowded around them, mostly asking after lost relatives. Father Kleinsorge filled out a claim form and started walking through the center of the town on his way to Nagatsuka. It was then that he first realized the extent of the damage; he passed block after block of ruins, and even after all he had seen in the park, his breath was taken away. By the time he reached the Novitiate, he was sick with exhaustion. The last thing he did as he fell into bed was request that someone go back for the motherless Kataoka children.

Altogether, Miss Sasaki was left two days and two nights under the piece of propped-up roofing with her crushed leg and her two unpleasant comrades. Her only diversion was when men came to the factory air-raid shelters, which she could see from under one corner of her shelter, and hauled corpses up out of them with ropes. Her leg became discolored, swollen, and putrid. All that time, she went without food and water. On the third day, August 8th, some friends who supposed she was dead came to look for her body and found her. They told her that her mother, father, and baby brother, who at the time of the explosion were in the Tamura Pediatric Hospital, where the baby was a patient, had all been given up as certainly dead, since the hospital was totally destroyed. Her friends then left her to think that piece of news over. Later, some men picked her up by the arms and legs and carried her quite a distance to a truck. For about an hour, the truck moved over a bumpy road, and Miss Sasaki, who had become convinced that she was dulled to pain, discovered that she was not. The men lifted her out at a relief station in the section of Inokuchi, where two Army doctors looked at her. The moment one of them touched her wound, she fainted. She came to in time to hear them discuss whether or not to cut off her leg; one said there was gas gangrene in the lips of the wound and predicted she would die unless they ampuated, and the other said that was too bad, because they had no equipment with which to do the job. She fainted again. When she recovered consciousness, she was being carried somewhere on a stretcher. She was put aboard a launch, which went to the nearby island of Ninoshima, and she was taken to a military hospital there. Another doctor examined her and said that she did not have gas gangrene, though she did have a fairly ugly compound fracture. He said quite coldly that he was sorry, but this was a hospital for operative surgical cases only, and because she had no gangrene, she would have to return to Hiroshima that night. But then the doctor took her temperature, and what he saw on the thermometer made him decide to let her stay.

That day, August 8th, Father Cieslik went into the city to look for Mr. Fukai, the Japanese secretary of the diocese, who had ridden unwillingly out of the flaming city on Father Kleinsorge's back and then had run back crazily into it. Father Cieslik started hunting in the neighborhood of the Sakai Bridge, where the Jesuits had last seen Mr. Fukai; he went to the East Parade Ground, the evacuation area to which the secretary might have gone, and looked for him among

the wounded and dead there; he went to the prefectural police and made inquiries. He could not find any trace of the man. Back at the Novitiate that evening, the theological student, who had been rooming with Mr. Fukai at the mission house, told the priests that the secretary had remarked to him, during an air-raid alarm one day not long before the bombing, "Japan is dying. If there is a real air raid here in Hiroshima, I want to die with our country." The priests concluded that Mr. Fukai had run back to immolate himself in the flames. They never saw him again.

At the Red Cross Hospital, Dr. Sasaki worked for three straight days with only one hour's sleep. On the second day, he began to sew up the worst cuts, and right through the following night and all the next day he stitched. Many of the wounds were festered. Fortunately, someone had found intact a supply of *narucopon*, a Japanese sedative, and he gave it to many who were in pain. Word went around among the staff that there must have been something peculiar about the great bomb, because on the second day the vice-chief of the hospital went down in the basement to the vault where the X-ray plates were stored and found the whole stock exposed as they lay. That day, a fresh doctor and ten nurses came in from the city of Yamaguchi with extra bandages and antiseptics, and the third day another physician and a dozen more nurses arrived from Matsue—yet there were still only eight doctors for ten thousand patients. In the afternoon of the third day, exhausted from his foul tailoring, Dr. Sasaki became obsessed with the idea that his mother thought he was dead. He got permission to go to Mukaihara. He walked out to the first suburbs, beyond which the electric train service was still functioning, and reached home late in the evening. His mother said she had known he was all right all along; a wounded nurse had stopped by to tell her. He went to bed and slept for seventeen hours.

Before dawn on August 8th, someone entered the room at the Novitiate where Father Kleinsorge was in bed, reached up to the hanging light bulb, and switched it on. The sudden flood of light, pouring in on Father Kleinsorge's half sleep, brought him leaping out of bed, braced for a new concussion. When he realized what had happened, he laughed confusedly and went back to bed. He stayed there all day.

On August 9th, Father Kleinsorge was still tired. The rector looked at his cuts and said they were not even worth dressing, and if Father Kleinsorge kept them clean, they would heal in three or four days. Father Kleinsorge felt uneasy; he could not yet comprehend what he had been through; as if he were guilty of something awful, he felt he had to go back to the scene of the violence he had experienced. He got up out of bed and walked into the city. He scratched for a while in the ruins of the mission house, but he found nothing. He went to the sites of a couple of schools and asked after people he knew. He looked for some of the city's Japanese Catholics, but he found only fallen houses. He walked back to the Novitiate, stupefied and without any new understanding.

At two minutes after eleven o'clock on the morning of August 9th, the second atomic bomb was dropped, on Nagasaki. It was several days before the survivors of Hiroshima knew they had company, because the Japanese radio and newspapers were being extremely cautious on the subject of the strange weapon.

On August 9th, Mr. Tanimoto was still working in the park. He went to the suburb of Ushida, where his wife was staying with friends, and got a tent which he had stored there before the bombing. He now took it to the park and set it up as a shelter for some of the wounded who could not move or be moved. Whatever he did in the park, he felt he was being watched by the twenty-year-old girl, Mrs. Kamai, his former

neighbor, whom he had seen on the day the bomb exploded, with her dead baby daughter in her arms. She kept the small corpse in her arms for four days, even though it began smelling bad on the second day. Once, Mr. Tanimoto sat with her for a while, and she told him that the bomb had buried her under their house with the baby strapped to her back, and that when she had dug herself free, she had discovered that the baby was choking, its mouth full of dirt. With her little finger, she had carefully cleaned out the infant's mouth, and for a time the child had breathed normally and seemed all right; then suddenly it had died. Mrs. Kamai also talked about what a fine man her husband was, and again urged Mr. Tanimoto to search for him. Since Mr. Tanimoto had been all through the city the first day and had seen terribly burned soldiers from Kamai's post, the Chugoku Regional Army Headquarters, everywhere, he knew it would be impossible to find Kamai, even if he were living, but of course he didn't tell her that. Every time she saw Mr. Tanimoto, she asked whether he had found her husband. Once, he tried to suggest that perhaps it was time to cremate the baby, but Mrs. Kamai only held it tighter. He began to keep away from her, but whenever he looked at her, she was staring at him and her eyes asked the same question. He tried to escape her glance by keeping his back turned to her as much as possible.

The Jesuits took about fifty refugees into the exquisite chapel of the Novitiate. The rector gave them what medical care he could—mostly just the cleaning away of pus. Each of the Nakamuras was provided with a blanket and a mosquito net. Mrs. Nakamura and her younger daughter had no appetite and ate nothing; her son and other daughter ate, and lost, each meal they were offered. On August 10th, a friend, Mrs. Osaki, came to see them and told them that her son Hideo had been burned alive in the factory where he worked. This Hideo had been a kind of hero to Toshio, who had often gone to the plant to watch him run his machine. That night, Toshio woke up screaming. He had dreamed that he had seen Mrs. Osaki coming out of an opening in the ground with her family, and then he saw Hideo at his machine, a big one with a revolving belt, and he himself was standing beside Hideo, and for some reason this was terrifying.

On August 10th, Father Kleinsorge, having heard from someone that Dr. Fujii had been injured and that he had eventually gone to the summer house of a friend of his named Okuma, in the village of Fukawa, asked Father Cieslik if he would go and see how Dr. Fujii was. Father Cieslik went to Misasa station, outside Hiroshima, rode for twenty minutes on an electric train, and then walked for an hour and a half in a terribly hot sun to Mr. Okuma's house, which was beside the Ota River at the foot of a mountain. He found Dr. Fujii sitting in a chair in a kimono, applying compresses to his broken collarbone. The Doctor told Father Cieslik about having lost his glasses and said that his eyes bothered him. He showed the priest huge blue and green stripes where beams had bruised him. He offered the Jesuit first a cigarette and then whiskey, though it was only eleven in the morning. Father Cieslik thought it would please Dr. Fujii if he took a little, so he said yes. A servant brought some Suntory whiskey, and the Jesuit, the Doctor, and the host had a very pleasant chat. Mr. Okuma had lived in Hawaii, and he told some things about Americans. Dr. Fujii talked a bit about the disaster. He said that Mr. Okuma and a nurse had gone into the ruins of his hospital and brought back a small safe which he had moved into his air-raid shelter. This contained some surgical instruments, and Dr. Fujii gave Father Cieslik a few pairs of scissors and tweezers for the rector at the Novitiate. Father Cieslik was bursting with some inside dope he had, but he waited until the conversation turned naturally to the mystery of the bomb. Then he said he knew what kind of bomb it was; he had the secret on the best

authority—that of a Japanese newspaperman who had dropped in at the Novitiate. The bomb was not a bomb at all; it was a kind of fine magnesium powder sprayed over the whole city by a single plane, and it exploded when it came into contact with the live wires of the city power system. "That means," said Dr. Fujii, perfectly satisfied, since after all the information came from a newspaperman, "that it can only be dropped on big cities and only in the daytime, when the tram lines and so forth are in operation."

After five days of ministering to the wounded in the park, Mr. Tanimoto returned, on August 11th, to his parsonage and dug around in the ruins. He retrieved some diaries and church records that had been kept in books and were only charred around the edges, as well as some cooking utensils and pottery. While he was at work, a Miss Tanaka came and said that her father had been asking for him. Mr. Tanimoto had reason to hate her father, the retired shipping-company official who, though he made a great show of his charity, was notoriously selfish and cruel, and who, just a few days before the bombing, had said openly to several people that Mr. Tanimoto was a spy for the Americans. Several times he had derided Christianity and called it un-Japanese. At the moment of the bombing, Mr. Tanaka had been walking in the street in front of the city's radio station. He received serious flash burns, but he was able to walk home. He took refuge in his Neighborhood Association shelter and from there tried hard to get medical aid. He expected all the doctors of Hiroshima to come to him, because he was so rich and so famous for giving his money away. When none of them came, he angrily set out to look for them; leaning on his daughter's arm, he walked from private hospital to private hospital, but all were in ruins, and he went back and lay down in the shelter again. Now he was very weak and knew he was going to die. He was willing to be comforted by any religion.

Mr. Tanimoto went to help him. He descended into the tomblike shelter and, when his eyes were adjusted to the darkness, saw Mr. Tanaka, his face and arms puffed up and covered with pus and blood, and his eyes swollen shut. The old man smelled very bad, and he moaned constantly. He seemed to recognize Mr. Tanimoto's voice. Standing at the shelter stairway to get light, Mr. Tanimoto read loudly from a Japanese-language pocket Bible: "For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest the children of men away as with a flood; they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by Thine anger and by Thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. . . ."

Mr. Tanaka died as Mr. Tanimoto read the psalm.

On August 11th, word came to the Ninoshima Military Hospital that a large number of military casualties from the Chugoku Regional Army Headquarters were to arrive on the island that day, and it was deemed necessary to evacuate all civilian patients. Miss Sasaki, still running an alarmingly high fever, was put on a large ship. She lay out on deck, with a pillow under her leg. There were awnings over the deck, but the vessel's course put her in the sunlight. She felt as if she were under a magnifying glass in the sun. Pus oozed out of her wound, and soon the whole pillow was covered with it. She was taken ashore at Hatsukaichi, a town several miles to the southwest of Hiroshima, and put in the Goddess of Mercy Primary School, which had been turned into a hospital. She lay there for several days before a specialist on fractures came from Kobe. By then her leg was red and swollen up to her hip. The doc-

tor decided he could not set the breaks. He made an incision and put in a rubber pipe to drain off the putrescence.

At the Novitiate, the motherless Kataoka children were inconsolable. Father Cieslik worked hard to keep them distracted. He put riddles to them. He asked, "What is the cleverest animal in the world?," and after the thirteen-year-old girl had guessed the ape, the elephant, the horse, he said, "No, it must be the hippopotamus," because in Japanese that animal is *kaba*, the reverse of *baka*, stupid. He told Bible stories, beginning, in the order of things, with the Creation. He showed them a scrapbook of snapshots taken in Europe. Nevertheless, they cried most of the time for their mother.

Several days later, Father Cieslik started hunting for the children's family. First, he learned through the police that an uncle had been to the authorities in Kure, a city not far away, to inquire for the children. After that, he heard that an older brother had been trying to trace them through the post office in Ujina, a suburb of Hiroshima. Still later, he heard that the mother was alive and was on Goto Island, off Nagasaki. And at last, by keeping a check on the Ujina post office, he got in touch with the brother and returned the children to their mother.

About a week after the bomb dropped, a vague, incomprehensible rumor reached Hiroshima—that the city had been destroyed by the energy released when atoms were somehow split in two. The weapon was referred to in this word-of-mouth report as *genshi bakudan*—the root characters of which can be translated as "original child bomb." No one understood the idea or put any more credence in it than in the powdered magnesium and such things. Newspapers were being brought in from other cities, but they were still confining themselves to extremely general statements, such at Domei's assertion on August 12th: "There is nothing to do but admit the tremendous power of this inhuman bomb." Already, Japanese physicists had entered the city with Lauritsen electroscopes and Neher electrometers; they understood the idea all too well.

On August 12th, the Nakamuras, all of them still rather sick, went to the nearby town of Kabe and moved in with Mrs. Nakamura's sister-in-law. The next day, Mrs. Nakamura, although she was too ill to walk much, returned to Hiroshima alone, by electric car to the outskirts, by foot from there. All week, at the Novitiate, she had worried about her mother, brother, and older sister, who had lived in the part of town called Fukuro, and besides, she felt drawn by some fascination, just as Father Kleinsorge had been. She discovered that her family were all dead. She went back to Kabe so amazed and depressed by what she had seen and learned in the city that she could not speak that evening.

A comparative orderliness, at least, began to be established at the Red Cross Hospital. Dr. Sasaki, back from his rest, undertook to classify his patients (who were still scattered everywhere, even on the stairways). The staff gradually swept up the debris. Best of all, the nurses and attendants started to remove the corpses. Disposal of the dead, by decent cremation and enshrinement, is a greater moral responsibility to the Japanese than adequate care of the living. Relatives identified most of the first day's dead in and around the hospital. Beginning on the second day, whenever a patient appeared to be moribund, a piece of paper with his name on it was fastened to his clothing. The corpse detail carried the bodies to a clearing outside, placed them on pyres of wood from ruined houses, burned them, put some of the ashes in envelopes intended for exposed X-ray plates, marked the envelopes with the names of the deceased, and piled them, neatly and respectfully, in stacks in the main office. In a few days, the envelopes filled one whole side of the impromptu shrine.

In Kabe, on the morning of August 15th, ten-year-old Toshio Nakamura heard an airplane overhead. He ran outdoors and identified it with a professional eye as a B-29. "There goes Mr. B!" he shouted.

One of his relatives called out to him, "Haven't you had enough of Mr. B?"

The question had a kind of symbolism. At almost that very moment, the dull, dispirited voice of Hirohito, the Emperor Tenno, was speaking for the first time in history over the radio: "After pondering deeply the general trends of the world and the actual conditions obtaining in Our Empire today, We have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure. . . ."

Mrs. Nakamura had gone to the city again, to dig up some rice she had buried in her Neighborhood Association air-raid shelter. She got it and started back for Kabe. On the electric car, quite by chance, she ran into her younger sister, who had not been in Hiroshima the day of the bombing. "Have you heard the news?" her sister asked.

"What news?"

"The war is over."

"Don't say such a foolish thing, sister."

"But I heard it over the radio myself." And then, in a whisper, "It was the Emperor's voice."

"Oh," Mrs. Nakamura said (she needed nothing more to make her give up thinking, in spite of the atomic bomb, that Japan still had a chance to win the war), "in that case . . ."

Some time later, in a letter to an American, Mr. Tanimoto described the events of that morning. "At the time of the Post-War, the marvelous thing in our history happened. Our Emperor broadcasted his own voice through radio directly to us, common people of Japan. Aug. 15th we were told that some news of great importance could be heard & all of us should hear it. So I went to Hiroshima railway station. There set a loudspeaker in the ruins of the station. Many civilians, all of them were in boundage, some being helped by shoulder of their daughters, some sustaining their injured feet by sticks, they listened to the broadcast and when they came to realize the fact that it was the Emperor, they cried with full tears in their eyes, 'What a wonderful blessing it is that Tenno himself call on us and we can hear his own voice in person. We are thoroughly satisfied in such a great sacrifice.' When they came to know the war was ended—that is, Japan was defeated, they, of course, were deeply disappointed, but followed after their Emperor's commandment in calm spirit, making whole-hearted sacrifice for the everlasting peace of the world—and Japan started her new way."

IV. Panic Grass and Feverfew

On August 18th, twelve days after the bomb burst, Father Kleinsorge set out on foot for Hiroshima from the Novitiate with his papier-mâché suitcase in his hand. He had begun to think that this bag, in which he kept his valuables, had a talismanic quality, because of the way he had found it after the explosion, standing handle-side up in the doorway of his room, while the desk under which he had previously hidden it was in splinters all over the floor. Now he was using it to carry the yen belonging to the Society of Jesus to the Hiroshima branch of the Yokohama Specie Bank, already reopened in its half-ruined building. On the whole, he felt quite well that morning. It is true that the minor cuts he had received had not healed in three or four days, as the rector of the Novitiate, who had examined them, had positively promised they would, but Father Kleinsorge had rested well for a week and considered that he was again ready for hard work. By now he was accustomed to the terrible scene through which he walked on his way into the city: the large rice field near the Novitiate, streaked with brown; the houses on the outskirts of the city, standing but decrepit, with broken windows and dishevelled tiles; and then, quite suddenly, the beginning of the four square miles of reddish-brown scar, where nearly everything had been buffeted

down and burned; range on range of collapsed city blocks, with here and there a crude sign erected on a pile of ashes and tiles ("Sister, where are you?" or "All safe and we live at Toyosaka"); naked trees and canted telephone poles; the few standing, gutted buildings only accentuating the horizontality of everything else (the Museum of Science and Industry, with its dome stripped to its steel frame, as if for an autopsy; the modern Chamber of Commerce Building, its tower as cold, rigid, and unassailable after the blow as before; the row of dowdy banks, huge, low-lying, camouflaged city hall, caricaturing a shaken economic system); and in the streets a macabre traffic —hundreds of crumpled bicycles, shells of streetcars and automobiles, all halted in midmotion. The whole way, Father Kleinsorge was oppressed by the thought that all the damage he saw had been done in one instant by one bomb. By the time he reached the center of town, the day had become very hot. He walked to the Yokohama Bank, which was doing business in a temporary wooden stall on the ground floor of its building, deposited the money, went by the mission compound just to have another look at the wreckage, and then started back to the Novitiate. About halfway there, he began to have peculiar sensations. The more or less magical suitcase, now empty, suddenly seemed terribly heavy. His knees grew weak. He felt excruciatingly tired. With a considerable expenditure of spirit, he managed to reach the Novitiate. He did not think his weakness was worth mentioning to the other Jesuits. But a couple of days later, while attempting to say Mass, he had an onset of faintness and even after three attempts was unable to go through with the service, and the next morning the rector, who had examined Father Kleinsorge's apparently negligible but unhealed cuts daily, asked in surprise, "What have you done to your wounds?" They had suddenly opened wider and were swollen and inflamed.

As she dressed on the morning of August 20th, in the home of her sister-in-law in Kabe, not far from Nagatsuka, Mrs. Nakamura, who had suffered no cuts or burns at all, though she had been rather nauseated all through the week she and her children had spent as guests of Father Kleinsorge and the other Catholics at the Novitiate, began fixing her hair and noticed, after one stroke, that her comb carried with it a whole handful of hair; the second time, the same thing happened, so she stopped combing at once. But in the next three or four days, her hair kept falling out of its own accord, until she was quite bald. She began living indoors, practically in hiding. On August 26th, both she and her younger daughter, Myeko, woke up feeling extremely weak and tired, and they stayed on their bedrolls. Her son and other daughter, who had shared every experience with her during and after the bombing, felt fine.

At about the same time—he lost track of the days, so hard was he working to set up a temporary place of worship in a private house he had rented in the outskirts—Mr. Tanimoto felt suddenly ill with a general malaise, weariness, and feverishness, and he, too, took to his bedroll on the floor of the half-wrecked house of a friend in the suburb of Ushida.

These four did not realize it, but they were coming down with the strange, capricious disease which came later to be known as radiation sickness.

Miss Sasaki lay in steady pain in the Goddess of Mercy Primary School, at Hatsukaichi, the fourth station to the southwest of Hiroshima on the electric train. An internal infection still prevented the proper setting of the compound fracture of her lower left leg. A young man who was in the same hospital and who seemed to have grown fond of her in spite of her unremitting preoccupation with her suffering, or else just pitied her because of it, lent her a Japanese translation of de Maupassant, and she tried to read the stories, but she could concentrate for only four or five minutes at a time.

The hospitals and aid stations around Hiroshima were so crowded in the first weeks after the bombing, and their staffs were so

variable, depending on their health and on the unpredictable arrival of outside help, that patients had to be constantly shifted from place to place. Miss Sasaki, who had already been moved three times, twice by ship, was taken at the end of August to an engineering school, also at Hatsukaichi. Because her leg did not improve but swelled more and more, the doctors at the school bound it with crude splints and took her by car, on September 9th, to the Red Cross Hospital in Hiroshima. This was the first chance she had had to look at the ruins of Hiroshima; the last time she had been carried through the city's streets, she had been hovering on the edge of unconsciousness. Even though the wreckage had been described to her, and though she was still in pain, the sight horrified and amazed her, and there was something she noticed about it that particularly gave her the creeps. Over everything—up through the wreckage of the city, in gutters, along the riverbanks, tangled among tiles and tin roofing, climbing on charred tree trunks—with a blanket of fresh, vivid, lush, optimistic green; the verdancy rose even from the foundations of ruined houses. Weeds already hid the ashes, and wild flowers were in bloom among the city's bones. The bomb had not only left the underground organs of plants intact; it had stimulated them. Everywhere were bluets and Spanish bayonets, goosefoot, morning glories and day lilies, the hairy-fruited bean, purslane and clotbur and sesame and panic grass and feverfew. Especially in a circle at the center, sickle senna grew in extraordinary regeneration, not only standing among the charred remnants of the same plant but pushing up in new places, among bricks and through cracks in the asphalt. It actually seemed as if a load of sickle-senna seed had been dropped along with the bomb.

At the Red Cross Hospital, Miss Sasaki was put under the care of Dr. Sasaki. Now, a month after the explosion, something like order had been reëstablished in the hospital; which is to say that the patients who still lay in the corridors at least had mats to sleep on and that the supply of medicines, which had given out in the first few days, had been replaced, though inadequately, by contributions from other cities. Dr. Sasaki, who had had one seventeen-hour sleep at his home on the third night, had ever since then rested only about six hours a night, on a mat at the hospital; he had lost twenty pounds from his very small body; he still wore the borrowed glasses.

Since Miss Sasaki was a woman and was so sick (and perhaps, he afterward admitted, just a little bit because she was named Sasaki), Dr. Sasaki put her on a mat in a semi-private room, which at that time had only eight people in it. He questioned her and put down on her record card, in the correct, scrunched-up German in which he wrote all his records: "*Mittelgrosse Patientin in gutem Ernährungszustand. Faktur am linken Unterschenkelknochen mit Wunde; Anschwellung in der linken Unterschenkelgegend. Haut und sichtbare Schleimhäute mässig durchblutet und kein Oedema,*" noting that she was a medium-sized female patient in good general health; that she had a compound fracture of the left tibia, with swelling of the left lower leg; that her skin and visible mucous membranes were heavily spotted with *petechiae,* which are hemorrhages about the size of grains of rice, or even as big as soybeans; and, in addition, that her head, eyes, throat, lungs, and heart were apparently normal; and that she had a fever. He wanted to set her fracture and put her leg in a cast, but he had run out of plaster of Paris long since, so he just stretched her out on a mat and prescribed aspirin for her fever, and glucose intravenously and diastase orally for her undernourishment (which he had not entered on her record because everyone suffered from it). She exhibited only one of the queer symptoms so many of his patients were just then beginning to show—the spot hemorrhages.

Dr. Fujii was still pursued by bad luck, which still was connected with rivers. Now he was living in the summer house of Mr. Okuma, in Fukawa. This house clung to

the steep banks of the Ota River. Here his injuries seemed to make good progress, and he even began to treat refugees who came to him from the neighborhood, using medical supplies he had retrieved from a cache in the suburbs. He noticed in some of his patients a curious syndrome of symptoms that cropped out in the third and fourth weeks, but he was not able to do much more than swathe cuts and burns. Early in September, it began to rain, steadily and heavily. The river rose. On September 17th, there came a cloudburst and then a typhoon, and the water crept higher and higher up the bank. Mr. Okuma and Dr. Fujii became alarmed and scrambled up the mountain to a peasant's house. (Down in Hiroshima, the flood took up where the bomb had left off—swept away bridges that had survived the blast, washed out streets, undermined foundations of buildings that still stood—and ten miles to the west, the Ono Army Hospital, where a team of experts from Kyoto Imperial University was studying the delayed affliction of the patients, suddenly slid down a beautiful, pine-dark mountainside into the Inland Sea and drowned most of the investigators and their mysteriously diseased patients alike.) After the storm, Dr. Fujii and Mr. Okuma went down to the river and found that the Okuma house had been washed altogether away.

Because so many people were suddenly feeling sick nearly a month after the atomic bomb was dropped, an unpleasant rumor began to move around, and eventually it made its way to the house in Kabe where Mrs. Nakamura lay bald and ill. It was that the atomic bomb had deposited some sort of poison on Hiroshima which would give off deadly emanations for seven years; nobody could go there all that time. This especially upset Mrs. Nakamura, who remembered that in a moment of confusion on the morning of the explosion she had literally sunk her entire means of livelihood, her Sankoku sewing machine, in the small cement water tank in front of what was left of her house; now no one would be able to go and fish it out. Up to this time, Mrs. Nakamura and her relatives had been quite resigned and passive about the moral issue of the atomic bomb, but this rumor suddenly aroused them to more hatred and resentment of America than they had felt all through the war.

Japanese physicists, who knew a great deal about atomic fission (one of them owned a cyclotron), worried about lingering radiation at Hiroshima, and in mid-August, not many days after President Truman's disclosure of the type of bomb that had been dropped, they entered the city to make investigations. The first thing they did was roughly to determine a center by observing the side on which telephone poles all around the heart of the town were scorched; they settled on the torii gateway to the Gokoku Shrine, right next to the parade ground of the Chugoku Regional Army Headquarters. From there, they worked north and south with Lauritsen electroscopes, which are sensitive to both beta particles and gamma rays. These indicated that the highest intensity of radioactivity, near the torii, was 4.2 times the average natural "leak" of ultra-short waves for the earth of that area. The scientists noticed that the flash of the bomb had discolored concrete to a light reddish tint, had scaled off the surface of granite, and had scorched certain other types of building material, and that consequently the bomb had, in some places, left prints of the shadows that had been cast by its light. The experts found, for instance, a permanent shadow thrown on the roof of the Chamber of Commerce Building (220 yards from the rough center) by the structure's rectangular tower; several others in the lookout post on top of the Hypothec Bank (2,050 yards); another in the tower of the Chugoku Electric Supply Building (800 yards); another projected by the handle of a gas pump (2,630 yards); and several on granite tombstones in the Gokoku Shrine (385 yards). By triangulating these and other such shadows with the objects that formed them, the scientists determined that the exact center was a spot a hundred and fifty yards south of

the torii and a few yards southeast of the pile of ruins that had once been the Shima Hospital. (A few vague human silhouettes were found, and these gave rise to stories that eventually included fancy and precise details. One story told how a painter on a ladder was monumentalized in a kind of bas-relief on the stone façade of a bank building on which he was at work, in the act of dipping his brush into his paint can; another, how a man and his cart on the bridge near the Museum of Science and Industry, almost under the center of the explosion, were cast down in an embossed shadow which made it clear that the man was about to whip his horse.) Starting east and west from the actual center, the scientists, in early September, made new measurements, and the highest radiation they found this time was 3.9 times the natural "leak." Since radiation of at least a thousand times the natural "leak" would be required to cause serious effects on the human body, the scientists announced that people could enter Hiroshima without any peril at all.

As soon as this reassurance reached the household in which Mrs. Nakamura was concealing herself—or, at any rate, within a short time, after her hair had started growing back again—her whole family relaxed their extreme hatred of America, and Mrs. Nakamura sent her brother-in-law to look for the sewing machine. It was still submerged in the water tank, and when he brought it home, she saw, to her dismay, that it was all rusted and useless.

By the end of the first week in September, Father Kleinsorge was in bed at the Novitiate with a fever of 102.2, and since he seemed to be getting worse, his colleagues decided to send him to the Catholic International Hospital in Tokyo. Father Cieslik and the rector took him as far as Kobe and a Jesuit from that city took him the rest of the way, with a message from a Kobe doctor to the Mother Superior of the International Hospital: "Think twice before you give this man blood transfusions, because with atomic-bomb patients we aren't at all sure that if you stick needles in them, they'll stop bleeding."

When Father Kleinsorge arrived at the hospital, he was terribly pale and very shaky. He complained that the bomb had upset his digestion and given him abdominal pains. His white blood count was three thousand (five to seven thousand is normal), he was seriously anemic, and his temperature was 104. A doctor who did not know much about these strange manifestations—Father Kleinsorge was one of a handful of atomic patients who had reached Tokyo—came to see him, and to the patient's face he was most encouraging. "You'll be out of here in two weeks," he said. But when the doctor got out in the corridor, he said to the Mother Superior, "He'll die. All these bomb people die—you'll see. They go along for a couple of weeks and then they die."

The doctor prescribed suralimentation for Father Kleinsorge. Every three hours, they forced some eggs or beef juice into him, and they fed him all the sugar he could stand. They gave him vitamins, and iron pills and arsenic (in Fowler's solution) for his anemia. He confounded both the doctor's predictions; he neither died nor got up in a fortnight. Despite the fact that the message from the Kobe doctor deprived him of transfusions, which would have been the most useful therapy of all, his fever and his digestive troubles cleared up fairly quickly. His white count went up for a while, but early in October it dropped again, to 3,600; then, in ten days, it suddenly climbed above normal, to 8,800; and it finally settled at 5,800. His ridiculous scratches puzzled everyone. For a few days, they would mend, and then, when he moved around, they would open up again. As soon as he began to feel well, he enjoyed himself tremendously. In Hiroshima he had been one of thousands of sufferers; in Tokyo he was a curiosity. American Army doctors came by the dozen to observe him. Japanese experts questioned him. A newspaper interviewed him. And once, the confused doctor came and shook his head and said, "Baffling cases, these atomic-bomb people."

Mrs. Nakamura lay indoors with Myeko. They both continued sick, and though Mrs. Nakamura vaguely sensed that their trouble was caused by the bomb, she was too poor to see a doctor and so never knew exactly what the matter was. Without any treatment at all, but merely resting, they began gradually to feel better. Some of Myeko's hair fell out, and she had a tiny burn on her arm which took months to heal. The boy, Toshio, and the older girl, Yaeko, seemed well enough, though they, too, lost some hair and occasionally had bad headaches. Toshio was still having nightmares, always about the nineteen-year-old mechanic, Hideo Osaki, his hero, who had been killed by the bomb.

On his back with a fever of 104, Mr. Tanimoto worried about all the funerals he ought to be conducting for the deceased of his church. He thought he was just overtired from the hard work he had done since the bombing, but after the fever had persisted for a few days, he sent for a doctor. The doctor was too busy to visit him in Ushida, but he dispatched a nurse, who recognized his symptoms as those of mild radiation disease and came back from time to time to give him injections of Vitamin B_1. A Buddhist priest with whom Mr. Tanimoto was acquainted called on him and suggested that moxibustion might give him relief; the priest showed the pastor how to give himself the ancient Japanese treatment, by setting fire to a twist of the stimulant herb moxa placed on the wrist pulse. Mr. Tanimoto found that each moxa treatment temporarily reduced his fever one degree. The nurse had told him to eat as much as possible, and every few days his mother-in-law brought him vegetables and fish from Tsuzu, twenty miles away, where she lived. He spent a month in bed, and then went ten hours by train to his father's home in Shikoku. There he rested another month.

Dr. Sasaki and his colleagues at the Red Cross Hospital watched the unprecedented disease unfold and at last evolved a theory about its nature. It had, they decided, three stages. The first stage had been all over before the doctors even knew they were dealing with a new sickness; it was the direct reaction to the bombardment of the body, at the moment when the bomb went off, by neutrons, beta particles, and gamma rays. The apparently uninjured people who had died so mysteriously in the first few hours or days had succumbed in this first stage. It killed ninety-five per cent of the people within a half mile of the center, and many thousands who were farther away. The doctors realized in retrospect that even though most of these dead had also suffered from burns and blast effects, they had absorbed enough radiation to kill them. The rays simply destroyed body cells—caused their nuclei to degenerate and broke their walls. Many people who did not die right away came down with nausea, headache, diarrhea, malaise, and fever, which lasted several days. Doctors could not be certain whether some of these symptoms were the result of radiation or nervous shock. The second stage set in ten or fifteen days after the bombing. Its first symptom was falling hair. Diarrhea and fever, which in some cases went as high as 106, came next. Twenty-five to thirty days after the explosion, blood disorders appeared: gums bled, the white-blood-cell count dropped sharply, and *petechiae* appeared on the skin and mucous membranes. The drop in the number of white blood corpuscles reduced the patient's capacity to resist infection, so open wounds were usually slow in healing and many of the sick developed sore throats and mouths. The two key symptoms, on which the doctors came to base their prognosis, were fever and the lowered white-corpuscle count. If fever remained steady and high, the patient's chances for survival were poor. The white count almost always dropped below four thousand; a patient whose count fell below one thousand had little hope of living. Toward the end of the second stage, if the patient survived, anemia, or a drop in the red blood count, also set in. The third stage was the reaction that came when the body struggled

to compensate for its ills—when, for instance, the white count not only returned to normal but increased to much higher than normal levels. In this stage, many patients died of complications, such as infections in the chest cavity. Most burns healed with deep layers of pink, rubbery scar tissue, known as keloid tumors. The duration of the disease varied, depending on the patient's constitution and the amount of radiation he had received. Some victims recovered in a week; with others the disease dragged on for months.

As the symptoms revealed themselves, it became clear that many of them resembled the effects of overdoses of X-ray, and the doctors based their therapy on that likeness. They gave victims liver extract, blood transfusions, and vitamins, especially B_1. The shortage of supplies and instruments hampered them. Allied doctors who came in after the surrender found plasma and penicillin very effective. Since the blood disorders were, in the long run, the predominant factor in the disease, some of the Japanese doctors evolved a theory as to the seat of the delayed sickness. They thought that perhaps gamma rays, entering the body at the time of the explosion, made the phosphorus in the victims' bones radioactive, and that they in turn emitted beta particles, which, though they could not penetrate far through flesh, could enter the bone marrow, where blood is manufactured, and gradually tear it down. Whatever its source, the disease had some baffling quirks. Not all the patients exhibited all the main symptoms. People who suffered flash burns were protected, to a considerable extent, from radiation sickness. Those who had lain quietly for days or even hours after the bombing were much less liable to get sick than those who had been active. Gray hair seldom fell out. And, as if nature were protecting man against his own ingenuity, the reproductive processes were affected for a time; men became sterile, women had miscarriages, menstruation stopped.

For ten days after the flood, Dr. Fujii lived in the peasant's house on the mountain above the Ota. Then he heard about a vacant private clinic in Kaitaichi, a suburb to the east of Hiroshima. He bought it at once, moved there, and hung out a sign inscribed in English, in honor of the conquerors:

M. FUJII, M.D.
MEDICAL & VENEREAL

Quite recovered from his wounds, he soon built up a strong practice, and he was delighted, in the evenings, to receive members of the occuping forces, on whom he lavished whiskey and practiced English.

Giving Miss Sasaki a local anaesthetic of procain, Dr. Sasaki made an incision in her leg on October 23rd, to drain the infection, which still lingered on eleven weeks after the injury. In the following days, so much pus formed that he had to dress the opening each morning and evening. A week later, she complained of great pain, so he made another incision; he cut still a third, on November 9th, and enlarged it on the twenty-sixth. All this time, Miss Sasaki grew weaker and weaker, and her spirits fell low. One day, the young man who had lent her his translation of de Maupassant at Hatsukaichi came to visit her; he told her that he was going to Kyushu but that when he came back, he would like to see her again. She didn't care. Her leg had been so swollen and painful all along that the doctor had not even tried to set the fractures, and though an X-ray taken in November showed that the bones were mending, she could see under the sheet that her left leg was nearly three inches shorter than her right and that her left foot was turning inward. She thought often of the man to whom she had been engaged. Someone told her he was back from overseas. She wondered what he had heard about her injuries that made him stay away.

Father Kleinsorge was discharged from the hospital in Tokyo on December 19th and took a train home. On the way, two days later, at Yokogawa, a stop just before

Hiroshima, Dr. Fujii boarded the train. It was the first time the two men had met since before the bombing. They sat together. Dr. Fujii said he was going to the annual gathering of his family, on the anniversary of his father's death. When they started talking about their experiences, the Doctor was quite entertaining as he told how his places of residence kept falling into rivers. Then he asked Father Kleinsorge how he was, and the Jesuit talked about his stay in the hospital. "The doctors told me to be cautious," he said. "They ordered me to have a two-hour nap every afternoon."

Dr. Fujii said, "It's hard to be cautious in Hiroshima these days. Everyone seems to be so busy."

A new municipal government, set up under Allied Military Government direction, had gone to work at last in the city hall. Citizens who had recovered from various degrees of radiation sickness were coming back by the thousand—by November 1st, the population, mostly crowded into the outskirts, was already 137,000, more than a third of the wartime peak—and the government set in motion all kinds of projects to put them to work rebuilding the city. It hired men to clear the streets, and others to gather scrap iron, which they sorted and piled in mountains opposite the city hall. Some returning residents were putting up their own shanties and huts, and planting small squares of winter wheat beside them, but the city also authorized and built four hundred one-family "barracks." Utilities were repaired—electric lights shone again, trams started running, and employees of the waterworks fixed seventy thousand leaks in mains and plumbing. A Planning Conference, with an enthusiastic young Military Government officer, Lieutenant John D. Montgomery, of Kalamazoo, as its adviser, began to consider what sort of city the new Hiroshima should be. The ruined city had flourished—and had been an inviting target—mainly because it had been one of the most important military-command and communications centers in Japan, and would have become the Imperial headquarters had the islands been invaded and Tokyo been captured. Now there would be no huge military establishments to help revive the city. The Planning Conference, at a loss as to just what importance Hiroshima could have, fell back on rather vague cultural and paving projects. It drew maps with avenues a hundred yards wide and thought seriously of erecting a group of buildings as a monument to the disaster, and naming them the Institute of International Amity. Statistical workers gathered what figures they could on the effects of the bomb. They reported that 78,150 people had been killed, 13,983 were missing, and 37,425 had been injured. No one in the city government pretended that these figures were accurate—though the Americans accepted them as official—and as the months went by and more and more hundreds of corpses were dug up from the ruins, and as the number of unclaimed urns of ashes at the Zempoji Temple in Koi rose into the thousands, the statisticians began to say that at least a hundred thousand people had lost their lives in the bombing. Since many people died of a combination of causes, it was impossible to figure exactly how many were killed by each cause, but the statisticians calculated that about twenty-five per cent had died of direct burns from the bomb, about fifty per cent from other injuries, and about twenty per cent as a result of radiation effects. The statisticians' figures on property damage were more reliable: sixty-two thousands out of ninety thousand buildings destroyed, and six thousand more damaged beyond repair. In the heart of the city, they found only five modern buildings that could be used again without major repairs. This small number was by no means the fault of flimsy Japanese construction. In fact, since the 1923 earthquake, Japanese building regulations had required that the roof of each large building be able to bear a minimum load of seventy pounds per square foot, whereas American regulations do not normally specify more than forty pounds per square foot.

Scientists swarmed into the city. Some of them measured the force that had been

necessary to shift marble gravestones in the cemeteries, to knock over twenty-two of the forty-seven railroad cars in the yards at Hiroshima station, to lift and move the concrete roadway on one of the bridges, and to perform other noteworthy acts of strength, and concluded that the pressure exerted by the explosion varied from 5.3 to 8.0 tons per square yard. Others found that mica, of which the melting point is 900° C., had fused on granite gravestones three hundred and eighty yards from the center; that telephone poles of *Cryptomeria japonica,* whose carbonization temperature is 240° C., had been charred at forty-four hundred yards from the center; and that the surface of gray clay tiles of the type used in Hiroshima, whose melting point is 1,300° C., had dissolved at six hundred yards; and, after examining other significant ashes and melted bits, they concluded that the bomb's heat on the ground at the center must have been 6,000° C. And from further measurements of radiation, which involved, among other things, the scraping up of fission fragments from roof troughs and drainpipes as far away as the suburb of Takasu, thirty-three hundred yards from the center, they learned some far more important facts about the nature of the bomb. General MacArthur's headquarters systematically censored all mention of the bomb in Japanese scientific publications, but soon the fruit of the scientists' calculations became common knowledge among Japanese physicists, doctors, chemists, journalists, professors, and, no doubt, those statesmen and military men who were still in circulation. Long before the American public had been told, most of the scientists and lots of non-scientists in Japan knew—from the calculations of Japanese nuclear physicists—that a uranium bomb had exploded at Hiroshima and a more powerful one, of plutonium, at Nagasaki. They also knew that theoretically one ten times as powerful—or twenty—could be developed. The Japanese scientists thought they knew the exact height at which the bomb at Hiroshima was exploded and the approximate weight of the uranium used. They estimated that, even with the primitive bomb used at Hiroshima, it would require a shelter of concrete fifty inches thick to protect a human being entirely from radiation sickness. The scientists had these and other details which remained subject to security in the United States printed and mimeographed and bound into little books. The Americans knew of the existence of these, but tracing them and seeing that they did not fall into the wrong hands would have obliged the occupying authorities to set up, for this one purpose alone, an enormous police system in Japan. Altogether, the Japanese scientists were somewhat amused at the efforts of their conquerors to keep security on atomic fission.

Late in February, 1946, a friend of Miss Sasaki's called on Father Kleinsorge and asked him to visit her in the hospital. She had been growing more and more depressed and morbid; she seemed little interested in living. Father Kleinsorge went to see her several times. On his first visit, he kept the conversation general, formal, and yet vaguely sympathetic, and did not mention religion. Miss Sasaki herself brought it up the second time he dropped in on her. Evidently she had had some talks with a Catholic. She asked bluntly, "If your God is so good and kind, how can he let people suffer like this?" She made a gesture which took in her shrunken leg, the other patients in her room, and Hiroshima as a whole.

"My child," Father Kleinsorge said, "man is not now in the condition God intended. He has fallen from grace through sin." And he went on to explain all the reasons for everything.

It came to Mrs. Nakamura's attention that a carpenter from Kabe was building a number of wooden shanties in Hiroshima which he rented for fifty yen a month—$3.33, at the fixed rate of exchange. Mrs. Nakamura had lost the certificates for her bonds and other war-time savings, but fortunately she had copied off all the numbers just a few days before the bombing and had taken the list to Kabe, and so, when her hair had grown in

enough for her to be presentable, she went to her bank in Hiroshima, and a clerk there told her that after checking her numbers against the records the bank would give her her money. As soon as she got it, she rented one of the carpenter's shacks. It was in Nobori-cho, near the site of her former house, and though its floor was dirt and it was dark inside, it was at least a home in Hiroshima, and she was no longer dependent on the charity of her in-laws. During the spring, she cleared away some nearby wreckage and planted a vegetable garden. She cooked with utensils and ate off plates she scavenged from the debris. She sent Myeko to the kindergarten which the Jesuits reopened, and the two older children attended Nobori-cho Primary School, which, for want of buildings, held classes out of doors. Toshio wanted to study to be a mechanic, like his hero, Hideo Osaki. Prices were high; by midsummer Mrs. Nakamura's savings were gone. She sold some of her clothes to get food. She had once had several expensive kimonos, but during the war one had been stolen, she had given one to a sister who had been bombed out in Tokuyama, she had lost a couple in the Hiroshima bombing, and now she sold her last one. It brought only a hundred yen, which did not last long. In June, she went to Father Kleinsorge for advice about how to get along, and in early August, she was still considering the two alternatives he suggested—taking work as a domestic for some of the Allied occupation forces, or borrowing from her relatives enough money, about five hundred yen, or a bit more than thirty dollars, to repair her rusty sewing machine and resume the work of a seamstress.

When Mr. Tanimoto returned from Shikoku, he draped a tent he owned over the roof of the badly damaged house he had rented in Ushida. The roof still leaked, but he conducted services in the damp living room. He began thinking about raising money to restore his church in the city. He became quite friendly with Father Kleinsorge and saw the Jesuits often. He envied them their Church's wealth; they seemed to be able to do anything they wanted. He had nothing to work with except his own energy, and that was not what it had been.

The Society of Jesus had been the first institution to build a relatively permanent shanty in the ruins of Hiroshima. That had been while Father Kleinsorge was in the hospital. As soon as he got back, he began living in the shack, and he and another priest, Father Laderman, who had joined him in the mission, arranged for the purchase of three of the standardized "barracks," which the city was selling at seven thousand yen apiece. They put two together, end to end, and made a pretty chapel of them; they ate in the third. When materials were available, they commissioned a contractor to build a three-story mission house exactly like the one that had been destroyed in the fire. In the compound, carpenters cut timbers, gouged mortises, shaped tenons, whittled scores of wooden pegs and bored holes for them, until all the parts for the house were in a neat pile; then, in three days, they put the whole thing together, like an Oriental puzzle, without any nails at all. Father Kleinsorge was finding it hard, as Dr. Fujii had suggested he would, to be cautious and to take his naps. He went out every day on foot to call on Japanese Catholics and prospective converts. As the months went by, he grew more and more tired. In June, he read an article in the Hiroshima *Chugoku* warning survivors against working too hard—but what could he do? By July, he was worn out, and early in August, almost exactly on the anniversary of the bombing, he went back to the Catholic International Hospital, in Tokyo, for a month's rest.

Whether or not Father Kleinsorge's answers to Miss Sasaki's questions about life were final and absolute truths, she seemed quickly to draw physical strength from them. Dr. Sasaki noticed it and congratulated Father Kleinsorge. By April 15th, her temperature and white count were normal and the infection in the wound was beginning

to clear up. On the twentieth, there was almost no pus, and for the first time she jerked along a corridor on crutches. Five days later, the wound had begun to heal, and on the last day of the month she was discharged.

During the early summer, she prepared herself for conversion to Catholicism. In that period she had ups and downs. Her depressions were deep. She knew she would always be a cripple. Her fiancé never came to see her. There was nothing for her to do except read and look out, from her house on a hillside in Koi, across the ruins of the city where her parents and brother died. She was nervous, and any sudden noise made her put her hands quickly to her throat. Her leg still hurt; she rubbed it often and patted it, as if to console it.

It took six months for the Red Cross Hospital, and even longer for Dr. Sasaki, to get back to normal. Until the city restored electric power, the hospital had to limp along with the aid of a Japanese Army generator in its back yard. Operating tables, X-ray machines, dentist chairs, everything complicated and essential came in a trickle of charity from other cities. In Japan, face is important even to institutions, and long before the Red Cross Hospital was back to par on basic medical equipment, its directors put up a new yellow brick veneer façade, so the hospital became the handsomest building in Hiroshima—from the street. For the first four months, Dr. Sasaki was the only surgeon on the staff and he almost never left the building; then, gradually, he began to take an interest in his own life again. He got married in March. He gained back some of the weight he lost, but his appetite remained only fair; before the bombing, he used to eat four rice balls at every meal, but a year after it he could manage only two. He felt tired all the time. "But I have to realize," he said, "that the whole community is tired."

A year after the bomb was dropped, Miss Sasaki was a cripple; Mrs. Nakamura was destitute; Father Kleinsorge was back in the hospital; Dr. Sasaki was not capable of the work he once could do; Dr. Fujii had lost the thirty-room hospital it took him many years to acquire, and had no prospects of rebuilding it; Mr. Tanimoto's church had been ruined and he no longer had his exceptional vitality. The lives of these six people, who were among the luckiest in Hiroshima, would never be the same. What they thought of their experiences and of the use of the atomic bomb was, of course, not unanimous. One feeling they did seem to share, however, was a curious kind of elated community spirit, something like that of the Londoners after their blitz—a pride in the way they and their fellow-survivors had stood up to a dreadful ordeal. Just before the anniversary, Mr. Tanimoto wrote in a letter to an American some words which expressed this feeling: "What a heartbreaking scene this was the first night! About midnight I landed on the riverbank. So many injured people lied on the ground that I made my way by striding over them. Repeating 'Excuse me,' I forwarded and carried a tub of water with me and gave a cup of water to each one of them. They raised their upper bodies slowly and accepted a cup of water with a bow and drunk quietly and, spilling any remnant, gave back a cup with hearty expression of their thankfulness, and said, 'I couldn't help my sister, who was buried under the house, because I had to take care of my mother who got a deep wound on her eye and our house soon set fire and we hardly escaped. Look, I lost my home, my family, and at last my-self bitterly injured. But now I have gotted my mind to dedicate what I have and to complete the war for our country's sake.' Thus they pledged to me, even women and children did the same. Being entirely tired I lied down on the ground among them, but couldn't sleep at all. Next morning I found many men and women dead, whom I gave water last night. But, to my great surprise, I never heard any one cried in disorder, even though they suffered in great agony. They died in si-

lence, with no grudge, setting their teeth to bear it. All for the country!

"Dr. Y. Hiraiwa, professor of Hiroshima University of Literature and Science, and one of my church members, was buried by the bomb under the two storied house with his son, a student of Tokyo University. Both of them could not move an inch under tremendously heavy presure. And the house already caught fire. His son said, 'Father, we can do nothing except make our mind up to consecrate our lives for the country. Let us give *Banzai* to our Emperor.' Then the father followed after his son, *'Tenno-heika, Banzai, Banzai, Banzai!'* In the result, Dr. Hiraiwa said, 'Strange to say, I felt calm and bright and peaceful spirit in my heart, when I chanted *Banzai* to Tenno.' Afterward his son got out and digged down and pulled out his father and thus they were saved. In thinking of their experience of that time Dr. Hiraiwa repeated, 'What a fortunate that we are Japanese! It was my first time I ever tasted such a beautiful spirit when I decided to die for our Emperor.'

"Miss Kayoko Nobutoki, a student of girl's high school, Hiroshima Jazabuin, and a daughter of my church member, was taking rest with her friends beside the heavy fence of the Buddhist Temple. At the moment the atomic bomb was dropped, the fence fell upon them. They could not move a bit under such a heavy fence and then smoke entered into even a crack and choked their breath. One of the girls begun to sing *Kimi ga yo,* national anthem, and others followed in chorus and died. Meanwhile one of them found a crack and struggled hard to get out. When she was taken in the Red Cross Hospital she told how her friends died, tracing back in her memory to singing in chorus our national anthem. They were just 13 years old.

"Yes, people of Hiroshima died manly in the atomic bombing, believing that it was for Emperor's sake."

A surprising number of the people of Hiroshima remained more or less indifferent about the ethics of using the bomb. Possibly they were too terrified by it to want to think about it at all. Not many of them even bothered to find out much about what it was like. Mrs. Nakamura's conception of it—and awe of it—was typical. "The atom bomb," she would say when asked about it, "is the size of a matchbox. The heat of it is six thousand times that of the sun. It exploded in the air. There is some radium in it. I don't know just how it works, but when the radium is put together, it explodes." As for the use of the bomb, she would say, "It was war and we had to expect it." And then she would add, *Shikata ga nai,"* a Japanese expression as common as, and corresponding to, the Russian word *"nichevo"*: "It can't be helped. Oh, well. Too bad." Dr. Fujii said approximately the same thing about the use of the bomb to Father Kleinsorge one evening, in German: *"Da ist nichts zu machen.* There's nothing to be done about it."

Many citizens of Hiroshima, however, continued to feel a hatred for Americans which nothing could possibly erase. "I see," Dr. Sasaki once said, "that they are holding a trial for war criminals in Tokyo just now. I think they ought to try the men who decided to use the bomb and they should hang them all."

Father Kleinsorge and the other German Jesuit priests, who, as foreigners, could be expected to take a relatively detached view, often discussed the ethics of using the bomb. One of them, Father Siemes, who was out at Nagatsuka at the time of the attack, wrote in a report to the Holy See in Rome: "Some of us consider the bomb in the same category as poison gas and were against its use on a civilian population. Others were of the opinion that in total war, as carried on in Japan, there was no difference between civilians and soldiers, and that the bomb itself was an effective force tending to end the bloodshed, warning Japan to surrender and thus to avoid total destruction. It seems logical that he who supports total war in principal cannot complain of a war against civilians. The crux of the matter is whether total war in its present form is justifiable,

even when it serves a just purpose. Does it not have material and spiritual evil as its consequences which far exceed whatever good might result? When will our moralists give us a clear answer to this question?"

It would be impossible to say what horrors were embedded in the minds of the children who lived through the day of the bombing in Hiroshima. On the surface, their recollections, months after the disaster, were of an exhilarating adventure. Toshio Nakamura, who was ten at the time of the bombing, was soon able to talk freely, even gaily, about the experience, and a few weeks before the anniversary he wrote the following matter-of-fact essay for his teacher at Noboricho Primary School: "The day before the bomb, I went for a swim. In the morning, I was eating peanuts. I saw a light. I was knocked to little sister's sleeping place. When we were saved, I could only see as far as the tram: My mother and I started to pack our things. The neighbors were walking around burned and bleeding. Hataya-*san* told me to run away with her. I said I wanted to wait for my mother. We went to the park. A whirlwind came. At night a gas tank burned and I saw the reflection in the river. We stayed in the park one night. Next day I went to Taiko Bridge and met my girl friends Kikuki and Murakami. They were looking for their mothers. But Kikuki's mother was wounded and Murakami's mother, alas, was dead."

The Drama

Curtain Time, Eight-Thirty

THE THEATER is almost full. Ushers are seating the last-comers, swiftly, with a flourish of welcome, but counting the minutes till curtain-time. Over the expectant space, so quieted in carpet and so golden with a thousand lights from above, rises a hum of greeting and talk. The audience settles, looks around, reads the program to find out where Act I takes place—and then the lights begin to dim. You almost feel more than hear a kind of sigh of contentment and anticipation. In the first and the second balconies. the playgoers lean forward. A hand in the darkness seeks and finds another hand, to say, "Now it is beginning; this is what we wanted." Down below they lean back, ready and happy. It is all dark. Slowly, slowly the curtain lifts, and another world opens in brightness and surprise.

This is the theater. This is one of the richest moments in civilized life. There are a good many people who ask for no more wonderful experience than those few seconds while the curtain is two feet off the stage, and lifting. Of course what they will see is not so. What the actors will do and suffer is not real. But you have already surrendered to the impossible; this life you will watch takes place in a room with one of the four walls removed. The world looks in on comedy, or heartbreak, and you are the world. Or you are for a little while an all-seeing, all-knowing god, lost in looking and in feeling. This sensation is what the learned critics, who also have feelings, call the willing suspension of disbelief. Why not, why not? Our own lives have little enough plot, though sometimes more climax than we like to endure, and more strain and delay than we can manage. Let's lose ourselves. This is the theater. Let's sit here in the darkness and make believe. A play has less reality on the printed page. Because there are words in a play, the mistake is often made of discussing and teaching it as written literature, like an essay or a novel. But not even the famous old plays, with the stirring and beautiful lines, are merely written; they are plays. Some

successful plays—on the stage—are sometimes, and necessarily, almost unintelligible as reading. There are passages of dialogue in *Ah, Wilderness!* that seem a waste of space on the page, because as words they are old-fashioned slang, and nothing is happening—in words. There are pages in *Winterset* where nothing happens, not even on the page. But these lines spoken by actors, moving in the width and depth of a stage, before scenery and under lights, become some of the unforgettable moments of the whole evening of the play.

A play can fully live only in performance. It has its only real being in those two and a half hours while voices, persons, emotions, and meanings move forward in time from breath to breath, never to be repeated, never the same again. Not even the audience for *Life With Father,* or any year-long-run play, sees the same play tonight that was seen last night or last week. Did you ever try saying "Hello" in ten different ways? The actors live the story over and over and over, yet they will tell you how different tonight's show was from last night's. This difference is not true of the reading of a novel. All that happens in a novel happens on the printed page; only the mood or the age of the reader in any way changes it. The performance of a novel is the reading. But a play must be acted by living people, and watched and felt. A play in performance is like a flowing stream. Water from the Hudson River put in a bottle, and so marked, is not that river at all, but merely water. There are especially skilled people who can "read" the printed score of a symphony, or song, or string quartet, or can imitate the melody-lines on one instrument like the piano. But that is no more the living music than a play in print. Music is to be heard. Music mounts and moves, in its many voices, and no one measure of it is like any other, and none can be asked for again or gone back to. Just so the play rushes onward, the audience following.

Nothing like this can happen in the classroom—to put it very mildly. The best an instructor can hope for is to have seen the play he must teach. If some students have also seen the play done, they are the fortunate ones. The way to begin to get the idea of a play, when the only approach is through the printed lines, as it must be in such a book as this one, is by a really great effort of the imagination on the part of every student, with the instructor working twice as hard as anyone else.

The natural and the lazy thing, in reading a play, is to skip the stage directions. Here the playwright gives the reader conscious aid. It is easy, and most confusing, to read the words the characters speak. But perhaps in *Ah, Wilderness!* you do not realize until the middle of Act II, and after some looking back at the cast of characters, that Sid and Lily are brother and sister to the married Millers, whose children mix things up so thoroughly. Once you know, every word and retort has more meaning. But unless you read the cast of characters, unless you think about the relationship, unless you see in the mind's eye the stage setting, the printed play is no good. If you had seen the play, clothes and behavior would have made perfectly clear who is who.

Read the stage directions slowly, and the playwright's descriptions of his characters; read them slowly. Turn the eye inward, and imagine to yourself what is so flatly said. Create, even if you must draw a stage-plan, the place. The Place is that dark "cellar apartment under the apartment buildings, floored with

cement and roofed with huge boa-constrictor pipes that run slantwise from left to right, dwarfing the room." This is Maxwell Anderson's opening description for Act I, Scene 2, of *Winterset,* and it goes on with the sort of detail that must be visualized, item by item. "An outside door opens to the left and a door at the right rear leads to the interior of the place. A low squat window to the left. A table at the rear and a few chairs and books make up the furniture."

Anderson is brief and specific in his printed stage directions, in comparison to O'Neill, whose *Ah, Wilderness!* reads like an outline for a novel, in some of the italicized lines. In Act I, following an adolescent and defiant outburst from the seventeen-year-old Richard, who has been reading books, the playwright says, "(*His father and SID are greatly amused; LILY is shocked but, taking her cue from them, smiles. MILDRED stares at him in puzzled wonderment, never having heard this particular line before. Only ARTHUR betrays the outraged reaction of a patriot.*)" It may be that this sort of stage direction is for the reader of the printed play, who is more accustomed to reading novels. It may be that O'Neill is working it out in his own mind as he goes; but he is too great a constructor of great plays, too handy a craftsman, to put in words what his actors can show. It may be that O'Neill is imitating the verbose Shaw, whose printed plays seem to be excuses for long prefaces to them. Or, what is much more likely and far more rewarding, O'Neill is writing these lengthy stage directions for the people who will sometime act in, direct, and produce his plays. Mildred is the (gray-eyed) daughter of Nat and Essie Miller. Arthur, her Yale brother, wears what they wore in 1906. O'Neill describes it, in many words.

But no printed words can describe "his father and Sid are greatly amused," or Mildred staring in puzzled wonderment. Why is Lily shocked? How is it that Mildred had never before heard the line of poetry her brother speaks? Nothing in the text tells us. But long before this moment of startled amusement, shock, smiles, wonder, and outrage, we know it could have come about. We have lived our way into the play, more or less in spite of the words of the play. O'Neill is a great help to those who must *read* plays. He gives us moods, clues for behavior, and on the whole a more interior sort of stage direction than most playwrights provide.

The playwright knows what he wants done by actors, but usually the published text of a play does not say what it is. The acting version of a play, from which the players learn not only their words but their movements, and from which the lighting crew finds out what must be done, and the property manager and the costumer, the scene designer, the prompter, and the director learn what they must do to mount the play, is a very different thing. There is one entire script, without the spoken words, for the light cues. There are lists of the first, second, and third act properties—the weapons, candlesticks, coffee-service, books, decanters, paintings, food, almost anything you can think of. There is the detailed list of costumes, which is most specific as to color and style. And after all this comes into the hands of the backstage crew, there is the director's script. A director, something like the conductor of a symphony orchestra, creates his own interpretation, or even his own version, of any play he presents. He will take the original script, and by eliminating certain characters from the cast, by coaching certain scenes as he likes them, by consulting with his scene designer as to some

new interpretation of the setting, create his own version of the well-known play. This script is not the one we read. We read the words the playwright set down, the original but not the only version. A director re-creates each play he offers to his audience, adjusting the people and means he has, to accord with his tastes, and his ability to match the playwright's meaning.

It is wrong, or at least it is an incomplete judgment, to think of any play as being what the star makes of it, or what the playwright said, or what the director interpreted. The play is their joint creation. We must never forget the designer, the costumer, the lighting-man, or the smallest part as played by the youngest member of the company, or the least backstage job done by any one of a hundred people involved in the production. It is probably true that a play, as performed, is a director's play more than it is any other one person's, and that the director, being usually invisible, gets too little credit. But without a script, or a company, or a stage-crew, he has nothing to direct. What is a real play without the make-up crew? Or without the front office, tickets, posters, publicity, house-managers? Nothing. A play, after the curtain goes up, is the combined work, of three or four times as many people as appear on the stage.

This is what actually happens, this magnificent confusion of effort, that somehow always works through one crisis after another, endures at least a hundred hours of preparation for each hour of performance, surmounts fantastic difficulties, and on opening night gets the curtain up on time for a good show. The production of a play is like no other experience on earth. It is crazy, exhausting, and wasteful. It is difficult, expensive, uncertain, and heart-breaking, and there is nothing in the world like it, and nothing the addict would rather do. It is easier to cure all the incurable diseases at once than to kill theater, once it gets in the blood.

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE[1]

HENRIK IBSEN

Characters

DOCTOR THOMAS STOCKMANN, *medical officer of the Baths.*
MRS. STOCKMANN, *his wife.*
PETRA, *their daughter, a teacher.*
EILIF, MORTEN } *their sons, thirteen and ten years old respectively.*
PETER STOCKMANN, *the doctor's elder brother, Burgomaster and chief of police, chairman of the Baths Committee, etc.*
MORTEN KIIL, *master tanner, Mrs. Stockmann's adoptive-father.*
HOVSTAD, *editor of the "People's Messenger."*
BILLING, *on the staff of the paper.*
HORSTER, *a ship's captain.*
ASLAKSEN, *a printer*
Participants in a meeting of citizens: all sorts and conditions of men, some women, and a band of schoolboys.
The action passes in a town on the South Coast of Norway.

[1] Translated by Eleanor Marx-Aveling.

ACT FIRST

Evening. DR. STOCKMANN'S *sitting-room; simply but neatly decorated and furnished. In the wall to the right are two doors, the*

further one leading to the hall, the nearer one to the Doctor's study. In the opposite wall, facing the hall door, a door leading to the other rooms of the house. Against the middle of this wall stands the stove; further forward a sofa with a mirror above it, and in front of it an oval table with a cover. On the table a lighted lamp, with a shade. In the back wall an open door leading to the dining-room, in which is seen a supper-table, with a lamp on it.

BILLING *is seated at the supper table, with a napkin under his chin.* MRS. STOCKMANN *is standing by the table and placing before him a dish with a large joint of roast beef. The other seats round the table are empty; the table is in disorder, as after a meal.*

MRS. STOCKMANN. If you come an hour late, Mr. Billing, you must put up with a cold supper.

BILLING. (*eating*) It is excellent—really first rate.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You know how Stockmann insists on regular meal-hours—

BILLING. Oh, I don't mind at all. I almost think I enjoy my supper more when I can sit down to it like this, alone and undisturbed.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, well, if you enjoy it—(*listening in the direction of the hall*) I believe this is Mr. Hovstad coming too.

BILLING. Very likely.

BURGOMASTER STOCKMANN *enters, wearing an overcoat and an official gold-laced cap, and carrying a stick.*

BURGOMASTER. Good evening, sister-in-law.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*coming forward into the sitting-room*) Oh, good evening; is it you? It is good of you to look in.

BURGOMASTER. I was just passing, and so—(*looks towards the dining-room*) Ah, I see you have company.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*rather embarrassed*) Oh no, not at all; it's the merest chance. (*hurriedly*) Won't you sit down and have a little supper?

BURGOMASTER. I? No, thank you. Good gracious! hot meat in the evening! That wouldn't suit my digestion.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, for once in a way—

BURGOMASTER. No, no,—much obliged to you. I stick to tea and bread and butter. It's more wholesome in the long run—and rather more economical, too.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*smiling*) You mustn't think Thomas and I are mere spendthrifts, either.

BURGOMASTER. You are not, sister-in-law; far be it from me to say that. (*Pointing to the Doctor's study.*) Is he not at home?

MRS. STOCKMANN. No, he has gone for a little turn after supper—with the boys.

BURGOMASTER. I wonder if that is a good thing to do? (*Listening.*) There he is, no doubt.

MRS. STOCKMANN. No, that is not he. (*A knock.*) Come in!

(HOVSTAD *enters from the hall.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. Ah, it's Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. You must excuse me; I was detained at the printer's. Good evening, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER. (*bowing rather stiffly*) Mr. Hovstad? You come on business, I presume?

HOVSTAD. Partly. About an article for the paper.

BURGOMASTER. So I supposed. I hear my brother is an extremely prolific contributor to the *People's Messenger*.

HOVSTAD. Yes, when he wants to unburden his mind on one thing or another, he gives the *Messenger* the benefit.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*to* HOVSTAD) But will you not—? (*Points to the dining-room.*)

BURGOMASTER. Well, well, I am far from blaming him for writing for the class of readers he finds most in sympathy with him. And, personally, I have no reason to bear your paper any ill will, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. No, I should think not.

BURGOMASTER. One may say, on the whole, that a fine spirit of mutual tolerance prevails in our town—an excellent public spirit. And that is because we have a great common interest to hold us together—an interest in which all right-minded citizens are equally concerned—

HOVSTAD. Yes—the Baths.

BURGOMASTER. Just so. We have our magnificent new Baths. Mark my words! The whole life of the town will centre around the

Baths, Mr. Hovstad. There can be no doubt of it!

MRS. STOCKMANN. That is just what Thomas says.

BURGOMASTER. How marvellously the place has developed, even in this couple of years! Money has come into circulation, and brought life and movement with it. Houses and ground-rents rise in value every day.

HOVSTAD. And there are fewer people out of work.

BURGOMASTER. That is true. There is a gratifying diminution in the burden imposed on the well-to-do classes by the poor-rates; and they will be still further lightened if only we have a really good summer this year—a rush of visitors—plenty of invalids, to give the Baths a reputation.

HOVSTAD. I hear there is every prospect of that.

BURGOMASTER. Things look most promising. Inquiries about apartments and so forth keep on pouring in.

HOVSTAD. Then the Doctor's paper will come in very opportunely.

BURGOMASTER. Has he been writing again?

HOVSTAD. This is a thing he wrote in the winter; enlarging on the virtues of the Baths, and on the excellent sanitary conditions of the town. But at that time I held it over.

BURGOMASTER. Ah—I suppose there was something not quite judicious about it?

HOVSTAD. Not at all. But I thought it better to keep it till the spring, when people are beginning to look about them, and think of their summer quarters—

BURGOMASTER. You were right, quite right, Mr. Hovstad.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, Thomas is really indefatigable where the Baths are concerned.

BURGOMASTER. It is his duty as one of the staff.

HOVSTAD. And of course he was really their creator.

BURGOMASTER. Was he? Indeed! I gather that certain persons are of that opinion. But I should have thought that I, too, had a modest share in that undertaking.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, that is what Thomas is always saying.

HOVSTAD. No one dreams of denying it, Burgomaster. You set the thing going, and put it on a practical basis; everybody knows that. I only meant that the original idea was the doctor's.

BURGOMASTER. Yes, my brother has certainly had ideas enough in his time—worse luck! But when it comes to realising them, Mr. Hovstad, we want men of another stamp. I should have thought that in this house at any rate—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Why, my dear brother-in-law—

HOVSTAD. Burgomaster, how can you—?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do go in and have some supper, Mr. Hovstad; my husband is sure to be home directly.

HOVSTAD. Thanks; just a mouthful, perhaps. (*He goes into the dining-room.*)

BURGOMASTER. (*speaking in a low voice*) It is extraordinary how people who spring direct from the peasant class never can get over their want of tact.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But why should you care? Surely you and Thomas can share the honour, like brothers.

BURGOMASTER. Yes, one would suppose so; but it seems a share of the honour is not enough for some persons.

MRS. STOCKMANN. What nonsense! You and Thomas always get on so well together. (*Listening.*) There, I think I hear him. (*Goes and opens the door to the hall.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*laughing and talking loudly, without*) Here's another visitor for you, Katrina. Isn't it capital, eh? Come in, Captain Horster. Hang your coat on that peg. What! you don't wear an overcoat? Fancy, Katrina, I caught him in the street, and I could hardly get him to come in.

CAPTAIN HORSTER. (*Enters and bows to* MRS. STOCKMANN.)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*in the doorway*) In with you, boys. They're famishing again! Come along, Captain Horster; you must try our roast beef—(*He forces* HORSTER *into the dining-room.* EILIF *and* MORTEN *follow them.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, Thomas, don't you see—

DR. STOCKMANN. (*turning round in the doorway*) Oh, is that you, Peter! (*Goes up to*

him and holds out his hand.) Now this is really capital.

BURGOMASTER. Unfortunately, I have only a moment to spare—

DR. STOCKMANN. Nonsense! We shall have some toddy in a minute. You're not forgetting the toddy, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Of course not; the water's boiling. (*She goes into the dining-room.*)

BURGOMASTER. Toddy too—!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes; sit down, and let's make ourselves comfortable.

BURGOMASTER. Thanks; I never join in drinking parties.

DR. STOCKMANN. But this isn't a party.

BURGOMASTER. I don't know what else—(*Looks towards the dining-room.*) It's extraordinary how they can get through all that food.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*rubbing his hands*) Yes, doesn't it do one good to see young people eat? Always hungry! That's as it should be. They need good, solid meat to put stamina into them! It is they that have got to whip up the ferment of the future, Peter.

BURGOMASTER. May I ask what there is to be "whipped up," as you call it?

DR. STOCKMANN. You'll have to ask the young people that—when the time comes. We shan't see it, of course. Two old fogies like you and me—

BURGOMASTER. Come, come! Surely that is a very extraordinary expression to use—

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, you mustn't mind my nonsense, Peter. I'm in such glorious spirits, you see. I feel so unspeakably happy in the midst of all this growing, germinating life. Isn't it a marvellous time we live in! It seems as though a whole new world were springing up around us.

BURGOMASTER. Do you really think so?

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course, you can't see it as clearly as I do. You have passed your life in the midst of it all; and that deadens the impression. But I who had to vegetate all those years in that little hole in the north, hardly ever seeing a soul that could speak a stimulating word to me—all this affects me as if I had suddenly dropped into the heart of some teeming metropolis.

BURGOMASTER. Well, metropolis—

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, I know well enough that things are on a small scale here, compared with many other places. But there's life here—there's promise—there's an infinity of things to work and strive for; and that is the main point. (*Calling.*) Katrina, haven't there been any letters?

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*in the dining-room*) No, none at all.

DR. STOCKMANN. And then a good income, Peter! That's a thing one learns to appreciate when one has lived on starvation wages—

BURGOMASTER. Good heavens—!

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh yes, I can tell you we often had hard times of it up there. And now we can live like princes! To-day, for example, we had roast beef for dinner; and we've had some of it for supper too. Won't you have some? Come along—just look at it, at any rate—

BURGOMASTER. No, no; certainly not—

DR. STOCKMANN. Well then, look here—do you see we've bought a table-cover?

BURGOMASTER. Yes, so I observed.

DR. STOCKMANN. And a lamp-shade, too. Do you see? Katrina has been saving up for them. They make the room look comfortable, don't they? Come over here. No, no, no, not there. So—yes! Now you see how it concentrates the light—. I really thing it has quite an artistic effect. Eh?

BURGOMASTER. Yes, when one can afford such luxuries—

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, I can afford it now. Katrina says I make almost as much as we spend.

BURGOMASTER. Ah—almost!

DR. STOCKMANN. Besides, a man of science must live in some style. Why, I believe a mere sheriff[1] spends much more a year than I do.

BURGOMASTER. Yes, I should think so! A member of the superior magistracy—

DR. STOCKMANN. Well then, even a common shipowner! A man of that sort will get through many times as much—

BURGOMASTER. That is natural, in your relative positions.

[1] *Amtmand*, the chief magistrate of an *Amt* or county; consequently a high dignitary in the official hierarchy.

DR. STOCKMANN. And after all, Peter, I really don't squander any money. But I can't deny myself the delight of having people about me. I must have them. After living so long out of the world, I find it a necessity of life to have bright, cheerful, freedom-loving, hard-working young fellows around me—and that's what they are, all of them, that are sitting there eating so heartily. I wish you knew more of Hovstad—

BURGOMASTER. Ah, that reminds me—Hovstad was telling me that he is going to publish another article of yours.

DR. STOCKMANN. An article of mine?

BURGOMASTER. Yes, about the Baths. An article you wrote last winter.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, that one! But I don't want that to appear for the present.

BURGOMASTER. Why not? It seems to me this is the very time for it.

DR. STOCKMANN. Very likely—under ordinary circumstances—(*crosses the room.*)

BURGOMASTER. (*following him with his eyes*) And what is unusual in the circumstances now?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*standing still*) The fact is, Peter, I really cannot tell you just now; not this evening, at all events. There may prove to be a great deal that is unusual in the circumstances. On the other hand, there may be nothing at all. Very likely it's only my fancy.

BURGOMASTER. Upon my word, you are very enigmatical. Is there anything in the wind? Anything I am to be kept in the dark about? I should think, as Chairman of the Bath Committee—

DR. STOCKMANN. And I should think that I—Well, well, don't let us get our backs up, Peter.

BURGOMASTER. God forbid! I am not in the habit of "getting my back up," as you express it. But I must absolutely insist that all arrangements shall be made and carried out in a businesslike manner, and through the properly constituted authorities. I cannot be a party to crooked or underhand courses.

DR. STOCKMANN. Have *I* ever been given to crooked or underhand courses?

BURGOMASTER. At any rate you have an ingrained propensity to taking your own course. And that, in a well-ordered community, is almost as inadmissible. The individual must subordinate himself to society, or, more precisely, to the authorities whose business it is to watch over the welfare of society.

DR. STOCKMANN. Maybe. But what the devil has that to do with me?

BURGOMASTER. Why this is the very thing, my dear Thomas, that it seems you will never learn. But take care; you will have to pay for it—sooner or later. Now I have warned you. Good-bye.

DR. STOCKMANN. Are you stark mad? You're on a totally wrong track—

BURGOMASTER. I am not often on the wrong track. Moreover, I must protest against—(*Bowing towards dining-room.*) Good-bye, sister-in-law; good-day to you, gentlemen. (*He goes.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*entering the sitting-room*) Has he gone?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and in a fine temper, too.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Why, my dear Thomas, what have you been doing to him now?

DR. STOCKMANN. Nothing at all. He can't possibly expect me to account to him for everything—before the time comes.

MRS. STOCKMANN. What have you to account to him for?

DR. STOCKMANN. H'm;—never mind about that, Katrina.—It's very odd the postman doesn't come. (HOVSTAD, BILLING *and* HORSTER *have risen from table and come forward into the sitting-room.* EILIF *and* MORTEN *presently follow.*)

BILLING. (*stretching himself*) Ah! Strike me dead if one doesn't feel a new man after such a meal.

HOVSTAD. The Burgomaster didn't seem in the best of tempers this evening.

DR. STOCKMANN. That's his stomach. He has a very poor digestion.

HOVSTAD. I fancy it's the staff of the *Messenger* he finds it hardest to stomach.

MRS. STOCKMANN. I thought you got on well enough with him.

HOVSTAD. Oh, yes; but it's only a sort of armistice between us.

BILLING. That's it. That word sums up the situation.

DR. STOCKMANN. We must remember that

Peter is a lonely bachelor, poor devil! He has no home to be happy in; only business, business. And then all that cursëd weak tea he goes and pours down his throat! Now then, chairs round the table, boys! Katrina, shan't we have the toddy now?

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*going towards the dining-room*) I am just getting it.

DR. STOCKMANN. And you, Captain Horster, sit beside me on the sofa. So rare a guest as you—. Sit down, gentlemen, sit down. (*The men sit round the table;* MRS. STOCKMANN *brings in a tray with kettle, glasses, decanters, etc.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. Here you have it: here's arrak, and this is rum, and this cognac. Now, help yourselves.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*taking a glass*) So we will. (*While the toddy is being mixed.*) And now out with the cigars. Eilif, I think you know where the box is. And Morten, you may fetch my pipe. (*The boys go into the room on the right.*) I have a suspicion that Eilif sneaks a cigar now and then, but I pretend not to notice. (*Calls.*) And my smoking-cap, Morten! Katrina, can't you tell him where I left it. Ah, he's got it. (*The boys bring in the things.*) Now, friends, help yourselves. I stick to my pipe, you know;—this one has been on many a stormy journey with me, up there in the north. (*They clink glasses.*) Your health! Ah, I can tell you it's better fun to sit cosily here, safe from wind and weather.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*who sits knitting*) Do you sail soon, Captain Horster?

HORSTER. I hope to be ready for a start by next week.

MRS. STOCKMANN. And you're going to America?

HORSTER. Yes, that's the intention.

BILLING. But then you'll miss the election of the new Town Council.

HORSTER. Is there to be an election again?

BILLING. Didn't you know?

HORSTER. No, I don't trouble myself about those things.

BILLING. But I suppose you take an interest in public affairs?

HORSTER. No, I don't understand anything about them.

BILLING. All the same, one ought at least to vote.

HORSTER. Even those who don't understand anything about it?

BILLING. Understand? Why, what do you mean by that? Society is like a ship: every man must put his hand to the helm.

HORSTER. That may be all right on shore; but at sea it wouldn't do at all.

HOVSTAD. It's remarkable how little sailors care about public affairs as a rule.

BILLING. Most extraordinary.

DR. STOCKMANN. Sailors are like birds of passage; they are at home both in the south and in the north. So it behoves the rest of us to be all the more energetic, Mr. Hovstad. Will there be anything of public interest in the *People's Messenger* to-morrow?

HOVSTAD. Nothing of local interest. But the day after to-morrow I think of printing your article—

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh confound it, that article! No, you'll have to hold it over.

HOVSTAD. Really? We happen to have plenty of space, and I should say this was the very time for it—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes, you may be right; but you must hold it over all the same. I shall explain to you by-and-by. (PETRA, *wearing a hat and cloak, and with a number of exercise-books under her arm, enters from the hall.*)

PETRA. Good evening.

DR. STOCKMANN. Good evening, Petra. Is that you? (*General greetings.* PETRA *puts her cloak, hat, and books on a chair by the door.*)

PETRA. Here you all are, enjoying yourselves, while I've been out slaving.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well then, you come and enjoy yourself too.

BILLING. May I mix you a little—?

PETRA. (*coming towards the table*) Thank you, I'd rather help myself—you always make it too strong. By the way, father, I have a letter for you. (*Goes to the chair where her things are lying.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. A letter! From whom?

PETRA. (*searching in the pocket of her cloak*) I got it from the postman just as I was going out—

DR. STOCKMANN. (*rising and going towards her*) And you only bring it to me now?

PETRA. I really hadn't time to run up again. Here it is.

DR STOCKMANN. (*seizing the letter*) Let me see, let me see, child. (*Reads the address.*) Yes; this is it—!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Is it the one you have been so anxious about, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes it is. I must go at once. Where shall I find a light, Katrina? Is there no lamp in my study again!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes—the lamp is lighted. It's on the writing-table.

DR. STOCKMANN. Good, good. Excuse me one moment—(*He goes into the room on the right.*)

PETRA. What can it be, mother?

MRS. STOCKMANN. I don't know. For the last few days he has been continually on the look-out for the postman.

BILLING. Probably a country patient—

PETRA. Poor father! He'll soon have far too much to do. (*Mixes her toddy.*) Ah, this will taste good!

HOVSTAD. Have you been teaching in the night school as well to-day?

PETRA. (*sipping from her glass*) Two hours.

BILLING. And four hours in the morning at the institute—

PETRA. (*sitting down by the table*) Five hours.

MRS. STOCKMANN. And I see you have exercises to correct this evening.

PETRA. Yes, a heap of them.

HORSTER. It seems to me you have plenty to do, too.

PETRA. Yes; but I like it. You feel so delightfully tired after it.

BILLING. Do you like that?

PETRA. Yes, for then you sleep so well.

MORTEN. I say, Petra, you must be a great sinner.

PETRA. A sinner?

MORTEN. Yes, if you work so hard. Mr. Rörlund says work is a punishment for our sins.

EILIF. (*contemptuously*) Bosh! What a silly you are, to believe such stuff as that.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Come come, Eilif.

BILLING. (*laughing*) Capital, capital!

HOVSTAD. Should you not like to work so hard, Morten?

MORTEN. No, I shouldn't.

HOVSTAD. Then what will you do with yourself in the world?

MORTEN. I should like to be a Viking.

EILIF. But then you'd have to be a heathen.

MORTEN. Well, so I would.

BILLING. There I agree with you, Morten! I say just the same thing.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*making a sign to him*) No, no, Mr. Billing, I'm sure you don't.

BILLING. Strike me dead but I do, though. I am a heathen, and I'm proud of it. You'll see we shall all be heathens soon.

MORTEN. And shall we be able to do anything we like then?

BILLING. Well, you see, Morten—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Now run away, boys; I'm sure you have lessons to prepare for to-morrow.

EILIF. You might let me stay just a little longer—

MRS. STOCKMANN. No, you must go too. Be off, both of you. (*The boys say good-night and go into the room on the left.*)

HOVSTAD. Do you really think it can hurt the boys to hear these things?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Well, I don't know; I don't like it.

PETRA. Really, mother, I think you are quite wrong there.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Perhaps. But I don't like it—not here, at home.

PETRA. There's no end of hypocrisy both at home and at school. At home you must hold your tongue, and at school you have to stand up and tell lies to the children.

HORSTER. Have you to tell lies?

PETRA. Yes; do you think we don't have to tell them many and many a thing we don't believe ourselves?

BILLING. Ah, that's too true.

PETRA. If only I could afford it, I should start a school myself, and things should be very different there.

BILLING. Oh, afford it—!

HORSTER. If you really think of doing that, Miss Stockmann, I shall be delighted to let you have a room at my place. You know my father's old house is nearly empty; there's a great big dining-room on the ground floor—

PETRA. (*laughing*) Oh, thank you very

much—but I'm afraid it won't come to anything.

HOVSTAD. No, I fancy Miss Petra is more likely to go over to journalism. By the way, have you had time to look into the English novel you promised to translate for us?

PETRA. Not yet. But you shall have it in good time. (DR. STOCKMANN *enters from his room, with the letter open in his hand.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*flourishing the letter*) Here's news, I can tell you, that will waken up the town!

BILLING. News?

MRS. STOCKMANN. What news?

DR. STOCKMANN. A great discovery, Katrina!

HOVSTAD. Indeed?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Made by you?

DR. STOCKMANN. Precisely—by me! (*Walks up and down.*) Now let them go on accusing me of fads and crack-brained notions. But they won't dare to! Ha-ha! I tell you they won't dare!

PETRA. Do tell us what it is, father.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, well, give me time, and you shall hear all about it. If only I had Peter here now! This just shows how we men can go about forming judgments like the blindest moles—

HOVSTAD. What do you mean, doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*stopping beside the table*) Isn't it the general opinion that our town is a healthy place?

HOVSTAD. Of course.

DR. STOCKMANN. A quite exceptionally healthy place, indeed—a place to be warmly recommended, both to invalids and people in health—

MRS. STOCKMANN. My dear Thomas—

DR. STOCKMANN. And assuredly we haven't failed to recommend and belaud it. I've sung its praises again and again, both in the *Messenger* and in pamphlets—

HOVSTAD. Well, what then?

DR. STOCKMANN. These Baths, that we have called the pulse of the town, its vital nerve, and—and the devil knows what else—

BILLING. "Our city's palpitating heart," I once ventured to call them in a convivial moment—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, I daresay. Well—do you know what they really are, these mighty, magnificent, belauded Baths, that have cost so much money—do you know what they are?

HOVSTAD. No, what are they?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do tell us.

DR. STOCKMANN. Simply a pestiferous hole.

PETRA. The Baths, father?

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*at the same time*) Our Baths!

HOVSTAD. (*also at the same time*) But, Doctor—!

BILLING. Oh, it's incredible!

DR. STOCKMANN. I tell you the whole place is a poisonous whited-sepulchre; noxious in the highest degree! All that filth up there in the Mill Dale—the stuff that smells so horribly—taints the water in the feed-pipes of the Pump-Room; and the same accursed poisonous refuse oozes out by the beach—

HOVSTAD. Where the sea-baths are?

DR. STOCKMANN. Exactly.

HOVSTAD. But how are you so sure of all this, Doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN. I've investigated the whole thing as conscientiously as possible. I've long had my suspicions about it. Last year we had some extraordinary cases of illness among the patients—both typhoid and gastric attacks—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, I remember.

DR. STOCKMANN. We thought at the time that the visitors had brought the infection with them; but afterwards—last winter—I began to question that. So I set about testing the water as well as I could.

MRS. STOCKMANN. It was that you were working so hard at!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, you may well say I've worked, Katrina. But here, you know, I hadn't the necessary scientific appliances; so I sent samples both of our drinking-water and of our sea-water to the University, for exact analysis by a chemist.

HOVSTAD. And you have received his report?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*showing letter*) Here it is! And it proves beyond dispute the presence of putrefying organic matter in the water—millions of infusoria. It's absolutely pernicious to health, whether used internally or externally.

MRS. STOCKMANN. What a blessing you found it out in time.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, you may well say that.

HOVSTAD. And what do you intend to do now, Doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, to set things right, of course.

HOVSTAD. You think it can be done, then?

DR. STOCKMANN. It must be done. Else the whole Baths are useless, ruined. But there's no fear. I am quite clear as to what is required.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, my dear Thomas, why should you have made such a secret of all this?

DR. STOCKMANN. Would you have had me rush all over the town and chatter about it, before I was quite certain? No, thank you; I'm not so mad as that.

PETRA. But to us at home—

DR. STOCKMANN. I couldn't say a word to a living soul. But to-morrow you may look in at the Badger's—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, well, at your grandfather's. The old fellow will be astonished! He thinks I'm not quite right in my head—yes, and plenty of others think the same, I've noticed. But now these good people shall see—yes, they shall see now! (*Walks up and down rubbing his hands.*) What a stir there will be in the town, Katrina! Just think of it! All the water-pipes will have to be relaid.

HOVSTAD. (*rising*) All the water-pipes—?

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, of course. The intake is too low down; it must be moved much higher up.

PETRA. So you were right, after all.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, do you remember, Petra? I wrote against it when they were beginning the works. But no one would listen to me then. Now, you may be sure, I shall give them my full broadside—for of course I've prepared a statement for the Directors; it has been lying ready a whole week; I've only been waiting for this report. (*Points to letter.*) But now they shall have it at once. (*Goes into his room and returns with a MS. in his hand.*) See! Four closely-written sheets! And I'll enclose the report. A newspaper, Katrina! Get me something to wrap them up in. There—that's it. Give it to—to—(*Stamps.*)—what the devil's her name? Give it to the girl, I mean, and tell her to take it at once to the Burgomaster. (MRS. STOCKMANN *goes out with the packet through the dining-room.*)

PETRA. What do you think Uncle Peter will say, father?

DR. STOCKMANN. What should he say? He can't possibly be otherwise than pleased that so important a fact has been brought to light.

HOVSTAD. I suppose you will let me put a short announcement of your discovery in the *Messenger*.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, I shall be much obliged if you will.

HOVSTAD. It is highly desirable that the public should know about it as soon as possible.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, certainly.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*returning*) She's gone with it.

BILLING. Strike me dead if you won't be the first man in the town, Doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*walks up and down in high glee*) Oh, nonsense! After all, I have done no more than my duty. I've been a lucky treasure-hunter, that's all. But all the same—

BILLING. Hovstad, don't you think the town ought to get up a torchlight procession in honour of Dr. Stockmann?

HOVSTAD. I shall certainly propose it.

BILLING. And I'll talk it over with Aslaksen.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, my dear friends; let all such claptrap alone. I won't hear of anything of the sort. And if the Directors should want to raise my salary, I won't accept it. I tell you, Katrina, I will not accept it.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You are quite right, Thomas.

PETRA. (*raising her glass*) Your health, father!

HOVSTAD *and* BILLING. Your health, your health, Doctor!

HORSTER. (*clinking glasses with the* DOCTOR) I hope you may have nothing but joy of your discovery.

DR. STOCKMANN. Thanks, thanks, my dear friends! I can't tell you how happy I am—! Oh, what a blessing it is to feel that you have deserved well of your native town and your

fellow citizens. Hurrah, Katrina! (*He puts both his arms round her neck, and whirls her round with him.* MRS. STOCKMANN *screams and struggles. A burst of laughter, applause, and cheers for the* DOCTOR. *The boys thrust their heads in at the door.*)

CURTAIN

ACT SECOND

The DOCTOR'S *sitting-room. The dining-room door is closed. Morning.*

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*enters from the dining-room with a sealed letter in her hand, goes to the foremost door on the right, and peeps in*) Are you there, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*within*) Yes, I have just come in. (*Enters.*) What is it?

MRS. STOCKMANN. A letter from your brother. (*Hands it to him.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Aha, let us see. (*Opens the envelope and reads.*) "The MS. sent me is returned herewith—" (*Reads on, mumbling to himself.*) H'm—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Well, what does he say?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*putting the paper in his pocket*) Nothing; only that he'll come up himself about midday.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Then be sure you remember to stay at home.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, I can easily manage that; I've finished my morning's visits.

MRS. STOCKMANN. I am very curious to know how he takes it.

DR. STOCKMANN. You'll see he won't be overpleased that it is I that have made the discovery, and not he himself.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Ah, that's just what I'm afraid of.

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course at bottom he'll be glad. But still—Peter is damnably unwilling that any one but himself should do anything for the good of the town.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do you know, Thomas, I think you might stretch a point, and share the honour with him. Couldn't it appear that it was he that put you on the track—?

DR. STOCKMANN. By all means, for aught I care. If only I can get things put straight—(*Old* MORTEN KIIL *puts his head in at the hall door, and asks slyly.*)

MORTEN KIIL. Is it—is it true?

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*going towards him*) Father—is that you?

DR. STOCKMANN. Hallo, father-in-law! Good morning, good morning.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do come in.

MORTEN KIIL. Yes, if it's true; if not, I'm off again.

DR. STOCKMANN. If what is true?

MORTEN KIIL. This crazy business about the water-works. Now, is it true?

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, of course it is. But how came you to hear of it?

MORTEN KIIL. (*coming in*) Petra looked in on her way to the school—

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, did she?

MORTEN KIIL. Ay ay—and she told me—. I thought she was only making game of me; but that's not like Petra either.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, indeed; how could you think so?

MORTEN KIIL. Oh, you can never be sure of anybody. You may be made a fool of before you know where you are. So it is true, after all?

DR. STOCKMANN. Most certainly it is. Do sit down, father-in-law. (*Forces him down on the sofa.*) Now isn't it a real blessing for the town—?

MORTEN KIIL. (*suppressing his laughter*) A blessing for the town?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, that I made this discovery in time—

MORTEN KIIL. (*as before*) Ay, ay, ay!—Well, I could never have believed that you would play monkey-tricks with your very own brother.

DR. STOCKMANN. Monkey-tricks!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Why, father dear—

MORTEN KIIL. (*resting his hands and chin on the top of his stick and blinking slyly at the* DOCTOR) What was it again? Wasn't it that some animals had got into the water-pipes?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes; infusorial animals.

MORTEN KIIL. And any number of these animals had got in, Petra said—whole swarms of them.

DR. STOCKMANN. Certainly; hundreds of thousands.

MORTEN KIIL. But no one can see them—isn't that it?

DR. STOCKMANN. Quite right; no one can see them.

MORTEN KIIL. (*with a quiet, chuckling laugh*) I'll be damned if that isn't the best thing I've heard of you yet.

DR. STOCKMANN. What do you mean?

MORTEN KIIL. But you'll never in this world make the Burgomaster take in anything of the sort.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, that we shall see.

MORTEN KIIL. Do you really think he'll be so crazy?

DR. STOCKMANN. I hope the whole town will be so crazy.

MORTEN KIIL. The whole town! Well, I don't say but it may. But it serves them right; it'll teach them a lesson. They wanted to be so much cleverer than we old fellows. They hounded me out of the Town Council. Yes; I tell you they hounded me out like a dog, that they did. But now it's their turn. Just you keep up the game with them, Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but, father-in-law—

MORTEN KIIL. Keep it up, I say. (*Rising.*) If you can make the Burgomaster and his gang eat humble pie, I'll give a hundred crowns straight away to the poor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Come, that's good of you.

MORTEN KIIL. Of course I've little enough to throw away; but if you can manage that, I shall certainly remember the poor at Christmas-time, to the tune of fifty crowns. (HOVSTAD *enters from hall.*)

HOVSTAD. Good morning! (*Pausing.*) Oh! I beg your pardon—

DR. STOCKMANN. Not at all. Come in, come in.

MORTEN KIIL. (*chuckling again*) He! Is he in it too?

HOVSTAD. What do you mean?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, of course he is.

MORTEN KIIL. I might have known it! It's to go into the papers. Ah, you're the one, Stockmann! Do you two lay your heads together; I'm off.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh no; don't go yet, father-in-law.

MORTEN KIIL. No, I'm off now. Play them all the monkey-tricks you can think of. Deuce take me but you shan't lose by it. (*He goes,* MRS. STOCKMANN *accompanying him.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*laughing*) What do you think—? The old fellow doesn't believe a word of all this about the water-works.

HOVSTAD. Was that what he—?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes; that was what we were talking about. And I daresay you have come on the same business?

HOVSTAD. Yes. Have you a moment to spare, Doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN. As many as you like, my dear fellow.

HOVSTAD. Have you heard anything from the Burgomaster?

DR. STOCKMANN. Not yet. He'll be here presently.

HOVSTAD. I have been thinking the matter over since last evening.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well?

HOVSTAD. To you, as a doctor and a man of science, this business of the water-works appears an isolated affair. I daresay it hasn't occurred to you that a good many other things are bound up with it?

DR. STOCKMANN. Indeed! In what way? Let us sit down, my dear fellow.—No; there, on the sofa. (HOVSTAD *sits on sofa: the* DOCTOR *in an easy-chair on the other side of the table.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, so you think—?

HOVSTAD. You said yesterday that the water is polluted by impurities in the soil.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, undoubtedly; the mischief comes from that poisonous swamp up in the Mill Dale.

HOVSTAD. Excuse me, Doctor, but I think it comes from a very different swamp.

DR. STOCKMANN. What swamp may that be?

HOVSTAD. The swamp in which our whole municipal life is rotting.

DR. STOCKMANN. The devil, Mr. Hovstad! What notion is this you've got hold of?

HOVSTAD. All the affairs of the town have gradually drifted into the hands of a pack of bureaucrats—

DR. STOCKMANN. Come now, they're not all bureaucrats.

HOVSTAD. No; but those who are not are the friends and adherents of those who are. We are entirely under the thumb of a ring

of wealthy men, men of old family and position in the town.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but they are also men of ability and insight.

HOVSTAD. Did they show ability and insight when they laid the water-pipes where they are?

DR. STOCKMANN. No; that, of course, was a piece of stupidity. But that will be set right now.

HOVSTAD. Do you think it will go smoothly?

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, smoothly or not, it will have to be done.

HOVSTAD. Yes, if the press exerts its influence.

DR. STOCKMANN. Not at all necessary, my dear fellow; I am sure my brother—

HOVSTAD. Excuse me, Doctor, but I must tell you that I think of taking the matter up.

DR. STOCKMANN. In the paper?

HOVSTAD. Yes. When I took over the *People's Messenger*, I was determined to break up the ring of obstinate old blockheads who held everything in their hands.

DR. STOCKMANN. But you told me yourself what came of it. You nearly ruined the paper.

HOVSTAD. Yes, at that time we had to draw in our horns, that's true enough. The whole Bath scheme might have fallen through if these men had been sent about their business. But now the Baths are an accomplished fact, and we can get on without these august personages.

DR. STOCKMANN. Get on without them, yes; but still we owe them a great deal.

HOVSTAD. The debt shall be duly acknowledged. But a journalist of my democratic tendencies cannot let such an opportunity slip through his fingers. We must explode the tradition of official infallibility. That rubbish must be got rid of, like every other superstition.

DR. STOCKMANN. There I am with you with all my heart, Mr. Hovstad. If it's a superstition, away with it!

HOVSTAD. I should be sorry to attack the Burgomaster, as he is your brother. But I know you think with me—the truth before all other considerations.

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, of course. (*Vehemently.*) But still—! but still—!

HOVSTAD. You mustn't think ill of me. I am neither more self-interested nor more ambitious than other men.

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, my dear fellow—who says you are?

HOVSTAD. I come of humble folk, as you know; and I have had ample opportunities of seeing what the lower classes really require. And that is to have a share in the direction of public affairs, Doctor. That is what develops ability and knowledge and self-respect—

DR. STOCKMANN. I understand that perfectly.

HOVSTAD. Yes; and I think a journalist incurs a heavy responsibility if he lets slip a chance of helping to emancipate the downtrodden masses. I know well enough that our oligarchy will denounce me as an agitator, and so forth; but what do I care? If only my conscience is clear, I—

DR. STOCKMANN. Just so, just so, my dear Mr. Hovstad. But still—deuce take it—! (*A knock at the door.*) Come in! (ASLAKSEN, *the printer, appears at the door leading to the hall. He is humbly but respectably dressed in black, wears a white necktie, slightly crumpled, and has a silk hat and gloves in his hand.*)

ASLAKSEN. (*bowing*) I beg pardon, Doctor, for making so bold—

DR. STOCKMANN. (*rising*) Hallo! If it isn't Mr. Aslaksen!

ASLAKSEN. Yes, it's me, Doctor.

HOVSTAD. (*rising*) Is it me you want, Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN. No, not at all. I didn't know you were here. No, it's the Doctor himself—

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, what can I do for you?

ASLAKSEN. Is it true, what Mr. Billing tells me, that you're going to get us a better set of water-works?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, for the Baths.

ASLAKSEN. Of course, of course. Then I just looked in to say that I'll back up the movement with all my might.

HOVSTAD. (*to the* DOCTOR) You see!

DR. STOCKMANN. I'm sure I thank you heartily; but—

ASLAKSEN. You may find it no such bad thing to have us small middle-class men at

your back. We form what you may call a compact majority in the town—when we really make up our minds, that's to say. And it's always well to have the majority with you, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. No doubt, no doubt; but I can't conceive that any special measures will be necessary in this case. I should think in so clear and straightforward a matter—

ASLAKSEN. Yes, but all the same, it can do no harm. I know the local authorities very well—the powers that be are not over ready to adopt suggestions from outsiders. So I think it wouldn't be amiss if we made some sort of a demonstration.

HOVSTAD. Precisely my opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN. A demonstration, you say? But in what way would you demonstrate?

ASLAKSEN. Of course with great moderation, Doctor. I always insist upon moderation; for moderation is a citizen's first virtue —at least that's my way of thinking.

DR. STOCKMANN. We all know that, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. Yes, I think my moderation is generally recognised. And this affair of the water-works is very important for us small middle-class men. The Baths bid fair to become, as you might say, a little gold-mine for the town. We shall all have to live by the Baths, especially we house-owners. So we want to support the Baths all we can; and as I am Chairman of the House-owners' Association—

DR. STOCKMANN. Well—?

ASLAKSEN. And as I'm an active worker for the Temperance[1] Society—of course you know, Doctor, that I'm a temperance man?

DR. STOCKMANN. To be sure, to be sure.

ASLAKSEN. Well, you'll understand that I come in contact with a great many people. And as I'm known to be a prudent and law-abiding citizen, as you yourself remarked, Doctor, I have a certain influence in the town, and hold some power in my hands—though I say it that shouldn't.

DR. STOCKMANN. I know that very well, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. Well then, you see—it would be easy for me to get up an address, if it came to a pinch.

DR. STOCKMANN. An address?

ASLAKSEN. Yes, a kind of vote of thanks to you, from the citizens of the town, for your action in a matter of such general concern. Of course it will have to be drawn up with all fitting moderation, so as to give no offence to the authorities and parties in power. But so long as we're careful about that, no one can take it ill, I should think.

HOVSTAD. Well, even if they didn't particularly like it—

ASLAKSEN. No, no, no; no offence to the powers that be, Mr. Hovstad. No opposition to people that can take it out of us again so easily. I've had enough of that in my time; no good ever comes of it. But no one can object to the free but temperate expression of a citizen's opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*shaking his hand*) I can't tell you, my dear Mr. Aslaksen, how heartily it delights me to find so much support among my fellow townsmen. I'm so happy—so happy! Come, you'll have a glass of sherry? Eh?

ASLAKSEN. No, thank you; I never touch spirituous liquors.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, then, a glass of beer —what do you say to that?

ASLAKSEN. Thanks, not that either, Doctor. I never take anything so early in the day. And now I'll be off round the town, and talk to some of the house-owners, and prepare public opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN. It's extremely kind of you, Mr. Aslaksen; but I really cannot get it into my head that all these preparations are necessary. The affair seems to me so simple and self-evident.

ASLAKSEN. The authorities always move slowly, Doctor—God forbid I should blame them for it—

HOVSTAD. We'll stir them up in the paper to-morrow, Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. No violence, Mr. Hovstad. Proceed with moderation, or you'll do nothing with them. Take my advice; I've picked up experience in the school of life.—And now I'll say good morning, Doctor. You know now that at least you have us small middle-class

[1] The word "måddehold," in Norwegian, means both "moderation" and "temperance."

men behind you, solid as a wall. You have the compact majority on your side, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Many thanks, my dear Mr. Aslaksen. (*Holds out his hand.*) Good-bye, good-bye.

ASLAKSEN. Are you coming to the office, Mr. Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. I shall come on presently. I have still one or two things to arrange.

ASLAKSEN. Very well. (*Bows and goes.* DR. STOCKMANN *accompanies him into the hall.*)

HOVSTAD. (*as the* DOCTOR *re-enters*) Well, what do you say to that, Doctor? Don't you think it is high time we should give all this weak-kneed, half-hearted cowardice a good shaking up?

DR. STOCKMANN. Are you speaking of Aslaksen?

HOVSTAD. Yes, I am. He's a decent enough fellow, but he's one of those who are sunk in the swamp. And most people here are just like him; they are forever wavering and wobbling from side to side; what with scruples and misgivings, they never dare advance a step.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but Aslaksen seems to me thoroughly well-intentioned.

HOVSTAD. There is one thing I value more than good intentions, and that is an attitude of manly self-reliance.

DR. STOCKMANN. There I am quite with you.

HOVSTAD. So I am going to seize this opportunity, and try whether I can't for once put a little grit into their good intentions. The worship of authority must be rooted up in this town. This gross, inexcusable blunder of the waterworks must be brought home clearly to every voter.

DR. STOCKMANN. Very well. If you think it's for the good of the community, so be it; but not till I have spoken to my brother.

HOVSTAD. At all events, I shall be writing my leader in the meantime. And if the Burgomaster won't take the matter up—

DR. STOCKMANN. But how can you conceive his refusing?

HOVSTAD. Oh, it's not inconceivable. And then—

DR. STOCKMANN. Well then, I promise you—; look here—in that case you may print my paper—put it in just as it is.

HOVSTAD. May I? Is that a promise?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*handing him the manuscript*) There it is; take it with you. You may as well read it in any case; you can return it to me afterwards.

HOVSTAD. Very good; I shall do so. And now, good-bye, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Good-bye, good-bye. You'll see it will all go smoothly, Mr. Hovstad —as smoothly as possible.

HOVSTAD. H'm—we shall see. (*Bows and goes out through the hall.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*going to the dining-room door and looking in*) Katrina! Hallo! are you back, Petra?

PETRA. (*entering*) Yes, I've just got back from school.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*entering*) Hasn't he been here yet?

DR. STOCKMANN. Peter? No; but I have been having a long talk with Hovstad. He's quite enthusiastic about my discovery. It turns out to be of much wider import than I thought at first. So he has placed his paper at my disposal, if I should require it.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do you think you will?

DR. STOCKMANN. Not I! But at the same time, one cannot but be proud to know that the enlightened, independent press is on one's side. And what do you think? I have had a visit from the Chairman of the House-owners' Association too.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Really? What did he want?

DR. STOCKMANN. To assure me of his support. They will all stand by me at a pinch. Katrina, do you know what I have behind me?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Behind you? No. What have you behind you?

DR. STOCKMANN. The compact majority!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh! Is that good for you, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, indeed; I should think it was good. (*Rubbing his hands as he walks up and down.*) Great God! what a delight it is to feel oneself in such brotherly unison with one's fellow townsmen?

PETRA. And to do so much that's good and useful, father!

DR. STOCKMANN. And all for one's native town, too!

MRS. STOCKMANN. There's the bell.

DR. STOCKMANN. That must be he. (*Knock at the door.*) Come in! (*Enter* BURGOMASTER *from the hall.*)

BURGOMASTER. Good morning.

DR. STOCKMANN. I'm glad to see you, Peter.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Good morning, brother-in-law. How are you?

BURGOMASTER. Oh, thanks, so-so. (*To the* DOCTOR.) Yesterday evening, after office hours, I received from you a dissertation upon the state of the water at the Baths.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes. Have you read it?

BURGOMASTER. I have.

DR. STOCKMANN. And what do you think of the affair?

BURGOMASTER. H'm— (*With a sidelong glance.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. Come, Petra. (*She and* PETRA *go into the room on the left.*)

BURGOMASTER. (*after a pause*) Was it necessary to make all these investigations behind my back?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, till I was absolutely certain, I—

BURGOMASTER. And are you absolutely certain now?

DR. STOCKMANN. My paper must surely have convinced you of that.

BURGOMASTER. Is it your intention to submit this statement to the Board of Directors, as a sort of official document?

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course. Something must be done in the matter, and that promptly.

BURGOMASTER. As usual, you use very strong expressions in your statement. Amongst other things, you say that what we offer our visitors is a slow poison.

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, Peter, what else can it be called? Only think—poisoned water both internally and externally! And that to poor invalids who come to us in all confidence, and pay us handsomely to cure them!

BURGOMASTER. And then you announce as your conclusion that we must build a sewer to carry off the alleged impurities from the Mill Dale, and must re-lay all the water-pipes.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes. Can you suggest any other plan?—I know of none.

BURGOMASTER. I found a pretext for looking in at the town engineer's this morning, and—in a half-jesting way—I mentioned these alterations as things we might possibly have to consider, at some future time.

DR. STOCKMANN. At some future time!

BURGOMASTER. Of course he smiled at what he thought my extravagance. Have you taken the trouble to think what your proposed alterations would cost? From what the engineer said, I gathered that the expenses would probably mount up to several hundred thousand crowns.

DR. STOCKMANN. So much as that?

BURGOMASTER. Yes. But that is not the worst. The work would take at least two years.

DR. STOCKMANN. Two years! Do you mean to say two whole years?

BURGOMASTER. At least. And what are we to do with the Baths in the meanwhile? Are we to close them? We should have no alternative. Do you think any one would come here, if it got abroad that the water was pestilential?

DR. STOCKMANN. But, Peter, that's precisely what it is.

BURGOMASTER. And all this now, just now, when the Baths are doing so well! Neighbouring towns, too, are not without their claims to rank as health-resorts. Do you think they would not at once set to work to divert the full stream of visitors to themselves? Undoubtedly they would; and we should be left stranded. We should probably have to give up the whole costly undertaking; and so you would have ruined your native town.

DR. STOCKMANN. I—ruined—!

BURGOMASTER. It is only through the Baths that the town has any future worth speaking of. You surely know that as well as I do.

DR. STOCKMANN. Then what do you think should be done?

BURGOMASTER. I have not succeeded in convincing myself that the condition of the water at the Baths is as serious as your statement represents.

DR. STOCKMANN. I tell you it's if anything

worse—or will be in the summer, when the hot weather sets in.

BURGOMASTER. I repeat that I believe you exaggerate greatly. A competent physician should know what measures to take—he should be able to obviate deleterious influences, and to counteract them in case they should make themselves unmistakably felt.

DR. STOCKMANN. Indeed—? And then—?

BURGOMASTER. The existing water-works are, once for all, a fact, and must naturally be treated as such. But when the time comes, the Directors will probably not be indisposed to consider whether it may not be possible, without unreasonable pecuniary sacrifices, to introduce certain improvements.

DR. STOCKMANN. And do you imagine I could ever be a party to such dishonesty?

BURGOMASTER. Dishonesty?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, it would be dishonesty —a fraud, a lie, an absolute crime against the public, against society as a whole!

BURGOMASTER I have not, as I before remarked, been able to convince myself that there is really any such imminent danger.

DR. STOCKMANN. You have! You must have! I know that my demonstration is absolutely clear and convincing. And you understand it perfectly, Peter, only you won't admit it. It was you who insisted that both the Bath-buildings and the water-works should be placed where they now are; and it's that—it's that damned blunder that you won't confess. Pshaw! Do you think I don't see through you?

BURGOMASTER. And even if it were so? If I do watch over my reputation with a certain anxiety, I do it for the good of the town. Without moral authority I cannot guide and direct affairs in the way I consider most conducive to the general welfare. Therefore—and on various other grounds—it is of great moment to me that your statement should not be submitted to the Board of Directors. It must be kept back, for the good of the community. Later on I will bring up the matter for discussion, and we will do the best we can quietly; but not a word, not a whisper, of this unfortunate business must come to the public ears.

DR. STOCKMANN. But it can't be prevented now, my dear Peter.

BURGOMASTER. It must and shall be prevented.

DR. STOCKMANN. It can't be, I tell you; far too many people know about it already.

BURGOMASTER. Know about it! Who? Surely not those fellows on the *People's Messenger*—?

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh yes; they know. The liberal, independent press will take good care that you do your duty.

BURGOMASTER. (*after a short pause*) You are an amazingly reckless man, Thomas. Have not you reflected what the consequences of this may be to yourself?

DR STOCKMANN. Consequences? — Consequences to me?

BURGOMASTER. Yes—to you and yours.

DR. STOCKMANN. What the devil do you mean?

BURGOMASTER. I believe I have always shown myself ready and willing to lend you a helping hand.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, you have, and I thank you for it.

BURGOMASTER. I ask for no thanks. Indeed, I was in some measure forced to act as I did —for my own sake. I always hoped I should be able to keep you a little in check, if I helped to improve your pecuniary position.

DR. STOCKMANN. What! So it was only for your own sake—!

BURGOMASTER. In a measure, I say. It is painful for a man in an official position, when his nearest relative goes and compromises himself time after time.

DR. STOCKMANN. And you think I do that?

BURGOMASTER. Yes, unfortunately, you do, without knowing it. Yours is a turbulent, unruly, rebellious spirit. And then you have an unhappy propensity for rushing into print upon every possible and impossible occasion. You no sooner hit upon an idea than you must needs write a newspaper article or a whole pamphlet about it.

DR. STOCKMANN. Isn't it a citizen's duty, when he has conceived a new idea, to communicate it to the public!

BURGOMASTER. Oh, the public has no need

for new ideas. The public gets on best with the good old recognised ideas it has already.

DR. STOCKMANN. You say that right out!

BURGOMASTER. Yes, I must speak frankly to you for once. Hitherto I have tried to avoid it, for I know how irritable you are; but now I must tell you the truth, Thomas. You have no conception how much you injure yourself by your officiousness. You complain of the authorities, ay, of the Government itself—you cry them down and maintain that you have been slighted, persecuted. But what else can you expect, with your impossible disposition?

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, indeed! So I am impossible, am I?

BURGOMASTER. Yes, Thomas, you are an impossible man to work with. I know that from experience. You have no consideration for any one or any thing: you seem quite to forget that you have me to thank for your position as medical officer of the Baths—

DR. STOCKMANN. It was mine by right! Mine, and no one else's! I was the first to discover the town's capabilities as a watering-place; I saw them, and, at that time, I alone. For years I fought single-handed for this idea of mine; I wrote and wrote—

BURGOMASTER. No doubt; but then the right time had not come. Of course, in that out-of-the-world corner, you could not judge of that. As soon as the propitious moment arrived, I—and others—took the matter in hand—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and you went and bungled the whole of my glorious plan. Oh, we see now what a set of wiseacres you were!

BURGOMASTER. All *I* can see is that you are again seeking an outlet for your pugnacity. You want to make an onslaught on your superiors—that is an old habit of yours. You cannot endure any authority over you; you look askance at any one who holds a higher post than your own; you regard him as a personal enemy—and then you care nothing what kind of weapon you use against him. But now I have shown you how much is at stake for the town, and consequently for me too. And therefore I warn you, Thomas, that I am inexorable in the demand I am about to make of you!

DR. STOCKMANN. What demand?

BURGOMASTER. As you have not had the sense to refrain from chattering to outsiders about this delicate business, which should have been kept an official secret, of course it cannot now be hushed up. All sorts of rumours will get abroad, and evil-disposed persons will invent all sorts of additions to them. It will therefore be necessary for you publicly to contradict these rumours.

DR. STOCKMANN. I! How? I don't understand you?

BURGOMASTER. We expect that, after further investigation, you will come to the conclusion that the affair is not nearly so serious or pressing as you had at first imagined.

DR. STOCKMANN. Aha! So you expect that?

BURGOMASTER. Furthermore, we expect you to express your confidence that the Board of Directors will thoroughly and conscientiously carry out all measures for the remedying of any possible defects.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but that you'll never be able to do, so long as you go on tinkering and patching. I tell you that, Peter; and it is my deepest, sincerest conviction—

BURGOMASTER. As an official, you have no right to hold any individual conviction.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*starting*) No right to—?

BURGOMASTER. As an official, I say. In your private capacity, of course, it is another matter. But as a subordinate official of the Baths, you have no right to express any conviction at issue with that of your superiors.

DR. STOCKMANN. This is too much! I, a doctor, a man of science, have no right to—!

BURGOMASTER. The matter in question is not a purely scientific one; it is a complex affair, it has both a technical and an economic side.

DR. STOCKMANN. What the devil do I care what it is! I will be free to speak my mind upon any subject under the sun!

BURGOMASTER. As you please—so long as it does not concern the Baths. With them we forbid you to meddle.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*shouts*) You forbid—! You! A set of—

BURGOMASTER. *I* forbid it—*I*, your chief; and when I issue an order, you have simply to obey.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*controlling himself*) Upon my word, Peter, if you weren't my brother —

PETRA. (*tears open the door*) Father, you shan't submit to this!

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*following her*) Petra, Petra!

BURGOMASTER. Ah! So we have been listening!

MRS. STOCKMANN. The partition is so thin, we couldn't help—

PETRA. I stood and listened on purpose.

BURGOMASTER. Well, on the whole, I am not sorry—

DR. STOCKMANN. (*coming nearer to him*) You spoke to me of forbidding and obeying—

BURGOMASTER. You have forced me to adopt that tone.

DR. STOCKMANN. And am I to give myself the lie, in a public declaration?

BURGOMASTER. We consider it absolutely necessary that you should issue a statement in the terms indicated.

DR. STOCKMANN. And if I do not obey?

BURGOMASTER. Then we shall ourselves put forth a statement to reassure the public.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well and good; then I shall write against you. I shall stick to my point and prove that *I* am right, and you wrong. And what will you do then?

BURGOMASTER. Then I shall be unable to prevent your dismissal.

DR. STOCKMANN. What—!

PETRA. Father! Dismissal!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Dismissal!

BURGOMASTER. Your dismissal from the Baths. I shall be compelled to move that notice be given you at once, and that you have henceforth no connection whatever with the Baths.

DR. STOCKMANN. You would dare to do that!

BURGOMASTER. It is you who are playing the daring game.

PETRA. Uncle, this is a shameful way to treat a man like father!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do be quiet, Petra!

BURGOMASTER. (*looking at* PETRA) Aha! We have opinions of our own already, eh? To be sure, to be sure! (*To* MRS. STOCKMANN.) Sister-in-law, you are presumably the most rational member of this household. Use all your influence with your husband; try to make him realise what all this will involve both for his family—

DR. STOCKMANN. My family concerns myself alone!

BURGOMASTER. —both for his family, I say, and for the town he lives in.

DR. STOCKMANN. It is I that have the real good of the town at heart! I want to lay bare the evils that, sooner or later, must come to light. Ah! You shall see whether I love my native town.

BURGOMASTER. You, who, in your blind obstinacy, want to cut off the town's chief source of prosperity!

DR. STOCKMANN. That source is poisoned, man! Are you mad? We live by trafficking in filth and corruption! The whole of our flourishing social life is rooted in a lie!

BURGOMASTER. Idle fancies—or worse. The man who scatters broadcast such offensive insinuations against his native place must be an enemy of society.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*going towards him*) You dare to—.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*throwing herself between them*) Thomas!

PETRA. (*seizing her father's arms*) Keep calm, father!

BURGOMASTER. I will not expose myself to violence. You have had your warning now. Reflect upon what is due to yourself and to your family. Good-bye. (*He goes.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*walking up and down*) And I must put up with such treatment! In my own house, Katrina! What do you say to that!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Indeed, it's a shame and a disgrace, Thomas—

PETRA. Oh, if I could only get hold of uncle—!

DR. STOCKMANN. It's my own fault. I ought to have stood up against them long ago—to have shown my teeth—and used them too!—And to be called an enemy of society! Me! I won't bear it; by Heaven, I won't!

MRS. STOCKMANN. But my dear Thomas, after all, your brother has the power—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but I have the right.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Ah yes, right, right! What good does it do to have the right, if you haven't any might?

PETRA. Oh, mother—how can you talk so?

DR. STOCKMANN. What! No good, in a free

community, to have right on your side? What an absurd idea, Katrina! And besides—haven't I the free and independent press before me—and the compact majority at my back? That is might enough, I should think!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Why, good heavens, Thomas! you're surely not thinking of—?

DR. STOCKMANN. What am I not thinking of?

MRS. STOCKMANN. —of setting yourself up against your brother, I mean.

DR. STOCKMANN. What the devil would you have me do, if not stick to what is right and true?

PETRA. Yes, that's what I should like to know?

MRS. STOCKMANN. But it will be of no earthly use. If they won't, they won't.

DR. STOCKMANN. Ho-ho, Katrina! just wait a while, and you shall see whether I can fight my battles to the end.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, to the end of getting your dismissal; that is what will happen.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well then, I shall at any rate have done my duty towards the public, towards society—I who am called an enemy of society!

MRS. STOCKMANN. But towards your family, Thomas? Towards us at home? Do you think that is doing your duty towards those who are dependent on you?

PETRA. Oh, mother, don't always think first of us.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, it's easy for you to talk; you can stand alone if need be.—But remember the boys, Thomas; and think a little of yourself too, and of me—

DR. STOCKMANN. You're surely out of your senses, Katrina! If I were to be such a pitiful coward as to knuckle under to this Peter and his confounded crew—should I ever have another happy hour in all my life?

MRS. STOCKMANN. I don't know about that; but God preserve us from the happiness we shall all of us have if you persist in defying them. There you will be again, with nothing to live on, with no regular income. I should have thought we had had enough of that in the old days. Remember them, Thomas; think of what it all means.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*struggling with himself and clenching his hands*) And this is what these jacks-in-office can bring upon a free and honest man! Isn't it revolting, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, no doubt they are treating you shamefully. But God knows there's plenty of injustice one must just submit to in this world.—Here are the boys, Thomas. Look at them! What is to become of them? Oh no, no! you can never have the heart—(EILIF *and* MORTEN, *with school-books, have meanwhile entered.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. The boys—! (*With a sudden access of firmness and decision.*) Never, though the whole earth should crumble, will I bow my neck beneath the yoke. (*Goes towards his room.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*following him*) Thomas —what are you going to do?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*at the door*) I must have the right to look my boys in the face when they have grown into free men. (*Goes into his room.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*bursts into tears*) Ah, God help us all!

PETRA. Father is true to the core. He will never give in! (*The boys ask wonderingly what it all means;* PETRA *signs to them to be quiet.*)

CURTAIN

ACT THIRD

The Editor's Room of the "People's Messenger." In the background, to the left, an entrance-door; to the right another door, with glass panes, through which can be seen the composing-room. A door in the right-hand wall. In the middle of the room a large table covered with papers, newspapers, and books. In front, on the left, a window, and by it a desk with a high stool. A couple of arm-chairs beside the table; some other chairs along the walls. The room is dingy and cheerless, the furniture shabby, the arm-chairs dirty and torn. In the composing-room are seen a few compositors at work; further back, a hand-press in operation.

HOVSTAD *is seated at the desk, writing. Presently* BILLING *enters from the right, with the* DOCTOR'S *manuscript in his hand.*

BILLING. Well, I must say—!

HOVSTAD. (*writing*) Have you read it through?

BILLING. (*laying the MS. on the desk*) Yes, I should think I had.

HOVSTAD. Don't you think the Doctor comes out strong?

BILLING. Strong! Why, strike me dead if he isn't crushing! Every word falls like a—well, like a sledge-hammer.

HOVSTAD. Yes, but these fellows won't collapse at the first blow.

BILLING. True enough; but we'll keep on hammering away, blow after blow, till the whole officialdom comes crashing down. As I sat in there reading that article, I seemed to hear the revolution thundering afar.

HOVSTAD. (*turning round*) Hush! Don't let Aslaksen hear that.

BILLING. (*in a lower voice*) Aslaksen's a white-livered, cowardly fellow, without a spark of manhood in him. But this time you'll surely carry your point? Eh? You'll print the Doctor's paper?

HOVSTAD. Yes, if only the Burgomaster doesn't give in—

BILLING. That would be deuced annoying.

HOVSTAD. Well, whatever happens, fortunately we can turn the situation to account. If the Burgomaster won't agree to the Doctor's proposal, he'll have all the small middle-class down upon him—all the House-owners' Association, and the rest of them. And if he does agree to it, he'll fall out with the whole crew of big shareholders in the Baths, who have hitherto been his main support—

BILLING. Yes, of course; for no doubt they'll have to fork out a lot of money—

HOVSTAD. You may take your oath on that. And then, don't you see, when the ring is broken up, we'll din it into the public day by day that the Burgomaster is incompetent in every respect, and that all responsible positions in the town, the whole municipal government in short, must be entrusted to men of liberal ideas.

BILLING. Strike me dead if that isn't the square truth! I see it—I see it: we are on the eve of a revolution! (*A knock at the door.*)

HOVSTAD. Hush! (*Calls.*) Come in! (DR. STOCKMANN *enters from the back, left.*)

HOVSTAD. (*going towards him*) Ah, here is the Doctor. Well?

DR. STOCKMANN. Print away, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD. So it has come to that?

BILLING. Hurrah!

DR. STOCKMANN. Print away, I tell you. To be sure it has come to that. Since they will have it so, they must. War is declared, Mr. Billing!

BILLING. War to the knife, say I! War to the death, Doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN. This article is only the beginning. I have four or five others sketched out in my head already. But where do you keep Aslaksen?

BILLING. (*calling into the printing-room*) Aslaksen! just come here a moment.

HOVSTAD. Four or five more articles, eh? On the same subject?

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh no—not at all, my dear fellow. No; they will deal with quite different matters. But they're all of a piece with the water-works and sewer question. One thing leads to another. It's just like beginning to pick at an old house, don't you know?

BILLING. Strike me dead, but that's true! You feel you can't leave off till you've pulled the whole lumber-heap to pieces.

ASLAKSEN. (*enters from the printing-room*) Pulled to pieces! Surely the Doctor isn't thinking of pulling the Baths to pieces?

HOVSTAD. Not at all. Don't be alarmed.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, we were talking of something quite different. Well, what do you think of my article, Mr. Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. I think it's simply a masterpiece—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, isn't it? I'm glad you think so—very glad.

HOVSTAD. It's so clear and to the point. One doesn't in the least need to be a specialist to understand the gist of it. I am certain every intelligent man will be on your side.

ASLAKSEN. And all the prudent ones too, I hope?

BILLING. Both the prudent and the imprudent—in fact, almost the whole town.

ASLAKSEN. Then I suppose we may venture to print it.

DR. STOCKMANN. I should think so!

HOVSTAD. It shall go in to-morrow.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, plague take it, not a

day must be lost. Look here, Mr. Aslaksen, this is what I wanted to ask you: won't you take personal charge of the article?

ASLAKSEN. Certainly I will.

DR. STOCKMANN. Be as careful as if it were gold. No printers' errors; every word is important. I shall look in again presently; perhaps you'll be able to let me see a proof.—Ah! I can't tell you how I long to have the thing in print—to see it launched—

BILLING. Yes, like a thunderbolt!

DR. STOCKMANN. —and submitted to the judgment of every intelligent citizen. Oh, you have no idea what I have had to put up with to-day. I've been threatened with all sorts of things. I was to be robbed of my clearest rights as a human being—

BILLING. What! Your rights as a human being!

DR. STOCKMANN. —I was to humble myself, and eat the dust; I was to set my personal interests above my deepest, holiest convictions—

BILLING. Strike me dead, but that's too outrageous.

HOVSTAD. Oh, what can you expect from that quarter?

DR. STOCKMANN. But they shall find they were mistaken in me; they shall learn that in black and white, I promise them! I shall throw myself into the breach every day in the *Messenger*, bombard them with one explosive article after another—

ASLAKSEN. Yes, but look here—

BILLING. Hurrah! It's war! War!

DR. STOCKMANN. I shall smite them to the earth, I shall crush them, I shall level their entrenchments to the ground in the eyes of all right-thinking men! That's what I shall do!

ASLAKSEN. But above all things be temperate, Doctor; bombard with moderation—

BILLING. Not at all, not at all! Don't spare the dynamite!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*going on imperturbably*) For now it's no mere question of water-works and sewers, you see. No, the whole community must be purged, disinfected—

BILLING. There sounds the word of salvation!

DR. STOCKMANN. All the old bunglers must be sent packing, you understand. And that in every possible department! Such endless vistas have opened out before me to-day. I am not quite clear about everything yet, but I shall see my way presently. It's young and vigorous standard-bearers we must look for, my friends; we must have new captains at all the outposts.

BILLING. Hear, hear!

DR. STOCKMANN. And if only we hold together, it will go so smoothly, so smoothly! The whole revolution will glide off the stocks just like a ship. Don't you think so?

HOVSTAD. For my part, I believe we have now every prospect of placing our municipal affairs in the right hands.

ASLAKSEN. And if only we proceed with moderation, I really don't think there can be any danger.

DR. STOCKMANN. Who the devil cares whether there's danger or not! What I do, I do in the name of truth and for conscience' sake.

HOVSTAD. You are a man to be backed up, Doctor.

ASLAKSEN. Yes, there's no doubt the Doctor is a true friend to the town; he's what I call a friend of society.

BILLING. Strike me dead if Dr. Stockmann isn't a Friend of the People, Aslaksen!

ASLAKSEN. I have no doubt the Householders' Association will soon adopt that expression.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*shaking their hands, deeply moved*) Thanks, thanks, my dear, faithful friends; it does me good to hear you. My respected brother called me something very different. Never mind! Trust me to pay him back with interest! But I must be off now to see a poor devil of a patient. I shall look in again, though. Be sure you look after the article, Mr. Aslaksen; and, whatever you do, don't leave out any of my notes of exclamation! Rather put in a few more! Well, good-bye for the present, good-bye, good-bye. (*Mutual salutations while they accompany him to the door. He goes out.*)

HOVSTAD. He will be invaluable to us.

ASLAKSEN. Yes, so long as he confines himself to this matter of the Baths. But if he goes further, it will scarcely be advisable to follow him.

HOVSTAD. H'm—that entirely depends on—

BILLING. You're always so confoundedly timid, Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. Timid? Yes, when it's a question of attacking local authorities, I am timid, Mr. Billing; I have learnt caution in the school of experience, let me tell you. But start me on the higher politics, confront me with the Government itself, and then see if I'm timid.

BILLING. No, you're not; but that's just where your inconsistency comes in.

ASLAKSEN. The fact is, I am keenly alive to my responsibilities. If you attack the Government, you at least do society no harm; for the men attacked don't care a straw, you see—they stay where they are all the same. But local authorities can be turned out; and then we might get some incompetent set into power, to the irreparable injury both of house-owners and other people.

HOVSTAD. But the education of citizens by self-government—do you ever think of that?

ASLAKSEN. When a man has solid interests to protect, he can't think of everything, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. Then I hope I may never have solid interests to protect.

BILLING. Hear, hear!

ASLAKSEN. (*smiling*) H'm! (*Points to the desk.*) Governor Stensgard sat in that editorial chair before you.

BILLING. (*spitting*) Pooh! A turncoat like that!

HOVSTAD. I am no weathercock—and never will be.

ASLAKSEN. A politician should never be too sure of anything on earth, Mr. Hovstad. And as for you, Mr. Billing, you ought to take in a reef or two, I should say, now that you are applying for the secretaryship to the Town Council.

BILLING. I—!

HOVSTAD. Is that so, Billing?

BILLING. Well, yes—but, deuce take it, you understand, I'm only doing it to spite their high-mightinesses.

ASLAKSEN. Well, that has nothing to do with me. But if I am to be accused of cowardice and inconsistency, I should just like to point out this: My political record is open to every one. I have not changed at all, except in becoming more moderate. My heart still belongs to the people; but I don't deny that my reason inclines somewhat towards the authorities—the local ones, I mean. (*Goes into the printing-room.*)

BILLING. Don't you think we should try to get rid of him, Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. Do you know of any one else that will pay for our paper and printing?

BILLING. What a confounded nuisance it is to have no capital!

HOVSTAD. (*sitting down by the desk*) Yes, if we only had that—

BILLING. Suppose you applied to Dr. Stockmann?

HOVSTAD. (*turning over his papers*) What would be the good? He hasn't a rap.

BILLING. No; but he has a good man behind him—old Morten Kiil—"The Badger," as they call him.

HOVSTAD. (*writing*) Are you so sure he has money?

BILLING. Yes, strike me dead if he hasn't! And part of it must certainly go to Stockmann's family. He's bound to provide for—for the children at any rate.

HOVSTAD. (*half turning*) Are you counting on that?

BILLING. Counting? How should I be counting on it?

HOVSTAD. Best not! And that secretaryship you shouldn't count on either; for I can assure you you won't get it.

BILLING. Do you think I don't know that? A refusal is the very thing I want. Such a rebuff fires the spirit of opposition in you, gives you a fresh supply of gall, as it were; and that's just what you need in a god-forsaken hole like this, where anything really stimulating so seldom happens.

HOVSTAD. (*writing*) Yes, yes.

BILLING. Well—they shall soon hear from me!—Now I'll go and write the appeal to the House-owners' Association. (*Goes into the room on the right.*)

HOVSTAD. (*sits at his desk, biting his penholder, and says slowly:*) H'm—so that's the way of it.—(*A knock at the door.*) Come in. (PETRA *enters from the back, left.*)

HOVSTAD. (*rising*) What! Is it you? Here!

PETRA. Yes; please excuse me—

HOVSTAD. (*offering her an arm-chair*) Won't you sit down?

PETRA. No, thanks; I must go again directly.

HOVSTAD. Perhaps you bring a message from your father—?

PETRA. No, I have come on my own account. (*Takes a book from the pocket of her cloak.*) Here is that English story.

HOVSTAD. Why have you brought it back?

PETRA. Because I won't translate it.

HOVSTAD. But you promised—

PETRA. Yes; but then I hadn't read it. I suppose you have not read it either?

HOVSTAD. No; you know I can't read English; but—

PETRA. Exactly; and that's why I wanted to tell you that you must find something else. (*Putting the book on the table.*) This will never do for the *Messenger*.

HOVSTAD. Why not?

PETRA. Because it flies in the face of all your convictions.

HOVSTAD. Well, for that matter—

PETRA. You don't understand me. It makes out that a supernatural power looks after the so-called good people in this world, and turns everything to their advantage at last; while all the so-called bad people are punished.

HOVSTAD. Yes, but that's all right. That's the very thing the public like.

PETRA. And would you supply the public with such stuff? You don't believe a word of it yourself. You know well enough that things do not really happen like that.

HOVSTAD. Of course not; but an editor can't always do as he likes. He has often to humour people's fancies in minor matters. After all, politics is the chief thing in life—at any rate for a newspaper; and if I want the people to follow me along the path of emancipation and progress, I mustn't scare them away. If they find a moral story like this down in the cellar,[1] they are all the more ready to take in what we tell them above—they feel themselves safer.

PETRA. For shame! You're not such a hypocrite as to set traps like that for your readers. You're not a spider.

HOVSTAD. (*smiling*) Thanks for your good opinion. It's true that the idea is Billing's, not mine.

PETRA. Mr. Billing's!

HOVSTAD. Yes, at least he was talking in that strain the other day. It was Billing that was so anxious to get the story into the paper; I don't even know the book.

PETRA. But how can Mr. Billing, with his advanced views—

HOVSTAD. Well, Billing is many-sided. He's applying for the secretaryship to the Town Council, I hear.

PETRA. I don't believe that, Mr. Hovstad. How could he descend to such a thing?

HOVSTAD. That you must ask him.

PETRA. I could never have thought it of Billing!

HOVSTAD. (*looking more closely at her*) No? Is it such a surprise to you?

PETRA. Yes. And yet—perhaps not. Oh, I don't know—

HOVSTAD. We journalists are not worth much, Miss Petra.

PETRA. Do you really say that?

HOVSTAD. I think so, now and then.

PETRA. Yes, in the little every-day squabbles—that I can understand. But now that you have taken up a great cause—

HOVSTAD. You mean this affair of your father's?

PETRA. Of course. I should think you must feel yourself worth more than the general run of people now.

HOVSTAD. Yes, to-day I do feel something of the sort.

PETRA. Yes, surely you must. Oh, it's a glorious career you have chosen! To be the pioneer of unrecognised truths and new and daring ways of thought!—even, if that were all, to stand forth fearlessly in support of an injured man—

HOVSTAD. Especially when the injured man is—I hardly know how to put it—

PETRA. You mean when he is so upright and true?

HOVSTAD. (*in a low voice*) I mean—especially when he is your father.

[1] The reference is to the continental feuilleton at the foot of the page.

PETRA. (*suddenly taken aback*) That?

HOVSTAD. Yes, Petra—Miss Petra.

PETRA. So that is your chief thought, is it? Not the cause itself? Not the truth? Not father's great, warm heart?

HOVSTAD. Oh, that too, of course.

PETRA. No, thank you; you said too much that time, Mr. Hovstad. Now I shall never trust you again, in anything.

HOVSTAD. Can you be so hard on me because it's mainly for your sake—?

PETRA. What I blame you for is that you have not acted straightforwardly towards father. You have talked to him as if you cared only for the truth and the good of the community. You have trifled with both father and me. You are not the man you pretended to be. And that I will never forgive you—never.

HOVSTAD. You shouldn't say that so bitterly, Miss Petra—least of all now.

PETRA. Why not now?

HOVSTAD. Because your father cannot do without my help.

PETRA. (*measuring him from head to foot*) So you are capable of that, too? Oh, shame!

HOVSTAD. No, no. I spoke without thinking. You mustn't believe that of me.

PETRA. I know what to believe. Good-bye. (ASLAKSEN *enters from printing-room, hurriedly and mysteriously.*)

ASLAKSEN. What do you think, Mr. Hovstad—(*Seeing* PETRA.) Ow, that's awkward—

PETRA. Well, there is the book. You must give it to some one else. (*Going towards the main door.*)

HOVSTAD. (*following her*) But, Miss Petra—

PETRA. Good-bye. (*She goes.*)

ASLAKSEN. I say, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD. Well well; what is it?

ASLAKSEN. The Burgomaster's out there, in the printing-office.

HOVSTAD. The Burgomaster?

ASLAKSEN. Yes. He wants to speak to you; he came in by the back way—he didn't want to be seen, you understand.

HOVSTAD. What can be the meaning of this? Stop, I'll go myself—(*Goes towards the printing-room, opens the door, bows and invites the* BURGOMASTER *to enter.*)

HOVSTAD. Keep a look-out, Aslaksen, that no one—

ASLAKSEN. I understand. (*Goes into the printing-room.*)

BURGOMASTER. You didn't expect to see me here, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. No, I cannot say that I did.

BURGOMASTER. (*looking about him*) You are very comfortably installed here—capital quarters.

HOVSTAD. Oh—

BURGOMASTER. And here have I come, without with your leave or by your leave, to take up your time—

HOVSTAD. You are very welcome, Burgomaster; I am at your service. Let me take your cap and stick. (*He does so, and puts them on a chair.*) And won't you be seated?

BURGOMASTER. (*sitting down by the table*) Thanks. (HOVSTAD *also sits by the table.*) I have been much—very much worried to-day, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. Really? Well, I suppose with all your various duties, Burgomaster—

BURGOMASTER. It is the Doctor that has been causing me annoyance to-day.

HOVSTAD. Indeed! The Doctor?

BURGOMASTER. He has written a sort of memorandum to the Directors about some alleged shortcomings in the Baths.

HOVSTAD. Has he really?

BURGOMASTER. Yes; hasn't he told you? I thought he said—

HOVSTAD. Oh yes, by-the-bye, he did mention something—

ASLAKSEN. (*from the printing-office*) I've just come for the manuscript—

HOVSTAD. (*in a tone of vexation*) Oh!—there it is on the desk.

ASLAKSEN. (*finding it*) All right.

BURGOMASTER. Why, that is the very thing—

ASLAKSEN. Yes, this is the Doctor's article, Burgomaster.

HOVSTAD. Oh, is that what you were speaking of?

BURGOMASTER. Precisely. What do you think of it?

HOVSTAD. I have no technical knowledge of the matter, and I've only glanced through it.

BURGOMASTER. And yet you are going to print it!

HOVSTAD. I can't very well refuse a signed communication—

ASLAKSEN. I have nothing to do with the editing of the paper, Burgomaster—

BURGOMASTER. Of course not.

ASLAKSEN. I merely print what is placed in my hands.

BURGOMASTER. Quite right, quite right.

ASLAKSEN. So I must—(*Goes towards the printing-room.*)

BURGOMASTER. No, stop a moment, Mr. Aslaksen. With your permission, Mr. Hovstad—

HOVSTAD. By all means, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER. You are a discreet and thoughtful man, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. I am glad you think so, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER. And a man of very wide influence.

ASLAKSEN. Well—chiefly among the lower middle-class.

BURGOMASTER. The small taxpayers form the majority—here as everywhere.

ASLAKSEN. That's very true.

BURGOMASTER. And I have no doubt that you know the general feeling among them. Am I right?

ASLAKSEN. Yes, I think I may say that I do, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER. Well—since our townsfolk of the poorer class appear to be so heroically eager to make sacrifices—

ASLAKSEN. How so?

HOVSTAD. Sacrifices?

BURGOMASTER. It is a pleasing evidence of public spirit—a most pleasing evidence. I admit it is more than I should quite have expected. But, of course, you know public feeling better than I do.

ASLAKSEN. Yes but, Burgomaster—

BURGOMASTER. And assuredly it is no small sacrifice the town will have to make.

HOVSTAD. The town?

ASLAKSEN. But I don't understand—It's the Baths—

BURGOMASTER. At a rough provisional estimate, the alterations the Doctor thinks desirable will come to two or three hundred thousand crowns.

ASLAKSEN. That's a lot of money; but—

BURGOMASTER. Of course we shall be obliged to raise a municipal loan.

HOVSTAD. (*rising*) You surely can't mean that the town—?

ASLAKSEN. Would you come upon the rates? Upon the scanty savings of the lower middle-class?

BURGOMASTER. Why, my dear Mr. Aslaksen, where else are the funds to come from?

ASLAKSEN. The proprietors of the Baths must see to that.

BURGOMASTER. The proprietors are not in a position to go to any further expense.

ASLAKSEN. Are you quite sure of that, Burgomaster?

BURGOMASTER. I have positive information. So if these extensive alterations are called for, the town itself will have to bear the cost.

ASLAKSEN. Oh, plague take it all—I beg your pardon!—but this is quite another matter, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. Yes, it certainly is.

BURGOMASTER. The worst of it is, that we shall be obliged to close the establishment for a couple of years.

HOVSTAD. To close it? Completely?

ASLAKSEN. For two years!

BURGOMASTER. Yes, the work will require that time—at least.

ASLAKSEN. But, damn it all! we can't stand that, Burgomaster. What are we house-owners to live on in the meantime?

BURGOMASTER. It's extremely difficult to say, Mr. Aslaksen. But what would you have us do? Do you think a single visitor will come here if we go about making them fancy that the water is poisoned, that the place is pestilential, that the whole town—

ASLAKSEN. And it's all nothing but fancy?

BURGOMASTER. With the best will in the world, I have failed to convince myself that it is anything else.

ASLAKSEN. In that case it's simply inexcusable of Dr. Stockmann—I beg your pardon, Burgomaster, but—

BURGOMASTER. I'm sorry to say you are only speaking the truth, Mr. Aslaksen. Unfortunately, my brother has always been noted for his rashness.

ASLAKSEN. And yet you want to back him up in this, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD. But who could possibly imagine that—?

BURGOMASTER. I have drawn up a short statement of the facts, as they appear from a sober-minded standpoint; and I have intimated that any drawbacks that may possibly exist can no doubt be remedied by measures compatible with the finances of the Baths.

HOVSTAD. Have you the article with you, Burgomaster?

BURGOMASTER. (*feeling in his pockets*) Yes; I brought it with me, in case you—

ASLAKSEN. (*quickly*) Plague take it, there he is!

BURGOMASTER. Who? My brother?

HOVSTAD. Where? where?

ASLAKSEN. He's coming through the composing-room.

BURGOMASTER. Most unfortunate! I don't want to meet him here, and yet there are several things I want to talk to you about.

HOVSTAD. (*pointing to the door on the right*) Go in there for a moment.

BURGOMASTER. But—?

HOVSTAD. You'll find nobody but Billing there.

ASLAKSEN. Quick, quick, Burgomaster; he's just coming.

BURGOMASTER. Very well, then. But try to get rid of him quickly. (*He goes out by the door on the right, which* ASLAKSEN *opens, and closes behind him.*)

HOVSTAD. Pretend to be busy, Aslaksen. (*He sits down and writes.* ASLAKSEN *turns over a heap of newspapers on a chair, right.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*entering from the composing-room*) Here I am, back again. (*Puts down his hat and stick.*)

HOVSTAD. (*writing*) Already, Doctor? Make haste with what we were speaking of, Aslaksen. We've no time to lose to-day.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*to* ASLAKSEN) No proof yet, I hear.

ASLAKSEN. (*without turning round*) No; how could you expect it?

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course not; but you understand my impatience. I can have no rest or peace until I see the thing in print.

HOVSTAD. H'm; it will take a good while yet. Don't you think so, Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN. I'm afraid it will.

DR. STOCKMANN. All right, all right, my good friend; then I shall look in again. I'll look in twice if necessary. With so much at stake—the welfare of the whole town—one mustn't grudge a little trouble. (*Is on the point of going but stops and comes back.*) Oh, by the way—there's one other thing I must speak to you about.

HOVSTAD. Excuse me; wouldn't some other time—?

DR. STOCKMANN. I can tell you in two words. You see it's this: when people read my article in the paper to-morrow, and find I have spent the whole winter working quietly for the good of the town—

HOVSTAD. Yes but, Doctor—

DR. STOCKMANN. I know what you're going to say. You don't think it was a bit more than my duty—my simple duty as a citizen. Of course I know that, as well as you do. But you see, my fellow townsmen—good Lord! the poor souls think so much of me—

ASLAKSEN. Yes, the townspeople have hitherto thought very highly of you, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. That's exactly why I'm afraid that—. What I wanted to say was this: when all this comes to them—especially to the poorer classes—as a summons to take the affairs of the town into their own hands for the future—

HOVSTAD. (*rising*) H'm, Doctor, I won't conceal from you—

DR. STOCKMAN. Aha! I thought there was something brewing! But I won't hear of it. If they are getting up anything of that sort—

HOVSTAD. Of what sort?

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, anything of any sort—a procession with banners, or a banquet, or a subscription for a testimonial, or whatever it may be—you must give me your solemn promise to put a stop to it. And you too, Mr. Aslaksen; do you hear?

HOVSTAD. Excuse me, Doctor; we may as well tell you the whole truth first as last— (MRS. STOCKMANN *enters from the back, left.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*seeing the* DOCTOR) Ah! just as I thought!

HOVSTAD. (*going towards her*) Mrs. Stockmann, too?

DR. STOCKMANN. What the devil do you want here, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN. You know very well what I want.

HOVSTAD. Won't you sit down? Or perhaps—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Thanks, please don't trouble. And you must forgive my following my husband here; remember, I am the mother of three children.

DR. STOCKMANN. Stuff and nonsense! We all know that well enough.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Well, it doesn't look as if you thought very much about your wife and children to-day, or you wouldn't be so ready to plunge us all into ruin.

DR. STOCKMANN. Are you quite mad, Katrina! Has a man with a wife and children no right to proclaim the truth? Has he no right to be an active and useful citizen? Has he no right to do his duty by the town he lives in?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Everything in moderation, Thomas!

ASLAKSEN. That's just what I say. Moderation in everything.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You are doing us a great wrong, Mr. Hovstad, in enticing my husband away from house and home, and befooling him in this way.

HOVSTAD. I am not befooling any one—

DR. STOCKMANN. Befooling! Do you think I should let myself be befooled?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, that's just what you do. I know very well that you are the cleverest man in the town; but you're very easily made a fool of, Thomas. (*To* HOVSTAD.) Remember that he loses his post at the Baths if you print what he has written—

ASLAKSEN. What!

HOVSTAD. Well now, really, Doctor—

DR. STOCKMANN. (*laughing*) Ha, ha! just let them try—! No no, my dear, they'll think twice about that. I have the compact majority behind me, you see!

MRS. STOCKMANN. That's just the misfortune, that you should have such a horrid thing behind you.

DR. STOCKMANN. Nonsense, Katrina;—you go home and look after your house, and let me take care of society. How can you be in such a fright when you see me so confident and happy? (*Rubbing his hands and walking up and down.*) Truth and the People must win the day; you may be perfectly sure of that. Oh! I can see all our free-souled citizens standing shoulder to shoulder like a conquering army—! (*Stopping by a chair.*) Why, what the devil is that?

ASLAKSEN. (*looking at it*) Oh Lord!

HOVSTAD. (*the same*) H'm—

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, here's the top-knot of authority! (*He takes the* BURGOMASTER'S *official cap carefully between the tips of his fingers and holds it up.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. The Burgomaster's cap!

DR. STOCKMANN. And here's the staff of office, too! But how in the devil's name did they—?

HOVSTAD. Well then—

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah, I understand! He has been here to talk you over. Ha, ha! He reckoned without his host that time! And when he caught sight of me in the printing-room—(*Bursts out laughing*)—he took to his heels, eh, Mr. Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN. (*hurriedly*) Exactly; he took to his heels, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Made off without his stick and—. No, that won't do! Peter never left anything behind him. But where the devil have you stowed him? Ah—in here, of course. Now you shall see, Katrina!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Thomas—I implore you—!

ASLAKSEN. Take care, Doctor! (DR. STOCKMANN *has put on the* BURGOMASTER'S *cap and grasped his stick; he now goes up to the door, throws it open, and makes a military salute. The* BURGOMASTER *enters, red with anger. Behind him comes* BILLING.)

BURGOMASTER. What is the meaning of these antics?

DR. STOCKMANN. Respect, my good Peter! Now, it's I that am in power in this town. (*He struts up and down.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*almost in tears*) Oh, Thomas!

BURGOMASTER. (*following him*) Give me my cap and stick!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*as before*) You may be Chief of Police, but I am Burgomaster. I am master of the whole town I tell you!

BURGOMASTER. Put down my cap, I say. Remember it is an official cap, as by law prescribed!

DR. STOCKMANN. Pshaw! Do you think the awakening lion of the democracy will let itself be scared by a gold-laced cap? There's to be a revolution in the town to-morrow, let me tell you. You threatened me with dismissal; but now *I* dismiss you—dismiss you from all your offices of trust—. You think I can't do it?—Oh, yes, I can! I have the irresistible forces of society on my side. Hovstad and Billing will thunder in the *People's Messenger*, and Aslaksen will take the field at the head of the House-owners' Association—

ASLAKSEN. No, Doctor, I shall not.

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, of course you will—

BURGOMASTER. Aha! Perhaps Mr. Hovstad would like to join the agitation after all?

HOVSTAD. No, Burgomaster.

ASLAKSEN. No, Mr. Hovstad isn't such a fool as to ruin both himself and the paper for the sake of a delusion.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*looking about him*) What does all this mean?

HOVSTAD. You have presented your case in a false light, Doctor; therefore I am unable to give you any support.

BILLING. And after what the Burgomaster has been so kind as to explain to me, I—

DR. STOCKMANN. In a false light! Well, I am responsible for that. Just you print my article, and I promise you I shall prove it up to the hilt.

HOVSTAD. I shall not print it. I cannot, and will not, and dare not print it.

DR. STOCKMANN. You dare not? What nonsense is this? You are editor; and I suppose it's the editor that controls a paper.

ASLAKSEN. No, it's the subscribers, Doctor.

BURGOMASTER. Fortunately.

ASLAKSEN. It's public opinion, the enlightened majority, the house-owners and all the rest. It's they who control a paper.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*calmly*) And all these powers I have against me?

ASLAKSEN. Yes, you have. It would mean absolute ruin for the town if your article were inserted.

DR. STOCKMANN. So that is the way of it!

BURGOMASTER. My hat and stick! (DR. STOCKMANN *takes off the cap and lays it on the table along with the stick.*)

BURGOMASTER. (*taking them both*) Your term of office has come to an untimely end.

DR. STOCKMANN. The end is not yet. (*To* HOVSTAD.) So you are quite determined not to print my article in the *Messenger*?

HOVSTAD. Quite; for the sake of your family, if for no other reason.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, be kind enough to leave his family out of the question, Mr. Hovstad.

BURGOMASTER. (*takes a manuscript from his pocket*) When this appears, the public will be in possession of all necessary information; it is an authentic statement. I place it in your hands.

HOVSTAD. (*taking the MS.*) Good. It shall appear in due course.

DR. STOCKMANN. And not mine! You imagine you can kill me and the truth by a conspiracy of silence! But it won't be so easy as you think. Mr. Aslaksen, will you be good enough to print my article at once, as a pamphlet? I'll pay for it myself, and be my own publisher. I'll have four hundred copies—no, five—six hundred.

ASLAKSEN. No. If you offered me its weight in gold, I dare not lend my press to such a purpose, Doctor. I daren't fly in the face of public opinion. You won't get it printed anywhere in the whole town.

DR. STOCKMANN. Then give it me back.

HOVSTAD. (*handing him the MS.*) By all means.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*taking up his hat and cane*) It shall be made public all the same. I shall read it at a great mass meeting; all my fellow citizens shall hear the voice of truth!

BURGOMASTER. Not a single society in the town would let you their hall for such a purpose.

ASLAKSEN. Not one, I'm quite certain.

BILLING. No, strike me dead if they would!

MRS. STOCKMANN. That would be too disgraceful! Why do they turn against you like this, every one of them?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*irritated*) I'll tell you why. It's because in this town all the men are old women—like you. They all think of nothing but their families, not of the general good.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*taking his arm*) Then I'll show them that an—an old woman can be

a man for once in a way. For now I'll stand by you, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. Bravely said, Katrina! I swear by my soul and conscience the truth shall out! If they won't let me a hall, I'll hire a drum and march through the town with it; and I'll read my paper at every street corner.

BURGOMASTER. You can scarcely be such a raving lunatic as that?

DR. STOCKMANN. I am.

ASLAKSEN. You would not get a single man in the whole town to go with you.

BILLING. No, strike me dead if you would!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Don't give in, Thomas. I'll ask the boys to go with you.

DR. STOCKMANN That's a splendid idea!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Morten will be delighted; and Eilif will go too, I daresay.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and so will Petra! And you yourself, Katrina!

MRS. STOCKMANN. No no, not I. But I'll stand at the window and watch you—that I will.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*Throwing his arms about her and kissing her*) Thank you for that! Now, my good sirs, we're ready for the fight! Now we shall see whether your despicable tactics can stop the mouth of the patriot who wants to purge society! (*He and his wife go out together by the door in the back, left.*)

BURGOMASTER. (*shaking his head dubiously*) Now he has turned her head too!

CURTAIN

ACT FOURTH

A large old-fashioned room in CAPTAIN HORSTER'S *house. An open folding-door in the background leads to an anteroom. In the wall on the left are three windows. About the middle of the opposite wall is a platform, and on it a small table, two candles, a water-bottle and glass, and a bell. For the rest, the room is lighted by sconces placed between the windows. In front, on the left, is a table with a candle on it, and by it a chair. In front, to the right, a door, and near it a few chairs.*

Large assemblage of all classes of townsfolk. In the crowd are a few women and schoolboys. More and more people gradually stream in from the back until the room is quite full.

FIRST CITIZEN. (*to another standing near him*) So you're here too, Lamstad?

SECOND CITIZEN. I never miss a public meeting.

A BYSTANDER. I suppose you've brought your whistle?

SECOND CITIZEN. Of course I have; haven't you?

THIRD CITIZEN. I should think so. And Skipper Evensen said he'd bring a thumping big horn.

SECOND CITIZEN. He's a good 'un, is Evensen! (*Laughter in the group.*)

A FOURTH CITIZEN. (*joining them*) I say, what's it all about? What's going on here tonight?

SECOND CITIZEN. Why, it's Dr. Stockmann that's going to lecture against the Burgomaster.

FOURTH CITIZEN. But the Burgomaster's his brother.

FIRST CITIZEN. That makes no difference. Dr. Stockmann's not afraid of him.

THIRD CITIZEN. But he's all wrong; the *People's Messenger* says so.

SECOND CITIZEN. Yes, he must be wrong this time; for neither the House-owners' Association nor the Citizens' Club would let him have a hall.

FIRST CITIZEN. They wouldn't even lend him the hall at the Baths.

SECOND CITIZEN. No, you may be sure they wouldn't.

A MAN. (*in another group*) Now, who's the one to follow in this business, eh?

ANOTHER MAN. (*in the same group*) Just keep your eye on Aslaksen, and do as he does.

BILLING. (*with a portfolio under his arm, makes his way through the crowd*) Excuse me, gentlemen. Will you allow me to pass? I'm here to report for the *People's Messenger*. Many thanks. (*Sits by the table on the left.*)

A WORKING-MAN. Who's he?

ANOTHER WORKING-MAN. Don't you know him? It's that fellow Billing, that writes for Aslaksen's paper. (CAPTAIN HORSTER *enters by the door in front on the right, escorting*

MRS. STOCKMANN *and* PETRA. EILIF *and* MORTEN *follow them.*)

HORSTER. This is where I thought you might sit; you can so easily slip out if anything should happen

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do you think there will be any disturbance?

HORSTER. One can never tell—with such a crowd. But there's no occasion for anxiety.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*sitting down*) How kind it was of you to offer Stockmann this room.

HORSTER. Since no one else would, I—

PETRA. (*who has also seated herself*) And it was brave too, Captain Horster.

HORSTER. Oh, I don't see where the bravery comes in. (HOVSTAD *and* ASLAKSEN *enter at the same moment, but make their way through the crowd separately.*)

ASLAKSEN. (*going up to* HORSTER) Hasn't the Doctor come yet?

HORSTER. He's waiting in there. (*A movement at the door in the background.*)

HOVSTAD. (*to* BILLING) There's the Burgomaster! Look!

BILLING. Yes, strike me dead if he hasn't put in an appearance after all! (BURGOMASTER STOCKMANN *makes his way blandly through the meeting, bowing politely to both sides, and takes his stand by the wall on the left. Soon afterwards,* DR. STOCKMANN *enters by the door on the right. He wears a black frock-coat and white necktie. Faint applause, met by a subdued hissing. Then silence.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*in a low tone*) How do you feel, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Quite comfortable, thank you. (*In a low voice.*) Now do keep your temper, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, I shall keep myself well in hand. (*Looks at his watch, ascends the platform, and bows.*) It's a quarter past the hour, so I shall begin—(*Takes out his MS.*)

ASLAKSEN. But surely a chairman must be elected first.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, that's not at all necessary.

SEVERAL GENTLEMEN. (*shouting*) Yes, yes.

BURGOMASTER. I should certainly say that a chairman ought to be elected.

DR. STOCKMANN. But I've called this meeting to give a lecture, Peter!

BURGOMASTER. Dr. Stockmann's lecture may possibly lead to differences of opinion.

SEVERAL VOICES IN THE CROWD. A chairman! A chairman!

HOVSTAD. The general voice of the meeting seems to be for a chairman!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*controlling himself*) Very well then; let the meeting have its way.

ASLAKSEN. Will not the Burgomaster take the chair?

THREE GENTLEMEN. (*clapping*) Bravo! Bravo!

BURGOMASTER. For reasons you will easily understand, I must decline. But, fortunately, we have among us one whom I think we can all accept. I allude to the president of the House-owners' Association, Mr. Aslaksen.

MANY VOICES. Yes, yes! Bravo Aslaksen! Hurrah for Aslaksen! (DR. STOCKMANN *takes his MS. and descends from the platform.*)

ASLAKSEN. Since my fellow citizens repose this trust in me, I cannot refuse—(*Applause and cheers.* ASLAKSEN *ascends the platform.*)

BILLING. (*writing*) So—"Mr. Aslaksen was elected by acclamation—"

ASLAKSEN. And now, as I have been called to the chair, I take the liberty of saying a few brief words. I am a quiet, peace-loving man; I am in favour of discreet moderation, and of —and of moderate discretion. Every one who knows me, knows that.

MANY VOICES. Yes, yes, Aslaksen!

ASLAKSEN. I have learnt in the school of life and of experience that moderation is the virtue in which the individual citizen finds his best advantage—

BURGOMASTER. Hear, hear!

ASLAKSEN. —and it is discretion and moderation, too, that best serve the community. I could therefore suggest to our respected fellow citizen, who has called this meeting, that he should endeavour to keep within the bounds of moderation.

A MAN. (*by the door*) Three cheers for the Temperance Society!

A VOICE. Go to the devil!

VOICES. Hush! hush!

ASLAKSEN. No interruptions, gentlemen!—Does any one wish to offer any observations?

BURGOMASTER. Mr. Chairman!

ASLAKSEN. Burgomaster Stockmann will address the meeting.

BURGOMASTER. On account of my close relationship—of which you are probably aware—to the present medical officer of the Baths, I should have preferred not to speak here this evening. But my position as chairman of the Baths, and my care for the vital interests of this town, force me to move a resolution. I may doubtless assume that not a single citizen here present thinks it desirable that untrustworthy and exaggerated statements should get abroad as to the sanitary condition of the Baths and of our town.

MANY VOICES. No, no, no! Certainly not! We protest!

BURGOMASTER. I therefore beg to move, "That this meeting declines to hear the proposed lecture or speech on the subject by the medical officer of the Baths."

DR. STOCKMANN. (*flaring up*) Declines to hear—! What do you mean?

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*coughing*) H'm! h'm!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*controlling himself*) So I am not to be heard?

BURGOMASTER. In my statement in the *People's Messenger* I have made the public acquainted with the essential facts, so that all well-disposed citizens can easily form their own judgment. From that statement it will be seen that the medical officer's proposal—besides amounting to a vote of censure upon the leading men of the town—at bottom only means saddling the ratepayers with an unnecessary outlay of at least a hundred thousand crowns. (*Sounds of protest and some hissing.*)

ASLAKSEN. (*ringing the bell*) Order, gentlemen! I must beg leave to support the Burgomaster's resolution. I quite agree with him that there is something beneath the surface of the Doctor's agitation. In all his talk about the Baths, it is really a revolution he is aiming at; he wants to effect a redistribution of power. No one doubts the excellence of Dr. Stockmann's intentions—of course there cannot be two opinions as to that. I, too, am in favour of self-government by the people, if only it doesn't cost the ratepayers too much. But in this case it would do so; and therefore I'll be hanged if—excuse me—in short, I cannot go with Dr. Stockmann upon this occasion. You can buy even gold too dear; that's my opinion. (*Loud applause on all sides.*)

HOVSTAD. I, too, feel bound to explain my attitude. Dr. Stockmann's agitation seemed at first to find favour in several quarters, and I supported it as impartially as I could. But it presently appeared that we had been misled by a false representation of the facts—

DR. STOCKMANN. False—!

HOVSTAD. Well then, an untrustworthy representation. This the Burgomaster's report has proved. I trust no one here present doubts my liberal principles; the attitude of the *Messenger* on all great political questions is well known to you all. But I have learned from men of judgment and experience that in purely local matters a paper must observe a certain amount of caution.

ASLAKSEN. I entirely agree with the speaker.

HOVSTAD. And in the matter under discussion it is quite evident that Dr. Stockmann has public opinion against him. But, gentlemen, what is an editor's clearest and most imperative duty? Is it not to work in harmony with his readers? Has he not in some sort received a tacit mandate to further assiduously and unweariedly the interests of his constituents? Or am I mistaken in this?

MANY VOICES. No, no, no! Hovstad is right!

HOVSTAD. It has cost me a bitter struggle to break with a man in whose house I have of late been a frequent guest—with a man who, up to this day, has enjoyed the unqualified goodwill of his fellow citizens—with a man whose only, or, at any rate, whose chief fault is that he consults his heart rather than his head.

A FEW SCATTERED VOICES. That's true! Hurrah for Dr. Stockmann!

HOVSTAD. But my duty towards the community has constrained me to break with him. Then, too, there is another consideration that impels me to oppose him, and, if possible, to block the ill-omened path upon which he is entering: consideration for his family—

DR. STOCKMANN. Keep to the water-works and sewers!

HOVSTAD. —consideration for his wife and his unprotected[1] children.

MORTEN. Is that us, mother?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Hush!

ASLAKSEN. I will now put the Burgomaster's resolution to the vote.

DR. STOCKMANN. You need not. I have no intention of saying anything this evening of all the filth at the Baths. No! You shall hear something quite different.

BURGOMASTER. (*half aloud*) What next, I wonder?

A DRUNKEN MAN. (*at the main entrance*) I'm a ratepayer, so I've a right to my opinion! And it's my full, firm, incomprehensible opinion that—

SEVERAL VOICES. Silence up there!

OTHERS. He's drunk! Turn him out! (*The drunken man is turned out.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Can I speak?

ASLAKSEN. (*ringing the bell*) Dr. Stockmann will address the meeting.

DR. STOCKMANN. A few days ago, I should have liked to see any one venture upon such an attempt to gag me as has been made here to-night! I would have fought like a lion for my sacred rights! But now I care little enough; for now I have more important things to speak of. (*The people crowd closer round him.* MORTEN KIIL *comes in sight among the bystanders.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*continuing*) I have been pondering a great many things during these last days—thinking such a multitude of thoughts, that at last my head was positively in a whirl—

BURGOMASTER. (*coughing*) H'm—!

DR. STOCKMANN. But presently things seemed to straighten themselves out, and I saw them clearly in all their bearings. That is why I stand here this evening. I am about to make great revelations, my fellow citizens! I am going to announce to you a far-reaching discovery, beside which the trifling fact that our water-works are poisoned, and that our health-resort is built on pestilential ground, sinks into insignificance.

MANY VOICES. (*shouting*) Don't speak about the Baths! We won't listen to that! No more of that!

[1] Literally, "unprovided-for."

DR. STOCKMANN. I have said I would speak of the great discovery I have made within the last few days—the discovery that all our sources of spiritual life are poisoned, and that our whole society rests upon a pestilential basis of falsehood.

SEVERAL VOICES. (*in astonishment and half aloud*) What's he saying?

BURGOMASTER. Such an insinuation—!

ASLAKSEN. (*with his hand on the bell*) I must call upon the speaker to moderate his expressions.

DR. STOCKMANN. I have loved my native town as dearly as any man can love the home of his childhood. I was young when I left our town, and distance, homesickness and memory threw, as it were, a glamour over the place and its people. (*Some applause and cries of approval.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Then for years I was imprisoned in a horrible hole, far away in the north. As I went about among the people scattered here and there over the stony wilderness, it seemed to me, many a time, that it would have been better for these poor famishing creatures to have had a cattle-doctor to attend them, instead of a man like me. (*Murmurs in the room.*)

BILLING. (*laying down his pen*) Strike me dead if I've ever heard—!

HOVSTAD. What an insult to an estimable peasantry!

DR. STOCKMANN. Wait a moment!—I don't think any one can reproach me with forgetting my native town up there. I sat brooding like an eider duck and what I hatched was—the plan of the Baths. (*Applause and expressions of dissent.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. And when, at last, fate ordered things so happily that I could come home again—then, fellow citizens, it seemed to me that I hadn't another desire in the world. Yes, one desire I had: an eager, constant, burning desire to be of service to my birthplace, and to its people.

BURGOMASTER. (*gazing into vacancy*) A strange method to select—!

DR. STOCKMANN. So I went about revelling in my happy illusions. But yesterday morning—no, it was really two nights ago—my mind's eyes were opened wide, and the first thing I

saw was the colossal stupidity of the authorities—(*Noise, cries, and laughter.* MRS. STOCKMANN *coughs repeatedly.*)

BURGOMASTER. Mr. Chairman!

ASLAKSEN. (*ringing his bell*) In virtue of my position—!

DR. STOCKMANN. It's petty to catch me up on a word, Mr. Aslaksen! I only mean that I became alive to the extraordinary muddle our leading men had been guilty of, down at the Baths. I cannot for the life of me abide leading men—I've seen enough of them in my time. They are like goats in a young plantation: they do harm at every point; they block the path of a free man wherever he turns—and I should be glad if we could exterminate them like other noxious animals—(*Uproar in the room.*)

BURGOMASTER. Mr. Chairman, are such expressions permissible?

ASLAKSEN. (*with his hand on the bell*) Dr. Stockmann—

DR. STOCKMANN. I can't conceive how it is that I have only now seen through these gentry; for haven't I had a magnificent example before my eyes here every day—my brother Peter—slow of understanding, tenacious in prejudice—(*Laughter, noise, and whistling.* MRS. STOCKMANN *coughs.* ASLAKSEN *rings violently.*)

THE DRUNKEN MAN. (*who has come in again*) Is it me you're alluding to? Sure enough, my name's Petersen; but devil take me if—

ANGRY VOICES. Out with that drunken man! Turn him out! (*The man is again turned out.*)

BURGOMASTER. Who is that person?

A BYSTANDER. I don't know him, Burgomaster.

ANOTHER. He doesn't belong to the town.

A THIRD. I believe he's a timber-dealer from—(*The rest is inaudible.*)

ASLAKSEN. The man was evidently intoxicated.—Continue, Dr. Stockmann; but pray endeavour to be moderate.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, fellow citizens, I shall say no more about our leading men. If any one imagines, from what I have just said, that it's these gentlemen I want to make short work of to-night, he is mistaken—altogether mistaken. For I cherish the comfortable conviction that these laggards, these relics of a decaying order of thought, are diligently cutting their own throats. They need no doctor to hasten their end. And it is not people of that sort that constitute the real danger to society; it is not they who are most active in poisoning the sources of our spiritual life and making a plague-spot of the ground beneath our feet; it is not they who are the most dangerous enemies of truth and freedom in our society.

CRIES FROM ALL SIDES. Who, then? Who is it? Name, name!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, you may be sure I shall name them! For this is the great discovery I made yesterday: (*In a louder tone.*) The most dangerous foe to truth and freedom in our midst is the compact majority. Yes, it's the confounded, compact, liberal majority—that, and nothing else! There, I've told you. (*Immense disturbance in the room. Most of the audience are shouting, stamping, and whistling. Several elderly gentlemen exchange furtive glances and seem to be enjoying the scene.* MRS. STOCKMANN *rises in alarm.* EILIF *and* MORTEN *advance threateningly towards the schoolboys, who are making noises.* ASLAKSEN *rings the bell and calls for order.* HOVSTAD *and* BILLING *both speak, but nothing can be heard. At last quiet is restored.*)

ASLAKSEN. I must request the speaker to withdraw his ill-considered expressions.

DR. STOCKMANN. Never, Mr. Aslaksen! For it's this very majority that robs me of my freedom, and wants to forbid me to speak the truth.

HOVSTAD. The majority always has right on its side.

BILLING. Yes, and truth too, strike me dead!

DR. STOCKMANN. The majority never has right on its side. Never I say! That is one of the social lies that a free, thinking man is bound to rebel against. Who make up the majority in any given country? Is it the wise men or the fools? I think we must agree that the fools are in a terrible, overwhelming majority, all the wide world over. But how in the devil's name can it ever be right for the

fools to rule over the wise men? (*Uproar and yells.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes, you can shout me down, but you cannot gainsay me. The majority has might—unhappily—but right it has not. It is I, and the few, the individuals, that are in the right. The minority is always right. (*Renewed uproar.*)

HOVSTAD. Ha, ha! Dr. Stockman has turned aristocrat since the day before yesterday!

DR. STOCKMANN. I have said that I have no words to waste on the little, narrow-chested, short-winded crew that lie in our wake. Pulsating life has nothing more to do with them. I am speaking of the few, the individuals among us, who have made all the new, germinating truths their own. These men stand, as it were, at the outposts, so far in the van that the compact majority has not yet reached them—and there they fight for truths that are too lately born into the world's consciousness to have won over the majority.

HOVSTAD. So the Doctor's a revolutionist now!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, by Heaven, I am, Mr. Hovstad! I am going to revolt against the lie that truth belongs exclusively to the majority. What sort of truths do the majority rally round? Truths so stricken in years that they are sinking into decrepitude. When a truth is so old as that, gentlemen, it's in a fair way to become a lie. (*Laughter and jeers.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes, you may believe me or not, as you please; but truths are by no means the wiry Methusalehs some people think them. A normally-constituted truth lives—let us say—as a rule, seventeen or eighteen years; at the outside twenty; very seldom more. And truths so patriarchal as that are always shockingly emaciated; yet it's not till then that the majority takes them up and recommends them to society as wholesome food. I can assure you there's not much nutriment in that sort of fare; you may take my word as a doctor for that. All these majority-truths are like last year's salt pork; they're like rancid, mouldy ham, producing all the moral scurvy that devastates society.

ASLAKSEN. It seems to me that the honourable speaker is wandering rather far from the subject.

BURGOMASTER. I beg to endorse the Chairman's remark.

DR. STOCKMANN. Why you're surely mad, Peter! I'm keeping as closely to my text as I possibly can; for my text is precisely this—that the masses, the majority, this devil's own compact majority—it's that, I say, that's poisoning the sources of our spiritual life, and making a plague-spot of the ground beneath our feet.

HOVSTAD. And you make this charge against the great, independent majority, just because they have the sense to accept only certain and acknowledged truths?

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah, my dear Mr. Hovstad, don't talk about certain truths! The truths acknowledged by the masses, the multitude, were certain truths to the vanguard in our grandfathers' days. We, the vanguard of today, don't acknowledge them any longer; and I don't believe there exists any other certain truth but this—that no society can live a healthy life upon truths so old and marrowless.

HOVSTAD. But instead of all this vague talk, suppose you were to give us some specimens of these old marrowless truths that we are living upon. (*Approval from several quarters.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, I could give you no end of samples from the rubbish-heap; but, for the present, I shall keep to one acknowledged truth, which is a hideous lie at bottom, but which Mr. Hovstad, and the *Messenger,* and all adherents of the *Messenger,* live on all the same.

HOVSTAD. And that is—?

DR. STOCKMANN. That is the doctrine you have inherited from your forefathers, and go on thoughtlessly proclaiming far and wide—the doctrine that the multitude, the vulgar herd, the masses, are the pith of the people—that they are the people—that the common man, the ignorant, undeveloped member of society, has the same right to sanction and to condemn, to counsel and to govern, as the intellectually distinguished few.

BILLING. Well, now, strike me dead—!

HOVSTAD. (*shouting at the same time*) Citizens, please note this!

ANGRY VOICES. Ho-ho! Aren't we the people?

Is it only the grand folks that are to govern?

A WORKING MAN. Out with the fellow that talks like that!

OTHERS. Turn him out!

A CITIZEN. (*shouting*) Blow your horn, Evensen. (*The deep notes of a horn are heard; whistling, and terrific noise in the room.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*when the noise has somewhat subsided*) Now do be reasonable! Can't you bear even for once in a way to hear the voice of truth? I don't ask you all to agree with me on the instant. But I certainly should have expected Mr. Hovstad to back me up, as soon as he had collected himself a bit. Mr. Hovstad sets up to be a freethinker—

SEVERAL VOICES. (*subdued and wondering*) Freethinker, did he say? What? Mr. Hovstad a freethinker?

HOVSTAD. (*shouting*) Prove it, Dr. Stockmann. When have I said so in print?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*reflecting*) No, upon my soul, you're right there; you've never had the frankness to do that. Well, well, I won't put you on the rack, Mr. Hovstad. Let me be the freethinker then. And now I'll make it clear to you all, and on scientific grounds too, that the *Messenger* is leading you shamefully by the nose, when it tells you that you, the masses, the crowd, are the true pith of the people. I tell you that's only a newspaper lie. The masses are nothing but the raw material that must be fashioned into a People. (*Murmurs, laughter, and disturbance in the room.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Is it not so with all other living creatures? What a difference between a cultivated and an uncultivated breed of animals! Just look at a common barn-door hen. What meat do you get from such a skinny carcase? Not much, I can tell you! And what sort of eggs does she lay? A decent crow or raven can lay nearly as good. Then take a cultivated Spanish or Japanese hen, or take a fine pheasant or turkey—ah! then you'll see the difference! And now look at the dog, our near relation. Think first of an ordinary vulgar cur—I mean one of those wretched, ragged, plebeian mongrels that haunt the gutters, and soil the sidewalks. Then place such a mongrel by the side of a poodle-dog, descended through many generations from an aristocratic stock, who have lived on delicate food, and heard harmonious voices and music. Do you think the brain of the poodle isn't very differently developed from that of the mongrel? Yes, you may be sure it is! It's well-bred poodle-pups like this that jugglers train to perform the most marvellous tricks. A common peasant-cur could never learn anything of the sort—not if he tried till doomsday. (*Noise and laughter are heard all round.*)

A CITIZEN. (*shouting*) Do you want to make dogs of us now?

ANOTHER MAN. We're not animals, Doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, on my soul, but we are animals, my good sir! We're one and all of us animals, whether we like it or not. But truly there are few enough aristocratic animals among us. Oh, there's a terrible difference between poodle-men and mongrel-men! And the ridiculous part of it is, that Mr. Hovstad quite agrees with me so long as it's four-legged animals we're talking of—

HOVSTAD. Oh, beasts are only beasts.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well and good—but no sooner do I apply the law to two-legged animals, than Mr. Hovstad stops short; then he daren't hold his own opinions, or think out his own thoughts; then he turns the whole principle upside down, and proclaims in the *People's Messenger* that the barn-door hen and the gutter-mongrel are precisely the finest specimens in the menagerie. But that's always the way, so long as the commonness still lingers in your system, and you haven't worked your way up to spiritual distinction.

HOVSTAD. I make no pretence to any sort of distinction. I come of simple peasant folk, and I am proud that my root should lie deep down among the common people, who are here being insulted.

WORKMEN. Hurrah for Hovstad. Hurrah! hurrah!

DR. STOCKMANN. The sort of common people I am speaking of are not found among the lower classes alone; they crawl and swarm all around us—up to the very summits of society. Just look at your own smug, respectable Burgomaster! Why, my brother

Peter belongs as clearly to the common people as any man that walks on two legs—(*Laughter and hisses.*)

BURGOMASTER. I protest against such personalities.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*imperturbably*) —and that not because, like myself, he's descended from a good-for-nothing old pirate from Pomerania, or thereabouts—for that's our ancestry—

BURGOMASTER. An absurd tradition! Utterly groundless.

DR. STOCKMANN. —but he is so because he thinks the thoughts and holds the opinions of his official superiors. Men who do that, belong, intellectually-speaking, to the common people; and that is why my distinguished brother Peter is at bottom so undistinguished, —and consequently so illiberal.

BURGOMASTER. Mr. Chairman—!

HOVSTAD. So that the distinguished people in this country are the Liberals? That's quite a new light on the subject. (*Laughter.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, that is part of my new discovery. And this, too, follows: that liberality of thought is almost precisely the same thing as morality. Therefore I say it's absolutely unpardonable of the *Messenger* to proclaim, day out, day in, the false doctrine that it's the masses, the multitude, the compact majority, that monopolise liberality and morality,—and that vice and corruption and all sorts of spiritual uncleanness ooze out of culture, as all that filth oozes down to the Baths from the Mill Dale tan-works! (*Noise and interruptions.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*goes on imperturbably, smiling in his eagerness*) And yet this same *Messenger* can preach about elevating the masses and the multitude to a higher level of well-being! Why, deuce take it, if the *Messenger's* own doctrine holds good, the elevation of the masses would simply mean hurling them straight to perdition! But, happily, the notion that culture demoralises is nothing but an old traditional lie. No, it's stupidity, poverty, the ugliness of life, that do the devil's work! In a house that isn't aired and swept every day—my wife maintains that the floors ought to be scrubbed too, but perhaps that is going too far;—well,—in such a house, I say, within two or three years, people lose the power of thinking or acting morally. Lack of oxygen enervates the conscience. And there seems to be precious little oxygen in many and many a house in this town, since the whole compact majority is unscrupulous enough to want to found its future upon a quagmire of lies and fraud.

ASLAKSEN. I cannot allow so gross an insult to be levelled against a whole community.

A GENTLEMAN. I move that the Chairman order the speaker to sit down.

EAGER VOICES. Yes, yes! That's right! Sit down! Sit down!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*flaring up*) Then I shall proclaim the truth at every street corner! I shall write to newspapers in other towns! The whole country shall know how matters stand here!

HOVSTAD. It almost seems as if the Doctor's object were to ruin the town.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, so well do I love my native town that I would rather ruin it than see it flourishing upon a lie.

ASLAKSEN. That's plain speaking. (*Noise and whistling.* MRS. STOCKMANN *coughs in vain; the* DOCTOR *no longer heeds her.*)

HOVSTAD. (*shouting amid the tumult*) The man who would ruin a whole community must be an enemy to his fellow citizens!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*with growing excitement*) What does it matter if a lying community is ruined! Let it be levelled to the ground, say I! All men who live upon a lie ought to be exterminated like vermin! You'll end by poisoning the whole country; you'll bring it to such a pass that the whole country will deserve to perish. And if ever it comes to that, I shall say, from the bottom of my heart: Perish the country! Perish all its people!

A MAN. (*in the crowd*) Why, he talks like a regular enemy of the people!

BILLING. Strike me dead but there spoke the people's voice!

THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY. (*shouting*) Yes! yes! yes! He's an enemy of the people! He hates his country! He hates the whole people!

ASLAKSEN. Both as a citizen of this town and as a human being, I am deeply shocked at what it has been my lot to hear to-night. Dr. Stockmann has unmasked himself in a

manner I should never have dreamt of. I must reluctantly subscribe to the opinion just expressed by some estimable citizens; and I think we ought to formulate this opinion in a resolution. I therefore beg to move, "That this meeting declares the medical officer of the Baths, Dr. Thomas Stockmann, to be an enemy of the people." (*Thunders of applause and cheers. Many form a circle round the* DOCTOR *and hoot at him.* MRS. STOCKMANN *and* PETRA *have risen.* MORTEN *and* EILIF *fight the other school-boys, who have also been hooting. Some grown-up persons separate them.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*to the people hooting*) Ah, fools that you are! I tell you that—

ASLAKSEN. (*ringing*) The Doctor is out of order in speaking. A formal vote must be taken; but out of consideration for personal feelings, it will be taken in writing and without names. Have you any blank paper, Mr. Billing?

BILLING. Here's both blue and white paper—

ASLAKSEN. Capital; that will save time. Cut it up into slips. That's it. (*To the meeting.*) Blue means no, white means aye. I myself will go round and collect the votes. (*The* BURGOMASTER *leaves the room.* ASLAKSEN *and a few others go round with pieces of paper in hats.*)

A GENTLEMAN. (*to* HOVSTAD) What can be the matter with the Doctor? What does it all mean?

HOVSTAD. Why, you know what a hare-brained creature he is.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN. (*to* BILLING) I say, you're often at his house. Have you ever noticed if the fellow drinks?

BILLING. Strike me dead if I know what to say. The toddy's always on the table when any one looks in.

A THIRD GENTLEMAN. No, I should rather say he went off his head at times.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. I wonder if there's madness in the family?

BILLING. I shouldn't be surprised.

A FOURTH GENTLEMAN. No, it's pure malice. He wants to be revenged for something or other.

BILLING. He was certainly talking about a rise in his salary the other day; but he didn't get it.

ALL THE GENTLEMEN. (*together*) Aha! That explains everything.

THE DRUNKEN MAN. (*in the crowd*) I want a blue one, I do! And I'll have a white one too.

SEVERAL PEOPLE. There's the tipsy man again! Turn him out.

MORTEN KIIL. (*approaching the* DOCTOR) Well, Stockmann, you see now what such monkey-tricks lead to?

DR. STOCKMANN. I have done my duty.

MORTEN KIIL. What was that you said about the Mill Dale tanneries?

DR. STOCKMANN. You heard what I said—that all the filth comes from them.

MORTEN KIIL. From my tannery as well?

DR. STOCKMANN. I'm sorry to say yours is the worst of all.

MORTEN KIIL. Are you going to put that in the papers, too?

DR. STOCKMANN. I can't gloze anything over.

MORTEN KIIL. This may cost you dear, Stockmann! (*He goes out.*)

A FAT GENTLEMAN. (*goes up to* HORSTER, *without bowing to the ladies*) Well, Captain, so you lend your house to enemies of the people.

HORSTER. I suppose I can do as I please with my own property, Sir.

THE GENTLEMAN. Then of course you can have no objection if I follow your example?

HORSTER. What do you mean, Sir?

THE GENTLEMAN. You shall hear from me to-morrow. (*Turns away and goes out.*)

PETRA. Wasn't that the owner of your ship, Captain Horster?

HORSTER. Yes, that was Mr. Vik.

ASLAKSEN. (*with the voting papers in his hands, ascends the platform and rings*) Gentlemen! I have now to announce the result of the vote. All the voters, with one exception—

A YOUNG GENTLEMAN. That's the tipsy man!

ASLAKSEN. With the exception of one intoxicated person, this meeting of citizens unanimously declares the medical officer of the Baths, Dr. Thomas Stockmann, to be an enemy of the people. (*Cheers and applause.*) Three cheers for our fine old municipality! (*Cheers.*) Three cheers for our able and

energetic Burgomaster, who has so loyally set family prejudice aside! (*Cheers.*) The meeting is dissolved. (*He descends.*)

BILLING. Three cheers for the Chairman!

ALL. Hurrah for Aslaksen.

DR. STOCKMANN. My hat and coat, Petra. Captain, have you room for passengers to the new world?

HORSTER. For you and yours, Doctor, we'll make room.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*while* PETRA *helps him to put on his coat*) Good. Come Katrina, come boys! (*He gives his wife his arm.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*in a low voice*) Thomas, dear, let us go out by the back way.

DR. STOCKMANN. No back ways, Katrina. (*In a loud voice.*) You shall hear from the enemy of the people, before he shakes the dust from his feet! I am not so forbearing as a certain person; I don't say: I forgive you, for you know not what you do.

ASLAKSEN. (*shouts*) That is a blasphemous comparison, Dr. Stockmann!

BILLING. Strike me—! This is more than a serious man can stand!

A COARSE VOICE. And he threatens us into the bargain!

ANGRY CRIES. Let's smash his windows! Duck him in the fiord!

A MAN. (*in the crowd*) Blow your horn, Evensen! Blow man, blow! (*Horn-blowing, whistling, and wild shouting. The* DOCTOR, *with his family, goes towards the door.* HORSTER *clears the way for them.*)

ALL. (*yelling after them as they go out*) Enemy of the people! Enemy of the people! Enemy of the people!

BILLING. Strike me dead if I'd care to drink toddy at Stockmann's to-night! (*The people throng towards the door; the shouting is taken up by others outside; from the street are heard cries of "Enemy of the people! Enemy of the people!"*)

CURTAIN

ACT FIFTH

DR. STOCKMANN'S *Study. Bookshelves and glass cases with various collections along the walls. In the back, a door leading to the hall; in front, on the left, a door to the sitting-room. In the wall to the right are two windows, all the panes of which are smashed. In the middle of the room is the* DOCTOR'S *writing-table, covered with books and papers. The room is in disorder. It is forenoon.*

DR. STOCKMANN, *in dressing-gown, slippers, and skull-cap, is bending down and raking with an umbrella under one of the cabinets; at last he rakes out a stone.*

DR. STOCKMANN. (*speaking through the sitting-room doorway*) Katrina, I've found another!

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*in the sitting-room*) Oh, I'm sure you'll find plenty more.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*placing the stone on a pile of others on the table*) I shall keep these stones as sacred relics. Eilif and Morten shall see them every day, and when I die they shall be heirlooms. (*Raking under the bookcase.*) Hasn't—what the devil is her name?—the girl—hasn't she been for the glazier yet?

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*coming in*) Yes, but he said he didn't know whether he would be able to come to-day.

DR. STOCKMANN. I believe, if the truth were told, he daren't come.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Well, Randina, too, had an idea he was afraid to come, because of the neighbours. (*Speaks through the sitting-room doorway.*) What is it, Randina?—Very well. (*Goes out, and returns immediately.*) Here is a letter for you, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. Let me see. (*Opens the letter and reads.*) Aha!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Who is it from?

DR. STOCKMANN. From the landlord. He gives us notice.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Is it possible? He is such a nice man—

DR. STOCKMANN. (*looking at the letter*) He daren't do otherwise, he says. He is very unwilling to do it; but he daren't do otherwise—on account of his fellow citizens—out of respect for public opinion—is in a dependent position—doesn't dare to offend certain influential men—

MRS. STOCKMANN. There, you see, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes, I see well enough; they are all cowards, every one of them, in this town; no one dares do anything for fear

of all the rest. (*Throws the letter on the table.*) But it's all the same to us, Katrina. We will shape our course for the new world, and then—

MRS. STOCKMANN. But are you sure this idea of going abroad is altogether wise, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN. Would you have me stay here, where they have pilloried me as an enemy of the people, branded me, smashed my windows! And look here, Katrina, they've torn a hole in my black trousers, too.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh dear; and these are the best you have!

DR. STOCKMANN. A man should never put on his best trousers when he goes out to battle for freedom and truth. Well, I don't care so much about the trousers; them you can always patch up for me. But that the mob, the rabble, should dare to attack me, as if they were my equals—that is what I can't, for the life of me, stomach!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, they have behaved abominably to you here, Thomas; but is that any reason for leaving the country altogether?

DR. STOCKMANN. Do you think the plebeians aren't just as insolent in other towns? Oh yes, they are, my dear; it's six of one and half a dozen of the other. Well, never mind; let the curs yelp; that's not the worst; the worst is that every one, all over the country, is the slave of his party. Not that I suppose—very likely it's no better in the free West either; the compact majority, and enlightened public opinion, and all the other devil's trash is rampant there too. But you see the conditions are larger there than here; they may kill you, but they don't slow-torture you; they don't screw up a free soul in a vice, as they do at home here. And then, if need be, you can keep out of it all. (*Walks up and down.*) If I only knew of any primeval forest, or a little South Sea island to be sold cheap—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, but the boys, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*comes to a standstill*) What an extraordinary woman you are, Katrina! Would you rather have the boys grow up in such a society as ours? Why, you could see for yourself yesterday evening that one half of the population is stark mad, and if the other half hasn't lost its wits, that's only because they are brute beasts who haven't any wits to lose.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But really, my dear Thomas, you do say such imprudent things.

DR. STOCKMANN. What! Isn't it the truth that I tell them? Don't they turn all ideas upside down? Don't they stir up right and wrong into one hotch-potch? Don't they call lies everything that I know to be the truth? But the maddest thing of all is to see crowds of grown men, calling themselves Liberals, go about persuading themselves and others that they are friends of freedom! Did you ever hear anything like it, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes, no doubt. But— (PETRA *enters from the sitting-room.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. Back from school already?

PETRA. Yes; I have been dismissed.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Dismissed?

DR. STOCKMANN. You too!

PETRA. Mrs. Busk gave me notice, and so I thought it best to leave there and then.

DR. STOCKMANN. You did perfectly right!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Who could have thought Mrs. Busk was such a bad woman!

PETRA. Oh mother, Mrs. Busk isn't bad at all; I saw clearly how sorry she was. But she dared not do otherwise, she said; and so I am dismissed.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*laughing and rubbing his hands*) She dared not do otherwise—just like the rest! Oh, it's delicious.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh well, after that frightful scene last night—

PETRA. It wasn't only that. What do you think, father—?

DR. STOCKMANN. Well?

PETRA. Mrs. Busk showed me no fewer than three letters she had received this morning—

DR. STOCKMANN. Anonymous, of course?

PETRA. Yes.

DR. STOCKMANN. They never dare give their names, Katrina!

PETRA. And two of them stated that a gentleman who is often at our house said at the club last night that I held extremely advanced opinions upon various things—

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course you didn't deny it.

PETRA. Of course not. You know Mrs. Busk herself is pretty advanced in her opinions when we're alone together; but now that this has come out about me, she dared not keep me on.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Some one that is often at our house, too. There, you see, Thomas, what comes of all your hospitality.

DR. STOCKMANN. We won't live any longer in such a pig-sty! Pack up as quickly as you can, Katrina; let's get away—the sooner the better.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Hush! I think there is some one in the passage. See who it is, Petra.

PETRA. (*opening the door*) Oh, is it you, Captain Horster? Please come in.

HORSTER. (*from the hall*) Good morning. I thought I might just look in and ask how you are.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*shaking his hand*) Thanks; that's very good of you.

MRS. STOCKMANN. And thank you for helping us through the crowd last night, Captain Horster.

PETRA. How did you ever get home again?

HORSTER. Oh, that was all right. I am tolerably able-bodied, you know; and those fellows' bark is worse than their bite.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, isn't it extraordinary, this piggish cowardice? Come here, and let me show you something! Look, here are all the stones they threw in at us. Only look at them? Upon my soul there aren't more than two decent-sized lumps in the whole heap; the rest are nothing but pebbles — mere gravel. They stood down there, and yelled, and swore they'd half kill me;—but as for really doing it—no, there's mighty little fear of that in this town!

HORSTER. You may thank your stars for that this time, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. So I do, of course. But it's depressing all the same; for if ever it should come to a serious national struggle, you may be sure public opinion would be for taking to its heels, and the compact majority would scamper for their lives like a flock of sheep, Captain Horster. That is what's so melancholy to think of; it grieves me to the heart.—But deuce take it—it's foolish of me to feel anything of the sort! They have called me an enemy of the people; well then, let me be an enemy of the people!

MRS. STOCKMANN. That you'll never be, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. You'd better not take your oath of it, Katrina. A bad name may act like a pin-scratch in the lung. And that confounded word—I can't get rid of it; it has sunk deep into my heart; and there it lies gnawing and sucking like an acid. And no magnesia can cure me.

PETRA. Pooh; you should only laugh at them, father.

HORSTER. People will think differently yet, Doctor.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, Thomas, that's as certain as that you are standing here.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, perhaps, when it is too late. Well, as they make their bed so they must lie! Let them go on wallowing here in their pig-sty, and learn to repent having driven a patriot into exile. When do you sail, Captain Horster?

HORSTER. Well—that's really what I came to speak to you about—

DR. STOCKMANN. What? Anything wrong with the ship?

HORSTER. No; but the fact is, I shan't be sailing in her.

PETRA. Surely you have not been dismissed?

HORSTER. (*smiling*) Yes, I have.

PETRA. You too!

MRS. STOCKMANN. There, you see, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. And for the truth's sake! Oh, if I could possibly have imagined such a thing—

HORSTER. You mustn't be troubled about this; I shall soon find a berth with some other company, elsewhere.

DR. STOCKMANN. And this is that man Vik! A wealthy man, independent of every one! Faugh!

HORSTER. Oh, for that matter, he's a very well-meaning man. He said himself he would gladly have kept me on if only he dared—

DR. STOCKMANN. But he didn't dare? Of course not!

HORSTER. It's not so easy, he said, when you belong to a party—

DR. STOCKMANN. My gentleman has hit it there! A party is like a sausage-machine; it grinds all the brains together in one mash; and that's why we see nothing but porridge-heads and pulp-heads all around!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Now really, Thomas!

PETRA. (*to* HORSTER) If only you hadn't seen us home, perhaps it would not have come to this.

HORSTER. I don't regret it.

PETRA. (*gives him her hand*) Thank you for that!

HORSTER. (*to* DR. STOCKMANN) And then, too, I wanted to tell you this: if you are really determined to go abroad, I've thought of another way—

DR. STOCKMANN. That's good—if only we can get off quickly—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Hush! Isn't that a knock?

PETRA. I believe it is uncle.

DR. STOCKMANN. Aha! (*Calls.*) Come in!

MRS. STOCKMANN. My dear Thomas, now do promise me—(*The* BURGOMASTER *enters from the hall.*)

BURGOMASTER. (*in the doorway*) Oh, you are engaged. Then I'd better—

DR. STOCKMANN. No no; come in.

BURGOMASTER. But I wanted to speak to you alone.

MRS. STOCKMANN. We can go into the sitting-room.

HORSTER. And I shall look in again presently.

DR. STOCKMANN. No no; go with the ladies, Captain Horster; I must hear more about—

HORSTER. All right, then I'll wait. (*He follows* MRS. STOCKMANN *and* PETRA *into the sitting-room. The* BURGOMASTER *says nothing, but casts glances at the windows.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. I daresay you find it rather draughty here to-day? Put on your cap.

BURGOMASTER. Thanks, if I may. (*Does so.*) I fancy I caught cold yesterday evening. I stood there shivering—

DR. STOCKMANN. Really. On my soul, now, I found it quite warm enough.

BURGOMASTER. I regret that it was not in my power to prevent these nocturnal excesses.

DR. STOCKMANN. Have you anything else in particular to say to me?

BURGOMASTER. (*producing a large letter*) I have this document for you from the Directors of the Baths.

DR. STOCKMANN. My dismissal?

BURGOMASTER. Yes; dated from to-day. (*Places the letter on the table.*) We are very sorry—but frankly, we dared not do otherwise, on account of public opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*smiling*) Dared not? I've heard that phrase already to-day.

BURGOMASTER. I beg you to realise your position clearly. For the future, you cannot count upon any sort of practice in the town.

DR. STOCKMANN. Devil take the practice! But how can you be so sure of that?

BURGOMASTER. The House-owners' Association is sending round a circular from house to house, in which all well-disposed citizens are called upon not to employ you; and I dare swear that not a single head of a family will venture to refuse his signature; he simply dare not.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well well; I don't doubt that. But what then?

BURGOMASTER. If I might advise, I would suggest that you should leave the town for a time—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, I've had some such idea in my mind already.

BURGOMASTER. Good. And when you have had six months or so for mature deliberation, if you could make up your mind to acknowledge your error, with a few words of regret—

DR. STOCKMANN. I might perhaps be reinstated, you think?

BURGOMASTER. Perhaps it's not quite out of the question.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but how about public opinion? You daren't, on account of public opinion.

BURGOMASTER. Opinion is extremely variable. And, to speak candidly, it is of the greatest importance for us to have such an admission under your own hand.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, I daresay it would be mightily convenient for you! But you remember what I've said to you before about such foxes' tricks!

BURGOMASTER. At that time your position was infinitely more favourable; at that time

you thought you had the whole town at your back—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and now I have the whole town on my back— (*Flaring up.*) But no—not if I had the devil and his dam on my back—! Never—never, I tell you!

BURGOMASTER. The father of a family has no right to act as you are doing. You have no right to do it, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. I have no right! There's only one thing in the world that a free man has a right to do; and do you know what that is?

BURGOMASTER. No.

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course not; but *I* will tell you. A free man has no right to wallow in filth like a cur; he has no right to act so that he ought to spit in his own face!

BURGOMASTER. That sounds extremely plausible; and if there were not another explanation of your obstinacy—but we all know there is—

DR. STOCKMANN. What do you mean by that?

BURGOMASTER. You understand well enough. But as your brother, and as a man who knows the world, I warn you not to build too confidently upon prospects and expectations that may very likely come to nothing.

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, what on earth are you driving at?

BURGOMASTER. Do you really want me to believe that you are ignorant of the terms of old Morten Kiil's will?

DR. STOCKMANN. I know that the little he has is to go to a home for old and needy artisans. But what has that got to do with me?

BURGOMASTER. To begin with, "the little he has" is no trifle. Morten Kiil is a tolerably wealthy man.

DR. STOCKMANN. I have never had the least notion of that!

BURGOMASTER. H'm—really? Then I suppose you have no notion that a not inconsiderable part of his fortune is to go to your children, you and your wife having a life-interest in it. Has he not told you that?

DR. STOCKMANN. No, I'll be hanged if he has! On the contrary, he has done nothing but grumble about being so preposterously over-taxed. But are you really sure of this, Peter?

BURGOMASTER. I have it from a thoroughly trustworthy source.

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, good heavens, then Katrina's provided for—and the children too! Oh, I must tell her—(*Calls.*) Katrina, Katrina!

BURGOMASTER. (*holding him back*) Hush! don't say anything about it yet.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*opening the door*) What is it?

DR. STOCKMANN. Nothing my dear; go in again. (MRS. STOCKMANN *closes the door.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*pacing up and down*) Provided for! Only think—all of them provided for! And for life! After all, it's a grand thing to feel yourself secure!

BURGOMASTER. Yes, but that is just what you are not. Morten Kiil can revoke his will any day or hour he chooses.

DR. STOCKMANN. But he won't, my good Peter. The Badger is only too delighted to see me fall foul of you and your wiseacre friends.

BURGOMASTER. (*starts and looks searchingly at him*) Aha! That throws a new light on a good many things.

DR. STOCKMANN. What things?

BURGOMASTER. So the whole affair has been a carefully-concocted intrigue. Your recklessly violent onslaught—in the name of truth—upon the leading men of the town—

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, what of it?

BURGOMASTER. It was nothing but a preconcerted requital for that vindictive old Morten Kiil's will.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*almost speechless*) Peter—you are the most abominable plebeian I have ever known in all my born days.

BURGOMASTER. All is over between us. Your dismissal is irrevocable—for now we have a weapon against you. (*He goes out.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Shame! shame! shame! (*Calls.*) Katrina! The floor must be scrubbed after him! Tell her to come here with a pail—what's her name? confound it—the girl with the smudge on her nose—

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*in the sitting-room doorway*) Hush, hush, Thomas!

PETRA. (*also in the doorway*) Father, here's grandfather; he wants to know if he can speak to you alone.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, of course he can. (*By the door.*) Come in, father-in-law. (MORTEN KIIL *enters.* DR. STOCKMANN *closes the door behind him.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, what is it? Sit down.

MORTEN KIIL. I won't sit down. (*Looking about him.*) It looks cheerful here to-day, Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, don't you think so?

MORTEN KIIL. Sure enough. And you've plenty of fresh air too; you've got your fill of that oxygen you were talking about yesterday. You must have a rare good conscience to-day, I should think.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, I have.

MORTEN KIIL. So I should suppose. (*Tapping himself on the breast.*) But do you know what *I* have got here?

DR. STOCKMANN. A good conscience too, I hope.

MORTEN KIIL. Pooh! No; something far better than that. (*Takes out a large pocket-book, opens it, and shows* STOCKMANN *a bundle of papers.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. (*looking at him in astonishment*) Shares in the Baths!

MORTEN KIIL. They weren't difficult to get to-day.

DR. STOCKMANN. And you've gone and bought these up—?

MORTEN KIIL. All I had the money to pay for.

DR. STOCKMANN. Why, my dear sir,—just when things are in such a desperate way at the Baths—

MORTEN KIIL. If you behave like a reasonable being, you can soon set the Baths all right again.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, you can see for yourself I'm doing all I can. But the people of this town are mad!

MORTEN KIIL. You said yesterday that the worst filth came from my tannery. Now, if that's true, then my grandfather, and my father before me, and I myself, have for ever so many years been poisoning the town with filth, like three destroying angels. Do you think I'm going to sit quiet under such a reproach?

DR. STOCKMANN. Unfortunately, you can't help it.

MORTEN KIIL. No, thank you. I hold fast to my good name. I've heard that people call me "the Badger." A badger's a sort of a pig, I know; but I'm determined to give them the lie. I will live and die a clean man.

DR. STOCKMANN. And how will you manage that?

MORTEN KIIL. You shall make me clean, Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN. I!

MORTEN KIIL. Do you know what money I've used to buy these shares with? No, you can't know; but now I'll tell you. It's the money Katrina and Petra and the boys are to have after my death. For, you see, I've laid by something after all.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*flaring up*) And you've taken Katrina's money and done this with it!

MORTEN KIIL. Yes; the whole of it is invested in the Baths now. And now I want to see if you're really so stark, staring mad, after all, Stockmann. If you go on making out that these beasts and other abominations dribble down from my tannery, it'll be just as if you were to flay broad stripes of Katrina's skin—and Petra's too, and the boys. No decent father would ever do that—unless he were a madman.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*walking up and down*) Yes, but I am a madman; I am a madman!

MORTEN KIIL. You surely can't be so raving, ramping mad where your wife and children are concerned.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*stopping in front of him*) Why couldn't you have spoken to me before you went and bought all that rubbish?

MORTEN KIIL. What's done can't be undone.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*walking restlessly about*) If only I weren't so certain about the affair—! But I am absolutely convinced that I'm right.

MORTEN KIIL. (*weighing the pocket-book in his hand*) If you stick to this lunacy, these aren't worth much. (*Puts the book into his pocket.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. But, deuce take it! surely science ought to be able to hit upon some antidote, some sort of prophylactic—

MORTEN KIIL. Do you mean something to kill the beasts?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, or at least to make them harmless.

MORTEN KIIL. Couldn't you try ratsbane?

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, nonsense, nonsense!—But since every one declares it's nothing but fancy, why fancy let it be! Let them have it their own way! Haven't the ignorant, narrow-hearted curs reviled me as an enemy of the people?—and weren't they on the point of tearing the clothes off my back?

MORTEN KIIL. And they've smashed all your windows for you too!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and then there's one's duty to one's family! I must talk that over with Katrina; such things are more in her line.

MORTEN KIIL. That's right! You just follow the advice of a sensible woman.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*turning upon him angrily*) How could you act so preposterously! Risking Katrina's money, and putting me to this horrible torture! When I look at you, I seem to see the devil himself—

MORTEN KIIL. Then I'd better be off. But I must hear from you, yes or no, by two o'clock. If it's no, all the shares go to the Hospital—and that this very day.

DR. STOCKMANN. And what will Katrina get?

MORTEN KIIL. Not a rap. (*The door leading to the hall opens.* HOVSTAD *and* ASLAKSEN *are seen outside it.*)

MORTEN KIIL. Hullo! look at these two.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*staring at them*) What! Do you actually venture to come here?

HOVSTAD. Why, to be sure we do.

ASLAKSEN. You see, we've something to discuss with you.

MORTEN KIIL. (*whispers*) Yes or no—by two o'clock.

ASLAKSEN. (*with a glance at* HOVSTAD) Aha! (MORTEN KIIL *goes out.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, what do you want with me? Be brief.

HOVSTAD. I can quite understand that you resent our attitude at the meeting yesterday—

DR. STOCKMANN. Your attitude, you say? Yes, it was a pretty attitude! I call it the attitude of cowards—of old women— Shame upon you!

HOVSTAD. Call it what you will; but we could not act otherwise.

DR. STOCKMANN. You dared not, I suppose? Isn't that so?

HOVSTAD. Yes, if you like to put it so.

ASLAKSEN. But why didn't you just say a word to us beforehand? The merest hint to Mr. Hovstad or to me—

DR. STOCKMANN. A hint? About what?

ASLAKSEN. About what was really behind it all.

DR. STOCKMANN. I don't in the least understand you?

ASLAKSEN. (*nods confidentially*) Oh yes, you do, Dr. Stockmann.

HOVSTAD. It's no good making a mystery of it any longer.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*looking from one to the other*) Why, what in the devil's name—!

ASLAKSEN. May I ask—isn't your father-in-law going about the town buying up all the Bath stock?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, he has been buying Bath stock to-day, but—

ASLAKSEN. It would have been more prudent to let somebody else do that—some one not so closely connected with you.

HOVSTAD. And then you ought not to have appeared in the matter under your own name. No one need have known that the attack on the Baths came from you. You should have taken me into your counsels, Dr. Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*stares straight in front of him; a light seems to break in upon him, and he says as though thunderstruck*) Is this possible? Can such things be?

ASLAKSEN. (*smiling*) It's plain enough that they can. But they ought to be managed delicately, you understand.

HOVSTAD. And there ought to be more people in it; for the responsibility always falls more lightly when there are several to share it.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*calmly*) In one word, gentlemen—what is it you want?

ASLAKSEN. Mr. Hovstad can best—

HOVSTAD. No, you explain, Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. Well, it's this: now that we know how the matter really stands, we believe we

can venture to place the *People's Messenger* at your disposal.

DR. STOCKMANN. You can venture to now, eh? But how about public opinion? Aren't you afraid of bringing down a storm upon us?

HOVSTAD. We must manage to ride out the storm.

ASLAKSEN. And you must be ready to put about quickly, Doctor. As soon as your attack has done its work—

DR. STOCKMANN. As soon as my father-in-law and I have bought up the shares at a discount, you mean?

HOVSTAD. I presume it is mainly on scientific grounds that you want to take the management of the Baths into your own hands.

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course; it was on scientific grounds that I got the old Badger to stand in with me. And then we'll tinker up the water-works a little, and potter about a bit down at the beach, without its costing the town sixpence. That ought to do the business? Eh?

HOVSTAD. I think so—if you have the *Messenger* to back you up.

ASLAKSEN. In a free community the press is a power, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, indeed; and so is public opinion. And you, Mr. Aslaksen—I suppose you will answer for the House-owners' Association?

ASLAKSEN. Both for the House-owners' Association and the Temperance Society. You may make your mind easy.

DR. STOCKMANN. But, gentlemen—really I'm quite ashamed to mention such a thing—but—what return—?

HOVSTAD. Of course, we should prefer to give you our support for nothing. But the *Messenger* is not very firmly established; it's not getting on as it ought to; and I should be very sorry to have to stop the paper just now, when there's so much to be done in general politics.

DR. STOCKMANN. Naturally; that would be very hard for a friend of the people like you. (*Flaring up.*) But I—I am an enemy of the people! (*Striding about the room.*) Where's my stick? Where the devil is my stick?

HOVSTAD. What do you mean?

ASLAKSEN. Surely you wouldn't—

DR. STOCKMANN. (*standing still*) And suppose I don't give you a single farthing out of all my shares? You must remember we rich folk don't like parting with our money.

HOVSTAD. And you must remember that this business of the shares can be represented in two ways.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, you are the man for that; if I don't come to the rescue of the *Messenger*, you'll manage to put a vile complexion on the affair; you'll hunt me down, I suppose—bait me—try to throttle me as a dog throttles a hare!

HOVSTAD. That's a law of nature—every animal fights for its own subsistence.

ASLAKSEN. And must take its food where it can find it, you know.

DR. STOCKMANN. Then see if you can't find some out in the gutter; (*striding about the room*) for now, by heaven! we shall see which is the strongest animal of us three (*Finds his umbrella and brandishes it.*) Now, look here—!

HOVSTAD. You surely don't mean to assault us!

ASLAKSEN. I say, be careful with that umbrella.

DR. STOCKMANN. Out at the window with you, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD. (*by the hall door*) Are you utterly crazy?

DR. STOCKMANN. Out at the window, Mr. Aslaksen! Jump I tell you! Be quick about it!

ASLAKSEN. (*running round the writing-table*) Moderation, Doctor; I'm not at all strong; I can't stand much—(*Screams.*) Help! help! (MRS. STOCKMANN, PETRA, *and* HORSTER *enter from sitting-room.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. Good heavens, Thomas! what can be the matter?

DR. STOCKMANN. (*brandishing the umbrella*) Jump, I tell you! Out into the gutter!

HOVSTAD. An unprovoked assault! I call you to witness, Captain Horster. (*Rushes off through the hall.*)

ASLAKSEN. (*bewildered*) If one only knew the local situation—! (*He slinks out by the sitting-room door.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*holding back the* DOCTOR) Now, do restrain yourself, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*throwing down the um-*

brella) I'll be hanged if they haven't got off after all.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Why, what can they have wanted with you?

DR. STOCKMANN. I'll tell you afterwards; I have other things to think of now. (*Goes to the table and writes on a visiting-card.*) Look here, Katrina: what's written here?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Three big Noes; what does that mean?

DR. STOCKMANN. That I'll tell you afterwards, too. (*Handing the card.*) There, Petra; let smudgy-face run to the Badger's with this as fast as she can. Be quick! (PETRA *goes out through the hall with the card.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, if I haven't had visits to-day from all the emissaries of the devil! But now I'll sharpen my pen against them till it becomes a goad; I'll dip it in gall and venom; I'll hurl my inkstand straight at their skulls.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You forget we are going away, Thomas. (PETRA *returns.*)

DR. STOCKMANN. Well?

PETRA. She has gone.

DR. STOCKMANN. Good. Going away, do you say? No, I'll be damned if we do; we stay where we are, Katrina!

PETRA. Stay!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Here in the town?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, here; the field of battle is here; here the fight must be fought; here I will conquer! As soon as my trousers are mended, I shall go out into the town and look for a house; we must have a roof over our heads for the winter.

HORSTER. That you can have in my house.

DR. STOCKMANN. Can I?

HORSTER. Yes, there's no difficulty about that. I have room enough, and I'm hardly ever at home myself.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, how kind of you, Captain Horster.

PETRA. Thank you!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*shaking his hand*) Thanks, thanks! So that is off my mind. And this very day I shall set to work in earnest. Oh, there's no end of work to be done here, Katrina! It's a good thing I shall have all my time at my disposal now; for you must know I've had notice from the Baths—

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*sighing*) Oh yes, I was expecting that.

DR. STOCKMANN. —And now they want to take away my practice as well. But let them! The poor I shall keep anyhow—those that can't pay; and, good Lord! it's they that need me most. But by heaven! I'll make them listen to me; I'll preach to them in season and out of season, as the saying goes.

MRS. STOCKMANN. My dear Thomas, I should have thought you had learnt what good preaching does.

DR. STOCKMANN. You really are absurd, Katrina. Am I to let myself be beaten off the field by public opinion, and the compact majority, and all that sort of devilry? No, thank you! Besides, my point is so simple, so clear and straightforward. I only want to drive it into the heads of these curs that the Liberals are the craftiest foes free men have to face; that party-programmes wring the necks of all young and living truths; that considerations of expediency turn justice and morality upside down, until life here becomes simply unlivable. Come, Captain Horster, don't you think I shall be able to make the people understand that?

HORSTER. Maybe; I don't know much about these things myself.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, you see—this is the way of it! It's the party-leaders that must be exterminated. For a party-leader is just like a wolf, you see—like a ravening wolf; he must devour a certain number of smaller animals a year, if he's to exist at all. Just look at Hovstad and Aslaksen! How many small animals they polish off—or at least mangle and maim, so that they're fit for nothing else but to be house-owners and subscribers to the *People's Messenger*! (*Sits on the edge of the table.*) Just come here, Katrina—see how bravely the sun shines to-day! And how the blessed fresh spring air blows in upon me!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, if only we could live on sunshine and spring air, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, you'll have to pinch and save to eke them out—and then we shall get on all right. That's what troubles me least. No, what does trouble me is that I don't see any man free enough and high-minded enough to dare to take up my work after me.

PETRA. Oh, don't think about that, father; you have time enough before you.—Why, see, there are the boys already. (EILIF *and* MORTEN *enter from the sitting-room.*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. Have you a holiday today?

MORTEN. No; but we had a fight with the other fellows in play-time—

EILIF. That's not true; it was the other fellows that fought us.

MORTEN. Yes, and then Mr. Rörlund said we had better stop at home for a few days.

DR. STOCKMANN. (*snapping his fingers and springing down from the table*) Now I have it! Now I have it, on my soul! You shall never set foot in school again!

THE BOYS. Never go to school!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Why, Thomas—

DR. STOCKMANN. Never, I say! I shall teach you myself—that's to say, I won't teach you any mortal thing—

MORTEN. Hurrah!

DR. STOCKMANN. —but I shall help you to grow into free, high-minded men.—Look here, you'll have to help me, Petra.

PETRA. Yes, father, you may be sure I will.

DR. STOCKMANN. And we'll have our school in the room where they reviled me as an enemy of the people. But we must have more pupils. I must have at least a dozen boys to begin with.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You'll never get them in this town.

DR. STOCKMANN. We shall see. (*To the boys.*) Don't you know any street urchins—any regular ragamuffins—?

MORTEN. Yes, father, I know lots!

DR. STOCKMANN. That's all right; bring me a few of them. I shall experiment with the street-curs for once in a way; there are sometimes excellent heads amongst them.

MORTEN. But what are we to do when we've grown into free and high-minded men?

DR. STOCKMANN. Drive all the wolves out to the far west, boys! (EILIF *looks rather doubtful;* MORTEN *jumps about shouting "Hurrah!"*)

MRS. STOCKMANN. If only the wolves don't drive you out, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. Are you quite mad, Katrina! Drive me out! Now that I am the strongest man in the town?

MRS. STOCKMANN. The strongest—now?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, I venture to say this: that now I am one of the strongest men in the whole world.

MORTEN. I say, what fun!

DR. STOCKMANN. (*in a subdued voice*) Hush; you mustn't speak about it yet; but I have made a great discovery.

MRS. STOCKMANN. What, another?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, of course! (*Gathers them about him, and speaks confidentially.*) This is what I have discovered, you see: the strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone.

MRS. STOCKMANN. (*shakes her head, smiling*) Ah, Thomas dear—!

PETRA. (*grasping his hands cheerily*) Father!

THE END.

AH, WILDERNESS![1]

EUGENE O'NEILL

Characters

NAT MILLER, *owner of the* EVENING GLOBE
ESSIE, *his wife*
ARTHUR
RICHARD
MILDRED } *their children*
TOMMY
SID DAVIS, *Essie's brother*
LILY MILLER, *Nat's sister*
DAVID MCCOMBER
MURIEL MCCOMBER, *his daughter*
WINT SELBY, *a classmate of Arthur's at Yale*
BELLE
NORAH
BARTENDER
SALESMAN

ACT ONE

SCENE: *Sitting-room of the Miller home in a large small-town in Connecticut – about 7:30 in the morning of July 4th, 1906.*

The room is fairly large, homely looking and cheerful in the morning sunlight, furnished with scrupulous medium-priced tastelessness of the period. Beneath the two windows at left, front, a sofa with silk and satin cushions stands against the wall. At rear of sofa, a bookcase with glass doors, filled with cheap sets, extends along the remaining length of wall. In the rear wall, left, is a double doorway with sliding doors and portières, leading into a dark, windowless, back parlor. At right of this doorway, another bookcase, this time a small, open one, crammed with boys' and girls' books and the best-selling novels of many past years – books the family really have read. To the right of this bookcase is the mate of the double doorway at its left, with sliding doors and portières, this one leading to a well-lighted front parlor. In the right wall, rear, a screen door opens on a porch. Farther forward in this wall are two windows, with a writing desk and a chair between them. At center is a big, round table with a green-shaded reading lamp, the cord of the lamp running up to one of five sockets in the chandelier above. Five chairs are grouped about the table – three rockers at left, right, and right rear of it, two armchairs at rear and left rear. A medium-priced, inoffensive rug covers most of the floor. The walls are papered white with a cheerful, ugly blue design.

Voices are heard in a conversational tone from the dining-room beyond the back parlor, where the family are just finishing breakfast. Then MRS. MILLER'S *voice, raised commandingly,* "Tommy! Come back here and finish your milk!" *At the same moment* TOMMY *appears in the doorway from the back parlor – a chubby, sun-burnt boy of eleven with dark eyes, blond hair wetted and plastered down in a part, and a shiny, good-natured face, a rim of milk visible about his lips. Bursting with bottled-up energy and a longing to get started on the Fourth, he nevertheless has hesitated obediently at his mother's call.*

TOMMY. (*calls back pleadingly*) Aw, I'm full, Ma. And I said excuse me and you said all right. (*His* FATHER'S VOICE *is heard speaking to his mother. Then she calls:* "All right, Tommy," *and* TOMMY *asks eagerly*) Can I go out now?

MOTHER'S VOICE. (*correctingly*) May I!

TOMMY. (*fidgeting, but obediently*) May I, Ma?

MOTHER'S VOICE. Yes. (TOMMY *jumps for the screen door to the porch at right like a sprinter released by the starting shot.*)

FATHER'S VOICE. (*shouts after him*) But you set off your crackers away from the house, remember! (*But* TOMMY *is already*

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through the screen door, which he leaves open behind him.)

(A moment later the family appear from the back parlor, coming from the dining-room. First are MILDRED *and* ARTHUR. MILDRED *is fifteen, tall and slender, with big, irregular features, resembling her father to the complete effacing of any pretense at prettiness. But her big, gray eyes are beautiful; she has vivacity and a fetching smile, and everyone thinks of her as an attractive girl. She is dressed in shirtwaist and skirt in the fashion of the period.*

*(*ARTHUR, *the eldest of the Miller children who are still living home, is nineteen. He is tall, heavy, barrel-chested and muscular, the type of football linesman of that period, with a square, stolid face, small blue eyes and thick sandy hair. His manner is solemnly collegiate. He is dressed in the latest college fashion of that day, which has receded a bit from the extreme of preceding years, but still runs to padded shoulders and pants half pegged at the top, and so small at their wide-cuffed bottoms that they cannot be taken off with shoes on.)*

MILDRED. *(as they appear — inquisitively)* Where are you going today, Art?

ARTHUR. *(with superior dignity)* That's my business. *(He ostentatiously takes from his pocket a tobacco pouch with a big Y and class numerals stamped on it, and a heavy bulldog briar pipe with silver Y and numerals, and starts filling the pipe.)*

MILDRED. *(teasingly)* Bet I know, just the same! Want me to tell you her initials? E.R.! *(She laughs.* ARTHUR, *pleased by this insinuation at his lady-killing activities, yet finds it beneath his dignity to reply. He goes to the table, lights his pipe and picks up the local morning paper, and slouches back into the armchair at left rear of table, beginning to whistle "Oh, Waltz Me Around Again, Willie" as he scans the headlines.* MILDRED *sits on the sofa at left, front.)*

(Meanwhile, their mother and their AUNT LILY, *their father's sister, have appeared, following them from the back parlor.* MRS. MILLER *is around fifty, a short, stout woman with fading light-brown hair sprinkled with gray, who must have been decidedly pretty as a girl in a round-faced, cute, small-featured, wide-eyed fashion. She has big brown eyes, soft and maternal — a bustling, mother-of-a-family manner. She is dressed in shirtwaist and skirt.*

*(*LILY MILLER, *her sister-in-law, is forty-two, tall, dark and thin. She conforms outwardly to the conventional type of old-maid school teacher, even to wearing glasses. But behind the glasses her gray eyes are gentle and tired, and her whole atmosphere is one of shy kindliness. Her voice presents the greatest contrast to her appearance — soft and full of sweetness. She, also, is dressed in a shirtwaist and skirt.)*

MRS. MILLER. *(as they appear)* Getting milk down him is like— *(Suddenly she is aware of the screen door standing half open)* Goodness, look at that door he's left open! The house will be alive with flies! *(Rushing out to shut it)* I've told him again and again— and that's all the good it does! It's just a waste of breath! *(She slams the door shut.)*

LILY. *(smiling)* Well, you can't expect a boy to remember to shut doors—on the Fourth of July. *(She goes diffidently to the straight-backed chair before the desk at right, front, leaving the comfortable chairs to the others.)*

MRS. MILLER. That's you all over, Lily— always making excuses for him. You'll have him spoiled to death in spite of me. *(She sinks in rocker at right of table)* Phew, I'm hot, aren't you? This is going to be a scorcher. *(She picks up a magazine from the table and begins to rock, fanning herself.)*

(Meanwhile, her husband and her brother have appeared from the back parlor, both smoking cigars. NAT MILLER *is in his late fifties, a tall, dark, spare man, a little stoop-shouldered, more than a little bald, dressed with an awkward attempt at sober respectability imposed upon an innate heedlessness of clothes. His long face has large, irregular, undistinguished features, but he has fine, shrewd, humorous gray eyes.*

*(*SID DAVIS, *his brother-in-law, is forty-five, short and fat, bald-headed, with the Puckish face of a Peck's Bad Boy who has never grown up. He is dressed in what had once been a very natty loud light suit but is now a*

shapeless and faded nondescript in cut and color.)

SID. (*as they appear*) Oh, I like the job first rate, Nat. Waterbury's a nifty old town with the lid off, when you get to know the ropes. I rang in a joke in one of my stories that tickled the folks there pink. Waterwagon —Waterbury—Waterloo!

MILLER. (*grinning*) Darn good!

SID. (*pleased*) I thought it was pretty fair myself. (*Goes on a bit ruefully, as if oppressed by a secret sorrow*) Yes, you can see life in Waterbury, all right—that is, if you're looking for life in Waterbury!

MRS. MILLER. What's that about Waterbury, Sid?

SID. I was saying it's all right in its way—but there's no place like home. (*As if to punctuate this remark, there begins a series of bangs from just beyond the porch outside, as* TOMMY *inaugurates his celebration by setting off a package of firecrackers. The assembled family jump in their chairs.*)

MRS. MILLER. That boy! (*She rushes to the screen door and out on the porch, calling*) Tommy! You mind what your Pa told you! You take your crackers out in the back yard, you hear me!

ARTHUR. (*frowning thoughtfully*) Fresh kid! He did it on purpose to scare us.

MILLER. (*grinning through his annoyance*) Darned youngster! He'll have the house afire before the day's out.

SID. (*grins and sings*)

"Dunno what ter call 'im
But he's mighty like a Rose—velt."

(*They all laugh.*)

LILY. Sid, you Crazy! (SID *beams at her.* MRS. MILLER *comes back from the porch, still fuming.*)

MRS. MILLER. Well, I've made him go out back at last. Now we'll have a little peace. (*As if to contradict this, the bang of firecrackers and torpedoes begins from the rear of the house, left, and continues at intervals throughout the scene, not nearly so loud as the first explosion, but sufficiently emphatic to form a disturbing punctuation to the conversation.*)

MILLER. Well, what's on the tappee for all of you today? Sid, you're coming to the Sachem Club picnic with me, of course.

SID. (*a bit embarrassed*) You bet. I mean I'd like to, Nat—that is, if—

MRS. MILLER. (*regarding her brother with smiling suspicion*) Hmm! I know what that Sachem Club picnic's always meant!

LILY. (*breaks in in a forced joking tone that conceals a deep earnestness*) No, not this time, Essie. Sid's a reformed character since he's been on the paper in Waterbury. At least, that's what he swore to me last night.

SID. (*avoiding her eyes, humiliated—joking it off*) Pure as the driven snow, that's me. They're running me for president of the W.C.T.U. (*They all laugh.*)

MRS. MILLER. Sid, you're a caution. You turn everything into a joke. But you be careful, you hear? We're going to have dinner in the evening tonight, you know—the best shore dinner you ever tasted and I don't want you coming home—well, not able to appreciate it.

LILY. Oh, I know he'll be careful today. Won't you, Sid?

SID. (*more embarrassed than ever—joking it off melodramatically*) Lily, I swear to you if any man offers me a drink, I'll kill him—that is, if he changes his mind! (*They all laugh except* LILY, *who bites her lip and stiffens.*)

MRS. MILLER. No use talking to him, Lily. You ought to know better by this time. We can only hope for the best.

MILLER. Now, you women stop picking on Sid. It's the Fourth of July and even a downtrodden newspaperman has a right to enjoy himself when he's on his holiday.

MRS. MILLER. I wasn't thinking of Sid.

MILLER. (*with a wink at the others*) What are you insinuating I ever—?

MRS. MILLER. Well, to do you justice, no, not what you'd really call—But I've known you to come back from this darned Sachem Club picnic—Well, I didn't need any little bird to whisper that you'd been some place besides to the well! (*She smiles good-naturedly.* MILLER *chuckles.*)

SID. (*after a furtive glance at the stiff and silent* LILY—*changes the subject abruptly by turning to* ARTHUR) How are you spending

the festive Fourth, Boola-Boola? (ARTHUR *stiffens dignifiedly.*)

MILDRED. (*teasingly*) I can tell you, if he won't.

MRS. MILLER. (*smiling*) Off to the Rands', I suppose.

ARTHUR. (*with dignity*) I and Bert Turner are taking Elsie and Ethel Rand canoeing. We're going to have a picnic lunch on Strawberry Island. And this evening I'm staying at the Rands' for dinner.

MILLER. You're accounted for, then. How about you, Mid?

MILDRED. I'm going to the beach to Anne Culver's.

ARTHUR. (*sarcastically*) Of course, there won't be any boys present! Johnny Dodd, for example?

MILDRED. (*giggles—then with a coquettish toss of her head*) Pooh! What do I care for him? He's not the only pebble on the beach.

MILLER. Stop your everlasting teasing, you two. How about you and Lily, Essie?

MRS. MILLER. I don't know. I haven't made any plans. Have you, Lily?

LILY. (*quietly*) No. Anything you want to do.

MRS. MILLER. Well, I thought we'd just sit around and rest and talk.

MILLER. You can gossip any day. This is the Fourth. Now, I've got a better suggestion than that. What do you say to an automobile ride? I'll get out the Buick and we'll drive around town and out to the lighthouse and back. Then Sid and I will let you off here, or anywhere you say, and we'll go on to the picnic.

MRS. MILLER. I'd love it. Wouldn't you, Lily?

LILY. It would be nice.

MILLER. Then, that's all settled.

SID. (*embarrassedly*) Lily, want to come with me to the fireworks display at the beach tonight?

MRS. MILLER. That's right, Sid. You take her out. Poor Lily never has any fun, always sitting home with me.

LILY. (*flustered and grateful*) I—I'd like to, Sid, thank you. (*Then an apprehensive look comes over her face*) Only not if you come home—you know.

SID. (*again embarrassed and humiliated—again joking it off, solemnly*) Evil-minded, I'm afraid, Nat. I hate to say it of your sister. (*They all laugh. Even* LILY *cannot suppress a smile.*)

ARTHUR. (*with heavy jocularity*) Listen, Uncle Sid. Don't let me catch you and Aunt Lily spooning on a bench tonight—or it'll be my duty to call a cop! (SID *and* LILY *both look painfully embarrassed at this, and the joke falls flat, except for* MILDRED *who can't restrain a giggle at the thought of these two ancients spooning.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*rebukingly*) Arthur!

MILLER. (*dryly*) That'll do you. Your education in kicking a football around Yale seems to have blunted your sense of humor.

MRS. MILLER. (*suddenly—startledly*) But where's Richard? We're forgetting all about him. Why, where is that boy? I thought he came in with us from breakfast.

MILDRED. I'll bet he's off somewhere writing a poem to Muriel McComber, the silly! Or pretending to write one. I think he just copies—

ARTHUR. (*looking back toward the dining-room*) He's still in the dining-room, reading a book. (*Turning back—scornfully*) Gosh, he's always reading now. It's not my idea of having a good time in vacation.

MILLER. (*caustically*) He read his school books, too, strange as that may seem to you. That's why he came out top of his class. I'm hoping before you leave New Haven they'll find time to teach you reading is a good habit.

MRS. MILLER. (*sharply*) That reminds me, Nat. I've been meaning to speak to you about those awful books Richard is reading. You've got to give him a good talking to—(*She gets up from her chair*) I'll go up and get them right now. I found them where he'd hid them on the shelf in his wardrobe. You just wait till you see what— (*She bustles off, rear right, through the front parlor.*)

MILLER. (*plainly not relishing whatever is coming—to* SID, *grumblingly*) Seems to me she might wait until the Fourth is over before bringing up— (*Then with a grin*) I know there's nothing to it, anyway. When I

think of the books I used to sneak off and read when I was a kid.

SID. Me, too. I suppose Dick is deep in Nick Carter or Old Cap Collier.

MILLER. No, he passed that period long ago. Poetry's his red meat nowadays, I think—love poetry—and socialism, too, I suspect, from some dire declarations he's made. (*Then briskly*) Well, might as well get him on the carpet. (*He calls*) Richard. (*No answer—louder*) Richard. (*No answer—then in a bellow*) Richard!

ARTHUR. (*shouting*) Hey, Dick, wake up! Pa's calling you.

RICHARD'S VOICE. (*from the dining-room*) All right. I'm coming.

MILLER. Darn him! When he gets his nose in a book, the house could fall down and he'd never—

(RICHARD *appears in the doorway from the back parlor, the book he has been reading in one hand, a finger marking his place. He looks a bit startled still, reluctantly called back to earth from another world.*

(*He is going on seventeen, just out of high school. In appearance he is a perfect blend of father and mother, so much so that each is convinced he is the image of the other. He has his mother's light-brown hair, his father's gray eyes; his features are neither large nor small; he is of medium height, neither fat nor thin. One would not call him a handsome boy; neither is he homely. But he is definitely different from both of his parents, too. There is something of extreme sensitiveness added —a restless, apprehensive, defiant, shy, dreamy, self-conscious intelligence about him. In manner he is alternately plain simple boy and a posey actor solemnly playing a role. He is dressed in prep school reflection of the college style of* ARTHUR.)

RICHARD. Did you want me, Pa?

MILLER. I'd hoped I'd made that plain. Come and sit down a while. (*He points to the rocking chair at the right of table near his.*)

RICHARD. (*coming forward—seizing on the opportunity to play up his preoccupation—with apologetic superiority*) I didn't hear you, Pa. I was off in another world. (MILDRED *slyly shoves her foot out so that he trips over it, almost falling. She laughs gleefully. So does* ARTHUR.)

ARTHUR. Good for you, Mid! That'll wake him up!

RICHARD. (*grins sheepishly—all boy now*) Darn you, Mid! I'll show you! (*He pushes her back on the sofa and tickles her with his free hand, still holding the book in the other. She shrieks.*)

ARTHUR. Give it to her, Dick!

MILLER. That's enough now. No more roughhouse. You sit down here, Richard. (RICHARD *obediently takes the chair at right of table, opposite his father*) What were you planning to do with yourself today? Going out to the beach with Mildred?

RICHARD. (*scornfully superior*) That silly skirt party! I should say not!

MILDRED. He's not going because Muriel isn't. I'll bet he's got a date with her somewheres.

RICHARD. (*flushing bashfully*) You shut up! (*Then to his father*) I thought I'd just stay home, Pa—this morning, anyway.

MILLER. Help Tommy set off firecrackers, eh?

RICHARD. (*drawing himself up with dignity*) I should say not. (*Then frowning portentously*) I don't believe in this silly celebrating the Fourth of July—all this lying talk about liberty—when there is no liberty!

MILLER. (*a twinkle in his eye*) Hmm.

RICHARD. (*getting warmed up*) The land of the free and the home of the brave! Home of the slave is what they ought to call it—the wage slave ground under the heel of the capitalist class, starving, crying for bread for his children, and all he gets is a stone! The Fourth of July is a stupid farce!

MILLER. (*putting a hand to his mouth to conceal a grin*) Hmm. Them are mighty strong words. You'd better not repeat such sentiments outside the bosom of the family or they'll have you in jail.

SID. And throw away the key.

RICHARD. (*darkly*) Let them put me in jail. But how about the freedom of speech in the Constitution, then? That must be a farce, too. (*Then he adds grimly*) No, you can celebrate

your Fourth of July. I'll celebrate the day the people bring out the guillotine again and I see Pierpont Morgan being driven by in a tumbril! (*His father and* SID *are greatly amused;* LILY *is shocked but, taking her cue from them, smiles.* MILDRED *s'ares at him in puzzled wonderment, never having heard this particular line before. Only* ARTHUR *betrays the outraged reaction of a patriot.*)

ARTHUR. Aw say, you fresh kid, tie that bull outside! You ought to get a punch in the nose for talking that way on the Fourth!

MILLER. (*solemnly*) Son, if I didn't know it was you talking, I'd think we had Emma Goldman with us.

ARTHUR. Never mind, Pa. Wait till we get him down to Yale. We'll take that out of him!

RICHARD. (*with high scorn*) Oh, Yale! You think there's nothing in the world besides Yale. After all, what is Yale?

ARTHUR. You'll find out what!

SID. (*provocatively*) Don't let them scare you, Dick. Give 'em hell!

LILY. (*shocked*) Sid! You shouldn't swear before—

RICHARD. What do you think I am, Aunt Lily—a baby? I've heard worse than anything Uncle Sid says.

MILDRED. And said worse himself, I bet!

MILLER. (*with a comic air of resignation*) Well, Richard, I've always found I've had to listen to at least one stump speech every Fourth. I only hope getting your extra strong one right after breakfast will let me off for the rest of the day. (*They all laugh now, taking this as a cue.*)

RICHARD. (*somberly*) That's right, laugh! After you, the deluge, you think! But look out! Supposing it comes before? Why shouldn't the workers of the world unite and rise? They have nothing to lose but their chains! (*He recites threateningly*) "The days grow hot, O Babylon! 'Tis cool beneath thy willow trees!"

MILLER. Hmm. That's good. But where's the connection, exactly? Something from that book you're reading?

RICHARD. (*superior*) No. That's poetry. This is prose.

MILLER. I've heard there was a difference between 'em. What is the book?

RICHARD. (*importantly*) Carlyle's French Revolution.

MILLER. Hmm. So that's where you drove the tumbril from and piled poor old Pierpont in it. (*Then seriously*) Glad you're reading it, Richard. It's a darn fine book.

RICHARD. (*with unflattering astonishment*) What, have you read it?

MILLER. Well, you see, even a newspaper owner can't get out of reading a book every now and again.

RICHARD. (*abashed*) I—I didn't mean—I know you— (*Then enthusiastically*) Say, isn't it a great book, though—that part about Mirabeau—and about Marat and Robespierre—

MRS. MILLER. (*appears from the front parlor in a great state of flushed annoyance*) Never you mind Robespierre, young man! You tell me this minute where you've hidden those books! They were on the shelf in your wardrobe and now you've gone and hid them somewheres else. You go right up and bring them to your father! (RICHARD, *for a second, looks suddenly guilty and crushed. Then he bristles defensively.*)

MILLER. (*after a quick understanding glance at him*) Never mind his getting them now. We'll waste the whole morning over those darned books. And anyway, he has a right to keep his library to himself—that is, if they're not too— What books are they, Richard?

RICHARD. (*self-consciously*) Well—there's—

MRS. MILLER. I'll tell you, if he won't—and you give him a good talking to. (*Then, after a glance at* RICHARD, *mollifiedly*) Not that I blame Richard. There must be some boy he knows who's trying to show off as advanced and wicked, and he told him about—

RICHARD. No! I read about them myself, in the papers and in other books.

MRS. MILLER. Well, no matter how, there they were on his shelf. Two by that awful Oscar Wilde they put in jail for heaven knows what wickedness.

ARTHUR. (*suddenly—solemnly authoritative*) He committed bigamy. (*Then as* SID *smothers a burst of ribald laughter*) What are you laughing at? I guess I ought to know. A fellow at college told me. His father was in England when this Wilde was pinched—

and he said he remembered once his mother asked his father about it and he told her he'd committed bigamy.

MILLER. (*hiding a smile behind his hand*) Well then, that must be right, Arthur.

MRS. MILLER. I wouldn't put it past him, nor anything else. One book was called the Picture of something or other.

RICHARD. The Picture of Dorian Gray. It's one of the greatest novels ever written!

MRS. MILLER. Looked to me like cheap trash. And the second book was poetry. The Ballad of I forget what.

RICHARD. The Ballad of Reading Gaol, one of the greatest poems ever written. (*He pronounces it Reading Goal [as in goalpost].*)

MRS. MILLER. All about someone who murdered his wife and got hung, as he richly deserved, as far as I could make out. And then there were two books by that Bernard Shaw—

RICHARD. The greatest playwright alive today!

MRS. MILLER. To hear him tell it, maybe! You know, Nat, the one who wrote a play about—well, never mind—that was so vile they wouldn't even let it play in New York!

MILLER. Hmm. I remember.

MRS. MILLER. One was a book of his plays and the other had a long title I couldn't make head or tail of, only it wasn't a play.

RICHARD. (*proudly*) The Quintessence of Ibsenism.

MILDRED. Phew! Good gracious, what a name! What does it mean, Dick? I'll bet he doesn't know.

RICHARD. (*outraged*) I do, too, know! It's about Ibsen, the greatest playwright since Shakespeare!

MRS. MILLER. Yes, there was a book of plays by that Ibsen there, too! And poems by Swin something—

RICHARD. Poems and ballads by Swinburne, Ma. The greatest poet since Shelley! He tells the truth about real love!

MRS. MILLER. Love! Well, all I can say is, from reading here and there, that if he wasn't flung in jail along with Wilde, he should have been. Some of the things I simply couldn't read, they were so indecent—All about—well, I can't tell you before Lily and Mildred.

SID. (*with a wink at* RICHARD—*jokingly*) Remember, I'm next on that one, Dick. I feel the need of a little poetical education.

LILY. (*scandalized, but laughing*) Sid! Aren't you ashamed?

MRS. MILLER. This is no laughing matter. And then there was Kipling—but I suppose he's not so bad. And last there was a poem—a long one—the Rubay— What is it, Richard?

RICHARD. The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. That's the best of all!

MILLER. Oh, I've read that, Essie—got copy down at the office.

SID. (*enthusiastically*) So have I. It's a pippin!

LILY. (*with shy excitement*) I—I've read it, too—at the library. I like—some parts of it.

MRS. MILLER. (*scandalized*) Why, Lily!

MILLER. Everybody's reading that now, Essie—and it don't seem to do them any harm. There's fine things in it, seems to me—true things.

MRS. MILLER. (*a bit bewildered and uncertain now*) Why, Nat, I don't see how you—It looked terrible blasphemous—parts I read.

SID. Remember this one: (*He quotes rhetorically*) "Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and gin beset the path I was to wander in—" Now, I've always noticed how beset my path was with gin—in the past, you understand! (*He casts a joking side glance at* LILY. *The others laugh. But* LILY *is in a melancholy dream and hasn't heard him.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*tartly, but evidently suppressing her usual smile where he is concerned*) You would pick out the ones with liquor in them!

LILY. (*suddenly—with a sad pathos, quotes awkwardly and shyly*) I like—because it's true:

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

MRS. MILLER. (*astonished, as are all the others*) Why, Lily, I never knew you to recite poetry before!

LILY. (*immediately guilty and apologetic*) I—it just stuck in my memory somehow.

RICHARD. (*looking at her as if he had never seen her before*) Good for you, Aunt Lily!

(*Then enthusiastically*) But that isn't the best. The best is:

"A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, A Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—"

ARTHUR. (*who, bored to death by all this poetry quoting, has wandered over to the window at rear of desk, right*) Hey! Look who's coming up the walk—Old Man McComber!

MILLER. (*irritably*) Dave? Now what in thunder does that damned old—Sid, I can see where we never are going to get to that picnic.

MRS. MILLER. (*vexatiously*) He'll know we're in this early, too. No use lying. (*Then appalled by another thought*) That Norah—she's that thick, she never can answer the front door right unless I tell her each time. Nat, you've got to talk to Dave. I'll have her show him in here. Lily, you run up the back stairs and get your things on. I'll be up in a second. Nat, you get rid of him the first second you can! Whatever can the old fool want —(*She and* LILY *hurry out through the back parlor.*)

ARTHUR. I'm going to beat it—just time to catch the eight-twenty trolley.

MILDRED. I've got to catch that, too. Wait till I get my hat, Art! (*She rushes into the back parlor.*)

ARTHUR. (*shouts after her*) I can't wait. You can catch up with me if you hurry. (*He turns at the back-parlor door—with a grin*) McComber may be coming to see if your intentions toward his daughter are dishonorable, Dick! You'd better beat it while your shoes are good! (*He disappears through the back-parlor door, laughing.*)

RICHARD. (*a bit shaken, but putting on a brave front*) Think I'm scared of him?

MILLER. (*gazing at him—frowning*) Can't imagine what—But it's to complain about something, I know that. I only wish I didn't have to be pleasant with the old buzzard—but he's about the most valuable advertiser I've got.

SID. (*sympathetically*) I know. But tell him to go to hell, anyway. He needs that ad more than you.

(*The* [illegible] *kind of the bell comes from the rear of the house, off left from back parlor.*)

MILLER. There he is. You clear out, Dick—but come right back as soon as he's gone, you hear? I'm not through with you, yet.

RICHARD. Yes, Pa.

MILLER. You better clear out, too, Sid. You know Dave doesn't approve jokes.

SID. And loves me like poison! Come on, Dick, we'll go out and help Tommy celebrate. (*He takes* RICHARD'S *arm and they also disappear through the back-parlor door.* MILLER *glances through the front parlor toward the front door, then calls in a tone of strained heartiness.*)

MILLER. Hello, Dave. Come right in here. What good wind blows you around on this glorious Fourth?

(*A flat, brittle voice answers him:* "Good morning," *and a moment later* DAVID MCCOMBER *appears in the doorway from the front parlor. He is a thin, dried-up little man with a head too large for his body perched on a scrawny neck, and a long solemn horse face with deep-set little black eyes, a blunt formless nose and a tiny slit of a mouth. He is about the same age as* MILLER *but is entirely bald, and looks ten years older. He is dressed with a prim neatness in shiny old black clothes.*)

MILLER. Here, sit down and make yourself comfortable. (*Holding out the cigar box*) Have a cigar?

MCCOMBER. (*sitting down in the chair at the right of table—acidly*) You're forgetting. I never smoke.

MILLER. (*forcing a laugh at himself*) That's so. So I was. Well, I'll smoke alone then. (*He bites off the end of the cigar viciously, as if he wished it were* MCCOMBER'S *head, and sits down opposite him.*)

MCCOMBER. You asked me what brings me here, so I'll come to the point at once. I regret to say it's something disagreeable—disgraceful would be nearer the truth—and it concerns your son, Richard!

MILLER. (*beginning to bristle—but calmly*) Oh, come now, Dave, I'm sure Richard hasn't—

MCCOMBER. (*sharply*) And I'm positive he has. You're not accusing me of being a liar, I hope.

MILLER. No one said anything about liar. I only meant you're surely mistaken if you think—

MCCOMBER. I'm not mistaken. I have proof of everything in his own handwriting!

MILLER. (*sharply*) Let's get down to brass tacks. Just what is it you're charging him with?

MCCOMBER. With being dissolute and blasphemous—with deliberately attempting to corrupt the morals of my young daughter, Muriel.

MILLER. Then I'm afraid I will have to call you a liar, Dave!

MCCOMBER. (*without taking offense—in the same flat, brittle voice*) I thought you'd get around to that, so I brought some of the proofs with me. I've a lot more of 'em at home. (*He takes a wallet from his inside coat pocket, selects five or six slips of paper, and holds them out to* MILLER) These are good samples of the rest. My wife discovered them in one of Muriel's bureau drawers hidden under the underwear. They're all in his handwriting, you can't deny it. Anyway, Muriel's confessed to me he wrote them. You read them and then say I'm a liar. (MILLER *has taken the slips and is reading them frowningly.* MCCOMBER *talks on*) Evidently you've been too busy to take the right care about Richard's bringing up or what he's allowed to read—though I can't see why his mother failed in her duty. But that's your misfortune, and none of my business. But Muriel is my business and I can't and I won't have her innocence exposed to the contamination of a young man whose mind, judging from his choice of reading matter, is as foul—

MILLER. (*making a tremendous effort to control his temper*) Why, you damned old fool! Can't you see Richard's only a fool kid who's just at the stage when he's out to rebel against all authority, and so he grabs at everything radical to read and wants to pass it on to his elders and his girl and boy friends to show off what a young hellion he is! Why, at heart you'd find Richard is just as innocent and as big a kid as Muriel is! (*He pushes the slips of paper across the table contemptuously*) This stuff doesn't mean anything to me—that is, nothing of what you think it means. If you believe this would corrupt Muriel, then you must believe she's easily corrupted! But I'll bet you'd find she knows a lot more about life than you give her credit for—and can guess a stork didn't bring her down your chimney!

MCCOMBER. Now you're insulting my daughter. I won't forget that.

MILLER. I'm not insulting her. I think Muriel is a darn nice girl. That's why I'm giving her credit for ordinary good sense. I'd say the same about my own Mildred, who's the same age.

MCCOMBER. I know nothing about your Mildred except that she's known all over as a flirt. (*Then more sharply*) Well, I knew you'd prove obstinate, but I certainly never dreamed you'd have the impudence, after reading those papers, to claim your son was innocent of all wrongdoing!

MILLER. And what did you dream I'd do?

MCCOMBER. Do what it's your plain duty to do as a citizen to protect other people's children! Take and give him a hiding he'd remember to the last day of his life! You'd ought to do it for his sake, if you had any sense—unless you want him to end up in jail!

MILLER. (*his fists clenched, leans across the table*) Dave, I've stood all I can stand from you! You get out! And get out quick, if you don't want a kick in the rear to help you!

MCCOMBER. (*again in his flat, brittle voice, slowly getting to his feet*) You needn't lose your temper. I'm only demanding you to do your duty by your own as I've already done by mine. I'm punishing Muriel. She's not to be allowed out of the house for a month and she's to be in bed every night by eight sharp. And yet she's blameless, compared to that—

MILLER. I said I'd had enough out of you, Dave! (*He makes a threatening movement.*)

MCCOMBER. You needn't lay hands on me. I'm going. But there's one thing more. (*He takes a letter from his wallet*) Here's a letter from Muriel for your son. (*Puts it on the table*) It makes clear, I think, how she's come to think about him, now that her eyes have been opened. I hope he heeds what's inside—for his own good and yours—because if I ever catch him hanging about my place again I'll have him arrested! And don't think I'm not

going to make you regret the insults you've heaped on me. I'm taking the advertisement for my store out of your paper—and it won't go in again, I tell you, not unless you apologize in writing and promise to punish—

MILLER. I'll see you in hell first! As for your damned old ad, take it out and go to hell!

MCCOMBER. That's plain bluff. You know how badly you need it. So do I. (*He starts stiffly for the door.*)

MILLER. Here! Listen a minute! I'm just going to call *your* bluff and tell you that, whether you want to reconsider your decision or not, I'm going to refuse to print your damned ad after tomorrow! Put that in your pipe and smoke it! Furthermore, I'll start a campaign to encourage outside capital to open a dry-goods store in opposition to you that won't be the public swindle I can prove yours is!

MCCOMBER. (*a bit shaken by this threat—but in the same flat tone*) I'll sue you for libel.

MILLER. When I get through, there won't be a person in town will buy a dishrag in your place!

MCCOMBER. (*more shaken, his eyes shifting about furtively*) That's all bluff. You wouldn't dare— (*Then finally he says uncertainly*) Well, good day. (*And turns and goes out.* NAT *stands looking after him. Slowly the anger drains from his face and leaves him looking a bit sick and disgusted.* SID *appears from the back parlor. He is nursing a burn on his right hand, but his face is one broad grin of satisfaction.*)

SID. I burned my hand with one of Tommy's damned firecrackers and came in to get some vaseline. I was listening to the last of your scrap. Good for you, Nat! You sure gave him hell!

MILLER. (*dully*) Much good it'll do. He knows it was all talk.

SID. That's just what he don't know, Nat. The old skinflint has a guilty conscience.

MILLER. Well, anyone who knows me knows I wouldn't use my paper for a dirty, spiteful trick like that—no matter what he did to me.

SID. Yes, everyone knows you're an old sucker, Nat, too decent for your own good. But McComber never saw you like this before. I tell you you scared the pants off him. (He chuckles.)

MILLER. (*still dejectedly*) I don't know what made me let go like that. The hell of skunks like McComber is that after being with them ten minutes you become as big skunks as they are.

SID. (*notices the slips of paper on the table*) What's this? Something he brought? (*He picks them up and starts to read.*)

MILLER. (*grimly*) Samples of the new freedom—from those books Essie found—that Richard's been passing on to Muriel to educate her. They're what started the rumpus. (*Then frowning*) I've got to do something about that young anarchist or he'll be getting me, and himself, in a peck of trouble. (*Then pathetically helpless*) But what can I do? Putting the curb bit on would make him worse. Then he'd have a harsh tyrant to defy. He'd love that, darn him!

SID. (*has been reading the slips, a broad grin on his face—suddenly he whistles*) Phew! This is a warm lulu for fair! (*He recites with a joking intensity*)

"My life is bitter with thy love; thine eyes
Blind me, thy tresses burn me, thy sharp sighs
Divide my flesh and spirit with soft sound—"

MILLER. (*with a grim smile*) Hmm. I missed that one. That must be Mr. Swinburne's copy. I've never read him, but I've heard something like that was the matter with him.

SID. Yes, it's labeled Swinburne—"Anactoria." Whatever that is. But wait, watch and listen! The worst is yet to come! (*He recites with added comic intensity*)

"That I could drink thy veins as wine, and eat
Thy breasts like honey, that from face to feet
Thy body were abolished and consumed,
And in my flesh thy very flesh entombed!"

MILLER. (*an irrepressible boyish grin coming to his face*) Hell and hallelujah! Just picture old Dave digesting that for the first time! Gosh, I'd give a lot to have seen his face! (*Then a trace of shocked reproof showing in his voice*) But it's no joking matter. That stuff *is* warm—too damned warm, if you ask

me! I don't like this a damned bit, Sid. That's no kind of thing to be sending a decent girl. (*More worriedly*) I thought he was really stuck on her—as one gets stuck on a decent girl at his age—all moonshine and holding hands and a kiss now and again. But this looks—I wonder if he is hanging around her to see what he can get? (*Angrily*) By God, if that's true, he deserves that licking McComber says it's my duty to give him! I've got to draw the line somewhere!

SID. Yes, it won't do to have him getting any decent girl in trouble.

MILLER. The only thing I can do is put it up to him straight. (*With pride*) Richard'll stand up to his guns, no matter what. I've never known him to lie to me.

SID. (*at a noise from the back parlor, looks that way—in a whisper*) Then now's your chance. I'll beat it and leave you alone—see if the women folks are ready upstairs. We ought to get started soon—if we're ever going to make that picnic. (*He is halfway to the entrance to the front parlor as* RICHARD *enters from the back parlor, very evidently nervous about* MCCOMBER'S *call.*)

RICHARD. (*adopting a forced, innocent tone*) How's your hand, Uncle Sid?

SID. All right, Dick, thanks—only hurts a little. (*He disappears.* MILLER *watches his son frowningly.* RICHARD *gives him a quick side glance and grows more guiltily self-conscious.*)

RICHARD. (*forcing a snicker*) Gee, Pa, Uncle Sid's a bigger kid than Tommy is. He was throwing firecrackers in the air and catching them on the back of his hand and throwing 'em off again just before they went off—and one came and he wasn't quick enough, and it went off almost on top of—

MILLER. Never mind that. I've got something else to talk to you about besides firecrackers.

RICHARD. (*apprehensively*) What, Pa?

MILLER. (*suddenly puts both hands on his shoulders—quietly*) Look here, Son. I'm going to ask you a question, and I want an honest answer. I warn you beforehand if the answer is "yes" I'm going to punish you and punish you hard because you'll have done something no boy of mine ought to do. But you've never lied to me before, I know, and I don't believe, even to save yourself punishment, you'd lie to me now, would you?

RICHARD. (*impressed—with dignity*) I won't lie, Pa.

MILLER. Have you been trying to have something to do with Muriel—something you shouldn't—you know what I mean.

RICHARD. (*stares at him for a moment, as if he couldn't comprehend—then, as he does, a look of shocked indignation comes over his face*) No! What do you think I am, Pa? I never would! She's not that kind! Why, I—I love her! I'm going to marry her—after I get out of college! She's said she would! We're engaged!

MILLER. (*with great relief*) All right. That's all I want to know. We won't talk any more about it. (*He gives him an approving pat on the back.*)

RICHARD. I don't see how you could think—Did that old idiot McComber say that about me?

MILLER. (*joking now*) Shouldn't call your future father-in-law names, should you? 'Tain't respectful. (*Then after a glance at* RICHARD'S *indignant face—points to the slips of paper on the table*) Well, you can't exactly blame old Dave, can you, when you read through that literature you wished on his innocent daughter?

RICHARD. (*sees the slips for the first time and is overcome by embarrassment, which he immediately tries to cover up with a superior carelessness*) Oh, so that's why. He found those, did he? I told her to be careful— Well, it'll do him good to read the truth about life for once and get rid of his old-fogy ideas.

MILLER. I'm afraid I've got to agree with him, though, that they're hardly fit reading for a young girl. (*Then with subtle flattery*) They're all well enough, in their way, for you who're a man, but— Think it over, and see if you don't agree with me.

RICHARD. (*embarrassedly*) Aw, I only did it because I liked them—and I wanted her to face life as it is. She's so darned afraid of life—afraid of her Old Man—afraid of people saying this or that about her—afraid of being in love—afraid of everything. She's even afraid to let me kiss her. I thought, maybe, reading

those things—they're beautiful, aren't they, Pa?—I thought they would give her the spunk to lead her own life, and not be—always thinking of being afraid.

MILLER. I see. Well, I'm afraid she's still afraid. (*He takes the letter from the table*) Here's a letter from her he said to give you. (RICHARD *takes the letter from him uncertainly, his expression changing to one of apprehension.* MILLER *adds with a kindly smile*) You better be prepared for a bit of a blow. But never mind. There's lots of other fish in the sea. (RICHARD *is not listening to him, but staring at the letter with a sort of fascinated dread.* MILLER *looks into his son's face a second, then turns away, troubled and embarrassed*) Darn it! I better go upstairs and get rigged out or I never will get to that picnic. (*He moves awkwardly and self-consciously off through the front parlor.* RICHARD *continues to stare at the letter for a moment—then girds up his courage and tears it open and begins to read swiftly. As he reads his face grows more and more wounded and tragic, until at the end his mouth draws down at the corners, as if he were about to break into tears. With an effort he forces them back and his face grows flushed with humiliation and wronged anger.*)

RICHARD. (*blurts out to himself*) The little coward! I hate her! She can't treat me like that! I'll show her! (*At the sound of voices from the front parlor, he quickly shoves the letter into the inside pocket of his coat and does his best to appear calm and indifferent, even attempting to whistle "Waiting at the Church." But the whistle peters out miserably as his mother,* LILY *and* SID *enter from the front parlor. They are dressed in all the elaborate paraphernalia of motoring at that period—linen dusters, veils, goggles,* SID *in a snappy cap.*)

MRS. MILLER. Well, we're about ready to start at last, thank goodness! Let's hope no more callers are on the way. What did that McComber want, Richard, do you know? Sid couldn't tell us.

RICHARD. You can search me. Ask Pa.

MRS. MILLER. (*immediately sensing something "down" in his manner—going to him worriedly*) Why, whatever's the matter with you, Richard? You sound as if you'd lost your last friend! What is it?

RICHARD. (*desperately*) I—I don't feel so well—my stomach's sick.

MRS. MILLER (*immediately all sympathy—smoothing his hair back from his forehead*) You poor boy! What a shame—on the Fourth, too, of all days! (*Turning to the others*) Maybe I better stay home with him, if he's sick.

LILY. Yes, I'll stay, too.

RICHARD. (*more desperately*) No! You go, Ma! I'm not really sick. I'll be all right. You go. I want to be alone! (*Then, as a louder bang comes from in back as* TOMMY *sets off a cannon cracker, he jumps to his feet*) Darn Tommy and his darned firecrackers! You can't get any peace in this house with that darned kid around! Darn the Fourth of July, anyway! I wish we still belonged to England! (*He strides off in an indignant fury of misery through the front parlor.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*stares after him worriedly—then sighs philosophically*) Well, I guess he can't be very sick—after that. (*She shakes her head*) He's a queer boy. Sometimes I can't make head or tail of him.

MILLER. (*calls from the front door beyond the back parlor*) Come along, folks. Let's get started.

SID. We're coming, Nat. (*He and the two women move off through the front parlor.*)

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE—*Dining-room of the* MILLER *home—a little after 6 o'clock in the evening of the same day.*

The room is much too small for the medium-priced, formidable dining-room set, especially now when all the leaves of the table are in. At left, toward rear, is a double doorway with sliding doors and portières leading into the back parlor. In the rear wall, left, is the door to the pantry. At the right of door is the china closet with its display of the family cut glass and fancy china. In the right wall are two windows looking out on a side lawn. In front of the windows is a heavy, ugly sideboard with three pieces of old silver on its top. In the left wall, extreme front, is

a screen door opening on a side porch. A dark rug covers most of the floor. The table, with a chair at each end, left and right, three chairs on the far side, facing front, and two on the near side, their backs to front, takes up most of the available space. The walls are papered in a somber brown and dark-red design.

MRS. MILLER *is supervising and helping the Second Girl,* NORAH, *in the setting of the table.* NORAH *is a clumsy, heavy-handed, heavy-footed, long-jawed, beamingly good-natured young Irish girl—a "greenhorn."*

MRS. MILLER. I really think you better put on the lights, Norah. It's getting so cloudy out, and this pesky room is so dark, anyway.

NORAH. Yes, Mum. (*She stretches awkwardly over the table to reach the chandelier that is suspended from the middle of the ceiling and manages to turn one light on—scornfully*) Arrah, the contraption!

MRS. MILLER. (*worriedly*) Careful!

NORAH. Careful as can be, Mum. (*But in moving around to reach the next bulb she jars heavily against the table.*)

MRS. MILLER. There! I knew it! I do wish you'd watch—!

NORAH. (*a flustered appeal in her voice*) Arrah, what have I done wrong now?

MRS. MILLER. (*draws a deep breath—then sighs helplessly*) Oh, nothing. Never mind the rest of the lights. You might as well go out in the kitchen and wait until I ring.

NORAH. (*relieved and cheerful again*) Yes, Mum. (*She starts for the pantry.*)

MRS. MILLER. But there's one thing— (NORAH *turns apprehensively*) No, two things—things I've told you over and over, but you always forget. Don't pass the plates on the wrong side at dinner tonight, and do be careful not to let that pantry door slam behind you. Now you will try to remember, won't you?

NORAH. Yes, Mum. (*She goes into the pantry and shuts the door behind her with exaggerated care as* MRS. MILLER *watches her apprehensively.* MRS. MILLER *sighs and reaches up with difficulty and turns on another of the four lights in the chandelier. As she is doing so,* LILY *enters from the back parlor.*)

LILY. Here, let me do that, Essie. I'm taller. You'll only strain yourself. (*She quickly lights the other two bulbs.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*gratefully*) Thank you, Lily. It's a stretch for me, I'm getting so fat.

LILY. But where's Norah? Why didn't she—?

MRS. MILLER. (*exasperatedly*) Oh, that girl! Don't talk about her! She'll be the death of me! She's that thick, you honestly wouldn't believe it possible.

LILY. (*smiling*) Why, what did she do now?

MRS. MILLER. Oh, nothing. She means all right.

LILY. Anything else I can do, Essie?

MRS. MILLER. Well, she's got the table all wrong. We'll have to reset it. But you're always helping me. It isn't fair to ask you—in your vacation. You need your rest after teaching a pack of wild Indians of kids all year.

LILY. (*beginning to help with the table*) You know I love to help. It makes me feel I'm some use in this house instead of just sponging—

MRS. MILLER. (*indignantly*) Sponging! You pay, don't you?

LILY. Almost nothing. And you and Nat only take that little to make me feel better about living with you. (*Forcing a smile*) I don't see how you stand me—having a cranky old maid around all the time.

MRS. MILLER. What nonsense you talk! As if Nat and I weren't only too tickled to death to have you! Lily Miller, I've no patience with you when you go on like that. We've been over this a thousand times before, and still you go on! Crazy, that's what it is! (*She changes the subject abruptly*) What time's it getting to be?

LILY. (*looking at her watch*) Quarter past six.

MRS. MILLER. I do hope those men folks aren't going to be late for dinner. (*She sighs*) But I suppose with that darned Sachem Club picnic it's more likely than not. (LILY *looks worried, and sighs.* MRS. MILLER *gives her a quick side glance*) I see you've got your new dress on.

LILY. (*embarrassedly*) Yes, I thought—if Sid's taking me to the fireworks—I ought to spruce up a little.

MRS. MILLER. (*looking away*) Hmm. (*A pause—then she says with an effort to be casual*) You mustn't mind if Sid comes home feeling a bit—gay. I expect Nat to—and we'll have to listen to all those old stories of his about when he was a boy. You know what those picnics are, and Sid'd be running into all his old friends.

LILY. (*agitatedly*) I don't think he will—this time—not after his promise.

MRS. MILLER. (*avoiding looking at her*) I know. But men are weak. (*Then quickly*) That was a good notion of Nat's, getting Sid the job on the Waterbury *Standard*. All he ever needed was to get away from the rut he was in here. He's the kind that's the victim of his friends. He's easily led—but there's no real harm in him, you know that. (LILY *keeps silent, her eyes downcast.* MRS. MILLER *goes on meaningly*) He's making good money in Waterbury, too—thirty-five a week. He's in a better position to get married than he ever was.

LILY. (*stiffly*) Well, I hope he finds a woman who's willing—though after he's through with his betting on horse races, and dice, and playing Kelly pool, there won't be much left for a wife—even if there was nothing else he spent his money on.

MRS. MILLER. Oh, he'd give up all that—for the right woman. (*Suddenly she comes directly to the point*) Lily, why don't you change your mind and marry Sid and reform him? You love him and always have—

LILY. (*stiffly*) I can't love a man who drinks.

MRS. MILLER. You can't fool me. I know darned well you love him. And he loves you and always has.

LILY. Never enough to stop drinking for. (*Cutting off* MRS. MILLER's *reply*) No, it's no good in your talking, Essie. We've been over this a thousand times before and I'll always feel the same as long as Sid's the same. If he gave me proof he'd—but even then I don't believe I could. It's sixteen years since I broke off our engagement, but what made me break it off is as clear to me today as it was then. It was what he'd be liable to do now to anyone who married him—his taking up with bad women.

MRS. MILLER. (*protests half-heartedly*) But he's always sworn he got raked into that party and never had anything to do with those harlots.

LILY. Well, I don't believe him—didn't then and don't now. I do believe he didn't deliberately plan to, but—Oh, it's no good talking, Essie. What's done is done. But you know how much I like Sid—in spite of everything. I know he was just born to be what he is—irresponsible, never meaning to harm but harming in spite of himself. But don't talk to me about marrying him—because I never could.

MRS. MILLER. (*angrily*) He's a dumb fool—a stupid dumb fool, that's what he is!

LILY. (*quietly*) No. He's just Sid.

MRS. MILLER. It's a shame for you—a measly shame—you that would have made such a wonderful wife for any man—that ought to have your own home and children!

LILY. (*winces but puts her arm around her affectionately—gently*) Now don't you go feeling sorry for me. I won't have that. Here I am, thanks to your and Nat's kindness, with the best home in the world; and as for the children, I feel the same love for yours as if they were mine, and I didn't have the pain of bearing them. And then there are all the boys and girls I teach every year. I like to feel I'm a sort of second mother to them and helping them to grow up to be good men and women. So I don't feel such a useless old maid, after all.

MRS. MILLER. (*kisses her impulsively—her voice husky*) You're a good woman, Lily—too good for the rest of us. (*She turns away, wiping a tear furtively—then abruptly changing the subject*) Good gracious, if I'm not forgetting one of the most important things! I've got to warn that Tommy against giving me away to Nat about the fish. He knows, because I had to send him to market for it, and he's liable to burst out laughing—

LILY. Laughing about what?

MRS. MILLER. (*guiltily*) Well, I've never

told you, because it seemed sort of a sneaking trick, but you know how Nat carries on about not being able to eat bluefish.

LILY. I know he says there's a certain oil in it that poisons him.

MRS. MILLER. (*chuckling*) Poisons him, nothing! He's been eating bluefish for years —only I tell him each time it's weakfish. We're having it tonight—and I've got to warn that young imp to keep his face straight.

LILY. (*laughing*) Aren't you ashamed, Essie?

MRS. MILLER. Not much, I'm not! I like bluefish! (*She laughs*) Where is Tommy? In the sitting-room?

LIL. No, Richard's there alone. I think Tommy's out on the piazza with Mildred. (MRS. MILLER *bustles out through the back parlor. As soon as she is gone, the smile fades from* LILY'S *lips. Her face grows sad and she again glances nervously at her watch.* RICHARD *appears from the back parlor, moving in an aimless way. His face wears a set expression of bitter gloom; he exudes tragedy. For* RICHARD, *after his first outburst of grief and humiliation, has begun to take a masochistic satisfaction in his great sorrow, especially in the concern which it arouses in the family circle. On seeing his aunt, he gives her a dark look and turns and is about to stalk back toward the sitting-room when she speaks to him pityingly*) Feel any better, Richard?

RICHARD. (*somberly*) I'm all right, Aunt Lily. You mustn't worry about me.

LILY. (*going to him*) But I do worry about you. I hate to see you so upset.

RICHARD. It doesn't matter. Nothing matters.

LILY. (*puts her arm around him sympathetically*) You really mustn't let yourself take it so seriously. You know, something happens and things like that come up, and we think there's no hope—

RICHARD. Things like what come up?

LILY. What's happened between you and Muriel.

RICHARD. (*with disdain*) Oh, her! I wasn't even thinking about her. I was thinking about life.

LILY. But then—if we really, *really* love—why, then something else is bound to happen soon that changes everything again, and it's all as it was before the misunderstanding, and everything works out all right in the end. That's the way it is with life.

RICHARD. (*with a tragic sneer*) Life! Life is a joke! And everything comes out all wrong in the end!

LILY. (*a little shocked*) You mustn't talk that way. But I know you don't mean it.

RICHARD. I do too mean it! You can have your silly optimism, if you like, Aunt Lily. But don't ask me to be so blind. I'm a pessimist! (*Then with an air of cruel cynicism*) As for Muriel, that's all dead and past. I was only kidding her, anyway, just to have a little fun, and she took it seriously, like a fool. (*He forces a cruel smile to his lips*) You know what they say about women and trolley cars, Aunt Lily: there's always another one along in a minute.

LILY. (*really shocked this time*) I don't like you when you say such horrible, cynical things. It isn't nice.

RICHARD. Nice! That's all you women think of! I'm proud to be a cynic. It's the only thing you can be when you really face life. I suppose you think I ought to be heartbroken about Muriel—a little coward that's afraid to say her soul's her own, and keeps tied to her father's apron strings! Well, not for mine! There's plenty of other fish in the sea! (*As he is finishing, his mother comes back through the back parlor.*)

MRS. MILLER. Why, hello. You here, Richard? Getting hungry, I suppose?

RICHARD (*indignantly*) I'm not hungry a bit! That's all you think of, Ma—food!

MRS. MILLER. Well, I must say I've never noticed you to hang back at meal times. (*To* LILY) What's that he was saying about fish in the sea?

LILY. (*smiling*) He says he's through with Muriel now.

MRS. MILLER. (*tartly—giving her son a rebuking look*) She's through with him, he means! The idea of your sending a nice girl like her things out of those indecent books! (*Deeply offended,* RICHARD *disdains to reply*

but stalks woundedly to the screen door of left, front, and puts a hand on the knob) Where are you going?

RICHARD. (*quotes from "Candida" in a hollow voice*) "Out, then, into the night with me!" (*He stalks out, slamming the door behind him.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*calls*) Well, don't you go far, 'cause dinner'll be ready in a minute, and I'm not coming running after you! (*She turns to* LILY *with a chuckle*) Goodness, that boy! He ought to be on the stage! (*She mimics*) "Out—into the night"—and it isn't even dark yet! He got that out of one of those books, I suppose. Do you know, I'm actually grateful to old Dave McComber for putting an end to his nonsense with Muriel. I never did approve of Richard getting so interested in girls. He's not old enough for such silliness. Why, seems to me it was only yesterday he was still a baby. (*She sighs—then matter-of-factly*) Well, nothing to do now till those men turn up. No use standing here like gawks. We might as well go in the sitting-room and be comfortable.

LILY. (*the nervous, worried note in her voice again*) Yes, we might as well. (*They go out through the back parlor. They have no sooner disappeared than the screen door is opened cautiously and* RICHARD *comes back in the room.*)

RICHARD. (*stands inside the door, looking after them—quotes bitterly*) "They do not know the secret in the poet's heart." (*He comes nearer the table and surveys it, especially the cut-glass dish containing olives, with contempt and mutters disdainfully*) Food! (*But the dish of olives seems to fascinate him and presently he has approached nearer, and stealthily lifts a couple and crams them into his mouth. He is just reaching out for more when the pantry door is opened slightly and* NORAH *peers in.*)

NORAH. Mister Dick, you thief, lave them olives alone, or the missus'll be swearing it was me at them!

RICHARD. (*draws back his hand as if he had been stung—too flustered to be anything but guilty boy for a second*) I—I wasn't eating—

NORAH. Oho, no, of course not, divil fear you, you was only feeling their pulse! (*Then warningly*) Mind what I'm saying now, or I'll have to tell on you to protect me good name! (*She draws back into the pantry, closing the door.* RICHARD *stands, a prey to feelings of bitterest humiliation and seething revolt against everyone and everything. A low whistle comes from just outside the porch door. He starts. Then a masculine voice calls: "Hey, Dick." He goes over to the screen door grumpily—then as he recognizes the owner of the voice, his own as he answers becomes respectful and admiring.*)

RICHARD. Oh, hello, Wint. Come on in. (*He opens the door and* WINT SELBY *enters and stands just inside the door.* SELBY *is nineteen, a classmate of* ARTHUR'S *at Yale. He is a typical, good-looking college boy of the period, not the athletic but the hell-raising sport type. He is tall, blond, dressed in extreme collegiate cut.*)

WINT. (*as he enters—warningly, in a low tone*) Keep it quiet, Kid. I don't want the folks to know I'm here. Tell Art I want to see him a second—on the Q.T.

RICHARD. Can't. He's up at the Rands'—won't be home before ten, anyway.

WINT. (*irritably*) Damn, I thought he'd be here for dinner. (*More irritably*) Hell, that gums the works for fair!

RICHARD. (*ingratiatingly*) What is it, Wint? Can't I help?

WINT. (*gives him an appraising glance*) I might tell you, if you can keep your face shut.

RICHARD. I can.

WINT. Well, I ran into a couple of swift babies from New Haven this after and I dated them up for tonight, thinking I could catch Art. But now it's too late to get anyone else and I'll have to pass it up. I'm nearly broke and I can't afford to blow them both to drinks.

RICHARD. (*with shy eagerness*) I've got eleven dollars saved up. I could loan you some.

WINT. (*surveys him appreciatively*) Say, you're a good sport. (*Then shaking his head*) Nix, Kid, I don't want to borrow your money. (*Then getting an idea*) But say, have you got anything on for tonight?

RICHARD. No.

WINT. Want to come along with me? (*Then*

quickly) I'm not trying to lead you astray, understand. But it'll be a help if you would just sit around with Belle and feed her a few drinks while I'm off with Edith. (*He winks*) See what I mean? You don't have to do anything, not even take a glass of beer—unless you want to.

RICHARD. (*boastfully*) Aw, what do you think I am—a rube?

WINT. You mean you're game for anything that's doing?

RICHARD. Sure I am!

WINT. Ever been out with any girls—I mean, real swift ones that there's something doing with, not these dead Janes around here?

RICHARD. (*lies boldly*) Aw, what do you think? Sure I have!

WINT. Ever drink anything besides sodas?

RICHARD. Sure. Lots of times. Beer and sloe-gin fizz and—Manhattans.

WINT. (*impressed*) Hell, you know more than I thought. (*Then considering*) Can you fix it so your folks won't get wise? I don't want your old man coming after me. You can get back by half-past ten or eleven, though, all right. Think you can cook up some lie to cover that? (*As Richard hesitates—encouraging him*) Ought to be easy—on the Fourth.

RICHARD. Sure. Don't worry about that.

WINT. But you've got to keep your face closed about this, you hear?—to Art and everybody else. I tell you straight, I wouldn't ask you to come if I wasn't in a hole—and if I didn't know you were coming down to Yale next year, and didn't think you're giving me the straight goods about having been around before. I don't want to lead you astray.

RICHARD. (*scornfully*) Aw, I told you that was silly.

WINT. Well, you be at the Pleasant Beach Hotel at half-past nine then. Come in the back room. And don't forget to grab some cloves to take the booze off your breath.

RICHARD. Aw, I know what to do.

WINT. See you later, then. (*He starts out and is just about to close the door when he thinks of something*) And say, I'll say you're a Harvard freshman, and you back me up. They don't know a damn thing about Harvard. I don't want them thinking I'm traveling around with any high-school kid.

RICHARD. Sure. That's easy.

WINT. So long, then. You better beat it right after your dinner while you've got a chance, and hang around until it's time. Watch your step, Kid.

RICHARD. So long. (*The door closes behind* WINT. RICHARD *stands for a moment, a look of bitter, defiant rebellion coming over his face, and mutters to himself*) I'll show her she can't treat me the way she's done! I'll show them all! (*Then the front door is heard slamming, and a moment later* TOMMY *rushes in from the back parlor.*)

TOMMY. Where's Ma?

RICHARD. (*surlily*) In the sitting-room. Where did you think, Bonehead?

TOMMY. Pa and Uncle Sid are coming. Mid and I saw them from the front piazza. Gee, I'm glad. I'm awful hungry, ain't you? (*He rushes out through the back parlor, calling*) Ma! They're coming! Let's have dinner quick! (*A moment later* MRS. MILLER *appears from the back parlor accompanied by* TOMMY, *who keeps insisting urgently*) Gee, but I'm awful hungry, Ma!

MRS. MILLER. I know. You always are. You've got a tapeworm, that's what I think.

TOMMY. Have we got lobsters, Ma? Gee, I love lobsters.

MRS. MILLER. Yes, we've got lobsters. And fish. You remember what I told you about that fish. (*He snickers*) Now, do be quiet, Tommy! (*Then with a teasing smile at* RICHARD) Well, I'm glad to see you've got back out of the night, Richard. (*He scowls and turns his back on her.* LILY *appears through the back parlor, nervous and apprehensive. As she does so, from the front yard* SID'S *voice is heard singing "Poor John!"* MRS. MILLER *shakes her head forebodingly—but, so great is the comic spell for her even in her brother's voice, a humorous smile hovers at the corners of her lips*) Mmm! Mmm! Lily, I'm afraid—

LILY. (*bitterly*) Yes, I might have known. (MILDRED *runs in through the back parlor. She is laughing to herself a bit shamefacedly. She rushes to her mother.*)

MILDRED. Ma, Uncle Sid's— (*She whispers in her ear.*)

MRS. MILLER. Never mind! You shouldn't notice such things—at your age! And don't you encourage him by laughing at his foolishness, you hear!

TOMMY. You needn't whisper, Mid. Think I don't know? Uncle Sid's soused again.

MRS. MILLER (*shakes him by the arm indignantly*) You be quiet! Did I ever! You're getting too smart! (*Gives him a push*) Go to your place and sit right down and not another word out of you!

TOMMY. (*aggrieved—rubbing his arm as he goes to his place*) Aw, Ma!

MRS. MILLER. And you sit down, Richard and Mildred. You better, too, Lily. We'll get him right in here and get some food in him. He'll be all right then. (RICHARD, *preserving the pose of the bitter, disillusioned pessimist, sits down in his place in the chair at right of the two whose backs face front.* MILDRED *takes the other chair facing back, at his left.* TOMMY *has already slid into the end chair at right of those at the rear of table facing front.* LILY *sits in the one of those at left, by the head of the table, leaving the middle one* [SID'S] *vacant. While they are doing this, the front screen door is heard slamming and* NAT'S *and* SID'S *laughing voices, raised as they come in and for a moment after, then suddenly cautiously lowered.* MRS. MILLER *goes to the entrance to the back parlor and calls peremptorily*) You come right in here! Don't stop to wash up or anything. Dinner's coming right on the table.

MILLER'S VOICE. (*jovially*) All right, Essie. Here we are! Here we are!

MRS. MILLER. (*goes to pantry door, opens it and calls*) All right, Norah. You can bring in the soup. (*She comes back to the back-parlor entrance just as* MILLER *enters. He isn't drunk by any means. He is just mellow and benignly ripened. His face is one large, smiling, happy beam of utter appreciation of life. All's right with the world, so satisfyingly right that he becomes sentimentally moved even to think of it.*)

MILLER. Here we are, Essie! Right on the dot! Here we are! (*He pulls her to him and gives her a smacking kiss on the ear as she jerks her head away.* MILDRED *and* TOMMY *giggle.* RICHARD *holds rigidly aloof and disdainful, his brooding gaze fixed on his plate.* LILY *forces a smile.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*pulling away—embarrassedly, almost blushing*) Don't, you Crazy! (*Then recovering herself—tartly*) So I see, you're here! And if I didn't, you've told me four times already!

MILLER. (*beamingly*) Now, Essie, don't be critical. Don't be carpingly critical. Good news can stand repeating, can't it? 'Course it can! (*He slaps her jovially on her fat buttocks.* TOMMY *and* MILDRED *roar with glee. And* NORAH, *who has just entered from the pantry with a huge tureen of soup in her hands, almost drops it as she explodes in a merry guffaw.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*scandalized*) Nat! Aren't you ashamed!

MILLER. Couldn't resist it! Just simply couldn't resist it! (NORAH, *still standing with the soup tureen held out stiffly in front of her, again guffaws.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*turns on her with outraged indignation*) Norah! Bring that soup here this minute! (*She stalks with stiff dignity toward her place at the foot of the table, right.*)

NORAH. (*guiltily*) Yes, Mum. (*She brings the soup around the head of the table, passing* MILLER.)

MILLER. (*jovially*) Why, hello, Norah!

MRS. MILLER. Nat! (*She sits down stiffly at the foot of the table.*)

NORAH. (*rebuking him familiarly*) Arrah now, don't be making me laugh and getting me into trouble!

MRS. MILLER. Norah!

NORAH. (*a bit resentfully*) Yes, Mum. Here I am. (*She sets the soup tureen down with a thud in front of* MRS. MILLER *and passes around the other side, squeezing with difficulty between the china closet and the backs of chairs at the rear of the table.*)

MRS. MILLER. Tommy! Stop spinning your napkin ring! How often have I got to tell you? Mildred! Sit up straight in your chair! Do you want to grow up a humpback? Richard! Take your elbows off the table!

MILLER. (*coming to his place at the head of the table, rubbing his hands together genially*) Well, well, well. Well, well, well. It's

good to be home again. (*Norah exits into the pantry and lets the door slam with a bang behind her.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*jumps*) Oh! (*Then exasperatedly*) Nat, I do wish you wouldn't encourage that stupid girl by talking to her, when I'm doing my best to train—

MILLER. (*beamingly*) All right, Essie. Your word is law! (*Then laughingly*) We did have the darndest fun today! And Sid was the life of that picnic! You ought to have heard him! Honestly, he had that crowd just rolling on the ground and splitting their sides! He ought to be on the stage.

MRS. MILLER. (*as Norah comes back with a dish of saltines—begins ladling soup into the stack of plates before her*) He ought to be at this table eating something to sober him up, that's what he ought to be! (*She calls*) Sid! You come right in here! (*Then to Norah, handing her a soup plate*) Here, Norah. (*Norah begins passing soup*) Sit down, Nat, for goodness sakes. Start eating, everybody. Don't wait for me. You know I've given up soup.

MILLER. (*sits down but bends forward to call to his wife in a confidential tone*) Essie—Sid's sort of embarrassed about coming—I mean I'm afraid he's a little bit—not too much, you understand—but he met such a lot of friends and—well, you know, don't be hard on him. Fourth of July is like Christmas—comes but once a year. Don't pretend to notice, eh? And don't you kids, you hear! And don't you, Lily. He's scared of you.

LILY. (*with stiff meekness*) Very well, Nat.

MILLER. (*beaming again—calls*) All right, Sid. The coast's clear. (*He begins to absorb his soup ravenously*) Good soup, Essie! Good soup! (*A moment later* SID *makes his entrance from the back parlor. He is in a condition that can best be described as blurry. His movements have a hazy uncertainty about them. His shiny fat face is one broad, blurred, Puckish, naughty-boy grin; his eyes have a blurred, wondering eagerness. As he enters he makes a solemnly intense effort to appear casual and dead, cold sober. He waves his hand aimlessly and speaks with a silly gravity.*)

SID. Good evening. (*They all answer* "Good evening," *their eyes on their plates. He makes his way vaguely toward his place, continuing his grave effort at conversation*) Beautiful evening. I never remember seeing—more beautiful sunset. (*He bumps vaguely into* LILY'S *chair as he attempts to pass behind her—immediately he is all grave politeness*) Sorry—sorry, Lily—deeply sorry.

LILY. (*her eyes on her plate—stiffly*) It's all right.

SID. (*manages to get into his chair at last—mutters to himself*) Wha' was I sayin'? Oh, sunsets. But why butt in? Hasn't sun—perfect right to set? Mind y'r own business. (*He pauses thoughtfully, considering this—then looks around from face to face, fixing each with a vague, blurred, wondering look, as if some deep puzzle were confronting him. Then suddenly he grins mistily and nods with satisfaction*) And there you are! Am I right?

MILLER. (*humoring him*) Right.

SID. Right! (*He is silent, studying his soup plate, as if it were some strange enigma. Finally he looks up and regards his sister and asks with wondering amazement*) Soup?

MRS. MILLER. Of course, it's soup. What did you think it was? And you hurry up and eat it.

SID. (*again regards his soup with astonishment*) Well! (*Then suddenly*) Well, all right then! Soup be it! (*He picks up his spoon and begins to eat, but after two tries in which he finds it difficult to locate his mouth, he addresses the spoon plaintively*) Spoon, is this any way to treat a pal? (*Then suddenly comically angry, putting the spoon down with a bang*) Down with spoons! (*He raises his soup plate and declaims*) "We'll drink to the dead already, and hurrah for the next who dies." (*Bowing solemnly to right and left*) Your good health, ladies *and* gents. (*He starts drinking the soup.* MILLER *guffaws and* MILDRED *and* TOMMY *giggle. Even* RICHARD *forgets his melancholy and snickers, and* MRS. MILLER *conceals a smile. Only* LILY *remains stiff and silent.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*with forced severity*) Sid!

SID. (*peers at her muzzily, lowering the soup plate a little from his lips*) Eh?

MRS. MILLER. Oh, nothing. Never mind.

SID. (*solemnly offended*) Are you—publicly

rebuking me before assembled—? Isn't soup liquid? Aren't liquids drunk? (*Then considering this to himself*) What if they are drunk? It's a good man's failing. (*He again peers mistily about at the company*) Am I right or wrong?

MRS. MILLER. Hurry up and finish your soup, and stop talking nonsense!

SID. (*turning to her—again offended*) Oh, no, Essie, if I ever so far forget myself as to drink a leg of lamb, then you might have some—excuse for— Just think of waste effort eating soup with spoons—fifty gruelling lifts per plate—billions of soup-eaters on globe—why, it's simply staggering! (*Then darkly to himself*) No more spoons for me! If I want to develop my biceps, I'll buy Sandow Exerciser! (*He drinks the rest of his soup in a gulp and beams around at the company, suddenly all happiness again*) Am I right, folks?

MILLER. (*who has been choking with laughter*) Haw, haw! You're right, Sid.

SID. (*peers at him blurredly and shakes his head sadly*) Poor old Nat! Always wrong—but heart of gold, heart of purest gold. And drunk again, I regret to note. Sister, my heart bleeds for you and your poor fatherless chicks!

MRS. MILLER. (*restraining a giggle—severely*) Sid! Do shut up for a minute! Pass me your soup plates, everybody. If we wait for that girl to take them, we'll be here all night. (*They all pass their plates, which* MRS. MILLER *stacks up and then puts on the side-board. As she is doing this,* NORAH *appears from the pantry with a platter of broiled fish. She is just about to place these before* MILLER *when* SID *catches her eye mistily and rises to his feet, making her a deep, uncertain bow.*)

SID. (*raptly*) Ah, Sight for Sore Eyes, my beautiful Macushla, my star-eyed Mavourneen—

MRS. MILLER. Sid!

NORAH. (*immensely pleased—gives him an arch, flirtatious glance*) Ah sure, Mister Sid, it's you that have kissed the Blarney Stone, when you've a drop taken!

MRS. MILLER. (*outraged*) Norah! Put down that fish!

NORAH. (*fluteredly*) Yes, Mum. (*She attempts to put the fish down hastily before* MILLER, *but her eyes are fixed nervously on* MRS. MILLER *and she gives* MILLER *a nasty swipe on the side of the head with the edge of the dish.*)

MILLER. Ouch! (*The children, even* RICHARD, *explode into laughter.*)

NORAH. (*almost lets the dish fall*) Oh, glory be to God! Is it hurted you are?

MILLER. (*rubbing his head—good-naturedly*) No, no harm done. Only careful, Norah, careful.

NORAH. (*gratefully*) Yes, sorr. (*She thumps down the dish in front of him with a sigh of relief.*)

SID. (*who is still standing—with drunken gravity*) Careful, Mavourneen, careful! You might have hit him some place besides the head. Always aim at his head, remember—so as not to worry us. (*Again the children explode. Also* NORAH. *Even* LILY *suddenly lets out an hysterical giggle and is furious with herself for doing so.*)

LILY. I'm so sorry, Nat. I didn't mean to laugh. (*Turning on* SID *furiously*) Will you please sit down and stop making a fool of yourself! (SID *gives her a hurt, mournful look and then sinks meekly down on his chair.*)

NORAH. (*grinning cheerfully, gives* LILY *a reassuring pat on the back*) Ah, Miss Lily, don't mind him. He's only under the influence. Sure, there's no harm in him at all.

MRS. MILLER. Norah! (NORAH *exits hastily into the pantry, letting the door slam with a crash behind her. There is silence for a moment as* MILLER *serves the fish and it is passed around.* NORAH *comes back with the vegetables and disappears again, and these are dished out.*)

MILLER. (*is about to take his first bite—stops suddenly and asks his wife*) This isn't, by any chance, bluefish, is it, my dear?

MRS. MILLER. (*with a waving glance at* TOMMY) Of course not. You know we never have bluefish, on account of you.

MILLER. (*addressing the table now with the gravity of a man confessing his strange peculiarities*) Yes, I regret to say, there's a certain peculiar oil in bluefish that invariably poisons me. (*At this* TOMMY *cannot stand it any more but explodes into laughter.* MRS.

MILLER, *after a helpless glance at him, follows suit; then* LILY *goes off into uncontrollable, hysterical laughter, and* RICHARD *and* MILDRED *are caught in the contagion.* MILLER *looks around at them with a weak smile, his dignity now ruffled a bit*) Well, I must say I don't see what's so darned funny about my being poisoned.

SID. (*peers around him—then with drunken cunning*) Aha! Nat, I suspect—plot! This fish looks blue to me—very blue—in fact despondent, desperate, and—(*He points his fork dramatically at* MRS. MILLER) See how guilty she looks—a ver—veritable Lucretia Georgia! Can it be this woman has been slowly poisoning you all these years? And how well—you've stood it! What iron constitution! Even now, when you are invariably at death's door, I can't believe— (*Everyone goes off into uncontrollable laughter.*)

MILLER. (*grumpily*) Oh, give us a rest, you darned fool! A joke's a joke, but— (*He addresses his wife in a wounded tone*) Is this true, Essie?

MRS. MILLER. (*wiping the tears from her eyes—defiantly*) Yes, it is true, if you must know, and you'd never have suspected it, if it weren't for that darned Tommy, and Sid poking his nose in. You've eaten bluefish for years and thrived on it and it's all nonsense about that peculiar oil.

MILLER. (*deeply offended*) Kindly allow me to know my own constitution! Now I think of it, I've felt upset afterwards every damned time we've had fish! (*He pushes his plate away from him with proud renunciation*) I can't eat this.

MRS. MILLER. (*insultingly matter-of-fact*) Well, don't then. There's lots of lobster coming and you can fill up on that. (RICHARD *suddenly bursts out laughing again.*)

MILLER. (*turns to him caustically*) You seem in a merry mood, Richard. I thought you were the original of the Heart Bowed Down today.

SID. (*with mock condolence*) Never mind, Dick. Let them—scoff! What can they understand about girls whose hair sizzchels, whose lips are fireworks, whose eyes are red-hot sparks—

MILDRED. (*laughing*) Is that what he wrote to Muriel? (*Turning to her brother*) You silly goat, you!

RICHARD. (*surlily*) Aw, shut up, Mid. What do I care about her? I'll show all of you how much I care!

MRS. MILLER. Pass your plates as soon as you're through, everybody. I've rung for the lobster. And that's all. You don't get any dessert or tea after lobster, you know. (NORAH *appears bearing a platter of cold boiled lobsters which she sets before* MILLER, *and disappears.*)

TOMMY. Gee, I love lobster! (MILLER *puts one on each plate, and they are passed around and everyone starts in pulling the cracked shells apart.*)

MILLER. (*feeling more cheerful after a couple of mouthfuls—determining to give the conversation another turn, says to his daughter*) Have a good time at the beach, Mildred?

MILDRED. Oh, fine, Pa, thanks. The water was wonderful and warm.

MILLER. Swim far?

MILDRED. Yes, for me. But that isn't so awful far.

MILLER. Well, you ought to be a good swimmer, if you take after me. I used to be a regular water rat when I was a boy. I'll have to go down to the beach with you one of these days—though I'd be rusty, not having been in all these years. (*The reminiscent look comes into his eyes of one about to embark on an oft-told tale of childhood adventure*) You know, speaking of swimming, I never go down to that beach but what it calls to mind the day I and Red Sisk went in swimming there and I saved his life. (*By this time the family are beginning to exchange amused, guilty glances. They all know what is coming.*)

SID. (*with a sly, blurry wink around*) Ha! Now we—have it again!

MILLER. (*turning on him*) Have what?

SID. Nothing—go on with your swimming—don't mind me.

MILLER. (*glares at him—but immediately is overcome by the reminiscent mood again*) Red Sisk—his father kept a blacksmith shop where the Union Market is now—we kids called him Red because he had the darndest reddest crop of hair—

SID. (*as if he were talking to his plate*) Remarkable!—the curious imagination—of little children.

MRS. MILLER. (*as she sees* MILLER *about to explode—interposes tactfully*) Sid! Eat your lobster and shut up! Go on, Nat.

MILLER. (*gives* SID *a withering look—then is off again*) Well, as I was saying, Red and I went swimming that day. Must have been—let me see—Red was fourteen, bigger and older than me, I was only twelve—forty-five years ago—wasn't a single house down there then—but there was a stake out where the whistling buoy is now, about a mile out. (TOMMY, *who has been having difficulty restraining himself, lets out a stifled giggle.* MILLER *bends a frowning gaze on him*) One more sound out of you, young man, and you'll leave the table!

MRS. MILLER. (*quickly interposing, trying to stave off the story*) Do eat your lobster, Nat. You didn't have any fish, you know.

MILLER. (*not liking the reminder—pettishly*) Well, if I'm going to be interrupted every second anyway—(*He turns to his lobster and chews in silence for a moment.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*trying to switch the subject*) How's Anne's mother's rheumatism, Mildred?

MILDRED. Oh, she's much better, Ma. She was in wading today. She says salt water's the only thing that really helps her bunion.

MRS. MILLER. Mildred! Where are your manners? At the table's no place to speak of—

MILLER. (*fallen into the reminiscent obsession again*) Well, as I was saying, there was I and Red, and he dared me to race him out to the stake and back. Well, I didn't let anyone dare me in those days. I was a spunky kid. So I said all right and we started out. We swam and swam and were pretty evenly matched; though, as I've said, he was bigger and older than me, but finally I drew ahead. I was going along easy, with lots in reserve, not a bit tired, when suddenly I heard a sort of gasp from behind me—like this—"help." (*He imitates. Everyone's eyes are firmly fixed on their plates, except* SID's.) And I turned and there was Red, his face all pinched and white, and he says weakly: "Help, Nat! I got a cramp in my leg!" Well, I don't mind telling you I got mighty scared. I didn't know what to do. Then suddenly I thought of the pile. If I could pull him to that, I could hang on to him till someone'd notice us. But the pile was still—well, I calculate it must have been two hundred feet away.

SID. Two hundred and fifty!

MILLER. (*in confusion*) What's that?

SID. Two hundred *and* fifty! I've taken down the distance every time you've saved Red's life for thirty years and the mean average to that pile is two hundred and fifty feet! (*There is a burst of laughter from around the table.* SID *continues complainingly*) Why didn't you let that Red drown, anyway, Nat? I never knew him but I know I'd never have liked him.

MILLER. (*really hurt, forces a feeble smile to his lips and pretends to be a good sport about it*) Well, guess you're right, Sid. Guess I have told that one too many times and bored everyone. But it's a good true story for kids because it illustrates the danger of being foolhardy in the water—

MRS. MILLER. (*sensing the hurt in his tone, comes to his rescue*) Of course it's a good story—and you tell it whenever you've a mind to. And you, Sid, if you were in any responsible state, I'd give you a good piece of my mind for teasing Nat like that.

MILLER. (*with a sad, self-pitying smile at his wife*) Getting old, I guess, Mother—getting to repeat myself. Someone ought to stop me.

MRS. MILLER. No such thing! You're as young as you ever were. (*She turns on* SID *again angrily*) You eat your lobster and maybe it'll keep your mouth shut!

SID. (*after a few chews—irrepressibly*) Lobster! Did you know, Tommy, your Uncle Sid is the man invented lobster? Fact! One day—when I was building the Pyramids—took a day off and just dashed off lobster. He was bigger'n' older than me and he had the darndest reddest crop of hair but I dashed him off just the same! Am I right, Nat? (*Then suddenly in the tones of a sideshow barker*) Ladies *and* Gents—

MRS. MILLER. Mercy sakes! Can't you shut up?

SID. In this cage you see the lobster. You will not believe me, ladies *and* gents, but

it's a fact that this interesting bivalve only makes love to his mate once in every thousand years—but, dearie me, how he does enjoy it! (*The children roar.* LILY *and* MRS. MILLER *laugh in spite of themselves—then look embarrassed.* MILLER *guffaws—then suddenly grows shocked.*)

MILLER. Careful, Sid, careful. Remember you're at home.

TOMMY. (*suddenly in a hoarse whisper to his mother, with an awed glance of admiration at his uncle*) Ma! Look at him! He's eating that claw, shells and all!

MRS. MILLER. (*horrified*) Sid, do you want to kill yourself? Take it away from him, Lily!

SID. (*with great dignity*) But I prefer the shells. All famous epicures prefer the shells—to the less delicate, coarser meat. It's the same with clams. Unless I eat the shells there is a certain, peculiar oil that invariably poisons—Am I right, Nat?

MILLER. (*good-naturedly*) You seem to be getting a lot of fun kidding me. Go ahead, then. I don't mind.

MRS. MILLER. He better go right up to bed for a while, that's what he better do.

SID. (*considering this owlishly*) Bed? Yes, maybe you're right. (*He gets to his feet*) I am not at all well—in very delicate condition—we are praying for a boy. Am I right, Nat? Nat, I kept telling you all day I was in delicate condition and yet you kept forcing demon chowder on me, although you knew full well—even if you were full—that there is a certain, peculiar oil in chowder that invariably—(*They are again all laughing*—LILY, *hysterically.*)

MRS. MILLER. *Will* you go to bed, you idiot!

SID. (*mutters graciously*) Immediately—if not sooner. (*He turns to pass behind* LILY, *then stops, staring down at her*) But wait. There is still a duty I must perform. No day is complete without it. Lily, answer once and for all, will you marry me?

LILY. (*with an hysterical giggle*) No, I won't—never!

SID. (*nodding his head*) Right! And perhaps it's all for the best. For how could I forget the pre—precepts taught me at mother's dying knee. "Sidney," she said, "never marry a woman who drinks! Lips that touch liquor shall never touch yours!" (*Gazing at her mournfully*) Too bad! So fine a woman once—and now such a slave to rum! (*Turning to* NAT) What can we do to save her, Nat? (*In a hoarse, confidential whisper*) Better put her in institution where she'll be removed from temptation! The mere smell of it seems to drive her frantic!

MRS. MILLER. (*struggling with her laughter*) You leave Lily alone, and go to bed!

SID. Right! (*He comes around behind* LILY's *chair and moves toward the entrance to the back parlor—then suddenly turns and says with a bow*) Good night, ladies—*and* gents. We will meet—bye and bye! (*He gives an imitation of a Salvation Army drum*) Boom! Boom! Boom! Come and be saved, Brothers! (*He starts to sing the old Army hymn*)

"In the sweet
Bye and bye
We will meet on that beautiful shore."

(*He turns and marches solemnly out through the back parlor, singing*)

"Work and pray.
While you may.
We will meet in the sky bye and bye."

(MILLER *and his wife and the children are all roaring with laughter.* LILY *giggles hysterically.*)

MILLER. (*subsiding at last*) Haw, haw. He's a case, if ever there was one! Darned if you can help laughing at him—even when he's poking fun at you!

MRS. MILLER. Goodness, but he's a caution! Oh, my sides ache, I declare! I was trying so hard not to—but you can't help it, he's so silly! But I suppose we really shouldn't. It only encourages him. But, my lands—!

LILY. (*suddenly gets up from her chair and stands rigidly, her face working—jerkily*) That's just it—you shouldn't—even I laughed—it does encourage—that's been his downfall—everyone always laughing, everyone always saying what a card he is, what a case, what a caution, so funny—and he's gone on—and we're all responsible—making it easy for him—we're all to blame—and all we do is laugh!

MILLER. (*worriedly*) Now, Lily, now, you mustn't take on so. It isn't as serious as all that.

LILY. (*bitterly*) Maybe—it is—to me. Or

was—once. (*Then contritely*) I'm sorry, Nat. I'm sorry, Essie. I didn't mean to—I'm not feeling myself tonight. If you'll excuse me, I'll go in the front parlor and lie down on the sofa awhile.

MRS. MILLER. Of course, Lily. You do whatever you've a mind to. (LILY *goes out.*)

MILLER. (*frowning—a little shamefaced*) Hmm. I suppose she's right. Never knew Lily to come out with things that way before. Anything special happened, Essie?

MRS. MILLER. Nothing I know—except he'd promised to take her to the fireworks.

MILLER. That's so. Well, supposing I take her. I don't want her to feel disappointed.

MRS. MILLER. (*shaking her head*) Wild horses couldn't drag her there now.

MILLER. Hmm. I thought she'd got completely over her foolishness about him long ago.

MRS. MILLER. She never will.

MILLER. She'd better. He's got fired out of that Waterbury job—told me at the picnic after he'd got enough Dutch courage in him.

MRS. MILLER. Oh, dear! Isn't he the fool!

MILLER. I knew something was wrong when he came home. Well, I'll find a place for him on my paper again, of course. He always was the best news-getter this town ever had. But I'll tell him he's got to stop his damn nonsense.

MRS. MILLER. (*doubtfully*) Yes.

MILLER. Well, no use sitting here mourning over spilt milk. (*He gets up, and* RICHARD, MILDRED, TOMMY *and* MRS. MILLER *follow his example, the children quiet and a bit awed*) You kids go out in the yard and try to keep quiet for a while, so's your Uncle Sid'll get to sleep and your Aunt Lily can rest.

TOMMY. (*mournfully*) Ain't we going to set off the sky rockets and Roman candles, Pa?

MILLER. Later, Son, later. It isn't dark enough for them yet anyway.

MILDRED. Come on, Tommy. I'll see he keeps quiet, Pa.

MILLER. That's a good girl. (MILDRED *and* TOMMY *go out through the screen door.* RICHARD *remains standing, sunk in bitter, gloomy thoughts.* MILLER *glances at him—then irritably*) Well, Melancholy Dane, what are you doing?

RICHARD. (*darkly*) I'm going out—for a while. (*Then suddenly*) Do you know what I think? It's Aunt Lily's fault, Uncle Sid's going to ruin. It's all because he loves her, and she keeps him dangling after her, and eggs him on and ruins his life—like all women love to ruin men's lives! I don't blame him for drinking himself to death! What does he care if he dies, after the way she's treated him! I'd do the same thing myself if I were in his boots!

MRS. MILLER. (*indignantly*) Richard! You stop that talk!

RICHARD. (*quotes bitterly*)

"Drink! for you know not whence you come nor why.
Drink! for you know not why you go nor where!"

MILLER. (*losing his temper—harshly*) Listen here, young man! I've had about all I can stand of your nonsense for one day! You're growing a lot too big for your size, seems to me! You keep that damn fool talk to yourself, you hear me—or you're going to regret it! Mind, now! (*He strides angrily away through the back parlor.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*still indignant*) Richard, I'm ashamed of you, that's what I am. (*She follows her husband.* RICHARD *stands for a second, bitter, humiliated, wronged, even his father turned enemy, his face growing more and more rebellious. Then he forces a scornful smile to his lips.*)

RICHARD. Aw, what the hell do I care? I'll show them! (*He turns and goes out the screen door.*)

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

SCENE—*The back room of a bar in a small hotel—a small, dingy room, dimly lighted by two fly-specked globes in a fly-specked gilt chandelier suspended from the middle of the ceiling. At left, front, is the swinging door leading to the bar. At rear of door, against*

the wall, is a nickel-in-the-slot player-piano. In the rear wall, right, is a door leading to the "Family Entrance" and the stairway to the upstairs rooms. In the middle of the right wall is a window with closed shutters. Three tables with stained tops, four chairs around each table, are placed at center, front, at right, toward rear, and at rear, center. A brass cuspidor is on the floor by each table. The floor is unswept, littered with cigarette and cigar butts. The hideous saffron-colored wall-paper is blotched and spotted.

It is about 10 o'clock the same night. RICHARD *and* BELLE *are discovered sitting at the table at center,* BELLE *at left of it,* RICHARD *in the next chair at the middle of table, rear, facing front.*

BELLE *is twenty, a rather pretty peroxide blonde, a typical college "tart" of the period, and of the cheaper variety, dressed with tawdry flashiness. But she is a fairly recent recruit to the ranks, and is still a bit remorseful behind her make-up and defiantly careless manner.*

BELLE *has an empty gin-rickey glass before her,* RICHARD *a half-empty glass of beer. He looks horribly timid, embarrassed and guilty, but at the same time thrilled and proud of at last mingling with the pace that kills.*

The player-piano is grinding out "Bedelia." The BARTENDER, *a stocky young Irishman with a foxily cunning, stupid face and a cynically wise grin, stands just inside the bar entrance, watching them over the swinging door.*

BELLE. (*with an impatient glance at her escort—rattling the ice in her empty glass*) Drink up your beer, why don't you? It's getting flat.

RICHARD. (*embarrassedly*) I let it get that way on purpose. I like it better when it's flat. (*But he hastily gulps down the rest of his glass, as if it were some nasty-tasting medicine. The* BARTENDER *chuckles audibly.* BELLE *glances at him.*)

BELLE. (*nodding at the player-piano scornfully*) Say, George, is "Bedelia" the latest to hit this hick burg? Well, it's only a couple of years old! You'll catch up in time! Why don't you get a new roll for that old box?

BARTENDER. (*with a grin*) Complain to the boss, not me. We're not used to having Candy Kiddoes like you around—or maybe we'd get up to date.

BELLE. (*with a professionally arch grin at him*) Don't kid me, please. I can't bear it. (*Then she sings to the music from the piano, her eyes now on* RICHARD) "Bedelia, I'd like to feel yer." (*The* BARTENDER *laughs. She smirks at* RICHARD) Ever hear those words to it, Kid?

RICHARD. (*who has heard them but is shocked at hearing a girl say them—putting on a blasé air*) Sure, lots of times. That's old.

BELLE. (*edging her chair closer and putting a hand over one of his*) Then why don't you act as if you knew what they were all about?

RICHARD. (*terribly flustered*) Sure, I've heard that old parody lots of times. What do you think I am?

BELLE. I don't know, Kid. Honest to God, you've got me guessing.

BARTENDER. (*with a mocking chuckle*) He's a hot sport, can't you tell it? I never seen such a spender. My head's dizzy bringing you in drinks!

BELLE. (*laughs irritably—to* RICHARD) Don't let him kid you. You show him. Loosen up and buy another drink, what say?

RICHARD. (*humiliated—manfully*) Sure. Excuse me. I was thinking of something else. Have anything you like. (*He turns to the* BARTENDER *who has entered from the bar*) See what the lady will have—and have one on me yourself.

BARTENDER. (*coming to the table—with a wink at* BELLE.) That's talking! Didn't I say you were a sport? I'll take a cigar on you. (*To* BELLE) What's yours, Kiddo—the same?

BELLE. Yes. And forget the house rules this time and remember a rickey is supposed to have gin in it.

BARTENDER. (*grinning*) I'll try to—seeing it's you. (*Then to* RICHARD) What's yours—another beer?

RICHARD. (*shyly*) A small one, please! I'm not thirsty.

BELLE. (*calculatedly taunting*) Say, honest, are things that slow up at Harvard? If they had you down at New Haven, they'd put you in a kindergarten! Don't be such a dead one!

Filling up on beer will only make you sleepy. Have a man's drink!

RICHARD. (*shamefacedly*) All right. I was going to. Bring me a sloe-gin fizz.

BELLE. (*to* BARTENDER) And make it a real one.

BARTENDER. (*with a wink*) I get you. Something that'll warm him up, eh? (*He goes into the bar, chuckling.*)

BELLE. (*looks around the room—irritably*) Christ, what a dump! (RICHARD *is startled and shocked by this curse and looks down at the table*) If this isn't the deadest burg I ever struck! Bet they take the sidewalks in after nine o'clock! (*Then turning on him*) Say, honestly, Kid, does your mother know you're out?

RICHARD. (*defensively*) Aw, cut it out, why don't you—trying to kid me!

BELLE. (*glances at him—then resolves on a new tack—patting his hand*) All right. I didn't mean to, Dearie. Please don't get sore at me.

RICHARD. I'm not sore.

BELLE. (*seductively*) You see, it's this way with me. I think you're one of the sweetest kids I've ever met—and I could like you such a lot if you'd give me half a chance—instead of acting so cold and indifferent.

RICHARD. I'm not cold and indifferent. (*Then solemnly tragic*) It's only that I've got—a weight on my mind.

BELLE. (*impatiently*) Well, get it off your mind and give something else a chance to work. (*The* BARTENDER *comes in, bringing the drinks.*)

BARTENDER. (*setting them down—with a wink at* BELLE) This'll warm him for you. Forty cents, that is—with the cigar.

RICHARD. (*pulls out his roll and hands a dollar bill over—with exaggerated carelessness*) Keep the change. (BELLE *emits a gasp and seems about to protest, then thinks better of it. The* BARTENDER *cannot believe his luck for a moment—then pockets the bill hastily, as if afraid* RICHARD *will change his mind.*)

BARTENDER. (*respect in his voice*) Thank you, sir.

RICHARD. (*grandly*) Don't mention it.

BARTENDER. I hope you like the drink. I took special pains with it. (*The voice of the* SALESMAN, *who has just come in the bar, calls "Hey! Anybody here?" and a coin is rapped on the bar*) I'm coming. (*The* BARTENDER *goes out.*)

BELLE. (*remonstrating gently, a new appreciation for her escort's possibilities in her voice*) You shouldn't be so generous. Dearie. Gets him in bad habits. A dime would have been plenty.

RICHARD. Ah, that's all right. I'm no tightwad.

BELLE. That's the talk I like to hear. (*With a quick look toward the bar, she stealthily pulls up her dress—to* RICHARD'S *shocked fascination—and takes a package of cheap cigarettes from her stocking*) Keep an eye out for that bartender, Kid, and tell me if you see him coming. Girls are only allowed to smoke upstairs in the rooms, he said.

RICHARD. (*embarrassedly*) All right. I'll watch.

BELLE. (*having lighted her cigarette and inhaled deeply, holds the package out to him*) Have a Sweet? You smoke, don't you?

RICHARD. (*taking one*) Sure! I've been smoking for the last two years—on the sly. But next year I'll be allowed—that is, pipes and cigars. (*He lights his cigarette with elaborate nonchalance, puffs, but does not inhale—then, watching her, with shocked concern*) Say, you oughtn't to inhale like that! Smoking's awful bad for girls, anyway, even if they don't—

BELLE. (*cynically amused*) Afraid it will stunt my growth? Gee, Kid, you are a scream! You'll grow up to be a minister yet! (RICHARD *looks shamefaced. She scans him impatiently—then holds up her drink*) Well, here's how! Bottoms up, now! Show me you really know how to drink. It'll take that load off your mind. (RICHARD *follows her example and they both drink the whole contents of their glasses before setting them down*) There! That's something like! Feel better?

RICHARD. (*proud of himself—with a shy smile*) You bet.

BELLE. Well, you'll feel still better in a minute—and then maybe you won't be so distant and unfriendly, eh?

RICHARD. I'm not.

BELLE. Yes, you are. I think you just don't like me.

RICHARD. (*more manfully*) I do too like you.

BELLE. How much? A lot?

RICHARD. Yes, a lot.

BELLE. Show me how much! (*Then as he fidgets embarrassedly*) Want me to come sit on your lap?

RICHARD. Yes—I— (*She comes and sits on his lap. He looks desperately uncomfortable, but the gin is rising to his head and he feels proud of himself and devilish, too.*)

BELLE. Why don't you put your arm around me? (*He does so awkwardly*) No, not that dead way. Hold me tight. You needn't be afraid of hurting me. I like to be held tight, don't you?

RICHARD. Sure I do.

BELLE. 'Specially when it's by a nice handsome kid like you. (*Ruffling his hair*) Gee, you've got pretty hair, do you know it? Honest, I'm awfully strong for you! Why can't you be about me? I'm not so awfully ugly, am I?

RICHARD. No, you're—you're pretty.

BELLE. You don't say it as if you meant it.

RICHARD. I do mean it—honest.

BELLE. Then why don't you kiss me? (*She bends down her lips toward his. He hesitates, then kisses her and at once shrinks back*) Call that kissing? Here. (*She holds his head and fastens her lips on his and holds them there. He starts and struggles. She laughs*) What's the matter, Honey Boy? Haven't you ever kissed like that before?

RICHARD. Sure. Lots of times.

BELLE. Then why did you jump as if I'd bitten you? (*Squirming around on his lap*) Gee, I'm getting just crazy about you! What shall we do about it, eh? Tell me.

RICHARD. I—don't know. (*Then boldly*) I—I'm crazy about you, too.

BELLE. (*kissing him again*) Just think of the wonderful time Edith and your friend, Wint, are having upstairs—while we sit down here like two dead ones. A room only costs two dollars. And, seeing I like you so much, I'd only take five dollars—from you. I'd do it for nothing—for you—only I've got to live and I owe my room rent in New Haven—and you know how it is. I get ten dollars from everyone else. Honest! (*She kisses him again, then gets up from his lap—briskly*) Come on. Go out and tell the bartender you want a room. And hurry. Honest, I'm so strong for you I can hardly wait to get you upstairs!

RICHARD. (*starts automatically for the door to the bar—then hesitates, a great struggle going on in his mind—timidity, disgust at the money element, shocked modesty, and the guilty thought of* MURIEL, *fighting it out with the growing tipsiness that makes him want to be a hell of a fellow and go in for all forbidden fruit, and makes this tart a romantic, evil vampire in his eyes. Finally, he stops and mutters in confusion*) I can't.

BELLE. What, are you too bashful to ask for a room? Let me do it, then. (*She starts for the door.*)

RICHARD. (*desperately*) No—I don't want you to—I don't want to.

BELLE. (*surveying him, anger coming into her eyes*) Well, if you aren't the lousiest cheap skate!

RICHARD. I'm not a cheap skate!

BELLE. Keep me around here all night fooling with you when I might be out with some real live one—if there is such a thing in this burg!—and now you quit on me! Don't be such a piker! You've got five dollars! I seen it when you paid for the drinks, so don't hand me any lies!

RICHARD. I—Who said I hadn't? And I'm not a piker. If you need the five dollars so bad—for your room rent—you can have it without—I mean, I'll be glad to give—(*He has been fumbling in his pocket and pulls out his nine-dollar roll and holds out the five to her.*)

BELLE. (*hardly able to believe her eyes, almost snatches it from his hand—then laughs and immediately becomes sentimentally grateful*) Thanks, Kid. Gee—oh,thanks—Gee, forgive me for losing my temper and bawling you out, will you? Gee, you're a regular peach! You're the nicest kid I've ever met! (*She kisses him and he grins proudly, a hero to himself now on many counts*) Gee, you're a peach! Thanks, again!

RICHARD. (*grandly—and quite tipsily*) It's—nothing—only too glad. (*Then boldly*) Here—give me another kiss, and that'll pay me back.

BELLE. (*kissing him*) I'll give you a thou-

sand, if you want 'em. Come on, let's sit down, and we'll have another drink—and this time I'll blow you just to show my appreciation. (*She calls*) Hey, George! Bring us another round—the same!

RICHARD. (*a remnant of caution coming to him*) I don't know as I ought to—

BELLE. Oh, another won't hurt you. And I want to blow you, see. (*They sit down in their former places.*)

RICHARD. (*boldly draws his chair closer and puts an arm around her—tipsily*) I like you a lot—now I'm getting to know you. You're a darned nice girl.

BELLE. Nice is good! Tell me another! Well, if I'm so nice, why didn't you want to take me upstairs? That's what I don't get.

RICHARD. (*lying boldly*) I did want to—only I— (*Then he adds solemnly*) I've sworn off. (*The* BARTENDER *enters with the drinks.*)

BARTENDER. (*setting them on the table*) Here's your pleasure. (*Then regarding* RICHARD'S *arm about her waist*) Ho-ho, we're coming on, I see. (RICHARD *grins at him muzzily.*)

BELLE. (*digs into her stocking and gives him a dollar*) Here. This is mine. (*He gives her change and she tips him a dime, and he goes out. She puts the five* RICHARD *had given her in her stocking and picks up her glass*) Here's how—and thanks again. (*She sips.*)

RICHARD. (*boisterously*) Bottoms up! Bottoms up! (*He drinks all of his down and sighs with exaggerated satisfaction*) Gee, that's good stuff, all right. (*Hugging her*) Give me another kiss, Belle.

BELLE. (*kisses him*) What did you mean a minute ago when you said you'd sworn off?

RICHARD. (*solemnly*) I took an oath I'd be faithful.

BELLE. (*cynically*) Till death do us part, eh? Who's the girl?

RICHARD. (*shortly*) Never mind.

BELLE. (*bristling*) I'm not good enough to talk about her, I suppose?

RICHARD. I didn't—mean that. You're all right. (*Then with tipsy gravity*) Only you oughtn't to lead this kind of life. It isn't right—for a nice girl like you. Why don't you reform?

BELLE. (*sharply*) Nix on that line of talk! Can it, you hear! You can do a lot with me for five dollars—but you can't reform me, see. Mind your own business, Kid, and don't butt in where you're not wanted!

RICHARD. I—I didn't mean to hurt your feelings.

BELLE. I know you didn't mean. You're only like a lot of people who mean well, to hear them tell it. (*Changing the subject*) So you're faithful to your one love, eh? (*With an ugly sneer*) And how about her? Bet you she's out with a guy under some bush this minute, giving him all he wants. Don't be a sucker, Kid! Even the little flies do it!

RICHARD. (*starting up in his chair—angrily*) Don't you say that! Don't you dare!

BELLE. (*unimpressed—with a cynical shrug of her shoulders*) All right. Have it your own way and be a sucker! It cuts no ice with me.

RICHARD. You don't know her or—

BELLE. And don't want to. Shut up about her, can't you? (*She stares before her bitterly.* RICHARD *subsides into scowling gloom. He is becoming perceptibly more intoxicated with each moment now. The* BARTENDER *and the* SALESMAN *appear just inside the swinging door. The* BARTENDER *nods toward* BELLE, *giving the* SALESMAN *a wink. The* SALESMAN *grins and comes into the room, carrying his highball in his hand. He is a stout, jowly-faced man in his late thirties, dressed with cheap nattiness, with the professional breeziness and jocular, kid-'em-along manner of his kind.* BELLE *looks up as he enters and he and she exchange a glance of complete recognition. She knows his type by heart and he knows hers.*)

SALESMAN. (*passes by her to the table at right—grinning genially*) Good evening.

BELLE. Good evening.

SALESMAN. (*sitting down*) Hope I'm not butting in on your party—but my dogs were giving out standing at that bar.

BELLE. All right with me. (*Giving* RICHARD *a rather contemptuous look*) I've got no party on.

SALESMAN. That sounds hopeful.

RICHARD. (*suddenly recites sentimentally*)

"But I wouldn't do such, 'cause I loved her too much,
But I learned about women from her."

(*Turns to scowl at the* SALESMAN—*then to* BELLE) Let's have 'nother drink!

BELLE. You've had enough. (RICHARD *subsides, muttering to himself.*)

SALESMAN. What is it—a child poet or a child actor?

BELLE. Don't know. Got me guessing.

SALESMAN. Well, if you could shake the cradle-robbing act, maybe we could do a little business.

BELLE. That's easy. I just pull my freight. (*She shakes* RICHARD *by the arm*) Listen, Kid. Here's an old friend of mine, Mr. Smith of New Haven, just come in. I'm going over and sit at his table for a while, see. And you better go home.

RICHARD. (*blinking at her and scowling*) I'm never going home! I'll show them!

BELLE. Have it your own way—only let me up. (*She takes his arm from around her and goes to sit by the* SALESMAN. RICHARD *stares after her offendedly.*)

RICHARD. Go on. What do I care what you do? (*He recites scornfully*) "For a woman's only a woman, but a good cigar's a smoke."

SALESMAN. (*as* BELLE *sits beside him*) Well, what kind of beer will you have, Sister?

BELLE. Mine's a gin rickey.

SALESMAN. You've got extravagant tastes, I'm sorry to see.

RICHARD. (*begins to recite sepulchrally*)

"Yet each man kills the thing he loves,
By each let this be heard."

SALESMAN. (*grinning*) Say, this is rich! (*He calls encouragement*) That's swell dope, young feller. Give us some more.

RICHARD. (*ignoring him—goes on more rhetorically*)

"Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!"

(*He stares at* BELLE *gloomily and mutters tragically*) I did it with a kiss! I'm a coward.

SALESMAN. That's the old stuff, Kid. You've got something on the ball, all right, all right! Give us another—right over the old pan, now!

BELLE. (*with a laugh*) Get the hook!

RICHARD. (*glowering at her—tragically*)

"'Oho,' they cried, 'the world is wide,
But fettered limbs go lame!
And once, or twice, to throw the dice
Is a gentlemanly game,
But he does not win who plays with Sin
In the secret House of Shame!'"

BELLE. (*angrily*) Aw, can it! Give us a rest from that bunk!

SALESMAN. (*mockingly*) This gal of yours don't appreciate poetry. She's a lowbrow. But I'm the kid that eats it up. My middle name is Kelly and Sheets! Give us some more of the same! Do you know "The Lobster and the Wise Guy"? (*Turns to* BELLE *seriously*) No kidding, that's a peacherino. I heard a guy recite it at Poli's. Maybe this nut knows it. Do you, Kid? (*But* RICHARD *only glowers at him gloomily without answering.*)

BELLE. (*surveying* RICHARD *contemptuously*) He's copped a fine skinful—and gee, he's hardly had anything.

RICHARD. (*suddenly—with a dire emphasis*) "And then—at ten o'clock—Eilert Lovborg will come—with vine leaves in his hair!"

BELLE. And bats in his belfry, if he's you!

RICHARD. (*regards her bitterly—then starts to his feet bellicosely—to the* SALESMAN.) I don't believe you ever knew her in New Haven at all! You just picked her up now! You leave her alone, you hear! You won't do anything to her—not while I'm here to protect her!

BELLE. (*laughing*) Oh, my God! Listen to it!

SALESMAN. Ssshh! This is a scream! Wait! (*He addresses* RICHARD *in tones of exaggerated melodrama*) Curse you, Jack Dalton, if I won't unhand her, what then?

RICHARD. (*threateningly*) I'll give you a good punch in the snoot, that's what! (*He moves toward their table.*)

SALESMAN. (*with mock terror—screams in falsetto*) Help! Help! (*The* BARTENDER *comes in irritably.*)

BARTENDER. Hey. Cut out the noise. What the hell's up with you?

RICHARD. (*tipsily*) He's too—damn fresh!

SALESMAN. (*with a wink*) He's going to murder me! (*Then gets a bright idea for eliminating* RICHARD—*seriously to the* BARTENDER) It's none of my business, Brother, but if I were in your boots I'd give this young

souse the gate. He's under age; any fool can see that.

BARTENDER. (*guiltily*) He told me he was over eighteen.

SALESMAN. Yes, and I tell you I'm the Pope—but you don't have to believe me. If you're not looking for trouble, I'd advise you to get him started for some other gin mill and let them do the lying, if anything comes up.

BARTENDER. Hmm. (*He turns to* RICHARD *angrily and gives him a push*) Come on, now. On your way! You'll start no trouble in here! Beat it now!

RICHARD. I will not beat it!

BARTENDER. Oho, won't you? (*He gives him another push that almost sends him sprawling.*)

BELLE. (*callously*) Give him the bum's rush! I'm sick of his bull! (RICHARD *turns furiously and tries to punch the* BARTENDER.)

BARTENDER. (*avoids the punch*) Oho, you would, would you! (*He grabs* RICHARD *by the back of the neck and the seat of the pants and marches him ignominiously toward the swinging door.*)

RICHARD. Leggo of me, you dirty coward!

BARTENDER. Quiet now—or I'll pin a Mary Ann on your jaw that'll quiet you! (*He rushes him through the screen door and a moment later the outer doors are heard swinging back and forth.*)

SALESMAN. (*with a chuckle*) Hand it to me, Kid. How was that for a slick way of getting rid of him?

BELLE. (*suddenly sentimental*) Poor kid. I hope he makes home all right. I liked him—before he got soused.

SALESMAN. Who is he?

BELLE. The boy who's upstairs with my friend told me, but I didn't pay much attention. Name's Miller. His old man runs a paper in this one-horse burg, I think he said.

SALESMAN. (*with a whistle*) Phew! He must be Nat Miller's kid, then.

BARTENDER. (*coming back from the bar*) Well, he's on his way—with a good boot in the tail to help him!

SALESMAN. (*with a malicious chuckle*) Yes? Well, maybe that boot will cost you a job, Brother. Know Nat Miller who runs the *Globe*? That's his kid.

BARTENDER. (*his face falling*) The hell he is! Who said so?

SALESMAN. This baby doll. (*Getting up*) Say, I'll go keep cases on him—see he gets on the trolley all right, anyway. Nat Miller's a good scout. (*He hurries out.*)

BARTENDER. (*viciously*) God damn the luck! If he ever finds out I served his kid, he'll run me out of town. (*He turns on* BELLE *furiously*) Why didn't you put me wise, you lousy tramp, you!

BELLE. Hey! I don't stand for that kind of talk—not from no hick beer-squirter like you, see!

BARTENDER. (*furiously*) You don't, don't you! Who was it but you told me to hand him dynamite in that fizz? (*He gives her chair a push that almost throws her to the floor*) Beat it, you—and beat it quick—or I'll call Sullivan from the corner and have you run in for streetwalking! (*He gives her a push that lands her against the family-entrance door*) Get the hell out of here—and no long waits!

BELLE. (*opens the door and goes out—turns and calls back viciously*) I'll fix you for this, you thick Mick, if I have to go to jail for it. (*She goes out and slams the door.*)

BARTENDER. (*looks after her worriedly for a second—then shrugs his shoulders*) That's only her bull. (*Then with a sigh as he returns to the bar*) Them lousy tramps is always getting this dump in Dutch!

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE TWO

SCENE—*Same as Act One—Sitting-room of the Miller home—about 11 o'clock the same night.*

MILLER *is sitting in his favorite rocking-chair at left of table, front. He has discarded collar and tie, coat and shoes, and wears an old, worn, brown dressing-gown and disreputable-looking carpet slippers. He has his reading specs on and is running over items in a newspaper. But his mind is plainly preoccupied and worried, and he is not paying much attention to what he reads.*

MRS. MILLER *sits by the table at right, front. She also has on her specs. A sewing basket is on her lap and she is trying hard to keep her attention fixed on the doily she is doing. But, as in the case of her husband, but much more apparently, her mind is preoccupied, and she is obviously on tenterhooks of nervous uneasiness.*

LILY *is sitting in the armchair by the table at rear, facing right. She is pretending to read a novel, but her attention wanders, too, and her expression is sad, although now it has lost all its bitterness and become submissive and resigned again.*

MILDRED *sits at the desk at right, front, writing two words over and over again, stopping each time to survey the result critically, biting her tongue, intensely concentrated on her work.*

TOMMY *sits on the sofa at left, front. He has had a hard day and is terribly sleepy but will not acknowledge it. His eyes blink shut on him, his head begins to nod, but he isn't giving up, and every time he senses any of the family glancing in his direction, he goads himself into a bright-eyed wakefulness.*

MILDRED. (*finally surveys the two words she has been writing and is satisfied with them*) There. (*She takes the paper over to her mother*) Look, Ma. I've been practicing a new way of writing my name. Don't look at the others, only the last one. Don't you think it's the real goods?

MRS. MILLER. (*pulled out of her preoccupation*) Don't talk that horrible slang. It's bad enough for boys, but for a young girl supposed to have manners—my goodness, when I was your age, if my mother'd ever heard me—

MILDRED. Well, don't you think it's nice, then?

MRS. MILLER. (*sinks back into preoccupation—scanning the paper—vaguely*) Yes, very nice, Mildred—very nice, indeed. (*Hands the paper back mechanically.*)

MILDRED. (*is a little piqued, but smiles*) Absent-minded! I don't believe you even saw it. (*She passes around the table to show her* AUNT LILY. MILLER *gives an uneasy glance at his wife and then, as if afraid of meeting her eye, looks quickly back at his paper again.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*staring before her—sighs worriedly*) Oh, I do wish Richard would come home!

MILLER. There now, Essie. He'll be in any minute now. Don't you worry about him.

MRS. MILLER. But I do worry about him!

LILY. (*surveying* MILDRED'S *handiwork—smiling*) This is fine, Mildred. Your penmanship is improving wonderfully. But don't you think that maybe you've got a little too many flourishes?

MILDRED. (*disappointedly*) But, Aunt Lily, that's just what I was practicing hardest on.

MRS. MILLER. (*with another sigh*) What time is it now, Nat?

MILLER. (*adopting a joking tone*) I'm going to buy a clock for in here. You have me reaching for my watch every couple of minutes. (*He has pulled his watch out of his vest pocket—with forced carelessness*) Only a little past ten.

MRS. MILLER. Why, you said it was that an hour ago! Nat Miller, you're telling me a fib, so's not to worry me. You let me see that watch!

MILLER. (*guiltily*) Well, it's quarter to eleven—but that's not so late—when you remember it's Fourth of July.

MRS. MILLER. If you don't stop talking Fourth of July—! To hear you go on, you'd think that was an excuse for anything from murder to picking pockets!

MILDRED. (*has brought her paper around to her father and now shoves it under his nose*) Look, Pa.

MILLER. (*seizes on this interruption with relief*) Let's see. Hmm. Seems to me you've been inventing a new signature every week lately. What are you in training for—writing checks? You must be planning to catch a rich husband.

MILDRED. (*with an arch toss of her head*) No wedding bells for me! But how do you like it, Pa?

MILLER. It's overpowering—no other word for it, overpowering! You could put it on the Declaration of Independence and not feel ashamed.

MRS. MILLER. (*desolately, almost on the verge of tears*) It's all right for you to laugh

and joke with Mildred! I'm the only one in this house seems to care—(*Her lips tremble.*)

MILDRED. (*a bit disgustedly*) Ah, Ma, Dick only sneaked off to the fireworks at the beach, you wait and see.

MRS. MILLER. Those fireworks were over long ago. If he had, he'd be home.

LILY. (*soothingly*) He probably couldn't get a seat, the trolleys are so jammed, and he had to walk home.

MILLER. (*seizing on this with relief*) Yes, I never thought of that, but I'll bet that's it.

MILDRED. Ah, don't let him worry you, Ma. He just wants to show off he's heartbroken about that silly Muriel—and get everyone fussing over him and wondering if he hasn't drowned himself or something.

MRS. MILLER. (*snappily*) You be quiet! The way you talk at times, I really believe you're that hardhearted you haven't got a heart in you! (*With an accusing glance at her husband*) One thing I know, you don't get that from me! (*He meets her eye and avoids it guiltily. She sniffs and looks away from him around the room.* TOMMY, *who is nodding and blinking, is afraid her eye is on him. He straightens alertly and speaks in a voice that, in spite of his effort, is dripping with drowsiness.*)

TOMMY. Let me see what you wrote, Mid.

MILDRED. (*cruelly mocking*) You? You're so sleepy you couldn't see it!

TOMMY. (*valiantly*) I am not sleepy!

MRS. MILLER. (*has fixed her eye on him*) My gracious, I was forgetting you were still up! You run up to bed this minute! It's hours past your bedtime!

TOMMY. But it's the Fourth of July. Ain't it, Pa?

MRS. MILLER. (*gives her husband an accusing stare*) There! You see what you've done? You might know he'd copy your excuses! (*Then sharply to* TOMMY) You heard what I said, Young Man!

TOMMY. Aw, Ma, can't I stay up a *little* longer?

MRS. MILLER. I said, no! You obey me and no more arguing about it!

TOMMY. (*drags himself to his feet*) Aw! I should think I could stay up till Dick—..

MILLER. (*kindly but firmly*) You heard your ma say no more arguing. When she says git, you better git. (TOMMY *accepts his fate resignedly and starts around kissing them all good night.*)

TOMMY. (*kissing her*) Good night, Aunt Lily.

LILY. Good night, Dear. Sleep well.

TOMMY. (*pecking at* MILDRED) Good night, you.

MILDRED. Good night, you.

TOMMY. (*kissing him*) Good night, Pa.

MILLER. Good night, Son. Sleep tight.

TOMMY. (*kissing her*) Good night, Ma.

MRS. MILLER. Good night. Here! You look feverish. Let me feel of your head. No, you're all right. Hurry up, now. And don't forget your prayers.

(TOMMY *goes slowly to the doorway—then turns suddenly, the discovery of another excuse lighting up his face.*)

TOMMY. Here's another thing, Ma. When I was up to the water closet last—

MRS. MILLER. (*sharply*) When you were *where?*

TOMMY. The bathroom.

MRS. MILLER. That's better.

TOMMY. Uncle Sid was snoring like a fog horn—and he's right next to my room. How can I ever get to sleep while he's—(*He is overcome by a jaw-cracking yawn.*)

MRS. MILLER. I guess you'd get to sleep all right if you were inside a fog horn. You run along now. (TOMMY *gives up, grins sleepily, and moves off to bed. As soon as he is off her mind, all her former uneasiness comes back on* MRS. MILLER *tenfold. She sighs, moves restlessly, then finally asks*) What time is it now, Nat?

MILLER. Now, Essie, I just told you a minute ago.

MRS. MILLER. (*resentfully*) I don't see how you can take it so calm! Here it's midnight, you might say, and our Richard still out, and we don't even know where he is.

MILDRED. I hear someone on the piazza. Bet that's him now, Ma.

MRS. MILLER. (*her anxiety immediately turning to relieved anger*) You give him a good piece of your mind, Nat, you hear me! You're too easy with him, that's the whole trouble! The idea of him daring to stay out

like this! (*The front door is heard being opened and shut, and someone whistling "Waltz Me Around Again, Willie."*)

MILDRED. No, that isn't Dick. It's Art.

MRS. MILLER. (*her face falling*) Oh. (*A moment later* ARTHUR *enters through the front parlor, whistling softly, half under his breath, looking complacently pleased with himself.*)

MILLER. (*surveys him over his glasses, not with enthusiasm—shortly*) So you're back, eh? We thought it was Richard.

ARTHUR. Is he still out? Where'd he go to?

MILLER. That's just what we'd like to know. You didn't run into him anywhere, did you?

ARTHUR. No. I've been at the Rands' ever since dinner. (*He sits down in the armchair at left of table, rear*) I suppose he sneaked off to the beach to watch the fireworks.

MILLER. (*pretending an assurance he is far from feeling*) Of course. That's what we've been trying to tell your mother, but she insists on worrying her head off.

MRS. MILLER. But if he was going to the fireworks, why wouldn't he say so? He knew we'd let him.

ARTHUR. (*with calm wisdom*) That's easy, Ma. (*He grins superiorly*) Didn't you hear him this morning showing off bawling out the Fourth like an anarchist? He wouldn't want to reneg on that to you—but he'd want to see the old fireworks just the same. (*He adds complacently*) I know. He's at the foolish age.

MILLER. (*stares at* ARTHUR *with ill-concealed astonishment, then grins*) Well, Arthur, by gosh, you make me feel as if I owed you an apology when you talk horse sense like that. (*He turns to his wife, greatly relieved*) Arthur's hit the nail right on the head, I think, Essie. That was what I couldn't figure out—why he—but now it's clear as day.

MRS. MILLER. (*with a sigh*) Well, I hope you're right. But I wish he was home.

ARTHUR. (*takes out his pipe and fills and lights it with solemn gravity*) He oughtn't to be allowed out this late at his age. I wasn't, Fourth or no Fourth—if I remember.

MILLER. (*a twinkle in his eyes*) Don't tax your memory trying to recall those ancient days of your youth. (MILDRED *laughs and* ARTHUR *looks sheepish. But he soon regains his aplomb.*)

ARTHUR. (*importantly*) We had a corking dinner at the Rands'. We had sweetbreads on toast.

MRS. MILLER. (*arising momentarily from her depression*) Just like the Rands to put on airs before you! I never could see anything to sweetbreads. Always taste like soap to me. And no real nourishment to them. I wouldn't have the pesky things on my table! (ARTHUR *again feels sat upon.*)

MILDRED. (*teasingly*) Did you kiss Elsie good night?

ARTHUR. Stop trying to be so darn funny all the time! You give me a pain in the ear!

MILDRED. And that's where she gives me a pain, the stuck-up thing!—thinks she's the whole cheese!

MILLER. (*irritably*) And it's where your everlasting wrangling gives me a pain, you two! Give us a rest! (*There is silence for a moment.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*sighs worriedly again*) I do wish that boy would get home!

MILLER. (*glances at her uneasily, peeks surreptitiously at his watch—then has an inspiration and turns to* ARTHUR) Arthur, what's this I hear about your having such a good singing voice? Rand was telling me he liked nothing better than to hear you sing—said you did every night you were up there. Why don't you ever give us folks at home here a treat?

ARTHUR. (*pleased, but still nursing wounded dignity*) I thought you'd only sit on me.

MRS. MILLER. (*perking up—proudly*) Arthur has a real nice voice. He practices when you're not at home. I didn't know you cared for singing, Nat.

MILLER. Well, I do—nothing better—and when I was a boy I had a fine voice myself and folks used to say I'd ought—(*Then abruptly, mindful of his painful experience with reminiscence at dinner, looking about him guiltily*) Hmm. But don't hide your light under a bushel, Arthur. Why not give us a song or two now? You can play for him, can't you, Mildred?

MILDRED. (*with a toss of her head*) I can play as well as Elsie Rand, at least!

ARTHUR. (*ignoring her—clearing his throat importantly*) I've been singing a lot tonight. I don't know if my voice—

MILDRED. (*forgetting her grudge, grabs her brother's hand and tugs at it*) Come on. Don't play modest. You know you're just dying to show off. (*This puts* ARTHUR *off it at once. He snatches his hand away from her angrily.*)

ARTHUR. Let go of me, you! (*Then with surly dignity*) I don't feel like singing tonight, Pa. I will some other time.

MILLER. You let him alone, Mildred! (*He winks at* ARTHUR, *indicating with his eyes and a nod of his head* MRS. MILLER, *who has again sunk into worried brooding. He makes it plain by this pantomime that he wants him to sing to distract his mother's mind.*)

ARTHUR. (*puts aside his pipe and gets up promptly*) Oh—sure, I'll do the best I can. (*He follows* MILDRED *into the front parlor, where he switches on the lights.*)

MILLER. (*to his wife*) It won't keep Tommy awake. Nothing could. And Sid, he'd sleep through an earthquake. (*Then suddenly, looking through the front parlor—grumpily*) Darn it, speak of the devil, here he comes. Well, he's had a good sleep and he'd ought to be sobered up. (LILY *gets up from her chair and looks around her huntedly, as if for a place to hide.* MILLER *says soothingly*) Lily, you just sit down and read your book and don't pay any attention to him. (*She sits down again and bends over her book tensely. From the front parlor comes the tinkling of a piano as* MILDRED *runs over the scales. In the midst of this,* SID *enters through the front parlor. All the effervescence of his jag has worn off and he is now suffering from a bad case of hangover—nervous, sick, a prey to gloomy remorse and bitter feelings of self-loathing and self-pity. His eyes are bloodshot and puffed, his face bloated, the fringe of hair around his baldness tousled and tufty. He sidles into the room guiltily, his eyes shifting about, avoiding looking at anyone*)

SID. (*forcing a sickly, twitching smile*) Hello.

MILLER. (*considerately casual*) Hello, Sid. Had a good nap? (*Then, as* SID *swallows hard and is about to break into further speech,* MILDRED's *voice comes from the front parlor.* "I haven't played that in ever so long, but I'll try," *and she starts an accompaniment.* MILLER *motions* SID *to be quiet*) Ssshh! Arthur's going to sing for us. (SID *flattens himself against the edge of the bookcase at center, rear, miserably self-conscious and ill-at-ease there but nervously afraid to move anywhere else.* ARTHUR *begins to sing. He has a fairly decent voice but his method is untrained sentimentality to a dripping degree. He sings that old sentimental favorite, "Then You'll Remember Me." The effect on his audience is instant.* MILLER *gazes before him with a ruminating melancholy, his face seeming to become gently sorrowful and old.* MRS. MILLER *stares before her, her expression becoming more and more doleful.* LILY *forgets to pretend to read her book but looks over it, her face growing tragically sad. As for* SID, *he is moved to his remorseful, guilt-stricken depths. His mouth pulls down at the corners and he seems about to cry. The song comes to an end.* MILLER *starts, then claps his hands enthusiastically and calls*) Well done, Arthur—well done! Why, you've got a splendid voice! Give us some more! You liked that, didn't you, Essie?

MRS. MILLER. (*dolefully*) Yes—but it's sad—terrible sad.

SID. (*after swallowing hard, suddenly blurts out*) Nat and Essie—and Lily—I—I want to apologize—for coming home—the way I did—there's no excuse—but I didn't mean—

MILLER. (*sympathetically*) Of course, Sid. It's all forgotten.

MRS. MILLER. (*rousing herself—affectionately pitying*) Don't be a goose, Sid. We know how it is with picnics. You forget it. (*His face lights up a bit but his gaze shifts to* LILY *with a mute appeal, hoping for a word from her which is not forthcoming. Her eyes are fixed on her book, her body tense and rigid.*)

SID. (*finally blurts out desperately*) Lily—I'm sorry—about the fireworks. Can you—forgive me? (*But* LILY *remains implacably silent. A stricken look comes over* SID's *face. In*

the front parlor MILDRED *is heard saying* "But I only know the chorus"—*and she starts another accompaniment.*)

MILLER. (*comes to* SID's *rescue*) Ssshh! We're going to have another song. Sit down, Sid. (SID, *hanging his head, flees to the farthest corner, left, front, and sits at the end of the sofa, facing front, hunched up, elbows on knees, face in hands, his round eyes childishly wounded and woe-begone.* ARTHUR *sings the popular "Dearie," playing up its sentimental values for all he is worth. The effect on his audience is that of the previous song, intensified—especially upon* SID. *As he finishes,* MILLER *again starts and applauds*) Mighty fine, Arthur! You sang that darned well! Didn't he, Essie?

MRS. MILLER. (*dolefully*) Yes—but I wish he wouldn't sing such sad songs. (*Then, her lips trembling*) Richard's always whistling that.

MILLER. (*hastily—calls*) Give us something cheery, next one, Arthur. You know, just for variety's sake.

SID. (*suddenly turns toward* LILY—*his voice choked with tears—in a passion of self-denunciation*) You're right, Lily!—right not to forgive me!—I'm no good and never will be!—I'm a no-good drunken bum!—you shouldn't even wipe your feet on me!—I'm a dirty, rotten drunk!—no good to myself or anybody else!—If I had any guts I'd kill myself, and good riddance!—but I haven't!—I'm yellow, too!—a yellow, drunken bum! (*He hides his face in his hands and begins to sob like a sick little boy. This is too much for* LILY. *All her bitter hurt and steely resolve to ignore and punish him vanish in a flash, swamped by a pitying love for him. She runs and puts her arm around him—even kisses him tenderly and impulsively on his bald head, and soothes him as if he were a little boy.* MRS. MILLER, *almost equally moved, has half risen to go to her brother, too, but* MILLER *winks and shakes his head vigorously and motions her to sit down.*)

LILY. There! Don't cry, Sid! I can't bear it! Of course, I forgive you! Haven't I always forgiven you? I know you're not to blame—So don't, Sid!

SID. (*lifts a tearful, humbly grateful, pathetic face to her—but a face that the dawn of a cleansed conscience is already beginning to restore to its natural Puckish expression*) Do you really forgive me—I know I don't deserve it—can you really—?

LILY. (*gently*) I told you I did, Sid—and I do.

SID. (*kisses her hand humbly, like a big puppy licking it*) Thanks, Lily. I can't tell you— (*In the front parlor,* ARTHUR *begins to sing rollickingly "Waiting at the Church," and after the first line or two* MILDRED *joins in.* SID's *face lights up with appreciation and, automatically, he begins to tap one foot in time, still holding fast to* LILY's *hand. When they come to "sent around a note, this is what she wrote," he can no longer resist, but joins in a shaky bawl*) "Can't get away to marry you today, My wife won't let me!" (*As the song finishes, the two in the other room laugh.* MILLER *and* SID *laugh.* LILY *smiles at* SID's *laughter. Only* MRS. MILLER *remains dolefully preoccupied, as if she hadn't heard.*)

MILLER. That's fine, Arthur and Mildred. That's darned good.

SID. (*turning to* LILY *enthusiastically*) You ought to hear Vesta Victoria sing that! Gosh! she's great! I heard her at Hammerstein's Victoria—you remember, that trip I made to New York.

LILY. (*her face suddenly tired and sad again—for her memory of certain aspects of that trip is the opposite from what he would like her to recall at this moment—gently disengaging her hand from his—with a hopeless sigh*) Yes, I remember, Sid. (*He is overcome momentarily by guilty confusion. She goes quietly and sits down in her chair again. In the front parlor, from now on,* MILDRED *keeps starting to run over popular tunes but always gets stuck and turns to another.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*suddenly*) What time is it now, Nat? (*Then without giving him a chance to answer*) Oh, I'm getting worried something dreadful, Nat! You don't know what might have happened to Richard! You read in the papers every day about boys getting run over by automobiles.

LILY. Oh, don't say that, Essie!

MILLER. (*sharply, to conceal his own reawakened apprehension*) Don't get to imagining things, now!

MRS. MILLER. Well, why couldn't it happen, with everyone that owns one out tonight, and lots of those driving, drunk? Or he might have gone down to the beach dock and fallen overboard! (*On the verge of hysteria*) Oh, I know something dreadful's happened! And you can sit there listening to songs and laughing as if—Why don't you do something? Why don't you go out and find him? (*She bursts into tears.*)

LILY. (*comes to her quickly and puts her arm around her*) Essie, you mustn't worry so! You'll make yourself sick! Richard's all right. I've got a feeling in my bones he's all right.

MILDRED. (*comes hurrying in from the front parlor*) What's the trouble? (ARTHUR *appears in the doorway beside her. She goes to her mother and also puts an arm around her*) Ah, don't cry, Ma! Dick'll turn up in a minute or two, wait and see!

ARTHUR. Sure, he will!

MILLER. (*has gotten to his feet, frowning—soberly*) I was going out to look—if he wasn't back by twelve sharp. That'd be the time it'd take him to walk from the beach if he left after the last car. But I'll go now, if it'll ease your mind. I'll take the auto and drive out the beach road—and likely pick him up on the way. (*He has taken his collar and tie from where they hang from one corner of the bookcase at rear, center, and is starting to put them on*) You better come with me, Arthur.

ARTHUR. Sure thing, Pa. (*Suddenly he listens and says*) Ssshh! There's someone on the piazza now—coming around to this door, too. That must be him. No one else would—

MRS. MILLER. Oh, thank God, thank God!

MILLER. (*with a sheepish smile*) Darn him! I've a notion to give him hell for worrying us all like this. (*The screen door is pushed violently open and* RICHARD *lurches in and stands swaying a little, blinking his eyes in the light. His face is a pasty pallor, shining with perspiration, and his eyes are glassy. The knees of his trousers are dirty, one of them torn from the sprawl on the sidewalk he had taken, following the* BARTENDER's *kick. They all gape at him, too paralyzed for a moment to say anything.*)

MRS. MILLER. Oh God, what's happened to him! He's gone crazy! Richard!

SID. (*the first to regain presence of mind—with a grin*) Crazy, nothing. He's only soused!

ARTHUR. He's drunk, that's what! (*Then shocked and condemning*) You've got your nerve! You fresh kid! We'll take that out of you when we get you down to Yale!

RICHARD. (*with a wild gesture of defiance—maudlinly dramatic*)

"Yesterday this Day's Madness did prepare
Tomorrow's Silence, Triumph, or Despair.
Drink! for—"

MILLER. (*his face grown stern and angry, takes a threatening step toward him*) Richard! How dare—!

MRS. MILLER. (*hysterically*) Don't you strike him, Nat! Don't you—!

SID. (*grabbing his arm*) Steady, Nat! Keep your temper! No good bawling him out now! He don't know what he's doing!

MILLER. (*controlling himself and looking a bit ashamed*) All right—you're right, Sid.

RICHARD. (*drunkenly glorying in the sensation he is creating—recites with dramatic emphasis*) "And then—I will come—with vine leaves in my hair!" (*He laughs with a double-dyed sardonicism.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*staring at him as if she couldn't believe her eyes*) Richard! You're intoxicated!—you bad, wicked boy, you!

RICHARD. (*forces a wicked leer to his lips and quotes with ponderous mockery*) "Fancy that, Hedda!" (*Then suddenly his whole expression changes, his pallor takes on a greenish, sea-sick tinge, his eyes seem to be turned inward uneasily—and, all pose gone, he calls to his mother appealingly, like a sick little boy*) Ma! I feel—rotten! (MRS. MILLER *gives a cry and starts to go to him, but* SID *steps in her way.*)

SID. You let me take care of him, Essie. I know this game backwards.

MILLER. (*putting his arm around his wife*) Yes, you leave him to Sid.

SID. (*his arm around* RICHARD—*leading him off through the front parlor*) Come on, Old

Sport! Upstairs we go! Your old Uncle Sid'll fix you up. He's the kid that wrote the book!

MRS. MILLER. (*staring after them—still aghast*) Oh, it's too terrible! Imagine our Richard! And did you hear him talking about some Hedda? Oh, I know he's been with one of those bad women, I know he has—my Richard! (*She hides her face on* MILLER'S *shoulder and sobs heartbrokenly.*)

MILLER. (*a tired, harassed, deeply worried look on his face—soothing her*) Now, now, you mustn't get to imagining such things! You mustn't, Essie! (LILY *and* MILDRED *and* ARTHUR *are standing about awkwardly with awed, shocked faces.*)

CURTAIN

ACT FOUR

SCENE ONE

SCENE—*The same—Sitting-room of the Miller house—about 1 o'clock in the afternoon of the following day.*

As the curtain rises, the family, with the exception of RICHARD, *are discovered coming in through the back parlor from dinner in the dining-room.* MILLER *and his wife come first. His face is set in an expression of frowning severity.* MRS. MILLER'S *face is drawn and worried. She has evidently had no rest yet from a sleepless, tearful night.* SID *is himself again, his expression as innocent as if nothing had occurred the previous day that remotely concerned him. And, outside of eyes that are bloodshot and nerves that are shaky, he shows no after-effects except that he is terribly sleepy.* LILY *is gently sad and depressed.* ARTHUR *is self-consciously a virtuous young man against whom nothing can be said.* MILDRED *and* TOMMY *are subdued, covertly watching their father.*

They file into the sitting-room in silence and then stand around uncertainly, as if each were afraid to be the first to sit down. The atmosphere is as stiltedly grave as if they were attending a funeral service. Their eyes keep fixed on the head of the house, who has gone to the window at right and is staring out frowningly, savagely chewing a toothpick.

MILLER. (*finally—irritably*) Damn it, I'd ought to be back at the office putting in some good licks! I've a whole pile of things that have got to be done today!

MRS. MILLER. (*accusingly*) You don't mean to tell me you're going back without seeing him? It's your duty—!

MILLER. (*exasperatedly*) 'Course I'm not! I wish you'd stop jumping to conclusions! What else did I come home for, I'd like to know? Do I usually come way back here for dinner on a busy day? I was only wishing this hadn't come up—just at this particular time. (*He ends up very lamely and is irritably conscious of the fact.*)

TOMMY. (*who has been fidgeting restlessly—unable to bear the suspense a moment longer*) What is it Dick done? Why is everyone scared to tell me?

MILLER. (*seizes this as an escape valve—turns and fixes his youngest son with a stern forbidding eye*) Young man, I've never spanked you yet, but that don't mean I never will! Seems to me that you've been just itching for it lately! You keep your mouth shut till you're spoken to—or I warn you something's going to happen!

MRS. MILLER. Yes, Tommy, you keep still and don't bother your pa. (*Then warningly to her husband*) Careful what you say, Nat. Little pitchers have big ears.

MILLER. (*peremptorily*) You kids skedaddle—all of you. Why are you always hanging around the house? Go out and play in the yard, or take a walk, and get some fresh air. (MILDRED *takes* TOMMY'S *hand and leads him out through the front parlor.* ARTHUR *hangs back, as if the designation "kids" couldn't possibly apply to him. His father notices this—impatiently*) You, too, Arthur. (ARTHUR *goes out with a stiff, wounded dignity.*)

LILY. (*tactfully*) I think I'll go for a walk, too. (*She goes out through the front parlor.* SID *makes a movement as if to follow her.*)

MILLER. I'd like you to stay, Sid—for a while, anyway.

SID. Sure. (*He sits down in the rocking-*

chair at right, rear, of table and immediately yawns) Gosh, I'm dead. Don't know what's the matter with me today. Can't seem to keep awake.

MILLER. (*with caustic sarcasm*) Maybe that demon chowder you drank at the picnic poisoned you! (SID *looks sheepish and forces a grin. Then* MILLER *turns to his wife with the air of one who determinedly faces the unpleasant*) Where is Richard?

MRS. MILLER. (*flusteredly*) He's still in bed. I made him stay in bed to punish him—and I thought he ought to, anyway, after being so sick. But he says he feels all right.

SID. (*with another yawn*) 'Course he does. When you're young you can stand anything without it feazing you. Why, I remember when I could come down on the morning after, fresh as a daisy, and eat a breakfast of pork chops and fried onions and—(*He stops guiltily.*)

MILLER. (*bitingly*) I suppose that was before eating lobster shells had ruined your iron constitution!

MRS. MILLER. (*regards her brother severely*) If I was in your shoes, I'd keep still! (*Then turning to her husband*) Richard must be feeling better. He ate all the dinner I sent up, Norah says.

MILLER. I thought you weren't going to give him any dinner—to punish him.

MRS. MILLER. (*guiltily*) Well—in his weakened condition—I thought it best—(*Then defensively*) But you needn't think I haven't punished him. I've given him pieces of my mind he won't forget in a hurry. And I've kept reminding him his real punishment was still to come—that you were coming home to dinner on purpose—and then he'd learn that you could be terrible stern when he did such awful things.

MILLER. (*stirs uncomfortably*) Hmm!

MRS. MILLER. And that's just what it's your duty to do—punish him good and hard! The idea of him daring—(*Then hastily*) But you be careful how you go about it, Nat. Remember he's like you inside—too sensitive for his own good. And he never would have done it, I know, if it hadn't been for that darned little dunce, Muriel, and her numbskull father—feelings all day—and then you lost your temper and were so sharp with him right after dinner, before he went out.

MILLER. (*resentfully*) I see this is going to work round to where it's all my fault!

MRS. MILLER. Now, I didn't say that, did I? Don't go losing your temper again. And here's another thing. You know as well as I, Richard would never have done such a thing alone. Why, he wouldn't know how! He must have been influenced and led by someone.

MILLER. Yes, I believe that. Did you worm out of him who it was? (*Then angrily*) By God, I'll make whoever it was regret it!

MRS. MILLER. No, he wouldn't admit there was anyone. (*Then triumphantly*) But there is one thing I did worm out of him—and I can tell you it relieved my mind more'n anything. You know I was afraid he'd been with one of those bad women. Well, turns out there wasn't any Hedda. She was just out of those books he's been reading. He swears he's never known a Hedda in his life. And I believe him. Why, he seemed disgusted with me for having such a notion. (*Then lamely*) So somehow—I can't kind of feel it's all as bad as I thought it was. (*Then quickly and indignantly*) But it's bad enough, goodness knows—and you punish him good just the same. The idea of a boy of his age—! Shall I go up now and tell him to get dressed, you want to see him?

MILLER. (*helplessly—and irritably*) Yes! I can't waste all day listening to you!

MRS. MILLER. (*worriedly*) Now you keep your temper, Nat, remember! (*She goes out through the front parlor.*)

MILLER. Darn women, anyway! They always get you mixed up. Their minds simply don't know what logic is! (*Then he notices that* SID *is dozing—sharply*) Sid!

SID. (*blinking—mechanically*) I'll take the same. (*Then hurriedly*) What'd you say, Nat?

MILLER. (*caustically*) What I didn't say was what'll you have. (*Irritably*) Do you want to be of some help, or don't you? Then keep awake and try and use your brains! This is a damned sight more serious than Essie has any idea! She thinks there weren't any girls

but I happen to know there were! (*He takes a letter from his pocket*) Here's a note a woman left with one of the boys downstairs at the office this morning—didn't ask to see me, just said give me this. He'd never seen her before—said she looked like a tart. (*He has opened the letter and reads*) "Your son got the booze he drank last night at the Pleasant Beach House. The bartender there knew he was under age but served him just the same. He thought it was a good joke to get him soused. If you have any guts you will run that bastard out of town." Well, what do you think of that? It's a woman's handwriting—not signed, of course.

SID. She's one of the babies, all right—judging from her elegant language.

MILLER. See if you recognize the handwriting.

SID. (*with a reproachful look*) Nat, I resent the implication that I correspond with all the tramps around this town. (*Looking at the letter*) No, I don't know who this one could be. (*Handing the letter back*) But I deduce that the lady had a run-in with the barkeep and wants revenge.

MILLER. (*grimly*) And I deduce that before that she must have picked up Richard—or how would she know who he was?—and took him to this dive.

SID. Maybe. The Pleasant Beach House is nothing but a bed house—(*Quickly*) At least, so I've been told.

MILLER. That's just the sort of damned fool thing he might do to spite Muriel, in the state of mind he was in—pick up some tart. And she'd try to get him drunk so—

SID. Yes, it might have happened like that—and it might not. How're we ever going to prove it? Everyone at the Pleasant Beach will lie their heads off.

MILLER. (*simply and proudly*) Richard won't lie.

SID. Well, don't blame him if he don't remember everything that happened last night. (*Then sincerely concerned*) I hope you're wrong, Nat. That kind of baby is dangerous for a kid like Dick—in more ways than one. You know what I mean.

MILLER. (*frowningly*) Yep—and that's just what's got me worried. Damn it, I've got to have a straight talk with him—about women and all those things. I ought to have long ago.

SID. Yes. You ought.

MILLER. I've tried to a couple of times. I did it all right with Wilbur and Lawrence and Arthur, when it came time—but, hell, with Richard I always get sort of ashamed of myself and can't get started right. You feel, in spite of all his bold talk out of books, that he's so darned innocent inside.

SID. I know. I wouldn't like the job. (*Then after a pause—curiously*) How were you figuring to punish him for his sins?

MILLER. (*frowning*) To be honest with you, Sid, I'm damned if I know. All depends on what I feel about what he feels when I first size him up—and then it'll be like shooting in the dark.

SID. If I didn't know you so well, I'd say don't be too hard on him. (*He smiles a little bitterly*) If you remember, I was always getting punished—and see what a lot of good it did me!

MILLER. (*kindly*) Oh, there's lots worse than you around, so don't take to boasting. (*Then, at a sound from the front parlor—with a sigh*) Well, here comes the Bad Man, I guess.

SID. (*getting up*) I'll beat it. (*But it is* MRS. MILLER *who appears in the doorway, looking guilty and defensive.* SID *sits down again.*)

MRS. MILLER. I'm sorry, Nat—but he was sound asleep and I didn't have the heart to wake him. I waited for him to wake up but he didn't.

MILLER. (*concealing a relief of which he is ashamed—exasperatedly*) Well, I'll be double damned! If you're not the—

MRS. MILLER. (*defensively aggressive*) Now don't lose your temper at me, Nat Miller! You know as well as I do he needs all the sleep he can get today—after last night's ructions! Do you want him to be taken down sick? And what difference does it make to you, anyway? You can see him when you come home for supper, can't you? My goodness, I never saw you so savage-tempered! You'd think you couldn't bear waiting to punish him!

MILLER. (*outraged*) Well, I'll be eternally—(*Then suddenly he laughs*) No use talking,

you certainly take the cake! But you know darned well I told you I'm not coming home to supper tonight. I've got a date with Jack Lawson that may mean a lot of new advertising and it's important.

MRS. MILLER. Then you can see him when you do come home.

MILLER. (*covering his evident relief at this respite with a fuming manner*) All right! All right! I give up! I'm going back to the office. (*He starts for the front parlor*) Bring a man all the way back here on a busy day and then you—No consideration—(*He disappears, and a moment later the front door is heard shutting behind him.*)

MRS. MILLER. Well! I never saw Nat so bad-tempered.

SID. (*with a chuckle*) Bad temper, nothing. He's so tickled to get out of it for a while he can't see straight!

MRS. MILLER. (*with a sniff*) I hope I know him better than you. (*Then fussing about the room, setting this and that in place, while* SID *yawns drowsily and blinks his eyes*) Sleeping like a baby—so innocent-looking. You'd think butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. It all goes to show you never can tell by appearances—not even when it's your own child. The idea!

SID. (*drowsily*) Oh, Dick's all right, Essie. Stop worrying.

MRS. MILLER. (*with a sniff*) Of course, you'd say that. I suppose you'll have him out with you painting the town red the next thing! (*As she is talking,* RICHARD *appears in the doorway from the sitting-room. He shows no ill effects from his experience the night before. In fact, he looks surprisingly healthy. He is dressed in old clothes that look as if they had been hurriedly flung on. His expression is one of hang-dog guilt mingled with a defensive defiance.*)

RICHARD. (*with self-conscious concern, ignoring his mother*) Hello, Sid.

MRS. MILLER. (*whirls on him*) What are you doing here, Young Man? I thought you were asleep! Seems to me you woke up pretty quick—just after your pa left the house!

RICHARD. (*sulkily*) I wasn't asleep. I heard you in the room.

MRS. MILLER. (*outraged*) Do you mean to say you were deliberately deceiving—

RICHARD. I wasn't deceiving. You didn't ask if I was asleep.

MRS. MILLER. It amounts to the same thing and you know it! It isn't enough your wickedness last night, but now you have to take to lying!

RICHARD. I wasn't lying, Ma. If you'd asked if I was asleep I'd have said no.

MRS. MILLER. I've a good mind to send you straight back to bed and make you stay there!

RICHARD. Ah, what for, Ma? It was only giving me a headache, lying there.

MRS. MILLER. If you've got a headache, I guess you know it doesn't come from that! And imagine me standing there, and feeling sorry for you, like a fool—even having a run-in with your pa because—But you wait till he comes back tonight! If you don't catch it!

RICHARD. (*sulkily*) I don't care.

MRS. MILLER. You don't care? You talk as if you weren't sorry for what you did last night!

RICHARD. (*defiantly*) I'm not sorry.

MRS. MILLER. Richard! You ought to be ashamed! I'm beginning to think you're hardened in wickedness, that's what!

RICHARD. (*with bitter despondency*) I'm not sorry because I don't care a darn what I did, or what's done to me, or anything about anything! I won't do it again—

MRS. MILLER. (*seizing on this to relent a bit*) Well, I'm glad to hear you say that, anyway!

RICHARD. But that's not because I think it was wicked or any such old-fogy moral notion, but because it wasn't any fun. It didn't make me happy and funny like it does Uncle Sid—

SID. (*drowsily*) What's that? Who's funny?

RICHARD. (*ignoring him*) It only made me sadder—and sick—so I don't see any sense in it.

MRS. MILLER. Now you're talking sense! That's a good boy.

RICHARD. But I'm not sorry I tried it once—curing the soul by means of the senses, as Oscar Wilde says. (*Then with despairing pessimism*) But what does it matter what I do or don't do? Life is all a stupid farce! I'm through with it! (*With a sinister smile*) It's lucky there aren't any of General Gabler's

pistols around—or you'd see if I'd stand it much longer!

MRS. MILLER. (*worriedly impressed by this threat—but pretending scorn*) I don't know anything about General Gabler—I suppose that's more of those darned books—but you're a silly gabbler yourself when you talk that way!

RICHARD. (*darkly*) That's how little you know about me.

MRS. MILLER. (*giving in to her worry*) I wish you wouldn't say those terrible things—about life and pistols! You don't want to worry me to death, do you?

RICHARD. (*reassuringly stoical now*) You needn't worry, Ma. It was only my despair talking. But I'm not a coward. I'll face—my fate.

MRS. MILLER. (*stands looking at him puzzledly—then gives it up with a sigh*) Well, all I can say is you're the queerest boy I ever did hear of! (*Then solicitously, putting her hand on his forehead*) How's your headache? Do you want me to get you some Bromo Seltzer?

RICHARD. (*taken down—disgustedly*) No, I don't! Aw, Ma, you don't understand anything!

MRS. MILLER. Well, I understand this much: It's your liver, that's what! You'll take a good dose of salts tomorrow morning, and no nonsense about it! (*Then suddenly*) My goodness, I wonder what time it's getting to be. I've got to go upstreet. (*She goes to the front-parlor doorway—then turns*) You stay here, Richard, you hear? Remember you're not allowed out today—for a punishment. (*She hurries away.* RICHARD *sits in tragic gloom.* SID, *without opening his eyes, speaks to him drowsily.*)

SID. Well, how's my fellow Rum Pot, as good old Dowie calls us? Got a head?

RICHARD. (*startled—sheepishly*) Aw, don't go dragging that up, Uncle Sid. I'm never going to be such a fool again, I tell you.

SID. (*with drowsy cynicism—not unmixed with bitterness at the end*) Seems to me I've heard someone say that before. Who could it have been, I wonder? Why, if it wasn't Sid Davis! Yes, sir, I've heard him say that very thing a thousand times, must be. But then he's always fooling; you can't take a word he says seriously; he's a card, that Sid is!

RICHARD. (*darkly*) I was desperate, Uncle—even if she wasn't worth it. I was wounded to the heart.

SID. I like to the quick better myself—more stylish. (*Then sadly*) But you're right. Love is hell on a poor sucker. Don't I know it? (RICHARD *is disgusted and disdains to reply.* SID'S *chin sinks on his chest and he begins to breathe noisily, fast asleep.* RICHARD *glances at him with aversion. There is a sound of someone on the porch and the screen door is opened and* MILDRED *enters. She smiles on seeing her uncle, then gives a start on seeing* RICHARD.)

MILDRED. Hello! Are you allowed up?

RICHARD. Of course I'm allowed up.

MILDRED. (*comes and sits in her father's chair at right, front, of table*) How did Pa punish you?

RICHARD. He didn't. He went back to the office without seeing me.

MILDRED. Well, you'll catch it later. (*Then rebukingly*) And you ought to. If you'd ever seen how awful you looked last night!

RICHARD. Ah, forget it, can't you?

MILDRED. Well, are you ever going to do it again, that's what I want to know.

RICHARD. What's that to you?

MILDRED. (*with suppressed excitement*) Well, if you don't solemnly swear you won't—then I won't give you something I've got for you.

RICHARD. Don't try to kid me. You haven't got anything.

MILDRED. I have, too.

RICHARD. What?

MILDRED. Wouldn't you like to know! I'll give you three guesses.

RICHARD. (*with disdainful dignity*) Don't bother me. I'm in no mood to play riddles with kids!

MILDRED. Oh, well, if you're going to get snippy! Anyway, you haven't promised yet.

RICHARD. (*a prey to keen curiosity now*) I promise. What is it?

MILDRED. What would you like best in the world?

RICHARD. I don't know. What?

MILDRED. And you pretend to be in love! If I told Muriel that!

RICHARD. (*breathlessly*) Is it—from her?

MILDRED. (*laughing*) Well, I guess it's a shame to keep you guessing. Yes. It is from her. I was walking past her place just now when I saw her waving from their parlor window, and I went up and she said give this to Dick, and she didn't have a chance to say anything else because her mother called her and said she wasn't allowed to have company. So I took it—and here it is. (*She gives him a letter folded many times into a tiny square.* RICHARD *opens it with a trembling eagerness and reads.* MILDRED *watches him curiously—then sighs affectedly*) Gee, it must be nice to be in love like you are—all with one person.

RICHARD. (*his eyes shining*) Gee, Mid, do you know what she says—that she didn't mean a word in that other letter. Her old man made her write it. And she loves me and only me and always will, no matter how they punish her!

MILDRED. My! I'd never think she had that much spunk.

RICHARD. Huh! You don't know her! Think I could fall in love with a girl that was afraid to say her soul's her own? I should say not! (*Then more gleefully still*) And she's going to try and sneak out and meet me tonight. She says she thinks she can do it. (*Then suddenly feeling this enthusiasm before* MILDRED *is entirely the wrong note for a cynical pessimist—with an affected bitter laugh*) Ha! I knew darned well she couldn't hold out—that she'd ask to see me again. (*He misquotes cynically*) "Women never know when the curtain has fallen. They always want another act."

MILDRED. Is that so, Smarty?

RICHARD. (*as if he were weighing the matter*) I don't know whether I'll consent to keep this date or not.

MILDRED. Well, I know! You're not allowed out, you silly! So you can't!

RICHARD. (*dropping all pretense—defiantly*) Can't I, though! You wait and see if I can't! I'll see her tonight if it's the last thing I ever do! I don't care how I'm punished after!

MILDRED. (*admiringly*) Goodness! I never thought you had such nerve!

RICHARD. You promise to keep your face shut, Mid—until after I've left—then you can tell Pa and Ma where I've gone—I mean, if they're worrying I'm off like last night.

MILDRED. All right. Only you've got to do something for me when I ask.

RICHARD. 'Course I will. (*Then excitedly*) And say, Mid! Right now's the best chance for me to get away—while everyone's out! Ma'll be coming back soon and she'll keep watching me like a cat—(*He starts for the back parlor*) I'm going. I'll sneak out the back.

MILDRED. (*excitedly*) But what'll you do till nighttime? It's ages to wait.

RICHARD. What do I care how long I wait! (*Intensely sincere now*) I'll think of her—and dream! I'd wait a million years and never mind it—for her! (*He gives his sister a superior scornful glance*) The trouble with you is, you don't understand what love means! (*He disappears through the back parlor.* MILDRED *looks after him admiringly.* SID *puffs and begins to snore peacefully.*)

CURTAIN

ACT FOUR

SCENE TWO

SCENE—*A strip of beach along the harbor. At left, a bank of dark earth, running half-diagonally back along the beach, marking the line where the sand of the beach ends and fertile land begins. The top of the bank is grassy and the trailing boughs of willow trees extend out over it and over a part of the beach. At left, front, is a path leading up the bank, between the willows. On the beach, at center, front, a white, flat-bottomed rowboat is drawn up, its bow about touching the bank, the painter trailing up the bank, evidently made fast to the trunk of a willow. Halfway down the sky, at rear, left, the crescent of the new moon casts a soft, mysterious, caressing light over everything. The sand of the beach shimmers palely. The forward half (left of center) of the rowboat is in the deep*

shadow cast by the willow, the stern section is in moonlight. In the distance, the orchestra of a summer hotel can be heard very faintly at intervals.

RICHARD *is discovered sitting sideways on the gunwale of the rowboat near the stern. He is facing left, watching the path. He is in a great state of anxious expectancy, squirming about uncomfortably on the narrow gunwale, kicking at the sand restlessly, twirling his straw hat, with a bright-colored band in stripes, around on his finger.*

RICHARD. (*thinking aloud*) Must be nearly nine. . . . I can hear the Town Hall clock strike, it's so still tonight . . . Gee, I'll bet Ma had a fit when she found out I'd sneaked out . . . I'll catch hell when I get back, but it'll be worth it . . . if only Muriel turns up . . . she didn't say for certain she could . . . gosh, I wish she'd come! . . . am I sure she wrote nine? . . . (*He puts the straw hat on the seat amidships and pulls the folded letter out of his pocket and peers at it in the moonlight*) Yes, it's nine, all right. (*He starts to put the note back in his pocket, then stops and kisses it—then shoves it away hastily, sheepish, looking around him shamefacedly, as if afraid he were being observed*) Aw, that's silly . . . no, it isn't either . . . not when you're really in love. . . . (*He jumps to his feet restlessly*) Darn it, I wish she'd show up! . . . think of something else . . . that'll make the time pass quicker . . . where was I this time last night? . . . waiting outside the Pleasant Beach House . . . Belle . . . ah, forget her! . . . now, when Muriel's coming . . . that's a fine time to think of—! . . . but you hugged and kissed her . . . not until I was drunk, I didn't . . . and then it was all showing off . . . darned fool! . . . and I didn't go upstairs with her . . . even if she was pretty . . . aw, she wasn't pretty . . . she was all painted up . . . she was just a whore . . . she was everything dirty . . . Muriel's a million times prettier anyway . . . Muriel and I will go upstairs . . . when we're married . . . but that will be beautiful . . . but I oughtn't even to think of that yet . . . it's not right . . . I'd never—now . . . and she'd never . . . she's a decent girl . . . I couldn't love her if she wasn't . . . but after we're married. . . . (*He gives a little shiver of passionate longing—then resolutely turns his mind away from these improper, almost desecrating thoughts*) That damned barkeep kicking me . . . I'll bet you if I hadn't been drunk I'd have given him one good punch in the nose, even if he could have licked me after! . . . (*Then with a shiver of shamefaced revulsion and self-disgust*) Aw, you deserved a kick in the pants . . . making such a darned slob of yourself . . . reciting the Ballad of Reading Gaol to those lowbrows! . . . you must have been a fine sight when you got home! . . . having to be put to bed and getting sick! . . . Phaw! . . . (*He squirms disgustedly*) Think of something else, can't you? . . . recite something . . . see if you remember . . .

"Nay, let us walk from fire unto fire
From passionate pain to deadlier delight—
I am too young to live without desire,
Too young art thou to waste this summer-night—"

. . . gee, that's a peach! . . . I'll have to memorize the rest and recite it to Muriel the next time. . . . I wish I could write poetry . . . about her and me. . . . (*He sighs and stares around him at the night*) Gee, it's beautiful tonight . . . as if it was a special night . . . for me and Muriel. . . . Gee, I love tonight. . . . I love the sand, and the trees, and the grass, and the water and the sky, and the moon . . . it's all in me and I'm in it . . . God, it's so beautiful! (*He stands staring at the moon with a rapt face. From the distance the Town Hall clock begins to strike. This brings him back to earth with a start*) There's nine now. . . . (*He peers at the path apprehensively*) I don't see her . . . she must have got caught. . . . (*Almost tearfully*) Gee, I hate to go home and catch hell . . . without having seen her! . . . (*Then calling a manly cynicism to his aid*) Aw, who ever heard of a woman ever being on time. . . . I ought to know enough about life by this time not to expect . . . (*Then with sudden excitement*) There she comes

now. . . . Gosh! (*He heaves a huge sigh of relief—then recites dramatically to himself, his eyes on the approaching figure*)

"And lo my love, mine own soul's heart, more dear
Than mine own soul, more beautiful than God,
Who hath my being between the hands of her—"

(*Then hastily*) Mustn't let her know I'm so tickled. . . . I ought to be about that first letter, anyway . . . if women are too sure of you, they treat you like slaves . . . let her suffer, for a change. . . . (*He starts to stroll around with exaggerated carelessness, turning his back on the path, hands in pockets, whistling with insouciance "Waiting at the Church."*)

(MURIEL MCCOMBER *enters from down the path, left front. She is fifteen, going on sixteen. She is a pretty girl with a plump, graceful little figure, fluffy, light-brown hair, big naïve wondering dark eyes, a round, dimpled face, a melting drawly voice. Just now she is in a great thrilled state of timid adventurousness. She hesitates in the shadow at the foot of the path, waiting for* RICHARD *to see her; but he resolutely goes on whistling with back turned, and she has to call him.*)

MURIEL. Oh, Dick.

RICHARD. (*turns around with an elaborate simulation of being disturbed in the midst of profound meditation*) Oh, hello. Is it nine already? Gosh, time passes—when you're thinking.

MURIEL. (*coming toward him as far as the edge of the shadow—disappointedly*) I thought you'd be waiting right here at the end of the path. I'll bet you'd forgotten I was even coming.

RICHARD. (*strolling a little toward her but not too far—carelessly*) No, I hadn't forgotten, honest. But I got to thinking about life.

MURIEL. You might think of me for a change, after all the risk I've run to see you! (*Hesitating timidly on the edge of the shadow*) Dick! You come here to me. I'm afraid to go out in that bright moonlight where anyone might see me.

RICHARD. (*coming toward her—scornfully*) Aw, there you go again—always scared of life!

MURIEL. (*indignantly*) Dick Miller, I do think you've got an awful nerve to say that after all the risks I've run making this date and then sneaking out! You didn't take the trouble to sneak any letter to me, I notice!

RICHARD. No, because after your first letter, I thought everything was dead and past between us.

MURIEL. And I'll bet you didn't care one little bit! (*On the verge of humiliated tears*) Oh, I was a fool ever to come here! I've got a good notion to go right home and never speak to you again! (*She half turns back toward the path.*)

RICHARD. (*frightened—immediately becomes terribly sincere—grabbing her hand*) Aw, don't go, Muriel! Please! I didn't mean anything like that, honest I didn't! Gee, if you knew how broken-hearted I was by that first letter, and how darned happy your second letter made me—!

MURIEL. (*happily relieved—but appreciates she has the upper hand now and doesn't relent at once*) I don't believe you.

RICHARD. You ask Mid how happy I was. She can prove it.

MURIEL. She'd say anything you told her to. I don't care anything about what she'd say. It's you. You've got to swear to me—

RICHARD. I swear!

MURIEL. (*demurely*) Well then, all right, I'll believe you.

RICHARD. (*his eyes on her face lovingly—genuine adoration in his voice*) Gosh, you're pretty tonight, Muriel! It seems ages since we've been together! If you knew how I've suffered—!

MURIEL. I did, too.

RICHARD. (*unable to resist falling into his tragic literary pose for a moment*) The despair in my soul—(*He recites dramatically*) "Something was dead in each of us, And what was dead was Hope!" That was me! My hope of happiness was dead! (*Then with sincere boyish fervor*) Gosh, Muriel, it sure is wonderful to be with you again! (*He puts a timid arm around her awkwardly.*)

MURIEL. (*shyly*) I'm glad—it makes you happy. I'm happy, too.

RICHARD. Can't I—won't you let me kiss you—now? Please! (*He bends his face towards hers.*)

MURIEL. (*ducking her head away—timidly*) No. You mustn't. Don't—

RICHARD. Aw, why can't I?

MURIEL. Because—I'm afraid.

RICHARD. (*discomfited—taking his arm from around her—a bit sulky and impatient with her*) Aw, that's what you always say! You're always so afraid! Aren't you ever going to let me?

MURIEL. I will—sometime.

RICHARD. When?

MURIEL. Soon, maybe.

RICHARD. Tonight, will you?

MURIEL. (*coyly*) I'll see.

RICHARD. Promise?

MURIEL. I promise—maybe.

RICHARD. All right. You remember you've promised. (*Then coaxingly*) Aw, don't let's stand here. Come on out and we can sit down in the boat.

MURIEL. (*hesitantly*) It's so bright out there.

RICHARD. No one'll see. You know there's never anyone around here at night.

MURIEL. (*illogically*) I know there isn't. That's why I thought it would be the best place. But there might be someone.

RICHARD. (*taking her hand and tugging at it gently*) There isn't a soul. (MURIEL *steps out a little and looks up and down fearfully.* RICHARD *goes on insistently*) Aw, what's the use of a moon if you can't see it!

MURIEL. But it's only a new moon. That's not much to look at.

RICHARD. But I want to see you. I can't here in the shadow. I want to—drink in—all your beauty.

MURIEL. (*can't resist this*) Well, all right—only I can't stay only a few minutes. (*She lets him lead her toward the stern of the boat.*)

RICHARD. (*pleadingly*) Aw, you can stay a little while, can't you? Please! (*He helps her in and she settles herself in the stern seat of the boat, facing diagonally left front.*)

MURIEL. A little while. (*He sits beside her*) But I've got to be home in bed again pretending to be asleep by ten o'clock. That's the time Pa and Ma come up to bed, as regular as clockwork, and Ma always looks into my room.

RICHARD. But you'll have oodles of time to do that.

MURIEL. (*excitedly*) Dick, you have no idea what I went through to get here tonight! My, but it was exciting! You know Pa's punishing me by sending me to bed at eight sharp, and I had to get all undressed and into bed 'cause at half-past he sends Ma up to make sure I've obeyed, and she came up, and I pretended to be asleep, and she went down again, and I got up and dressed in such a hurry—I must look a sight, don't I?

RICHARD. You do not! You look wonderful!

MURIEL. And then I sneaked down the back stairs. And the pesky old stairs squeaked, and my heart was in my mouth, I was so scared, and then I sneaked out through the back yard, keeping in the dark under the trees, and —My, but it was exciting! Dick, you don't realize how I've been punished for your sake. Pa's been so mean and nasty, I've almost hated him!

RICHARD. And you don't realize what I've been through for you—and what I'm in for—for sneaking out—(*Then darkly*) And for what I did last night—what your letter made me do!

MURIEL. (*made terribly curious by his ominous tone*) What did my letter make you do?

RICHARD. (*beginning to glory in this*) It's too long a story—and let the dead bury its dead. (*Then with real feeling*) Only it isn't past, I can tell you! What I'll catch when Pa gets hold of me!

MURIEL. Tell me, Dick! Begin at the beginning and tell me!

RICHARD. (*tragically*) Well, after your old —your father left our place I caught holy hell from Pa.

MURIEL. Dick! You mustn't swear!

RICHARD. (*somberly*) Hell is the only word that can describe it. And on top of that, to torture me more, he gave me your letter. After I'd read that I didn't want to live any more. Life seemed like a tragic farce.

MURIEL. I'm so awful sorry, Dick—honest I am! But you might have known I'd never write that unless—

RICHARD. I thought your love for me was dead. I thought you'd never loved me, that you'd only been cruelly mocking me—to torture me!

MURIEL. Dick! I'd never! You know I'd never!

RICHARD. I wanted to die. I sat and brooded about death. Finally I made up my mind I'd kill myself.

MURIEL. (*excitedly*) Dick! You didn't!

RICHARD. I did, too! If there'd been one of Hedda Gabler's pistols around, you'd have seen if I wouldn't have done it beautifully! I thought, when I'm dead, she'll be sorry she ruined my life!

MURIEL. (*cuddling up a little to him*) If you ever had! I'd have died, too! Honest, I would!

RICHARD. But suicide is the act of a coward. That's what stopped me. (*Then with a bitter change of tone*) And anyway, I thought to myself, she isn't worth it.

MURIEL. (*huffily*) That's a nice thing to say!

RICHARD. Well, if you meant what was in that letter, you wouldn't have been worth it, would you?

MURIEL. But I've told you Pa—

RICHARD. So I said to myself, I'm through with women; they're all alike!

MURIEL. I'm not.

RICHARD. And I thought, what difference does it make what I do now? I might as well forget her and lead the pace that kills, and drown my sorrows! You know I had eleven dollars saved up to buy you something for your birthday, but I thought, she's dead to me now and why shouldn't I throw it away? (*Then hastily*) I've still got almost five left, Muriel, and I can get you something nice with that.

MURIEL. (*excitedly*) What do I care about your old presents? You tell me what you did!

RICHARD. (*darkly again*) After it was dark, I sneaked out and went to a low dive I know about.

MURIEL. Dick Miller, I don't believe you ever!

RICHARD. You ask them at the Pleasant Beach House if I didn't! They won't forget me in a hurry!

MURIEL. (*impressed and horrified*) You went there? Why, that's a terrible place! Pa says it ought to be closed by the police!

RICHARD. (*darkly*) I said it was a dive, didn't I? It's a "secret house of shame." And they let me into a secret room behind the barroom. There wasn't anyone there but a Princeton Senior I know—he belongs to Tiger Inn and he's fullback on the football team—and he had two chorus girls from New York with him, and they were all drinking champagne.

MURIEL. (*disturbed by the entrance of the chorus girls*) Dick Miller! I hope you didn't notice—

RICHARD. (*carelessly*) I had a highball by myself and then I noticed one of the girls—the one that wasn't with the fullback—looking at me. She had strange-looking eyes. And then she asked me if I wouldn't drink champagne with them and come and sit with her.

MURIEL. She must have been a nice thing! (*Then a bit falteringly*) And did—you?

RICHARD. (*with tragic bitterness*) Why shouldn't I, when you'd told me in that letter you'd never see me again?

MURIEL. (*almost tearfully*) But you ought to have known Pa made me—

RICHARD. I didn't know that then. (*Then rubbing it in*) Her name was Belle. She had yellow hair—the kind that burns and stings you!

MURIEL. I'll bet it was dyed!

RICHARD. She kept smoking one cigarette after another—but that's nothing for a chorus girl.

MURIEL. (*indignantly*) She was low and bad, that's what she was or she couldn't be a chorus girl, and her smoking cigarettes proves it! (*Then falteringly again*) And then what happened?

RICHARD. (*carelessly*) Oh, we just kept drinking champagne—I bought a round—and then I had a fight with the barkeep and knocked him down because he'd insulted her. He was a great big thug but—

MURIEL. (*huffily*) I don't see how he could—insult that kind! And why did you fight for

her? Why didn't the Princeton fullback who'd brought them there? He must have been bigger than you.

RICHARD. (*stopped for a moment—then quickly*) He was too drunk by that time.

MURIEL. And were you drunk?

RICHARD. Only a little then. I was worse later. (*Proudly*) You ought to have seen me when I got home! I was on the verge of delirium tremens!

MURIEL. I'm glad I didn't see you. You must have been awful. I hate people who get drunk. I'd have hated you!

RICHARD. Well, it was all your fault, wasn't it? If you hadn't written that letter—

MURIEL. But I've told you I didn't mean—(*Then faltering but fascinated*) But what happened with that Belle—after—before you went home?

RICHARD. Oh, we kept drinking champagne and she said she'd fallen in love with me at first sight and she came and sat on my lap and kissed me.

MURIEL. (*stiffening*) Oh!

RICHARD. (*quickly, afraid he has gone too far*) But it was only all in fun, and then we just kept on drinking champagne, and finally I said good night and came home.

MURIEL. And did you kiss her?

RICHARD. No, I didn't.

MURIEL. (*distractedly*) You did, too! You're lying and you know it. You did, too! (*Then tearfully*) And there I was right at that time lying in bed not able to sleep, wondering how I was ever going to see you again and crying my eyes out, while you—! (*She suddenly jumps to her feet in a tearful fury*) I hate you! I wish you were dead! I'm going home this minute! I never want to lay eyes on you again! And this time I mean it (*She tries to jump out of the boat but he holds her back. All the pose has dropped from him now and he is in a frightened state of contrition.*)

RICHARD. (*imploringly*) Muriel! Wait! Listen!

MURIEL. I don't want to listen! Let me go! If you don't I'll bite your hand!

RICHARD. I won't let you go! You've got to let me explain! I never—! Ouch! (*For* MURIEL *has bitten his hand and it hurts, and, stung by the pain, he lets go instinctively, and she jumps quickly out of the boat and starts running toward the path.* RICHARD *calls after her with bitter despair and hurt*) All right! Go if you want to—if you haven't the decency to let me explain! I hate you, too! I'll go and see Belle!

MURIEL. (*seeing he isn't following her, stops at the foot of the path—defiantly*) Well, go and see her—if that's the kind of girl you like! What do I care? (*Then as he only stares before him broodingly, sitting dejectedly in the stern of the boat, a pathetic figure of injured grief*) You can't explain! What can you explain? You owned up you kissed her!

RICHARD. I did not. I said she kissed me.

MURIEL. (*scornfully, but drifting back a step in his direction*) And I suppose you just sat and let yourself be kissed! Tell that to the Marines!

RICHARD. (*injuredly*) All right! If you're going to call me a liar every word I say—

MURIEL. (*drifting back another step*) I didn't call you a liar. I only meant—it sounds fishy. Don't you know it does?

RICHARD. I don't know anything. I only know I wish I was dead!

MURIEL. (*gently reproving*) You oughtn't to say that. It's wicked. (*Then after a pause*) And I suppose you'll tell me you didn't fall in love with her?

RICHARD. (*scornfully*) I should say not! Fall in love with that kind of girl! What do you take me for?

MURIEL. (*practically*) How do you know what you did if you drank so much champagne?

RICHARD. I kept my head—with her. I'm not a sucker, no matter what you think!

MURIEL. (*drifting nearer*) Then you didn't—love her?

RICHARD. I hated her! She wasn't even pretty! And I had a fight with her before I left, she got so fresh. I told her I loved you and never could love anyone else, and for her to leave me alone.

MURIEL. But you said just now you were going to see her—

RICHARD. That was only bluff. I wouldn't—unless you left me. Then I wouldn't care what I did—any more than I did last night. (*Then suddenly defiant*) And what if I did kiss her

once or twice? I only did it to get back at you!

MURIEL. Dick!

RICHARD. You're a fine one to blame me—when it was all your fault! Why can't you be fair? Didn't I think you were out of my life forever? Hadn't you written me you were? Answer me that!

MURIEL. But I've told you a million times that Pa—

RICHARD. Why didn't you have more sense than to let him make you write it? Was it my fault you didn't?

MURIEL. It was your fault for being so stupid! You ought to have known he stood right over me and told me each word to write. If I'd refused, it would only have made everything worse. I had to pretend, so I'd get a chance to see you. Don't you see, Silly? And I had sand enough to sneak out to meet you tonight, didn't I? (*He doesn't answer. She moves nearer*) Still I can see how you felt the way you did—and maybe I am to blame for that. So I'll forgive and forget, Dick—if you'll swear to me you didn't even think of loving that—

RICHARD. (*eagerly*) I didn't! I swear, Muriel. I couldn't. I love you!

MURIEL. Well, then—I still love you.

RICHARD. Then come back here, why don't you?

MURIEL. (*coyly*) It's getting late.

RICHARD. It's not near half-past yet.

MURIEL. (*comes back and sits down by him shyly*) All right—only I'll have to go soon, Dick. (*He puts his arm around her. She cuddles up close to him*) I'm sorry—I hurt your hand.

RICHARD. That was nothing. It felt wonderful—even to have you bite!

MURIEL. (*impulsively takes his hand and kisses it*) There! That'll cure it! (*She is overcome by confusion at her boldness.*)

RICHARD. You shouldn't—waste that—on my hand. (*Then tremblingly*) You said—you'd let me—

MURIEL. I said, maybe.

RICHARD. Please, Muriel. You know—I want it so!

MURIEL. Will it wash off—her kisses—make you forget you ever—for always?

RICHARD. I should say so! I'd never remember—anything but it—never want anything but it,—ever again.

MURIEL. (*shyly lifting her lips*) Then—all right—Dick. (*He kisses her tremblingly and for a moment their lips remain together. Then she lets her head sink on his shoulder and sighs softly*) The moon *is* beautiful, isn't it?

RICHARD. (*kissing her hair*) Not as beautiful as you! Nothing is! (*Then after a pause*) Won't it be wonderful when we're married?

MURIEL. Yes—but it's so long to wait.

RICHARD. Perhaps I needn't go to Yale. Perhaps Pa will give me a job. Then I'd soon be making enough to—

MURIEL. You better do what your pa thinks best—and I'd like you to be at Yale. (*Then patting his face*) Poor you! Do you think he'll punish you awful?

RICHARD. (*intensely*) I don't know and I don't care! Nothing would have kept me from seeing you tonight—not if I'd had to crawl over red-hot coals! (*Then falling back on Swinburne—but with passionate sincerity*) You have my being between the hands of you! You are "my love, mine own soul's heart, more dear than mine own soul, more beautiful than God!"

MURIEL. (*shocked and delighted*) Ssshh! It's wrong to say that.

RICHARD. (*adoringly*) Gosh, but I love you! Gosh, I love you—Darling!

MURIEL. I love you, too—Sweetheart! (*They kiss. Then she lets her head sink on his shoulder again and they both sit in a rapt trance, staring at the moon. After a pause—dreamily*) Where'll we go on our honeymoon, Dick? To Niagara Falls?

RICHARD. (*scornfully*) That dump where all the silly fools go? I should say not! (*With passionate romanticism*) No, we'll go to some far-off wonderful place! (*He calls on Kipling to help him*) Somewhere out on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new—on the road to Mandalay! We'll watch the dawn come up like thunder out of China!

MURIEL. (*hazily but happily*) That'll be wonderful, won't it?

CURTAIN

ACT FOUR

SCENE THREE

SCENE—*The sitting-room of the Miller house again—about 10 o'clock the same night.* MILLER *is sitting in his rocker at left, front, of table, his wife in the rocker at right, front, of table. Moonlight shines through the screen door at right, rear. Only the green-shaded reading lamp is lit and by its light* MILLER, *his specs on, is reading a book while his wife, sewing basket in lap, is working industriously on a doily.* MRS. MILLER'S *face wears an expression of unworried content.* MILLER'S *face has also lost its look of harassed preoccupation, although he still is a prey to certain misgivings, when he allows himself to think of them. Several books are piled on the table by his elbow, the books that have been confiscated from* RICHARD.

MILLER. (*chuckles at something he reads—then closes the book and puts it on the table.* MRS. MILLER *looks up from her sewing*) This Shaw's a comical cuss—even if his ideas are so crazy they oughtn't to allow them to be printed. And that Swinburne's got a fine swing to his poetry—if he'd only choose some other subjects besides loose women.

MRS. MILLER. (*smiling teasingly*) I can see where you're becoming corrupted by those books, too—pretending to read them out of duty to Richard, when your nose has been glued to the page!

MILLER. No, no—but I've got to be honest. There's something to them. That Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, now. I read that over again and liked it even better than I had before—parts of it, that is, where it isn't all about boozing.

MRS. MILLER. (*has been busy with her own thoughts during this last—with a deep sigh of relief*) My, but I'm glad Mildred told me where Richard went off to. I'd have worried my heart out if she hadn't. But now, it's all right.

MILLER. (*frowning a little*) I'd hardly go so far as to say that. Just because we know he's all right tonight doesn't mean last night is wiped out. He's still got to be punished for that.

MRS. MILLER. (*defensively*) Well, if you ask me, I think after the way I punished him all day, and the way I know he's punished himself, he's had about all he deserves. I've told you how sorry he was, and how he said he'd never touch liquor again. It didn't make him feel happy like Sid, but only sad and sick, so he didn't see anything in it for him.

MILLER. Well, if he's really got that view of it driven into his skull, I don't know but I'm glad it all happened. That'll protect him more than a thousand lectures—just horse sense about himself. (*Then frowning again*) Still, I can't let him do such things and go scot-free. And then, besides, there's another side to it—(*He stops abruptly.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*uneasily*) What do you mean, another side?

MILLER. (*hastily*) I mean, discipline. There's got to be some discipline in a family. I don't want him to get the idea he's got a stuffed shirt at the head of the table. No, he's got to be punished, if only to make the lesson stick in his mind, and I'm going to tell him he can't go to Yale, seeing he's so undependable.

MRS. MILLER. (*up in arms at once*) Not go to Yale! I guess he can go to Yale! Every man of your means in town is sending his boys to college! What would folks think of you? You let Wilbur go, and you'd have let Lawrence, only he didn't want to, and you're letting Arthur! If our other children can get the benefit of a college education, you're not going to pick on Richard—

MILLER. Hush up, for God's sake! If you'd let me finish what I started to say! I said I'd *tell* him that now—bluff—then later on I'll change my mind, if he behaves himself.

MRS. MILLER. Oh well, if that's all—(*Then defensively again*) But it's your duty to give him every benefit. He's got an exceptional brain, that boy has! He's proved it by the way he likes to read all those deep plays and books and poetry.

MILLER. But I thought you—(*He stops, grinning helplessly.*)

MRS. MILLER. You thought I what?

MILLER. Never mind.

MRS. MILLER. (*sniffs, but thinks it better to let this pass*) You mark my words, that boy's going to turn out to be a great lawyer, or a great doctor, or a great writer, or—

MILLER. (*grinning*) You agree he's going to be great, anyway.

MRS. MILLER. Yes, I most certainly have a lot of faith in Richard.

MILLER. Well, so have I, as far as that goes.

MRS. MILLER. (*after a pause—judicially*) And as for his being in love with Muriel, I don't see but what it might work out real well. Richard could do worse.

MILLER. But I thought you had no use for her, thought she was stupid.

MRS. MILLER. Well, so I did, but if she's good for Richard and he wants her—(*Then inconsequentially*) Ma used to say you weren't overbright, but she changed her mind when she saw I didn't care if you were or not.

MILLER. (*not exactly pleased by this*) Well, I've been bright enough to—

MRS. MILLER. (*going on as if he had not spoken*) And Muriel's real cute-looking, I have to admit that. Takes after her mother. Alice Briggs was the prettiest girl before she married.

MILLER. Yes, and Muriel will get big as a house after she's married, the same as her mother did. That's the trouble. A man never can tell what he's letting himself in for—(*He stops, feeling his wife's eyes fixed on him with indignant suspicion.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*sharply*) I'm not too fat and don't you say it!

MILLER. Who was talking about you?

MRS. MILLER. And I'd rather have some flesh on my bones than be built like a string bean and bore a hole in a chair every time I sat down—like some people!

MILLER. (*ignoring the result—flatteringly*) Why, no one'd ever call you fat, Essie. You're only plump, like a good figure ought to be.

MRS. MILLER. (*childishly pleased—gratefully giving tit for tat*) Well, you're not skinny, either—only slender—and I think you've been putting on weight lately, too. (*Having thus squared matters, she takes up her sewing again. A pause. Then* MILLER

MILLER. You don't mean to tell me you're actually taking this Muriel crush of Richard's seriously, do you? I know it's a good thing to encourage right now but—pshaw, why, Richard'll probably forget all about her before he's away six months, and she'll have forgotten him.

MRS. MILLER. Don't be so cynical. (*Then, after a pause, thoughtfully*) Well, anyway, he'll always have it to remember—no matter what happens after—and that's something.

MILLER. You bet that's something. (*Then with a grin*) You surprise me at times with your deep wisdom.

MRS. MILLER. You don't give me credit for ever having common sense, that's why. (*She goes back to her sewing.*)

MILLER. (*after a pause*) Where'd you say Sid and Lily had gone off to?

MRS. MILLER. To the beach to listen to the band. (*She sighs sympathetically*) Poor Lily! Sid'll never change, and she'll never marry him. But she seems to get some queer satisfaction out of fussing over him like a hen that's hatched a duck—though Lord knows I wouldn't in her shoes!

MILLER. Arthur's up with Elsie Rand, I suppose?

MRS. MILLER. Of course.

MILLER. Where's Mildred?

MRS. MILLER. Out walking with her latest. I've forgot who it is. I can't keep track of them. (*She smiles.*)

MILLER. (*smiling*) Then, from all reports, we seem to be completely surrounded by love!

MRS. MILLER. Well, we've had our share, haven't we? We don't have to begrudge it to our children. (*Then has a sudden thought*) But I've done all this talking about Muriel and Richard and clean forgot how wild old McComber was against it. But he'll get over that, I suppose.

MILLER. (*with a chuckle*) He has already. I ran into him upstreet this afternoon and he was meek as pie. He backed water and said he guessed I was right. Richard had just copied stuff out of books, and kids would be kids, and so on. So I came off my high horse a bit—but not too far—and I guess all that

bing his hands together—with a boyish grin of pleasure) And I told you about getting that business from Lawson, didn't I? It's been a good day, Essie—a darned good day! (*From the hall beyond the front parlor the sound of the front door being opened and shut is heard.* MRS. MILLER *leans forward to look, pushing her specs up.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*in a whisper*) It's Richard.

MILLER. (*immediately assuming an expression of becoming gravity*) Hmm. (*He takes off his spectacles and puts them back in their case and straightens himself in his chair.* RICHARD *comes slowly in from the front parlor. He walks like one in a trance, his eyes shining with a dreamy happiness, his spirit still too exalted to be conscious of his surroundings, or to remember the threatened punishment. He carries his straw hat dangling in his hand, quite unaware of its existence.*)

RICHARD. (*dreamily, like a ghost addressing fellow shades*) Hello.

MRS. MILLER. (*staring at him worriedly*) Hello, Richard.

MILLER. (*sizing him up shrewdly*) Hello, Son.

(RICHARD *moves past his mother and comes to the far corner, left front, where the light is dimmest, and sits down on the sofa, and stares before him, his hat dangling in his hand.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*with frightened suspicion now*) Goodness, he acts queer! Nat, you don't suppose he's been—?

MILLER. (*with a reassuring smile*) No. It's love, not liquor, this time.

MRS. MILLER. (*only partly reassured—sharply*) Richard! What's the matter with you? (*He comes to himself with a start. She goes on scoldingly*) How many times have I told you to hang up your hat in the hall when you come in! (*He looks at his hat as if he were surprised at its existence. She gets up fussily and goes to him*) Here. Give it to me. I'll hang it up for you this once. And what are you sitting over here in the dark for? Don't forget your father's been waiting to talk to you! (*She comes back to the table and he follows her, still half in a dream, and stands by his father's chair.* MRS. MILLER *starts for the hall with his hat.*)

MILLER. (*quietly but firmly now*) You better leave Richard and me alone for a while, Essie.

MRS. MILLER. (*turns to stare at him apprehensively*) Well—all right. I'll go sit on the piazza. Call me if you want me. (*Then a bit pleadingly*) But you'll remember all I've said, Nat, won't you? (MILLER *nods reassuringly. She disappears through the front parlor.* RICHARD, *keenly conscious of himself as the about-to-be-sentenced criminal by this time, looks guilty and a bit defiant, searches his father's expressionless face with uneasy side glances, and steels himself for what is coming.*)

MILLER. (*casually, indicating* MRS. MILLER'S *rocker*) Sit down, Richard. (RICHARD *slumps awkwardly into the chair and sits in a self-conscious, unnatural position.* MILLER *sizes him up keenly—then suddenly smiles and asks with quiet mockery*) Well, how are the vine leaves in your hair this evening?

RICHARD. (*totally unprepared for this approach—shamefacedly mutters*) I don't know, Pa.

MILLER. Turned out to be poison ivy, didn't they? (*Then kindly*) But you needn't look so alarmed. I'm not going to read you any temperance lecture. That'd bore me more than it would you. And, in spite of your damn foolishness last night, I'm still giving you credit for having brains. So I'm pretty sure anything I could say to you you've already said to yourself.

RICHARD. (*his head down—humbly*) I know I was a darned fool.

MILLER. (*thinking it well to rub in this aspect—disgustedly*) You sure were—not only a fool but a downright, stupid, disgusting fool! (RICHARD *squirms, his head still lower*) It was bad enough for you to let me and Arthur see you, but to appear like that before your mother and Mildred—! And I wonder if Muriel would think you were so fine if she ever saw you as you looked and acted then. I think she'd give you your walking papers for keeps. And you couldn't blame her. No nice girl wants to give her love to a stupid drunk!

RICHARD. (*writhing*) I know, Pa.

MILLER. (*after a pause—quietly*) All right.

Then that settles—the booze end of it. (*He sizes* RICHARD *up searchingly—then suddenly speaks sharply*) But there is another thing that's more serious. How about that tart you went to bed with at the Pleasant Beach House?

RICHARD. (*flabbergasted—stammers*) You know—? But I didn't! If they've told you about her down there, they must have told you I didn't! She wanted me to—but I wouldn't. I gave her the five dollars just so she'd let me out of it. Honest, Pa, I didn't! She made everything seem rotten and dirty—and—I didn't want to do a thing like that to Muriel—no matter how bad I thought she'd treated me—even after I felt drunk, I didn't. Honest!

MILLER. How'd you happen to meet this lady, anyway?

RICHARD. I can't tell that, Pa. I'd have to snitch on someone—and you wouldn't want me to do that.

MILLER. (*a bit taken aback*) No. I suppose I wouldn't. Hmm. Well, I believe you—and I guess that settles that. (*Then, after a quick, furtive glance at* RICHARD, *he nerves himself for the ordeal and begins with a shamefaced, self-conscious solemnity*) But listen here, Richard, it's about time you and I had a serious talk about—hmm—certain matters pertaining to—and now that the subject's come up of its own accord, it's a good time—I mean, there's no use in procrastinating further—so, here goes. (*But it doesn't go smoothly and as he goes on he becomes more and more guiltily embarrassed and self-conscious and his expressions more stilted.* RICHARD *sedulously avoids even glancing at him, his own embarrassment made tenfold more painful by his father's*) Richard, you have now come to the age when—Well, you're a fully developed man, in a way, and it's only natural for you to have certain desires of the flesh, to put it that way—I mean, pertaining to the opposite sex—certain natural feelings and temptations—that'll want to be gratified—and you'll want to gratify them. Hmm—well, human society being organized as it is, there's only one outlet for—unless you're a scoundrel and go around ruining decent girls—which you're not, of course. Well, there are a certain class of women—always have been and always will be as long as human nature is what it is—It's wrong, maybe, but what can you do about it? I mean, girls like that one you—girls there's something doing with—and lots of 'em are pretty, and it's human nature if you—But that doesn't mean to ever get mixed up with them seriously! You just have what you want and pay 'em and forget it. I know that sounds hard and unfeeling, but we're talking facts and—But don't think I'm encouraging you to—If you can stay away from 'em, all the better—but if—why—hmm—Here's what I'm driving at, Richard. They're apt to be whited sepulchers—I mean, your whole life might be ruined if—so, darn it, you've got to know how to—I mean, there are ways and means—(*Suddenly he can go no farther and winds up helplessly*) But, hell, I suppose you boys talk all this over among yourselves and you know more about it than I do. I'll admit I'm no authority. I never had anything to do with such women, and it'll be a hell of a lot better for you if you never do!

RICHARD. (*without looking at him*) I'm never going to, Pa. (*Then shocked indignation coming into his voice*) I don't see how you could think I could—now—when you know I love Muriel and am going to marry her. I'd die before I'd—!

MILLER. (*immensely relieved—enthusiastically*) That's the talk! By God, I'm proud of you when you talk like that! (*Then hastily*) And now that's all of that. There's nothing more to say and we'll forget it, eh?

RICHARD. (*after a pause*) How are you going to punish me, Pa?

MILLER. I *was* sort of forgetting that, wasn't I? Well, I'd thought of telling you you couldn't go to Yale—

RICHARD. (*eagerly*) Don't I have to go? Gee, that's great! Muriel thought you'd want me to. I was telling her I'd rather you gave me a job on the paper because then she and I could get married sooner. (*Then with a boyish grin*) Gee, Pa, you picked a lemon. That isn't any punishment. You'll have to do something besides that.

MILLER. (*grimly—but only half concealing an answering grin*) Then you'll go to Yale and you'll stay there till you graduate, that's

the answer to that! Muriel's got good sense and you haven't! (RICHARD *accepts this philosophically*) And now we're finished, you better call your mother. (RICHARD *opens the screen door and calls* "Ma," and a moment *later she comes in. She glances quickly from son to husband and immediately knows that all is well and tactfully refrains from all questions.*)

MRS. MILLER. My, it's a beautiful night. The moon's way down low—almost setting. (*She sits in her chair and sighs contentedly.* RICHARD *remains standing by the door, staring out at the moon, his face pale in the moonlight.*)

MILLER. (*with a nod at* RICHARD, *winking at his wife*) Yes, I don't believe I've hardly ever seen such a beautiful night—with such a wonderful moon. Have you, Richard?

RICHARD. (*turning to them—enthusiastically*) No! It was wonderful—down at the beach—(*He stops abruptly, smiling shyly.*)

MILLER. (*watching his son—after a pause—quietly*) I can only remember a few nights that were as beautiful as this—and they were long ago, when your mother and I were young and planning to get married.

RICHARD. (*stares at him wonderingly for a moment, then quickly from his father to his mother and back again, strangely, as if he'd never seen them before—then he looks almost disgusted and swallows as if an acrid taste had come into his mouth—but then suddenly his face is transfigured by a smile of shy understanding and sympathy. He speaks shyly*) Yes, I'll bet those must have been wonderful nights, too. You sort of forget the moon was the same way back then—and everything.

MILLER. (*huskily*) You're all right, Richard. (*He gets up and blows his nose.*)

MRS. MILLER. (*fondly*) You're a good boy, Richard. (RICHARD *looks dreadfully shy and embarrassed at this. His father comes to his rescue.*)

MILLER. Better get to bed early tonight, Son, hadn't you?

RICHARD. I couldn't sleep. Can't I go out on the piazza and sit for a while—until the moon sets?

MILLER. All right. Then you better say good night now. I don't know about your mother, but I'm going to bed right away. I'm dead tired.

MRS. MILLER. So am I.

RICHARD. (*goes to her and kisses her*) Good night, Ma.

MRS. MILLER. Good night. Don't you stay up till all hours now.

RICHARD. (*comes to his father and stands awkwardly before him*) Good night, Pa.

MILLER. (*puts his arm around him and gives him a hug*) Good night, Richard. (RICHARD *turns impulsively and kisses him—then hurries out the screen door.* MILLER *stares after him—then says huskily*) First time he's done that in years. I don't believe in kissing between fathers and sons after a certain age—seems mushy and silly—but that meant something! And I don't think we'll ever have to worry about his being safe—from himself—again. And I guess no matter what life will do to him, he can take care of it now. (*He sighs with satisfaction and, sitting down in his chair, begins to unlace his shoes*) My darned feet are giving me fits!

MRS. MILLER. (*laughing*) Why do you bother unlacing your shoes now, you big goose—when we're going right up to bed?

MILLER. (*as if he hadn't thought of that before, stops*) Guess you're right. (*Then getting to his feet—with a grin*) Mind if I don't say my prayers tonight, Essie? I'm certain God knows I'm too darned tired.

MRS. MILLER. Don't talk that way. It's real sinful. (*She gets up—then laughing fondly*) If that isn't you all over! Always looking for an excuse to—You're worse than Tommy! But all right. I suppose tonight you needn't. You've had a hard day. (*She puts her hand on the reading-lamp switch*) I'm going to turn out the light. All ready?

MILLER. Yep. Let her go, Gallagher. (*She turns out the lamp. In the ensuing darkness the faint moonlight shines full in through the screen door. Walking together toward the front parlor they stand full in it for a moment, looking out.* MILLER *puts his arm around her. He says in a low voice*) There he is—like a statue of Love's Young Dream. (*Then he sighs and speaks with a gentle nostalgic melancholy*) What's it that Rubaiyat says:

"Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!"

(*Then throwing off his melancholy, with a loving smile at her*) Well, Spring isn't everything, is it, Essie? There's a lot to be said for Autumn. That's got beauty, too. And Winter—if you're together.

MRS. MILLER. (*simply*) Yes, Nat. (*She kisses him and they move quietly out of the moonlight, back into the darkness of the front parlor.*)

CURTAIN

WINTERSET[1]

MAXWELL ANDERSON

A PRELUDE TO POETRY IN THE THEATRE

Experiment in the theater is made difficult and expensive by the fact that a play must find an audience at once or have no chance of finding one later. There is no instance in the theater of a writer who left behind him a body of unappreciated work which slowly found its public, as, for example, the work of Shelley and Keats found a belated public after they had left the scene. It follows that a playwright must pluck from the air about him a fable which will be of immediate interest to his time and hour, and relate it in a fashion acceptable to his neighbors. That is the job for which he is paid. But he will also try to make that fable coincide with something in himself that he wants to put in words. A certain cleverness in striking a compromise between the world about him and the world within has characterized the work of the greatest as well as the least of successful playwrights, for they must all take an audience with them if they are to continue to function. Some may consider it blasphemy to state that this compromise must be a considered and conscious act—will believe that the writer should look in his heart and write—but in the theater such an attitude leaves the achievement entirely to chance, and a purely chance achievement is not an artistic one.

Yet when a writer sits down before white paper to make this necessary compromise he finds himself alone among imponderables. Nobody has ever known definitely what any audience wanted. A choice must be made with only intuition and a mass of usually irrelevant information as the guides. One who thinks more of his job than his fame will therefore play safe by repressing his personal preferences and going all the way in the direction of what he believes the public wants. One who thinks as much of his fame as of his job will often hope the public is ready for a theme only because he wishes to treat it—or ready for a dramatic method only because he wishes to employ it.

I may have been somewhat guilty of this last misapprehension in Winterset, *for I have a strong and chronic hope that the theater of this country will outgrow the phrase of journalistic social comment and reach occasionally into the upper air of poetic tragedy. I believe with Goethe that dramatic poetry is man's greatest achievement on his earth so far, and I believe with the early George Bernard Shaw that the theater is essentially a cathedral of the spirit, devoted to the exaltation of men, and boasting an apostolic succession of inspired high priests which extends further into the past than the Christian line founded by St. Peter. It has been, even at its best, a democratic temple, decorated with more gargoyles than saints, generously open to wits, clowns, ex-*

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coriating satarists, false prophets and crowds of money-changers with a heavy investment in the mysteries.

When Shaw began his furious critical assault on the romantic theater which was lingering out the last decade of the nineteenth century he became the prophet of the theater of realistic social protest which he has dominated in England during his lifetime, and which is still the controlling pattern for plays of the English-speaking stage. A few original and outstanding playwrights, J. M. Synge, Sean O'Casey and Eugene O'Neill among them, may seem to fall completely outside the Shavian category. Synge was too poetic, symbolic and savage to work in any social harness, O'Casey's world-searing irony is too tremendous to come under the head of protest, and O'Neill has been seeking an escape from realism throughout his whole career. All three went beyond Shaw's amusing balance and clarity into a tragic, sinister and often brutal world. Synge wrote of that world with extraordinary beauty and a lethal precision; O'Casey and O'Neill write of it with passion and a sometimes choking defiance. O'Casey, in addition, has a power over words which lifts such a play as The Plough and the Stars out of its local setting and makes it, in my opinion, the finest contemporary play I have seen in the theater.

But none of these three, nor Shaw himself, has written plays which we can set unquestioningly beside the best we can pick up in the library—and the reason for that is a fairly simple one. Our modern dramatists (with the exception of O'Casey, who has lately tried his 'prentice wings) are not poets, and the best prose in the world is inferior on the stage to the best poetry. It is the fashion, I know, to say that poetry is a matter of content and emotion, not of form, but this is said in an age of prose by prose writers who have not studied the effect of form on content or who wish to believe there is no limit to the scope of the form they have mastered. To me it is inescapable that prose is the language of information and poetry the language of emotion. Prose can be stretched to carry emotion, and in some exceptional cases, as in Synge's and O'Casey's plays, can occasionally rise to poetic heights by substituting the unfamiliar speech rhythms of an untutored people for the rhythm of verse. But under the strain of an emotion the ordinary prose of our stage breaks down into inarticulateness, just as it does in life. Hence the cult of understatement, hence the realistic drama in which the climax is reached in an eloquent gesture or a moment of meaningful silence.

The majority of present-day play-goers have never seen any other kind of play and see no reason why there should be any other. So emphatic is this feeling that one is doubtful of being able to explain to this majority that verse was once the accepted convention on the stage, as prose is now, that prose fought its way into the play-books with difficulty at the beginning of the scientific era in which we live and will hold its place there only so long as men make a religion of fact and believe that information, conveyed in statistical language, can make them free.

For the stage is still a cathedral, but just now a journalistic one, dominated by those who wish to offer something immediate about our political, social or economic life. Like every other existing condition it gives the illusion of permanence, but it will change. An age of reason will be followed once more by an age of faith in things unseen. The cathedral will then house the mysteries again, along with the jugglers and the vendors of rose-colored spectacles. What faith men will then have, when they have lost their certainty of salvation through laboratory work, I don't know, having myself only a faith that men will have a faith. But that it will involve a desire for poetry after our starvation diet of prose I have no doubt. Men have not been altered by the invention of airplanes and the radio. They are still alone and frightened, holding their chance tenure of life in utter isolation in this desolate region of revolving fires. Science may answer a few necessary questions for them, but in the end science itself is obliged to say that the fact is created by the spirit, not spirit by the fact. Our leading scientists are already com-

ing to this conclusion, rather reluctantly and with some surprise.

Unless I am greatly mistaken many members of the theatre audience have anticipated this conclusion by one of those intuitional short-cuts which confound the devotees of pure reason, and are not only ready but impatient for plays which will take up again the consideration of man's place and destiny in prophetic rather than prosaic terms. It is incumbent on the dramatist to be a poet, and incumbent on the poet to be a prophet, dreamer and interpreter of the social dream. Men have come a long way from the salt water in the millions of years that lie behind them, and have a long way to go in the millions of years that lie ahead. We shall not always be as we are—but what we are to become depends on what we dream and desire. The theatre, more than any other art, has the power to weld and determine what the race dreams into what the race will become. All this may sound rather far-fetched in the face of our present Broadway, and Broadway may laugh at it unconscionably, but Broadway is itself as transient as the real-estate values under its feet. Those of us who fail to outlive the street in which we work will fail because we have accepted its valuations and measured our product by them.

For though on the surface we are still a pioneer people, ashamed of aspiration, offended by the deliberate quest for beauty, able to accept beauty only when it seems achieved by accident, our pioneer days are over and we must set about molding ourselves at least one form of art worthy of the leading nation of the world or be set down finally as barbarians and carry that name with us into the darkness to which all nations sooner or later descend. Our theatre is the one really living American art. It has size, vitality and popular interest. But it is still in the awkward and self-conscious age, concealing its dreams by clowning, burlesquing the things it most admires. Those who have read their literary history carefully know that now is the time for our native amusements to be transformed into a national art of power and beauty. It needs the touch of a great poet to make the transformation, a poet comparable to Aeschylus in Greece or Marlowe in England. Without at least one such we shall never have a great theatre in this country, and he must come soon, for these chances don't endure forever.

I must add lest I be misunderstood, that I have not mistaken myself for this impending phenomenon. I have made my living as teacher, journalist and playwright and have only that skill as a poet which may come from long practice of an art I have loved and studied and cannot let alone. When I wrote my first play, White Desert, *I wrote it in verse because I was weary of plays in prose that never lifted from the ground. It failed, and I did not come back to verse again until I had discovered that poetic tragedy had never been written successfully about its own place and time. There is not one tragedy by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Shakespeare, Corneille, or Racine which did not have the advantage of a setting either far away or long ago. With this admonition in mind I wrote* Elizabeth the Queen *and a succession of historical plays in verse, some of them successful, and found myself immediately labelled a historical and romantic playwright, two terms I found equally distasteful.* Winterset *is largely in verse, and treats a contemporary tragic theme, which makes it more of an experiment than I could wish, for the great masters themselves never tried to make tragic poetry out of the stuff of their own times. To do so is to attempt to establish a new convention, one that may prove impossible of acceptance, but to which I was driven by the lively historical sense of our day—a knowledge of period, costume and manners which almost shuts off the writer on historical themes from contemporary comment. Whether or not I have solved the problem in* Winterset *is probably of little moment. But it must be solved if we are to have a great* theatre *in America. Our theatre has not yet produced anything worthy to endure—and endurance, though it may be a fallible test, is the only test of excellence.*

MAXWELL ANDERSON, 1935

Characters

TROCK	CARR
SHADOW	HERMAN
GARTH	LUCIA
MIRIAMNE	PINY
ESDRAS	A SAILOR
THE HOBO	STREET URCHIN
1ST GIRL	POLICEMAN
2ND GIRL	RADICAL
JUDGE GAUNT	SERGEANT
MIO	

Non-speaking
URCHINS
TWO MEN IN BLUE SERGE

ACT ONE

SCENE I

SCENE: *The scene is the bank of a river under a bridgehead. A gigantic span starts from the rear of the stage and appears to lift over the heads of the audience and out to the left. At the right rear is a wall of solid supporting masonry. To the left an apartment building abuts against the bridge and forms the left wall of the stage with a dark basement window and a door in the brick wall. To the right, and in the foreground, an outcropping of original rock makes a barricade behind which one may enter through a cleft. To the rear, against the masonry, two sheds have been built by waifs and strays for shelter. The river bank, in the foreground, is black rock worn smooth by years of trampling. There is room for exit and entrance to the left around the apartment house, also around the rock to the right. A single street lamp is seen at the left—and a glimmer of apartment lights in the background beyond. It is an early, dark December morning.*

TWO YOUNG MEN IN SERGE *lean against the masonry, matching bills.* TROCK, ESTRELLA *and* SHADOW *come in from the left.*

TROCK. Go back and watch the car.

(*The* TWO YOUNG MEN *go out.* TROCK *walks to the corner and looks toward the city*)
You roost of punks and gulls! Sleep, sleep it off,
whatever you had last night, get down in warm,
one big ham-fat against another—sleep,
cling, sleep and rot! Rot out your pasty guts
with diddling, you had no brain to begin. If you had
there'd be no need for us to sleep on iron
who had too much brains for you.
SHADOW. Now look, Trock, look,
what would the warden say to talk like that?
TROCK. May they die as I die!
By God, what life they've left me
they shall keep me well! I'll have that out of them—
these pismires that walk like men!
SHADOW. Because, look, chief,
it's all against science and penology
for you to get out and begin to cuss that way
before your prison vittles are out of you. Hell,
you're supposed to leave the pen full of high thought,
kind of noble-like, loving toward all mankind,
ready to kiss their feet—or whatever parts
they stick out toward you. Look at me!
TROCK. I see you.
And even you may not live as long as you think.
You think too many things are funny. Well, laugh.
But it's not so funny.
SHADOW. Come on, Trock, you know me.
Anything you say goes, but give me leave
to kid a little.
TROCK. Then laugh at somebody else!
It's a lot safer! They've soaked me once too often
in that vat of poisoned hell they keep up-state
to soak men in, and I'm rotten inside, I'm all
one liquid puke inside where I had lungs
once, like yourself! And now they want to get me
and stir me in again—and that'd kill me—
and that's fine for them. But before that happens to me
a lot of these healthy boys'll know what it's like

when you try to breathe and have no place to
put air—
they'll learn it from me!

SHADOW. They've got nothing on you, chief.

TROCK. I don't know yet. That's what I'm
here to find out.
If they've got what they might have
it's not a year this time—
no, nor ten. It's screwed down under a lid.—
I can die quick enough, without help.

SHADOW. You're the skinny kind
that lives forever.

TROCK. He gave me a half a year,
the doc at the gate.

SHADOW. Jesus.

TROCK. Six months I get,
and the rest's dirt, six feet.

(LUCIA, *the street-piano man, comes in right from behind the rock and goes to the shed where he keeps his piano.* PINY, *the apple-woman, follows and stands in the entrance.* LUCIA *speaks to Estrella, who still stands facing Shadow*)

LUCIA. Morning.

(TROCK *and* SHADOW *go out round the apartment house without speaking*)

PINY. Now what would you call them?

LUCIA. Maybe someting da river washed
up.

PINY. Nothing ever washed him—that black
one.

LUCIA. Maybe not, maybe so. More like his
pa and ma raise-a heem in da cellar.
(*He wheels out the piano*)

PINY. He certainly gave me a turn.
(*She lays a hand on the rock*)

LUCIA. You don' live-a right, ol' gal. Take
heem easy. Look on da bright-a side.
Never say-a die. Me, every day in every
way I getta be da regular heller.
(*He starts out*)

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

SCENE II

SCENE: *A cellar apartment under the apartment building, floored with cement and roofed with huge boa constrictor pipes that run slantwise from left to right, dwarfing the room. An outside door opens to the left and a door at the right rear leads to the interior of the place. A low squat window to the left. A table at the rear and a few chairs and books make up the furniture.* GARTH, *son of Esdras, sits alone, holding a violin upside down to inspect a crack at its base. He lays the bow on the floor and runs his fingers over the joint.* MIRIAMNE *enters from the rear, a girl of fifteen.* GARTH *looks up, then down again.*

MIRIAMNE. Garth—

GARTH. The glue lets go. It's the steam, I
guess.
It splits the hair on your head.

MIRIAMNE. It can't be mended?

GARTH. I can't mend it.
No doubt there are fellows somewhere
who'd mend it for a dollar—and glad to do it.
That is if I had a dollar.—Got a dollar?
No, I thought not.

MIRIAMNE. Garth, you've sat at home here
three days now. You haven't gone out at all.
Something frightens you.

GARTH. Yes?

MIRIAMNE. And father's frightened.
He reads without knowing where. When a
shadow falls
across the page he waits for a blow to follow
after the shadow. Then in a little while
he puts his book down softly and goes out
to see who passed.

GARTH. A bill collector, maybe.
We haven't paid the rent.

MIRIAMNE. No.

GARTH. You're a bright girl, sis.—
You see too much. You run along and cook.
Why don't you go to school?

MIRIAMNE. I don't like school.
They whisper behind my back.

GARTH. Yes? About what?

MIRIAMNE. What did the lawyer mean
that wrote to you?

GARTH.
(*Rising*)
What lawyer?

MIRIAMNE. I found a letter
on the floor of your room. He said, "Don't get
me wrong,

but stay in out of the rain the next few days,
just for instance."
GARTH. I thought I burned that letter.
MIRIAMNE. Afterward you did. And then
what was printed
about the Estrella gang—you hid it from me,
you and father. What is it—about this murder—?
GARTH. Will you shut up, you fool!
MIRIAMNE. But if you know
why don't you tell them, Garth?
If it's true—what they say—
you knew all the time Romagna wasn't guilty,
and could have said so—
GARTH. Everybody knew
Romagna wasn't guilty! But they weren't listening
to evidence in his favor. They didn't want it.
They don't want it now.
MIRIAMNE. But was that why
they never called on you?—
GARTH. So far as I know
they never'd heard of me—and I can assure you
I knew nothing about it—
MIRIAMNE. But something's wrong—
and it worries father—
GARTH. What could be wrong?
MIRIAMNE. I don't know.
(*A pause*)
GARTH. And I don't know. You're a good kid, Miriamne,
but you see too many movies. I wasn't mixed up
in any murder, and I don't mean to be.
If I had a dollar to get my fiddle fixed
and another to hire a hall, by God I'd fiddle
some of the prodigies back into Sunday School
where they belong, but I won't get either, and so
I sit here and bite my nails—but if you hoped
I had some criminal romantic past
you'll have to look again!
MIRIAMNE. Oh, Garth, forgive me—
But I want you to be so far above such things
nothing could frighten you. When you seem to shrink
and be afraid, and you're the brother I love,
I want to run there and cry, if there's any question
they care to ask, you'll be quick and glad to answer,
for there's nothing to conceal!
GARTH. And that's all true—
MIRIAMNE. But then I remember—
how you dim the lights—
and we go early to bed—and speak in whispers—
and I could think there's a death somewhere behind us—
an evil death—
GARTH.
(*Hearing a step*)
Now for God's sake, be quiet!
(ESDRAS, *an old rabbi with a kindly face, enters from the outside. He is hurried and troubled*)
ESDRAS. I wish to speak alone with someone here
if I may have this room. Miriamne—
MIRIAMNE.
(*Turning to go*)
Yes, father.
(*The outer door is suddenly thrown open.* TROCK *appears*)
TROCK.
(*After a pause*)
You'll excuse me for not knocking.
(SHADOW *follows* TROCK *in*)
Sometimes it's best to come in quiet. Sometimes
it's a good way to go out. Garth's home, I see.
He might not have been here if I made a point
of knocking at doors.
GARTH. How are you, Trock?
TROCK. I guess
you can see how I am.
(*To Miriamne*)
Stay here. Stay where you are.
We'd like to make your acquaintance.
—If you want the facts
I'm no better than usual, thanks. Not enough sun,
my physician tells me. Too much close confinement.
A lack of exercise and an overplus
of beans in the diet. You've done well, no doubt?
GARTH. I don't know what makes you think so.

TROCK. Who's the family?
GARTH. My father and my sister.
TROCK. Happy to meet you.
Step inside a minute. The boy and I
have something to talk about.
ESDRAS. No, no—he's said nothing—
nothing, sir, nothing!
TROCK. When I say go out, you go—
ESDRAS.
(*Pointing to the door*)
Miriamne—
GARTH. Go on out, both of you!
ESDRAS. Oh, sir—I'm old—
old and unhappy—
GARTH. Go on!
(MIRIAMNE *and* ESDRAS *go inside*)
TROCK. And if you listen
I'll riddle that door!
(SHADOW *shuts the door behind them and stands against it*)
I just got out, you see,
and I pay my first call on you.
GARTH. Maybe you think
I'm not in the same jam you are.
TROCK. That's what I do think.
Who started looking this up?
GARTH. I wish I knew,
and I wish he was in hell! Some damned professor
with nothing else to do. If you saw his stuff
you know as much as I do.
TROCK. It wasn't you
turning state's evidence?
GARTH. Hell, Trock, use your brain!
The case was closed. They burned Romagna for it
and that finished it. Why should I look for trouble
and maybe get burned myself?
TROCK. Boy, I don't know,
but I just thought I'd find out.
GARTH. I'm going straight, Trock.
I can play this thing, and I'm trying to make a living.
I haven't talked and nobody's talked to me.
Christ—it's the last thing I'd want!
TROCK. Your old man knows.
GARTH. That's where I got the money that last time
when you needed it. He had a little saved up,
but I had to tell him to get it. He's as safe
as Shadow there.
TROCK.
(*Looking at* SHADOW)
There could be people safer
than that son-of-a-bitch.
SHADOW. Who?
TROCK. You'd be safer dead
along with some other gorillas.
SHADOW. It's beginning to look
as if you'd feel safer with everybody dead,
the whole god-damn world.
TROCK. I would. These Jesus-bitten
professors! Looking up their half-ass cases!
We've got enough without that.
GARTH. There's no evidence
to reopen the thing.
TROCK. And suppose they called on you
and asked you to testify?
GARTH. Why then I'd tell 'em
that all I know is what I read in the papers.
And I'd stick to that.
TROCK. How much does your sister know?
GARTH. I'm honest with you, Trock. She read my name
in the professor's pamphlet, and she was scared
the way anybody would be. She got nothing
from me, and anyway she'd go to the chair
herself before she'd send me there.
TROCK. Like hell.
GARTH. Besides, who wants to go to trial again
except the radicals?—You and I won't spill
and unless we did there's nothing to take to court
as far as I know. Let the radicals go on howling
about getting a dirty deal. They always howl
and nobody gives a damn. This professor's red—
everybody knows it.
TROCK. You're forgetting the judge.
Where's the damn judge?
GARTH. What judge?
TROCK. Read the morning papers.
It says Judge Gaunt's gone off his nut. He's got
that damn trial on his mind, and been going round

proving to everybody he was right all the time
and the radicals were guilty—stopping people
in the street to prove it—and now he's nuts entirely
and nobody knows where he is.

GARTH. Why don't they know?

TROCK. Because he's on the loose somewhere! They've got
the police of three cities looking for him.

GARTH. Judge Gaunt?

TROCK. Yes. Judge Gaunt.

SHADOW. Why should that worry you?
He's crazy, ain't he? And even if he wasn't
he's arguing on your side. You're jittery, chief.
God, all the judges are looney. You've got the jitters,
and you'll damn well give yourself away some time
peeing yourself in public.

(TROCK *half turns toward Shadow in anger*)

Don't jump the gun now,
I've got pockets in my clothes, too.

(*His hand is in his coat pocket*)

TROCK. All right. Take it easy.

(*He takes his hand from his pocket, and* SHADOW *does the same*)

(*To Garth*)

Maybe you're lying to me and maybe you're not.
Stay at home a few days.

GARTH. Sure thing. Why not?

TROCK. And when I say stay home I mean stay home.
If I have to go looking for you you'll stay a long time
wherever I find you.

(*To Shadow*)

Come on. We'll get out of here.

(*To Garth*)

Be seeing you.

(SHADOW *and* TROCK *go out. After a pause* GARTH *walks over to his chair and picks up the violin. Then he puts it down and goes to the inside door, which he opens*)

GARTH. He's gone.

(MIRIAMNE *enters,* ESDRAS *behind her*)

MIRIAMNE.

(*Going up to Garth*)

Let's not stay here.

(*She puts her hands on his arms*)

I thought he'd come for something—horrible.
Is he coming back?

GARTH. I don't know.

MIRIAMNE. Who is he, Garth?

GARTH. He'd kill me if I told you who he is, that is, if he knew.

MIRIAMNE. Then don't say it—

GARTH. Yes, and I'll say it! I was with a gang one time
that robbed a pay roll. I saw a murder done,
and Trock Estrella did it. If that got out
I'd go to the chair and so would he—that's why
he was here today—

MIRIAMNE. But that's not true—

ESDRAS. He says it
to frighten you, child.

GARTH. Oh, no I don't! I say it
because I've held it in too long! I'm damned
if I sit here forever, and look at the door,
waiting for Trock with his sub-machine gun, waiting
for police with a warrant!—I say I'm damned, and I am,
no matter what I do! These piddling scales
on a violin—first position, third, fifth,
arpeggios in E—and what I'm thinking
is Romagna dead for the murder—dead while I sat here
dying inside—dead for the thing Trock did
while I looked on—and I could have saved him, yes—
but I sat here and let him die instead of me
because I wanted to live! Well, it's no life,
and it doesn't matter who I tell, because
I mean to get it over!

MIRIAMNE. Garth, it's not true!

GARTH. I'd take some scum down with me if I died—
that'd be one good deed—

ESDRAS. Son, son, you're mad—
someone will hear—

GARTH. Then let them hear! I've lived
with ghosts too long, and lied too long. God damn you
if you keep me from the truth!—

(*He turns away*)

Oh, God damn the world!
I don't want to die!

(*He throws himself down*)

ESDRAS. I should have known.

I thought you hard and sullen,
Garth, my son. And you were a child, and hurt
with a wound that might be healed.
—All men have crimes,
and most of them are hidden, and many are heavy
as yours must be to you.
(GARTH *sobs*)
They walk the street
to buy and sell, but a spreading crimson stain
tinges the inner vestments, touches flesh,
and burns the quick. You're not alone.
GARTH. I'm alone
in this.
ESDRAS. Yes, if you hold with the world that only
those who die suddenly should be revenged.
But those whose hearts are cancered, drop by drop
in small ways, little by little, till they've borne
all they can bear, and die—these deaths will go
unpunished now as always. When we're young
we have faith in what is seen, but when we're old
we know that what is seen is traced in air
and built on water. There's no guilt under heaven,
just as there's no heaven, till men believe it—
no earth, till men have seen it, and have a word
to say this is the earth.
GARTH. Well, I say there's an earth,
and I say I'm guilty on it, guilty as hell.
ESDRAS. Yet till it's known you bear no guilt at all—
unless you wish. The days go by like film,
like a long written scroll, a figured veil
unrolling out of darkness into fire
and utterly consumed. And on this veil,
running in sounds and symbols of men's minds
reflected back, life flickers and is shadow
going toward flame. Only what men can see
exists in that shadow. Why must you rise and cry out:
That was I, there in the ravelled tapestry,
there, in that pistol flash, when the man was killed.
I was there, and was one, and am blood-stained!
Let the wind
and fire take that hour to ashes out of time
and out of mind! This thing that men call justice,
this blind snake that strikes men down in the dark,
mindless with fury, keep your hand back from it,
pass by in silence—let it be forgotten, forgotten!—
Oh, my son, my son—have pity!
MIRIAMNE. But if it was true
and someone died—then it was more than shadow—
and it doesn't blow away—
GARTH. Well, it was true.
ESDRAS. Say it if you must. If you have heart to die,
say it, and let them take what's left—there was little
to keep, even before—
GARTH. Oh, I'm a coward—
I always was. I'll be quiet and live. I'll live
even if I have to crawl. I know.
(*He gets up and goes into the inner room*)
MIRIAMNE. Is it better
to tell a lie and live?
ESDRAS. Yes, child. It's better.
MIRIAMNE. But if I had to do it—
I think I'd die.
ESDRAS. Yes, child. Because you're young.
MIRIAMNE. Is that the only reason?
ESDRAS. The only reason.

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

SCENE III

SCENE: *Under the bridge, evening of the same day. When the curtain rises* MIRIAMNE *is sitting alone on the ledge at the rear of the apartment house. A spray of light falls on her from a street lamp above. She shivers a little in her thin coat, but sits still as if heedless of the weather. Through the rocks on the other side a* TRAMP *comes*

down to the river bank, hunting a place to sleep. He goes softly to the apple-woman's hut and looks in, then turns away, evidently not daring to preëmpt it. He looks at MIRIAMNE *doubtfully. The door of the street-piano man is shut. The vagabond passes it and picks carefully among some rags and shavings to the right.* MIRIAMNE *looks up and sees him but makes no sign. She looks down again, and the man curls himself up in a makeshift bed in the corner, pulling a piece of sacking over his shoulders.* TWO GIRLS *come in from round the apartment house.*

1ST GIRL. Honest, I never heard of anything so romantic. Because you never liked him.

2ND GIRL. I certainly never did.

1ST GIRL. You've got to tell me how it happened. You've got to.

2ND GIRL. I couldn't. As long as I live I couldn't. Honest, it was terrible. It was terrible.

1ST GIRL. What was so terrible?

2ND GIRL. The way it happened.

1ST GIRL. Oh, please—not to a soul, never.

2ND GIRL. Well, you know how I hated him because he had such a big mouth. So he reached over and grabbed me, and I began all falling to pieces inside, the way you do—and I said, "Oh no you don't mister," and started screaming and kicked a hole through the windshield and lost a shoe, and he let go and was cursing and growling because he borrowed the car and didn't have money to pay for the windshield, and he started to cry, and I got so sorry for him I let him, and now he wants to marry me.

1ST GIRL. Honest, I never heard of anything so romantic!

(*She sees the sleeping* TRAMP)

My God, what you won't see!

(*They give the Tramp a wide berth, and go out right. The* TRAMP *sits up looking about him.* JUDGE GAUNT, *an elderly, quiet man, well dressed but in clothes that have seen some weather, comes in uncertainly from the left. He holds a small clipping in his hand and goes up to the Hobo*)

GAUNT.

(*Tentatively*)

Your pardon, sir. Your pardon, but perhaps you can tell me the name of this street.

HOBO. Huh?

GAUNT. The name of this street?

HOBO. This ain't no street.

GAUNT. There, where the street lamps are.

HOBO. That's the alley.

GAUNT. Thank you. It has a name, no doubt?

HOBO. That's the alley.

GAUNT. I see. I won't trouble you. You wonder why I ask, I daresay.—I'm a stranger. —Why do you look at me?

(*He steps back*)

I—I'm not the man you think. You've mistaken me, sir.

HOBO. Huh?

JUDGE. Perhaps misled by a resemblance. But you're mistaken—I had an errand in this city. It's only by accident that I'm here—

HOBO.

(*Muttering*)

You go to hell.

JUDGE.

(*Going nearer to him, bending over him*)

Yet why should I deceive you? Before God, I held the proofs in my hands. I hold them still. I tell you the defense was cunning beyond belief, and unscrupulous in its use of propaganda—they gagged at nothing—not even—

(*He rises*)

No, no—I'm sorry—this will hardly interest you. I'm sorry. I have an errand.

(*He looks toward the street.* ESDRAS *enters from the basement and goes to Miriamne. The* JUDGE *steps back into the shadows*)

ESDRAS. Come in, my daughter. You'll be cold here.

MIRIAMNE. After a while.

ESDRAS. You'll be cold. There's a storm coming.

MIRIAMNE. I didn't want him to see me crying. That was all.

ESDRAS. I know.

MIRIAMNE. I'll come soon.

(ESDRAS *turns reluctantly and goes out the*

way he came. MIRIAMNE *rises to go in, pausing to dry her eyes.* MIO *and* CARR, *road boys of seventeen or so, come round the apartment house. The Judge has disappeared)*

CARR. Thought you said you were never coming east again.

MIO. Yeah, but—I heard something changed my mind.

CARR. Same old business?

MIO. Yes. Just as soon not talk about it.

CARR. Where did you go from Portland?

MIO. Fishing—I went fishing. God's truth

CARR. Right after I left?

MIO. Fell in with a fisherman's family on the coast and went after the beautiful mackerel fish that swim in the beautiful sea. Family of Greeks—Aristides Marinos was his lovely name. He sang while he fished. Made the pea-green Pacific ring with his bastard Greek chanties. Then I went to Hollywood High School for a while.

CARR. I'll bet that's a seat of learning.

MIO. It's the hind end of all wisdom. They kicked me out after a time.

CARR. For cause?

MIO. Because I had no permanent address, you see. That means nobody's paying school taxes for you, so out you go.

(*To Miriamne*)

What's the matter, kid?

MIRIAMNE. Nothing.

(*She looks up at him, and they pause for a moment*)

Nothing.

MIO. I'm sorry.

MIRIAMNE. It's all right.

(*She withdraws her eyes from his and goes out past him. He turns and looks after her*)

CARR. Control your chivalry.

MIO. A pretty kid.

CARR. A baby.

MIO. Wait for me.

CARR. Be a long wait?

(MIO *steps swiftly out after Miriamne, then returns*)

Yeah?

MIO. She's gone.

CARR. Think of that.

MIO. No, but I mean—vanished. Presto—into nothing—prodigioso.

CARR. Damn good thing, if you ask me. The homely ones are bad enough, but the lookers are fatal.

MIO. You exaggerate, Carr.

CARR. I doubt it.

MIO. Well, let her go. This river bank's loaded with typhus rats, too. Might as well die one death as another.

CARR. They say chronic alcoholism is nice but expensive. You can always starve to death.

MIO. Not always. I tried it. After the second day I walked thirty miles to Niagara Falls and made a tour of the plant to get the sample of shredded wheat biscuit on the way out.

CARR. Last time I saw you you couldn't think of anything you wanted to do except curse God and pass out. Still feeling low?

MIO. Not much different.

(*He turns away, then comes back*)

Talk about the lost generation, I'm the only one fits that title. When the State executes your father, and your mother dies of grief, and you know damn well he was innocent, and the authorities of your home town politely inform you they'd consider it a favor if you lived somewhere else—that cuts you off from the world—with a meat-axe.

CARR. They asked you to move?

MIO. It came to that.

CARR. God, that was white of them.

MIO. It probably gave them a headache just to see me after all that agitation. They knew as well as I did my father never staged a holdup. Anyway, I've got a new interest in life now.

CARR. Yes—I saw her.

MIO. I don't mean the skirt.—No, I got wind of something, out west, some college professor investigating the trial and turning up new evidence. Couldn't find anything he'd written out there, so I beat it east and arrived on this blessed island just in time to find the bums holing up in the public library for the winter. I

know now what the unemployed have been doing since the depression started. They've been catching up on their reading in the main reference room. Man, what a stench! Maybe I stank, too, but a hobo has the stench of ten because his shoes are poor.

CARR. Tennyson.

MIO. Right. Jeez, I'm glad we met up again! Never knew anybody else that could track me through the driven snow of Victorian literature.

CARR. Now you're cribbing from some half-forgotten criticism of Ben Jonson's Roman plagiarisms.

MIO. Where did you get your education, sap?

CARR. Not in the public library, sap. My father kept a news-stand.

MIO. Well, you're right again.

(*There is a faint rumble of thunder*)

What's that? Winter thunder?

CARR. Or Mister God, beating on His little tocsin. Maybe announcing the advent of a new social order.

MIO. Or maybe it's going to rain coffee and doughnuts.

CARR. Or maybe it's going to rain.

MIO. Seems more likely.

(*Lowering his voice*)

Anyhow, I found Professor Hobhouse's discussion of the Romagna case. I think he has something. It occurred to me I might follow it up by doing a little sleuthing on my own account.

CARR. Yes?

MIO. I have done a little. And it leads me to somewhere in that tenement house that backs up against the bridge. That's how I happen to be here.

CARR. They'll never let you get anywhere with it, Mio. I told you that before.

MIO. I know you did.

CARR. The State can't afford to admit it was wrong, you see. Not when there's been that much of a row kicked up over it. So for all practical purposes the State was right and your father robbed the pay roll.

MIO. There's still such a thing as evidence.

CARR. It's something you can buy. In fact, at the moment I don't think of anything you can't buy, including life, honor, virtue, glory, public office, conjugal affection and all kinds of justice, from the traffic court to the immortal nine. Go out and make yourself a pot of money and you can buy all the justice you want. Convictions obtained, convictions averted. Lowest rates in years.

MIO. I know all that.

CARR. Sure.

MIO. This thing didn't happen to you.

They've left you your name
and whatever place you can take. For my heritage
they've left me one thing only, and that's to be
my father's voice crying up out of the earth
and quicklime where they stuck him. Electrocution
doesn't kill, you know. They eviscerate them
with a turn of the knife in the dissecting room.
The blood spurts out. The man was alive. Then into
the lime pit, leave no trace. Make it short shrift
and chemical dissolution. That's what they thought
of the man that was my father. Then my mother—
I tell you these county burials are swift
and cheap and run for profit! Out of the house
and into the ground, you wife of a dead dog. Wait,
here's some Romagna spawn left.
Something crawls here—
something they called a son. Why couldn't he die
along with his mother? Well, ease him out of town,
ease him out, boys, and see you're not too gentle.
He might come back. And, by their own living Jesus,
I will go back, and hang the carrion
around their necks that made it!
Maybe I can sleep then.
Or even live.

CARR. You have to try it?

MIO. Yes.
Yes. It won't let me alone. I've tried to live
and forget it—but I was birthmarked with hot iron
into the entrails. I've got to find out who did it
and make them see it till it scalds their eyes
and make them admit it till their tongues are blistered
with saying how black they lied!

(HERMAN, *a gawky shoe salesman, enters from the left*)

HERMAN. Hello. Did you see a couple of girls go this way?

CARR. Couple of girls? Did we see a couple of girls?

MIO. No.

CARR. No. No girls.

(HERMAN *hesitates, then goes out right.* LUCIA *comes in from the left, trundling his piano.* PINY *follows him, weeping*)

PINY. They've got no right to do it—

LUCIA. All right, hell what, no matter, I got to put him away, I got to put him away, that's what the hell!

(TWO STREET URCHINS *follow him in*)

PINY. They want everybody on the relief rolls and nobody making a living?

LUCIA. The cops, they do what the big boss says. The big boss, that's the mayor, he says he heard it once too often, the sextette—

PINY. They want graft, that's all. It's a new way to get graft—

LUCIA. Oh, no, no, no! He's a good man, the mayor. He's just don't care for music, that's all.

PINY. Why shouldn't you make a living on the street? The National Biscuit Company ropes off Eighth Avenue—and does the mayor do anything? No, the police hit you over the head if you try to go through!

LUCIA. You got the big dough, you get the pull, fine. No big dough, no pull, what the hell, get off the city property! Tomorrow I start cooking chestnuts . . .

(*He strokes the piano fondly. The* TWO GIRLS *and* HERMAN *come back from the right*)

Cost plenty—and two new records I only played twice. See, this one.

(*He starts turning the crank, talking while he plays*)

Two weeks since they play this one in a picture house.

(*A* SAILOR *wanders in from the left. One of the* STREET URCHINS *begins suddenly to dance a wild rumba, the others watch*)

Good boy—see, it's a lulu—it itches in the feet!

(HERMAN, *standing with his girl, tosses the boy a penny. He bows and goes on dancing; the other* URCHIN *joins him. The* SAILOR *tosses a coin*)

SAILOR. Go it, Cuba! Go it!

(LUCIA *turns the crank, beaming*)

2ND GIRL. Oh, Herman!

(*She throws her arms round Herman and they dance*)

1ST URCHIN. Hey, pipe the professionals!

1ST GIRL. Do your glide, Shirley! Do your glide!

LUCIA. Maybe we can't play in front, maybe we can play behind!

(*The* HOBO *gets up from his nest and comes over to watch. A* YOUNG RADICAL *wanders in*)

Maybe you don't know, folks! Tonight we play good-bye to the piano! Good-bye forever! No more piano on the streets! No more music! No more money for the music-man! Last time, folks! Good-bye to the piano—good-bye forever!

(MIRIAMNE *comes out the rear door of the apartment and stands watching. The* SAILOR *goes over to the 1st Girl and they dance together*)

Maybe you don't know, folks! Tomorrow will be sad as hell, tonight we dance! Tomorrow no more Verdi, no more rumba, no more good time! Tonight we play good-bye to the piano, good-bye forever!

(*The* RADICAL *edges up to Miriamne, and asks her to dance. She shakes her head and he goes to Piny, who dances with him. The* HOBO *begins to do a few lonely curvets on the side above*)

around! Use the head, use the feet! Last time forever!

(*He begins to sing to the air*)

MIO. Wait for me, will you?

CARR. Now's your chance.

(MIO *goes over to Miriamne and holds out a hand, smiling. She stands for a moment uncertain, then dances with him.* ESDRAS *comes out to watch.* JUDGE GAUNT *comes in from the left. There is a rumble of thunder*)

LUCIA. Hoy! Hoy! Maybe it rains tonight, maybe it snows tomorrow! Tonight we dance good-bye.

(*He sings the air lustily. A* POLICEMAN *comes in from the left and looks on.* TWO OR THREE PEDESTRIANS *follow him*)

POLICEMAN. Hey you!

(LUCIA *goes on singing*)

Hey, you!

LUCIA.

(*Still playing*)

What you want?

POLICEMAN. Sign off!

LUCIA. What you mean? I get off the street!

POLICEMAN. Sign off!

LUCIA.

(*Still playing*)

What you mean?

(*The* POLICEMAN *walks over to him.* LUCIA *stops playing and the* DANCERS *pause*)

POLICEMAN. Cut it.

LUCIA. Is this a street?

POLICEMAN. I say cut it out.

(*The* HOBO *goes back to his nest and sits in it, watching*)

LUCIA. It's the last time. We dance good-bye to the piano.

POLICEMAN. You'll dance good-bye to something else if I catch you cranking that thing again.

LUCIA. All right.

PINY. I'll bet you don't say that to the National Biscuit Company!

POLICEMAN. Lady, you've been selling apples on my beat for some time now, and I said nothing about it—

PINY. Selling apples is allowed—

POLICEMAN. You watch yourself—

(*He takes a short walk around the place and comes upon the Hobo*)

What are you doing here?

(*The* HOBO *opens his mouth, points to it, and shakes his head*)

Oh, you are, are you?

(*He comes back to Lucia*)

So you trundle your so-called musical instrument to wherever you keep it, and don't let me hear it again.

(*The* RADICAL *leaps on the base of the rock at right. The* 1ST GIRL *turns away from the Sailor toward the 2nd Girl and Herman*)

SAILOR. Hey, captain, what's the matter with the music?

POLICEMAN. Not a thing, admiral.

SAILOR. Well, we had a little party going here—

POLICEMAN. I'll say you did.

2ND GIRL. Please, officer, we want to dance.

POLICEMAN. Go ahead. Dance.

2ND GIRL. But we want music!

POLICEMAN.

(*Turning to go*)

Sorry. Can't help you.

RADICAL. And there you see it, the perfect example of capitalistic oppression! In a land where music should be free as air and the arts should be encouraged, a uniformed minion of the rich, a guardian myrmidon of the Park Avenue pleasure hunters, steps in and puts a limit on the innocent enjoyments of the poor! We don't go to theatres! Why not? We can't afford it! We don't go to night clubs, where women dance naked and the music drips from saxophones and leaks out of Rudy Vallee—we can't afford that either!—But we might at least dance on the river bank to the strains of a barrel organ—!

(GARTH *comes out of the apartment and listens*)

POLICEMAN. It's against the law!

RADICAL. What law? I challenge you to tell me what law of God or man—what ordinance—is violated by this spontaneous diversion? None! I say none! An official whim of the masters who should be our servants!—

POLICEMAN. Get down! Get down and shut up!

RADICAL. By what law, by what ordinance do you order me to be quiet?

POLICEMAN. Speaking without a flag. You know it.

RADICAL.

(Pulling out a small American flag)

There's my flag! There's the flag of this United States which used to guarantee the rights of man—the rights of man now violated by every third statute of the commonweal—

POLICEMAN. Don't try to pull tricks on me! I've seen you before! You're not making any speech, and you're climbing down—

JUDGE GAUNT.

(Who has come quietly forward)

One moment, officer. There is some difference of opinion even on the bench as to the elasticity of police power when applied in minor emergencies to preserve civil order. But the weight of authority would certainly favor the defendant in any equable court, and he would be upheld in his demand to be heard.

POLICEMAN. Who are you?

JUDGE GAUNT. Sir, I am not accustomed to answer that question.

POLICEMAN. I don't know you.

GAUNT. I am a judge of some standing, not in your city but in another with similar statutes. You are aware, of course, that the bill of rights is not to be set aside lightly by the officers of any municipality—

POLICEMAN.

(Looking over Gaunt's somewhat bedraggled costume)

Maybe they understand you better in the town you come from, but I don't get your drift.—

(To the Radical)

I don't want any trouble, but if you ask for it you'll get plenty. Get down!

RADICAL. I'm not asking for trouble, but I'm staying right here.

(The POLICEMAN moves toward him)

GAUNT.

(Taking the policeman's arm, but shaken off roughly)

I ask this for yourself, truly, not for the dignity of the law nor the maintenance of precedent. Be gentle with them when their threats are childish—be tolerant while you can—for your least harsh word will return on you in the night—return in a storm of cries!—

(He takes the Policeman's arm again)

Whatever they may have said or done, let them disperse in peace! It is better that they go softly, lest when they are dead you see their eyes pleading, and their outstretched hands touch you, fingering cold on your heart!—I have been harsher than you. I have sent men down that long corridor into blinding light and blind darkness!

(He suddenly draws himself erect and speaks defiantly)

And it was well that I did so! I have been an upright judge. They are all liars! Liars!

POLICEMAN.

(Shaking GAUNT off so that he falls)

Why, you fool, you're crazy!

GAUNT. Yes, and there are liars on the force! They came to me with their shifty lies!

(He catches at the POLICEMAN, who pushes him away with his foot)

POLICEMAN. You think I've got nothing better to do than listen to a crazy fool?

1ST GIRL. Shame, shame!

POLICEMAN. What have I got to be ashamed of? And what's going on here, anyway? Where in hell did you all come from?

RADICAL. Tread on him! That's right! Tread down the poor and the innocent!

(There is a protesting murmur in the crowd)

SAILOR.

(Moving in a little)

Say, big boy, you don't have to step on the guy.

POLICEMAN.

(Facing them, stepping back)

What's the matter with you? I haven't stepped on anybody!

MIO.

(At the right, across from the Policeman)

Listen now, fellows, give the badge a chance. He's doing his job, what he gets paid to do,

the same as any of you. They're all picked men,
these metropolitan police, hand picked
for loyalty and a fine up-standing pair
of shoulders on their legs—it's not so easy
to represent the law. Think what he does
for all of us, stamping out crime!
Do you want to be robbed and murdered in your beds?

SAILOR. What's eating you?

RADICAL. He must be a capitalist.

MIO. They pluck them fresh
from Ireland, and a paucity of headpiece
is a prime prerequisite. You from Ireland, buddy?

POLICEMAN.
(*Surly*)
Where are you from?

MIO. Buddy, I tell you flat
I wish I was from Ireland, and could boast
some Tammany connections. There's only one drawback
about working on the force. It infects the brain,
it eats the cerebrum. There've been cases known,
fine specimens of manhood, too, where autopsies,
conducted in approved scientific fashion,
revealed conditions quite incredible
in policemen's upper layers. In some, a trace,
in others, when they've swung a stick too long,
there was nothing there!—but nothing! Oh, my friends,
this fine athletic figure of a man
that stands so grim before us, what will they find
when they saw his skull for the last inspection?
I fear me a little puffball dust will blow away
rejoining earth, our mother—and this same dust,
this smoke, this ash on the wind, will represent
all he had left to think with!

THE HOBO. Hooray!

(*The* POLICEMAN *turns on his heel and looks hard at the* HOBO, *who slinks away*)

POLICEMAN. Oh, yeah?

MIO. My theme
gives ears to the deaf and voice to the dumb! But now
forgive me if I say you were most unkind
in troubling the officer. He's a simple man
of simple tastes, and easily confused
when faced with complex issues. He may reflect
on returning home, that is, so far as he
is capable of reflection, and conclude
that he was kidded out of his uniform pants,
and in his fury when this dawns on him
may smack his wife down!

POLICEMAN. That'll be about enough from you, too, professor!

MIO. May I say that I think you have managed this whole situation rather badly, from the beginning?—

POLICEMAN. You may not!

(TROCK *slips in from the background. The* TWO YOUNG MEN IN SERGE *come with him*)

MIO. Oh, but your pardon, sir! It's apparent to the least competent among us that you should have gone about your task more subtly—the glove of velvet, the hand of iron, and all that sort of thing—

POLICEMAN. Shut that hole in your face!

MIO. Sir, for that remark I shall be satisfied with nothing less than an unconditional apology! I have an old score to settle with policemen, brother, because they're fools and fat-heads, and you're one of the most fatuous fat-heads that ever walked his feet flat collecting graft! Tell that to your sergeant back in the booby-hatch.

POLICEMAN. Oh, you want an apology, do you? You'll get an apology out of the other side of your mouth!

(*He steps toward Mio.* CARR *suddenly stands in his path*)

Get out of my way!

(*He pauses and looks round him; the crowd looks less and less friendly. He lays a hand on his gun and backs to a position where there is nobody behind him*)

Get out of here, all of you! Get out!
What are you trying to do—start a riot?

MIO. There now, that's better! That's in the best police tradition. Incite a riot yourself and then accuse the crowd.

POLICEMAN. It won't be pleasant if I decide to let somebody have it! Get out!

(*The onlookers begin to melt away. The* SAILOR *goes out left with the* GIRLS *and* HERMAN. CARR *and* MIO *go out right,* CARR *whistling "The Star Spangled Banner." The* HOBO *follows them. The* RADICAL *walks past with his head in the air.* PINY *and* LUCIA *leave the piano where it stands and slip away to the left. At the end the* POLICEMAN *is left standing in the center, the* JUDGE *near him.* ESDRAS *stands in the doorway.* MIRIAMNE *is left sitting half in shadow and unseen by* ESDRAS)

JUDGE GAUNT.

(*To the Policeman*)

Yes, but should a man die, should it be necessary that one man die for the good of many, make not yourself the instrument of death, lest you sleep to wake sobbing! Nay, it avails nothing that you are the law—this delicate ganglion that is the brain, it will not bear these things—!

(*The* POLICEMAN *gives the Judge the once-over, shrugs, decides to leave him there and starts out left.* GARTH *goes to his father —a fine sleet begins to fall through the street lights.* TROCK *is still visible*)

GARTH. Get him in here, quick.

ESDRAS. Who, son?

GARTH. The Judge, damn him!

ESDRAS. Is it Judge Gaunt?

GARTH. Who did you think it was? He's crazy as a bedbug and telling the world. Get him inside!

(*He looks round*)

ESDRAS.

(*Going up to Gaunt*)

Will you come in, sir?

GAUNT. You will understand, sir. We old men know how softly we must proceed with these things.

ESDRAS. Yes, surely, sir.

GAUNT. It was always my practice—always. They will tell you that of me where I am known. Yet even I am not free of regret —even I. Would you believe it?

ESDRAS. I believe we are none of us free of regret.

GAUNT. None of us? I would it were true. I would I thought it were true.

ESDRAS. Shall we go in, sir? This is sleet that's falling.

GAUNT. Yes. Let us go in.

(ESDRAS, GAUNT *and* GARTH *enter the basement and shut the door.* TROCK *goes out with his men. After a pause* MIO *comes back from the right, alone. He stands at a little distance from Miriamne*)

MIO. Looks like rain.

(*She is silent*)

You live around here?

(*She nods gravely*)

I guess
you thought I meant it—about waiting here to meet me.

(*She nods again*)

I'd forgotten about it till I got that winter
across the face. You'd better go inside.
I'm not your kind. I'm nobody's kind but my own.
I'm waiting for this to blow over.

(*She rises*)

I lied. I meant it—
I meant it when I said it—but there's too much black
whirling inside me—for any girl to know.
So go on in. You're somebody's angel child
and they're waiting for you.

MIRIAMNE. Yes, I'll go.

(*She turns*)

MIO. And tell them
when you get inside where it's warm,
and you love each other,
and mother comes to kiss her darling, tell them
to hang on to it while they can, believe while they can
it's a warm safe world, and Jesus finds his lambs
and carries them in his bosom.—I've seen some lambs
that Jesus missed. If they ever want the truth
tell them that nothing's guaranteed in this climate
except it gets cold in winter, nor on this earth
except you die sometime.

(*He turns away*)

MIRIAMNE. I have no mother.
And my people are Jews.

MIO. Then you know something about it.

MIRIAMNE. Yes.
MIO. Do you have enough to eat?
MIRIAMNE. Not always.
MIO. What do you believe in?
MIRIAMNE. Nothing.
MIO. Why?
MIRIAMNE. How can one?
MIO. It's easy if you're a fool. You see the words
in books. Honor, it says there, chivalry, freedom,
heroism, enduring love—and these
are words on paper. It's something to have them there.
You'll get them nowhere else.
MIRIAMNE. What hurts you?
MIO. Just that.
You'll get them nowhere else.
MIRIAMNE. Why should you want them?
MIO. I'm alone, that's why. You see those lights,
along the river, cutting across the rain—?
those are the hearths of Brooklyn, and up this way
the love-nests of Manhattan—
they turn their points
like knives against me—outcast of the world,
snake in the streets.—I don't want a hand-out.
I sleep and eat.
MIRIAMNE. Do you want me to go with you?
MIO. Where?
MIRIAMNE. Where you go.
(*A pause. He goes nearer to her*)
MIO. Why, you god-damned little fool—
what made you say that?
MIRIAMNE. I don't know.
MIO. If you have a home
stay in it. I ask for nothing. I've schooled myself
to ask for nothing, and take what I can get,
and get along. If I fell for you, that's my lookout,
and I'll starve it down.
MIRIAMNE. Wherever you go, I'd go.
MIO. What do you know about loving?
How could you know?
Have you ever had a man?
MIRIAMNE.
(*After a slight pause*)
No. But I know.
Tell me your name.
MIO. Mio. What's yours?
MIRIAMNE. Miriamne.
MIO. There's no such name.
MIRIAMNE. But there's no such name as Mio!
M.I.O. It's no name.
MIO. It's for Bartolomeo.
MIRIAMNE. My mother's name was Miriam,
so they called me Miriamne.
MIO. Meaning little Miriam?
MIRIAMNE. Yes.
MIO. So now little Miriamne will go in
and take up quietly where she dropped them all
her small housewifely cares.—When I first saw you,
not a half-hour ago, I heard myself saying,
this is the face that launches ships for me—
and if I owned a dream—yes, half a dream—
we'd share it. But I have no dream. This earth
came tumbling down from chaos, fire and rock,
and bred up worms, blind worms that sting each other
here in the dark. These blind worms of the earth
took out my father—and killed him, and set a sign
on me—the heir of the serpent—and he was a man
such as men might be if the gods were men—
but they killed him—
as they'll kill all others like him
till the sun cools down to the stabler molecules,
yes, till men spin their tent-worm webs to the stars
and what they think is done, even in the thinking,
and they are the gods, and immortal, and constellations
turn for them all like mill wheels—still as they are
they will be, worms and blind. Enduring love,
oh gods and worms, what mockery!—And yet
I have blood enough in my veins. It goes like music,
singing, because you're here. My body turns

as if you were the sun, and warm. This men called love
in happier times, before the Freudians taught us
to blame it on the glands. Only go in
before you breathe too much of my atmosphere
and catch death from me.

MIRIAMNE. I will take my hands
and weave them to a little house, and there
you shall keep a dream—

MIO. God knows I could use a dream
and even a house.

MIRIAMNE. You're laughing at me, Mio!

MIO. The worms are laughing.
I tell you there's death about me
and you're a child! And I'm alone and half mad
with hate and longing. I shall let you love me
and love you in return, and then, why then
God knows what happens!

MIRIAMNE. Something most unpleasant?

MIO. Love in a box car—love among the children.
I've seen too much of it. Are we to live
in this same house you make with your two hands
mystically, out of air?

MIRIAMNE. No roof, no mortgage!
Well, I shall marry a baker out in Flatbush,
it gives hot bread in the morning! Oh, Mio, Mio,
in all the unwanted places and waste lands
that roll up into the darkness out of sun
and into sun out of dark, there should be one empty
for you and me.

MIO. No.

MIRIAMNE. Then go now and leave me.
I'm only a girl you saw in the tenements,
and there's been nothing said.

MIO. Miriamne.

(*She takes a step toward him*)

MIRIAMNE. Yes.

(*He kisses her lips lightly*)

MIO. Why, girl, the transfiguration on the mount
was nothing to your face. It lights from within—
a white chalice holding fire, a flower in flame,
this is your face.

MIRIAMNE. And you shall drink the flame
and never lessen it. And round your head
the aureole shall burn that burns there now,
forever. This I can give you. And so forever
the Freudians are wrong.

MIO. They're well-forgotten
at any rate.

MIRIAMNE. Why did you speak to me
when you first saw me?

MIO. I knew then.

MIRIAMNE. And I came back
because I must see you again. And we danced together
and my heart hurt me. Never, never, never,
though they should bind me down and tear out my eyes,
would I ever hurt you now. Take me with you, Mio,
let them look for us, whoever there is to look,
but we'll be away.

(MIO *turns away toward the tenement*)

MIO. When I was four years old
we climbed through an iron gate, my mother and I,
to see my father in prison. He stood in the death-cell
and put his hand through the bars and said, My Mio,
I have only this to leave you, that I love you,
and will love you after I die. Love me then, Mio,
when this hard thing comes on you, that you must live
a man despised for your father. That night the guards,
walking in flood-lights brighter than high noon,
led him between them with his trousers slit
and a shaven head for the cathodes. This sleet and rain
that I feel cold here on my face and hands
will find him under thirteen years of clay
in prison ground. Lie still and rest, my father,
for I have not forgotten. When I forget
may I lie blind as you. No other love,
time passing, nor the spaced light-years of suns
shall blur your voice, or tempt me from the path
that clears your name—
till I have these rats in my grip

or sleep deep where you sleep.
(*To Miriamne*)
I have no house,
nor home, nor love of life, nor fear of death,
nor care for what I eat, or who I sleep with,
or what color of calcimine the Government
will wash itself this year or next to lure
the sheep and feed the wolves. Love somewhere else,
and get your children in some other image
more acceptable to the State! This face of mine
is stamped for sewage!
(*She steps back, surmising*)
MIRIAMNE. Mio—
MIO. My road is cut
in rock, and leads to one end. If I hurt you, I'm sorry.
One gets over hurts.
MIRIAMNE. What was his name—
your father's name?
MIO. Bartolomeo Romagna.
I'm not ashamed of it.
MIRIAMNE. Why are you here?
MIO. For the reason
I've never had a home. Because I'm a cry
out of a shallow grave, and all roads are mine
that might revenge him!
MIRIAMNE. But Mio—why here—why here?
MIO. I can't tell you that.
MIRIAMNE. No—but—there's someone
lives here—lives not far—and you mean to see him—
you mean to ask him—
(*She pauses*)
MIO. Who told you that?
MIRIAMNE. His name
is Garth—Garth Esdras—
MIO.
(*After a pause, coming nearer*)
Who are you, then? You seem
to know a good deal about me.—Were you sent
to say this?
MIRIAMNE. You said there was death about you! Yes,
but nearer than you think! Let it be as it is—
let it all be as it is, never see this place
nor think of it—forget the streets you came
when you're away and safe! Go before you're seen
or spoken to!
MIO. Will you tell me why?
MIRIAMNE. As I love you
I can't tell you—and I can never see you—
MIO. I walk where I please—
MIRIAMNE. Do you think it's easy for me
to send you away?
(*She steps back as if to go*)
MIO. Where will I find you then
if I should want to see you?
MIRIAMNE. Never—I tell you
I'd bring you death! Even now. Listen!
(SHADOW *and* TROCK *enter between the bridge and the tenement house.* MIRIAMNE *pulls* MIO *back into the shadow of the rock to avoid being seen*)
TROCK. Why, fine.
SHADOW. You watch it now—just for the record, Trock—
you're going to thank me for staying away from it
and keeping you out. I've seen men get that way,
thinking they had to plug a couple of guys
and then a few more to cover it up, and then
maybe a dozen more. You can't own all
and territory adjacent, and you can't
slough all the witnesses, because every man
you put away has friends—
TROCK. I said all right.
I said fine.
SHADOW. They're going to find this judge,
and if they find him dead it's just too bad,
and I don't want to know anything about it—
and you don't either.
TROCK. You all through?
SHADOW. Why sure.
TROCK. All right.
We're through, too, you know.
SHADOW. Yeah?
(*He becomes wary*)
TROCK. Yeah, we're through.
SHADOW. I've heard that said before, and afterwards
somebody died.
(TROCK *is silent*)
Is that what you mean?
TROCK. You can go.
I don't want to see you.
SHADOW. Sure, I'll go.
Maybe you won't mind if I just find out

what you've got on you. Before I turn my back
I'd like to know.
(*Silently and expertly he touches Trock's pockets, extracting a gun*)
Not that I'd distrust you,
but you know how it is.
(*He pockets the gun*)
So long, Trock.

TROCK. So long.

SHADOW. I won't talk.
You can be sure of that.

TROCK. I know you won't.

(SHADOW *turns and goes out right, past the rock and along the bank. As he goes the* TWO YOUNG MEN IN BLUE SERGE *enter from the left and walk slowly after Shadow. They look toward Trock as they enter and he motions with his thumb in the direction taken by Shadow. They follow Shadow out without haste.* TROCK *watches them disappear, then slips out the way he came.* MIO *comes a step forward, looking after the two men. Two or three shots are heard, then silence.* MIO *starts to run after* SHADOW)

MIRIAMNE. Mio!

MIO. What do you know about this?

MIRIAMNE. The other way,
Mio—quick!
(CARR *slips in from the right, in haste*)

CARR. Look, somebody's just been shot.
He fell in the river. The guys that did the shooting
ran up the bank.

MIO. Come on.

(MIO *and* CARR *run out right.* MIRIAMNE *watches uncertainly, then slowly turns and walks to the rear door of the tenement. She stands there a moment, looking after Mio, then goes in, closing the door.* CARR *and* MIO *return*)

CARR. There's a rip tide past the point. You'd never find him.

MIO. No.

CARR. You know a man really ought to carry insurance living around here.—God, it's easy, putting a fellow away. I never saw it done before.

MIO. (*Looking at the place where Miriamne stood*)
They have it all worked out.

CARR. What are you doing now?

MIO. I have a little business to transact in this neighborhood.

CARR. You'd better forget it.

MIO. No.

CARR. Need any help?

MIO. Well, if I did I'd ask you first. But I don't see how it would do any good. So you keep out of it and take care of yourself.

CARR. So long, then.

MIO. So long, Carr.

CARR.
(*Looking down-stream*)
He was drifting face up. Must be halfway to the island the way the tide runs.
(*He shivers*)
God, it's cold here. Well—
(*He goes out to the left.* MIO *sits on the edge of the rock.* LUCIA *comes stealthily back from between the bridge and the tenement, goes to the street-piano and wheels it away.* PINY *comes in. They take a look at* MIO, *but say nothing.* LUCIA *goes into his shelter and* PINY *into hers.* MIO *rises, looks up at the tenement, and goes out to the left*)

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE: *The basement as in Scene 2 of Act One. The same evening.* ESDRAS *sits at the table reading,* MIRIAMNE *is seated at the left, listening and intent. The door of the inner room is half open and Garth's violin is heard. He is playing the theme from the third movement of Beethoven's Archduke Trio.* ESDRAS *looks up.*

ESDRAS. I remember when I came to the end
of all the Talmud said, and the commentaries,
then I was fifty years old—and it was time
to ask what I had learned. I asked this question

and gave myself the answer. In all the Talmud
there was nothing to find but the names of things,
set down that we might call them by those names
and walk without fear among things known. Since then
I have had twenty years to read on and on
and end with Ecclesiastes. Names of names,
evanid days, evanid nights and days
and words that shift their meaning. Space is time,
that which was is now—the men of tomorrow
live, and this is their yesterday. All things
that were and are and will be, have their being
then and now and to come. If this means little
when you are young, remember it. It will return
to mean more when you are old.

MIRIAMNE. I'm sorry—I
was listening for something.

ESDRAS. It doesn't matter.
It's a useless wisdom. It's all I have,
but useless. It may be there is no time,
but we grow old. Do you know his name?

MIRIAMNE. Whose name?

ESDRAS. Why, when we're young and listen for a step
the step should have a name—

(MIRIAMNE, *not hearing, rises and goes to the window.* GARTH *enters from within, carrying his violin and carefully closing the door*)

GARTH.

(*As* ESDRAS *looks at him*)
Asleep.

ESDRAS. He may
sleep on through the whole night—then in the morning
we can let them know.

GARTH. We'd be wiser to say nothing—
let him find his own way back.

ESDRAS. How did he come here?

GARTH. He's not too crazy for that. If he wakes again
we'll keep him quiet and shift him off tomorrow.
Somebody'd pick him up.

ESDRAS. How have I come
to this sunken end of a street, at a life's end—?

GARTH. It was cheaper here—not to be transcendental—
So—we say nothing—?

ESDRAS. Nothing.

MIRIAMNE. Garth, there's no place
in this whole city—not one—
where you wouldn't be safer
than here—tonight—or tomorrow.

GARTH.

(*Bitterly*)
Well, that may be.
What of it?

MIRIAMNE. If you slipped away and took
a place somewhere where Trock couldn't find you—

GARTH. Yes—
using what for money? and why do you think
I've sat here so far—because I love my home
so much? No, but if I stepped round the corner
it'd be my last corner and my last step.

MIRIAMNE. And yet—
if you're here—they'll find you here—
Trock will come again—
and there's worse to follow—

GARTH. Do you want to get me killed?

MIRIAMNE. No.

GARTH. There's no way out of it. We'll wait
and take what they send us.

ESDRAS. Hush! You'll wake him.

GARTH. I've done it.
I hear him stirring now.

(*They wait quietly.* JUDGE GAUNT *opens the door and enters*)

GAUNT.

(*In the doorway*)
I beg your pardon—
no, no, be seated—keep your place—I've made
your evening difficult enough, I fear;
and I must thank you doubly for your kindness,
for I've been ill—I know it.

ESDRAS. You're better, sir?

GAUNT. Quite recovered, thank you. Able, I hope,
to manage nicely now. You'll be rewarded
for your hospitality—though at this moment
(*He smiles*)

I'm low in funds.
(*He inspects his billfold*)
Sir, my embarrassment
is great indeed—and more than monetary,
for I must own my recollection's vague
of how I came here—how we came together—
and what we may have said. My name is Gaunt,
Judge Gaunt, a name long known in the criminal courts,
and not unhonored there.
ESDRAS. My name is Esdras—
and this is Garth, my son. And Miriamne,
the daughter of my old age.
GAUNT. I'm glad to meet you.
Esdras. Garth Esdras.
(*He passes a hand over his eyes*)
It's not a usual name.
Of late it's been connected with a case—
a case I knew. But this is hardly the man.
Though it's not a usual name.
(*They are silent*)
Sir, how I came here,
as I have said, I don't well know. Such things
are sometimes not quite accident.
ESDRAS. We found you
outside our door and brought you in.
GAUNT. The brain
can be overworked, and weary, even when the man
would swear to his good health. Sir, on my word
I don't know why I came here, nor how, nor when,
nor what would explain it. Shall we say the machine
begins to wear? I felt no twinge of it.—
You will imagine how much more than galling
I feel it, to ask my way home—and where I am—
but I do ask you that.
ESDRAS. This is New York City—
or part of it.
GAUNT. Not the best part, I presume?
(*He smiles grimly*)
No, not the best.
ESDRAS. Not typical, no.
GAUNT. And you—
(*To Garth*)
you are Garth Esdras?
GARTH. That's my name.
GAUNT. Well, sir,
(*To Esdras*)
I shall lie under the deepest obligation
if you will set an old man on his path,
for I lack the homing instinct, if the truth
were known. North, east and south mean nothing to me
here in this room.
ESDRAS. I can put you in your way.
GARTH. Only you'd be wiser to wait a while—
if I'm any judge.—
GAUNT. It happens I'm the judge—
(*With stiff humor*)
in more ways than one. You'll forgive me if I say
I find this place and my predicament
somewhat distasteful.
(*He looks round him*)
GARTH. I don't doubt you do;
but you're better off here.
GAUNT. Nor will you find it wise
to cross my word as lightly as you seem
inclined to do. You've seen me ill and shaken—
and you presume on that.
GARTH. Have it your way.
GAUNT. Doubtless what information is required
we'll find nearby.
ESDRAS. Yes, sir—the terminal,—
if you could walk so far.
GAUNT. I've done some walking—
to look at my shoes.
(*He looks down, then puts out a hand to steady himself*)
That—that was why I came—
never mind—it was there—and it's gone.
(*To Garth*)
Professor Hobhouse—
that's the name—he wrote some trash about you
and printed it in a broadside.
—Since I'm here I can tell you
it's a pure fabrication—lacking facts
and legal import. Senseless and impudent,
written with bias—with malicious intent
to undermine the public confidence
in justice and the courts. I knew it then—
all he brings out about this testimony

you might have given. It's true I could have called you,
but the case was clear—Romagna was known guilty,
and there was nothing to add. If I've endured
some hours of torture over their attacks
upon my probity—and in this torture
have wandered from my place, wandered perhaps
in mind and body—and found my way to face you—
why, yes, it is so—I know it—I beg of you
say nothing. It's not easy to give up
a fair name after a full half century
of service to a state. It may well rock
the surest reason. Therefore I ask of you
say nothing of this visit.

GARTH. I'll say nothing.

ESDRAS. Nor any of us.

GAUNT. Why, no—for you'd lose, too.
You'd have nothing to gain.

ESDRAS. Indeed we know it.

GAUNT. I'll remember you kindly. When I've returned,
there may be some mystery made of where I was—
we'll leave it a mystery?

GARTH. Anything you say.

GAUNT. Why, now I go with much more peace of mind—
if I can call you friends.

ESDRAS. We shall be grateful
for silence on your part, Your Honor.

GAUNT. Sir—
if there were any just end to be served
by speaking out, I'd speak! There is none. No—
bear that in mind!

ESDRAS. We will, Your Honor.

GAUNT. Then—
I'm in some haste. If you can be my guide,
we'll set out now.

ESDRAS. Yes, surely.

(There is a knock at the door. The four look at each other with some apprehension. MIRIAMNE *rises)*
I'll answer it.

MIRIAMNE. Yes.

(She goes into the inner room and closes the door. ESDRAS *goes to the outer door. The knock is repeated. He opens the door.* MIO *is there)*

ESDRAS. Yes, sir.

MIO. May I come in?

ESDRAS. Will you state your business, sir?
It's late—and I'm not at liberty—

MIO. Why, I might say
that I was trying to earn my tuition fees
by peddling magazines. I could say that,
or collecting old newspapers—paying cash—
highest rates—no questions asked—

(He looks round sharply)

GARTH. We've nothing to sell.
What do you want?

MIO. Your pardon, gentlemen.
My business is not of an ordinary kind,
and I felt the need of this slight introduction
while I might get my bearings. Your name is Esdras,
or they told me so outside.

GARTH. What do you want?

MIO. Is that the name?

GARTH. Yes.

MIO. I'll be quick and brief.
I'm the son of a man who died many years ago
for a pay roll robbery in New England. You
should be Garth Esdras, by what I've heard. You have
some knowledge of the crime, if one can believe
what he reads in the public prints, and it might be
that your testimony, if given, would clear my father
of any share in the murder. You may not care
whether he was guilty or not. You may not know.
But I do care—and care deeply, and I've come
to ask you face to face.

GARTH. To ask me what?

MIO. What do you know of it?

ESDRAS. This man Romagna,
did he have a son?

MIO. Yes, sir, this man Romagna,
as you choose to call him, had a son, and I
am that son, and proud.

ESDRAS. Forgive me.

MIO. Had you known him,
and heard him speak, you'd know why I'm

proud, and why
he was no malefactor.
ESDRAS. I quite believe you.
If my son can help he will. But at this moment,
as I told you—could you, I wonder, come tomorrow,
at your own hour?
MIO. Yes.
ESDRAS. By coincidence
we too of late have had this thing in mind—
there have been comments printed, and much discussion
which we could hardly avoid.
MIO. Could you tell me then
in a word?—What you know—
is it for him or against him?—
that's all I need.
ESDRAS. My son knows nothing.
GARTH. No.
The picture-papers lash themselves to a fury
over any rumor—make them up when they're short
of bedroom slops.—This is what happened. I
had known a few members of a gang one time
up there—and after the murder they picked me up
because I looked like someone that was seen
in what they called the murder car. They held me
a little while, but they couldn't identify me
for the most excellent reason I wasn't there
when the thing occurred. A dozen years later now
a professor comes across this, and sees red
and asks why I wasn't called on as a witness
and yips so loud they syndicate his picture
in all the rotos. That's all I know about it.
I wish I could tell you more.
ESDRAS. Let me say too
that I have read some words your father said,
and you were a son fortunate in your father,
whatever the verdict of the world.
MIO. There are few
who think so, but it's true, and I thank you. Then—
that's the whole story?
GARTH. All I know of it.
MIO. They cover their tracks well, the inner ring
that distributes murder. I came three thousand miles
to this dead end.
ESDRAS. If he was innocent
and you know him so, believe it, and let the others
believe as they like.
MIO. Will you tell me how a man's
to live, and face his life, if he can't believe
that truth's like a fire,
and will burn through and be seen
though it takes all the years there are?
While I stand up and have breath in my lungs
I shall be one flame of that fire;
it's all the life I have.
ESDRAS. Then you must live so.
One must live as he can.
MIO. It's the only way
of life my father left me.
ESDRAS. Yes? Yet it's true
the ground we walk on is impacted down
and hard with blood and bones of those who died
unjustly. There's not one title to land or life,
even your own, but was built on rape and murder,
back a few years. It would take a fire indeed
to burn out all this error.
MIO. Then let it burn down,
all of it!
ESDRAS. We ask a great deal of the world
at first—then less—and then less.
We ask for truth
and justice. But this truth's a thing unknown
in the lightest, smallest matter—and as for justice,
who has once seen it done? You loved your father,
and I could have loved him, for every word he spoke
in his trial was sweet and tolerant, but the weight
of what men are and have, rests heavy on
the graves of those who lost. They'll not rise again,
and their causes lie there with them.
GAUNT. If you mean to say
that Bartolomeo Romagna was innocent,
you are wrong. He was guilty.
There may have been injustice

from time to time, by regrettable chance, in our courts,
but not in that case, I assure you.
MIO. Oh, you assure me!
You lie in your scrag teeth, whoever you are!
My father was murdered!
GAUNT. Romagna was found guilty
by all due process of law, and given his chance
to prove his innocence.
MIO. What chance? When a court
panders to mob hysterics, and the jury
comes in loaded to soak an anarchist
and a foreigner, it may be due process of law
but it's also murder!
GAUNT. He should have thought of that
before he spilled blood.
MIO. He?
GAUNT. Sir, I know too well
that he was guilty.
MIO. Who are you? How do you know?
I've searched the records through, the trial and what
came after, and in all that million words
I found not one unbiased argument
to fix the crime on him.
GAUNT. And you yourself,
were you unprejudiced?
MIO. Who are you?
ESDRAS. Sir,
this gentleman is here, as you are here,
to ask my son, as you have asked, what ground
there might be for this talk of new evidence
in your father's case. We gave him the same answer
we've given you.
MIO. I'm sorry. I'd supposed
his cause forgotten except by myself. There's still
a defense committee then?
GAUNT. There may be. I
am not connected with it.
ESDRAS. He is my guest,
and asks to remain unknown.
MIO.
(*After a pause, looking at Gaunt*)
The judge at the trial
was younger, but he had your face. Can it be
that you're the man?—Yes—Yes.—The jury charge—
I sat there as a child and heard your voice,
and watched that Brahminical mouth. I knew even then
you meant no good to him. And now you're here
to winnow out truth and justice—the fountain-head
of the lies that slew him! Are you Judge Gaunt?
GAUNT. I am.
MIO. Then tell me what damnation to what inferno
would fit the toad that sat in robes and lied
when he gave the charge, and knew he lied! Judge that,
and then go to your place in that hell!
GAUNT. I know and have known
what bitterness can rise against a court
when it must say, putting aside all weakness,
that a man's to die. I can forgive you that,
for you are your father's son, and you think of him
as a son thinks of his father. Certain laws
seem cruel in their operation; it's necessary
that we be cruel to uphold them. This cruelty
is kindness to those I serve.
MIO. I don't doubt that.
I know who it is you serve.
GAUNT. Would I have chosen
to rack myself with other men's despairs,
stop my ears, harden my heart, and listen only
to the voice of law and light, if I had hoped
some private gain for serving? In all my years
on the bench of a long-established commonwealth
not once has my decision been in question
save in this case. Not once before or since.
For hope of heaven or place on earth, or power
or gold, no man has had my voice, nor will
while I still keep the trust that's laid on me
to sentence and define.
MIO. Then why are you here?
GAUNT. My record's clean. I've kept it so. But suppose
with the best intent, among the myriad tongues
that come to testify, I had missed my way
and followed a perjured tale to a lethal end
till a man was forsworn to death? Could I

rest or sleep
while there was doubt of this,
even while there was question in a layman's mind?
For always, night and day,
there lies on my brain like a weight, the admonition:
see truly, let nothing sway you; among all functions
there's but one godlike, to judge. Then see to it
you judge as a god would judge, with clarity,
with truth, with what mercy is found consonant
with order and law. Without law men are beasts,
and it's a judge's task to lift and hold them
above themselves. Let a judge be once mistaken
or step aside for a friend, and a gap is made
in the dykes that hold back anarchy and chaos,
and leave men bond but free.

MIO. Then the gap's been made,
and you made it.

GAUNT. I feared that too. May you be a judge
sometime, and know in what fear,
through what nights long
in fear, I scanned and verified and compared
the transcripts of the trial.

MIO. Without prejudice,
no doubt. It was never in your mind to prove
that you'd been right.

GAUNT. And conscious of that, too—
that that might be my purpose—watchful of that,
and jealous as his own lawyer of the rights
that should hedge the defendant!
And still I found no error,
shook not one staple of the bolts that linked
the doer to the deed! Still following on
from step to step, I watched all modern comment,
and saw it centered finally on one fact—
Garth Esdras was not called. This is Garth Esdras,
and you have heard him. Would his deposition
have justified a new trial?

MIO. No. It would not.

GAUNT. And there I come, myself. If the man were still
in his cell, and waiting, I'd have no faint excuse
for another hearing.

MIO. I've told you that I read
the trial from beginning to end. Every word you spoke
was balanced carefully to keep the letter
of the law and still convict—convict, by Christ,
if it tore the seven veils! You stand here now
running cascades of casuistry, to prove
to yourself and me that no judge of rank and breeding
could burn a man out of hate! But that's what you did
under all your varnish!

GAUNT. I've sought for evidence,
and you have sought. Have you found it? Can you cite
one fresh word in defence?

MIO. The trial itself
was shot full of legerdemain, prearranged to lead
the jury astray—

GAUNT. Could you prove that?

MIO. Yes!

GAUNT. And if
the jury were led astray, remember it's
the jury, by our Anglo-Saxon custom,
that finds for guilt or innocence. The judge
is powerless in that matter.

MIO. Not you! Your charge
misled the jury more than the evidence,
accepted every biased meaning, distilled
the poison for them!

GAUNT. But if that were so
I'd be the first, I swear it, to step down
among all men, and hold out both my hands
for manacles—yes, publish it in the streets,
that all I've held most sacred was defiled
by my own act. A judge's brain becomes
a delicate instrument to weigh men's lives
for good and ill—too delicate to bear
much tampering. If he should push aside
the weights and throw the beam, and say, this once
the man is guilty, and I will have it so
though his mouth cry out from the ground,
and all the world

revoke my word, he'd have a short way to go
to madness. I think you'd find him in the squares,
stopping the passers-by with arguments,—
see, I was right, the man was guilty there—
this was brought in against him, this—and this—
and I was left no choice! It's no light thing
when a long life's been dedicated to one end
to wrench the mind awry!

MIO. By your own thesis
you should be mad, and no doubt you are.

GAUNT. But my madness
is only this—that I would fain look back
on a life well spent—without one stain—one breath
of stain to flaw the glass—not in men's minds
nor in my own. I take my God as witness
I meant to earn that clearness, and believe
that I have earned it. Yet my name is clouded
with the blackest, fiercest scandal of our age
that's touched a judge. What I can do to wipe
that smutch from my fame I will. I think you know
how deeply I've been hated, for no cause
that I can find there. Can it not be—and I ask this
quite honestly—that the great injustice lies
on your side and not mine? Time and time again
men have come before me perfect in their lives,
loved by all who knew them, loved at home,
gentle, not vicious, yet caught so ripe red-handed
in some dark violence there was no denying
where the onus lay.

MIO. That was not so with my father!

GAUNT. And yet it seemed so to me. To other men
who sat in judgment on him. Can you be sure—
I ask this in humility—that you,
who were touched closest by the tragedy,
may not have lost perspective—may have brooded
day and night on one theme—till your eyes are tranced
and show you one side only?

MIO. I see well enough.

GAUNT. And would that not be part of the malady—
to look quite steadily at the drift of things
but see there what you wish—not what is there—
not what another man to whom the story
was fresh would say is there?

MIO. You think I'm crazy.
Is that what you meant to say?

GAUNT. I've seen it happen
with the best and wisest men. I but ask the question.
I can't speak for you. Is it not true wherever
you walk, through the little town where you knew him well,
or flying from it, inland or by the sea,
still walking at your side, and sleeping only
when you too sleep, a shadow not your own
follows, pleading and holding out its hands
to be delivered from shame?

MIO. How you know that
by God I don't know.

GAUNT. Because one spectre haunted you and me—
and haunts you still, but for me it's laid to rest
now that my mind is satisfied. He died
justly and not by error.

(*A pause*)

MIO.

(*Stepping forward*)
Do you care to know
you've come so near to death it's miracle
that pulse still beats in your splotchy throat?
Do you know
there's murder in me?

GAUNT. There was murder in your sire,
and it's to be expected! I say he died
justly, and he deserved it!

MIO. Yes, you'd like too well
to have me kill you! That would prove your case
and clear your name, and dip my father's name
in stench forever! You'll not get that from me!
Go home and die in bed, get it under cover,
your lux-et-lex putrefaction of the right thing,
you man that walks like a god!

GAUNT. Have I made you angry
by coming too near the truth?

MIO. This sets him up,

this venomous slug, this sets him up in a gown,
deciding who's to walk above the earth
and who's to lie beneath! And giving reasons!
The cobra giving reasons; I'm a god,
by Buddha, holy and worshipful my fang,
and can I sink it in!
(*He pauses, turns as if to go, then sits*)
This is no good.
This won't help much.
(*The* JUDGE *and* ESDRAS *look at each other*)
GAUNT. We should be going.
ESDRAS. Yes.
(*They prepare to go*)
I'll lend you my coat.
GAUNT.
(*Looking at it with distaste*)
No, keep it. A little rain
shouldn't matter to me.
ESDRAS. It freezes as it falls,
and you've a long way to go.
GAUNT. I'll manage, thank you.
(GAUNT *and* ESDRAS *go out,* ESDRAS *obsequious, closing the door*)
GARTH.
(*Looking at Mio's back*)
Well?
MIO.
(*Not moving*)
Let me sit here a moment.
(GARTH *shrugs his shoulders and goes toward the inner door.* MIRIAMNE *opens it and comes out.* GARTH *looks at her, then at Mio, then lays his fingers on his lips. She nods.* GARTH *goes out.* MIRIAMNE *sits and watches* MIO. *After a little he turns and sees her*)
MIO. How did you come here?
MIRIAMNE. I live here.
MIO. Here?
MIRIAMNE. My name is Esdras. Garth
is my brother. The walls are thin.
I heard what was said.
MIO.
(*Stirring wearily*)
I'm going. This is no place for me.
MIRIAMNE. What place
would be better?
MIO. None. Only it's better to go.
Just to go.
(*She comes over to him, puts her arm round him and kisses his forehead*)
MIRIAMNE. Mio.
MIO. What do you want?
Your kisses burn me—and your arms. Don't offer
what I'm never to have! I can have nothing. They say
they'll cross the void sometime to the other planets
and men will breathe in that air.
Well, I could breathe there,
but not here now. Not on this ball of mud.
I don't want it.
MIRIAMNE. They can take away so little
with all their words. For you're a king among them.
I heard you, and loved your voice.
MIO. I thought I'd fallen
so low there was no further, and now a pit
opens beneath. It was bad enough that he
should have died innocent, but if he were guilty—
then what's my life—what have I left to do—?
Then son of a felon—and what they spat on me
was earned—and I'm drenched with the stuff.
Here on my hands
and cheeks, their spittle hanging! I liked my hands
because they were like his. I tell you I've lived
by his innocence, lived to see it flash
and blind them all—
MIRIAMNE. Never believe them, Mio,
never.
(*She looks toward the inner door*)
MIO. But it was truth I wanted, truth—
not the lies you'd tell yourself, or tell a woman,
or a woman tells you! The judge with his cobra mouth
may have spat truth—and I may be mad! For me—
your hands are too clean to touch me. I'm to have
the scraps from hotel kitchens—and instead of love
those mottled bodies that hitch themselves through alleys
to sell for dimes or nickels. Go, keep yourself chaste

for the baker bridegroom—baker and son of a baker,
let him get his baker's dozen on you!
MIRIAMNE. No—
say once you love me—say it once; I'll never
ask to hear it twice, nor for any kindness,
and you shall take all I have!
(GARTH *opens the inner door and comes out*)
GARTH. I interrupt
a love scene, I believe. We can do without
your adolescent mawkishness.
(*To Miriamne*)
You're a child.
You'll both remember that.
MIRIAMNE. I've said nothing to harm you—
and will say nothing.
GARTH. You're my sister, though,
and I take a certain interest in you. Where
have you two met?
MIRIAMNE. We danced together.
GARTH. Then
the dance is over, I think.
MIRIAMNE. I've always loved you
and tried to help you, Garth. And you've been kind.
Don't spoil it now.
GARTH. Spoil it how?
MIRIAMNE. Because I love him.
I didn't know it would happen. We danced together.
And the world's all changed. I see you through a mist,
and our father, too. If you brought this to nothing
I'd want to die.
GARTH.
(*To Mio*)
You'd better go.
MIO. Yes, I know.
(*He rises. There is a trembling knock at the door.* MIRIAMNE *goes to it. The* HOBO *is there shivering*)
HOBO. Miss, could I sleep under the pipes tonight, miss?
Could I, please?
MIRIAMNE. I think—not tonight.
HOBO. There won't be any more nights—
if I don't get warm, miss.
MIRIAMNE. Come in.
(*The* HOBO *comes in, looks round deprecatingly, then goes to a corner beneath a huge heating pipe, which he crawls under as if he'd been there before*)
HOBO. Yes, miss, thank you.
GARTH. Must we put up with that?
MIRIAMNE. Father let him sleep there—
last winter.
GARTH. Yes, God, yes.
MIO. Well, good night.
MIRIAMNE. Where will you go?
MIO. Yes, where? As if it mattered.
GARTH. Oh, sleep here, too.
We'll have a row of you under the pipes.
MIO. No, thanks.
MIRIAMNE. Mio, I've saved a little money. It's only
some pennies, but you must take it.
(*She shakes some coins out of a box into her hand*)
MIO. No, thanks.
MIRIAMNE. And I love you.
You've never said you love me.
MIO. Why wouldn't I love you
when you're clean and sweet,
and I've seen nothing sweet or clean
this last ten years? I love you. I leave you that
for what good it may do you. It's none to me.
MIRIAMNE. Then kiss me.
MIO.
(*Looking at Garth*)
With that scowling over us? No.
When it rains, some spring
on the planet Mercury, where the spring comes often,
I'll meet you there, let's say. We'll wait for that.
It may be some time till then.
(*The outside door opens and* ESDRAS *enters with* JUDGE GAUNT, *then, after a slight interval,* TROCK *follows.* TROCK *surveys the interior and its occupants one by one, carefully*)
TROCK. I wouldn't want to cause you inconvenience,
any of you, and especially the Judge.
I think you know that. You've all got things to do—
trains to catch, and so on. But trains can wait.
Hell, nearly anything can wait, you'll find,
only I can't. I'm the only one that can't
because I've got no time. Who's all this here?

Who's that?
(*He points to the Hobo*)
ESDRAS. He's a poor half-wit, sir,
that sometimes sleeps here.
TROCK. Come out. I say come out,
whoever you are.
(*The* HOBO *stirs and looks up*)
Yes, I mean you. Come out.
(*The* HOBO *emerges*)
What's your name?
HOBO. They mostly call me Oke.
TROCK. What do you know?
HOBO. No, sir.
TROCK. Where are you from?
HOBO. I got a piece of bread.
(*He brings it out, trembling*)
TROCK. Get back in there!
(*The* HOBO *crawls back into his corner*)
Maybe you want to know why I'm doing this.
Well, I've been robbed, that's why—
robbed five or six times;
the police can't find a thing—so I'm out for myself—
if you want to know.
(*To Mio*)
Who are you?
MIO. Oh, I'm a half-wit,
came in here by mistake. The difference is
I've got no piece of bread.
TROCK. What's your name?
MIO. My name?
Theophrastus Such. That's respectable.
You'll find it all the way from here to the coast
on the best police blotters.
Only the truth is we're a little touched in the head,
Oke and me. You'd better ask somebody else.
TROCK. Who *is* he?
ESDRAS. His name's Romagna. He's the son.
TROCK. Then what's he doing here? You said you were on the level.
GARTH. He just walked in. On account of the stuff in the papers. We didn't ask him.
TROCK. God, we are a gathering. Now if we had Shadow we'd be all here, huh? Only I guess we won't see Shadow. No, that's too much to ask.
MIO. Who's Shadow?
TROCK. Now you're putting questions.
Shadow was just nobody, you see. He blew away. It might happen to anyone.
(*He looks at Garth*)
Yes, anyone at all.
MIO. Why do you keep your hand in your pocket, friend?
TROCK. Because I'm cold, punk. Because I've been outside and it's cold as the tomb of Christ.
(*To Garth*)
Listen, there's a car waiting up at the street to take the Judge home. We'll take him to the car.
GARTH. That's not necessary.
ESDRAS. No.
TROCK. I say it is, see? You wouldn't want to let the Judge walk, would you? The Judge is going to ride where he's going, with a couple of chauffeurs, and everything done in style. Don't you worry about the Judge. He'll be taken care of. For good.
GARTH. I want no hand in it.
TROCK. Anything happens to me happens to you too, musician.
GARTH. I know that.
TROCK. Keep your mouth out of it then. And you'd better keep the punk here tonight, just for luck.
(*He turns toward the door. There is a brilliant lightning flash through the windows, followed slowly by dying thunder.* TROCK *opens the door. The rain begins to pour in sheets*)
Jesus, somebody tipped it over again!
(*A cough racks him*)
Wait till it's over. It takes ten days off me every time I step into it.
(*He closes the door*)
Sit down and wait.
(*Lightning flashes again. The thunder is fainter.* ESDRAS, GARTH *and the* JUDGE *sit down*)
GAUNT. We were born too early. Even you who are young
are not of the elect. In a hundred years
man will put his finger on life itself, and then
he will live as long as he likes. For you and me
we shall die soon—one day, one year more or less,

when or where, it's no matter. It's what we call
an indeterminate sentence. I'm hungry.
(GARTH *looks at Miriamne*)
MIRIAMNE. There was nothing left
tonight.
HOBO. I've got a piece of bread.
(*He breaks his bread in two and hands half to the Judge*)
GAUNT. I thank you, sir.
(*He eats*)
This is not good bread.
(*He rises*)
Sir, I am used
to other company. Not better, perhaps, but their clothes
were different. These are what it's the fashion to call
the underprivileged.
TROCK. Oh, hell!
(*He turns toward the door*)
MIO.
(*To Trock*)
It would seem that you and the Judge know each other.
(TROCK *faces him*)
TROCK. I've been around.
MIO. Maybe you've met before.
TROCK. Maybe we have.
MIO. Will you tell me where?
TROCK. How long do you want to live?
MIO. How long? Oh, I've got big ideas about that.
TROCK. I thought so. Well, so far I've got nothing against you but your name, see? You keep it that way.
(*He opens the door. The rain still falls in torrents. He closes the door. As he turns from it, it opens again, and* SHADOW, *white, bloodstained and dripping, stands in the doorway.* GARTH *rises,* TROCK *turns*)
GAUNT.
(*To the Hobo*)
Yet if one were careful of his health, ate sparingly, drank not at all, used himself wisely, it might be that even an old man could live to touch immortality. They may come on the secret sooner than we dare hope. You see? It does no harm to try.
TROCK.
(*Backing away from Shadow*)
By God, he's out of his grave!
SHADOW.
(*Leaning against the doorway, holding a gun in his hands*)
Keep your hands where they belong, Trock.
You know me.
TROCK. Don't! Don't! I had nothing to do with it!
(*He backs to the opposite wall*)
SHADOW. You said the doctor gave you six months to live—well, I don't give you that much. That's what you had, six months, and so you start bumping off your friends to make sure of your damn six months. I got it from you. I know where I got it.
Because I wouldn't give it to the Judge.
So he wouldn't talk.
TROCK. Honest to God—
SHADOW. What God?
The one that let you put three holes in me
when I was your friend? Well, He let me get up again
and walk till I could find you. That's as far as I get,
but I got there, by God! And I can hear you
even if I can't see!
(*He takes a staggering step forward*)
A man needs blood
to keep going.—I got this far.—And now I can't see!
It runs out too fast—too fast—
when you've got three slugs
clean through you.
Show me where he is, you fools! He's here!
I got here!
(*He drops the gun*)
Help me! Help me! Oh, God! Oh, God!
I'm going to die! Where does a man lie down?
I want to lie down!
(MIRIAMNE *starts toward Shadow.* GARTH *and* ESDRAS *help him into the next room,* MIRIAMNE *following.* TROCK *squats in his corner, breathing hard, looking at the door.* MIO *stands, watching Trock.* GARTH *returns, wiping his hand with a handkerchief.* MIO *picks up and pockets the gun.* MIRIAMNE *comes back and leans against the door jamb*)
GAUNT. You will hear it said that an old

man makes a good judge, being calm, clear-eyed, without passion. But this is not true. Only the young love truth and justice. The old are savage, wary, violent, swayed by maniac desires, cynical of friendship or love, open to bribery and the temptations of lust, corrupt and dastardly to the heart. I know these old men. What have they left to believe, what have they left to lose? Whorers of daughters, lickers of girls' shoes, contrivers of nastiness in the night, purveyors of perversion, worshippers of possession! Death is the only radical. He comes late, but he comes at last to put away the old men and give the young their places. It was time.

(*He leers*)

Here's one I heard yesterday:

Marmaduke behind the barn
got his sister in a fix;
he says damn instead of darn;
ain't he cute? He's only six!

THE HOBO. He, he, he!

GAUNT.

And the hoot-owl hoots all night,
and the cuckoo cooks all day,
and what with a minimum grace of God
we pass the time away.

THE HOBO. He, he, he—I got ya!

(*He makes a sign with his thumb*)

GAUNT.

(*Sings*)

And he led her all around
and he laid her on the ground
and he ruffled up the feathers of her
cuckoo's nest!

HOBO. Ho, ho, ho!

GAUNT. I am not taken with the way you laugh. You should cultivate restraint.

(ESDRAS *reënters*)

TROCK. Shut the door.

ESDRAS. He won't come back again.

TROCK. I want the door shut! He was dead, I tell you!

(*Esdras closes the door*)

And Romagna was dead, too, once! Can't they keep a man under ground?

MIO. No. No more! They don't stay under ground any more, and they don't stay under water! Why did you have him killed?

TROCK. Stay away from me! I know you!

MIO. Who am I, then?

TROCK. I know you, damn you! Your name's Romagna!

MIO. Yes! And Romagna was dead, too, and Shadow was dead, but the time's come when you can't keep them down, these dead men! They won't stay down! They come in with their heads shot off and their entrails dragging! Hundreds of them! One by one—all you ever had killed! Watch the door! See!—It moves!

TROCK.

(*Looking, fascinated, at the door*)

Let me out of here!

(*He tries to rise*)

MIO.

(*The gun in his hand*)

Oh, no! You'll sit there and wait for them! One by one they'll come through that door, pulling their heads out of the gunny-sacks where you tied them—glauming over you with their rotten hands! They'll see without eyes and crawl over you—Shadow and the paymaster and all the rest of them—putrescent bones without eyes! Now! Look! Look! For I'm first among them!

TROCK. I've done for better men than you! And I'll do for you!

GAUNT.

(*Rapping on the table*)

Order, gentlemen, order! The witness will remember that a certain decorum is essential in the court-room!

MIO. By God, he'll answer me!

GAUNT.

(*Thundering*)

Silence! Silence! Let me remind you of courtesy toward the witness! What case is this you try?

MIO. The case of the state against Bartolomeo Romagna for the murder of the paymaster!

GAUNT. Sir, that was disposed of long ago!

MIO. Never disposed of, never, not while I live!

GAUNT. Then we'll have done with it now!

I deny the appeal! I have denied the appeal before and I do so again!

HOBO. He, he!—He thinks he's in the moving pictures!

(*A flash of lightning*)

GAUNT. Who set that flash! Bailiff, clear the court! This is not Flemington, gentlemen! We are not conducting this case to make a journalistic holiday!

(*The thunder rumbles faintly.* GARTH *opens the outside door and faces a solid wall of rain*)

Stop that man! He's one of the defendants!

(GARTH *closes the door*)

MIO. Then put him on the stand!

GARTH. What do you think you're doing?

MIO. Have you any objection?

GAUNT. The objection is not sustained. We will hear the new evidence. Call your witness.

MIO. Garth Esdras!

GAUNT. He will take the stand!

GARTH. If you want me to say what I said before I'll say it!

MIO. Call Trock Estrella then!

GAUNT. Trock Estrella to the stand!

TROCK. No, by God!

MIO. Call Shadow, then! He'll talk! You thought he was dead, but he'll get up again and talk!

TROCK.

(*Screaming*)

What do you want of me?

MIO. You killed the paymaster! You!

TROCK. You lie! It was Shadow killed him!

MIO. And now I know! Now I know!

GAUNT. Again I remind you of courtesy toward the witness!

MIO. I know them now!

Let me remind you of courtesy toward the dead!

He says that Shadow killed him! If Shadow were here

he'd say it was Trock! There were three men involved

in the new version of the crime for which

my father died! Shadow and Trock Estrella

as principals in the murder—Garth as witness!—

Why are they here together?—and you—the Judge—

why are you here? Why, because you were all afraid

and you drew together out of that fear to arrange

a story you could tell! And Trock killed Shadow

and meant to kill the Judge out of that same fear—

to keep them quiet! This is the thing I've hunted

over the earth to find out, and I'd be blind

indeed if I missed it now!

(*To Gaunt*)

You heard what he said:

It was Shadow killed him! Now let the night conspire

with the sperm of hell! It's plain beyond denial

even to this fox of justice—and all his words

are curses on the wind! You lied! You lied!

You knew this too!

GAUNT.

(*Low*)

Let me go. Let me go!

MIO. Then why

did you let my father die?

GAUNT. Suppose it known,

but there are things a judge must not believe

though they should head and fester underneath

and press in on his brain. Justice once rendered

in a clear burst of anger, righteously,

upon a very common laborer,

confessed an anarchist, the verdict found

and the precise machinery of law

invoked to know him guilty—think what furor

would rock the state if the court then flatly said;

all this was lies—must be reversed? It's better,

as any judge can tell you, in such cases,

holding the common good to be worth more

than small injustice, to let the record stand,

let one man die. For justice, in the main,

is governed by opinion. Communities

will have what they will have, and it's quite as well,

after all, to be rid of anarchists. Our rights

as citizens can be maintained as rights
only while we are held to be the peers
of those who live about us. A vendor of fish
is not protected as a man might be
who kept a market. I own I've sometimes wished
this was not so, but it is. The man you defend
was unfortunate—and his misfortune bore
almost as heavily on me.—I'm broken—
broken across. You're much too young to know
how bitter it is when a worn connection chars
and you can't remember—can't remember.
(*He steps forward*)
You
will not repeat this? It will go no further?
MIO. No.
No further than the moon takes the tides—no further
than the news went when he died—
when you found him guilty
and they flashed that round the earth. Wherever men
still breathe and think, and know what's done to them
by the powers above, they'll know. That's all I ask.
That'll be enough.
(TROCK *has risen and looks darkly at Mio*)
GAUNT. Thank you. For I've said some things
a judge should never say.
TROCK. Go right on talking.
Both of you. It won't get far, I guess.
MIO. Oh, you'll see to that?
TROCK. I'll see to it. Me and some others.
Maybe I lost my grip there just for a minute.
That's all right.
MIO. Then see to it! Let it rain!
What can you do to me now when the night's on fire
with this thing I know? Now I could almost wish
there was a god somewhere—I could almost think
there was a god—and he somehow brought me here
and set you down before me here in the rain
where I could wring this out of you! For it's said,
and I've heard it, and I'm free! He was as I thought him,
true and noble and upright, even when he went
to a death contrived because he was as he was
and not your kind! Let it rain! Let the night speak fire
and the city go out with the tide, for he was a man
and I know you now, and I have my day!
(*There is a heavy knock at the outside door.* MIRIAMNE *opens it, at a glance from* GARTH. *The* POLICEMAN *is there in oilskins*)
POLICEMAN. Evening.
(*He steps in, followed by a* SERGEANT, *similarly dressed*)
We're looking for someone
might be here. Seen an old man around
acting a little off?
(*To* ESDRAS)
You know the one
I mean. You saw him out there. Jeez! You've got
a funny crowd here!
(*He looks round. The* HOBO *shrinks into his corner*)
That's the one I saw.
What do you think?
SERGEANT. That's him. You mean to say
you didn't know him by his pictures?
(*He goes to* GAUNT)
Come on, old man.
You're going home.
GAUNT. Yes, sir. I've lost my way.
I think I've lost my way.
SERGEANT. I'll say you have.
About three hundred miles. Now don't you worry.
We'll get you back.
GAUNT. I'm a person of some rank
in my own city.
SERGEANT. We know that. One look at you
and we'd know that.
GAUNT. Yes, sir.
POLICEMAN. If it isn't Trock!
Trock Estrella. How are you, Trock?
TROCK. Pretty good,
Thanks.
POLICEMAN. Got out yesterday again, I hear?

TROCK. That's right.
SERGEANT. Hi'ye, Trock?
TROCK. O.K.
SERGEANT. You know we got orders
to watch you pretty close. Be good now, baby,
or back you go. Don't try to pull anything,
not in my district.
TROCK. No, sir.
SERGEANT. No bumping off.
If you want my advice quit carrying a gun.
Try earning your living for once.
TROCK. Yeah.
SERGEANT. That's an idea.
Because if we find any stiffs on the river bank
we'll know who to look for.
MIO. Then look in the other room!
I accuse that man of murder! Trock Estrella!
He's a murderer!
POLICEMAN. Hello. I remember you.
SERGEANT. Well, what murder?
MIO. It was Trock Estrella
that robbed the pay roll thirteen years ago
and did the killing my father died for! You know
the Romagna case! Romagna was innocent,
and Trock Estrella guilty
SERGEANT.
(*Disgusted*)
Oh, what the hell!
That's old stuff—the Romagna case.
POLICEMAN. Hey, Sarge!
(*The* SERGEANT *and* POLICEMAN *come closer together*)
The boy's a professional kidder. He took me over
about half an hour ago. He kids the police
and then ducks out!
SERGEANT. Oh, yeah?
MIO. I'm not kidding now.
You'll find a dead man there in the next room
and Estrella killed him!
SERGEANT. Thirteen years ago?
And nobody smelled him yet?
MIO.
(*Pointing*)
I accuse this man
of two murders! He killed the paymaster long ago
and had Shadow killed tonight. Look, look for yourself!
He's there all right!
POLICEMAN. Look boy. You stood out there
and put the booby sign on the dumb police
because they're fresh out of Ireland. Don't try it twice.
SERGEANT.
(*To* GARTH)
Any corpses here?
GARTH. Not that I know of.
SERGEANT. I thought so.
(MIO *looks at Miriamne*)
(*To Mio*)
Think up a better one.
MIO. Have I got to drag him
out here where you can see him?
(*He goes toward the inner door*)
Can't you scent a murder
when it's under your nose? Look in!
MIRIAMNE. No, no—there's no one—there's no one there!
SERGEANT.
(*Looking at Miriamne*)
Take a look inside.
POLICEMAN. Yes, sir.
(*He goes into the inside room. The* SERGEANT *goes up to the door. The* POLICEMAN *returns*)
He's kidding, Sarge. If there's a cadaver
in here I don't see it.
MIO. You're blind then!
(*He goes into the room, the* SERGEANT *following him*)
SERGEANT. What do you mean?
(*He comes out,* MIO *following him*)
When you make a charge of murder it's better to have
the corpus delicti, son. You're the kind puts in
fire alarms to see the engine!
MIO. By God, he was there!
He went in there to die.
SERGEANT. I'll bet he did.
And I'm Haile Selassie's aunt! What's your name?
MIO. Romagna.
(*To Garth*)
What have you done with him?
GARTH. I don't know what you mean.
SERGEANT.
(*To Garth*)
What's he talking about?

GARTH. I wish I could tell you.
I don't know.
SERGEANT. He must have seen something.
POLICEMAN. He's got
the Romagna case on the brain. You watch yourself,
chump, or you'll get run in.
MIO. Then they're in it together!
All of them!
(*To Miriamne*)
Yes, and you!
GARTH. He's nuts, I say.
MIRIAMNE.
(*Gently*)
You have dreamed something—isn't it true?
You've dreamed—
But truly, there was no one—
(MIO *looks at her comprehendingly*)
MIO. You want me to say it.
(*He pauses*)
Yes, by God, I was dreaming.
SERGEANT.
(*To Policeman*)
I guess you're right.
We'd better be going. Haven't you got a coat?
GAUNT. No, sir.
SERGEANT. I guess I'll have to lend you mine.
(*He puts his oilskins on Gaunt*)
Come on, now. It's getting late.
(GAUNT, *the* POLICEMAN *and the* SERGEANT *go out*)
TROCK. They're welcome to him.
His fuse is damp. Where is that walking fool
with the three slugs in him?
ESDRAS. He fell in the hall beyond
and we left him there.
TROCK. That's lucky for some of us. Is he out this time
or is he still butting around?
ESDRAS. He's dead.
TROCK. That's perfect.
(*To Mio*)
Don't try using your firearms, amigo baby,
the Sarge is outside.
(*He turns to go*)
Better ship that carrion
back in the river! The one that walks when he's dead;
maybe he'll walk the distance for you.
GARTH. Coming back?
TROCK. Well, if I come back,
you'll see me. If I don't, you won't. Let the punk
go far as he likes. Turn him loose and let him go.
And may you all rot in hell.
(*He pulls his coat around him and goes to the left.* MIRIAMNE *climbs up to look out a window*)
MIRIAMNE. He's climbing up to the street,
along the bridgehead.
(*She turns*)
Quick, Mio! It's safe now! Quick!
GARTH. Let him do as he likes.
MIRIAMNE. What do you mean? Garth! He means to kill him!
You know that!
GARTH. I've no doubt Master Romagna
can run his own campaign.
MIRIAMNE. But he'll be killed!
MIO. Why did you lie about Shadow?
(*There is a pause.* GARTH *shrugs, walks across the room, and sits*)
You were one of the gang!
GARTH. I can take a death if I have to! Go tell your story,
only watch your step, for I warn you, Trock's out gunning
and you may not walk very far. Oh, I could defend it
but it's hardly worth while.
If they get Trock they get me too.
Go tell them. You owe me nothing.
ESDRAS. This Trock you saw,
no one defends him. He's earned his death so often
there's nobody to regret it. But his crime,
his same crime that has dogged you, dogged us down
from what little we had, to live here among the drains,
where the waterbugs break out like a scrofula
on what we eat—and if there's lower to go
we'll go there when you've told your story. And more
that I haven't heart to speak—
MIO.
(*To Garth*)
My father died
in your place. And you could have saved him!

You were one of the gang!
GARTH. Why, there you are.
You certainly owe me nothing.
MIRIAMNE.
(*Moaning*)
I want to die.
I want to go away.
MIO. Yes, and you lied!
And trapped me into it!
MIRIAMNE. But Mio, he's my brother.
I couldn't give them my brother.
MIO. No. You couldn't.
You were quite right. The gods were damned ironic
tonight, and they've worked it out.
ESDRAS. What will be changed
if it comes to trial again? More blood poured out
to a mythical justice, but your father lying still
where he lies now.
MIO. The bright, ironical gods!
What fun they have in heaven! When a man prays hard
for any gift, they give it, and then one more
to boot that makes it useless
(*To Miriamne*)
You might have picked
some other stranger to dance with!
MIRIAMNE. I know.
MIO. Or chosen
some other evening to sit outside in the rain.
But no, it had to be this. All my life long
I've wanted only one thing, to say to the world
and prove it: the man you killed was clean and true
and full of love as the twelve-year-old that stood
and taught in the temple. I can say that now
and give my proofs—and now you stick a girl's face
between me and the rites I've sworn the dead
shall have of me! You ask too much! Your brother
can take his chance! He was ready enough to let
an innocent man take certainty for him
to pay for the years he's had. That parts us, then,
but we're parted anyway, by the same dark wind
that blew us together. I shall say what I have to say.
(*He steps back*)
And I'm not welcome here.
MIRIAMNE. But don't go now! You've stayed
too long! He'll be waiting!
MIO. Well, is this any safer?
Let the winds blow, the four winds of the world,
and take us to the four winds.
(*The three are silent before him. He turns and goes out*)

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE: *The river bank outside the tenement, a little before the close of the previous act. The rain still falls through the street lamps. The* TWO NATTY YOUNG MEN IN SERGE AND GRAY *are leaning against the masonry in a ray of light, concentrating on a game of chance. Each holds in his hand a packet of ten or fifteen crisp bills. They compare the numbers on the top notes and immediately a bill changes hands. This goes on with varying fortune until the tide begins to run toward the* 1ST GUNMAN, *who has accumulated nearly the whole supply. They play on in complete silence, evidently not wishing to make any noise. Occasionally they raise their heads slightly to look carefully about. Luck begins to favor the* 2ND GUNMAN, *and the notes come his way. Neither evinces the slightest interest in how the game goes. They merely play on, bored, half-absorbed. There is a slight noise at the tenement door. They put the bills away and watch.* TROCK *comes out, pulls the door shut and comes over to them. He says a few words too low to be heard, and without changing his expression the* YOUNG MEN *saunter toward the right.* TROCK *goes out to the left, and the* 2ND PLAYER, *catching that out of the corner of his eye, lingers in a glimmer of light to go on with the game. The* 1ST, *with an eye on*

the tenement door, begins to play without ado, and the bills again shift back and forth, then concentrate in the hands of the 1ST GUNMAN. *The* 2ND *shrugs his shoulders, searches his pockets, finds one bill, and playing with it begins to win heavily. They hear the door opening, and putting the notes away, slip out in front of the rock.* MIO *emerges, closes the door, looks round him and walks to the left. Near the corner of the tenement he pauses, reaches out his hand to try the rain, looks up toward the street, and stands uncertainly a moment. He returns and leans against the tenement wall.* MIRIAMNE *comes out.* MIO *continues to look off into space as if unaware of her. She looks away.*

MIO. This rather takes one off his high horse.—What I mean, tough weather for a hegira. You see, this is my sleeping suit, and if I get it wet—basta!

MIRIAMNE. If you could only hide here.

MIO. Hide?

MIRIAMNE. Lucia would take you in. The street-piano man.

MIO. At the moment I'm afflicted with claustrophobia. I prefer to die in the open, seeking air.

MIRIAMNE. But you could stay here till daylight.

MIO. You're concerned about me.

MIRIAMNE. Shall I ask him?

MIO. No. On the other hand there's a certain reason in your concern. I looked up the street and our old friend Trock hunches patiently under the warehouse eaves.

MIRIAMNE. I was sure of that.

MIO. And here I am, a young man on a cold night, waiting the end of the rain. Being read my lesson by a boy, a blind boy—you know the one I mean. Knee-deep in the salt-marsh, Miriamne, bitten from within, fought.

MIRIAMNE. Wouldn't it be better if you came back in the house?

MIO. You forget my claustrophobia.

MIRIAMNE. Let me walk with you, then. Please. If I stay beside you he wouldn't dare.

MIO. And then again he might.—We don't speak the same language, Miriamne.

MIRIAMNE. I betrayed you. Forgive me.

MIO. I wish I knew this region. There's probably a path along the bank.

MIRIAMNE. Yes. Shadow went that way.

MIO. That's true, too. So here I am, a young man on a wet night, and blind in my weather eye. Stay and talk to me.

MIRIAMNE. If it happens—it's my fault.

MIO. Not at all, sweet. You warned me to keep away. But I would have it. Now I have to find a way out. It's like a chess game. If you think long enough there's always a way out.—For one or the other.—I wonder why white always wins and black always loses in the problems. White to move and mate in three moves. But what if white were to lose—ah, what then? Why, in that case, obviously black would be white and white would be black.—As it often is.—As we often are.—Might makes white. Losers turn black. Do you think I'd have time to draw a gun?

MIRIAMNE. No.

MIO. I'm a fair shot. Also I'm fair game.

(*The door of the tenement opens and* GARTH *comes out to look about quickly. Seeing only Mio and Miriamne he goes in and comes out again almost immediately carrying one end of a door on which a body lies covered with a cloth. The* HOBO *carries the other end. They go out to the right with their burden*)

This is the burial of Shadow, then;
feet first he dips, and leaves the haunts of men.
Let us make mourn for Shadow, wetly lying,
in elegiac stanzas and sweet crying.
Be gentle with him, little cold waves and fishes;
nibble him not, respect his skin and tissues—

MIRIAMNE. Must you say such things?

MIO. My dear, some requiem is fitting over the dead, even for Shadow. But the last rhyme was bad.

Whittle him not, respect his dying wishes.
That's better. And then to conclude:
His aromatic virtues, slowly rising
will circumnamb the isle, beyond disguising.

He clung to life beyond the wont of men.
Time and his silence drink us all. Amen.
How I hate these identicals. The French allow them, but the French have no principles anyway. You know, Miriamne, there's really nothing mysterious about human life. It's purely mechanical, like an electric appliance. Stop the engine that runs the generator and the current's broken. When we think the brain gives off a small electric discharge—quite measurable, and constant within limits. But that's not what makes your hair stand up when frightened.

MIRIAMNE. I think it's a mystery.

MIO. Human life? We'll have to wear veils if we're to keep it a mystery much longer. Now if Shadow and I were made up into sausages we'd probably make very good sausages.

MIRIAMNE. Don't—

MIO. I'm sorry. I speak from a high place, far off, long ago, looking down. The cortège returns.

(GARTH *and the* HOBO *return, carrying the door, the cloth lying loosely over it*)

I hope you place an obol in his mouth to pay the ferryman? Even among the Greeks a little money was prerequisite to Elysium.

(GARTH *and the* HOBO *go inside, silent*)

No? It's grim to think of Shadow lingering among lesser shades on the hither side. For lack of a small gratuity.

(ESDRAS *comes out the open door and closes it behind him*)

ESDRAS. You must wait here, Mio, or go inside. I know
you don't trust me, and I haven't earned your trust.
You're young enough to seek truth—
and there is no truth;
and I know that—
but I shall call the police and see that you get safely off.

MIO. It's a little late for that.

ESDRAS. I shall try.

MIO. And your terms? For I daresay you make terms?

ESDRAS. No.

MIO. Then let me remind you what will happen.
The police will ask some questions.
When they're answered
they'll ask more, and before they're done with it
your son will be implicated.

ESDRAS. Must he be?

MIO. I shall not keep quiet.

(*A pause*)

ESDRAS. Still, I'll go.

MIO. I don't ask help, remember. I make no truce.
He's not on my conscience, and I'm not on yours.

ESDRAS. But you
could make it easier, so easily.
He's my only son. Let him live.

MIO. His chance of survival's
better than mine, I'd say.

ESDRAS. I'll go.

MIO. I don't urge it.

ESDRAS. No. I put my son's life in your hands.
When you're gone,
that may come to your mind.

MIO. Don't count on it.

ESDRAS. Oh,
I count on nothing.

(*He turns to go.* MIRIAMNE *runs over to him and silently kisses his hands*)

Not mine, not mine, my daughter!
They're guilty hands.

(*He goes out left.* GARTH'S *violin is heard within*)

MIO. There was a war in heaven
once, all the angels on one side, and all
the devils on the other, and since that time
disputes have raged among the learned, concerning
whether the demons won, or the angels. Maybe
the angels won, after all.

MIRIAMNE. And again, perhaps
there are no demons or angels.

MIO. Oh, there are none.
But I could love your father.

MIRIAMNE. I love him. You see,
he's afraid because he's old. The less one has to lose the more he's afraid.

MIO. Suppose one had

only a short stub end of life, or held
a flashlight with the batteries run down
till the bulb was dim, and knew that he could live
while the glow lasted. Or suppose one knew
that while he stood in a little shelter of time
under a bridgehead, say, he could live, and then,
from then on, nothing. Then to lie and turn
with the earth and sun, and regard them not in the least
when the bulb was extinguished or he stepped beyond
his circle into the cold? How would he live
that last dim quarter-hour, before he went,
minus all recollection, to grow in grass
between cobblestones?

MIRIAMNE. Let me put my arms round you, Mio.
Then if anything comes, it's for me, too.

(*She puts both arms round him*)

MIO. Only suppose
this circle's charmed! To be safe until he steps
from this lighted space into dark! Time pauses here
and high eternity grows in one quarter-hour
in which to live.

MIRIAMNE. Let me see if anyone's there—
there in the shadows.

(*She looks toward the right*)

MIO. It might blast our eternity—
blow it to bits. No, don't go. This is forever,
here where we stand. And I ask you, Miriamne,
how does one spend a forever?

MIRIAMNE. You're frightened?

MIO. Yes.
So much that time stands still.

MIRIAMNE. Why didn't I speak—
tell them—when the officers were here? I failed you
in that one moment!

MIO. His life for mine? Oh, no.
I wouldn't want it, and you couldn't give it.
And if I should go on living we're cut apart
by that brother of yours.

MIRIAMNE. Are we?

MIO. Well, think about it.
A body lies between us, buried in quicklime.
Your allegiance is on the other side of that grave
and not to me.

MIRIAMNE. No, Mio! Mio, I love you!

MIO. I love you, too, but in case my life went on
beyond that barrier of dark—then Garth
would run his risk of dying.

MIRIAMNE. He's punished, Mio.
His life's been torment to him. Let him go,
for my sake, Mio.

MIO. I wish I could. I wish
I'd never seen him—or you. I've steeped too long
in this thing. It's in my teeth and bones. I can't
let go or forget. And I'll not add my lie
to the lies that cumber his ground. We live our days
in a storm of lies that drifts the truth too deep
for path or shovel; but I've set my foot on a truth
for once, and I'll trail it down!

(*A silence.* MIRIAMNE *looks out to the right*)

MIRIAMNE. There's someone there—
I heard—

(CARR *comes in from the right*)

MIO. It's Carr.

CARR. That's right. No doubt about it.
Excuse me.

MIO. Glad to see you. This is Miriamne.
Carr's a friend of mine.

CARR. You're better employed
than when I saw you last.

MIO. Bow to the gentleman,
Miriamne. That's meant for you.

MIRIAMNE. Thank you, I'm sure.
Should I leave you, Mio? You want to talk?

MIO. Oh, no,
we've done our talking.

MIRIAMNE. But—

CARR. I'm the one's out of place—
I wandered back because I got worried about you,
that's the truth.—Oh—those two fellows with the hats
down this way, you know, the ones that ran
after we heard the shooting—they're back again,

lingering or malingering down the bank,
revisiting the crime, I guess. They may
mean well.
MIO. I'll try to avoid them.
CARR. I didn't care
for the way they looked at me.—No luck, I
suppose,
with that case history? The investigation
you had on hand?
MIO. I can't say. By the way,
the stiff that fell in the water and we saw
swirling
down the eddy, he came trudging up, later
on,
long enough to tell his name. His name was
Shadow,
but he's back in the water now. It's all in an
evening.
These things happen here.
CARR. Good God!
MIO. I know.
I wouldn't believe it if you told it.
CARR. But—
the man was alive?
MIO. Oh, not for long! He's dunked
for good this time. That's all that's happened.
CARR. Well,
if you don't need me—
MIRIAMNE. You had a message to send—
have you forgotten—?
MIO. I?—Yes, I had a message—
but I won't send it—not now.
MIRIAMNE. Then I will—!
MIO. No.
Let it go the way it is! It's all arranged
another way. You've been a good scout, Carr,
the best I ever knew on the road.
CARR. That sounds
like making your will.
MIO. Not yet, but when I do
I've thought of something to leave you. It's
the view
of Mt. Rainier from the Seattle jail,
snow over cloud. And the rusty chain in my
pocket
from a pair of handcuffs my father wore.
That's all
the worldly goods I'm seized of.
CARR. Look, Mio—hell—
if you're in trouble—
MIO. I'm not. Not at all. I have
a genius that attends me where I go,
and guards me now. I'm fine.
CARR. Well, that's good news.
He'll have his work cut out.
MIO. Oh, he's a genius.
CARR. I'll see you then.
I'll be at the Grand Street place. I'm lucky
tonight,
and I can pay. I could even pay for two.
MIO. Thanks, I may take you up.
CARR. Good night.
MIO. Right, Carr.
CARR.
(*To Miriamne*)
Good night.
MIRIAMNE.
(*After a pause*)
Good night.
(CARR *goes out to the left*)
Why did you do that? He's your genius, Mio,
and you let him go.
MIO. I couldn't help it.
MIRIAMNE. Call him.
Run after him and call him!
MIO. I tried to say it
and it strangled in my throat. I might have
known
you'd win in the end.
MIRIAMNE. Is it for me?
MIO. For you?
It stuck in my throat, that's all I know.
MIRIAMNE. Oh, Mio,
I never asked for that! I only hoped
Garth could go clear.
MIO. Well, now he will.
MIRIAMNE. But you—
It was your chance!
MIO. I've lost
my taste for revenge if it falls on you. Oh,
God,
deliver me from the body of this death
I've dragged behind me all these years! Miri-
amne!
Miriamne!
MIRIAMNE. Yes!
MIO. Miriamne, if you love me
teach me a treason to what I am, and have
been,
till I learn to live like a man! I think I'm
waking

from a long trauma of hate and fear and death
that's hemmed me from my birth—and glimpse a life
to be lived in hope—but it's young in me yet, I can't
get free, or forgive! But teach me how to live
and forget to hate!

MIRIAMNE. He would have forgiven.

MIO. He?

MIRIAMNE. Your father.

(*A pause*)

MIO. Yes.

(*Another pause*)

You'll think it strange, but I've never
remembered that.

MIRIAMNE. How can I help you?

MIO. You have.

MIRIAMNE. If I were a little older—if I knew
the things to say! I can only put out my hands
and give you back the faith you bring to me
by being what you are. Because to me
you are all hope and beauty and brightness drawn
across what's black and mean!

MIO. He'd have forgiven—
Then there's no more to say—I've groped long enough
through this everglades of old revenges—here
the road ends.—Miriamne, Miriamne,
the iron I wore so long—it's eaten through
and fallen from me. Let me have your arms.
They'll say we're children—Well—the world's made up
of children.

MIRIAMNE. Yes.

MIO. But it's too late for me.

MIRIAMNE. No.

(*She goes into his arms, and they kiss for the first time*)

Then we'll meet again?

MIO. Yes.

MIRIAMNE. Where?

MIO. I'll write—
or send Carr to you.

MIRIAMNE. You won't forget?

MIO. Forget?
Whatever street I walk, you'll walk them, too,
from now on, and whatever roof or stars
I have to house me, you shall share my roof
and stars and morning. I shall not forget.

MIRIAMNE. God keep you!

MIO. And keep you. And this to remember!
if I should die, Miriamne, this half-hour
is our eternity. I came here seeking
light in darkness, running from the dawn,
and stumbled on a morning.

(*One of the* YOUNG MEN IN SERGE *strolls in casually from the right, looks up and down without expression, then, seemingly having forgotten something, retraces his steps and goes out.* ESDRAS *comes in slowly from the left. He has lost his hat, and his face is bleeding from a slight cut on the temple. He stands abjectly near the tenement*)

MIRIAMNE. Father—what is it?

(*She goes towards Esdras*)

ESDRAS. Let me alone.

(*He goes nearer to Mio*)

He wouldn't let me pass.
The street's so icy up along the bridge
I had to crawl on my knees—he kicked me back
three times—and then he held me there—I swear
what I could do I did! I swear to you
I'd save you if I could.

MIO. What makes you think
that I need saving?

ESDRAS. Child, save yourself if you can!
He's waiting for you.

MIO. Well, we knew that before.

ESDRAS. He won't wait much longer. He'll come here—
he told me so. Those damned six months of his—
he wants them all—and you're to die—you'd spread
his guilt—I had to listen to it—

MIO. Wait—

(*He walks forward and looks casually to the right, then returns*)

There must be some way up through the house and out across the roof—

ESDRAS. He's watching that. But come in—
and let me look.—

MIO. I'll stay here, thanks. Once in
and I'm a rat in a deadfall—I'll stay here—
look for me if you don't mind.

ESDRAS. Then watch for me—

I'll be on the roof—
(*He goes in hurriedly*)
MIO.
(*Looking up*)
Now all you silent powers
that make the sleet and dark, and never yet
have spoken, give us a sign, let the throw be ours
this once, on this longest night, when the winter sets
his foot on the threshold leading up to spring
and enters with remembered cold—let fall
some mercy with the rain. We are two lovers
here in your night, and we wish to live.
MIRIAMNE. Oh, Mio—
if you pray that way, nothing good will come!
You're bitter, Mio.
MIO. How many floors has this building?
MIRIAMNE. Five or six. It's not as high as the bridge.
MIO. No, I thought not. How many pomegranate seeds
did you eat, Persephone?
MIRIAMNE. Oh, darling, darling,
if you die, don't die alone.
MIO. I'm afraid I'm damned
to hell, and you're not damned at all. Good God,
how long he takes to climb!
MIRIAMNE. The stairs are steep.
(*A slight pause*)
MIO. I'll follow him.
MIRIAMNE. He's there—at the window—now.
He waves you to go back, not to go in.
Mio, see, that path between the rocks—
they're not watching that—they're out at the river—
I can see them there—they can't watch both—
it leads to a street above.
MIO. I'll try it, then.
Kiss me. You'll hear. But if you never hear—
then I'm the king of hell, Persephone,
and I'll expect you.
MIRIAMNE. Oh, lover, keep safe.
MIO. Good-bye.
(*He slips out quickly between the rocks. There is a quick machine gun rat-tat. The violin stops.* MIRIAMNE *runs toward the path.* MIO *comes back slowly, a hand pressed under his heart*)
It seems you were mistaken.
MIRIAMNE. Oh, God, forgive me!
(*She puts an arm round him. He sinks to his knees*)
Where is it, Mio? Let me help you in! Quick, quick, let me help you!
MIO. I hadn't thought to choose—this—ground—
but it will do.
(*He slips down*)
MIRIAMNE. Oh, God, forgive me!
MIO. Yes?
The king of hell was not forgiven then,
Dis is his name, and Hades is his home—
and he goes alone—
MIRIAMNE. Why does he bleed so? Mio, if you go
I shall go with you.
MIO. It's better to stay alive.
I wanted to stay alive—because of you—
I leave you that—and what he said to me dying:
I love you, and will love you after I die.
Tomorrow, I shall still love you, as I've loved
the stars I'll never see, and all the mornings
that might have been yours and mine. Oh, Miriamne,
you taught me this.
MIRIAMNE. If only I'd never seen you
then you could live—
MIO. That's blasphemy—Oh, God,
there might have been some easier way of it.
You didn't want me to die, did you, Miriamne—?
You didn't send me away—?
MIRIAMNE. Oh, never, never—
MIO. Forgive me—kiss me—I've got blood on your lips—
I'm sorry—it doesn't matter—I'm sorry—
(ESDRAS *and* GARTH *come out*)
MIRIAMNE. Mio—
I'd have gone to die myself—you must hear this, Mio,
I'd have died to help you—you must listen, sweet,
you must hear it—
(*She rises*)
I can die, too, see! You! There!

You in the shadows!—You killed him to silence him!
(*She walks toward the path*)
But I'm not silenced! All that he knew I know,
and I'll tell it tonight! Tonight—
tell it and scream it
through all the streets—that Trock's a murderer
and he hired you for this murder!
Your work's not done—
and you won't live long! Do you hear?
You're murderers, and I know who you are!
(*The machine gun speaks again. She sinks to her knees.* GARTH *runs to her*)
GARTH. You little fool!
(*He tries to lift her*)
MIRIAMNE. Don't touch me!
(*She crawls toward Mio*)
Look, Mio! They killed me, too. Oh, you can believe me
now, Mio. You can believe I wouldn't hurt you,
because I'm dying! Why doesn't he answer me?
Oh, now he'll never know!
(*She sinks down, her hand over her mouth, choking.* GARTH *kneels beside her, then rises, shuddering. The* HOBO *comes out.* LUCIA *and* PINY *look out*)
ESDRAS. It lacked only this.
GARTH. Yes.
(ESDRAS *bends over Miriamne, then rises slowly*)
Why was the bastard born? Why did he come here?
ESDRAS. Miriamne — Miriamne — yes, and Mio,
one breath shall call you now—forgive us both—
forgive the ancient evil of the earth
that brought you here—
GARTH. Why must she be a fool?
ESDRAS. Well, they were wiser than you and I. To die
when you are young and untouched, that's beggary
to a miser of years, but the devils locked in synod
shake and are daunted when men set their lives
at hazard for the heart's love, and lose. And these,
who were yet children, will weigh more than all
a city's elders when the experiment
is reckoned up in the end. Oh, Miriamne,
and Mio—Mio, my son—know this where you lie,
this is the glory of earth-born men and women,
not to cringe, never to yield, but standing,
take defeat implacable and defiant,
die unsubmitting. I wish that I'd died so,
long ago; before you're old you'll wish
that you had died as they have. On this star,
in this hard star-adventure, knowing not
what the fires mean to right and left, nor whether
a meaning was intended or presumed,
man can stand up, and look out blind, and say:
in all these turning lights I find no clue,
only a masterless night, and in my blood
no certain answer, yet is my mind my own,
yet is my heart a cry toward something dim
in distance, which is higher than I am
and makes me emperor of the endless dark
even in seeking! What odds and ends of life
men may live otherwise, let them live, and then
go out, as I shall go, and you. Our part
is only to bury them. Come, take her up.
They must not lie here.
(LUCIA *and* PINY *come near to help.* ESDRAS *and* GARTH *stoop to carry* MIRIAMNE)

CURTAIN

THE Short Story

Illusion and Design

NEARLY everyone has said of someone he has known well, "You should have known so-and-so!" or, "I hope you get to know him." Often this wish has been coupled with patience and skill in writing to produce notable character sketches. In much the same way, we as readers have through descriptive effects been able to live places and occasions as if we were really present. We enjoy experiencing such illusions.

A story produces an illusion, too. But however vivid its descriptive effects and however alive its characters, a story is not properly a story unless at the end there is change, unless things are not as they were – unless something has happened.

A short story concentrates on a single happening. Such concentration is possible for some storytellers only part of the time, and for some people it is never possible. This concentration is not necessarily synonymous with brevity, since the good short story may be a thousand words long or several thousand. Nor is it a matter of a single place or a very short period of time, since many short stories cover a period of days, months, or even years, and likewise involve changing scenes. It is not ever necessary that a short story concentrate on the life or part of the life of a single character, though many stories do just this.

A storyteller is interested in *what happened when;* so is a reader, primarily. It is a concern with cause and effect. The cause is basically psychology – the psychology of man, or human nature, since most of our stories concern human beings. Man has his hopes and fears, curiosities and desires, his ambitions, beliefs, loves, and hates. As any human being in life or in story is expressive of the general nature of man, he is also the result of his own particular life-experience. Given a certain happening or suddenly fancying one, the storyteller imagines a certain "kind" of person – or people – involved in it, and the outcome becomes both plausible and alive. Or, the storyteller wonders what would happen if a certain person became involved in a particular set of circumstances.

Whichever the beginning, as he presents his story to us our storyteller believes in it as living history, fascinating in its beginnings, continuance, and outcome. His is the prime illusion, and this is the basis of all good storytelling. For him the outcome has a finality that is convincing. Not only are his "facts" all "true," but mere chronology – the idea of "and then"—has become minor. Most important is how the event works itself out, one thing leading to another in an engrossing chain of cause and effect building to the inevitable result. However the story touches him emotionally, he keeps it moving in the best sense of the word—now rapidly, now slowly, but always toward the outcome. He will be happiest, if he is a good storyteller, when we say not "too bad," "how sad," or "how marvelous" —but "how inevitable."

Further, the storyteller, if sufficiently engrossed himself, will have led us to participate actively in the interplay, the give-and-take between his characters, between a character and the phenomena he encounters, between alternatives of decision and action struggling for supremacy within a person's consciousness, or between the demands of good judgment and desire. In proportion as the forces are strong and there is uncertainty as to the outcome of this interplay, he engrosses our interest the more. Inasmuch as the author already knows the outcome—and he must know it—he can concentrate the more on making us feel as he does how inevitable that outcome is. The story never disgresses, really; never comes to a halt.

The happening in our author's story may be an old one in its general outline and its outcome and still be alive and new to him. To some extent this comes from his ability to imagine the story, however old it is, in a new localization. Also, through this very localization, he is increasingly aware what permanent forces, at odds in the world, make stories happen. He does not have to be content with superficial illusion or vividness. He is presenting an image of life in terms of how people become involved and how they do or do not get out of their difficulties. He is finding some design—some pattern of a kind—in life itself, and imitating it excitedly in language. It is a design of beginnings, complications, and outcomes.

This is the main reason why in a good story there is no irrelevant character or episode. We are led by the author, even as he is led by his imagination, to an outcome which he conceived and felt in terms of the characters involved and the circumstances met. Out of what the characters are the action grows; and out of the action comes the realization of what they are and what is universal and representative about them.

What has happened is known, and the reader can tell us where he is when. Time and space are not confused, ever. Why a thing happens is made sufficiently clear. The outcome is probable, even inevitable, though it may have been uncertain until very near the end. But there is also the interest in *how* it happens, and this brings us to the most important thing that happens in the story, as in other forms of reading—the thing that happens to the reader himself in the reading. What is his outcome, his change? For no one really reads merely to learn "what happens," much as he may sometimes think he does. The *how* is partly answered by recognizing that this most important happening cannot occur unless the reader lives the story from a live, consistent point of view—the point of view that is the most engrossing for the writer himself. We must think of *engrossing* in such a way that we shall think a good test of a story is the degree to which we feel inside it and participating to the very end, even to a kind of release which

the author must give us—and will, if he participates sufficiently himself. Thus "point of view," the angle from which the story is told, is not mechanical; it is not option but necessity. The same is true of what we call "suspense." What we mean, really, is the suspense in us as we read a story. The whole vicarious experience afforded by good stories is one of the prime motives for reading, anyway; whether our minds are enlarged and our emotions less sentimental, or we still move in the same narrow circle. One feels that we arise from the best stories in some way larger beings, if only by an increased sympathy with others and better understanding of our own frailties.

Illusion and design signify belief and the sure working out of purpose, based, in a story, on happening and change. The writer must live his story, and after him the reader does so too. He is not told about it—he lives it. The best test of this is in re-reading: we have enjoyed this story once; can we extend that enjoyment by finding increasing satisfaction in the sureness of the telling and the power of the story as a commentary on the issues of life?

The stories in this book all seem good stories for the reasons here asserted. The quite brief "Birthday Party" seems really an incident in a story which has been developing for some time and is still to reach its outcome; yet it has dramatic interest and at least a momentary resolution appropriate to the clash of this wife and husband as we know them in one moment of their lives. The happening is what happens to her hoping for and planning at least a brief time of satisfaction. Without her wish and his response there would be no semblance of story. The interest of a storyteller is here, though pursued but momentarily.

The revolt of Mother, on the other hand, has been a long time preparing and getting into the open, but a certain "inevitable" act of Father's is given its motivation and the battle is an active one. The outcome is there too. But whether it is brought on inevitably in our imaginations or is merely a sentimental conclusion by the author, the reader must decide for himself. Eudora Welty's "Livvie" is based on the old theme of January and May, of age and youth (Chaucer has one version), localized in the imagination of the author. One interesting aspect of this story is the significance of the cosmetics saleswoman in the working out of Livvie's decision. Another is the will the old man leaves. Observe what is actually happening.

Is "Sex Education" a story, and not a character sketch only, and why? The same may be asked of Clark's "The Wind and the Snow of Winter." What is the storyteller's interest? Again, "Sailor! Sailor!" in outer incident is not dramatic at all, as a summary will show. But what a piece of drama is going on inside! And how it is presented or imitated and not merely told about!

Something certainly happens in "The Captain's Palm." Shall we say "how inevitable" to this? What has Heggen known he had to do to make us say so? Or what good merely to narrate or explain the story in "Turn About"? It will be a dead story unless we more and more participate as the Captain himself—unless, for instance, we feel sympathetic with him when he finds what he is sitting on in that small boat, and feel as he does when the first attempt to launch the torpedo fails.

One of the subtlest of all these stories is Shaw's "Gunner's Passage," but something is developing there all the same. Shaw starts late in the story of this young man and so makes his task all the more difficult. But his is much more of a story than deMaupassant's, to some extent because the French author yields to the temptation to exploit our sentiments at the end and makes too much of an equation out

of his situation. It is interesting to note, however, that this situation has a modern application for everyone who has read about World War II.

The story in "The Lottery" may be wondered about and discussed most of all, perhaps. It already has quite a history. One might remember Coleridge's idea that it is possible to work all kinds of physical miracles but never a moral one. One should also observe the apparent complete belief that all happened as told. In "The Lottery," what beyond the faithful report of that day persists? What, after the shock of first reading, suggests the possibilities of another outcome, provided something about man himself were different? Finally, in "The Real Thing" could there be a story if the "I" were not the kind of person he is?

People vary, and situations; hence the multiplicity of stories in the world. Underneath all differences, story is generically illusion in a pattern of cause and effect moving toward a decisive outcome.

Birthday Party[1]

KATHARINE BRUSH

THEY WERE a couple in their late thirties, and they looked unmistakably married. They sat on the banquette opposite us in a little narrow restaurant, having dinner. The man had a round, self-satisfied face, with glasses on it; the woman was fadingly pretty, in a big hat. There was nothing conspicuous about them, nothing particularly noticeable, until the end of their meal, when it suddenly became obvious that this was an Occasion—in fact, the husband's birthday, and the wife had planned a little surprise for him.

It arrived, in the form of a small but glossy birthday cake, with one pink candle burning in the center. The headwaiter brought it in and placed it before the husband, and meanwhile the violin-and-piano orchestra played "Happy Birthday to You" and the wife beamed with shy pride over her little surprise, and such few people as there were in the restaurant tried to help out with a pattering of applause. It became clear at once that help was needed, because the husband was not pleased. Instead he was hotly embarrassed, and indignant at his wife for embarrassing him.

You looked at him and you saw this and you thought, "Oh, now, don't *be* like that!" But he was like that, and as soon as the little cake had been deposited on the table, and the orchestra had finished the birthday piece, and the general attention had shifted from the man and the woman, I saw him say something to her under his breath—some punishing thing, quick and curt and unkind. I couldn't bear to look at the woman then, so I stared at my plate and waited for quite a long time. Not long enough, though. She was still crying when I finally glanced over there again. Crying quietly and heartbrokenly and hopelessly, all to herself, under the gay big brim of her best hat.

[1] Reprinted from *The New Yorker* by permission of the author. Copyright 1946 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

Mole-Bane[1]

JAMES STILL

OUR HOUSE BURNED in March and we lived that spring in the smokehouse, sleeping in two beds pushed close into the corners, and with strings of peppers and onions hanging from the rafters overhead. We planted our garden early, using the seeds Mother had hoarded, but it was long before the vegetables were ready for eating. Mother cooked under a shed Father built against the house. There was no abundance of food and we ate all that was set before us, with never a crumb left. Father told us the mines were closed in the headwaters of the Kentucky River and there was hunger in the camps. We believed that we fared well, and did not complain.

Father's face was thin as a saw blade, and it seemed he had grown taller, towering over us. His muscles were bunched on his arms, blue-veined and not soft-cushioned now with flesh. He went hunting, searching through the sedge coves and swampy hollows, never wasting a shot. We ate squirrel and rabbit, broiled over hot coals, for there was not a smidgen of grease left in the stone jar. The handful of bullets was hoarded in a leather pouch. Never more than three were taken for the rifle-gun, and Father rarely missed.

With spring upon the hills, it was strange now to go out and kill in the new-budded wood. The squirrels moved sluggishly, carrying their young. Rabbits huddled in the sedge clumps, swollen and stupid. Once Father brought a rusty-eared rabbit home, setting Euly to clean it. When she came on four little ones in its warm belly, she cried out in fear of what she had done, flung the bloody knife into the dirt and ran away into the low pasture. She stayed there all day crying in the stubble, and never ate wild meat again.

We had come through to spring, but Mother was the leanest of us all, and the baby cried in the night when there was no milk. Mother ate a little more now than the rest of us, for the baby's sake, eating as though for shame while we were not there to see, fearing that we might not understand, that we might think her taking more than her share.

The garden grew as by a miracle, and the blackberry winter passed with the April winds, doing no harm. Beans broke their waxen leaves out of hoe-turned furrows, bearing the husk of the seeds with them. Sweet corn unfurled tight young blades from weed mould, timid to night chill, growing slowly and darkly. Crows hung on blue air, surveying the patch, but the garden was too near the house. Our shouts and swift running through the tended ground kept them frightened and filled with wonder.

Before the garden was ready, Mother and Euly gathered a mess of plantain and speckled jack and we had salet-greens cooked with meat rind. The beans were still young and tender, and the potatoes thin-skinned and small. We watched the beans grow, measuring them day by day with joints of our fingers, and dug under the potato stalks carefully with our hands so as not to bruise the watery roots. We picked off the potato bugs and scraped their egg patches from the leaves. Fletch saved the bugs in a fruit jar, pinching off buds to feed them when we were not looking.

We went out into the garden in the cool of the evening, turning the vines to look for beetles on the underleaves. Father would pull off a bean and break it impatiently between his fingers, looking hungry enough to eat it raw.

"I figger they're fair ready for biling," he would say. "It's time we had a mess."

"They ain't nigh ready," Mother would say. "When a bean snaps like you'd broke a stick,

[1] From *River of Earth* by James Still. Copyright 1940 by James Still. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York and *The Atlantic Monthly*.

hit's time. They ain't had their full growth."

One morning we found the heaped trail of a mole across the garden, damp with new earth. Father was angry, stamping the ridge of its path with his feet, packing the ground down hard where it went among the bean vines. He whittled two green walnut sprouts, shaved the bark until they were brown with sap, and drove them in the farther ends of the trail.

"That walnut juice ought to git in its eyes and turn it back," Father said, laughing a little savagely, and rubbing his hands in the dirt.

Euly begged Father to dig the mole out. "If'n I had me a moleskin, I'd make a powder-rag out o'it," she said. "When I get me some face powder, I'd have a mole-rag to rub it on with."

Father looked darkly at her, and she ran out of the garden, ashamed of her vain-wishing.

On the day the men came from Blackjack, Mother was washing clothes, and Father swung the battling stick for her on a chestnut stump. Euly saw the men first as they climbed the hill from Little Carr Creek, and she ran to tell us. "They's three men a-coming, and they got mine caps setting on their heads, and two of them has got pokes."

We went around the smokehouse and looked down. They were still a quarter off, and their legs were awkward like a hound's against the steep climb. Mother went back to the tubs. Father waited, shading his eyes from the sun-ball, trying to see who they were. And he knew them long before they turned over the last short curl of the path, and he knew why they had come.

"Hit's Fruit Middleton, and Ab Stevall and Sid Pindlar," Father said.

The men came into the yard, looking at the gray pile of ashes and the charred ends of rafters where our house had burned.

"We heered about your burning," Fruit said. 'Hit's a puore pity with times so hard, and all the mines closed up tight as a jug. We'd a come and raised you a house, but we heered you was living in the smokehouse and gitting along peart."

"We're so packed-up inside we do all our setting out here on the ground," Father said. "We got one chair, but it's holding a wash-tub."

"Aye, God," Fruit said. "We've done so much setting these last eight months it's like pulling eyeteeth climbing that hill."

"Setting and hearing our bellies growl," Sid said, dragging the poke he held back and forth across the ground. "The grace o' God tuk us through the winter. We've come out skin and bone. We would a planted a garden if they'd been any seeds. They was et up, and anyhow there ain't a fitten place to drap seeds in the camp with all the beasts scratching and digging."

The men glanced out across the garden, now thick with growing, and with the furrow-ridges lost among the leaves. Father slouched down, looking worried.

"We was thinking you could spare us a mess o' beans out o' your patch," Fruit said. "Our womenfolks and children are right mealy in the face."

"Begging comes hard for us who's used to working for our bread," Ab said.

"The beans ain't half-growed yet," Father said. "They ain't nigh filled out."

"We hain't asking you to give us nothing," Fruit said, the wrinkles around his eyes drawing tight. "You'll be paid when the mines open. Aye, God, we ain't asking for handout. Our folks need some green victuals."

"They ain't nigh ready," Father said again, and he trod up and down in his tracks without moving from where he stood. Then he looked off down the hill, saying quietly and sadly: "I got my first hungry folks to turn down. Go out and see what you can find fitten to eat."

The men walked out toward the garden. Mother was hanging clothes behind the smokehouse and she saw them jump over the split-paling fence, their pokes flaring up in the wind. Father went around to the wash-tubs, standing there helpless, not knowing what to say. Mother began to cry silently, saying nothing.

"You can't turn down folks that's starving," Father said at last, and he knew his words sounded foolish and with no weight. He began to hang a tubful of clothes on the line.

spreading them out clumsily until it sagged, and the shirt sleeves were barely clear of the ground. He tightened the line, drawing the raveled cord with all his strength.

The men came out of the garden after a spell. They came with their pokes bulging at one end. We knew they had picked every bean, that not one was left.

"Our womenfolks will be right proud to taste a mess o' green victuals," Fruit said. "You'll shorely git your pay when the mines open."

Sid held his poke up and laughed. "You got a right fair garden," he said. "I seed a brash o' blossoms on them vines. In a leetle time you'll have all you kin eat."

They had turned to go when Ab suddenly pulled something out of his pocket and threw it upon the grass. It was a dead mole.

"I dug this varmint out o' the garden patch," he said. "I seed where he'd holed-up under a pile o' dirt and I scratched him out. They ain't nothing that can tear up a garden like a mole varmint. You ought to plant a leetle dog-tick around. Hit's the best mole-bane I ever heerd tell of."

Ab hurried down the hill to catch the others, the rocks rattling under his feet. Euly grabbed up the mole and was gone with it before Father could stop her, running swiftly around the house. And Mother ran too, swinging her arms in dismay, for she had heard the clothesline break, and the clean garments now lay miserably in the dirt.

A Fishing Excursion

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

PARIS was blockaded, desolate, famished. The sparrows were few, and anything that was to be had was good to eat.

On a bright morning in January, Mr. Morissot, a watchmaker by trade, but idler through circumstances, was walking along the boulevard, sad, hungry, with his hands in the pockets of his uniform trousers, when he came face to face with a brother-in-arms whom he recognized as an old-time friend.

Before the war, Morissot could be seen at daybreak every Sunday, trudging along with a cane in one hand and a tin box on his back. He would take the train to Colombes and walk from there to the Isle of Marante, where he would fish until dark.

It was there he had met Mr. Sauvage, who kept a little notion store in the Rue Notre Dame de Lorette, a jovial fellow and passionately fond of fishing like himself. A warm friendship has sprung up between these two and they would fish side by side all day, very often without saying a word. Some days, when everything looked fresh and new and the beautiful spring sun gladdened every heart, Mr. Morissot would exclaim:

"How delightful!" and Mr. Sauvage would answer:

"There is nothing to equal it."

Then again on a fall evening, when the glorious setting sun, spreading its golden mantle on the already tinted leaves, would throw strange shadows around the two friends, Sauvage would say:

"What a grand picture!"

"It beats the boulevard!" would answer Morissot. But they understood each other quite as well without speaking.

The two friends had greeted each other warmly and had resumed their walk side by side, both thinking deeply of the past and present events. They entered a café, and when a glass of absinthe had been placed before each Sauvage sighed:

"What terrible events, my friend!"

"And what weather!" said Morissot sadly; "this is the first nice day we have had this year. Do you remember our fishing excursions?"

"Do I! Alas! when shall we go again!"

After a second absinthe they emerged from the café, feeling rather dizzy—that light-headed effect which alcohol has on an empty stomach. The balmy air had made Sauvage exuberant and he exclaimed:

"Suppose we go!"

"Where?"

"Fishing."

"Fishing! Where?"

"To our old spot, to Colombes. The French soldiers are stationed near there and I know Colonel Dumoulin will give us a pass."

"It's a go; I am with you."

An hour after, having supplied themselves with their fishing tackle, they arrived at the colonel's villa. He had smiled at their request and had given them a pass in due form.

At about eleven o'clock they reached the advance guard, and after presenting their pass, walked through Colombes and found themselves very near their destination. Argenteuil, across the way, and the great plains toward Nanterre were all deserted. Solitary the hill of Orgemont and Sannois rose clearly above the plains; a splendid point of observation.

"See," said Sauvage pointing to the hills, "the Prussians are there."

Prussians! They had never seen one, but they knew that they were all around Paris, invisible and powerful; plundering, devastating, and slaughtering. To their superstitious terror they added a deep hatred for this unknown and victorious people.

"What if we should meet some?" said Morissot.

"We would ask them to join us," said Sauvage in true Parisian style.

Still they hesitated to advance. The silence frightened them. Finally Sauvage picked up courage.

"Come, let us go on cautiously."

They proceeded slowly, hiding behind bushes, looking anxiously on every side, listening to every sound. A bare strip of land had to be crossed before reaching the river. They started to run. At last, they reached the bank and sank into the bushes; breathless, but relieved.

Morissot thought he heard some one walking. He listened attentively, but no, he heard no sound. They were indeed alone! The little island shielded them from view. The house where the restaurant used to be seemed deserted; feeling reassured, they settled themselves for a good day's sport.

Sauvage caught the first fish, Morissot the second; and every minute they would bring one out which they would place in a net at their feet. It was indeed miraculous! They felt that supreme joy which one feels after having been deprived for months of a pleasant pastime. They had forgotten everything; even the war!

Suddenly, they heard a rumbling sound and the earth shook beneath them. It was the cannon on Mont Valérien. Morissot looked up and saw a trail of smoke, which was instantly followed by another explosion. Then they followed in quick succession.

"They are at it again," said Sauvage shrugging his shoulders. Morissot, who was naturally peaceful, felt a sudden, uncontrollable anger.

"Stupid fools! What pleasure can they find in killing each other!"

"They are worse than brutes!"

"It will always be thus as long as we have governments."

"Well, such is life!"

"You mean death!" said Morissot laughing.

They continued to discuss the different political problems, while the cannon on Mont Valérien sent death and desolation among the French.

Suddenly they started. They had heard a step behind them. They turned and beheld four big men in dark uniforms, with guns pointed right at them. Their fishing-lines dropped out of their hands and floated away with the current.

In a few minutes, the Prussian soldiers had bound them, cast them into a boat, and rowed across the river to the island which our friends had thought deserted. They soon found out their mistake when they reached the house, behind which stood a score or more of soldiers. A big burly officer, seated astride a chair, smoking an immense pipe, addressed them in excellent French:

"Well, gentlemen, have you made a good haul?"

Just then, a soldier deposited at his feet the net full of fish which he had taken care to take along with him. The officer smiled and said:

"I see you have done pretty well, but let us change the subject. You are evidently sent to spy upon me. You pretended to fish so as to put me off the scent, but I am not so simple. I have caught you and shall have you shot. I am sorry, but war is war. As you passed the advance-guard you certainly must have the password; give it to me, and I will set you free."

The two friends stood side by side, pale and slightly trembling, but they answered nothing.

"No one will ever know. You will go back home quietly and the secret will disappear with you. If you refuse, it is instant death! Choose!"

They remained motionless; silent. The Prussian officer calmly pointed to the river.

"In five minutes you will be at the bottom of this river! Surely, you have a family, friends waiting for you?"

Still they kept silent. The cannon rumbled incessantly. The officer gave orders in his own tongue, then moved his chair away from the prisoners. A squad of men advanced within twenty feet of them, ready for command.

"I give you one minute; not a second more!"

Suddenly approaching the two Frenchmen, he took Morissot aside and whispered:

"Quick; the password. Your friend will not know; he will think I changed my mind." Morissot said nothing.

Then taking Sauvage aside he asked him the same thing, but he also was silent. The officer gave further orders and the men leveled their guns. At that moment, Morissot's eyes rested on the net full of fish lying in the grass a few feet away. The sight made him faint and, though he struggled against it, his eyes filled with tears. Then turning to his friend:

"Farewell! Mr. Sauvage!"

"Farewell! Mr. Morissot."

They stood for a minute, hand in hand, trembling with emotion which they were unable to control.

"Fire!" commanded the officer.

The squad of men fired as one. Sauvage fell straight on his face. Morissot, who was taller, swayed, pivoted and fell across his friend's body his face to the sky; while blood flowed freely from the wound in the breast. The officer gave further orders and his men disappeared. They came back presently with ropes and stones, which they tied to the feet of the two friends, and four of them carried them to the edge of the river. They swung them and threw them in as far as they could. The bodies weighted by stones sank immediately. A splash, a few ripples and the water resumed its usual calmness. The only thing to be seen was a little blood floating on the surface. The officer calmly retraced his steps toward the house, muttering:

"The fish will get even now."

He perceived the net full of fish, picked it up, smiled, and called:

"Wilhelm!"

A soldier in a white uniform approached. The officer handed him the fish, saying:

"Fry these little things while they are still alive; they will make a delicious meal."

And having resumed his position on the chair, he puffed away at his pipe.

The Revolt of Mother

MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN

"Father!"

"What is it?"

"What are them men diggin' over there in the field for?"

There was a sudden dropping and enlarging of the lower part of the old man's face, as if some heavy weight had settled therein; he shut his mouth tight, and went on harnessing the great bay mare. He hustled the collar on to her neck with a jerk.

"Father!"

The old man slapped the saddle upon the mare's back.

"Look here, father, I want to know what them men are diggin' over in the field for, an' I'm goin' to know."

"I wish you'd go into the house, mother, an' 'tend to your own affairs," the old man said then. He ran his words together, and his speech was almost as inarticulate as a growl.

But the woman understood; it was her most native tongue. "I ain't goin' into the house till you tell me what them men are doin' over there in the field," said she.

Then she stood waiting. She was a small woman, short and straight-waisted like a child in her brown cotton gown. Her forehead was mild and benevolent between the smooth curves of grey hair; there were meek downward lines about her nose and mouth; but her eyes, fixed upon the old man, looked as if the meekness had been the result of her own will, never the will of another.

They were in the barn, standing before the wide open doors. The spring air, full of the smell of growing grass and unseen blossoms, came in their faces. The deep yard in front was littered with farm wagons and piles of wood; on the edges, close to the fence and the house, the grass was a vivid green, and there were some dandelions.

The old man glanced doggedly at his wife as he tightened the last buckles on the harness. She looked as immovable to him as one of the rocks in his pasture-land, bound to the earth with generations of blackberry vines. He slapped the reins over the horse, and started forth from the barn.

"Father!" said she.

The old man pulled up. "What is it?"

"I want to know what them men are diggin' over there in that field for."

"They're diggin' a cellar, I s'pose, if you've got to know."

"A cellar for what?"

"A barn."

"A barn? You ain't goin' to build a barn over there where we was goin' to have a house, father?"

The old man said not another word He hurried the horse into the farm wagon, and clattered out of the yard, jouncing as sturdily on his seat as a boy.

The woman stood a moment looking after him, then she went out of the barn across a corner of the yard to the house. The house, standing at right angles with the great barn and a long reach of sheds and out-buildings, was infinitesimal compared with them. It was scarcely as commodious for people as the little boxes under the barn eaves were for doves.

A pretty girl's face, pink and delicate as a flower, was looking out of one of the house windows. She was watching three men who were digging over in the field which bounded the yard near the road line. She turned quietly when the woman entered.

"What are they digging for, mother?" said she. "Did he tell you?"

"They're diggin' for—a cellar for a new barn."

"Oh, mother, he ain't going to build another barn?"

"That's what he says."

A boy stood before the kitchen glass combing his hair. He combed slowly and painstakingly, arranging his brown hair in a

smooth hillock over his forehead. He did not seem to pay any attention to the conversation.

"Sammy, did you know father was going to build a new barn?" asked the girl.

The boy combed assiduously.

"Sammy!"

He turned, and showed a face like his father's under his smooth crest of hair. "Yes, I s'pose I did," he said, reluctantly.

"How long have you known it?" asked his mother.

"'Bout three months, I guess."

"Why didn't you tell of it?"

"Didn't think 'twould do no good."

"I don't see what father wants another barn for," said the girl, in her sweet, slow voice. She turned again to the window, and stared out at the digging men in the field. Her tender, sweet face was full of a gentle distress. Her forehead was as bald and as innocent as a baby's, with the light hair strained back from it in a row of curl papers. She was quite large, but her soft curves did not look as if they covered muscles.

Her mother looked sternly at the boy. "Is he goin' to buy more cows?" said she.

The boy did not reply; he was tying his shoes.

"Sammy, I want you to tell me if he's goin' to buy more cows."

"I s'pose he is."

"How many?"

"Four, I guess."

His mother said nothing more. She went into the pantry, and there was a clatter of dishes. The boy got his cap from a nail behind the door, took an old arithmetic from the shelf, and started for school. He was lightly built, but clumsy. He went out of the yard with a curious spring in the hips, that made his loose home-made jacket tilt up in the rear.

The girl went to the sink, and began to wash the dishes that were piled up there. Her mother came promptly out of the pantry, and shoved her aside. "You wipe 'em," said she, "I'll wash. There's a good many this mornin'."

The mother plunged her hands vigorously into the water, the girl wiped the plates slowly and dreamily. "Mother," said she, "don't you think it's too bad father's going to build that new barn, much as we need a decent house to live in?"

Her mother scrubbed a dish fiercely. "You ain't found out yet we're women-folks, Nanny Penn," said she. "You ain't seen enough of men-folks yet to. One of these days you'll find it out, an' then you'll know that, we know only what men-folks think we do, so far as any use of it goes, an' how we'd ought to reckon men-folks in with Providence, an' not complain of what they do any more than we do of the weather."

"I don't care; I don't believe George is anything like that, anyhow," said Nanny. Her delicate face flushed pink, her lips pouted softly, as if she were going to cry.

"You wait an' see. I guess George Eastman ain't no better than other men. You hadn't ought to judge father, though. He can't help it, 'cause he don't look at things jest the way we do. An' we've been pretty comfortable here, after all. The roof don't leak—ain't never but once—that's one thing. Father's kept it shingled right up."

"I do wish we had a parlor."

"I guess it won't hurt George Eastman any to come to see you in a nice clean kitchen. I guess a good many girls don't have as good a place as this. Nobody's ever heard me complain."

"I ain't complained either, mother."

"Well, I don't think you'd better, a good father an' a good home as you've got. S'pose your father made you go out an' work for your livin'? Lots of girls have to that ain't no stronger an' better able to than you be."

Sarah Penn washed the frying pan with a conclusive air. She scrubbed the outside of it as faithfully as the inside. She was a masterly keeper of her box of a house. Her one living room never seemed to have in it any of the dust that the friction of life with inanimate matter produces. She swept, and there seemed to be no dirt to go before the broom; she cleaned, and one could see no difference. She was like an artist; so perfect that he apparently has no art. Today she got out a mixing bowl and a board, and rolled some pies, and there was no more flour upon her

than there was upon her daughter who was doing finer work. Nanny was to be married in the fall, and she was sewing on some white cambric and embroidery. She sewed industriously while her mother cooked; her soft, milk-white hands and wrists showed whiter than her delicate work.

"We must have the stove moved out in the shed before long," said Mrs. Penn. "Talk about not havin' things, it's been a real blessin' to be able to put a stove up in that shed in hot weather. Father did one good thing when he fixed that stove-pipe out there."

Sarah Penn's face as she rolled her pies had that expression of meek vigor which might have characterized one of the New Testament saints. She was making mince pies. Her husband, Adoniram Penn, liked them better than any other kind. She baked twice a week. Adoniram often liked a piece of pie between meals. She hurried this morning. It had been later than usual when she began, and she wanted to have a pie baked for dinner. However deep a resentment she might be forced to hold against her husband, she would never fail in sedulous attention to his wants.

Nobility of character manifests itself at loop-holes when it is not provided with large doors. Sarah Penn's showed itself today in flaky dishes of pastry. So she made pies faithfully, while across the table she could see, when she glanced up from her work, the sight that rankled in her patient and steadfast soul—the digging of the cellar of the new barn in the place where Adoniram forty years ago had promised her their new house should stand.

The pies were done for dinner. Adoniram and Sammy were home a few minutes after twelve o'clock. The dinner was eaten with serious haste. There was never much conversation at the table in the Penn family. Adoniram asked a blessing, and they ate promptly, then rose up and went about their work.

Sammy went back to school, taking soft, sly lopes out of the yard like a rabbit. He wanted a game of marbles before school, and feared his father would give him some chores to do. Adoniram hastened to the door and called after him, but he was out of sight.

"I don't see what you let him go for, mother," said he. "I wanted him to help me unload that wood."

Adoniram went to work out in the yard, unloading wood from the wagon. Sarah put away the dinner dishes, while Nanny took down her curl-papers and changed her dress. She was going down to the store to buy some more embroidery and thread.

When Nanny was gone, Mrs. Penn went to the door. "Father!" she called.

"Well, what is it!"

"I want to see you jest a minute, father."

"I can't leave this wood nohow. I've got to git it unloaded an' go for a load of gravel afore two o'clock. Sammy had ought to help me. You hadn't ought to let him go to school so early."

"I want to see you jest a minute."

"I tell ye I can't, nohow, mother."

"Father, you come here." Sarah Penn stood in the door like a queen; she held her head as if it bore a crown; there was that patience which makes authority royal in her voice. Adoniram went.

Mrs. Penn led the way into the kitchen, and pointed to a chair. "Sit down, father," said she; "I've got somethin' I want to say to you."

He sat down heavily; his face was quite solid, but he looked at her with restive eyes. "Well, what is it, mother?"

"I want to know what you're buildin' that new barn for, father?"

"I tell ye I ain't got nothin' to say about it, mother; an' I ain't goin' to say nothin'."

"Be you goin' to buy more cows?"

Adoniram did not reply; he shut his mouth tight.

"I know you be, as well as I want to. Now, father, look here"—Sarah Penn had not sat down; she stood before her husband in the humble fashion of a Scripture woman—"I'm goin' to talk real plain to you; I never have since I married you, but I'm goin' to now. I ain't never complained, and I ain't goin' to complain now, but I'm goin' to talk plain. You see this room here, father; you look at it well. You see there ain't no carpet on the floor, an' you see the paper is all dirty, an'

droppin' off the walls. We ain't had no new paper on it for ten year, an' then I put it on myself, and it didn't cost but ninepence a roll. You see this room, father; it's all the one I've had to work in an' eat in an' sit in sence we was married. There ain't another woman in the whole town whose husband ain't got half the means you have but what's got better. It's all the room Nanny's got to have her company in; an' there ain't one of her mates but what's got better, an' their fathers not so able as hers is. It's all the room she'll have to be married in. What would you have thought, father, if we had had our weddin' in a room no better than this? I was married in my mother's parlor, with a carpet on the floor, an' stuffed furniture, and a mahogany card-table. An' this is all the room my daughter will have to be married in. Look here, father!"

Sarah Penn went across the room as though it were a tragic stage. She flung open a door and disclosed a tiny bedroom, only large enough for a bed and a bureau, with a path between. "There, father," said she—"there's all the room I've had to sleep in forty year. All my children was born there—the two that died, an' the two that's livin'. I was sick with a fever there."

She stepped to another door and opened it. It led into a small, ill-lighted pantry. "Here," said she, "is all the buttery I've got—every place I've got for my dishes, to set away my victuals in, an' to keep my milk-pans in. Father, I've been takin' care of the milk of six cows in this place, an' now you're goin' to build a new barn, an' keep more cows, an' give me more to do in it."

She threw open another door. A narrow crooked flight of stairs wound upward from it. "There, father," said she, I want you to look at the stairs that go up to them two unfinished chambers that are all the places our son an' daughter have had to sleep in all their lives. There ain't a prettier girl in town nor a more ladylike one than Nanny, an' that's the place she has to sleep in. It ain't so good as your horse's stall; it ain't so warm and tight."

Sarah Penn went back and stood before her husband. "Now, father," said she, "I want to know if you think you're doin' right an' accordin' to what you profess. Here, when we was married, forty years ago, you promised me faithful that we should have a new house built in that lot over in the field before the year was out. You said you had money enough, an' you wouldn't ask me to live in no such place as this. It is forty year now, an' you've been makin' more money, an' I've been savin' of it for you ever since, an' you ain't built no house yet. You've built sheds an' cow-houses an' one new barn, an' now you're goin' to build another. Father, I want to know if you think it's right. You're lodgin' your dumb beasts better than you are your own flesh and blood. I want to know if you think it's right."

"I ain't got nothin' to say."

"You can't say nothin' without ownin' it ain't right, father. An' there's another thing—I ain't complained; I've got along forty year, an' I suppose I should forty more, if it wa'n't for that—if we don't have another house. Nanny, she can't live with us after she's married. She'll have to go somewhere else to live away from us, an' it don't seem as if I could have it so, noways, father. She wa'n't ever strong. She's got considerable color, but there wa'n't never any backbone to her. I've always took the heft of everything off her, an' she ain't fit to keep house an' do everything herself. She'll be all worn out inside of a year. Think of her doin' all the washin' an' ironin' an' bakin' with them soft white hands an' arms, an' sweepin'! I can't have it so, noways, father."

Mrs. Penn's face was burning; her mild eyes gleamed. She had pleaded her little cause like a Webster; she had ranged from severity to pathos; but her opponent employed that obstinate silence which makes eloquence futile with mocking echoes. Adoniram arose clumsily.

"Father, ain't you got nothin' to say?" said Mrs. Penn.

"I've got to go off after that load of gravel. I can't stan' here talkin' all day."

"Father, won't you think it over, an' have a house built there, instead of a barn."

"I ain't got nothin' to say."

Adoniram shuffled out. Mrs. Penn went

into her bedroom. When she came out, her eyes were red. She had a roll of unbleached cotton cloth. She spread it out on the kitchen table, and began cutting out some shirts for her husband. The men over in the field had a team to help them this afternoon; she could hear their halloos. She had a scanty pattern for the shirts; she had to plan and piece the sleeves. Nanny came home with her embroidery, and sat down with her needlework. She had taken down her curl-papers, and there was a soft roll of fair hair like an aureole over her forehead; her face was as delicately fine and clear as porcelain. Suddenly she looked up, and the tender red flamed all over her face and neck. "Mother," said she.

"What say?"

"I've been thinking—I don't see how we're goin' to have any—wedding in this room. I'd be ashamed to have his folks come if we didn't have anybody else."

"Mebbe we can have some new paper before then; I can put it on. I guess you won't have no call to be ashamed of your belongin's."

"We might have the wedding in the new barn," said Nanny, with gentle pettishness. "Why, mother, what makes you look so?"

Mrs. Penn had started, and was staring at her with a curious expression. She turned again to her work, and spread out a pattern carefully on the cloth. "Nothin'," said she.

Presently Adoniram clattered out of the yard in his two wheeled dump cart, standing as proudly upright as a Roman charioteer. Mrs. Penn opened the door and stood there a minute looking out; the halloos of the men sounded louder.

It seemed to her all through the spring months that she heard nothing but the halloos and the noises of the saws and hammers. The new barn grew fast. It was a fine edifice for this little village. Men came on pleasant Sundays, in their meeting suits and clean shirt bosoms, and stood around it admiringly. Mrs. Penn did not speak of it, and Adoniram did not mention it to her, although, sometimes, upon a return from inspecting it, he bore himself with injured dignity.

"It's a strange thing how your mother feels about the new barn," he said, confidentially, to Sammy one day.

Sammy only grunted after an odd fashion for a boy; he had learned it from his father.

The barn was all completed ready for use by the third week of July. Adoniram had planned to move his stock in on Wednesday; on Tuesday he received a letter which changed his plans. He came in with it early in the morning. "Sammy's been to the post-office," said he, "and I've got a letter from Hiram." Hiram was Mrs. Penn's brother, who lived in Vermont.

"Well," said Mrs. Penn, "what does he say about the folks?"

"I guess they're all right. He says he thinks if I come up country right off there's a chance to buy jest the kind of a horse I want." He stared reflectively out of the window at the new barn.

Mrs. Penn was making pies. She went on clapping the rolling pin into the crust, although she was very pale, and her heart beat loudly.

"I dun' know but what I'd better go," said Adoniram. "I hate to go off jest now, right in the midst of hayin', but the ten-acre lot's cut, an' I guess Rufus an' the others can git along without me three or four days. I can't get a horse round here to suit me, nohow, an' I've got to have another for all that wood-haulin' in the fall. I told Hiram to watch out, an' if he got wind of a good horse to let me know. I guess I'd better go."

"I'll get out your clean shirt an' collar," said Mrs. Penn calmly.

She laid out Adoniram's Sunday suit and his clean clothes on the bed in the little bedroom. She got his shaving water and razor ready. At last she buttoned on his collar and fastened his black cravat.

Adoniram never wore his collar and cravat except on extra occasions. He held his head high, with a rasped dignity. When he was all ready, with his coat and hat brushed, and a lunch of pie and cheese in a paper bag, he hesitated on the threshold of the door. He looked at his wife and his manner was defiantly apologetic. "If them cows come today, Sammy can drive 'em into the new barn,"

said he; "an' when they bring the hay up, they can pitch it in there."

"Well," replied Mrs. Penn.

Adoniram set his shaven face ahead and started. When he had cleared the doorstep, he turned and looked back with a kind of nervous solemnity. "I shall be back by Saturday if nothin' happens," said he.

"Do be careful, father," returned his wife.

She stood in the door with Nanny at her elbow and watched him out of sight. Her eyes had a strange, doubtful expression in them; her peaceful forehead was contracted. She went in, and about her baking again. Nanny sat sewing. Her wedding-day was drawing nearer, and she was getting pale and thin with her steady sewing. Her mother kept glancing at her.

"Have you got that pain in your side this mornin'?" she asked.

"A little."

Mrs. Penn's face, as she worked, changed, her perplexed forehead smoothed, her eyes were steady, her lips firmly set. She formed a maxim for herself, although incoherently, with her unlettered thoughts. "Unsolicited opportunities are the guide-posts of the Lord to the new roads of life," she repeated in effect, and she made up her mind to her course of action.

"S'posin' I *had* wrote to Hiram," she muttered once, when she was in pantry—"s'posin' I had wrote, an' asked him if he knew of any horse? But I didn't, an' father's goin' wa'n't none of my doin'. It looks like a providence." Her voice rang out quite loud at the last.

"What are you talkin' about, mother?" called Nanny.

"Nothin'."

Mrs. Penn hurried her baking; at eleven o'clock it was all done. The load of hay from the west field came slowly down the cart track, and drew up at the new barn. Mrs. Penn ran out. "Stop!" she screamed—"stop!"

The men stopped and looked; Sammy upreared from the top of the load and stared at his mother.

"Stop!" she cried out again. "Don't you put the hay in that barn; put it in the old one."

"Why, he said to put it in here," returned one of the haymakers, wonderingly. He was a young man, a neighbor's son, whom Adoniram hired by the year to help on the farm.

"Don't you put the hay in the new barn; there's room enough in the old one, ain't there?" said Mrs. Penn.

"Room enough," returned the hired man, in his thick, rustic tones. "Didn't need the new barn, nohow, far as room's concerned. Well, I s'pose he changed his mind." He took hold of the horses' bridles.

Mrs. Penn went back to the house. Soon the kitchen windows were darkened, and a fragrance like warm honey came into the room.

Nanny laid down her work. "I thought father wanted them to put the hay into the new barn?" she said wonderingly.

"It's all right," replied her mother.

Sammy slid down from the load of hay, and came in to see if dinner was ready.

"I ain't goin' to get a regular dinner today, as long as father's gone," said his mother. "I've let the fire go out. You can have some bread an' milk an' pie. I thought we could get along." She set out some bowls of milk, some bread, and a pie on the kitchen table. "You'd better eat your dinner now," said she. "You might jest as well get through with it. I want you to help me afterward."

Nanny and Sammy stared at each other. There was something strange in their mother's manner. Mrs. Penn did not eat anything herself. She went into the pantry, and they heard her moving dishes while they ate. Presently she came out with a pile of plates. She got the clothes basket out of the shed, and packed them into it. She brought out cups and saucers, and put them in with the plates.

"What are you goin' to do, mother?" inquired Nanny, in a timid voice. A sense of something unusual made her tremble, as if it were a ghost. Sammy rolled his eyes over his pie.

"You'll see what I'm goin' to do," replied Mrs. Penn. "If you're through, Nanny, I want you to go upstairs an' pack up your things; an' I want you, Sammy, to help me take down the bed in the bedroom."

"Oh, mother, what for?" gasped Nanny.

"You'll see."

During the next few hours a feat was performed by this simple, pious New England mother which was equal in its way to Wolfe's storming of the Heights of Abraham. It took no more genius and audacity of bravery for Wolfe to cheer his wondering soldiers up those steep precipices, under the sleeping eyes of the enemy, than for Sarah Penn, at the head of her children, to move all their little household goods into the new barn while her husband was away.

Nanny and Sammy followed their mother's instructions without a murmur; indeed, they were overawed. There is a certain uncanny and superhuman quality about all such purely original undertakings as their mother's was to them. Nanny went back and forth with her light loads, and Sammy tugged with sober energy.

At five o'clock in the afternoon the little house in which the Penns had lived for forty years had emptied itself into the new barn.

Every builder builds somewhat for unknown purposes, and is in a measure a prophet. The architect of Adoniram Penn's barn, while he designed it for the comfort of four-footed animals had planned better than he knew for the comfort of humans. Sarah Penn saw at a glance its possibilities. Those great box-stalls, with quilts hung before them, would make better bedrooms than the one she had occupied for forty years, and there was a tight carriage room. The harness room, with its chimney and shelves, would make a kitchen of her dreams. The great middle space would make a parlor, by and by, fit for a palace. Upstairs, there was as much room as down. With partitions and windows, what a house would there be! Sarah looked at the row of stanchions before the allotted space for cows, and reflected that she would have her front entry there.

At six o'clock the stove was set up in the harness-room, the kettle was boiling, and the table was set for tea. It looked almost as home-like as the abandoned house across the yard had ever done. The young hired man milked, and Sarah directed him calmly to bring the milk to the new barn. He came, gaping, dropping little blots of foam from the brimming pails on the grass. Before the next morning he had spread all over the little village the story of Adoniram Penn's wife moving into the new barn. Men assembled in the store and talked it over, women with shawls over their heads scuttled into each other's houses before their work was done. Any deviation from the ordinary course of life in this quiet town was enough to stop all progress in it. Everybody paused to look at the staid, independent figure on the side track. There was a difference of opinion in regard to her. Some held her to be insane; some, of a lawless and rebellious spirit.

Friday the minister went to see her. It was in the forenoon, and she was at the barn door shelling peas for dinner. She looked up and returned his salutation with dignity; then she went on with her work. She did not invite him in. The saintly expression of her face remained fixed, but there was an angry flush over it.

The minister stood awkwardly before her, and talked. She handled the peas as if they were bullets. At last, she looked up, and her eyes showed the spirit that her meek front had covered up for a lifetime.

"There ain't no use talkin', Mr. Hersey," said she. "I've thought it all over an' over, an' I believe I'm doin' what's right. I've made it the subject of prayer, an' it's betwixt me an' the Lord an' Adoniram. There ain't no call for nobody else to worry about it."

"Well, of course, if you have brought it to the Lord in prayer, and feel satisfied that you are doing right, Mrs. Penn," said the minister, helplessly. His thin, grey-bearded face was pathetic. He was a sickly man; his youthful confidence had cooled; he had to scourge himself up to some of his pastoral duties as relentlessly as a Catholic ascetic, and then he was prostrated by the smart.

"I think it's right jest as much as I think it was right for our forefathers to come over from the old country 'cause they didn't have what belonged to 'em," said Mrs. Penn. She arose. The barn threshold might have been Plymouth Rock from her bearing. "I don't doubt you mean well, Mr. Hersey," said she, "but there are things people hadn't ought to interfere with. I've been a member of the

church for over forty year. I've got my own mind an' my own feet, an' I'm goin' to think my own thoughts an go my own ways, an' nobody but the Lord is goin' to dictate to me unless I've a mind to have him. Won't you come in and set down? How is Mis' Hersey?"

"She is well, I thank you," replied the minister. He added some more perplexed apologetic remarks; then he retreated.

He could expound the intricacies of every character study in the Scriptures; he was competent to grasp the Pilgrim Fathers and all historical innovators; but Sarah Penn was beyond him. He could deal with primal cases, but parallel ones worsted him. But, after all, it was aside from his province, he wondered more how Adoniram Penn would deal with his wife than how the Lord would. Everybody shared the wonder. When Adoniram's four new cows arrived, Sarah ordered three to be put in the old barn, the other in the house shed where the cooking stove had stood. That added to the excitement. It was whispered that all four cows were domiciled in the house.

Towards sunset on Saturday, when Adoniram was expected home, there was a knot of men in the road near the new barn. The hired man had milked, but he still hung around the premises. Sarah Penn had supper all ready. There were brown bread and baked beans and a custard pie; it was the supper that Adoniram loved on a Saturday night. She had on a clean calico, and she bore herself imperturbably. Nanny and Sammy kept close at her heels. Their eyes were large, and Nanny was full of nervous tremors. Still, there was to them more pleasant excitement than anything else. An inborn confidence in their mother over their father asserted itself.

Sammy looked out of the harness-room window. "There he is," he announced in an awed whisper. He and Nanny peeped around the casing. Mrs. Penn kept on about her work. The children watched Adoniram leave the new horse standing in the drive while he went to the house door. It was fastened. Then he went around to the shed. That door was seldom locked, even when the family was away. The thought how her father would be confronted by the cow flashed upon Nanny. There was a hysterical sob in her throat. Adoniram emerged from the shed and stood looking around in a dazed fashion. His lips moved; he was saying something, but they could not hear what it was. The hired man was peeping around a corner of the old barn, but nobody saw him.

Adoniram took the new horse by the bridle and led him across the yard to the new barn. Nanny and Sammy slunk close to their mother. The barn doors rolled back, and there stood Adoniram, with the long mild face of the Canadian farm horse looking over his shoulder.

Nanny kept behind her mother, but Sammy stepped suddenly forward, and stood in front of her.

Adoniram stared at the group. "What on airth you all down here for?" said he. "What's the matter over to the house?"

"We've come here to live, father," said Sammy. His shrill voice quavered out bravely.

"What"—Adoniram sniffed—"what is it smells like cookin'?" said he. He stepped forward and looked in the open door of the harness-room. Then he turned to his wife. His old bristling face was pale and frightened. "What on airth does this mean, mother?" he gasped.

"You come in here, father," said Sarah. She led the way into the harness room and shut the door. "Now, father," said she, "you needn't be scared. I ain't crazy. There ain't nothin' to be upset over. But we've come here to live, an' we're goin' to live here. We've got just as good a right here as new horses an' cows. The house wa'n't fit for us to live in any longer, an' I made up my mind I wa'n't goin' to stay there. I've done my duty by you forty year, an' I'm goin' to do it now, but I'm goin' to live here. You've got to put in some windows and partitions; an' you'll have to buy some furniture."

"Why, mother!" the old man gasped.

"You'd better take your coat off an' get washed—there's the wash-basin—an' then we'll have supper."

"Why, mother!"

Sammy went past the window, leading the

new horse to the old barn. The old man saw him, and shook his head speechlessly. He tried to take off his coat, but his arms seemed to lack the power. His wife helped him. She poured some water into the tin basin, and put in a piece of soap. She got the comb and brush, and smoothed his thin grey hair after he had washed. Then she put the beans, hot bread, and tea on the table. Sammy came in and the family drew up. Adoniram sat looking dazedly at his plate and they waited.

"Ain't you goin' to ask a blessin', father?" said Sarah.

And the old man bent his head and mumbled.

All through the meal he stopped eating at intervals, and stared furtively at his wife; but he ate well. The home food tasted good to him, and his old frame was too sturdily healthy to be affected by his mind. But after supper he went out, and sat down on the step of the smaller door at the right of the barn, through which he had meant his Jerseys to pass in stately file, but which Sarah designed for her front house door, and he leaned his head on his hands.

After the supper dishes were cleared away and the milk pans washed, Sarah went out to him. The twilight was deepening. There was a clear green glow in the sky. Before them stretched the smooth level of field; in the distance was a cluster of haystacks like the huts of a village; the air was very cool and calm and sweet. The landscape might have been an ideal one of peace.

Sarah bent over and touched her husband on one of his thin, sinewy shoulders. "Father!"

The old man's shoulders heaved; he was weeping.

"Why, don't do so, father," said Sarah.

"I'll—put up the—partitions, an'—everything you—want, mother."

Sarah put her apron up to her face; she was overcome by her own triumph.

Adoniram was like a fortress whose walls had no active resistance, and went down the instant the right besieging tools were used. "Why, mother," he said hoarsely, "I hadn't no idee you was so set on't as all this comes to."

Windwagon Smith[1]

WILBUR L. SCHRAMM

I

WINDWAGON SMITH had a face like any other man and two legs to walk on, but the morning he rode into Westport the quietest mule in town jumped sixteen feet. And some men would have flown like bald eagles that day, if they could.

That was when Westport was the great city of the prairie. Now it is only a far corner of Kansas City and smells like gasoline and coal smoke, but in those days it smelled of prairie grass and clean wind and was on every road west. No matter where you were going beyond the Missouri, you started at Westport. You followed a rutted trail twenty miles from town to a meadow where Jake Shafer's Negro boy had nailed a box top to a runt cottonwood and painted on it, "Rode to Oregon." There the families for Oregon turned north and the wagons for Santa Fe and the Spanish cities southwest. West of the crossing two hundred miles of grass rolled away to the sky, waist-high, blowing black and green and yellow. Your shoes got slick as lard in that grass. Then you came out into the sagebrush, and the grit chewed off your soles and left you barefoot. And about that time the Comanches would come yelling out of the sand hills. All the way

[1] From *Windwagon Smith and Other Yarns*, copyright, 1941, by Wilbur Schramm. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., and *The Atlantic Monthly*.

across a thousand miles of empty prairie you would wish you were back in Westport, sitting in Punch Dunkelberger's Star of the West saloon, listening to Jake Shafer tell how Davy Crockett could grin the bark off a tree.

Westport could have been the greatest city in the United States. It could have been Boston and New York and Detroit pressed into one and set down in the middle of the prairie, if it hadn't made one mistake. That was about Windwagon Smith.

The morning Windwagon came Punch Dunkelberger's hound dog woke up bristling like a hairbrush. That dog always slept until noon under his master's hat peg in the Star of the West; he had slept through a cyclone and seven street fights. But that morning he woke up about ten o'clock, waved his nose in the air, howled a long quaver, and slunk into a closet. Two Pawnees in the Star looked at the dog and blew away like smoke. Jake Shafer changed his seat and drew a bead on the door. The door opened slowly. But only Shelby Foster glided in, with his apologetic way, giving a little bow before speaking, because he was from the East and knew manners. When he tried to talk he was so excited he couldn't squeeze the words out and stood there with his mouth mostly open, his eyes big as soap kettles, and a silly polite look on his face, waving his hands toward the street as though he were batting gnats.

"I never hoped to see the Missouri flow juleps," said Jake Shafer, "or a gopher running a coyote, or Foster without anything to say."

Foster looked behind him and croaked and skipped aside, and there was a crash, and the head and shoulders of Jake's mule Martha appeared in the doorway. The doors slammed back and caught the mule's neck in a pincers, and there she stood like a moose head on the wall, rolling her eyes.

"I can stand bugs in the beer," bellowed Jake in his big barrel voice, "but when the draft animals come in I go out."

When they went out, there was Windwagon Smith.

All they saw at first was a Conestoga wagon coming down the street between the log houses. It was like any other Conestoga wagon, sway-backed, with a horseshoe canvas top. Except for one thing: there was nothing in front of it.

No oxen, no mules, no horses. Nothing. The wagon was just coming down the street.

The Pawnees were peeking from behind trees, eyes bulging like hard-boiled eggs. The dogs were barking, and the ponies that hadn't run away were pulling at their hackamores.

"He's got a sail," said Punch suddenly.

A pole stuck up out of the wagon like a ship's mast, and on it a square of canvas turned half sideways to catch the quartering wind.

A little man in blue denim was riding on the wagon seat. He furled the sail in quick movements, locked the wagon wheel, and came to a stop exactly where Jake's mule had been. When he hopped down from the wagon he walked with a sailor's roll and sway. The dogs quit barking and balanced on their hind legs, ready to go either way. It was so quiet you could hear the stranger's feet crunch in the dust and sand.

"Ahoy!" he said out of the silence. "Think I'll drop anchor and come ashore for a bit of refreshment."

His voice was deep and rolling, with something about it that prolonged the *r*'s and clipped the consonants like axebites in an oak tree.

"My name's Smith," he explained. "I'm the master, the crew, and most of the cargo of this ship, and I aim to do a lot of sailing on the prairie." There was never so much *r* in prairie until he said it.

It was Painted Dog, a Pawnee, who really named him. Painted Dog had been behind the nearest tree when Jake's mule jumped into the saloon. "Mule be there," he explained later, "door there. Windwagon blow down street. Whoosh! Mule: here, there!" So they called the stranger Windwagon, for he was the kind of person who had to have a shinier name than Smith.

The whole town followed the stranger to the Star. They made a circle around his table, then circles around that circle, like winding up a ball of yarn, until the room was full. Those who were near passed word over

their shoulders to those who were not, so that bulletins would slide outward like waves when you throw a stone in a pond: "He's sitting down"—"sitting down"—and finally, at farthest remove, the Pawnees would hear the news and pass it on: "Sittum down"—"sittum."

The stranger savored his drink like a man who had been long away from the good things. He was one of those old youngsters, anywhere between thirty and fifty. His face was burned and lined, his sandy hair had been tumbled and tousled by many a wind, and his eyes had the perpetual squint that a sailor gets from peeking all day at horizons. People looked mostly at his eyes: they burned like a tent preacher's. When he began to talk he wasn't bashful or brash, just quiet and sure and convincing, his big burry voice rolling like the tide. He told how the prairies were going to look tomorrow, speckled with mansions and factories and towns, wealthier than India. But he said people needed one great thing before they could have any of those things. They needed a way to move fast, a way to carry goods from town to town; to build this new prairie of tomorrow they had to have the speed of the wind! Then he talked about his wagon, how it would sail any place on the prairie ten times as fast as a draft animal, yet, without animals to buy or feed, it didn't need to follow crooked trails along rivers, and it would always have free power because the wind never stops on the prairie.

Jake Shafer nodded his head at that, and the circle behind him nodded, and two minutes later the Pawnees were nodding their heads too; they knew that prairie wind. Then the stranger looked Jake straight in the eye and said he wanted the men of Westport to ante in some money and build a fleet of big sail wagons, like his little one, for the Santa Fe trade. For a minute everybody stared at him. Then somebody snickered and somebody laughed, and everybody around began to laugh, and the room shook, and mirth rippled outward until the farthest Pawnee was holding his belly and gurgling *ug-ug-ug* in his throat.

When the room was quiet again the stranger said he had thought they might feel that way. He would be back in a few days; they should think it over. Then he climbed back into his wagon, unfurled the sail, and rumbled away in a great arc toward the west.

II

For the next few days they talked of nothing except Windwagon Smith. Jake Shafer said that he didn't hand over any chips until he saw the cards on the table, and everybody agreed that was sage. Shelby Foster, who had just graduated from a New England college, said that the kind of mathematics they taught in New England colleges proved that such a big wagon couldn't run, and only a fool would invest money in it. Foster had come out to write a book like Francis Parkman's about the Oregon Trail and went around looking at people and writing in his notebook. And as soon as Foster came out against windwagons people began to look at them more favorably. Jake's daughter Rosalie, who was as sweet as clover honey, said that maybe this was one of the things you just have to believe in—like boats, the first time you see one. Someone suggested that maybe Smith had gone to St. Joe, Westport's rival town, and St. Joe would build windwagons and take over the whole trade; and everybody spent a bad day imagining St. Joe full of millionaires. But a rider from St. Joe said Smith hadn't been up there. And when he hadn't come back in four days Westport gave him up and thought of other things.

When Windwagon Smith had been gone six days a trapper came to Westport with a strange story. He had been riding about ten miles from town when he saw a white streak on the prairie. The streak turned out to be an old cow, sticking its head between its legs and uncoiling with ten-foot jumps, stringing its tail out behind like a fence rail. Before he could think what to do about the cow it sailed past him and disappeared in a funnel of dust. He pondered whether he should catch the cow and race it against all comers, but he didn't know that he *could* catch it; it was the fastest cow he ever saw.

That same day a caravan that had just

started west passed back through Westport, headed *east*. The men of the caravan held tight to their guns and kept their mouths shut. One woman who was a little hysterical said they weren't afraid of the Sioux or the Mormons, but they weren't going out on the prairie among the *spirits*. They were going back to Ohio where bodies stayed in their graves!

Punch Dunkelberger and Jake Shafer talked of these events in the Star; Dr. Jackson told his patients about them while he prescribed calomel and mustard plasters; Shelby Foster discussed them with Rosalie Shafer while they looked at the moon. But the meaning was not fully comprehended until the next morning, when the dogs waved their noses in the air again and slunk away, all the ponies that could jump leaped the corrals and started east, and the Indians began to glide around, looking for wide trees. And soon Windwagon sailed down the street, waving to everyone.

"Ahoy!" he said. "I'd have been back yesterday, but came on a caravan and maybe scared them, so I took a long swing off the trail and waited until I was sure they were out of the way."

The town followed him into the Star again, and he showed a stone that was as good as an affidavit for where he had been. It was jagged and black and still warm from lying in a little gully beyond Council Grove where all the wind blows straight up, hot as Mexican pepper. That gully is one of the side doors to hell, people think. The Doctor worked long division on a table top and calculated that the windwagon had made nearly seventy miles a day. An ox team was lucky to make fifteen. When Windwagon said he thought he might go to St. Joe, Jake looked at the faces around him and then jumped up and banged the table and said, "By God, we'll form a company *here*!" A great whoop went up behind him and undulated outward, and in a little while the Pawnees were screaming and dancing in the street, the dogs snapping at their heels.

That is how the Westport Prairie Clipper Company was formed. You can see it in the company's minute book. Jake Shafer was elected president; Punch Dunkelberger, vice president; the Doctor, secretary and treasurer. Windwagon could have had any office he wanted, but he wanted only to be Navigator—Navigator of the Prairies, he said with a faraway look in his eyes. He said you had to believe in the future. Columbus had to believe; Dan Boone had to believe in Kentucky before he cut the Wilderness Road; Fulton had to believe that a little engine could push a big boat. Every time progress is made it's because people believe enough in something to take a chance. He said that pretty soon the prairie would be white with sails. The clippers would cruise past the oxen like coyotes past snails. Every day a clipper would dock in Westport with its hold full of gold and spices and blankets, and every day in the Spanish cities (ports, he called them) they would shout, "Make way for the Westport Prairie Clipper!"

Punch Dunkelberger was so near to tears he made the mistake of setting up the whole crowd.

They were slow in starting to build the clippers, because Windwagon was particular. He wanted white oak and hickory for the bed, so it could be curved just right to hold the cargo on slopes, and long-seasoned ash for the spokes and the tillers and all the moving parts that weren't iron. The iron had to be beaten just enough. When Jake saw what a job it was going to be he said they would build one clipper and try it out before building the others. Windwagon looked a little hurt, but he put the measurements on paper and sent riders to St. Joe and Independence to see what materials they could collect. Some things had to be ordered from St. Louis and Pittsburgh.

While the clipper was building, Windwagon had plenty of time to talk. He was ever one to talk grandly—not boastfully, just grandly. As soon as he got a dozen wagons promised he began to talk of a hundred-wagon fleet. And one evening he said, "It'll never do any good to have ships unless we have sailors. We've got to build crews at the same time we build clippers. If you are going to be the first captains in the Santa Fe voyage, you've got to learn to pilot."

So Jake climbed into Smith's little wagon one day, with his jaw set firm and his hands holding tight, and Windwagon sat beside him and explained how the sail worked. He let Jake try to steer, and they staggered over the prairie for a while. When they came back Jake climbed out quickly with the sweat running down his face and said he'd rather drive a runaway bull team than handle a 6 x 6 sail. One by one the other members of the Company began to go out for sailing lessons. They would swell out their muscles and hold onto the tiller as though they were driving a twelve-mule span and tug at the tiny sail like wrestling a steer. Windwagon would shake his head in despair and take the tiller from them and make the wagon glide this way and that. When Windwagon steered it was as though the man, the wagon, and the wind were all one will. But when Jake or Punch or the Doctor steered, the wagon would stagger and hesitate and groan in its joints. And when the lesson was over the pupil would climb out as quickly as possible and go into the Star for a long drink.

Windwagon explained that a captain must also know how to navigate. Foster snorted at that; he said that to navigate you need to know the kind of elevated mathematics that is taught only in New England colleges, but Windwagon said that for a man of sense it wasn't necessary to go to college, and he began to teach Westport the common rules about the stars and directions and estimating distances.

Jake Shafer ordered a sextant from Baltimore, and Windwagon nearly cried when he saw it. It reminded him of the sea, and he spent a whole afternoon telling how it feels to skid before a salt breeze, and how the mountains come to the bay at Naples, and how in a few weeks the first clipper would be sailing into Santa Fe.

One day Punch Dunkelberger appeared wearing a captain's cap he had ordered from St. Louis. It was bright blue with silver braid, and Punch looked like baked ham with birthday candles. But in a few weeks everyone had a blue cap. Each new one seemed to have more trimming than the one before, until Punch got ashamed of his and talked of putting a red turkey feather on it. The town was no longer interested in the things it had been. A caravan could hardly buy a mule or an ox in the village. The blacksmith was working on the clipper and had no time to shoe animals or repair wheels. Most of the businessmen closed up shop, hid their leathery faces under blue caps, sighted through the sextant, and tried to walk and talk like Windwagon. It was wonderful to hear them go on about tacking and hauling, port and starb'd.

Sometimes a man would look at himself in his wife's mirror or calculate how much money the experiment was costing him. Then he would go to Windwagon, clear his throat and furrow his brow, and try to say his worries. Always Windwagon would soothe him and tell him about Tomorrow and send him away figuring how much money could be made on one trip to Santa Fe. You couldn't doubt a man who believed as hard as Windwagon.

Shelby Foster was the only man in Westport that Windwagon couldn't convince. Foster stood around and wrote in his notebook and groused. He said he had learned in college how another damned fool once wanted to make a machine that would fly on the wind—somebody named Darius Green, he said. That led to Foster's quarrel with Rosalie Shafer. When Foster had come to Missouri he had tried once to ride a pony and taken one look at Rosalie and decided to write his book in Westport rather than on the trail. Before that, Rosalie hadn't had any beau except on Sunday nights when Punch would come over and sit beside her and talk about the mule business with Jake. She said Punch lacked imagination. Foster would kiss her hand and tell her she was a flower. They would sit close together and he would read poetry to her, the kind they learn in the New England colleges, about skylarks. But sometimes they talked about Windwagon Smith, and Foster said sensible men would lock Windwagon up, and Rosalie called Foster a coward and said he, too, lacked imagination, and they would sit at opposite ends of the bench and look at the moon individually.

Windwagon had imagination, Rosalie said. And finally she teased him into giving her a sailing lesson, and after that he went out often with her late in the afternoon, when the sun would glint like a Sioux bonfire on Rosalie's hair, and Foster would sit in front of the Star, looking as though he were chewing pickled nails. Rosalie might become a good sailor, Windwagon said; she had sea sense. But that's all he said about her. Foster still went to see her six nights a week, and Punch on Sunday nights, but Punch said she didn't act so interested in the mule business any more.

III

When two caravans wanted to buy windwagons the men of Westport began to see what kind of business they were in.

"There's no end to it," Windwagon said. "When we build our fleet of a hundred we can squeeze almost everybody else off the trail. When we build a thousand we can take over the whole trade. Then we can build a thousand more and spread out into Iowa and Illinois and maybe start a water-level route beside the Lakes as far east as New York State. Then we'll build a million little wagons and sell them to the Oregon settlers. We'll keep the Santa Fe route to ourselves. We'll have our shipyards over there in the bottom by the creek and start branches in St. Joe and Independence. We'll train other captains and become admirals and have fleets under us."

The Doctor calculated they could make two hundred thousand dollars the first year and six million the second. They got so tangled figuring what the income might be the fourth year that Windwagon forgot Rosalie's sailing lesson, and Foster sneaked over and read Milton to her.

One day half-a-dozen businessmen came up on the boat from St. Louis, looked at the wagon, and offered a thousand dollars' cash for it; said they didn't know whether Windwagon was crazy or a genius, but they liked to gamble. Jake laughed at them. They talked to Windwagon awhile and offered ten thousand, but Jake told them to go home and dig up some real money.

Foster said Westport contained seven kinds of fools, all bad.

A company of soldiers marched down from Leavenworth one day. They had heard that cannons were being mounted in the wagons to conquer an empire in the Southwest, like Aaron Burr's. There weren't any cannons. Some people thought Windwagon looked a little crestfallen; it was the only thing he hadn't thought of. The soldiers poked around and talked impressively about military possibilities.

Jim Bridger himself came in one day and spent a long time studying the wagon. He looked sad, as though he saw the old West changing. And Kit Carson came up, with his Indian wife, and talked a long time to Windwagon like a brother and said he wished he were thirty years younger.

Westport was becoming a tourist town. The store stopped carrying powder and stocked little windwagons carved from soft wood. The print shop at St. Joe put out a souvenir booklet all about Windwagon Smith, saying that he had once been an admiral in the Scotch navy, had captured the Sandwich Isles from the cannibals, and had twice sailed around the world. Foster sneered that if the truth were known he'd bet Windwagon had a past a lot different from that. Rosalie said Foster had less imagination than Punch. Windwagon just laughed.

When the windwagon was done it seemed that the whole population of the Western territories came into Westport to see it. You could hardly shuffle your feet without stepping on a dog or baby. The windwagon was ten times as large as a Conestoga wagon and built with two decks. Passengers could shoot buffalo from the upper deck when regular service started, Windwagon said. When the windwagon service was extended to Africa they could shoot lions. It had a mainsail as big as a house, and the wheels were a foot wide and tired with iron. Yet, big as it was, it was so beautifully fitted and greased that it moved with hardly a push of the hand. Some were in favor of painting it red, white, and blue, like most of the wagons,

but Windwagon said this must have dignity; this wasn't a wagon, it was a clipper ship. They made it blue with silver trimmings, and red spokes in the wheels.

The day before the first trip the manager of an Eastern railroad said that he didn't think the ship would run but was willing to offer twenty-five thousand for complete rights. Jake was pretty uncertain for a while, and then talked to Windwagon, and came back and laughed and said they wouldn't take a million dollars for the clipper. He talked almost as convincingly as Windwagon.

The Westport Prairie Clipper Company invited the President of the United States to dedicate the new ship, but he regretted. However, two top-hatted men walked into the Star, and when Punch went up to them and said in the new grand manner, "I am Captain Dunkelberger. I don't believe I have the pleasure of your acquaintance," they looked at him oddly and one said he was the Secretary of the Navy and the other the Secretary of War. Then they borrowed ten dollars from him.

The prairie clipper was rolled out to the edge of town, and Rosalie Shafer broke a bottle of corn whisky right prettily over one front wheel. Everybody yelled for a speech from Windwagon, everybody except Shelby Foster. Windwagon climbed up on the upper deck, blew his nose, hawked his throat, and began to talk with that faraway shine in his eyes.

"Ladies and gents," he said, "and them of you as has come a long way to see us today. I want to welcome you to the port of the prairie. And I thank you for coming to see our little ship, the first clipper ever built for trans-prairie shipping in America. And I wish I could tell you what this is going to mean to you. I wish I could paint a picture the way this prairie is going to look in five years. This ship you see here today is only a pack rat compared to the ships you are going to see tied up in this port. There'll be passenger ships and freighters big enough to carry this one on the poop deck, big enough to carry a whole caravan or a whole army. And there'll be little windwagons. Where there's big ones there's usually little ones, you know. (*Long laughter.*) We'll make so many they won't cost much. And every one of you'll have a little windwagon in your barn, and you can get in it and go anywhere you want on the prairie just as easy as you put a chicken in a pot. This clipper shows that all you have to do is believe in these things and they'll come true. This is just like the sunrise on a new day, only you and me are helping to pull up the sun!"

It was the best speech Windwagon ever made, but he never made a bad speech.

IV

The maiden voyage, Windwagon called it, and said that only the real charter members of the company should go—and the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy, if they were sober. The President could have gone, too, if he had come. But nobody else. Not even Rosalie, who almost bawled in front of everybody when Jake told her no. The passengers boarded the ship and waved their caps. Punch had a red feather in his. Then Windwagon climbed up to the seat he called the bridge, grabbed the tiller, and yelled, "Cast off!" Jake's Negro boy took a block from under one of the wheels, and the clipper began to move.

There wasn't much jerk when they started, for Windwagon payed out the sail slowly, but in a minute Westport was a quarter mile away and the grass under wheel like a green rug. Punch said so later. In two minutes they could hardly see the ponies and the crowd, and Shelby Foster out in front in his red shirt, looking as though he were balancing the family tree on his nose.

They all said they had never felt anything like that ride. It was airy, like flying. This is the way a hawk feels, they guessed. This is the way it feels to scud in a three-master before the trade winds. The clipper swished past an ox team as though it were standing still. A Pawnee on a painted pony tried to race but was left so far behind he got off his horse and gave the sacred salute of one thumb and four fingers.

Under full sail, the clipper rushed across

the prairie. Occasionally it struck a gully or a dry creek bed, and then the body bounced on the springs and the passengers bounced in their seats. Sometimes it swayed sharply as it hurried down a prairie swell. But the swaying and bouncing were mostly in the body. The great wheels rolled true and straight where the tiller pointed them.

"It runs like a flagship," shouted Windwagon over the whine of the wind. "It'll run to Santa Fe in a week."

He had to give his attention immediately to steering over an acre of badlands. That was when Punch Dunkelberger bounced into the lap of the Secretary of War. Punch weighed three hundred pounds.

"I say," said the Secretary, "don't you think we are going rather fast? For a maiden voyage?" he added.

The Secretary of the Navy looked at the grass swirling past, then looked hastily away from it.

"Go up and talk to him," the Doctor said to Jake.

Jake crawled to the front.

"Don't you think we are going a bit fast?" he said in Windwagon's ear. "Confidentially, some of the passengers who aren't so used to this as we are seem to be getting a little frightened."

Windwagon laughed. He threw back his head and laughed from his toes up, as free as the wind, happy as a child.

"This is just crawling," he said. "Tomorrow we'll be going over this prairie so fast we'll hardly need to touch the ground."

Jake crawled back to his seat and closed his eyes.

"The man is mad," said the Doctor.

"Knock him over the head," said Punch.

"Then who'll steer and stop this thing?" asked Jake.

"True," said the Doctor.

Windwagon looked back over his shoulder. "Would you gentlemen from Washington like to ask any questions?" he called.

"Us? No," grunted the Secretary of War weakly.

The sail thumped like a drum in the wind, and the stench of hot axle grease rose inside the wagon.

"What if we hit something at this speed?" said Jake.

"Or turn over?" said the Secretary of War.

"Don't worry," said Windwagon.

"Can you pull that brake?" asked the Doctor.

"I think I'd better," said Jake. He crawled forward until he could reach the lever.

When the brake caught, the wagon skidded, groaned, began to turn almost at a right angle. It leaned dangerously on its springs. The sail strained and the hickory mast trembled. The wagon came around, grandly, thrillingly. But it didn't stop, and it didn't come out of the turn. It shuddered, hesitated, then swung around so that it was running backwards, slowly at first, then faster and faster.

They said Windwagon gave one slow look at Jake. He didn't say anything. One slow look, more sad than angry, but Jake shriveled under it. And then Windwagon laughed again, that same free laugh from his toes to his mouth, but more rueful. He laughed and turned back and worked with the sail.

Later they knew what had happened. A brake on one wheel will stop a wagon going slow but not a prairie clipper at full speed. The brake held just long enough to throw the clipper into a sharp turn and lock the steering gear. The sail turned on the mast and twisted its rope beyond chance of furling.

Far back the crowd watched admiringly as the wagon bore down stern-first upon them, cutting a wide arc over the waves of prairie grass. Not until it was two hundred yards away did they stop cheering. When it was a hundred yards away they scattered like a buffalo stampede. The prairie streamed pintos.

There were three little gullies in the path of the circle. Every twenty seconds the wagon hit a gully and the passengers bounced around like popcorn. About the tenth gully the Secretary of War bounced out. He lit in a ball and rolled like a tumbleweed. Then he got up and ran like a jack rabbit away from the path of the wagon. "Stop the ship!"

shouted Jake. "Stop the ship at once! We've lost His Honor!"

"You stop it," Punch suggested.

"Excuse me," said the Secretary of the Navy, and jumped. He yelled and sprang up and began to pick things out of his pants.

"Dwarf cactus," observed Punch.

"Gentlemen," said the Doctor, "I know the consequences of broken bones. I do not advise jumping."

Two more passengers jumped, and then another, and finally the Doctor himself. That left Windwagon and Jake and Punch.

"Father," said a sweet voice in the wagon.

Jake covered his eyes with his hands. "Did you ever hear of the voices of your beloved speaking to you just before death?" he asked Punch. Punch held tight and groaned. "Speaking to me too," he moaned.

"Father," said someone again.

Jake looked toward the back of the wagon.

"Rosalie!" he bellowed.

Rosalie was just climbing out of the compartment Windwagon had designed to hold liquids and pottery on the Santa Fe run.

"Rosalie!" said Punch Dunkelberger between bounces.

"Miss Shafer!" said Windwagon, looking around quickly.

"What are you doing here?" Jake thundered.

"You know this is a very great thing," yelled Windwagon above the roar of wind and wagon. "Miss Shafer is the first stowaway in the history of prairie clippers." He went back to working with the sail. They said he was just as calm as though this were a box social in the schoolhouse.

Jake said some short ugly words.

"You'd better jump," Punch advised her.

"Don't you dare jump," said Windwagon over his shoulder. "You might get killed."

"I'll take care of you," offered Punch.

"You need a spanking," said Jake.

"I don't need taking care of," Rosalie said to Punch. She looked Jake in the eye.

"You pulled the brake, didn't you?" she said, low and hard.

Jake stared at her.

"You couldn't believe in Windwagon. You couldn't put your chips down and take a chance. You got scared. You pulled the brake."

Jake made gurgling noises.

"I'm going up and sit with Windwagon," Rosalie said. Once she looked back at her father and Punch, who was staring at the nearest exit.

"Don't give up the ship, Captain Dunkelberger," she said sweetly.

The wagon whirled in its circle, the wind shrieking.

"There went Jake!" yelled Punch. Then Punch went.

He said he hit the ground unanimously, every square inch of him. He pulled himself out of the track and watched the windwagon. There was something beautiful about it even going backwards, something shiplike, birdlike, not wagonlike, with the wind filling out the sail blue-white against the blue-green grass. But he could see something from the ground he couldn't from the clipper: every circle was carrying it farther west. Already at its most distant point it was out of sight behind the swell of prairie.

"Catch it! Catch it!" yelled Jake, limping along.

"Stop them!" yelled Shelby Foster, bouncing along on a borrowed pony, holding tight to the saddle horn.

The windwagon changed its circles into ovals, its ovals into a pattern that couldn't be made out because it was so far away. The last time anybody saw it, it was scudding backwards into the west, with Shelby Foster after it, far behind, occasionally taking one hand off the saddle horn to shake his fist. Rosalie and Windwagon were sitting close. Whenever they hit a gully they held to each other.

V

The Secretary of the Navy had to walk all the way back to town because he couldn't sit. The others rode back on borrowed ponies, each jog showing up a fresh bruise. In Westport it was like a picnic breaking up after everyone had got indigestion and poison ivy. Shelby Foster came into the Star and said politely, "Good evening, Captain Dunkel-

berger," and Punch chased him halfway into Independence. Punch had a bandage around his head and was pale as whitewash but full of fight. It took the Doctor two hours to pick all the cactus spines out of the Secretary of the Navy. Then the Secretaries stole two horses and gave a sort of generalized scowl at all of Westport before they rode away.

The town went back into the mule, powder, and bacon business, trying not to hear a tide of scornful laughter that rose in St. Joe and spread and bounced back and forth between the Rockies and the Appalachians. But history seemed to be moving past Westport. The wagons began to go farther north, and when the railroads came in they chose other towns. Westport shrank and Kansas City grew, and after a while Kansas City swallowed Westport and put its street railway through the place where the Star had stood and built its municipal airport on the very land where the windwagon had begun its maiden voyage.

They never saw the windwagon again, although they searched the prairie as far as Council Grove. Of course there were stories. Every once in a while a bullwhacker would be picked up barefoot and half dead from thirst and tell how his draft animals had suddenly reared up at a dust cloud and run away like antelope; and the worst drinker in Independence swore off and became an elder in the Lutheran church because he saw the ghost of a Conestoga wagon floating on the wind near the Pueblo. But that man was always seeing things.

Many a man saw Windwagon Smith after he left Westport, though. He was in the pilot house, he and a beautiful red-haired woman, when the first steamboat came up the Yellowstone, and they swear that nobody but Windwagon Smith held the golden spike when the two railroads came together at Promontory Point. And not long ago, when the first transcontinental airplane roared out of Kansas City, a little sandy-haired man closed the plane's door and waved the pilot on. The little man walked like a sailor, they said. His eyes seemed to burn, and he had the perpetual squint that comes from looking always at horizons.

The Captain's Palm[1]

THOMAS HEGGEN

LIEUTENANT ROBERTS was the only one on the ship who gave a damn about the war in Europe, and he cared profoundly. Scarcely anybody else even listened to the news, much less absorbed it. And it was a time of great news. Now, in the last days of April and the first days of May, 1945, the Third Reich lay in its death throes. Peace for much of the world was only days away, maybe hours. It had already been rumored and denied, rumored and denied again. It was a time as exciting and, in the best sense, as great as the world had ever known: and in its minute displacement of the Pacific Ocean, the *Reluctant* went about its business and didn't even look up. Its talk was of worn and familiar things: the States, the chow in the messhall, the movies, the recent trip to Elysium, and long and always, the Captain. Once in a while a man would ask another, "They still fighting over there in Europe?" but he did it only to display his global awareness. He didn't really care.

Germany writhed in the awful constriction of Allied and Russian armies, vomited agony. The last-ditch defenders fought from the sewers of Berlin. Lieutenant Roberts sat for hours at a time in the radio shack with a headset on his ears, listening to the fading, crackling voices of the shortwave broadcasts. It was seldom that the ship was at an island owning a radio station, and much of the time

[1] From *Mister Roberts*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946.

shortwave was the only means of getting the news. The phonograph in the wardroom, endlessly tended by Carney or Billings or Langston, endless whining the sick, scratchy, distorted lovesongs of two years ago—"I'll Never Smile Again," "You'll Never Know," "Wrong, Would It Be Wrong to Care"—drove Roberts to the headset in the radio shack. It was virtually impossible to silence the monotone nostalgia of the turntable long enough for a news broadcast. Once Roberts had persuaded Billings, the communicator, to put out every morning a sheet of mimeographed press news. The experiment lasted only a week, and even Roberts had to admit its failure. The copies were being tossed unread into the trash baskets.

Roberts had just had a run-in with the Captain when the news came of the final surrender of Germany. The *Reluctant* lay at anchor in the bay of one of the islands. It was early evening when the word came, the four-to-eight watch; and Roberts had the watch. Because there was no gangway down, he stood it on the bridge. There were several difficulties with the Captain. First the quartermaster dropped a megaphone on the deck of the wheelhouse, and the Captain was heard from on that. His cabin was directly below, and he couldn't stand noise overhead of any sort. At night, awakening him from sleep, an object dropped on the deck overhead would send him nearly out of his mind with rage.

Then, after the first incident, it wasn't ten minutes until the Captain came up on the bridge again. He was obviously looking for trouble, and he found it. He saw a group of men on the foredeck leaning on the rail. Leaning on the rail was his currently favorite prohibition. He stormed over to Lieutenant Roberts on the wing.

"Do you see those men down there?" he demanded.

Roberts looked up with the minor annoyance of a man brushing away a fly. He nodded complacently.

"Well!" shouted the Captain. "What're you going to do about it?"

Roberts looked around indifferently and summoned the messenger. "Go down and tell those men to get off the rail," he said casually.

The Captain's mustache bristled. His face and neck got red. "Get off the rail, nothing!" he shouted. "You get their names and, by God, you put them on report. You get those men on report in a goddamn quick hurry or, by God, I'll take care of you!" He started muttering then and walking agitatedly about. He never was a match for Roberts and he knew it.

Roberts turned wearily to the messenger. "Go down and get their names," he said. The way he said it, it was understood that they were humoring a foolish child. Then he turned and walked away to the other wing, leaving the Captain muttering a familiar monologue: "By God, what do you think I make these orders for—just to be doing something? By God, when I say something's going to be done, it's going to be done, or, by God, I'll take care of you officers! Bet your ass I will . . ." A few minutes later, when Thompson, the radioman, came out and told Roberts that Germany had just surrendered unconditionally, he forgot all about the Captain.

As soon as he was relieved, Roberts went into the radio shack and put on the headset. The air was full of the great news. Roberts heard a transcription of the rolling eloquence of Churchill. He heard the text of the President's proclamation from Washington. He heard the quiet, controlled exultation of General Eisenhower. He heard the news commentators. They talked from Reims, from "somewhere in Germany," from Paris, from Rome, from Lisbon, from London. They told of the celebration in their cities on this, a day of such triumph as the world had never known. There were splendid fireworks in Paris over the Place de l'Opéra. There were snake dances through the streets of Rome. In London, the pubs were jammed and the streets were jammed. Flags and bunting instantaneously bloomed from the buildings, and there were parades of crack Guard regiments. In New York, Times Square, of course, was thronged. Ticker-tape rained from Wall Street windows. The universal joy

was only feebly relieved by cognizance of the still unwon Pacific war.

Roberts sat for a long time at the headset: it must have been two hours that he listened. When one station went off the air, he switched to another. Almost frantically he would seek out a new station. Finally the news programs were all off the air, or repeating themselves. Finally there were only the sad iterations of American dance music on the radio bands. Roberts got up then.

The movie was just letting out. There were sudden shouts in the passageways, and the loud, happy voices of the crew as they swarmed forward to the fo'c'sle. It must have been a good movie. Hearing them, Roberts felt a sudden loneliness. He felt a vague sorrow and, pressing just behind it, an awful sick despair that he had lived with for a long, familiar time. He needed suddenly to talk to someone. He needed to tell them the news, and he needed, in return, some strange assurance; and this was not understood. He went down to the wardroom.

Carney and Billings were alone in there. They pored over their acey-deucey game. The phonograph played "Paper Doll." There was a crack in the record that clicked at every turn. The big fan droned in the corner.

Roberts stood over them for a moment. "The war's over in Europe," he said. "Germany has surrendered." He stood waiting.

Carney looked up politely. "Yeah?" he said. Then, evidently feeling that some amplifying comment was indicated, he added: "Well, that ought to speed things up out here a good bit."

"Yeah," said Billings, "it should." He picked up the dice.

"What's the name of the game?" he asked.

"Acey-deucey," said Carney.

"Acey-deucey," said Billings. He rolled the dice. "There it is."

Roberts smiled a little and went out. He should have known better than to expect anything else. No one could help him because no one gave a hoot in hell what went on beyond the confines of this ship. It was to the rest of the officers a matter of indifference that a war of supreme horror had ended. Just to establish this, Roberts went around and told his friends the news. Lying in bed reading a year-old Street and Smith detective magazine, Ed Pauley agreed substantially with Carney: "Well, maybe they'll get on the ball out here now." Ensign Pulver was languidly militant: "I guess we took care of the bastards good this time!" Ensign Moulton was cynical. "That'll hold them for another twenty years." Ensign Keith wanted to know, did they catch Hitler? Finally Roberts went to the Doc's room. If anyone could help, it would be the Doc.

The Doctor was reading at his desk. The desk light shone on his forehead and on the bald part of his head. Without seeming to shift his eyes, he shot a quick, sharp glance at the doorway. "Come in!" he called to Roberts. He put the book aside.

"Sit down. Take a load off."

"Hi, Doc," said Roberts. He sat down in the chair beside the desk, locked his hands behind his head, and leaned back against the bulkhead. "The war is over in Europe. Germany surrendered unconditionally at Reims."

The Doctor stroked his mustache thoughtfully. "That's fine," he said. "That's really splendid news. Has it been announced from Washington?"

Roberts nodded.

"That's very wonderful news," said the Doc softly. "Very wonderful."

Roberts kept his hands locked behind his head. "Doc, here's something for you," he said slowly. "The most horrible war in history has just ended. A terrible war, Doc, a truly terrible one. You would expect this, then to be a time of the wildest general rejoicing. And what do I feel?—Doc, I feel depressed as all hell. What do you make of that?"

The Doctor squinted his eyes and leaned back in his chair. "Well," he said, "I shouldn't think that so remarkable. With anything as consummately absorbing as a great war there's always a great deal of transference. You know: the great general conflict swallows the little individual conflicts. Also there's the matter of war considered as a spectacle. War is a hell of a hypnotic and buoyant thing—viewed from a distance, a considerable

distance—and it's quite reasonable to expect a letdown when it ends."

Roberts shook his head and smiled. "No," he said. "It's not like that at all. I guess I'm just being ingratiating in asking, because I know what it is. So do you. It's just that I feel left out. I wanted in that war, Doc. I wanted in it like hell. Does that sound stupid?"

"No," said the Doc, "but it is rare." He lighted a cigarette. "You never did satisfactorily explain to me how come you're so all-fired anxious to fight this war."

"I don't know that I could," said Roberts. "I don't know how you go about explaining a compulsion. That's what it is, of course."

Roberts had a crooked smile. "Did I ever tell you," he went on, "what a long and consistent record I have as a frustrated anti-fascist?"

The Doctor shook his head and exhaled smoke. "I think you omitted that."

"Well, I have," said Roberts. "A truly distinguished record of frustration. When I was eighteen I quit high school and went to New York and got signed up as an ambulance driver in the Lincoln Brigade. That time the war was over before they could ship me out." He scratched his ear. "But I guess there wasn't much anti-fascism to that. It was just a hell of a gaudy thing to do. I was quite a hero when I left."

"Then," he went on, "in 1940, in my last year of pre-med, I quit school again. This time I went up to Montreal and tried to get in the RAF. I think by then I honestly had an idea of what was involved. It was strictly nothing doing, though"—he tapped his teeth—"they threw me out on this foolish malocclusion. Same thing in 1941 when I tried to get in the Air Corps—all three of them. They wouldn't have anything to do with me. This is the only outfit that would have me."

The Doc looked thoughtfully at Roberts. "You give this war a lot, don't you?"

"Yes, I do," said Roberts. "But you don't."

"No," the Doc agreed. "I don't. I see it as a war of unrelieved necessity—nothing more. Any ideology attaching is only incidental. Not to say accidental."

"Well," said Roberts, "no need for us to go into that again. But Doc, if you had asked me four years ago I could have told you to hell and back what this war was about. I would have overwhelmed you with moral superiority. I would have used terms like 'war against fascism,' 'holy war,' 'crusade,' and so forth. I would have defined fascism as a revolution against the human soul, and I would have talked of the forces of good and evil. And perhaps, Doc, there was a lot of justice in that sort of talk. Perhaps there still is: I don't know. It seems to me that causes are hellishly elusive things, and that the moment you try to articulate them, give them a label, they shy away and become something else. I don't know, Doc."

He paused. "I guess the minimum thing I'd say now is that the war seems to me—or should I say seemed—immensely worth while (positively and consciously and inherently, that is—not accidentally, as you say), and that I feel a hell of a compulsion to be in it." He held up his hands quizzically and looked at the Doctor.

The Doc was quiet a moment; then he said, "I could kick your ass for ever leaving med school."

"So could I," said Roberts. "Now. Particularly now. Particularly today. I chase the hell out of this war and it quits on me."

"I would remind you that there is still a war out here which you may very well see plenty of."

Roberts shook his head. "Not a chance. I've sat on this bucket this long. I'll sit here now till it's over."

"And I would further remind you," said the Doc, "that it's through no fault of yours that you're on this bucket instead of in a grave in Germany."

Roberts grinned. "What an enchanting thought!" he said.

The Doctor pushed back from the desk. "And I would still further remind you," he said briskly, "that what we need is a drink. How about getting the orange juice?"

"You're right," said Roberts. He went and got the orange juice and the Doc broke out the alcohol and they sat together with their drinks for over an hour. The Doc was at his best. He told some splendid stories. He

told about the fairy patient of his who tried to change his sex with a self-amputation. He told a couple of fine stories about alcoholics. When he left an hour later, Roberts felt some better. The Doc's company had smothered a little of his depression. He thought now that perhaps he could sleep: it was after eleven. He went up and turned in.

But he couldn't sleep. Langston snored lustily in the top bunk, and he lay and studied the lights of the island circled in the porthole. At first he tried to keep his thoughts centered on neutral, tranquil things; but soon, like a car with a locked steering-gear, they ran helplessly out of control and he was back again with his old conflict, and thinking again of the war and the victory. He was thinking now of the celebrating cities, of the celebrating cities that had known the war. There were snake dances through the streets of Rome, they said. He tried to see Rome, but he couldn't make it convincing. Paris was easier: he could see the fireworks over the massed roofs of Paris and the crowds surging along the Champs d'Elysées and upsetting chairs and tables in the boulevard cafés. Surely they would upset the chairs and tables. London he could see very well: the parading regiments and the intimately cheering crowds and the grinning soldiers and the officers weaving just a little as they marched at the head of their companies. The pubs would be absolute madhouses and the beer would be passed back over the heads of the mob to be spilled or drunk before it ever got beyond the third row, and everybody would laugh and nobody gave a damn, and way at the back someone would shout despairingly for his beer. Naked girls would appear at the balcony windows of hotel rooms and call happy things down to the streets, and then an arm would appear and drag them laughing and squealing back into the room. It would be like that in all the cities that had a stake in this day; pushing, shouting, laughing, fighting, drinking, lovemaking; all personal identities frenziedly submerged in the shining common identity of a fabulous victory.

Roberts saw all these things in separate scenes, as though they were the changing slides of a stereoscope. And now, suddenly, the series of the tumultous cities clicked out and in its place came a very different scene. It was a scene Roberts recognized from its origin as a picture in *Life* magazine. (My knowledge of the war comes straight from *Life*, he thought ironically.) There was a field in France, and a farmer was harrowing this field, walking behind the harrow. The furrowed rows were very straight, except in the middle of the field, where they broke and gave way for the mounded grave of a British Tommy. It looked like lovely country, green with trees, with the soft haze of distant hills in the background. The rows of the harrow detoured for just the area of the grave and then they ran on straight and unswerving. It was that way the war, too, had moved off and left the Tommy. The grave looked lonely in the bright sunshine.

The dead, Roberts mused, what could you say for the dead of this war? What could you *really* say? Well, there were a lot of things you could say automatically and without thought, but they were all the wrong things; and just this once, just this one war, anyhow, let us try to say true things about the dead. Begin by cancelling the phrase, "our honored dead": for this is not true—we forget them, we do not honor them but in rhetoric—and the phrase is the badge of those who want something of the dead. If the dead of this war must have a mutual encomium, then let it be "poor dead bastards." There is at least a little humanity in that. And let us not say of them, this time, "they gave their lives" for something or other; for certainly there was nothing voluntary in their dying. And neither is it fair to speak of "dead heroes," for not at all necessarily does the fact of death include the fact of heroism. Some of these dead were shining youths scornful of the sanctity of their own lives, who lived daily with terror rarefied by inevitability and died with a flawless gesture of self-immolation: and others died as the result of injuries sustained in falling through a privy. But, thought Roberts, if they did not live equally, they are every one equally dead; and you could say this affirmative thing of all: that in a war of terrifying consequence

and overwhelming agony, they participated one hundred per cent. That was the only true thing you could say for all, but it was enough. The war demanded the shortening of how many—two million, five hundred and sixty thousand, two hundred and fourteen? —lives, and these men were chosen. So pile them high as Austerlitz and Waterloo and Ypres and Verdun, and add a few new places, Aachen and Dunkerque and Anzio; only do not talk lies about the dead. They are the chosen.

Chosen? thought Roberts. Was that the right word? Perhaps it was. Perhaps it was *just* the word. Maybe there was some gigantic over-all selection that named the men good enough to fight the war and consigned to ships like this the ones who weren't. Perhaps they were all, on here, something less than men in a war that demanded men; subtly deficient in a war that required completeness. Take the Captain; what could be more blatant than his inadequacy? Maybe it was that way with all of them—with Ed Pauley and Carney and Billings and Keith and himself—and all the others. Perhaps it was that in some infallible system of measuring men they fell short: some incompetency in the nerve endings, the white corpuscles, the adrenal gland; the stamina of their mother, the integrity of great-great-great-grandfather; the shape of their remembrance of first-known fear; something . . .

Sleep was out of the question. Roberts sat up suddenly, rubbed his eyes. Langston snored above him in a perfect monotone. He got up, and in the dark put on his clothes. He bumped against the coaster chair and made a noise, but there was no hitch in Langston's breathing. Roberts went out and down the ladder to the quarterdeck. It was a cool night with a little breeze blowing, and overhead there were patches of clouds. Over on the island the lights burned their night vigil, and now and then a jeep or a truck went by along the beach road. Tonight, perhaps because it was a cool night for sleeping, there were no late-talking groups sitting about on the deck. Roberts couldn't see another soul on deck. He started walking up and down on the quarterdeck.

V-E day aboard the *Reluctant,* he composed, was observed quietly, without ostentatious display, and with a grim awareness of the still unfinished Pacific war. Appropriately, the ship's company marked the great day in restrained but distinctive fashion. Lieutenant Carney and Lieutenant (jg) Billings, swept up in the spirit of the moment, played a game of acey-deucey in the wardroom. Lieutenant (jg) Pauley celebrated with quiet taste by reading a detective magazine. Lieutenant (jg) Langston observed the day by retiring at nine instead of ten, and by sleeping a little more soundly than usual. Ensign Pulver was moved to the extent of rigging a new portable fan at the foot of his bunk. The gruff but lovable Captain couldn't quite conceal an unusual generousness of spirit, placing only twelve men on report during a fifteen-minute period. But in these small though significant ways it was, for the *Reluctant,* just another work day on the road to Tokyo . . .

And all of a sudden Roberts had to do something. And it had to be against the Captain: it had to be. This thing was suddenly just as obligatory and inevitable as his next breath; and just the thought of it was like a door opening out of prison. And he knew right away what to do. The Captain's palm tree. The Captain kept a small palm tree in a painted five-gallon can on the wing of his bridge, and it was the joy of his life. With slow, deadly certainty Roberts walked up to the boat deck and out on the Captain's wing. There, in the corner, was the palm tree. It was very dark and he couldn't hear anyone moving about on the bridge overhead. He jerked the palm out by the roots and threw it over the side. Then he took the can and scattered the loose earth about on the deck. Then he put the can down and went around aft of the house. Already he felt worlds better, but still there was something undone. And immediately that thing was revealed to him too.

Automatically he recalled the Captain's obsessional hatred of noise, particularly noise at night, particularly noise in the area of his cabin. He went down to the cabin deck and found what he wanted. It was a gangway

stanchion, about the size of a baseball bat, and solid lead. He went up to the port wing of the Captain's bridge and calculated. The Captain's bedroom was just inside, and the Captain slept athwartships. The head of his bunk was right against this bulkhead. Roberts figured: it was about three feet off the deck; it was right about here. He swung the stanchion with all his strength against the bulkhead. Then he swung a second time and a third. The blows shook the house like an explosion. Next morning every single officer confessed to having been awakened, and Ensign Moulton, who lived just aft of the Captain, said he had been knocked almost out of his bunk. Roberts placed the stanchion carefully at the Captain's door, walked calmly down the ladder and around the house, and returned to his own room by the starboard ladder. He undressed carefully and got into bed.

Langston was awake and sitting dazedly up. "What the hell was that noise?" he mumbled.

Roberts pulled the sheet up to his chin. "I didn't hear any noise," he said. And then he added, "But I do now." He could hear the screaming voice of the Captain, and the opening of doors, and the scurrying of many feet, as of quartermasters and messengers running down from the bridge. They were wonderfully pleasant noises. Roberts listened to them for several minutes, until he fell soundly asleep.

The Egg[1]

SHERWOOD ANDERSON

MY FATHER was, I am sure, intended by nature to be a cheerful, kindly man. Until he was thirty-four years old he worked as a farm-hand for a man named Thomas Butterworth whose place lay near the town of Bidwell, Ohio. He had then a horse of his own and on Saturday evenings drove into town to spend a few hours in social intercourse with other farm-hands. In town he drank several glasses of beer and stood about in Ben Head's saloon—crowded on Saturday evenings with visiting farm-hands. Songs were sung and glasses thumped on the bar. At ten o'clock father drove home along a lonely country road, made his horse comfortable for the night and himself went to bed, quite happy in his position in life. He had at that time no notion of trying to rise in the world.

It was in the spring of his thirty-fifth year that father married my mother, then a country school-teacher, and in the following spring I came wriggling and crying into the world. Something happened to the two people. They became ambitious. The American passion for getting up in the world took possession of them.

It may have been that mother was responsible. Being a school-teacher she had no doubt read books and magazines. She had, I presume, read of how Garfield, Lincoln, and other Americans rose from poverty to fame and greatness and as I lay beside her —in the days of her lying-in—she may have dreamed that I would some day rule men and cities. At any rate she induced father to give up his place as a farm-hand, sell his horse and embark on an independent enterprise of his own. She was a tall silent woman with a long nose and troubled grey eyes. For herself she wanted nothing. For father and myself she was incurably ambitious.

The first venture into which the two people went turned out badly. They rented ten acres of poor stony land on Griggs's Road, eight miles from Bidwell, and launched into chicken raising. I grew into boyhood on the place and got my first impressions of life there. From the beginning they were im-

[1] From *The Triumph of the Egg* by Sherwood Anderson. Copyright 1920 by Eleanor Anderson. Reprinted by permission of Harold Ober Associates.

pressions of disaster and if, in my turn, I am a gloomy man inclined to see the darker side of life, I attribute it to the fact that what should have been for me the happy joyous days of childhood were spent on a chicken farm.

One unversed in such matters can have no notion of the many and tragic things that can happen to a chicken. It is born out of an egg, lives for a few weeks as a tiny fluffy thing such as you will see pictured on Easter cards, then becomes hideously naked, eats quantities of corn and meal bought by the sweat of your father's brow, gets diseases called pip, cholera, and other names, stands looking with stupid eyes at the sun, becomes sick and dies. A few hens and now and then a rooster, intended to serve God's mysterious ends, struggle through to maturity. The hens lay eggs out of which come other chickens and the dreadful cycle is thus made complete. It is all unbelievably complex. Most philosophers must have been raised on chicken farms. One hopes for so much from a chicken and is so dreadfully disillusioned. Small chickens, just setting out on the journey of life, look so bright and alert and they are in fact so dreadfully stupid. They are so much like people they mix one up in one's judgments of life. If disease does not kill them they wait until your expectations are thoroughly aroused and then walk under the wheels of a wagon—to go squashed and dead back to their maker. Vermin infest their youth, and fortunes must be spent for curative powders. In later life I have seen how a literature has been built up on the subject of fortunes to be made out of the raising of chickens. It is intended to be read by the gods who have just eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is a hopeful literature and declares that much may be done by simple ambitious people who own a few hens. Do not be led astray by it. It was not written for you. Go hunt for gold on the frozen hills of Alaska, put your faith in the honesty of a politician, believe if you will that the world is daily growing better and that good will triumph over evil, but do not read and believe the literature that is written concerning the hen. It was not written for you.

I, however, digress. My tale does not primarily concern itself with the hen. If correctly told it will centre on the egg. For ten years my father and mother struggled to make our chicken farm pay and then they gave up that struggle and began another. They moved into the town of Bidwell, Ohio, and embarked in the restaurant business. After ten years of worry with incubators that did not hatch, and with tiny—and in their own way lovely—balls of fluff that passed on into semi-naked pullethood and from that into dead henhood, we threw all aside and packing our belongings on a wagon drove down Griggs's Road toward Bidwell, a tiny caravan of hope looking for a new place from which to start on our upward journey through life.

We must have been a sad looking lot, not, I fancy, unlike refugees fleeing from a battlefield. Mother and I walked in the road. The wagon that contained our goods had been borrowed for the day from Mr. Albert Griggs, a neighbor. Out of its sides stuck the legs of cheap chairs and at the back of the pile of beds, tables, and boxes filled with kitchen utensils was a crate of live chickens, and on top of that the baby carriage in which I had been wheeled about in my infancy. Why we stuck to the baby carriage I don't know. It was unlikely other children would be born and the wheels were broken. People who have few possessions cling tightly to those they have. That is one of the facts that make life so discouraging.

Father rode on top of the wagon. He was then a bald-headed man of forty-five, a little fat, and from long association with mother and the chickens he had become habitually silent and discouraged. All during our ten years on the chicken farm he had worked as a laborer on neighboring farms and most of the money he had earned had been spent for remedies to cure chicken diseases, on Wilmer's White Wonder Cholera Cure or Professor Bidlow's Egg Producer or some other preparations that mother found advertised in the poultry papers. There were two

little patches of hair on father's head just above his ears. I remember that as a child I used to sit looking at him when he had gone to sleep in a chair before the stove on Sunday afternoons in the winter. I had at that time already begun to read books and have notions of my own, and the bald path that led over the top of his head was, I fancied, something like a broad road, such a road as Caesar might have made on which to lead his legions out of Rome and into the wonders of an unknown world. The tufts of hair that grew above father's ears were, I thought, like forests. I fell into a half-sleeping, half-waking state and dreamed I was a tiny thing going along the road into a far beautiful place where there were no chicken farms and where life was a happy eggless affair.

One might write a book concerning our flight from the chicken farm into town. Mother and I walked the entire eight miles —she to be sure that nothing fell from the wagon and I to see the wonders of the world. On the seat of the wagon beside father was his greatest treasure. I will tell you of that.

On a chicken farm where hundreds and even thousands of chickens come out of eggs surprising things sometimes happen. Grotesques are born out of eggs as out of people. The accident does not often occur—perhaps once in a thousand births. A chicken is, you see, born that has four legs, two pairs of wings, two heads or what not. The things do not live. They go quickly back to the hand of their maker that has for a moment trembled. The fact that the poor little things could not live was one of the tragedies of life to father. He had some sort of notion that if he could but bring into henhood or roosterhood a five-legged hen or a two-headed rooster his fortune would be made. He dreamed of taking the wonder about to county fairs and of growing rich by exhibiting it to other farm-hands.

At any rate he saved all the little monstrous things that had been born on our chicken farm. They were preserved in alcohol and put each in its own glass bottle. These he had carefully put into a box and on our journey into town it was carried on the wagon seat beside him. He drove the horses with one hand and with the other clung to the box. When we got to our destination the box was taken down at once and the bottles removed. All during our days as keepers of a restaurant in the town of Bidwell, Ohio, the grotesques in their little glass bottles sat on a shelf back of the counter. Mother sometimes protested, but father was a rock on the subject of his treasure. The grotesques were, he declared, valuable. People, he said, liked to look at strange and wonderful things.

Did I say that we embarked in the restaurant business in the town of Bidwell, Ohio? I exaggerated a little. The town itself lay at the foot of a low hill and on the shore of a small river. The railroad did not run through the town and the station was a mile away to the north at a place called Pickleville. There had been a cider mill and pickle factory at the station, but before the time of our coming they had both gone out of business. In the morning and in the evening busses came down to the station along a road called Turner's Pike from the hotel on the main street of Bidwell. Our going to the out-of-the-way place to embark in the restaurant business was mother's idea. She talked of it for a year and then one day went off and rented an empty store building opposite the railroad station. It was her idea that the restaurant would be profitable. Travelling men, she said, would be always waiting around to take trains out of town and town people would come to the station to await incoming trains. They would come to the restaurant to buy pieces of pie and drink coffee. Now that I am older I know that she had another motive in going. She was ambitious for me. She wanted me to rise in the world, to get into a town school and become a man of the towns.

At Pickleville father and mother worked hard as they always had done. At first there was the necessity of putting our place into shape to be a restaurant. That took a month. Father built a shelf on which he put tins of vegetables. He painted a sign on which he put his name in large red letters. Below

his name was the sharp command—"EAT HERE"—that was so seldom obeyed. A show case was bought and filled with cigars and tobacco. Mother scrubbed the floor and the walls of the room. I went to school in the town and was glad to be away from the farm and from the presence of the discouraged, sad-looking chickens. Still I was not very joyous. In the evening I walked home from school along Turner's Pike and remembered the children I had seen playing in the town school yard. A troop of little girls had gone hopping about and singing. I tried that. Down along the frozen road I went hopping solemnly on one leg. "Hippity Hop To The Barber Shop," I sang shrilly. Then I stopped and looked doubtfully about. I was afraid of being seen in my gay mood. It must have seemed to me that I was doing a thing that should not be done by one who, like myself, had been raised on a chicken farm where death was a daily visitor.

Mother decided that our restaurant should remain open at night. At ten in the evening a passenger train went north past our door followed by a local freight. The freight crew had switching to do in Pickleville and when the work was done they came to our restaurant for hot coffee and food. Sometimes one of them ordered a fried egg. In the morning at four they returned north-bound and again visited us. A little trade began to grow up. Mother slept at night and during the day tended the restaurant and fed our boarders while father slept. He slept in the same bed mother had occupied during the night and I went off to the town of Bidwell and to school. During the long nights, while mother and I slept, father cooked meats that were to go into sandwiches for the lunch baskets of our boarders. Then an idea in regard to getting up in the world came into his head. The American spirit took hold of him. He also became ambitious.

In the long nights when there was little to do father had time to think. That was his undoing. He decided that he had in the past been an unsuccessful man because he had not been cheerful enough and that in the future he would adopt a cheerful outlook on life. In the early morning he came upstairs and got into bed with mother. She woke and the two talked. From my bed in the corner I listened.

It was father's idea that both he and mother should try to entertain the people who came to eat at our restaurant. I cannot now remember his words, but he gave the impression of one about to become in some obscure way a kind of public entertainer. When people, particularly young people from the town of Bidwell, came into our place, as on very rare occasions they did, bright entertaining conversation was to be made. From father's words I gathered that something of the jolly inn-keeper effect was to be sought. Mother must have been doubtful from the first, but she said nothing discouraging. It was father's notion that a passion for the company of himself and mother would spring up in the breasts of the younger people of the town of Bidwell. In the evening bright happy groups would come singing down Turner's Pike. They would troop shouting with joy and laughter into our place. There would be song and festivity. I do not mean to give the impression that father spoke so elaborately of the matter. He was as I have said an uncommunicative man. "They want some place to go. I tell you they want some place to go," he said over and over. That was as far as he got. My own imagination has filled in the blanks.

For two or three weeks this notion of father's invaded our house. We did not talk much, but in our daily lives tried earnestly to make smiles take the place of glum looks. Mother smiled at the boarders, and I, catching the infection, smiled at our cat. Father became a little feverish in his anxiety to please. There was no doubt, lurking somewhere in him, a touch of the spirit of the showman. He did not waste much of his ammunition on the railroad men he served at night but seemed to be waiting for a young man or woman from Bidwell to come in to show what he could do. On the counter in the restaurant there was a wire basket kept always filled with eggs, and it must have been before his eyes when the idea of being entertaining was born in his brain. There was something pre-natal about the way eggs

kept themselves connected with the development of his idea. At any rate an egg ruined his new impulse in life. Late one night I was awakened by a roar of anger coming from father's throat. Both mother and I sat upright in our beds. With trembling hands she lighted a lamp that stood on a table by her head. Downstairs the front door of our restaurant went shut with a bang and in a few minutes father tramped up the stairs. He held an egg in his hand and his hand trembled as though he were having a chill. There was a half insane light in his eyes. As he stood glaring at us I was sure he intended throwing the egg at either mother or me. Then he laid it gently on the table beside the lamp and dropped on his knees beside mother's bed. He began to cry like a boy and I, carried away by his grief, cried with him. The two of us filled the little upstairs room with our wailing voices. It is ridiculous, but of the picture we made I can remember only the fact that mother's hand continually stroked the bald path that ran across the top of his head. I have forgotten what mother said to him and how she induced him to tell her of what had happened downstairs. His explanation also has gone out of my mind. I remember only my own grief and fright and the shiny path over father's head glowing in the lamp light as he knelt by the bed.

As to what happened downstairs. For some unexplainable reason I know the story as well as though I had been a witness to my father's discomfiture. One in time gets to know many unexplainable things. On that evening young Joe Kane, son of a merchant of Bidwell, came to Pickleville to meet his father, who was expected on the ten o'clock evening train from the South. The train was three hours late and Joe came into our place to loaf about and to wait for its arrival. The local freight train came in and the freight crew were fed. Joe was left alone in the restaurant with father.

From the moment he came into our place the Bidwell young man must have been puzzled by my father's actions. It was his notion that father was angry at him for hanging around. He noticed that the restaurant keeper was apparently disturbed by his presence and he thought of going out. However, it began to rain and he did not fancy the long walk to town and back. He bought a five-cent cigar and ordered a cup of coffee. He had a newspaper in his pocket and took it out and began to read. "I'm waiting for the evening train. It's late," he said apologetically.

For a long time father, whom Joe Kane had never seen before, remained silently gazing at his visitor. He was no doubt suffering from an attack of stage fright. As so often happens in life he had thought so much and so often of the situation that now confronted him that he was somewhat nervous in its presence.

For one thing, he did not know what to do with his hands. He thrust one of them nervously over the counter and shook hands with Joe Kane. "How-de-do," he said. Joe Kane put his newspaper down and stared at him. Father's eye lighted on the basket of eggs that sat on the counter and he began to talk. "Well," he began hesitatingly, "well, you have heard of Christopher Columbus, eh?" He seemed to be angry. "That Christopher Columbus was a cheat," he declared emphatically. "He talked of making an egg stand on its end. He talked, he did, and then he went and broke the end of the egg."

My father seemed to his visitor to be beside himself at the duplicity of Christopher Columbus. He muttered and swore. He declared it was wrong to teach children that Christopher Columbus was a great man when, after all, he cheated at the critical moment. He had declared he would make an egg stand on end and then when his bluff had been called he had done a trick. Still grumbling at Columbus, father took an egg from the basket on the counter and began to walk up and down. He rolled the egg between the palms of his hands. He smiled genially. He began to mumble words regarding the effect to be produced on an egg by the electricity that comes out of the human body. He declared that without breaking its shell and by virtue of rolling it back and forth in his hands he could stand the egg on its end. He explained that the warmth of his hands

and the gentle rolling movement he gave the egg created a new centre of gravity, and Joe Kane was mildly interested. "I have handled thousands of eggs," father said. "No one knows more about eggs than I do."

He stood the egg on the counter and it fell on its side. He tried the trick again and again, each time rolling the egg between the palms of his hands and saying the words regarding the wonders of electricity and the laws of gravity. When after a half hour's effort he did succeed in making the egg stand for a moment, he looked up to find that his visitor was no longer watching. By the time he had succeeded in calling Joe Kane's attention to the success of his effort, the egg had again rolled over and lay on its side.

Afire with the showman's passion and at the same time a good deal disconcerted by the failure of his first effort, father now took the bottles containing the poultry monstrosities down from their place on the shelf and began to show them to his visitor. "How would you like to have seven legs and two heads like this fellow?" he asked, exhibiting the most remarkable of his treasures. A cheerful smile played over his face. He reached over the counter and tried to slap Joe Kane on the shoulder as he had seen men do in Ben Head's saloon when he was a young farm-hand and drove to town on Saturday evenings. His visitor was made a little ill by the sight of the body of the terribly deformed bird floating in the alcohol in the bottle, and got up to go. Coming from behind the counter, father took hold of the young man's arm and led him back to his seat. He grew a little angry and for a moment had to turn his face away and force himself to smile. Then he put the bottles back on the shelf. In an outburst of generosity he fairly compelled Joe Kane to have a fresh cup of coffee and another cigar at his expense. Then he took a pan and filling it with vinegar, taken from a jug that sat beneath the counter, he declared himself about to do a new trick. "I will heat this egg in this pan of vinegar," he said. "Then I will put it through the neck of a bottle without breaking the shell. When the egg is inside the bottle it will resume its normal shape and the shell will become hard again. Then I will give the bottle with the egg in it to you. You can take it about with you wherever you go. People will want to know how you got the egg in the bottle. Don't tell them. Keep them guessing. That is the way to have fun with this trick."

Father grinned and winked at his visitor. Joe Kane decided that the man who confronted him was mildly insane but harmless. He drank the cup of coffee that had been given him and began to read his paper again. When the egg had been heated in vinegar father carried it on a spoon to the counter and going into a back room got an empty bottle. He was angry because his visitor did not watch him as he began to do his trick, but nevertheless went cheerfully to work. For a long time he struggled, trying to get the egg to go through the neck of the bottle. He put the pan of vinegar back on the stove, intending to reheat the egg, then picked it up and burned his fingers. After a second bath in the hot vinegar the shell of the egg had been softened a little but not enough for his purpose. He worked and worked and a spirit of desperate determination took possession of him. When he thought that at last the trick was about to be consummated, the delayed train came in at the station and Joe Kane started to go nonchalantly out at the door. Father made a last desperate effort to conquer the egg and make it do the thing that would establish his reputation as one who knew how to entertain guests who came into his restaurant. He worried the egg. He attempted to be somewhat rough with it. He swore and the sweat stood out on his forehead. The egg broke under his hand. When the contents spurted over his clothes, Joe Kane, who had stopped at the door, turned and laughed.

A roar of anger rose from my father's throat. He danced and shouted a string of inarticulate words. Grabbing another egg from the basket on the counter, he threw it, just missing the head of the young man as he dodged through the door and escaped.

Father came upstairs to mother and me with an egg in his hand. I do not know what he intended to do. I imagine he had some

idea of destroying it, of destroying all eggs, and that he intended to let mother and me see him begin. When, however, he got into the presence of mother something happened to him. He laid the egg gently on the table and dropped on his knees by the bed as I have already explained. He later decided to close the restaurant for the night and to come upstairs and get into bed. When he did so he blew out the light and after much muttered conversation both he and mother went to sleep. I suppose I went to sleep also, but my sleep was troubled. I awoke at dawn and for a long time looked at the egg that lay on the table. I wondered why eggs had to be and why from the egg came the hen who again laid the egg. The question got into my blood. It has stayed there, I imagine, because I am the son of my father. At any rate, the problem remains unsolved in my mind. And that, I conclude, is but another evidence of the complete and final triumph of the egg—at least as far as my family is concerned.

The Pomegranate Trees[1]

WILLIAM SAROYAN

MY UNCLE MELIK was just about the worst farmer that ever lived. He was too imaginative and poetic for his own good. What he wanted was beauty. He wanted to plant it and see it grow. I myself planted over one hundred pomegranate trees for my uncle one year back there in the good old days of poetry and youth in the world. I drove a John Deere tractor too, and so did my uncle. It was all pure esthetics, not agriculture. My uncle just liked the idea of planting trees and watching them grow.

Only they wouldn't grow. It was on account of the soil. The soil was desert soil. It was dry. My uncle waved at the six hundred and eighty acres of desert he had bought and he said in the most poetic Armenian anybody ever heard, "Here in this awful desolation a garden shall flower, fountains of cold water shall bubble out of the earth, and all things of beauty shall come into being."

"Yes, sir," I said.

I was the first and only relative to see the land he had bought. He knew I was a poet at heart, and he believed I would understand the magnificent impulse that was driving him to glorious ruin. I did. I knew as well as he that what he had purchased was worthless desert land. It was away over to hell and gone, at the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountains. It was full of every kind of desert plant that ever sprang out of dry hot earth. It was overrun with prairie dogs, squirrels, horned toads, snakes, and a variety of smaller forms of life. The space over this land knew only the presence of hawks, eagles, and buzzards. It was a region of loneliness, emptiness, truth and dignity. It was nature at its proudest, dryest, loneliest, and loveliest.

My uncle and I got out of the Ford roadster in the middle of his land and began to walk over the dry earth.

"This land," he said, "is my land."

He walked slowly, kicking into the dry soil. A horned toad scrambled over the earth at my uncle's feet. My uncle clutched my shoulder and came to a pious halt.

"What is that animal?" he said.

"That little tiny lizard?" I said.

"That mouse with horns," my uncle said. "What is it?"

"I don't know for sure," I said. "We call them horny toads."

The horned toad came to a halt about three feet away and turned its head.

My uncle looked down at the small animal.

[1] From *My Name is Aram*, copyright, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, by William Saroyan. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., and *The Atlantic Monthly*.

"Is it poison?" he said.

"To eat?" I said. "Or if it bites you?"

"Either way," my uncle said.

"I don't think it's good to eat," I said. "I think it's harmless. I've caught many of them. They grow sad in captivity, but never bite. Shall I catch this one?"

"Please do," my uncle said.

I sneaked up on the horned toad, then sprang on it while my uncle looked on.

"Careful," he said. "Are you sure it isn't poison?"

"I've caught many of them," I said.

I took the horned toad to my uncle. He tried not to seem afraid.

"A lovely little thing, isn't it?" he said. His voice was unsteady.

"Would you like to hold it?" I said.

"No," my uncle said. "You hold it. I have never before been so close to such a thing as this. I see it has eyes. I suppose it can see us."

"I suppose it can," I said. "It's looking up at you now."

My uncle looked the horned toad straight in the eye. The horned toad looked my uncle straight in the eye. For fully half a minute they looked one another straight in the eye and then the horned toad turned its head aside and looked down at the ground. My uncle sighed with relief.

"A thousand of them," he said, "could kill a man, I suppose."

"They never travel in great numbers," I said. "You hardly ever see more than one at a time."

"A big one," my uncle said, "could probably bite a man to death."

"They don't grow big," I said. "This is as big as they grow."

"They seem to have an awful eye for such small creatures," my uncle said. "Are you sure they don't mind being picked up?"

"I suppose they forget all about it the minute you put them down," I said.

"Do you really think so?" my uncle said.

"I don't think they have very good memories," I said.

My uncle straightened up, breathing deeply.

"Put the little creature down," he said. "Let us not be cruel to the innocent creations of Almighty God. If it is not poison and grows no larger than a mouse and does not travel in great numbers and has no memory to speak of, let the timid little thing return to the earth. Let us be gentle toward these small things which live on the earth with us."

"Yes, sir," I said.

I placed the horned toad on the ground.

"Gently now," my uncle said. "Let no harm come to this strange dweller on my land."

The horned toad scrambled away.

"These little things," I said, "have been living on soil of this kind for centuries."

"Centuries?" my uncle said. "Are you sure?"

"I'm not sure," I said, "but I imagine they have. They're still here, anyway."

My uncle looked around at his land, at the cactus and brush growing out of it, at the sky overhead.

"What have they been eating all this time?" he shouted.

"I don't know," I said.

"What would you say they've been eating?" he said.

"Insects, I guess."

"Insects?" my uncle shouted. "What sort of insects?"

"Little bugs, most likely," I said. "I don't know their names. I can find out to-morrow at school."

We continued to walk over the dry land. When we came to some holes in the earth, my uncle stood over them and said, "What lives down there?"

"Prairie dogs," I said.

"What are *they*?" he said.

"Well," I said, "they're something like rats. They belong to the rodent family."

"What are all these things doing on my land?" my uncle said.

"They don't know it's your land," I said. "They've been living here a long while."

"I don't suppose that horny toad ever looked a man in the eye before," my uncle said.

"I don't think so," I said.

"Do you think I scared it or anything?" my uncle said.

"I don't know for sure," I said.

"If I did," my uncle said, "I didn't mean to. I'm going to build a house here some day."

"I didn't know that," I said.

"Of course," my uncle said. "I'm going to build a magnificent house."

"It's pretty far away," I said.

"It's only an hour from town," my uncle said.

"If you go fifty miles an hour," I said.

"It's not fifty miles to town," my uncle said. "It's thirty-seven."

"Well, you've got to take a little time out for rough roads," I said.

"I'll build me the finest house in the world," my uncle said. "What else lives on this land?"

"Well," I said, "there are three or four kinds of snakes."

"Poison or non-poison?" my uncle said.

"Mostly non-poison," I said. "The rattlesnake is poison, though."

"Do you mean to tell me there are rattlesnakes on this land?" my uncle said.

"This is the kind of land rattlesnakes usually live on," I said.

"How many?" my uncle said.

"Per acre?" I said. "Or on the whole six hundred and eighty acres?"

"Per acre," my uncle said.

"Well," I said, "I'd say there are about three per acre, conservatively."

"Three per acre?" my uncle shouted. "Conservatively?"

"Maybe only two," I said.

"How many is that to the whole place?" my uncle said.

"Well, let's see," I said. "Two per acre. Six hundred and eighty acres. About fifteen hundred of them."

"Fifteen hundred of them?" my uncle said.

"An acre is pretty big," I said. "Two rattlesnakes per acre isn't many. You don't often see them."

"What else have we got around here that's poison?" my uncle said.

"I don't know of anything else," I said. "All the other things are harmless. The rattlesnakes are pretty harmless too, unless you step on them."

"All right," my uncle said. "You walk ahead and watch where you're going. If you see a rattlesnake, don't step on it. I don't want you to die at the age of eleven."

"Yes, sir," I said. "I'll watch carefully."

We turned around and walked back to the Ford. I didn't see any rattlesnakes on the way back. We got into the car and my uncle lighted a cigarette.

"I'm going to make a garden of this awful desolation," he said.

"Yes, sir," I said.

"I know what my problems are," my uncle said, "and I know how to solve them."

"How?" I said.

"Do you mean the horny toads or the rattlesnakes?" my uncle said.

"I mean the problems," I said.

"Well," my uncle said, "the first thing I'm going to do is hire some Mexicans and put them to work."

"Doing what?" I said.

"Clearing the land," my uncle said. "Then I'm going to have them dig for water."

"Dig where?" I said.

"Straight down," my uncle said. "After we get water, I'm going to have them plow the land and then I'm going to plant."

"What are you going to plant?" I said. "Wheat?"

"Wheat?" my uncle shouted. "What do I want with wheat? Bread is five cents a loaf. I'm going to plant pomegranate trees."

"How much are pomegranates?" I said.

"Pomegranates," my uncle said, "are practically unknown in this country."

"Is that all you're going to plant?" I said.

"I have in mind," my uncle said, "planting several other kinds of trees."

"Peach trees?" I said.

"About ten acres," my uncle said.

"How about apricots?" I said.

"By all means," my uncle said. "The apricot is a lovely fruit. Lovely in shape, with a glorious flavor and a most delightful pit. I

shall plant about twenty acres of apricot trees."

"I hope the Mexicans don't have any trouble finding water," I said. "Is there water under this land?"

"Of course," my uncle said. "The important thing is to get started. I shall instruct the men to watch out for rattlesnakes. Pomegranates," he said. "Peaches. Apricots. What else?"

"Figs?" I said.

"Thirty acres of figs," my uncle said.

"How about mulberries?" I said. "The mulberry tree is a very nice-looking tree."

"Mulberries," my uncle said. He moved his tongue around in his mouth. "A nice tree," he said. "A tree I know well in the old country. How many acres would you suggest?"

"About ten," I said.

"All right," he said. "What else?"

"Olive trees are nice," I said.

"Yes, they are," my uncle said. "One of the nicest. About ten acres of olive trees. What else?"

"Well," I said, "I don't suppose apple trees would grow on this kind of land."

"I suppose not," my uncle said. "I don't like apples anyway."

He started the car and we drove off the dry land on to the dry road. The car bounced about slowly until we reached the road and then we began to travel at a higher rate of speed.

"One thing," my uncle said. "When we get home I would rather you didn't mention this farm to the folks."

"Yes, sir," I said. ("Farm?" I thought. "What farm?")

"I want to surprise them," my uncle said. "You know how your grandmother is. I'll go ahead with my plans and when everything is in order I'll take the whole family out to the farm and surprise them."

"Yes, sir," I said.

"Not a word to a living soul," my uncle said.

"Yes, sir," I said.

Well, the Mexicans went to work and cleared the land. They cleared about ten acres of it in about two months. There were seven of them. They worked with shovels and hoes. They didn't understand anything about anything. It all seemed very strange, but they never complained. They were being paid and that was the thing that counted. They were two brothers and their sons. One day the older brother, Diego, very politely asked my uncle what it was they were supposed to be doing.

"Señor," he said, "please forgive me. Why are we cutting down the cactus?"

"I'm going to farm this land," my uncle said.

The other Mexicans asked Diego in Mexican what my uncle had said and Diego told them.

They didn't believe it was worth the trouble to tell my uncle he couldn't do it. They just went on cutting down the cactus.

The cactus, however, stayed down only for a short while. The land which had been first cleared was already rich again with fresh cactus and brush. My uncle made this observation with considerable amazement.

"It takes deep plowing to get rid of cactus," I said. "You've got to plow it out."

My uncle talked the matter over with Ryan, who had a farm-implement business. Ryan told him not to fool with horses. The modern thing to do was to turn a good tractor loose on the land and do a year's work in a day.

So my uncle bought a John Deere tractor. It was beautiful. A mechanic from Ryan's taught Diego how to operate the tractor, and the next day when my uncle and I reached the land we could see the tractor away out in the desolation and we could hear it booming in the awful emptiness of the desert. It sounded pretty awful. It was awful. My uncle thought it was wonderful.

"Progress," he said. "There's the modern age for you. Ten thousand years ago," he said, "it would have taken a hundred men a week to do what that tractor's done today."

"Ten thousand years ago?" I said. "You mean yesterday."

"Anyway," my uncle said, "there's nothing like these modern conveniences."

"The tractor isn't a convenience," I said.

"What is it, then?" my uncle said. "Doesn't the driver sit?"

"He couldn't very well stand," I said.

"Any time they let you sit," my uncle said, "it's a convenience. Can you whistle?"

"Yes, sir," I said. "What sort of a song would you like to hear?"

"Song?" my uncle said. "I don't want to hear any song. I want you to whistle at that Mexican on the tractor."

"What for?" I said.

"Never mind what for," my uncle said. "Just whistle. I want him to know we are here and that we are pleased with his work. He's probably plowed twenty acres."

"Yes, sir," I said.

I put the second and third fingers of each hand into my mouth and blew with all my might. It was good and loud. Nevertheless, it didn't seem as if Diego had heard me. He was pretty far away. We were walking toward him anyway, so I couldn't figure out why my uncle wanted me to whistle at him.

"Once again," he said.

I whistled once again, but Diego didn't hear.

"Louder," my uncle said.

This next time I gave it all I had, and my uncle put his hands over his ears. My face got very red, too. The Mexican on the tractor heard the whistle this time. He slowed the tractor down, turned it around, and began plowing straight across the field toward us.

"Do you want him to do that?" I said.

"It doesn't matter," my uncle said.

In less than a minute and a half the tractor and the Mexican arrived. The Mexican seemed very delighted. He wiped dirt and perspiration off his face and got down from the tractor.

"Señor," he said, "this is wonderful."

"I'm glad you like it," my uncle said.

"Would you like a ride?" the Mexican asked my uncle.

My uncle didn't know for sure. He looked at me.

"Go ahead," he said. "Hop on. Have a little ride."

Diego got on the tractor and helped me on. He sat on the metal seat and I stood behind him, holding him. The tractor began to move. It moved swiftly and made a good deal of noise. The Mexican drove around in a big circle and brought the tractor back to my uncle. I jumped off.

"All right," my uncle said to the Mexican. "Go back to your work."

The Mexican drove the tractor back to where he was plowing.

My uncle didn't get water out of the land until many months later. He had wells dug all over the place, but no water came out of the wells. Of course he had motor pumps too, but even then no water came out. A water specialist named Roy came out from Texas with his two younger brothers and they began investigating the land. They told my uncle they'd get water for him. It took them three months and the water was muddy and there wasn't much of it. There was a trickle of muddy water. The specialist told my uncle matters would improve with time and went back to Texas.

Now half the land was cleared and plowed and there was water, so the time had come to plant.

We planted pomegranate trees. They were of the finest quality and very expensive. We planted about seven hundred of them. I myself planted a hundred. My uncle planted quite a few. We had a twenty-acre orchard of pomegranate trees away over to hell and gone in the strangest desolation anybody ever saw. It was the loveliest-looking absurdity imaginable, and my uncle was crazy about it. The only trouble was, his money was giving out. Instead of going ahead and trying to make a garden of the whole six hundred and eighty acres, he decided to devote all his time and energy and money to the pomegranate trees.

"Only for the time being," he said. "Until we begin to market the pomegranates and get our money back."

"Yes, sir," I said.

I didn't know for sure, but I figured we wouldn't be getting any pomegranates to speak of off those little trees for two or three years at least, but I didn't say anything. My uncle got rid of the Mexican work-

ers and he and I took over the farm. We had the tractor and a lot of land, so every now and then we drove out to the farm and drove the tractor around, plowing up cactus and turning over the soil between the pomegranate trees. This went on for three years.

"One of these days," my uncle said, "you'll see the loveliest garden in the world in this desert."

The water situation didn't improve with time, either. Every once in a while there would be a sudden generous spurt of water containing only a few pebbles and my uncle would be greatly pleased, but the next day it would be muddy again and there would be only a little trickle. The pomegranate trees fought bravely for life, but they never did get enough water to come out with any fruit.

There were blossoms after the fourth year. This was a great triumph for my uncle. He went out of his head with joy when he saw them.

Nothing much ever came of the blossoms, though. They were very beautiful, but that was about all. Purple and lonely.

That year my uncle harvested three small pomegranates.

I ate one, he ate one, and we kept the other one up in his office.

The following year I was fifteen. A lot of wonderful things had happened to me. I mean, I had read a number of good writers and I'd grown as tall as my uncle. The farm was still our secret. It had cost my uncle a lot of money, but he was always under the impression that very soon he was going to start marketing his pomegranates and get his money back and go on with his plan to make a garden in the desert.

The trees didn't fare very well. They grew a little, but it was hardly noticeable. Quite a few of them withered and died.

"That's average," my uncle said. "Twenty trees to an acre is only average. We won't plant new trees just now. We'll do that later."

He was still paying for the land, too.

The following year he harvested about two hundred pomegranates. He and I did the harvesting. They were pretty sad-looking pomegranates. We packed them in nice-looking boxes and my uncle shipped them to a wholesale produce house in Chicago. There were eleven boxes.

We didn't hear from the wholesale produce house for a month, so one night my uncle made a long-distance phone call. The produce man, D'Agostino, told my uncle nobody wanted pomegranates.

"How much are you asking per box?" my uncle shouted over the phone.

"One dollar," D'Agostino shouted back.

"That's not enough," my uncle shouted. "I won't take a nickel less than five dollars a box."

"They don't want them at one dollar a box," D'Agostino shouted.

"Why not?" my uncle shouted.

"They don't know what they are," D'Agostino shouted.

"What kind of a business man are you anyway?" my uncle shouted. "They're pomegranates. I want five dollars a box."

"I can't sell them," the produce man shouted. "I ate one myself and I don't see anything so wonderful about them."

"You're crazy," my uncle shouted. "There is no other fruit in the world like the pomegranate. Five dollars a box isn't half enough."

"What shall I do with them?" D'Agostino shouted. "I can't sell them. I don't want them."

"I see," my uncle whispered. "Ship them back. Ship them back express collect."

The phone call cost my uncle about seventeen dollars.

So the eleven boxes came back.

My uncle and I ate most of the pomegranates.

The following year my uncle couldn't make any more payments on the land. He gave the papers back to the man who had sold him the land. I was in the office at the time.

"Mr. Griffith," my uncle said, "I've got to give you back your property, but I would like to ask a little favor. I've planted twenty acres of pomegranate trees out there on that land and I'd appreciate it very much if you'd let me take care of those trees."

"Take care of them?" Mr. Griffith said.

"What in the world for?"

My uncle tried to explain, but couldn't. It was too much to try to explain to a man who wasn't sympathetic.

So my uncle lost the land, and the trees, too.

About three years later he and I drove out to the land and walked out to the pomegranate orchard. The trees were all dead. The soil was heavy again with cactus and desert brush. Except for the small dead pomegranate trees the place was exactly the way it had been all the years of the world.

We walked around in the orchard for a while and then went back to the car.

We got into the car and drove back to town.

We didn't say anything because there was such an awful lot to say, and no language to say it in.

Night Flight[1]

JOSEPHINE W. JOHNSON

BEATING slowly, a little wearily, back across the long Kansas pastures, Joe thought it all over and decided it was good. Almost the real thing. He thought of her face when she had finally seen him sitting there on the bed, and forgot the creeping ache in his arms as he shot on forward. Only five hundred miles to go, but the air had the warning cold of dawn.

He smiled a little to himself. God, the things that a woman thought of to do before she let herself go to bed! And the nightgowns she wore when he wasn't there! Long-sleeved cotton, with buttons down the front. She'd looked like a cute little shoebox in it. And the ironing, ironing, ironing, while he'd paced up and down half wild, and she'd stood there mashing down a tablecloth, pleating up a skirt, looking straight at him and not knowing he was there. Then she'd just sighed and folded up in a chair and taken off her shoes. He'd noticed how little her feet looked in the damp stockings with three runs up the side.

Then she'd got up and gone to the icebox and made herself a little sandwich of bread and butter and a slice of cold sweet potato, and drunk some milk straight out of the bottle, and wiped her mouth on her sleeve. It had made him hungry and he'd almost reached over her shoulder and grabbed a cold slice of ham, but remembered Polocheck's warning just in time; "Don't eat, Joe. Don't drink. You might ground yourself coming back. It has happened." He had shaken his head in an ominous and warning way, and in his silence Joe read some unspeakable fate.

Then Charlotte had puttered and puttered and puttered. Washing her stockings and hanging them first in one place and then in another, and brushing her lovely, thick black hair and looking at herself in the mirror to see how much bigger she'd got round the waist, and then just standing there like a kid making faces at herself and whispering.

He loved her so much he thought his heart would crack, and then he thought he would let loose and crack her too if she didn't quit dawdling.

Then, finally, she'd turned out the lights and sat down on the bed facing west, and looked out at the moon and spoken his name once or twice, and that was all the praying she seemed to do; and then she'd gone to sleep and found him there.

"Jesus!" Joe said quietly to the Kansas prairies. "She was sure surprised!"

It hadn't taken as much explaining, though, as he'd expected. Apparently she had thought of it, too, and wanted him to teach her how.

[1] From *Harper's Magazine*. Reprinted by permission of Josephine W. Johnson.

But he'd said no, he wasn't going to have her flying around at night, and besides, his bunk wasn't very big, and for God's sake suppose they had a night alarm and inspection. "This isn't like the Mexican Army, baby," he'd said. "It's for adults only, and all of those adults male."

She had thought him wonderful to have learned so quickly, and since she pointed it out he realized it *was* pretty wonderful, come to think of it. This was only Monday, and Sunday morning Polocheck had told him of his dream. ". . . And in the dream I ran from these dogs—but I see no reason why I ran. I could have flown." He looked at Joe and slowly lifted his glass of beer. "I often fly."

"Home?"

"Home to Czechoslovakia." He looked calmly into Joe's grinning eyes. "Tonight when it is dark I will teach you how." He raised a round, warning hand above his glass. "Hush." His blue eyes glittered behind his glasses. "We want no *more* fliers. The nights are wide and peaceful now."

Joe had leaned forward and whispered behind his hand: "When?"

"Eight o'clock."

"Do many know?"

"Some."

"Who?"

Josef's eyes had twinkled. "You would be surprised."

"Okay," Joe said.

It had been a bad morning. He wanted to forget it. Even acting like nuts out in the middle of the desert in a madman's prank was preferable to remembering. "It wasn't so much that it happened to me," he growled into her warm and patient ear, "but that it could happen at all! The fool—the damn young fool!" He reenacted the scene. The major's office, young pudgy Major Lewis whose wife once offered Joe a bag of peanuts and who summered in New England and early-autumned in New York. It had all been trivial and nasty. The matter of a desk. The desk drawer stuck, and the major wanted another desk and he knew where another was. He wanted it moved in, and his own desk moved out, and he needed a truck and about five men, and he started writing out communications all over the place. Joe had been standing there and listening and finally he said: "Why don't you just have the desk drawer fixed?" Somewhere along the line he had put in a "sir."

And the major had turned with his vapid young face suddenly interesting with hate, and shouted: "Who spoke to you? Wait till you're spoken to, soldier!"

Well, that was that. But it was there like a ten-word brand.

". . . And then I just went out with Josef, and he showed me how . . ."

"You learned so quickly, darling!" She had looked at him with love and adoration. Sometimes Charlotte got God and Joe confused.

He laughed and hugged her and muttered that it was something that any fool could do. He told her how it had felt, his spirit slipping quietly between the beds, shuffling out into the moonlight desert. . . . He had paused and taken in the incomparable beauty of this early autumn night. South the wide snow-streaked peaks, beautiful and barren in the white moonlight. The clean icy air poured down his lungs. All round him the silent tarboard barracks and the sand, sleeping in the great white flooded light. The army trucks huddled row on row like shrouded beasts.

Quietly Joe had lifted one long arm and then the other. He whirled them round like a ship's propeller, and felt the blood race through his veins. "Contact," he whispered, grinning.

Then, warmed up, he had started taxiing across the sand, his long mountain legs casting wild shadows from the moon. He aimed for the eastern fence and planned to take off and soar above the spiked wire in a gesture of derision. But halfway down the road he slowed down suddenly and crouched. By shadowy sound his spirit's sensitive ears detected another traveler, and he whirled and flattened against a barracks building. From a door of the officers' quarters a short and heavy form came striding, and paused in the open moonlight. Major Lewis hesitated, reconnoitered, and seeing only the dry, unspeaking sand, the bright, expressionless

autumn moon, seemed satisfied. Over his face came a silly, expectant look, and his mouth opened and shut like a toad devouring flies. After a few minutes Joe realized that the major was singing as he flailed his arms and warmed up for the flight. " 'From the desert I come to thee,' " he was singing, " 'On a stallion shod with fire . . .' "

"Oh, my God," Joe muttered. "Oh, my God."

Then the major was running, beating his arms in perfect form, and heading for the gate with terrific speed. Breathless, Joe watched him and saw him suddenly leap, click his heels together and soar upward with a roar like a little four-engine bomber. The perfect take-off of long practice.

Joe sighed with envy and slid out from the shadow. "Bastard," he murmured. "Bastard!"

Then his eyes filled with a deep and cynical scorn. The major had shot like a bullet westward and not toward the high towers of Manhattan, which seemed an odd thing for a man whose wife never went farther westward than Hot Springs, Virginia.

" 'From the desert I come to thee,' " Joe whinnied derisively, " 'On a stallion shod with fire . . .' " He stamped his big feet in the sand. "Did I speak to you?" he muttered fiercely. "Wait till you're spoken to, soldier!"

A flame of intolerable hate flared up in him and then he remembered it was growing late, and started to run, forgetting the major and concentrating with all his might on Polocheck's lesson and his warnings:

"Flail those arms. Pick up the feet. Then jump—so—leap. Beat. Beat. Right, left, together: beat." He felt himself soaring upward in a wild rush, clearing the barrack fence and heading like a comet for the sky.

"Watch you level off!" Polocheck had warned him. "Once I forgot. My God, the stars!"

He had leveled off then and flown eastward in the moonlight. Brownsville, Indiana, here I come! Below him the dry autumn fields of Colorado, the bony creek beds twisting whitely, the forms of sleeping cattle soaked in moonlight. The cold pure air whistled by his ears. It was an extraordinary and exhilarating experience. He felt as though he had been doing it all his life, and wanted to try a nose dive just for the hell of it.

Josef was too cautious. "Keep level," he'd said. "Don't fuss round. You got to go fast." But Indiana wasn't Europe, and Joe turned down his right hand, raised his left, and bore down with a mighty rush. The cattle lifted up stricken faces and poured over the pastures, their wet hoofs glittering. Joe grinned and swept on eastward.

Above the Solomon River he had hit an air pocket and dropped downward with a sickening rush, but recovered himself and pulled up again, beating his way above the cold, scaly water, the river smell chilling his throat.

Sometimes he thought he saw other forms far off, dim wing shapes of soldiers passing, but was not sure. Not till he pulled past Topeka, lights burning like a handful of embers on a plain, did he meet another nocturnal flier close enough to speak. Here he was overtaken by a young Negro sergeant bound for Carolina and traveling fast. Joe acknowledged his coming with a right-arm sweep and motioned as though to shake his hand. "Cold, Sergeant?"

"Cold!"

"Been at this flying long?"

"Learned last week. Been home every night since." He laughed as at something secret and very pleasant.

"First flight for me," Joe said. "I don't know how it'll be. Not sure of all the rules."

The sergeant laughed. "Me neither." He winged in closer. "You learn something new every time. Las' night I landed late and I walked up the back yard after my wife was asleep—she can't see you till she sleeps—and the lights were all out, only a bright moon so you could see everything white, and the moonflowers hanging on the fence. Well, I walk up and past the old broken swing the kids still use, and suddenly I stop. I'm not kidding you: I stopped like a man shot dead. And there, sitting down on the swing, scuffing his boots and looking all out of joints, was the mortal soul of my first lieutenant!"

He laughed very loudly, and after a mo-

ment of uncertainty Joe laughed too.

"He couldn't get in!" The sergeant gloated. "That's one of the things you learn. She never thought about *him*. She didn't never know he was there!"

Joe took an exulting leap. "What'd you do?"

The sergeant shrugged. "Jus' let him swing. A man's got a right to dream, I guess. He was gone when I come out again. Only a scuff place under the swing." He laughed again.

They flew on for a minute in silence, and then they saw the lights of St. Louis and the sluggish silvery mud of the Mississippi. "Here's where I leave you, brother," the sergeant said. "Take it slow and easy. Don't eat. Don't drink. And a long night to you!" He was gone, winging darkly southward, and soon lost in the shadows.

Not long now for Joe. Fly east, young man. Familiar hills and farmlands going under, but he could not see them well in the night. "I was sure afraid," he told Charlotte. "I thought I'd pass over and land in Brooklyn! 'You'll know,' Josef kept telling me, but I got the jitters. No map, no compass—how'd I know Brownsville from Ashtabula?"

"How did you know?" Charlotte whispered.

He held her and laughed. There had been no question about his finding her. He had flown lower and lower, peering at highways and little billboards and the silent, impassive roofs of towns.

Suddenly he realized that he was gliding slowly downward as in the grip of a thick, receding tide. "I just knew," he said.

Now, crossing the Kansas border and beating on, he knew he would find the camp all right, not by any love gravity of the heart, but because it was so damn big that he could not miss it.

He felt calm and happy. Tomorrow was tomorrow, and to hell with yesterday. He saw the white, shining, snow-cold peaks and the canyoned towns. And then the camp stretched out far below him. There wasn't much time, but he circled slowly above it, hunting hawklike for signs of some living thing on the outskirts of the plain. Then he saw what he was seeking.

A mile westward from the camp a small fat form, like a two-legged dusty beetle, scurried across the sand.

Leisurely, heartlessly, like a falcon over a wounded hare, Joe circled nearer and lower. He knew the major's odd hummocky run. "He ate too much, and he drank too much, and a lot of other things too much, and he foundered all right," he thought. "'On the wings of the desert, I come to thee!'" Joe sang in a loud, sweet voice. He swooped low, and the wind of his swooping swept the major's hat from his round blond head. It gleamed like a moonflower opening wide in the pale gray desert air. "Get a horse, bud!" Joe shouted coarsely. "Get a horse!"

Then happily Joe soared upward with firm, triumphant strokes and plummeted swiftly toward the barracks, taking care to avoid the soul of Josef, returning in haste from Europe, the dawn like a white Gestapo at his heels.

Livvie[1]

EUDORA WELTY

SOLOMON carried Livvie twenty-one miles away from her home when he married her. He carried her away up on the Old Natchez Trace into the deep country to live in his house. She was sixteen—an only girl, then. Once people said he thought nobody would ever come along there. He told her himself that it had been a long time, and a day she did not know about, since that road was a

[1] From *The Wide Net*, copyright, 1943, by Eudora Welty. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

traveled road with *people* coming and going. He was good to her, but he kept her in the house. She had not thought that she could not get back. Where she came from, people said an old man did not want anybody in the world to ever find his wife, for fear they would steal her back from him. Solomon asked her before he took her, "Would she be happy?"—very dignified, for he was a colored man that owned his land and had it written down in the courthouse; and she said, "Yes, sir," since he was an old man and she was young and just listened and answered. He asked her, if she was choosing winter, would she pine for spring, and she said, "No indeed." Whatever she said, always, was because he was an old man . . . while nine years went by. All the time he got old, and he got so old he gave out. At last he slept the whole day in bed, and she was young still.

It was a nice house, inside and outside both. In the first place, it had three rooms. The front room was papered in holly paper, with green palmettos from the swamp spaced at careful intervals over the walls. There was fresh newspaper cut with fancy borders on the mantel-shelf, on which were propped photographs of old or very young men printed in faint yellow—Solomon's people. Solomon had a houseful of furniture. There was a double settee, a tall scrolled rocker and an organ in the front room, all around a three-legged table with a pink marble top, on which was set a lamp with three gold feet, besides a jelly glass with pretty hen feathers in it. Behind the front room, the other room had the bright iron bed with the polished knobs like a throne, in which Solomon slept all day. There were snow-white curtains of wiry lace at the window, and a lace bed-spread belonged on the bed. But what old Solomon slept so sound under was a big feather-stitched piece-quilt in the pattern "Trip Around the World," which had twenty-one different colors, four hundred and forty pieces, and a thousand yards of thread, and that was what Solomon's mother made in her life and old age. There was a table holding the Bible, and a trunk with a key. On the wall were two calendars, and a diploma from somewhere in Solomon's family, and under that Livvie's one possession was nailed, a picture of the little white baby of the family she worked for, back in Natchez before she was married. Going through that room and on to the kitchen, there was a big wood stove and a big round table always with a wet top and with the knives and forks in one jelly glass and the spoons in another, and a cut-glass vinegar bottle between, and going out from those, many shallow dishes of pickled peaches, fig preserves, watermelon pickles and blackberry jam always sitting there. The churn sat in the sun, the doors of the safe were always both shut, and there were four baited mouse-traps in the kitchen, one in every corner.

The outside of Solomon's house looked nice. It was not painted, but across the porch was an even balance. On each side there was one easy chair with high springs, looking out, and a fern basket hanging over it from the ceiling, and a dishpan of zinnia seedlings growing at its foot on the floor. By the door was a plow-wheel, just a pretty iron circle, nailed up on one wall and a square mirror on the other, a turquoise-blue comb stuck up in the frame, with the wash stand beneath it. On the door was a wooden knob with a pearl in the end, and Solomon's black hat hung on that, if he was in the house.

Out front was a clean dirt yard with every vestige of grass patiently uprooted and the ground scarred in deep whorls from the strike of Livvie's broom. Rose bushes with tiny blood-red roses blooming every month grew in threes on either side of the steps. On one side was a peach tree, on the other a pomegranate. Then coming around up the path from the deep cut of the Natchez Trace below was a line of bare crape-myrtle trees with every branch of them ending in a colored bottle, green or blue. There was no word that fell from Solomon's lips to say what they were for, but Livvie knew that there could be a spell put in trees, and she was familiar from the time she was born with the way bottle trees kept evil spirits from coming into the house—by luring them inside the colored bottles, where they cannot get out again. Solomon had made the bottle trees with his own hands over the

nine years, in labor amounting to about a tree a year, and without a sign that he had any uneasiness in his heart, for he took as much pride in his precautions against spirits coming in the house as he took in the house, and sometimes in the sun the bottle trees looked prettier than the house did.

It was a nice house. It was in a place where the days would go by and surprise anyone that they were over. The lamplight and the firelight would shine out the door after dark, over the still and breathing country, lighting the roses and the bottle trees, and all was quiet there.

But there was nobody, nobody at all, not even a white person. And if there had been anybody, Solomon would not have let Livvie look at them, just as he would not let her look at a field hand, or a field hand look at her. There was no house near, except for the cabins of the tenants that were forbidden to her, and there was no house as far as she had been, stealing away down the still, deep Trace. She felt as if she waded a river when she went, for the dead leaves on the ground reached as high as her knees, and when she was all scratched and bleeding she said it was not like a road that went anywhere. One day, climbing up the high bank, she had found a graveyard without a church, with ribbon-grass growing about the foot of an angel (she had climbed up because she thought she saw angel wings), and in the sun, trees shining like burning flames through the great caterpillar nets which enclosed them. Scarey thistles stood looking like the prophets in the Bible in Solomon's house. Indian paint brushes grew over her head, and the mourning dove made the only sound in the world. Oh for a stirring of the leaves, and a breaking of the nets! But not by a ghost, prayed Livvie, jumping down the bank. After Solomon took to his bed, she never went out, except one more time.

Livvie knew she made a nice girl to wait on anybody. She fixed things to eat on a tray like a surprise. She could keep from singing when she ironed; and to sit by a bed and fan away the flies, she could be so still she could not hear herself breathe. She could clean up the house and never drop a thing, and wash the dishes without a sound, and she would step outside to churn, for churning sounded too sad to her, like sobbing, and if it made her home-sick and not Solomon, she did not think of that.

But Solomon scarcely opened his eyes to see her, and scarcely tasted his food. He was not sick or paralyzed or in any pain that he mentioned, but he was surely wearing out in the body, and no matter what nice hot thing Livvie would bring him to taste, he would only look at it now, as if he were past seeing how he could add anything more to himself. Before she could beg him, he would go fast asleep. She could not surprise him any more, if he would not taste, and she was afraid that he was never in the world going to taste another thing she brought him—and so how could he last?

But one morning it was breakfast time and she cooked his eggs and grits, carried them in on a tray, and called his name. He was sound asleep. He lay in a dignified way with his watch beside him, on his back in the middle of the bed. One hand drew the quilt up high, though it was the first day of spring. Through the white lace curtains a little puffy wind was blowing as if it came from round cheeks. All night the frogs had sung out in the swamp, like a commotion in the room, and he had not stirred, though she lay wide awake and saying "Shh, frogs!" for fear he would mind them.

He looked as if he would like to sleep a little longer, and so she put back the tray and waited a little. When she tiptoed and stayed so quiet, she surrounded herself with a little reverie, and sometimes it seemed to her when she was so stealthy that the quiet she kept was for a sleeping baby, and that she had a baby and was its mother. When she stood at Solomon's bed and looked down at him, she would be thinking, "He sleeps so well," and she would hate to wake him up. And in some other way, too, she was afraid to wake him up because even in his sleep he seemed to be such a strict man.

Of course, nailed to the wall over the

bed—only she would forget who it was—there was a picture of him when he was young. Then he had a fan of hair over his forehead like a king's crown. Now his hair lay down on his head; the spring had gone out of it. Solomon had a lightish face, with eyebrows scattered but rugged, the way privet grows, strong eyes, with second sight, a strict mouth, and a little gold smile. This was the way he looked in his clothes, but in bed in the daytime he looked like a different and smaller man, even when he was wide awake, and holding the Bible. He looked like somebody kin to himself. And then sometimes when he lay in sleep and she stood fanning the flies away, and the light came in, his face was like new, so smooth and clear that it was like a glass of jelly held to the window, and she could almost look through his forehead and see what he thought.

She fanned him and at length he opened his eyes and spoke her name, but he would not taste the nice eggs she had kept warm under a pan.

Back in the kitchen she ate heartily, his breakfast and hers, and looked out the open door at what went on. The whole day, and the whole night before, she had felt the stir of spring close to her. It was as present in the house as a young man would be. The moon was in the last quarter and outside they were turning the sod and planting peas and beans. Up and down the red fields, over which smoke from the brush-burning hung showing like a little skirt of sky, a white horse and a white mule pulled the plow. At intervals hoarse shouts came through the air and roused her as if she dozed neglectfully in the shade, and they were telling her, "Jump up!" She could see how over each ribbon of field were moving men and girls, on foot and mounted on mules, with hats set on their heads and bright with tall hoes and forks as if they carried streamers on them and were going to some place on a journey—and how as if at a signal now and then they would all start at once shouting, hollering, cajoling, calling and answering back, running, being leaped on and breaking away, flinging to earth with a shout and lying motionless in the trance of twelve o'clock. The old women came out of the cabins and brought them the food they had ready for them, and then all worked together, spread evenly out. The little children came too, like a bouncing stream overflowing the fields, and set upon the men, the women, the dogs, the rushing birds, and the wave-like rows of earth, their little voices almost too high to be heard. In the middle distance like some white and gold towers were the haystacks, with black cows coming around to eat their edges. High above everything, the wheel of fields, house, and cabins, and the deep road surrounding like a moat to keep them in, was the turning sky, blue with long, far-flung white mare's-tail clouds, serene and still as high flames. And sound asleep while all this went around him that was his, Solomon was like a little still spot in the middle.

Even in the house the earth was sweet to breathe. Solomon had never let Livvie go any farther than the chicken house and the well. But what if she would walk now into the heart of the fields and take a hoe and work until she fell stretched out and drenched with her efforts, like other girls, and laid her cheek against the laid-open earth, and shamed the old man with her humbleness and delight? To shame him! A cruel wish could come in uninvited and so fast while she looked out the back door. She washed the dishes and scrubbed the table. She could hear the cries of the little lambs. Her mother, that she had not seen since her wedding day, had said one time, "I rather a man be anything, than a woman be mean."

So all morning she kept tasting the chicken broth on the stove, and when it was right she poured off a nice cupful. She carried it in to Solomon, and there he lay having a dream. Now what did he dream about? For she saw him sigh gently as if not to disturb some whole thing he held round in his mind, like a fresh egg. So even an old man dreamed about something pretty. Did he dream of her, while his eyes were shut and sunken, and his small hand with the wedding ring curled close in sleep around the quilt? He might be dreaming of what time it was,

for even through his sleep he kept track of it like a clock, and knew how much of it went by, and waked up knowing where the hands were even before he consulted the silver watch that he never let go. He would sleep with the watch in his palm, and even holding it to his cheek like a child that loves a plaything. Or he might dream of journeys and travels on a steamboat to Natchez. Yet she thought he dreamed of her; but even while she scrutinized him, the rods of the foot of the bed seemed to rise up like a rail fence between them, and she could see that people never could be sure of anything as long as one of them was asleep and the other awake. To look at him dreaming of her when he might be going to die frightened her a little, as if he might carry her with him that way, and she wanted to run out of the room. She took hold of the bed and held on, and Solomon opened his eyes and called her name, but he did not want anything. He would not taste the good broth.

Just a little after that, as she was taking up the ashes in the front room for the last time in the year, she heard a sound. It was somebody coming. She pulled the curtains together and looked through the slit.

Coming up the path under the bottle trees was a white lady. At first she looked young, but then she looked old. Marvelous to see, a little car stood steaming like a kettle out in the field-track—it had come without a road.

Livvie stood listening to the long, repeated knockings at the door, and after a while she opened it just a little. The lady came in through the crack, though she was more than middle-sized and wore a big hat.

"My name is Miss Baby Marie," she said.

Livvie gazed respectfully at the lady and at the little suitcase she was holding close to her by the handle until the proper moment. The lady's eyes were running over the room, from palmetto to palmetto, but she was saying, "I live at home . . . out from Natchez . . . and get out and show these pretty cosmetic things to the white people and the colored people both . . . all around . . . years and years. . . . Both shades of powder and rouge. . . . It's the kind of work a girl can do and not go clear 'way from home . . ." And the harder she looked, the more she talked. Suddenly she turned up her nose and said, "It is not Christian or sanitary to put feathers in a vase," and then she took a gold key out of the front of her dress and began unlocking the locks on her suitcase. Her face drew the light, the way it was covered with intense white and red, with a little patty-cake of white between the wrinkles by her upper lip. Little red tassels of hair bobbed under the rusty wires of her picture-hat, as with an air of triumph and secrecy she now drew open her little suitcase and brought out bottle after bottle and jar after jar, which she put down on the table, the mantel-piece, the settee, and the organ.

"Did you ever see so many cosmetics in your life?" cried Miss Baby Marie.

"No'm," Livvie tried to say, but the cat had her tongue.

"Have you ever applied cosmetics?" asked Miss Baby Marie next.

"No'm," Livvie tried to say.

"Then look!" she said, and pulling out the last thing of all, "Try this!" she said. And in her hand was unclenched a golden lipstick which popped open like magic. A fragrance came out of it like incense, and Livvie cried out suddenly, "Chinaberry flowers!"

Her hand took the lipstick, and in an instant she was carried away in the air through the spring, and looking down with a half-drowsy smile from a purple cloud she saw from above a chinaberry tree, dark and smooth and neatly leaved, neat as a guinea hen in the dooryard, and there was her home that she had left. On one side of the tree was her mama holding up her heavy apron, and she could see it was loaded with ripe figs, and on the other side was her papa holding a fish-pole over the pond, and she could see it transparently, the little clear fishes swimming up to the brim.

"Oh, no, not chinaberry flowers—secret ingredients," said Miss Baby Marie. "My cosmetics have secret ingredients—not chinaberry flowers."

"It's purple," Livvie breathed, and Miss Baby Marie said, "Use it freely. Rub it on."

Livvie tiptoed out to the wash stand on the front porch and before the mirror put the paint on her mouth. In the wavery surface her face danced before her like a flame. Miss Baby Marie followed her out, took a look at what she had done, and said, "That's it."

Livvie tried to say "Thank you" without moving her parted lips where the paint lay so new.

By now Miss Baby Marie stood behind Livvie and looked in the mirror over her shoulder, twisting up the tassels of her hair. "The lipstick I can let you have for only two dollars," she said, close to her neck.

"Lady, but I don't have no money, never did have," said Livvie.

"Oh, but you don't pay the first time. I make another trip, that's the way I do. I come back again—later."

"Oh," said Livvie, pretending she understood everything so as to please the lady.

"But if you don't take it now, this may be the last time I'll call at your house," said Miss Baby Marie sharply. "It's far away from anywhere, I'll tell you that. You don't live close to anywhere."

"Yes'm. My husband, he keep the *money*," said Livvie, trembling. "He is strict as he can be. He don't know *you* walk in here—Miss Baby Marie!"

"Where is he?"

"Right now, he in yonder sound asleep, an old man. I wouldn't ever ask him for anything."

Miss Baby Marie took back the lipstick and packed it up. She gathered up the jars for both black and white and got them all inside the suitcase, with the same little fuss of triumph with which she had brought them out. She started away.

"Goodbye," she said, making herself look grand from the back, but at the last minute she turned around in the door. Her old hat wobbled as she whispered, "Let me see your husband."

Livvie obediently went on tiptoe and opened the door to the other room. Miss Baby Marie came behind her and rose on her toes and looked in.

"My, what a little tiny old, old man!" she whispered, clasping her hands and shaking her head over them. "What a beautiful quilt! What a tiny old, old man!"

"He can sleep like that all day," whispered Livvie proudly.

They looked at him awhile so fast asleep, and then all at once they looked at each other. Somehow that was as if they had a secret, for he had never stirred. Livvie then politely, but all at once, closed the door.

"Well! I'd certainly like to leave you with a lipstick!" said Miss Baby Marie vivaciously. She smiled in the door.

"Lady, but I told you I don't have no money, and never did have."

"And never will?" In the air and all around, like a bright halo around the white lady's nodding head, it was a true spring day.

"Would you take eggs, lady?" asked Livvie softly.

"No, I have plenty of eggs—plenty," said Miss Baby Marie.

"I still don't have no money," said Livvie, and Miss Baby Marie took her suitcase and went on somewhere else.

Livvie stood watching her go, and all the time she felt her heart beating in her left side. She touched the place with her hand. It seemed as if her heart beat and her whole face flamed from the pulsing color of her lips. She went to sit by Solomon and when he opened his eyes he could not see a change in her. "He's fixin' to die," she said inside. That was the secret. That was when she went out of the house for a little breath of air.

She went down the path and down the Natchez Trace a way, and she did not know how far she had gone, but it was not far, when she saw a sight. It was a man, looking like a vision—she standing on one side of the Old Natchez Trace and he standing on the other.

As soon as this man caught sight of her, he began to look himself over. Starting at the bottom with his pointed shoes, he began to look up, lifting his peg-top pants the higher to see fully his bright socks. His coat long and wide and leaf-green he opened like doors to see his high-up tawny pants and his

pants he smoothed downward from the points of his collar, and he wore a luminous baby-pink satin shirt. At the end, he reached gently above his wide platter-shaped round hat, the color of a plum, and one finger touched at the feather, emerald green, blowing in the spring winds.

No matter how she looked, she could never look so fine as he did, and she was not sorry for that, she was pleased.

He took three jumps, one down and two up, and was by her side.

"My name is Cash," he said.

He had a guinea pig in his pocket. They began to walk along. She stared on and on at him, as if he were doing some daring spectacular thing, instead of just walking beside her. It was not simply the city way he was dressed that made her look at him and see hope in its insolence looking back. It was not only the way he moved along kicking the flowers as if he could break through everything in the way and destroy anything in the world, that made her eyes grow bright. It might be, if he had not appeared the way he did appear that day she would never have looked so closely at him, but the time people come makes a difference.

They walked through the still leaves of the Natchez Trace, the light and the shade falling through trees about them, the white irises shining like candles on the banks and the new ferns shining like green stars up in the oak branches. They came out at Solomon's house, bottle trees and all. Livvie stopped and hung her head.

Cash began whistling a little tune. She did not know what it was, but she had heard it before from a distance, and she had a revelation. Cash was a field hand. He was a transformed field hand. Cash belonged to Solomon. But he had stepped out of his overalls into this. There in front of Solomon's house he laughed. He had a round head, a round face; all of him was young, and he flung his head up, rolled it against the mare's-tail sky in his round hat, and he could laugh just to see Solomon's house sitting there. Livvie looked at it, and there was Solomon's black hat hanging on the peg on the front door, the blackest thing in the world.

"I been to Natchez," Cash said, wagging his head around against the sky. "*I* taken a trip. *I* ready for Easter!"

How was it possible to look so fine before the harvest? Cash must have stolen the money, stolen it from Solomon. He stood in the path and lifted his spread hand high and brought it down again and again in his laughter. He kicked up his heels. A little chill went through her. It was as if Cash was bringing that strong hand down to beat a drum or to rain blows upon a man, such an abandon and menace were in his laugh. Frowning, she went closer to him and his swinging arm drew her in at once and the fright was crushed from her body, as a little match-flame might be smothered out by what it lighted. She gathered the folds of his coat behind him and fastened her red lips to his mouth, and she was dazzled by herself then, the way he had been dazzled at himself to begin with.

In that instant she felt something that could not be told—that Solomon's death was at hand, that he was the same to her as if he were dead now. She cried out, and uttering little cries turned and ran for the house.

At once Cash was coming, following after, he was running behind her. He came close, and halfway up the path he laughed and passed her. He even picked up a stone and sailed it into the bottle trees. She put her hands over her head, and sounds clattered through the bottle trees like cries of outrage. Cash stamped and plunged zigzag up the front steps and in at the door.

When she got there, he had stuck his hands in his pockets and was turning slowly about in the front room. The little guinea pig peeped out. Around Cash the pinned-up palmettos looked as if a lazy green monkey had walked up and down and around the walls leaving green prints of his hands and feet.

She got through the room and his hands were still in his pockets, and she fell upon the closed door to the other room and pushed it open. She ran to Solomon's bed, calling

"Solomon! Solomon!" The little shape of the old man never moved at all, wrapped under the quilt as if it were winter still.

"Solomon!" She pulled the quilt away, but there was another one under that, and she fell on her knees beside him. He made no sound except a sigh, and then she could hear in the silence the light springy steps of Cash walking and walking in the front room, and the ticking of Solomon's silver watch, which came from the bed. Old Solomon was far away in his sleep; his face looked small, relentless, and devout, as if he were walking somewhere where she could imagine the snow falling.

Then there was a noise like a hoof pawing the floor, and the door gave a creak, and Cash appeared beside her. When she looked up, Cash's face was so black it was bright, and so bright and bare of pity that it looked sweet to her. She stood up and held up her head. Cash was so powerful that his presence gave her strength even when she did not need any.

Under their eyes Solomon slept. People's faces tell of things and places not known to the one who looks at them while they sleep, and while Solomon slept under the eyes of Livvie and Cash his face told them like a mythical story that all his life he had built, little scrap by little scrap, respect. A beetle could not have been more laborious or more ingenious in the task of its destiny. When Solomon was young, as he was in his picture overhead, it was the infinite thing with him, and he could see no end to the respect he would contrive and keep in a house. He had built a lonely house, the way he would make a cage, but it grew to be the same with him as a great monumental pyramid and sometimes in his absorption of getting it erected he was like the builder-slaves of Egypt who forgot or never knew the origin and meaning of the thing to which they gave all the strength of their bodies and used up all their days. Livvie and Cash could see that as a man might rest from a life-labor he lay in his bed, and they could hear how, wrapped in his quilt, he sighed to himself comfortably in sleep, while in his dreams he might have been an ant, a beetle, a bird, an Egyptian, assembling and carrying on his back and building with his hands, or he might have been an old man of India or a swaddled baby, about to smile and brush all away.

Then without warning old Solomon's eyes flew wide open under the hedge-like brows. He was wide awake.

And instantly Cash raised his quick arm. A radiant sweat stood on his temples. But he did not bring his arm down—it stayed in the air, as if something might have taken hold.

It was not Livvie—she did not move. As if something said "Wait," she stood waiting. Even while her eyes burned under motionless lids, her lips parted in a stiff grimace, and with her arms stiff at her sides she stood above the prone old man and the panting young one, erect and apart.

Movement when it came came in Solomon's face. It was an old and strict face, a frail face, but behind it, like a covered light, came an animation that could play hide and seek, that would dart and escape, had always escaped. The mystery flickered in him, and invited from his eyes. It was that very mystery that Cash with his quick arm would have to strike, and that Livvie could not weep for. But Cash only stood holding his arm in the air, when the gentlest flick of his great strength, almost a puff of his breath, would have been enough, if he had known how to give it, to send the old man over the obstruction that kept him away from death.

If it could not be that the tiny illumination in the fragile and ancient face caused a crisis, a mystery in the room that would not permit a blow to fall, at least it was certain that Cash, throbbing in his Easter clothes, felt a pang of shame that the vigor of a man would come to such an end that he could not be struck without warning. He took down his hand and stepped back behind Livvie, like a round-eyed schoolboy on whose unsuspecting head the dunce cap had been set.

"Young ones can't wait," said Solomon.

Livvie shuddered violently, and then in

a gush of tears she stooped for a glass of water and handed it to him, but he did not see her.

"So here come the young man Livvie wait for. Was no prevention. No prevention. Now I lay eyes on young man and it come to be somebody I know all the time, and been knowing since he were born in a cotton patch, and watched grow up year to year, Cash McCord, growed to size, growed up to come in my house in the end—ragged and barefoot."

Solomon gave a cough of distaste. Then he shut his eyes vigorously, and his lips began to move like a chanter's.

"When Livvie married, her husband were already somebody. He had paid great cost for his land. He spread sycamore leaves over the ground from wagon to door, day he brought her home, so her foot would not have to touch ground. He carried her through his door. Then he growed old and could not lift her, and she were still young."

Livvie's sobs followed his words like a soft melody repeating each thing as he stated it. His lips moved for a little without sound, or she cried too fervently, and unheard he might have been telling his whole life, and then he said, "God forgive Solomon for sins great and small. God forgive Solomon for carrying away too young girl for wife and keeping her away from her people and from all the young people would clamor for her back."

Then he lifted up his right hand toward Livvie where she stood by the bed, and offered her his silver watch. He dangled it before her eyes, and she hushed crying; her tears stopped. For a moment the watch could be heard ticking as it always did, precisely in his proud hand. She lifted it away. Then he took hold of the quilt; then he was dead.

Livvie left Solomon dead and went out of the room. Stealthily, nearly without noise, Cash went beside her. He was like a shadow, but his shiny shoes moved over the floor in spangles, and the green downy feather shone like a light in his hat. As they reached the front room, he seized her deftly as a long black cat and dragged her hanging by the waist round and round him, while he turned in a circle, his face bent down to hers. The first moment, she kept one arm and its hand stiff and still, the one that held Solomon's watch. Then the fingers softly let go, all of her was limp, and the watch fell somewhere on the floor. It ticked away in the still room, and all at once there began outside the full song of a bird.

They moved around and around the room and into the brightness of the open door, then he stopped and shook her once. She rested in silence in his trembling arms, unprotesting as a bird on a nest. Outside the redbirds were flying and criss-crossing, the sun was in all the bottles on the prisoned trees, and the young peach was shining in the middle of them with the bursting light of spring.

Turn About[1]

WILLIAM FAULKNER

THE AMERICAN—the older one—wore no pink Bedfords. His breeches were of plain whipcord, like the tunic. And the tunic had no long London-cut skirts, so that below the Sam Browne the tail of it stuck straight out like the tunic of a military policeman beneath his holster belt. And he wore simple putties and the easy shoes of a man of middle age, instead of Savile Row boots, and the shoes and the putties did not match in shade, and the ordnance belt did not match either of them, and the pilot's wings on his breast were just wings. But the ribbon beneath them

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was a good ribbon, and the insignia on his shoulders were the twin bars of a captain. He was not tall. His face was thin, a little aquiline; the eyes intelligent and a little tired. He was past twenty-five; looking at him, one thought, not Phi Beta Kappa exactly, but Skull and Bones perhaps, or possibly a Rhodes scholarship.

One of the men who faced him probably could not see him at all. He was being held on his feet by an American military policeman. He was quite drunk, and in contrast with the heavy-jawed policeman who held him erect on his long, slim, boneless legs, he looked like a masquerading girl. He was possibly eighteen, tall, with a pink-and-white face and blue eyes, and a mouth like a girl's mouth. He wore a pea-coat, buttoned awry and stained with recent mud, and upon his blond head, at that unmistakable and rakish swagger which no other people can ever approach or imitate, the cap of a Royal Naval officer.

"What's this, Corporal?" the American captain said. "What's the trouble? He's an Englishman. You'd better let their M.P.'s take care of him."

"I know he is," the policeman said. He spoke heavily, breathing heavily, in the voice of a man under physical strain; for all his girlish delicacy of limb, the English boy was heavier—or more helpless—than he looked. "Stand up!" the policeman said. "They're officers!"

The English boy made an effort then. He pulled himself together, focusing his eyes. He swayed, throwing his arm about the policeman's neck, and with the other hand he saluted, his hand flicking, fingers curled a little, to his right ear, already swaying again and catching himself again. "Cheerio, sir," he said. "Name's not Beatty, I hope."

"No," the captain said.

"Ah," the English boy said. "Hoped not. My mistake. No offense, what?"

"No offense," the captain said quietly. But he was looking at the policeman. The second American spoke. He was a lieutenant, also a pilot. But he was not twenty-five and he wore the pink breeches, the London boots, and his tunic might have been a British tunic save for the collar.

"It's one of those navy eggs," he said. "They pick them out of the gutters here all night long. You don't come to town often enough."

"Oh," the captain said. "I've heard about them. I remember now." He also remarked now that, though the street was a busy one—it was just outside a popular café—and there were many passers, soldier, civilian, women, yet none of them so much as paused, as though it were a familiar sight. He was looking at the policeman. "Can't you take him to his ship?"

"I thought of that before the captain did," the policeman said. "He says he can't go aboard his ship after dark because he puts the ship away at sundown."

"Puts it away?"

"Stand up, sailor!" the policeman said savagely, jerking at his lax burden. "Maybe the captain can make sense out of it. Damned if I can. He says they keep the boat under the wharf. Run it under the wharf at night, and that they can't get it out again until the tide goes out tomorrow."

"Under the wharf? A boat? What is this?" He was now speaking to the lieutenant. "Do they operate some kind of aquatic motorcycles?"

"Something like that," the lieutenant said. "You've seen them, the boats. Launches, camouflaged and all. Dashing up and down the harbor. You've seen them. They do that all day and sleep in the gutters here all night."

"Oh," the captain said. "I thought those boats were ship commanders' launches. You mean to tell me they use officers just to——"

"I don't know," the lieutenant said. "Maybe they use them to fetch hot water from one ship to another. Or buns. Or maybe to go back and forth fast when they forget napkins of something."

"Nonsense," the captain said. He looked at the English boy again.

"That's what they do," the lieutenant said. "Town's lousy with them all night long.

Gutters full, and their M.P.'s carting them away in batches, like nursemaids in a park. Maybe the French give them the launches to get them out of the gutters during the day."

"Oh," the captain said, "I see." But it was clear that he didn't see, wasn't listening, didn't believe what he did hear. He looked at the English boy. "Well, you can't leave him here in that shape," he said.

Again the English boy tried to pull himself together. "Quite all right, 'sure you," he said glassily, his voice pleasant, cheerful almost, quite courteous. "Used to it. Confounded rough *pavé*, though. Should force French do something about it. Visiting lads jolly well deserve decent field to play on what?"

"And he was jolly well using all of it too," the policeman said savagely. "He must think he's a one-man team, maybe."

At that moment a fifth man came up. He was a British military policeman. "Nah then," he said. "What's this? What's this?" Then he saw the American's shoulder bars. He saluted. At the sound of his voice the English boy turned, swaying, peering.

"Oh, hullo, Albert," he said.

"Nah then, Mr. Hope," the British policeman said. He said to the American policeman, over his shoulder: "What is it this time?"

"Likely nothing," the American said. "The way you guys run a war. But I'm a stranger here. Here. Take him."

"What is this, Corporal?" the captain said. "What was he doing?"

"He won't call it nothing," the American policeman said, jerking his head at the British policeman. "He'll just call it a thrush or a robin or something. I turn into this street about three blocks back a while ago, and I find it blocked with a line of trucks going up from the docks, and the drivers all hollering ahead what the hell the trouble is. So I come on, and I find it is about three blocks of them, blocking the cross streets too; and I come on to the head of it where the trouble is, and I find about a dozen of the drivers out in front, holding a caucus or something in the middle of the street, and I come up and I say, 'What's going on here?' and they leave me through and I find this egg here laying—"

"Yer talking about one of His Majesty's officers, my man," the British policeman said.

"Watch yourself, Corporal," the captain said. "And you found this officer—"

"He had done gone to bed in the middle of the street, with an empty basket for a pillow. Laying there with his hands under his head and his knees crossed, arguing with them about whether he ought to get up and move or not. He said that the trucks could turn back and go around by another street, but that he couldn't use any other street, because this street was his."

"His street?"

The English boy had listened, interested, pleasant. "Billet, you see," he said. "Must have order, even in war emergency. Billet by lot. This street mine; no poaching, eh? Next street Jamie Wutherspoon's. But trucks can go by that street because Jamie not using it yet. Not in bed yet. Insomnia. Knew so. Told them. Trucks go that way. See now?"

"Was that it, Corporal?" the captain said.

"He told you. He wouldn't get up. He just laid there, arguing with them. He was telling one of them to go somewhere and bring back a copy of their articles of war—"

"King's Regulations; yes," the captain said.

"—and see if the book said whether he had the right of way, or the trucks. And then I got him up, and then the captain come along. And that's all. And with the captain's permission I'll now hand him over to His Majesty's wet nur—"

"That'll do, Corporal," the captain said. "You can go. I'll see to this." The policeman saluted and went on. The British policeman was now supporting the English boy. "Can't you take him home?" the captain said. "Where are their quarters?"

"I don't rightly know, sir, if they have quarters or not. We—I usually see them about the pubs until daylight. They don't seem to use quarters."

"You mean, they really aren't off of ships?"

"Well, sir, they might be ships, in a manner of speaking. But a man would have to be a bit sleepier than him to sleep in one of them."

"I see," the captain said. He looked at the policeman. "What kind of boats are they?"

This time the policeman's voice was immediate, final and completely inflectionless. It was like a closed door. "I don't rightly know, sir."

"Oh," the captain said. "Quite. Well, he's in no shape to stay about pubs until daylight this time."

"Perhaps I can find him a bit of a pub with a back table, where he can sleep," the policeman said. But the captain was not listening. He was looking across the street, where the lights of another café fell across the pavement. The English boy yawned terrifically, like a child does, his mouth pink and frankly gaped as a child's.

The captain turned to the policeman:

"Would you mind stepping across there and asking for Captain Bogard's driver? I'll take care of Mr. Hope."

The policeman departed. The captain now supported the English boy, his hand beneath the other's arm. Again the boy yawned like a weary child. "Steady," the captain said. "The car will be here in a minute."

"Right," the English boy said through the yawn.

Once in the car, he went to sleep immediately with the peaceful suddenness of babies, sitting between the two Americans. But though the aërodrome was only thirty minutes away, he was awake when they arrived, apparently quite fresh, and asking for whisky. When they entered the mess he appeared quite sober, only blinking a little in the lighted room, in his raked cap and his awry-buttoned pea-jacket and a soiled silk muffler, embroidered with a club insignia which Bogard recognized to have come from a famous preparatory school, twisted about his throat.

"Ah," he said, his voice fresh, clear now, not blurred, quite cheerful, quite loud, so that the others in the room turned and looked at him. "Jolly. Whisky, what?" He went straight as a bird dog to the bar in the corner, the lieutenant following. Bogard had turned and gone on to the other end of the room, where five men sat about a card table.

"What's he admiral of?" one said.

"Of the whole Scotch navy, when I found him," Bogard said.

Another looked up. "Oh. I thought I'd seen him in town." He looked at the guest. "Maybe it's because he was on his feet that I didn't recognize him when he came in. You usually see them lying down in the gutter."

"Oh," the first said. He, too, looked around. "Is he one of those guys?"

"Sure. You've seen them. Sitting on the curb, you know, with a couple of limey M.P.'s hauling at their arms."

"Yes. I've seen them," the other said. They all looked at the English boy. He stood at the bar, talking, his voice loud, cheerful. "They all look like him too," the speaker said. "About seventeen or eighteen. They run those little boats that are always dashing in and out."

"Is that what they do?" a third said. "You mean, there's a male marine auxiliary to the Waacs? Good Lord, I sure made a mistake when I enlisted. But this war never was advertised right."

"I don't know," Bogard said. "I guess they do more than just ride around."

But they were not listening to him. They were looking at the guest. "They run by clock," the first said. "You can see the condition of one of them after sunset and almost tell what time it is. But what I don't see, is how a man that's in that shape at one o'clock every morning can even see a battleship the next day."

"Maybe when they have a message to send out to a ship," another said, "they just make duplicates and line the launches up and point them toward the ship and give each one a duplicate of the message and let them go. And the ones that miss the ship just cruise around the harbor until they hit a dock somewhere."

"It must be more than that," Bogard said.

He was about to say something else, but at that moment the guest turned from the bar and approached, carrying a glass. He walked steadily enough, but his color was high and his eyes were bright, and he was talking, loud, cheerful, as he came up.

"I say. Won't you chaps join—" He ceased. He seemed to remark something; he was

looking at their breasts. "Oh, I say. You fly. All of you. Oh, good gad! Find it jolly, eh?"

"Yes," somebody said. "Jolly."

"But dangerous, what?"

"A little faster than tennis," another said. The guest looked at him, bright, affable, intent.

Another said quickly, "Bogard says you command a vessel."

"Hardly a vessel. Thanks, though. And not command. Ronnie does that. Ranks me a bit. Age."

"Ronnie?"

"Yes. Nice. Good egg. Old, though. Stickler."

"Stickler?"

"Frightful. You'd not believe it. Whenever we sight smoke and I have the glass, he sheers away. Keeps the ship hull down all the while. No beaver then. Had me two down a fortnight yesterday."

The Americans glanced at one another. "No beaver?"

"We play it. With basket masts, you see. See a basket mast. Beaver! One up. The *Ergenstrasse* doesn't count any more, though."

The men about the table looked at one another. Bogard spoke. "I see. When you or Ronnie see a ship with basket masts, you get a beaver on the other. I see. What is the *Ergenstrasse*?"

"She's German. Interned. Tramp steamer. Foremast rigged so it looks something like a basket mast. Booms, cables, I daresay. I didn't think it looked very much like a basket mast, myself. But Ronnie said yes. Called it one day. Then one day they shifted her across the basin and I called her on Ronnie. So we decided to not count her any more. See now, eh?"

"Oh," the one who had made the tennis remark said, "I see. You and Ronnie run about in the launch, playing beaver. H'm'm. That's nice. Did you ever pl—"

"Jerry," Bogard said. The guest had not moved. He looked down at the speaker, still smiling, his eyes quite wide.

The speaker still looked at the guest. "Has yours and Ronnie's boat got a yellow stern?"

"A yellow stern?" the English boy said. He had quit smiling, but his face was still pleasant.

"I thought that maybe when the boats had two captains, they might paint the sterns yellow or something."

"Oh," the guest said. "Burt and Reeves aren't officers."

"Burt and Reeves," the other said, in a musing tone. "So they go too. Do they play beaver too?"

"Jerry," Bogard said. The other looked at him. Bogard jerked his head a little. "Come over here." The other rose. They went aside. "Lay off of him," Bogard said. "I mean it, now. He's just a kid. When you were that age, how much sense did you have? Just about enough to get to chapel on time."

"My country hadn't been at war going on four years, though," Jerry said. "Here we are, spending our money and getting shot at by the clock, and it's not even our fight, and these limeys that would have been goose-stepping twelve months now if it hadn't been—"

"Shut it," Bogard said. "You sound like a Liberty Loan."

"—taking it like it was a fair or something. 'Jolly.'" His voice was now falsetto, lilting. "'But dangerous, what?'"

"Sh-h-h-h," Bogard said.

"I'd like to catch him and his Ronnie out in the harbor, just once. Any harbor. London's. I wouldn't want anything but a Jenny, either. Jenny? Hell, I'd take a bicycle and a pair of water wings! I'll show him some war."

"Well, you lay off him now. He'll be gone soon."

"What are you going to do with him?"

"I'm going to take him along this morning. Let him have Harper's place out front. He says he can handle a Lewis. Says they have one on the boat. Something he was telling me—about how he once shot out a channel-marker light at seven hundred yards."

"Well, that's your business. Maybe he can beat you."

"Beat me?"

"Playing beaver. And then you can take on Ronnie."

"I'll show him some war, anyway," Bogard said. He looked at the guest. "His people have been in it three years now, and he seems to take it like a sophomore in town for the big game." He looked at Jerry again. "But you lay off him now."

As they approached the table, the guest's voice was loud and cheerful: ". . . if he got the glasses first, he would go in close and look, but when I got them first, he'd sheer off where I couldn't see anything but the smoke. Frightful stickler. Frightful. But *Ergenstrasse* not counting any more. And if you make a mistake and call her, you lose two beaver from your score. If Ronnie were only to forget and call her we'd be even."

At two o'clock the English boy was still talking, his voice bright, innocent, and cheerful. He was telling them how Switzerland had been spoiled by 1914, and instead of the vacation which his father had promised him for his sixteenth birthday, when that birthday came he and his tutor had had to do with Wales. But that he and the tutor had got pretty high and that he dared to say—with all due respect to any present who might have had the advantage of Switzerland, of course—that one could see probably as far from Wales as from Switzerland. "Perspire as much and breathe as hard, anyway," he added. And about him the Americans sat, a little hard-bitten, a little sober, somewhat older, listening to him with a kind of cold astonishment. They had been getting up for some time now and going out and returning in flying clothes, carrying helmets and goggles. An orderly entered with a tray of coffee cups, and the guest realized that for some time now he had been hearing engines in the darkness outside.

At last Bogard rose. "Come along," he said. "We'll get your togs." When they emerged from the mess, the sound of the engines was quite loud—an idling thunder. In alignment along the invisible tarmac was a vague rank of short banks of flickering blue-green fire suspended apparently in mid-air. They crossed the aërodrome to Bogard's quarters, where the lieutenant, McGinnis, sat on a cot fastening his flying boots. Bogard reached down a Sidcott suit and threw it across the cot. "Put this on," he said.

"Will I need all this?" the guest said. "Shall we be gone that long?"

"Probably," Bogard said. "Better use it. Cold upstairs."

The guest picked up the suit. "I say," he said. "I say. Ronnie and I have a do ourselves, tomor — today. Do you think Ronnie won't mind if I am a bit late? Might not wait for me."

"We'll be back before teatime," McGinnis said. He seemed quite busy with his boot. "Promise you." The English boy looked at him.

"What time should you be back?" Bogard said.

"Oh, well," the English boy said, "I daresay it will be all right. They let Ronnie say when to go, anyway. He'll wait for me if I should be a bit late."

"He'll wait," Bogard said. "Get your suit on."

"Right," the other said. They helped him into the suit. "Never been up before," he said, chattily, pleasantly. "Daresay you can see farther than from mountains, eh?"

"See more, anyway," McGinnis said. "You'll like it."

"Oh, rather. If Ronnie only waits for me. Lark. But dangerous, isn't it?"

"Go on," McGinnis said. "You're kidding me."

"Shut your trap, Mac," Bogard said. "Come along. Want some more coffee?" He looked at the guest, but McGinnis answered:

"No. Got something better than coffee. Coffee makes such a confounded stain on the wings."

"On the wings?" the English boy said. "Why coffee on the wings?"

"Stow it, I said, Mac," Bogard said. "Come along."

They recrossed the aërodrome, approaching the muttering banks of flame. When they drew near, the guest began to discern the shape, the outlines of the Handley-Page. It looked like a Pullman coach run upslanted aground into the skeleton of the first floor of an incomplete skyscraper. The guest looked at it quietly.

"It's larger than a cruiser," he said in his

bright, interested voice. "I say, you know. This doesn't fly in one lump. You can't pull my leg. Seen them before. It comes in two parts: Captain Bogard and me in one; Mac and 'nother chap in other. What?"

"No," McGinnis said. Bogard had vanished. "It all goes up in one lump. Big lark, eh? Buzzard, what?"

"Buzzard?" the guest murmured. "Oh, I say. A cruiser. Flying. I say, now."

"And listen," McGinnis said. His hand came forth; something cold fumbled against the hand of the English boy—a bottle. "When you feel yourself getting sick, see? Take a pull at it."

"Oh, shall I get sick?"

"Sure. We all do. Part of flying. This will stop it. But if it doesn't. See?"

"What? Quite. What?"

"Not overside. Don't spew it overside."

"Not overside?"

"It'll blow back in Bogy's and my face. Can't see. Bingo. Finished. See?"

"Oh, quite. What shall I do with it?" Their voices were quiet, brief, grave as conspirators.

"Just duck your head and let her go."

"Oh, quite."

Bogard returned. "Show him how to get into the front pit, will you?" he said. McGinnis led the way through the trap. Forward, rising to the slant of the fuselage, the passage narrowed; a man would need to crawl.

"Crawl in there and keep going," McGinnis said.

"It looks like a dog kennel," the guest said.

"Doesn't it, though?" McGinnis agreed cheerfully. "Cut along with you." Stooping, he could hear the other scuttling forward. "You'll find a Lewis gun up there, like as not," he said into the tunnel.

The voice of the guest came back: "Found it."

"The gunnery sergeant will be along in a minute and show you if it is loaded."

"It's loaded," the guest said; almost on the heels of his words the gun fired, a brief staccato burst. There were shouts, the loudest from the ground beneath the nose of the aëroplane. "It's quite all right," the English boy's voice said. "I pointed it west before I let it off. Nothing back there but Marine office and your brigade headquarters. Ronnie and I always do this before we go anywhere. Sorry if I was too soon. Oh, by the way," he added, "my name's Claude. Don't think I mentioned it."

On the ground, Bogard and two other officers stood. They had come up running. "Fired it west," one said. "How in hell does he know which way is west?"

"He's a sailor," the other said. "You forgot that."

"He seems to be a machine gunner too," Bogard said.

"Let's hope he doesn't forget that," the first said.

Nevertheless, Bogard kept an eye on the silhouetted head rising from the ground gunpit in the nose ten feet ahead of him. "He did work that gun, though," he said to McGinnis beside him. "He even put the drum on himself, didn't he?"

"Yes, "McGinnis said. "If he just doesn't forget and think that that gun is him and his tutor looking around from a Welsh alp."

"Maybe I should not have brought him," Bogard said. McGinnis didn't answer. Bogard jockeyed the wheel a little. Ahead in the gunner's pit, the guest's head moved this way and that continuously, looking. "Well get there and unload and haul air for home," Bogard said. "Maybe in the dark—Confound it, it would be a shame for his country to be in this mess for four years and him not even to see a gun pointed in his direction."

"He'll see one tonight if he don't keep his head in," McGinnis said.

But the boy did not do that. Not even when they had reached the objective and McGinnis had crawled down to the bomb toggles. And even when the searchlights found them and Bogard signaled to the other machines and dived, the two engines snarling full speed into and through the bursting shells, he could see the boy's face in the searchlight's glare, leaned far overside, coming sharply out as a spotlighted face on a stage, with an expression upon it of childlike interest and delight. "But he's firing that

Lewis," Bogard thought. "Straight too"; nosing the machine farther down, watching the pinpoint swing into the sights, his right hand lifted, waiting to drop into McGinnis's sight. He dropped his hand; above the noise of the engines he seemed to hear the click and whistle of the released bombs as the machine, freed of the weight, shot zooming in a long upward bounce that carried it for an instant out of the light. Then he was pretty busy for a time, coming into and through the shells again, shooting athwart another beam that caught and held long enough for him to see the English boy leaning far over the side, looking back and down past the right wing, the undercarriage. "Maybe he's read about it somewhere," Bogard thought, turning, looking back to pick up the rest of the flight.

Then it was all over, the darkness cool and empty and peaceful and almost quiet, with only the steady sound of the engines. McGinnis climbed back into the office, and standing up in his seat, he fired the colored pistol this time and stood for a moment longer, looking backward toward where the searchlights still probed and sabered. He sat down again.

"O.K.," he said. "I counted all four of them. Let's haul air." Then he looked forward. "What's become of the King's Own? You didn't hang him onto a bomb release, did you?" Bogard looked. The forward pit was empty. It was in dim silhouette again now, against the stars, but there was nothing there now save the gun. "No," McGinnis said; "there he is. See? Leaning overside. Dammit, I told him not to spew it! There he comes back." The guest's head came into view again. But again it sank out of sight.

"He's coming back," Bogard said. "Stop him. Tell him we're going to have every squadron in the Hun Channel group on top of us in thirty minutes."

McGinnis swung himself down and stooped at the entrance to the passage. "Get back!" he shouted. The other was almost out; they squatted so, face to face like two dogs, shouting at one another above the noise of the still throttled engines on either side of the fabric walls. The English boy's voice was thin and high.

"Bomb!" he shrieked.

"Yes," McGinnis shouted, "they were bombs! We gave them hell! Get back, I tell you! Have every Hun in France on us in ten minutes! Get back to your gun!"

Again the boy's voice came, high, faint above the noise; "Bomb! All right?"

"Yes! Yes! All right. Back to your gun, damn you!"

McGinnis climbed back into the office. "He went back. Want me to take her awhile?"

"All right," Bogard said. He passed McGinnis the wheel. "Ease her back some. I'd just as soon it was daylight when they come down on us."

"Right," McGinnis said. He moved the wheel suddenly. "What's the matter with that right wing?" he said. "Watch it. . . . See? I'm flying on the right aileron and a little rudder. Feel it."

Bogard took the wheel a moment. "I didn't notice that. Wire somewhere, I guess. I didn't think any of those shells were that close. Watch her though."

"Right," McGinnis said. "And so you are going with him on his boat tomorrow—today."

"Yes. I promised him. Confound it, you can't hurt a kid, you know."

"Why don't you take Collier along, with his mandolin? Then you could sail around and sing."

"I promised him," Bogard said. "Get that wing up a little."

"Right," McGinnis said.

Thirty minutes later it was beginning to be dawn; the sky was gray. Presently McGinnis said: "Well, here they come. Look at them! They look like mosquitoes in September. I hope he don't get worked up now and think he's playing beaver. If he does he'll just be one down to Ronnie, provided the devil has a beard. . . . Want the wheel?"

At eight o'clock the beach, the Channel, was beneath them. Throttled back the machine drifted down as Bogard ruddered it

gently into the Channel wind. His face was strained, a little tired.

McGinnis looked tired, too, and he needed a shave.

"What do you guess he is looking at now?" he said. For again the English boy was leaning over the right side of the cockpit, looking backward and downward past the right wing.

"I don't know," Bogard said. "Maybe bullet holes." He blasted the port engine. "Must have the riggers——"

"He could see some closer than that," McGinnis said. "I'll swear I saw tracer going into his back at one time. Or maybe it's the ocean he's looking at. But he must have seen that when he came over from England." Then Bogard leveled off; the nose rose sharply, the sand, the curling tide edge fled alongside. Yet still the English boy hung far overside, looking backward and downward at something beneath the right wing, his face rapt, with utter and childlike interest. Until the machine was completely stopped he continued to do so. Then he ducked down, and in the abrupt silence of the engines they could hear him crawling in the passage. He emerged just as the two pilots climbed stiffly down from the office, his face bright, eager; his voice high, excited.

"Oh, I say! Oh, good gad! What a chap! What a judge of distance! If Ronnie could only have seen! Oh, good gad! Or maybe they aren't like ours—don't load themselves as soon as the air strikes them."

The Americans looked at him. "What don't what?" McGinnis said.

"The bomb. It was magnificent; I say, I shan't forget it, Oh, I say, you know! It was splendid!"

After a while McGinnis said, "The bomb?" in a fainting voice. Then the two pilots glared at each other; they said in unison: "That right wing!" Then as one they clawed down through the trap and, with the guest at their heels, they ran around the machine and looked beneath the right wing. The bomb, suspended by its tail, hung down like a plumb bob beside the right wheel, its tip just touching the sand. And parallel with the wheel track was the long, delicate line in the sand where its ultimate tip had dragged. Behind them the English boy's voice was high, clear, child-like:

"Frightened, myself. Tried to tell you. But realized you knew your business better than I. Skill. Marvelous. Oh, I say, I shan't forget it."

A marine with a bayoneted rifle passed Bogard onto the wharf and directed him to the boat. The wharf was empty, and he didn't even see the boat until he approached the edge of the wharf and looked directly down into it and upon the backs of two stooping men in greasy dungarees, who rise and glanced briefly at him and stooped again.

It was about thirty feet long and about three feet wide. It was painted with gray-green camouflage. It was quarter-decked forward, with two blunt raked exhaust stacks. "Good Lord," Bogard thought, "if all that deck is engine—" Just aft the deck was the control seat; he saw a big wheel, an instrument panel. Rising to a height of about a foot above the freeboard, and running from the stern forward to where the deck began, and continuing on across the after edge of the deck and thence back down the other gunwale to the stern, was a solid screen, also camouflaged, which inclosed the boat save for the width of the stern, which was open. Facing the steersman's seat like an eye was a hole in the screen about eight inches in diameter. And looking down into the long, narrow, still, vicious shape, he saw a machine gun swiveled at the stern, and he looked at the low screen—including which the whole vessel did not sit much more than a yard above water level—with its single empty forward-staring eye, and he thought quietly: "It's steel. It's made of steel." And his face was quite sober, quite thoughtful, and he drew his trench coat about him and buttoned it, as though he were getting cold.

He heard steps behind him and turned. But it was only an orderly from the aërodrome, accompanied by the marine with the rifle. The orderly was carrying a largish bundle wrapped in paper.

"From Lieutenant McGinnis to the captain," the orderly said.

Bogard took the bundle. The orderly

and the marine retreated. He opened the bundle. It contained some objects and a scrawled note. The objects were a new yellow silk sofa cushion and a Japanese parasol, obviously borrowed, and a comb and a few sheets of flimsy paper. The note said:

Couldn't find a camera anywhere and Collier wouldn't let me have his mandolin. But maybe Ronnie can play on the comb.

Mac

Bogard looked at the objects. But his face was still quite thoughtful, quite grave. He rewrapped the things and carried the bundle on up the wharf a way and dropped it quietly into the water.

As he returned toward the invisible boat he saw two men approaching. He recognized the boy at once—tall, slender, already talking, voluble, his head bent a little toward his shorter companion, who plodded along beside him, hands in pockets, smoking a pipe. The boy still wore the pea-coat beneath a flapping oilskin, but in place of the rakish and casual cap he now wore an infantryman's soiled Balaclava helmet, with, floating behind him as though upon the sound of his voice, a curtainlike piece of cloth almost as long as a burnous.

"Hullo, there!" he cried, still a hundred yards away.

But it was the second man that Bogard was watching, thinking to himself that he had never in his life seen a more curious figure. There was something stolid about the very shape of his hunched shoulders, his slightly down-looking face. He was a head shorter than the other. His face was ruddy, too, but its mold was of a profound gravity that was almost dour. It was the face of a man of twenty who has been for a year trying, even while asleep, to look twenty-one. He wore a high-necked sweater and dungaree slacks; above this a leather jacket; and above this a soiled naval officer's warmer that reached almost to his heels and which had one shoulder strap missing and not one remaining button at all. On his head was a plaid fore-and-aft deer stalker's cap, tied on by a narrow scarf brought across and down, hiding his ears, and then wrapped once about his throat and knotted with a hangman's noose beneath his left ear. It was unbelievably soiled, and with his hands elbow-deep in his pockets and his hunched shoulders and his bent head, he looked like someone's grandmother hanged, say, for a witch. Clamped upside down between his teeth was a short brier pipe.

"Here he is!" the boy cried. "This is Ronnie. Captain Bogard."

"How are you?" Bogard said. He extended his hand. The other said no word, but his hand came forth, limp. It was quite cold, but it was hard, calloused. He said no word; he just glanced briefly at Bogard and then away. But in that instant Bogard caught something in the look, something strange—a flicker; a kind of covert and curious respect, something like a boy of fifteen looking at a circus trapezist.

But he said no word. He ducked on; Bogard watched him drop from sight over the wharf edge as though he had jumped feet first into the sea. He remarked now that the engines in the invisible boat were running.

"We might get aboard too," the boy said. He started toward the boat, then he stopped. He touched Bogard's arm. "Yonder!" he hissed. "See?" His voice was thin with excitement.

"What?" Bogard also whispered; automatically he looked backward and upward, after old habit. The other was gripping his arm and pointing across the harbor.

"There! Over there. The *Ergenstrasse*. They have shifted her again." Across the harbor lay an ancient, rusting, sway-backed hulk. It was small and nondescript, and remembering, Bogard saw that the foremast was a strange mess of cables and booms, resembling—allowing for a great deal of license or looseness or imagery—a basket mast. Beside him the boy was almost chortling. "Do you think that Ronnie noticed?" he hissed. "Do you?"

"I don't know," Bogard said.

"Oh, good gad! If he should glance up and call her before he notices, we'll be even.

Oh, good gad! But come along." He went on; he was still chortling. "Careful," he said. "Frightful ladder."

He descended first, the two men in the boat rising and saluting. Ronnie had disappeared, save for his backside, which now filled a small hatch leading forward beneath the deck. Bogard descended gingerly.

"Good Lord," he said. "Do you have to climb up and down this every day?"

"Frightful, isn't it?" the other said, in his happy voice. "But you know yourself. Try to run a war with makeshifts, then wonder why it takes so long." The narrow hull slid and surged, even with Bogard's added weight. "Sits right on top, you see," the boy said. "Would float on a lawn, in a heavy dew. Goes right over them like a bit of paper."

"It does?" Bogard said.

"Oh, absolutely. That's why, you see." Bogard didn't see, but he was too busy letting himself gingerly down to a sitting posture. There were no thwarts; no seats save a long, thick, cylindrical ridge which ran along the bottom of the boat from the driver's seat to the stern. Ronnie had backed into sight. He now sat behind the wheel, bent over the instrument panel. But when he glanced back over his shoulder he did not speak. His face was merely interrogatory. Across his face there was now a long smudge of grease. The boy's face was empty, too, now.

"Right," he said. He looked forward, where one of the seamen had gone. "Ready forward?" he said.

"Aye, sir," the seaman said.

The other seaman was at the stern line. "Ready aft?"

"Aye, sir."

"Cast off." The boat sheered away, purring, a boiling of water under the stern. The boy looked down at Bogard. "Silly business. Do it shipshape, though. Can't tell when silly four-striper——" His face changed again, immediate, solicitous. "I say. Will you be warm? I never thought to fetch——"

"I'll be all right," Bogard said. But the other was already taking off his oilskin. "No, no," Bogard said. "I won't take it."

"You'll tell me if you get cold?"

"Yes. Sure." He was looking down at the cylinder on which he sat. It was a half cylinder—that is, like the hot-water tank to some Gargantuan stove, sliced down the middle and bolted, open side down, to the floor plates. It was twenty feet long and more than two feet thick. Its top rose as high as the gunwales and between it and the hull on either side was just room enough for a man to place his feet to walk.

"That's Muriel," the boy said.

"Muriel?"

"Yes. The one before that was Agatha. After my aunt. The first one Ronnie and I had was Alice in Wonderland. Ronnie and I were the White Rabbit. Jolly, eh?"

"Oh, you and Ronnie have had three, have you?"

"Oh yes," the boy said. He leaned down. "He didn't notice," he whispered. His face was again bright, gleeful. "When we come back," he said. "You watch."

"Oh," Bogard said. "The *Ergenstrasse.*" He looked astern, and then he thought: "Good Lord! We must be going—traveling." He looked out now, broadside, and saw the harbor line fleeing past, and he thought to himself that the boat was well-nigh moving at the speed at which the Handley-Page flew, left the ground. They were beginning to bound now, even in the sheltered water, from one wave crest to the next with a distinct shock. His hand still rested on the cylinder on which he sat. He looked down at it again, following it from where it seemed to emerge, beneath Ronnie's seat, to where it beveled into the stern. "It's the air in here, I suppose," he said.

"The what?" the boy said.

"The air. Stored up in here. That makes the boat ride high."

"Oh, yes. I daresay. Very likely. I hadn't thought about it." He came forward, his burnous whipping in the wind, and sat down beside Bogard. Their heads were below the top of the screen.

Astern the harbor fled, diminishing, sinking into the sea. The boat had begun to lift now, swooping forward and down, shocking almost stationary for a moment, then

lifting and swooping again; a gout of spray came aboard over the bows like a flung shovelful of shot. "I wish you'd take this coat," the boy said.

Bogard didn't answer. He looked around at the bright face. "We're outside, aren't we?" he said quietly.

"Yes. . . . Do take it, won't you?"

"Thanks, no. I'll be all right. We won't be long, anyway, I guess."

"No. We'll turn soon. It won't be so bad then."

"Yes. I'll be all right, when we turn." Then they did turn. The motion became easier. That is, the boat didn't bang head-on, shuddering, into the swells. They came up beneath now, and the boat fled with increased speed, with a long, sickening, yawning motion, first to one side and then the other. But it fled on, and Bogard looked astern with that same soberness with which he had first looked down into the boat. "We're going east now," he said.

"With just a spot of north," the boy said. "Makes her ride a bit better, what?"

"Yes," Bogard said. Astern there was nothing now save empty sea and the delicate needlelike cant of the machine gun against the boiling and slewing wake, and the two seamen crouching quietly in the stern. "Yes. It's easier." Then he said: "How far do we go?"

The boy leaned closer. He moved closer. His voice was happy, confidential, proud, though lowered a little: "It's Ronnie's show. He thought of it. Not that I wouldn't have, in time. Gratitude and all that. But he's the older, you see. Thinks fast. Courtesy, *noblesse oblige*—all that. Thought of it soon as I told him this morning. I said, 'Oh, I say. I've been there. I've seen it'; and he said, 'Not flying'; and I said, 'Strewth'; and he said 'How far? No lying now'; and I said, 'Oh, far. Tremendous. Gone all night'; and he said, 'Flying all night. That must have been to Berlin'; and I said, 'I don't know. I daresay'; and he thought. I could see him thinking. Because he is the older, you see. More experience in courtesy, right thing. And he said, 'Berlin. No fun to that chap, dashing out and back with us.' And he thought and I waited, and I said, 'But we can't take him to Berlin. Too far. Don't know the way, either'; and he said—fast, like a shot—said, 'But there's Kiel'; and I knew—"

"What?" Bogard said. Without moving, his whole body sprang. "Kiel? In this?"

"Absolutely. Ronnie thought of it. Smart even if he is a stickler. Said at once, 'Zeebrugge no show at all for that chap. Must do best we can for him. Berlin,' Ronnie said. 'My gad! Berlin.' "

"Listen," Bogard said. He had turned now, facing the other, his face quite grave. "What is this boat for?"

"For?"

"What does it do?" Then, knowing beforehand the answer to his own question, he said, putting his hand on the cylinder: "What is this in here? A torpedo, isn't it?"

"I thought you knew," the boy said.

"No," Bogard said. "I didn't know." His voice seemed to reach him from a distance, dry, cricketlike: "How do you fire it?"

"Fire it?"

"How do you get it out of the boat? When that hatch was open a while ago I could see the engines. They were right in front of the end of this tube."

"Oh," the boy said. "You pull a gadget there and the torpedo drops out astern. As soon as the screw touches the water it begins to turn, and then the torpedo is ready, loaded. Then all you have to do is turn the boat quickly and the torpedo goes on."

"You mean—" Bogard said. After a moment his voice obeyed him again. "You mean you aim the torpedo with the boat and release it and it starts moving, and you turn the boat out of the way and the torpedo passes through the same water that the boat just vacated?"

"Knew you'd catch on," the boy said. "Told Ronnie so. Airman. Tamer than yours, though. But can't be helped. Best we can do, just on water. But knew you'd catch on."

"Listen," Bogard said. His voice sounded to him quite calm. The boat fled on yawing over the swells. He sat quite motionless. It seemed to him that he could hear himself.

talking to himself: "Go on. Ask him. Ask him what? Ask him how close to the ship do you have to be before you fire. . . . Listen," he said in that calm voice. "Now, you tell Ronnie, you see. You just tell him—just say—" He could feel his voice ratting off on him again, so he stopped it. He sat quite motionless, waiting for it to come back; the boy leaning now, looking at his face. Again the boy's voice was solicitous:

"I say. You're not feeling well. These confounded shallow boats."

"It's not that," Bogard said. "I just—Do your orders say Kiel?"

"Oh, no. They let Ronnie say. Just so we bring the boat back. This is for you. Gratitude. Ronnie's idea. Tame, after flying. But if you'd rather, eh?"

"Yes, some place closer. You see, I—"

"Quite, I see. No vacations in wartime. I'll tell Ronnie." He went forward. Bogard did not move. The boat fled in long, slewing swoops. Bogard looked quietly astern, at the scudding sea, the sky.

"My God!" he thought. "Can you beat it? Can you beat it?"

The boy came back; Bogard turned to him a face the color of dirty paper. "All right now," the boy said. "Not Kiel. Nearer place, hunting probably just as good. Ronnie says he knows you will understand." He was tugging at his pocket. He brought out a bottle. "Here. Haven't forgot last night. Do the same for you. Good for the stomach, eh?"

Bogard drank, gulping—a big one. He extended the bottle, but the boy refused. "Never touch it on duty," he said. "Not like you chaps. Tame here."

The boat fled on. The sun was already down the west. But Bogard had lost all count of time, of distance. Ahead he could see white seas through the round eye opposite Ronnie's face, and Ronnie's hand on the wheel and the granitelike jut of his profiled jaw and the dead upside-down pipe. The boat fled on.

Then the boy leaned and touched his shoulder. He half rose. The boy was pointing. The sun was reddish; against it, outside them and about two miles away, a vessel—a trawler, it looked like—at anchor swung a tall mast.

"Lightship!" the boy shouted. "Theirs." Ahead Bogard could see a low, flat mole—the entrance to a harbor. "Channel!" the boy shouted. He swept his arm in both directions. "Mines!" His voice swept back on the wind. "Place filthy with them. All sides. Beneath us too. Lark, eh?"

Against the mole a fair surf was beating. Running before the seas now, the boat seemed to leap from one roller to the next; in the intervals while the screw was in the air the engine seemed to be trying to tear itself out by the roots. But it did not slow; when it passed the end of the mole the boat seemed to be standing almost erect on its rudder, like a sailfish. The mole was a mile away. From the end of it little faint lights began to flicker like fireflies. The boy leaned. "Down," he said. "Machine guns. Might stop a stray."

"What do I do?" Bogard shouted. "What can I do?"

"Stout fellow! Give them hell, what? Knew you'd like it!"

Crouching, Bogard looked up at the boy, his face wild. "I can handle the machine gun!"

"No need," the boy shouted back. "Give them first innings. Sporting. Visitors, eh?" He was looking forward. "There she is. See?" They were in the harbor now, the basin opening before them. Anchored in the channel was a big freighter. Painted midships of the hull was a huge Argentine flag. "Must get back to stations!" the boy shouted down to him. Then at that moment Ronnie spoke for the first time. The boat was hurtling along now in smoother water. Its speed did not slacken and Ronnie did not turn his head when he spoke. He just swung his jutting jaw and the clamped cold pipe a little, and said from the side of his mouth a single word:

"Beaver."

The boy, stooped over what he had called his gadget, jerked up, his expression astonished and outraged. Bogard also looked forward and saw Ronnie's arm pointing to starboard. It was a light cruiser at anchor a mile

away. She had basket masts, and as he looked a gun flashed from her after turret. "Oh, damn!" the boy cried. "Oh, you putt! Oh, confound you, Ronnie! Now I'm three down!" But he had already stooped again over his gadget, his face bright and empty and alert again; not sober; just calm, waiting. Again Bogard looked forward and felt the boat pivot on its rudder and head directly for the freighter at terrific speed, Ronnie now with one hand on the wheel and the other lifted and extended at the height of his head.

But it seemed to Bogard that the hand would never drop. He crouched not sitting, watching with a kind of quiet horror a painted flag increase like a moving picture of a locomotive taken from between the rails. Again the gun crashed from the cruiser behind them, and the freighter fired point-blank at them from its poop. Bogard heard neither shot.

"Man, man," he shouted. "For God's sake!"

Ronnie's hand dropped. Again the boat spun on its rudder. Bogard saw the bow rise, pivoting; he expected the hull to slam broadside on into the ship. But it didn't. It shot off on a long tangent. He was waiting for it to make a wide sweep, heading seaward, putting the freighter astern, and he thought of the cruiser again. "Get a broadside, this time, once we clear the freighter," he thought. Then he remembered the freighter, the torpedo, and he looked back toward the freighter to watch the torpedo strike, and saw to his horror that the boat was now bearing down on the freighter again, in a skidding turn. Like a man in a dream, he watched himself rush down upon the ship and shoot past under her counter, still skidding, close enough to see the faces on her decks. "They missed and they are going to run down the torpedo and catch it and shoot it again," he thought idiotically.

So the boy had to touch his shoulder before he knew he was behind him. The boy's voice was quite calm: "Under Ronnie's seat there. A bit of a crank handle. If you'll just hand it to me—"

He found the crank. He passed it back; he was thinking dreamily: "Mac would say they had a telephone on board." But he didn't look at once to see what the boy was doing with it, for in that still and peaceful horror he was watching Ronnie, the cold pipe rigid in his jaw, hurling the boat at top speed round and round the freighter, so near that he could see the rivets in the plates. Then he looked aft, his face wild, importunate, and he saw what the boy was doing with the crank. He had fitted it into what was obviously a small windlass low on one flank of the tube near the head. He glanced up and saw Bogard's face. "Didn't go that time!" he shouted cheerfully.

"Go?" Bogard shouted. "It didn't—the torpedo—"

The boy and one of the seamen were quite busy, stooping over the windlass and the tube. "No. Clumsy. Always happening. Should think clever chaps like engineers—Happens, though. Draw her in and try her again."

"But the nose, the cap!" Bogard shouted. It's still in the tube, isn't it? It's all right, isn't it?"

"Absolutely. But it's working now. Loaded. Screw's started turning. Get it back and drop it clear. If we should stop or slow up it would overtake us. Drive back into the tube. Bingo! What?"

Bogard was on his feet now, turned, braced to the terrific merry-go-round of the boat. High above them the freighter seemed to be spinning on her heel like a trick picture in the movies. "Let me have that winch!" he cried.

"Steady!" the boy said. "Mustn't draw her back too fast. Jam her into the head of the tube ourselves. Same bingo! Best let us. Every cobbler to his last, what?"

"Oh, quite," Bogard said. "Oh, absolutely." It was like someone else was using his mouth. He leaned, braced, his hands on the cold tube, beside the others. He was hot inside, but his outside was cold. He could feel all his flesh jerking with cold as he watched the blunt, grained hand of the seaman turning the windlass in short, easy, inch-long arcs, while at the head of the tube the boy bent, tapping the cylinder with a spanner, lightly, his head turned

with listening, delicate and deliberate as a watchmaker. The boat rushed on in those furious, slewing turns. Bogard saw a long, drooping thread loop down from somebody's mouth, between his hands, and he found that the thread came from his own mouth.

He didn't hear the boy speak, nor notice when he stood up. He just felt the boat straighten out, flinging him to his knees beside the tube. The seaman had gone back to the stern and the boy stooped again over his gadget. Bogard knelt now, quite sick. He did not feel the boat when it swung again, nor hear the gun from the cruiser which had not dared to fire and the freighter which had not been able to fire, firing again. He did not feel anything at all when he saw the huge, painted flag directly ahead and increasing with locomotive speed, and Ronnie's lifted hand drop. But this time he knew that the torpedo was gone; in pivoting and spinning this time the whole boat seemed to leave the water; he saw the bow of the boat shoot skyward like the nose of a pursuit ship going into a wing-over. Then his outraged stomach denied him. He saw neither the geyser nor heard the detonation as he sprawled over the tube. He felt only a hand grasp him by the slack of his coat, and the voice of one of the seamen: "Steady all, sir. I've got you."

A voice roused him, a hand. He was half sitting in the narrow starboard runway, half lying across the tube. He had been there for quite a while; quite a while ago he had felt someone spread a garment over him. But he had not raised his head. "I'm all right," he had said. "You keep it."

"Don't need it," the boy said. "Going home now."

"I'm sorry I—" Bogard said.

"Quite. Confounded shallow boats. Turn any stomach until you get used to them. Ronnie and I both, at first. Each time. You wouldn't believe it. Believe human stomach hold so much. Here." It was the bottle. "Good drink. Take enormous one. Good for stomach."

Bogard drank. Soon he did feel better, warmer. When the hand touched him later, he found that he had been asleep.

It was the boy again. The pea-coat was too small for him; shrunken, perhaps. Below the cuffs his long, slender, girl's wrists were blue with cold. Then Bogard realized what the garment was that had been laid over him. But before Bogard could speak, the boy leaned down, whispering; his face was gleeful: "He didn't notice!"

"What?"

"*Ergenstrasse!* He didn't notice that they had shifted her. Gad, I'd be just one down, then." He watched Bogard's face with bright, eager eyes. "Beaver, you know. I say. Feeling better, eh?"

"Yes," Bogard said, "I am."

"He didn't notice at all. Oh, gad! Oh, Jove!"

Bogard rose and sat on the tube. The entrance to the harbor was just ahead; the boat had slowed a little. It was just dusk. He said quietly: "Does this often happen?" The boy looked at him. Bogard touched the tube. "This. Failing to go out."

"Oh, yes. Why they put the windlass on them. That was later. Made first boat; whole thing blew up one day. So put on windlass."

"But it happens sometimes, even now? I mean, sometimes they blow up, even with the windlass?"

"Well, can't say, of course. Boats go out. Not come back. Possible. Not ever know, of course. Not heard of one captured yet, though. Possible. Not to us, though. Not yet."

"Yes," Bogard said. "Yes." They entered the harbor, the boat moving still fast, but throttled now and smooth, across the dusk-filled basin. Again the boy leaned down, his voice gleeful.

"Not a word, now!" he hissed. "Steady all!" He stood up; he raised his voice: "I say, Ronnie." Ronnie did not turn his head, but Bogard could tell that he was listening. "That Argentine ship was amusing, eh? In there. How do you suppose it got past us here? Might have stopped here as well. French would buy the wheat." He paused, diabolical—Machiavelli with the face of a

strayed angel. "I say. How long has it been since we had a strange ship in here? Been months, eh?" Again he leaned, hissing. "Watch, now!" But Bogard could not see Ronnie's head move at all. "He's looking, though!" the boy whispered, breathed. And Ronnie was looking, though his head had not moved at all. Then there came into view, in silhouette against the dusk-filled sky, the vague, basketlike shape of the interned vessel's foremast. At once Ronnie's arm rose, pointing; again he spoke without turning his head, out of the side of his mouth, past the cold, clamped pipe, a single word:

"Beaver."

The boy moved like a released spring, like a heeled dog freed. "Oh, damn you!" he cried. "Oh, you putt! It's the *Ergenstrassel* Oh, confound you! I'm just one down now!" He had stepped in one stride completely over Bogard, and he now leaned down over Ronnie. What?" The boat was slowing in toward the wharf, the engine idle. "Aren't I, Ronnie? Just one down now?"

The boat drifted in; the seaman had again crawled forward onto the deck. Ronnie spoke for the third and last time. "Right," he said.

"I want," Bogard said, "a case of Scotch. The best we've got. And fix it up good. It's to go to town. And I want a responsible man to deliver it." The responsible man came. "This is for a child," Bogard said, indicating the package. "You'll find him in the Street of the Twelve Hours, somewhere near the Café Twelve Hours. He'll be in the gutter. You'll know him. A child about six feet long. Any English M.P. will show him to you. If he is asleep, don't wake him. Just sit there and wait until he wakes up. Tell him it is from Captain Bogard."

About a month later a copy of the *English Gazette* which had strayed onto an American aërodrome carried the following item in the casualty lists:

MISSING: Torpedo Boat X001. Lieutenants R. Boyce Smith and L.C.W. Hope, R.N.R., Able Seamen, Machinist's Mate Burt and Torpedoman Reeves, Channel Fleet, Light Torpedo Division. Failed to return from coast patrol duty.

Shortly after that the American Air Service headquarters also issued a bulletin:

For extraordinary valor over and beyond the routine of duty, Captain H. S. Bogard, with his crew, composed of Second Lieutenant Darrel McGinnis and Aviation Gunners Watts and Harper, on a daylight raid and without scout protection, destroyed with bombs an ammunition depot several miles behind the enemy's lines. From here, beset by enemy aircraft in superior numbers these men proceeded with what bombs remained to the enemy's corps headquarters at —— and partially demolished this château, and then returned safely without loss of a man.

And regarding which exploit, it might have added, had it failed and had Captain Bogard come out of it alive, he would have been immediately and thoroughly court-martialed.

Carrying his remaining two bombs, he had dived the Handley-Page at the château where the generals sat at lunch, until McGinnis, at the toggles below him, began to shout at him, before he ever signaled. He didn't signal until he could discern separately the slate tiles of the roof. Then his hand dropped and he zoomed, and he held the aëroplane so, in its wild snarl, his lips parted, his breath hissing, thinking: "God! God! If they were all there—all the generals, the admirals, the presidents and the kings—theirs, ours—all of them."

Gunners' Passage[1]

IRWIN SHAW

"IN BRAZIL," Whitejack was saying, "the problem was girls, American girls."

They were lying on the comfortable cots, with the mosquito netting looped gracefully over their heads and the barracks quiet and empty, except for the two of them, and shaded and cool, when you remembered that outside the full sun of Africa stared down.

"Three months in the jungle, on rice and monkey meat." Whitejack lit a large, long, nickel cigar and puffed deeply, squinting up at the tin roof. "When we got to Rio we felt we deserved an American girl. So the lieutenant and Johnny Moffat and myself, we got the telephone directory of the American Embassy and we went down the list, calling up likely names—secretaries, typists, interpreters, filing clerks—" Whitejack grinned up at the ceiling. He had a large, sunburned, rough face that was broken into good looks by his smile, and his speech was Southern, but not the kind of Southern that puts a Northerner's teeth on edge.

"It was the lieutenant's idea, and by the time we got to the Q's, he was ready to give up. But we hit pay dirt on the S's." Slowly he blew out a long column of cigar smoke. "Uh-uh," he said, closing his eyes reflectively. "Two months and eleven days of honey and molasses. Three tender and affectionate American girls, as loving as the day is long, with their own flat. Beer in the icebox from Sunday to Sunday, steaks big enough to saddle a mule with, and nothing to do—just lie on the beach in the afternoon and go swimmin' when the mood seized yuh. On per diem."

"How were the girls?" Stais asked. "Pretty?"

"Well, Sergeant." Whitejack paused thoughtfully and pursed his lips. "To tell you the truth, Sergeant, the girls the lieutenant and Johnny had were as smart and pretty as chipmunks. Mine . . ." Once more he paused. "Ordinarily my girl would find herself hard put to collect a man in the middle of a full division of infantry soldiers. She was small and runty and she had less curves than a rifle barrel and she wore glasses. But from the first time she looked at me I could see she wasn't interested in Johnny or the lieutenant. She looked at me, and behind her glasses her eyes were soft and hopeful and humble and appealing." Whitejack flicked the cigar ash off into a little tin can which was resting on his bare chest. "Sometimes," he said slowly, "a man feels mighty small if he just thinks of himself and turns down an appeal like that. Let me tell you something, Sergeant, I was in Rio two months and eleven days and I didn't look at another woman. All those dark-brown women walkin' along the beach, three quarters out of their bathing suits, just wavin' it in front of your face—I didn't look at them. This runty, skinny little thing with glasses was the most lovin' and satisfactory and decent little person a man could possibly conceive of and a man'd just have to be hog-greedy with sex to have winked an eye at another woman." Whitejack doused his cigar, took the tin can off his chest, and rolled over on his belly. "Now," he said, "I'm going to get myself a little sleep."

In a moment Whitejack was snoring gently, his tough mountaineer's face tucked childishly into the crook of one arm. Outside, on the shady side of the building, a native boy hummed low and wild to himself as he ironed a pair of sun-tan trousers. From the field, two hundred yards away, again and again came the sliding roar of engines climbing or descending the afternoon sky.

Stais closed his eyes wearily. Ever since

[1] From *The New Yorker*, July 22, 1944. Copyright 1944 by Irwin Shaw. Originally published in *The New Yorker*.

he'd got into Accra he had done nothing but sleep and lie on his cot daydreaming, listening to Whitejack talk.

"Hi," Whitejack had said as Stais had come slowly into the barracks two days before. "Which way you going?"

"Home," Stais had said, smiling wearily, as he did every time he said it. "Going home. Which way you going?"

"Not home." Whitejack had grinned a little. "Not home at all."

Stais liked to listen to Whitejack. Whitejack talked about America, about the woods of the Blue Ridge Mountains, where he had been in forestry service, about his mother's cooking and how he had owned great dogs who had been extraordinary at finding a trail and holding it, about how they had tried hunting deer in the hills from the medium bomber (no good because of the swirling winds rising from the gorges), about pleasant, indiscriminate week-end parties in the woods with his friend Johnny Moffat and the girls from the mill in the next town. Stais had been away from America for nineteen months now, and Whitejack's talk made his native country seem present and pleasantly real to him.

"There was a man in my town by the name of Thomas Wolfe," Whitejack had said irrelevantly that morning. "He was a great big feller and he went away to New York to be an author. Maybe you heard of him?"

"Yes," said Stais. "I read two books of his."

"Well, I read that book of his," said Whitejack, "and the people in town were yellin' to lynch him for a while, but I read that book, and he got that town down fair and proper, and when they brought him back dead I came down from the hills and I went to his funeral. There were a lot of important people from New York and over to Chapel Hill down for the funeral and it was a hot day, too, and I'd never met the feller, but I felt it was only right to go to his funeral after readin' his book. And the whole town was there, very quiet, although just five years before they were yellin' to lynch him, and it was a sad and impressive sight and I'm glad I went."

And another time, the slow, deep voice rolling between sleep and sleep in the shaded heat, "My mother takes a quail and bones it, then she scoops out a great big sweet potato and lays some bacon on it, then she puts the quail in and cooks it slow for three hours, bastin' it with butter all the time. You got to try that sometime."

"Yes," said Stais, "I will."

Stais did not have a high-priority number and there seemed to be a flood of colonels surging toward America, taking all the seats on the C-54s setting out westward, so he'd had to wait. It hadn't been bad. Just to lie down, stretched full out, unbothered, these days, was holiday enough after Greece, and anyway he didn't want to arrive home, in front of his mother, until he'd stopped looking like a tired old man. And the barracks usually were empty and quiet and the chow good at the transient mess and you could get Coca-Cola and chocolate milk at the PX. The rest of the enlisted men in Whitejack's crew were young and ambitious and were out swimming all day and going to the movies or playing poker in another barracks all night, and Whitejack's talk was smooth and amusing in the periods between sleep and dreams. Whitejack was an aerial photographer and gunner in a mapping and survey squadron and he'd been in Alaska and Brazil and back to the States and now was on his way to India, full of conversation. He was in a Mitchell squadron and the whole squadron was supposed to be on its way together, but two of the Mitchells had crashed and burned on the take-off at Natal as Whitejack's plane had circled the field, waiting to form up. The rest of the squadron had been held at Natal and Whitejack's plane had been sent on to Accra, across the ocean, by itself.

Vaguely and slowly, lying on the warm cot, with the wild song of the Negro boy outside the window, Stais thought of the two Mitchells burning between sea and jungle three thousand miles away, and of other planes burning elsewhere, and of what it was going to be like sitting down in the armchair of his own house and looking across the room at his mother, and of the pretty Vien-

nese girl in Jerusalem, and of the DC-3 coming down slowly, like an angel in the dusk, to the rough, secret pasture in the Peloponnesian hills.

He fell asleep. His bones knit gently into dreams on the soft cot, with the sheets, in the quiet barracks, and he was over Athens again, with the ruins pale and shining on the hills, and the fighters boring in, and Lathrop saying, over the intercom, as they persisted into a hundred, fifty yards, twisting, swift and shifty, in the bright Greek sky, "They grounded all the students today. They have the instructors up this afternoon." And, suddenly and wildly, fifty feet over Ploesti, with Liberators going down into the filth in dozens, flaming . . . Then swimming off the white beach at Benghazi, with the dead boys playing in the mild, tideless swell, then the parachute pulling at every muscle in his body, then the green and forest blue of Minnesota woods and his father, fat and small, sleeping on pine needles on his Sunday off, then Athens again, Athens . . .

"I don't know what's come over the lieutenant," a new voice was saying as Stais came out of his dream. "He passes us on the field and he just don't seem to see us."

Stais opened his eyes. Novak, a farm boy from Oklahoma, was sitting on the edge of Whitejack's bed, talking. "It has all the guys real worried." He had a high, shy, rather girlish voice. "I used to think they never came better than the lieutenant. Now . . ." Novak shrugged. "If he does see you, he snaps at you like he was General Ulysses S. Grant."

"Maybe," Whitejack said, "maybe seeing Lieutenant Brogan go down in Natal . . . He and Brogan were friends since they were ten years old. Like as if I saw Johnny Moffat go down."

"It's not that." Novak went over to his own cot and got out his writing pad. "It began back in Miami, four weeks ago. Didn't you notice it?"

"I noticed it," Whitejack said slowly.

"You ought to ask him about it." Novak started writing a letter. "You and him are good friends. After all, going into combat now, it's bad—the lieutenant just lookin' through us when he passes us on the field. You don't think he's drunk all the time, do you?"

"He's not drunk."

"You ought to ask him."

"Maybe I will." Whitejack sat up. "Maybe I will." He looked forlornly down at his stomach. "Since I got into the Army I've turned pig-fat. On the day I took the oath I was twenty-eight and one half inches around the waist. Today I'm thirty-two and three quarters if I'm an inch. The Army . . . Maybe I shouldn't've joined. I was in a reserved profession, and I was the sole support of an ailing mother."

"Why did you join?" Stais asked.

"Oh." Whitejack smiled at him. "You're awake. Feeling any better, Sergeant?"

"Feeling fine, thanks. Why did you join?"

"Well . . ." Whitejack rubbed the side of his jaw. "Well, I waited and I waited. I sat up in my cabin in the hills and I tried to avoid listenin' to the radio, and I waited and I waited, and finally I went downtown to my mother and I said, 'Ma'am, I just can't wait any longer,' and I joined up."

"When was that?" Stais asked.

"Eight days"—Whitejack lay down again, plumping the pillow under his head—"eight days after Pearl Harbor."

"Sergeant," Novak said, "Sergeant Stais, you don't mind if I tell my girl you're a Greek, do you?"

"No," Stais said gravely. "I don't mind. You know, I was born in Minnesota."

"I know," said Novak, writing industriously. "But your parents came from Greece. My girl'll be very interested, your parents coming from Greece and you bombing Greece and being shot down there."

"What do you mean, your girl?" Whitejack asked. "I thought you said she was going around with a technical sergeant in Flushing, Long Island."

"That's true," Novak said apologetically. "But I still like to think of her as my girl."

"It's the ones that stay at home," said Whitejack darkly, "that get all the stripes and all the girls. My motto is, don't write to a girl once you get out of pillowcase distance from her."

"I like to write to this girl in Flushing, Long Island," Novak said, his voice shy but stubborn. Then to Stais, "How many days were you in the hills before the Greek farmers found you?"

"Fourteen," said Stais.

"And how many of you were wounded?"

"Three. Out of seven. The others were dead."

"Maybe he doesn't like to talk about it, Charlie," Whitejack said.

"Oh, I'm sorry." Novak looked up, his young, unlined face crossed with concern.

"That's all right," Stais said. "I don't mind."

"Did you tell them you were a Greek too?" Novak asked.

"When one finally showed up who could speak English."

"That must be funny," Novak said reflectively. "Being a Greek, bombing Greece, not speaking the language. Can I tell my girl they had a radio and they radioed to Cairo?"

"It's the girl of a technical sergeant in Flushing, Long Island," Whitejack chanted. "Why don't you look facts in the face?"

"I prefer it this way," Novak said with dignity.

"I guess you can tell about the radio," Stais said. "It was pretty long ago. Three days later the DC-3 came down through a break in the clouds. It'd been raining all the time and it just stopped for about thirty minutes at dusk and that plane came down, throwin' water fifteen feet in the air. We cheered, but we couldn't get up from where we were sitting, any of us, because we were too weak to stand."

"I got to write that to my girl," Novak said. "Too weak to stand."

"Then it started to rain again and the field was hip-deep in mud and when we all got into the DC-3 we couldn't get it started." Stais spoke calmly and thoughtfully, as though he were alone, reciting to himself. "We were just bogged down in that Greek mud. Then the pilot got out—he was a captain—and he looked around, with the rain coming down and all those farmers just standing there, sympathizing with him, and nothing anyone could do, and he just cursed for ten minutes. He was from San Francisco and he really knew how to curse. Then everybody started breaking branches off the trees in the woods around that pasture, even those of us who couldn't stand an hour before, and we just covered that big DC-3 complete with branches and waited for the rain to stop. We just sat in the woods and prayed no German patrols would come out in weather like that. In those three days I learned five words of Greek."

"What are they?" Novak asked.

"*Vouno*," Stais said. "That means 'mountain.' *Vrohi*: rain. *Theos*: God. *Avrion*: tomorrow. And *Yassou*. That means 'farewell.'"

"*Yassou*," Novak said. "Farewell."

"Then the sun came out and the field started to steam and nobody said anything. We just sat there, watching the water dry off the grass, then the puddles started to go, here and there, then the mud to cake a little. Then we got into the DC-3 and the Greeks pushed and hauled for a while and we broke loose and got out. And those farmers just standing below waving at us, as though they were seeing us off at Grand Central Station. Ten miles farther on we went right over a German camp. They fired at us a couple of times, but they didn't come anywhere close. The best moment of my whole life was getting into that hospital bed in Cairo. I just stood there and looked at it for a whole minute, looking at the sheets. Then I got in, very slow."

"Did you ever find out what happened to those Greeks?" Novak asked.

"No," said Stais. "I guess they're still there, waiting for us to come back someday."

There was silence, broken only by the slow scratching of Novak's pen. Stais thought of the thin, dark mountain faces of the men he had last seen, fading away, waving, standing in the scrub and short silver grass of the hill pasture near the Aegean Sea. They had been cheerful and anxious to please, and there was a look on their faces that made you feel they expected to die.

"How many missions were you on?" Novak asked.

"Twenty-one and a half," Stais said. He smiled. "I count the last one as half."

"How old are you?" Novak was obviously

keeping the technical sergeant's girl carefully posted on all points of interest.

"Nineteen."

"You look older," said Whitejack.

"Yes," said Stais.

"A lot older."

"Yes."

"Did you shoot down any planes?" Novak peered at him shyly, his red face uncertain and embarrassed, like a little boy asking a doubtful question about girls. "Personally?"

"Two," Stais said. "Personally."

"What did you feel?"

"Why don't you leave him alone?" Whitejack said. "He's too tired to keep his eyes open as it is."

"I felt—relieved," Stais said. He tried to think of what he'd really felt when the tracers went in and the Focke-Wulf started to smoke like a crazy smudge pot and the German pilot fought wildly for half a second with the cowling and then didn't fight wildly any more. There was no way of telling these men, no way of remembering, in words, himself. "You'll find out," he said. "Soon enough. The sky's full of Germans."

"Japs," Whitejack said. "We're going to India."

"The sky's full of Japs."

There was silence once more, with the echo of the word "Japs" rustling thinly in the long, quiet room, over the empty rows of cots. Stais felt the old waving dizziness starting behind his eyes that the doctor in Cairo had said came from shock or starvation or exposure or all of these things, and lay back, still keeping his eyes open, because it became worse and waved more violently when he closed his eyes.

"One more question," Novak said. "Are—are guys afraid?"

"You'll be afraid," Stais said.

"Do you want to send that back to your girl in Flushing?" Whitejack asked sardonically.

"No," said Novak quietly. "I wanted that for myself."

"If you want to sleep," said Whitejack, "I'll shut this farmer up."

"Oh no," said Stais. "I'm pleased to talk."

"If you're not careful," Whitejack said, "he'll talk about his girl in Flushing."

"I'd be pleased to hear it," said Stais.

"It's only natural I should want to talk about her," Novak said. "She was the best girl I ever knew in my whole life. I'd've married her if I could."

"My motto," said Whitejack, "is never marry a girl who goes to bed with you the first time out. The chances are she isn't pure. The second time—that, of course, is different." He winked at Stais.

"I was in Flushing, Long Island, taking a five-week course in aerial cameras," Novak said, "and I was living at the Y.M.C.A."

"This is where I leave." Whitejack got off the bed and put on his pants.

"The Y.M.C.A. was very nice. There were bathrooms for every two rooms, and the food was very good," said Novak, talking earnestly to Stais, "but I must confess, I was lonely in Flushing, Long Island."

"I'll be back"—Whitejack was buttoning up his shirt—"for the ninth installment."

"As long as you're going out," Novak said to him, "I wish you'd talk to the lieutenant. It really makes me feel queer, passing him and him just looking through me like I was a windowpane."

"Maybe I'll talk to the lieutenant," Whitejack said. "And leave the sergeant alone. Remember, he's a tired man who's been to the war and he needs his rest." He went out.

Novak stared after Whitejack. "There's something wrong with him too," he said. "Just lying on his back here for ten days, reading and sleeping. He never did that before. He was the liveliest man in the United States Air Force. Seeing those two planes go down . . . It's a funny thing, you fly with fellers all over the world, over America, Brazil, Alaska, you watch them shoot porpoises and sharks in gunnery practice over the Gulf Stream, you get drunk with them, go to their weddings, talk to them over the radio with their planes maybe a hundred feet away, in the air, and after all that flying, in one minute, for no reason, two planes go down. Fourteen fellers you've been livin' with for over a year." Novak shook his head. "There was a particular friend of Whitejack's in one of those planes. Frank Sloan.

Just before we left Miami they had a big fight. Frank went off and married a girl that Whitejack'd been going with off and on for a year, every time we hit Miami. Whitejack told him he was crazy, half the squadron had slept with the lady, and that was true too, and just to teach him a lesson he'd sleep with her himself after they'd been married. And he did, too." Novak sighed. "A lot of funny things happen in the Army when fellers've been together a long time and get to know each other real well. And then one minute the Mitchell goes down. I guess Whitejack must've felt sort of queer, watching Frankie burn." Novak had put his writing pad down and now he screwed the top on his fountain pen. "The truth is," he said, "I don't feel so solid myself. That's why I like to talk. Especially to you. You've been through it. You're young, but you've been through it. But if it's any bother to you I'll keep quiet."

"No," said Stais, still lying back, abstractedly wondering whether the waving would get worse or better, "not at all."

"This girl in Flushing, Long Island," Novak said slowly. "It's easy for Whitejack to make fun of me. The girls fall all over themselves chasing after him. He has no real conception of what it's like to be a man like me. Not very good-looking. Not much money. Not an officer. Not humorous. Shy."

Stais couldn't help grinning. "You're going to have a tough time in India."

"I know," Novak said. "I've resigned myself to not having a girl until the armistice. How did you do with the girls in the Middle East?" he asked politely.

"There was a nice Viennese girl in Jerusalem," Stais said dreamily. "But otherwise zero. You have to be very good, unless you're an officer, in the Middle East."

"That's what I heard," Novak said sorrowfully. "Well, it won't be so different to me from Oklahoma. That was the nice thing about this girl in Flushing, Long Island. She saw me come into the jewelry store where she worked and I was in my fatigues and I was with a very smooth feller who made a date with her for that night. But she smiled at me and I knew if I had the guts I could ask her for a date too. But of course I didn't. But then later that night I was sitting in my room in the Y.M.C.A. and my phone rang. It was this girl. The other feller had stood her up, she said, and would I take her out." Novak smiled dimly, thinking of that tremulous moment of glory in the small Y.M.C.A. room far away. "I got my fatigues off in one minute and shaved and showered and I picked her up. We went to Coney Island. It was the first time in my entire life I had ever seen Coney Island. It took three and a half weeks for me to finish my course and I went out with that girl every single night. Nothing like that ever happened to me before in my life—a girl who just wanted to see me every night of the week. Then, the night before I was due to leave to join my squadron, she told me she had got permission to take the afternoon off and she would like to see me down to the train, if I let her. I called at the jewelry shop at noon and her boss shook my hand and she had a package under her arm and we got into the subway and we rode to New York City. Then we went into a cafeteria and had a wonderful lunch and she saw me off and gave me the package. It was Schrafft's candy, and she was crying at the gate there, crying for me, and she said she would like me to write, no matter what." Novak paused and Stais could tell that the scene at the gate, the hurrying crowds, the package of Schrafft's chocolates, the weeping young girl, were as clear as the afternoon sunlight to Novak, there on the coast of Africa. "So I keep writing," Novak said. "She's written me she has a technical sergeant now, but I keep writing. I haven't seen her in a year and a half and what's a girl to do? Do you blame her?"

"No," said Stais. "I don't blame her."

"I hope I haven't bored you," Novak said.

"Not at all." Stais smiled at him. Suddenly the dizziness had gone and he could close his eyes. As he drifted down into that weird and ever-present pool of sleep in which he half lived these days, he heard Novak say, "Now I have to write my mother."

Outside the Negro boy sang and the planes grumbled down from the Atlantic and labori-

ously set out across the Sahara Desert.

Dreams again: Arabs, bundled in rags, driving camels along the perimeter of the field, outlined against the parked Liberators and waiting bombs; two Mitchells still burning on the shores of Brazil and Frank Sloan burning there and, circling above him, Whitejack, who had told him he'd sleep with his wife and had; the hills around Jerusalem, gnarled, rocky, dusty, with the powdered green of olive groves set on slopes here and there, clinging against the desert wind; Mitchells slamming along the gorges of the Blue Ridge Mountains, bucking in the updrafts, their guns going, hunting deer; the Mediterranean, bluer than anything in America, below them on the way home from Italy, coming down below oxygen level, with the boys singing dirty songs over the intercom, and leave in Alexandria ahead of them. The girl from Flushing, Long Island, quietly going hand in hand with Novak to Coney Island on a summer's night.

It was Whitejack who awakened him. He woke slowly. It was dark outside and the electric light was shining in his eyes and Whitejack was standing over him, shaking him gently.

"I thought you'd like to know," Whitejack was saying, "your name's on the bulletin board. You're leaving tonight."

"Thanks," Stais said, dimly grateful at being shaken out of the broken and somehow sorrowful dreams.

"I took the liberty of initialing it for you, opposite your name." Whitejack said. "Save you a trip up to the field."

"Thanks," said Stais. "Very kind of you."

"Also," said Whitejack, "there's fried chicken for chow."

Stais pondered over the fried chicken. He was a little hungry, but the effort of getting up and putting on his shoes and walking the hundred yards to the mess hall had to be weighed in the balance. "Thanks. I'll just lie right here," he said. "Any news of your boys?" he asked.

"Yes," said Whitejack. "The squadron came in."

"That's good."

"All except one plane." Whitejack sat down on the end of Stais's cot. His voice was soft and expressionless. "Johnny Moffat's plane."

In all the months that Stais had been in the Air Force, on fields to which planes had failed to return, he had learned that there was nothing to say. He was only nineteen years old, but he had learned that. So he lay quiet.

"They got separated in clouds on the way out of Ascension, and they never picked them up again. There's still a chance," Whitejack said, "that they'll drop in any minute." He looked at his watch. "Still a chance for another hour and forty minutes."

There was still nothing to say, so Stais lay silent.

"Johnny Moffat," said Whitejack, "at one time looked as though he was going to marry my sister. In a way it's a good thing he didn't. It'd be a little hard, being brothers-in-law, on some of the parties the Air Force goes on in one place and another." Whitejack fell silent and looked down at his belly. Deliberately he let his belt out a notch, then pulled it to, with a severe little click. "That fried chicken was mighty good," he said. "You sure you want to pass it up?"

"I'm saving my appetite for my mother's cooking," Stais said.

"My sister was passing fond of Johnny," said Whitejack, "and I have a feeling when he gets home from the war and settles down she's going to snag him. She came to me right before I left and she asked me if I would let her have ten acres on the north side of my property and three acres of timber to build their house. I said it was okay with me." He was silent again, thinking of the rolling ten acres of upland meadow in North Carolina and the three tall acres of standing timber, oak and pine, from which it would be possible to build a strong country house. "There's nobody in the whole world I'd rather have living on my property than Johnny Moffat. I've known him for twenty years and I've had six fist fights with him and won them all, and been alone with him in the woods for two months at a time, and I still say that." He got up and went over to his own cot, then turned and came back.

"By the way," he said softly, "this is between you and me, Sergeant."

"Sure," said Stais.

"My sister said she'd murder me for my hide and taller if I ever let Johnny know what was in store for him." He grinned a little. "Women're very confident in certain fields," he said. "And I never did tell Johnny, not even when I was so drunk I was singing 'Casey Jones' naked in the middle of the city of Tampa at three o'clock in the morning." He went over to his musette bag and got out a cigar and lit it thoughtfully "You'd be surprised," he said, "how fond you become of nickel cigars in the Army."

"I tried smoking," said Stais. "I think I'll wait until I get a little older."

Whitejack sat heavily on his own cot. "Do you think they'll send you out to fight again?" he asked.

Stais stared up at the ceiling. "I wouldn't be surprised," he said. "There's nothing really wrong with me. I'm just tired."

Whitejack nodded, smoking slowly. "By the way," he said, "you heard us talking about the lieutenant, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"I went out to the field and had a little conversation with him. He's just been sittin' there all day and most of the night since we got here, outside the operations room, just lookin' and starin' across at the planes comin' in. Him and me, we've been good friends for a long time and I asked him point-blank. I said, 'Freddie,' I said, 'there's a question the boys're askin' themselves these days about you.' And he said, 'What's the matter?' And I said, 'The boys're asking if you've turned bad. You pass 'em and you don't even look at them as though you recognize 'em. What is it, you turn GI after a year?' I said. He looked at me and then he looked at the ground and he didn't say anything for maybe a minute. Then he said, 'I beg your pardon, Arnold. It never occurred to me.' Then he told me what was on his mind," Whitejack looked at his watch, almost automatically, then lifted his head again. "Ever since we got the order to go overseas he's been worrying. You know Simpson, in our crew. Well, he's worrying about him and his navigator."

"What's he worrying about?" For a moment a crazy list of all the thousand things you can worry about in the crew of one airplane flashed through Stais's head.

"They're not fighting men," Whitejack said slowly. "They're both good fellers, you wouldn't want better, but the lieutenant's been watchin' 'em for a long time on the ground, in the air, at their guns, and he's convinced they won't measure. And he feels he's responsible for taking the Mitchell in and getting it out with as many of us alive as possible and feels Simpson and the navigator're dangerous to have in the plane. And he's makin' up his mind to put in a request for two new men when we get to India, and he can't bear to think of what it'll do to Simpson and the navigator when they find out he's asked to have 'em grounded. That's why he just sits there outside operations, not even seein' us when we go by." Whitejack sighed. "He's twenty-two years old, the lieutenant. It's a strain, something like that, for a man twenty-two years old. If you see Simpson or Novak, you won't tell them anything, will you?"

"No," said Stais.

"I suppose things like this come up all the time in any army."

"All the time," said Stais.

Whitejack looked at his watch. Outside there was the growing and lapsing roar of engines that had been the constant sound of both their lives for so many months.

"Ah," said Whitejack, "they should've put me in the Infantry. I can hit a rabbit at three hundred yards with a rifle. They put me in the Air Force and give me a camera. Well, Sergeant, I think it's about time you were movin'."

Slowly Stais got up. He put on his shoes and put his shaving kit into his musette bag and slung it over one shoulder.

"You ready?" asked Whitejack.

"Yes," said Stais.

"That all the baggage you got, that little musette bag?"

"Yes," said Stais. "I was listed as missing, presumed dead, and they sent all my stuff into the supply room and all my personal belongings home to my mother."

Stais looked around the barracks. They shone in the harsh army light of barracks at night all over the world, by now familiar, home-like, to all the men who passed through them. He had left nothing.

They walked out into the soft, engine-filled night. A beacon flashed nervously across the sky, dimming the enormous pale twinkle of southern stars for a moment.

As they passed the operations room Stais saw a young lieutenant slumped down in a wobbly old wicker chair, staring out across the field.

"They come yet?" Whitejack asked.

"No," said the lieutenant without looking up.

Stais went into the building and into the room where they had the rubber raft and the patented radio and the cloth painted blue on one side and yellow on the other. A fat, middle-aged ATC captain wearily told them about ditching procedure. There were more than thirty people in the room, all passengers on Stais's plane. There were two small, yellow Chinamen and five bouncing fat Red Cross women and three sergeants with a lot of Air Force medals, trying not to seem excited about going home, and two colonels in the Engineers, looking too old for this war. Stais only half listened as the fat captain explained how to inflate the raft, what strings to pull, what levers to move, where to find the waterproofed Bible.

Whitejack was standing outside when Stais started for his plane. He gave Stais a slip of paper. "It's my home address," he said. "After the war, just come down sometime in October and I'll take you hunting."

"Thank you very much," said Stais gravely. Over Whitejack's shoulder he saw the lieutenant, still slumped in the wicker chair, still staring fixedly out across the dark field.

Whitejack walked out to the great plane with Stais, along the oil-spattered concrete of the runway, among the Chinamen and loud Red Cross women and the sergeants. The two men stopped without a word at the steps going up to the doorway of the plane and the other passengers filed past them.

They stood there, silently, with the two days of random conversation behind them, and Brazil and Athens behind them, and five hundred flights behind them, and Jerusalem and Miami behind them, and the girls from Vienna and the American Embassy and Flushing, Long Island, behind them, and the Greek mountaineers behind them, and Thomas Wolfe's funeral, and friends burning like torches, and dogs under treed raccoons in the Blue Ridge Mountains behind them, and a desperate twenty-two-year-old lieutenant painfully staring across a dusty airfield for ten days behind them, and the Mediterranean and the hospital bed in Cairo and Johnny Moffat wandering that night over the southern Atlantic, with ten acres of meadow and three acres of timber for his house and Whitejack's sister waiting for him, all behind them. And, ahead of Stais, home, and a mother who had presumed him dead and wept over his personal belongings, and ahead of Whitejack the cold, bitter mountains of India and China, and the tearing dead sound of the fifties and the sky full of Japs.

"All right, Sergeant," the voice of the lieutenant checking the passengers said. "Get on."

Stais waved, a little broken wave, at Whitejack standing there. "See you," he said, "in North Carolina."

"Some October." Whitejack smiled a little, in the light of the flood lamps.

The door closed and Stais sat down in the seat in front of the two Chinamen.

"I think these planes are absolutely charming," one of the Red Cross women was saying loudly. "Don't you?"

The engines started and the big plane began to roll. Stais looked out of the window. A plane was landing. It came slowly into the light of the runway lamps and set down heavily, bumping wearily. Stais stared. It was a Mitchell. Stais sighed. As the big C-54 wheeled at the head of the runway, then started clumsily down, Stais put the slip of paper with "Arnold Whitejack" written on it, and the address, in scrawling, childlike handwriting, into his pocket. And he saw the Mitchell pull to a stop near the operations room he felt for a moment a little less guilty for going home.

Ex-Champion Nailer[1]

WESSEL HYATT SMITTER

I CAN REMEMBER as easy as if it was yesterday the first day he came to work in the factory. It was Monday and we still had a few minutes to loaf before it was time for the bell. All of us nailers were sprawled around on the boxes and Alf was telling about a couple of new janes in a joint on Hastings Street, run by Slant-eye Susie, when Big Barney, the straw-boss, comes up with this new fellow looking scared and sort of trailing behind.

"This is Louie," he said. "I want you fellows to break him in on the nailing. The Old Man has been crabbing to beat the band at the way you fellows have been holding up the line lately."

We had him sized up in a minute. A big fellow he was, with clay on his shoes and eyes like those of a cow. His bushy eyebrows, turned white by the sun, made you think of some wild animal, and the smell of the cow stables hung in his clothes like a fog. But most of all we noticed his hands. They were as big as a couple of slab-sides of bacon and the knuckles stood out like rows of big adams-apples. When he picked up his hammer the whole handle just about disappeared out of sight in his fist.

"Do we have to nail the covers on these boxes," he asked, "while they're moving along on this track?"

"Sure," said Alf, "and it's no fair either hitting your thumb." Alf and I worked together.

Toenails, the little Polak, who looked like a walrus, laughed out of his whiskers, and Louie looked him over with a nervous interest.

"Ever work in an automobile factory before?" asked Alf.

"No," said Louie, "I've never even been in one until now."

"Well, there ain't much to it," said Alf, "it's like I told you, the main thing is—don't hit your thumb. All you need on this job is a weak mind and a strong arm. Of course, our job is a little different from other jobs in this department. Our job is harder. This thing that the boxes ride along on is called a conveyor. It's about 800 feet long and is run by a motor with a speed control button up there by the Old Man's desk. At the head of the line the empty boxes are set on the conveyor and all these other fellows—about two hundred and fifty of them—pack in the stuff. When the boxes get down to us each one is packed with four motors and four chassis assemblies. You can figure it out for yourself what kind of a job you got here. Two hundred and fifty fellows to dump the stuff into the boxes and only six of us to nail on the covers. It's a raw deal any way that you look at it and yet, right away the straw-boss tries to give you a bum impression of us by trying to make you think we're loafing."

"What would happen," Louie asked, "if the boxes came through so fast that we couldn't get the covers nailed on?"

"Plenty," said Alf. "You see that bird up there in that little cage underneath the crane. Well, as soon as we get the last nail drove in he hooks onto the box and takes it over to the loading platform. But he can't take 'em until we get finished else all the stuff would spill out. And if the boxes ain't off by the time they get to the end of the conveyor track, everything gets dumped on the floor. Once, a couple of years ago, they had to shut down the line to give us a chance to catch up with our nailing. The Big Boss had a hemorrhage and up in the front office they ain't done talking about it yet."

Louie had a hand full of nails. He was itching to go. There was a box, half nailed up on the line and he started to hammer. At

[1] From *Story* Magazine, Vol. IV, No. 23, June, 1934. Reprinted by permission.

the first blow we all hollered,—"Hey! wait for the bell!"

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Doesn't anyone go to work until it is just the second for starting?"

"Certainly not," said Alf. "If the boss saw you driving nails before the bell rung he'd think you was crazy."

The first day we had more fun than a circus with Louie. By the way he went at his new job you'd think he'd never had a hammer in his hand till that day. Each nail he tried to drive in was a separate struggle. He went at the job like a fellow going into a fight. Once in a while he got a nail into the wood but most of them curled up under the clumsy blows of his hammer as if they were made out of paper. It's no cinch to drive ten-penny wire nails into elm and hard maple, but we didn't know till that day how good we were compared with a greenhorn like Louie. All that day we had fun. He'd watch one of us old-timers sink the long nails into the wood and then he'd go at it again. But always they curled up and bent over under the fierce blows of his hammer. He didn't realize that some of us had been driving nails on the same job four and five years.

"I can't seem to do it," he'd say. He'd be pretty disgusted.

"Maybe there's something wrong with my hammer. Maybe I'm not holding it the same as you fellows."

"The trouble with you is," said Alf, "you're not hitting 'em hard enough. It don't make so much difference if you hit straight; the main thing is to come down on 'em hard." It was all we could do to keep from laughing out loud.

We got behind a couple of times that day just to make the situation look serious and when Louie saw the big hooks from the crane hanging over our heads waiting to pick up the box that we were still working on he broke out in a cold sweat. We had it figured out. We got the last nails in just before the box reached the end of the conveyor.

When the bell rang that night Louie was still having his troubles. "I can't understand it," he said. "When I watch you fellows it looks so easy, and yet I can't get the hang of it. I don't want to give it up and yet it's not right to fall down on a job and get paid just the same. Maybe I ought to talk to the boss. I'm getting paid five dollars a day and I didn't earn fifty cents. It's not right. Maybe he'd let me work for nothing until I get better."

It was silly talk, but that's what he said.

"Listen," said Alf, "you're too serious. What do you care what you're worth. The main thing is to hold your job and get every cent you got coming on Saturday night. The idea is to hold your job and not do any more work than you have to."

Alf wasn't kidding. I guess he was feeling sorry for Louie. But this Louie was funny.

"I guess you and I don't see things in the same way. I wouldn't feel right," he said, "if I took money that I didn't earn honestly." He was a case if there ever was one.

The next morning he was back on the job full of pep and ambition. He could hardly wait to get started. But he still couldn't get the hang of the job. The nails flew from under his hammer and bent double every time he hit them a hard blow. Then he would try to straighten them out, and by the time he got done fooling around with three or four nails the box would be near the end of the conveyor and we would have to jump in and finish his share of the nailing.

In the middle of the forenoon Big Barney came up to Louie.

"Listen, fellow," he said, "you don't seem to be getting on to this job. This is the second day you been here and so far you ain't drove two pounds of nails. I been watching you. You ain't doing anywheres near your share of the work. What's the matter," he said, "don't you know how to use a hammer?"

"I can't get the trick of it," said Louie. "I'm trying as hard as I can, but they bend over. The nails are too thin."

"You're hitting too hard," said Barney. "Take it easy. First learn to hit straight. It's no use hitting 'em so hard if they don't go in."

Big Barney took the hammer from Louie. "Watch me," he said. "See—give 'em little

taps until you get the feel of the hammer. And don't try to straighten them out when they bend over. Yank 'em out and drive in another. Don't fool away any more time than you have to."

When Big Barney walked away Louie looked pretty serious. For the rest of the day he followed Barney's advice so carefully that one or two boards on each box was about all that he was able to get.

And the nails were still bending over. All afternoon Barney watched him out of the corner of his eye as he prowled around between the boxes and when the bell rang that night he came up again. We could see he had his mind made up to do something.

"Well, fellow," he said, "I guess I'll have to lay you off. This job is just naturally too much for you. I been watching you this afternoon and I can see that you can't make the grade."

Right away Louie spoke up. He was serious.

"Listen," he said, "I can learn this job. All I need is a couple days of practice. I never got fired from a job yet and if I get fired from this one it would hurt me—I'd never forget it. I'll work on this job without pay until I learn it."

"It's against the rules," said Barney.

"In that case," said Louie, "give me one more day to make good. If you'd give me a chance I'd be a good nailer some day. I've got the strength. All I need is some practice. Tomorrow night at this time I'll be lots better."

"You want to keep the job pretty bad, don't you?" said Barney.

"I sure do," said Louie.

"All right then," said Barney. "I'll give you one more chance, but if you keep the job you'll have to be lots better tomorrow."

The next morning Louie told us something that gave us a laugh. He told us that he'd spent most of the whole night practicing in the landlady's garage. He'd been driving nails into blocks of wood, doing it on his own time. He even bought nails with his own money.

We kidded him about it, but he didn't understand.

"What's funny about it?" he said. "It's no more than right."

That day he did some pretty fair nailing. He got the feel of his hammer and he learned to hit straighter so the nails didn't bend over so much. In the afternoon he was almost able to keep up with his share of the work.

"I guess you'll make it all right," said Big Barney that night. "Take it easy for another day or two and then see if you can get up a little more speed."

Louie was tickled.

"It won't be long," he said, "until I'm a good nailer. Pretty soon I'll be as good as you fellows."

He was in earnest. He didn't say it to brag.

In those first days we thought we had him figured out. We thought he was working hard so that he wouldn't lose his job or get fired. But that wasn't the case.

After a couple of weeks he was a good nailer. He was as good as any of us old-timers, and some of us had been on the job four or five years. But after he got to be a good nailer he wasn't satisfied with himself. Pretty soon he learned to drive straighter and harder than anyone else on the job. There was no let down to the way he went at it. To look at him you would think that the boss was standing behind his shoulder watching every stroke of his hammer.

With us driving nails was just work—something disagreeable we had to do to earn our five bucks a day. We didn't think about the job any more than we had to, and we never talked about driving nails unless we absolutely couldn't help it. But with him it was different. He got the idea that his job was pretty important, and he was always talking about "being honest" and "doing justice" to something.

"We've got a big responsibility," he would say. "This job that we've got here is the only one in the whole department they can't do with machinery. If we slow up on our job we hold up the work of all the fellows ahead on the line."

It was easy to see that he needed some education and Alf and the rest of us tried to show Louie where he was wrong.

"Listen," said Alf to him one day, "you've got the wrong idea about this job. If you don't watch your step you're going to cook your own goose on this job and ours, too. We're supposed to nail up four hundred boxes a day, and that's what we're doing. We could get out five hundred if we wanted to work our fool heads off but if we did it once they'd expect us to do it every day and we wouldn't get a cent more for doing it. This job that you've got here is a kind of game. All the bosses are lined up on one side and we're lined up on the other. They're doing everything they can to get more work out of us, and we're doing everything we can to hold back.

But this Louie was funny. He didn't get the point.

"When I work I put myself into it," he said. "I put myself into it for all I'm worth. It ain't the bosses I'm afraid of—it's myself. If I didn't give everything I have to this job I wouldn't be honest; I wouldn't have any respect for myself."

Maybe those wasn't the exact words that he used, but that's the way it sounded. The stuff that he told us sometimes didn't hardly make sense.

There was no holding him back and he kept on getting better and better.

He experimented with hammers of different weights and the muscles of his right arm got as big as a stovepipe. He was driving every nail straight and there was all kinds of power in the way he came down with his hammer. He could sink the heads down into the wood.

One day a nail shot out from under his hammer and hit Toe-nails, the Polak, in the forehead. It laid the skin wide open. The next morning there was a new order up by the time-clock, saying that all the nailers had to wear goggles. That didn't make us feel any better about Louie. It's a nuisance to have to wear goggles.

Pretty soon Louis was a better nailer than any of us old-timers. He was so fast that he could nail down his share of the boards and have maybe a half a minute to fool around between boxes. When he started doing that we knew that Big Barney would soon sit up and take notice. Alf got an idea.

"Listen," he said to us fellow one night after Louie had gone, "this fellow is going to ruin our job if we don't get a little sense into his head. He's gonna make us look like a bunch of saps if we don't do something and get him lined up. He ain't regular and maybe it's our fault. Tomorrow let's be nice to him. Let's invite him out tomorrow night and show him a good time. We'll get him drunk first then we'll take him over to Slant-eye's place on Hastings Street. Maybe if we treat him like a regular fellow he'll listen to what we say and line up with us on the job."

The next day we asked him, but it didn't work out like we figured.

"I can't make it," he said, "I'm reading a book. Besides I wouldn't care about doing those things."

And then, he turned around and gave us a lecture on how to drive nails. It was lunch time and we were shooting a game of craps on the floor.

"Have you fellows ever noticed how many times you hit a nail to drive it in?" he asked us.

"No," said Alf, "you tell us."

"Six," said Louie,—"I've been watching you lately. You give 'em a light tap to start 'em and then you hit each nail five times to drive 'em down."

"What of it?" said Alf. "We're holding our jobs and getting our money every Saturday night, ain't we?"

"Well," said Louie, "I've found out that it's just as easy to drive 'em down with four or five blows. In fact, I think that any one of us could drive one of those nails down with three blows if we practiced a little and really started out to do it."

It had a funny effect on us, what he said. Some of us old-timers had been doing nothing but driving nails for four or five years and yet I don't believe there was a one of us that knew just how many times we were hitting each nail. That afternoon we all watched each other. We didn't say anything but we couldn't help watch the other fellows to see how many times they were hitting each nail. I guess we did it against our

own wills. Louie was right. He sunk every nail down out of sight with four smacks of the hammer while Alf and the rest of us were hitting six times to each nail. Even Tom Foley, the big buck nigger whose right arm was the size of a man's thigh, didn't do any better and along towards quitting time some of us went up to seven. After that we didn't have any use for Louie. We kidded him every chance we got but his one-track mind stayed just as serious as ever.

One day, Big Barney stopped at our station with a look on his face that was as dark as a thunder-cloud.

"The Old Man," he said, "is crabbing again. He claims its costing too much to get these boxes nailed up. The way you fellows are loafing is awful. If we had a little more speed over here we could be getting out twenty more boxes a day."

It was the same old belly-ache but Louie fell for it.

"I could be doing twice as much as I am doing now," he said. "I could do two-thirds of the nailing on this side of the line if I had to."

Big Barney exploded.

"Well, then why the Hell don't you do it?" he said. "You're the fellow that's doing all the loafing. Half the time I look at you you're standing here with your hands in your pocket playing pool or something. You go into a trance between every box that comes over the line."

"I'm doing my share of the work," said Louie, "and I'm getting it done just as fast and as good as I can. It's not my fault if there's nothing to do between boxes."

Big Barney got sarcastic. He was so mad he was red.

"Oh," he said, "you're trying to make a fool out of me. You're trying to show me up with the boss; you're trying to make me look like a sap, are you? Here the boss is jumping on me because the boxes ain't getting nailed up and you stand there and tell me you're only working half of the time. What are you doing, trying to make me look like a sucker? Trying to get my job away from me?"

It never fazed Louie a bit.

"Give me a raise," he said, "and I'll do the work of two men. I can do it."

"All right," said Barney. "Starting tomorrow you get six-twenty a day and do the work of two nailers. If you fall down on the job it's your own fault."

"Nice pal, you are," said Alf, after Barney went away. "Here one of us is going to lose his job because you got some funny idea. You were a fool for talking like that. Now Barney thinks you are trying to get him in dutch. Your crazy nailing will make the big boss think Barney can't get enough work out of us."

"If someone is going to lose his job," said Louie, "I'm sorry. But in the long run it's better. No one can do anything to hurt anyone else as long as they're honest."

The next morning Toe-nails was transferred to the salvage department where he got a job sorting screws and washers out of floor sweepings. Louie did the work of two nailers. None of us thought he could do it. It's easy enough to drive nails as fast as you can for an hour or so but to keep it up for a long time throws a strain on your muscles. But he did it. That day we saw some real nailing and along about ten in the morning he got better than ever. He started driving them down with three powerful smacks of his hammer. Yes, sir;—that day he started sinking his nails out of sight in the wood with three blows. None of us could hardly believe it. The crane-man stretched his neck out of the cage, looked at us and grinned. Big Barney peeked from behind pillars and boxes and hardly knew how to take it. It made us old nailers look like a bunch of big saps and we got dirty looks from the big boss and Barney.

After that things started happening fast. Right away Louie got the idea that his job was pretty important and that he himself was mighty darn good. And the worst of it was he started talking to us like a preacher trying to make us feel that we were nothing but a bunch of dumb kids.

"You fellows," he would say, looking at us with his cow eyes, "ain't getting the most out of yourselves. On this nailing, for instance—put yourself in it for all you're worth

and see what a different feeling it will give you. We've all got it in us to be great. You could all be just as good on this job as I am if you buckled right down to it and gave it all you got."

Then, like as not, he'd start off and tell us about some book he was reading. It got so pretty soon that when he started his talk we wouldn't listen.

Then something happened that none of us ever expected. One afternoon the guide, Cicero, we called him, came into our department with a long string of visitors looking over the sights of the factory. We were used to that, a big string came through twice every day. But this time it was different. He stopped the whole bunch at our station and lined 'em up in a half circle.

"Judast!" said Alf. "What's Cicero gonna pull off here?"

None of us knew. We were all plenty curious. Every man on the line was watching to see what was going to happen.

Cicero waited until the last stragglers came up and then with his bit mouth he went into action.

"Ladies and Gentlemen," he started, "I'm going to let you see an exhibition of nailing. This fellow you see here," he said, pointing his cane at Louie, "is our champion nailer. He is the best nailer, not only in this department, but in the whole factory."

Louie was flabbergasted for a minute or so, but pretty soon got the idea and started driving nails for all he was worth. Cicero went ahead with his spiel.

"Where the ordinary nailer," he said, "has to hit a nail four or five times, this man drives 'em down with three swats. Watch 'em go down out of sight—you'd think he was driving nails into cheese instead of into hard wood. Right now he's doing the work of two men and taking it easy. But don't try it yourself; you might hit your thumb."

A couple of good looking dames giggled. Louie was as good as a circus. With his left fist full of nails, all arranged so that the heads were pointing up, he would sort of spin them out between his forefinger and thumb; a light blow would set them and two powerful blows would sink them out of sight in the wood.

"You'll notice," Cicero said, "all the men working around this fellow have to wear goggles, it's orders. If one of those nails should happen to fly out from under his hammer it would go like a bullet. Notice the way his hammer comes down—true as a die. Look at the muscles he's got in his shoulder and the size of that arm. He's what you might call an expert."

At the end of his spiel he had a hard job getting some of the school teachers started again.

That was just the beginning. After that Louie gave his exhibition twice every day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. It got to be a regular part of the program. And every time that Cicero went over his spiel he improved it. At first he had Louie doing the work of two men and then he raised it to three. A week later he raised it again. Then he started calling Louie "our champion nailer" and used the word "art." Louie fell in with the show. He would let a nail fly out from under his hammer at just the right second and Cicero would end up his spiel with a bunch of statistics. "If all the nails that this fellow drives in one year," he would say, "were laid end to end, they would make a solid line from Detroit to Cleveland, Ohio."

It was rich. It wasn't long until Louie worked up a pretty good opinion of himself. He started wearing silk shirts to work with the sleeves cut off at the shoulder so that everyone could see the size of his muscles. Then, he got dissatisfied with his wages.

"If I'm worth three or four times as much as you fellows," he said, "why don't I get it?"

"That's it exactly," we told him. "Why don't you see the big boss and tell him he's got to give you a raise or you'll quit."

So that's what he did. He asked the big boss for a raise and the boss turned him down. The next day Louie was mad. Mad and disgusted.

"It's a dirty shame," said Alf; "it's a raw deal you're getting. Here, you're worth as

much to the company as four or five of us fellows and they'll only give you six-twenty a day." We all talked as if we were terribly sorry for Louie.

Then, one day, a big order came along for Sao Paulo and the big boss tried to speed up the line. Right away, the first thing in the morning, the big boxes started coming through at the rate of about fifty an hour. At nine o'clock there was hardly time to take a deep breath between boxes, and at ten they were piling up against us, pushing us to the end of the line. Half the time the big boss was fooling around with the regulator, speeding it up when we were only just holding our own and slowing it down when it looked like a box would be dumped on the floor before we could get the cover nailed on. Louie was holding his own and the rest of us were working as though we had all suddenly gone crazy, when Barney came up.

"The Old Man is watching you fellows," he said. "You better snap into it. Here everybody else is trying to get this order out on time and you fellows are laying down, holding up everyone else."

We all looked dumb and acted like he'd hurt our feelings and even Louie, for once, had enough sense to keep his mouth shut. For the rest of the day, Big Barney paced up and down like a panther and the boss sat at his desk with hunched shoulders and glared at us underneath the shade of his lamp. At the end of the day, production was only ten more than an average day's run, and we felt that we had more than held our own against the system. As for Louie, he scarcely realized that all day we had been playing a game with the bosses.

One Saturday afternoon a couple of weeks later, three machine flunkeys brought their tools into the shipping department and squatted down against the wall on their heels. When the bell rang Big Barney came up. He had a grin on his face and was sort of sucking in his breath like he does when he has bad news for somebody.

"Well," he said, rubbing his hands, "Monday morning I'm going to have to scatter you fellows around a little bit. Wouldn't be surprised if I had to lay off one or two. We got a nailing machine coming in."

Louie's jaw dropped a foot.

"A nailing machine!" he said "You can't get a machine to nail boxes. There isn't any machine made that will do it. To drive nails into hard wood you have to hit 'em hard and just right. Besides, these boxes are all the time moving."

"This machine is a new one," said Barney. "Our own engineers made it up; you never saw anything like it. It's got an electric motor on top and all the man has to do is press a button. I was gonna give you the job of running it."

"I don't want it," said Louie. "I don't even want to work near it. If I can't keep the job I got now I'll turn in my badge."

"I wanted you to run it," said Barney, "so that you'd be handy in case something went wrong. I'm giving you the first try. Lots of fellows would jump at the chance. You'd be getting the same wages—anyhow for a while."

Louie argued some more and then he changed his mind all of a sudden.

"All right," he said. "I'll take it. But I know it won't do the work."

Monday morning when he got to work they had it set up. The machine flunkeys were still on the job and were breaking it in. Alf and I got the job of laying the boards on top of the boxes. The other fellows were laid off.

It was comical to watch Louie. He walked around the machine and looked it over as though it might take a notion to bite him. He examined the boxes to see if the nails were all the way in.

The machine was perched on four iron legs over the conveyor and there was an electric motor on top. When the boxes got underneath one of the flunkeys pressed a button and a bunch of gears and cams went into motion. It drove sixty-four nails in one crack and there was hardly a sound.

"I didn't think it was possible," said Louie. "If I didn't see it with my own eyes I wouldn't believe it."

"This one is nothing," said one of the flunkeys. "You ought to see the machine we set up in the motor assembly department. It

bores forty-eight holes from six different angles at the same time. And in the magneto department we've got one that took the place of twelve men. It can drive screws—sixteen every time you pull down on a lever. There's a machine that's a honey."

When the flunkeys got the nailing machine tuned up, they turned the job over to Louie. It was a cinch and he was lucky to get it. All he had to do was to shovel nails into a hopper that went up and down and every time a box came along he pressed a little black button. That made the thing go into gear and a bunch of spindles came down and pressed the nails into the wood. There was no fuss about it.

When Cicero led his string of sight-seers into the shipping department we expected him to pass through without stopping. But he didn't. He rounded them up about Louie and the nailing machine and got ready to make them a spiel. We couldn't figure out what he was going to say, Louie no longer being the "Champion Nailer." But Cicero was slick. Not many fellows ever put it over on him.

"I am going to show you," he said, "a little exhibition of mechanical nailing. This machine that you see here is something that was figured out by our own engineers. It does the work of six men without any fuss and in a pinch, when we have to get out a rush order, it can be speeded up fifty per cent."

Cicero looked past Louie in such a way as to make you think there wasn't anyone there. He talked like he owned half the factory, and listening to him you might have thought the nailing machine was his own personal idea.

"Before we got this machine," he said, "we had a man working here who was a pretty good nailer. He had to hit every nail two or three times with a hammer and the best he could do was around twelve thousand a day. This machine drives sixty-four at a crack and it only comes down on 'em once. That's what you call nailing."

Louie looked like he'd turned into rock. His big cow eyes were fastened on Cicero and his mouth was half open.

"And the beauty of it is," Cicero wound up, "a machine like this is always one hundred per cent efficient. It's never late on the job and on Monday mornings it never comes to work with a headache."

A couple of out-of-town Rotary fellows looked at each other and giggled. The whole thing was over in a couple of minutes but it was as good as a circus.

Louie was fairly bristling. Even his eyebrows seemed to stick out more than usual and his eyes looked black against his white face. When he pressed the button he shoved his thumb down on it as if he were trying to push the machine clear out of the factory.

In the afternoon there was an accident. Louie let out a yell and we saw him pull his arm out of the machine. There was a smear of blood on his hand. Alf and I saw right away what had happened. He had tried to jam a piece of wood into the gears of the nailing machine.

Barney came up on the run.

Louie was so mad he was dancing around in a circle. It looked as if he was mad enough to tear something to pieces. He was screaming so that you could have heard him above the noise of the machinery.

"It ain't right," he said, "I won't stand for it. It's got my job away from me and now it's making a fool out of me. It's making a fool out of me, I tell you, and I won't stand for it."

"What's the matter?" said Barney, all excited.

"It's this nailing machine. It's got my job away from me and then it tries to take off my hand. It ain't right. Everybody around here is laughing at me; I'm not going to stand it."

While Barney was trying to calm him down the little motor up on top of the nailing machine was humming along as if nothing had happened. Louie looked at it fiercely.

"Look at that motor," he said, "I'd like to smash it to pieces."

Barney sent Louie to the first-aid to get his hand fixed and when no one was looking Alf knocked the block of wood out of the machine. Nothing was damaged and we

figured there was no use letting Barney know how the accident happened.

When Louie got back the safety engineers were already on the job looking things over. They watched Louie work for a while and then they stood around in a huddle talking things over.

"There's no excuse for it," they said, "he must have stuck his hand in there on purpose. The safer we make 'em the dumber it seems to make the fellows that run 'em. We'll get it fixed up tonight," they said.

In the morning they had finished their job. And you had to admit it was a swell piece of work. Instead of one button to press there were two, and they were far enough apart so that Louie had to use both hands at the same time. And they had something else. They had a little steel gate affair that slid up in front of Louie every time he pressed down on the buttons. It came up just before the machine went into gear. After the nails were punched in it dropped down. You had to admit it was good.

When Cicero came through with his bunch of sight-seers and started off on his spiel he was better than ever. Just before he got to the end of his speech he came to a pause. Then he came out with a hot one.

"If all the nails," he said, "that this machine can drive in a year were laid end to end they would reach from here to San Francisco—from Detroit all the way to the Pacific Ocean." That was something. All the school teachers wrote it down in their books.

Then Cicero noticed the double button effect and the little gate that slid up and down.

"You'll notice," he said, "this machine is one hundred per cent fool proof. The operator couldn't get his hands into the wheels if he tried. In order to throw the machine into gear he's got to press two buttons at the same time or else it won't go. But our engineers are not satisfied with making machines one hundred per cent safe. They've got to be safer than that. They've got to be so safe that the fellow that runs 'em couldn't get hurt even if he figured out ways to do it. And that's the reason for the little steel gate that slides up in front of his nose every time he punches the buttons."

We had to laugh. All the fellows had grins on their faces.

After that Louie was different. He was more like he was on the first morning when he came to work in the factory. All the fight was gone out of him and he had that scared look on his face. When Alf said something to him he looked straight at Alf a long time as if it was something terribly serious.

When the bell rang he trailed Alf and me to the tool-crib though he didn't have a single tool to turn in.

"You fellows going out tonight?" he asked us.

"Sure," we said, "it's Saturday night."

"Are you going to Slant-eye's and all those other places you were telling me about once?" he asked.

"Sure," said Alf, "but Saturday night is your night for going down to the library, ain't it?"

"If you don't mind," said Louie, "I'd like to go along with you fellows."

Then he looked at us for maybe a half minute or so.

"If it hadn't been for that little gate," he said—

"Yeah," said Alf, "if it hadn't been for that little gate and the nailing machine you would've been a stick-in-the-mud all the rest of your life. That nailing machine has made a man out of you."

And that's just about the end of the story. We took Louie out with us and showed him a swell time. After that we treated him like one of the fellows, and none of us ever kidded him any more except Alf. Every once in a while Alf calls him the "ex-champion nailer."

Sailor! Sailor! [1]

WILBUR D. STEELE

I HAVE crossed oceans and seen the world's rivers, but no water has ever touched my imagination with quite the magic of the brown flood of the High Line. In High Line Ditch I launched the first ships I can remember, and there I learned to swim.

When I was ten or eleven, folks in Denver still kept cows, and in the summer I used to go out with the South Side herd. It came up the road in the clear dewless mornings, a smoke of dust past the standpipe, past the university and the professors' houses. There, bareback on my tall horse, I fell in with the other kids on theirs; musically, to the clickerty-click of split hoofs, the yapping of "shep" dogs, and the seven-beat song of the meadowlark, we passed out from beneath the shade of Scholtz's orchard, cool on the road for half a mile, and mounted at the cows' pace the bald rise of the plain toward the grazing under the High Line.

The first boy out of the water clapped on first of all his cap and yelled "King!" The second yelled "Queen!" What the third yelled I have forgotten. (I have not.)

But then, with the muddy liquid still cool in the hair in the waxing heat, it was pleasant to lie on that baked embankment and blink down into the hollow of the world, the wide and nearly treeless valley of the South Platte broken by vivid squares of alfalfa, the Queen City a compact and intricate toy city in its bottom, the wall of the Rockies at its thither rim seeming hardly higher than we on our dyke, so immense it was in its other magnitude, visible two hundred miles from north to south, and so clear in every detail of its modeling. On the face of Pike's at seventy-five miles, between the snow and the shadows every crevice was drawn plain. I have known boys who claimed they could see the cairn of stones on Gray's.

It was pleasant, I say, as some things that are known and humdrum are pleasant, but it was not adventurous; adventure lay between the dust-yellow banks of the ditch behind. There only was distance, distance. Lying on one's stomach with the chin nearly in the water, the fifteen-foot spread of slowly sweeping, coffee-colored water widened in the swift perspective of the plains-boy's dream. Ripples grew waves, waves blue rollers creamed with spume, or black waves where storms wandered and ships drove aslant with singing spars, or green glass again where privateersmen warped through the windless stealth of tropic moonlights, or the Swiss Family plundered their wreck, or East rowed ashore. And once, on a day never to be forgotten, with my living eyes there, low to the water, I saw a living fish.

The best grazing, as I remember it, was to the south of the Bend; for nearly a mile there it was the freest of cactus and prairie-dog towns, all along to the barbed wire of Flack's alfalfa. That alfalfa was always, to us of the herd, what a lee shore in a gale must be to the mariner. Flack was a devil, but little less than the fear of the ranchman's violence was the terror of the cattle's "bloating," if ever they should find a fallen fence-strand and worm into that belly-deep paradise of green. Forever it lay on our souls. Forever, from the midst of a casino game in a horse's shadow, or out of the deep of sleep, some kid would start afoot, scramble up the ditch embankment, and shade his eyes down over the scattered herd, to make sure. And if, once reassured, his gaze went astray into Flack's, across the green ribbon of the hay, to where a browner ribbon marked the melon field, and if his mouth began to water, he could shiver a little in the arid heat to think

[1] From *The Man Who Saw Through Heaven and Other Stories*, reprinted by permission of the author, Wilbur D. Steele.

of bold Louie Swensen, who, creeping in there on a night, came within an inch of putting his hand down on a pan of a wolf trap, a dim double question mark of steel set in wait in the tangled starlight among the vines.

I shall never forgive Flack for a thing he did. He can never undo it. It is still there, twisting my life in little ways, after thirty years.

One day he came driving to us up the outside of his fence in his yellow sulky. For once his grin looked human; amity shone in his eyes.

"You kids like mushmelons?" he called from between his thin high wheels. "Got more'n I want this year. Go on in, help yourselves. What's eating you? Hope to die, I mean it. Go on in there and help yourselves."

We got between the barbs. We ran through the alfalfa, through the narrow lanes made by the cross-ditches, our legs cool with the under-air, our heads dull and dazzled. We descended upon that melon field. Knives open, eyes round, drunk as gods, we scuttled on hands and knees from hill to hill, thumbing the navels of the gray-veined cantaloups, abandoning the prettiest here for one still prettier on a vine to come.

But then there came a strange figure, a lank man with a shotgun, threshing through the corn beyond; two figures, for behind him there waded a woman, a youngish woman with a shrill voice, a big stomach, and a little head, hallooing him on; then four, when two dogs as big as steers broke from the corn.

How we ran! How we tripped, sprawled, drowned in the green dark of the alfalfa, and up and on again, floundering, and the pads of dogs everywhere! That was the day I learned that if you face on a dog suddenly and scream on a certain note, the dog will turn tail. And that was the day we learned that Flack had sold his ranch.

I have said that it was on the soupy tide of the High Line I launched my first ship. I cannot remember, as a matter of fact, what the first one was; it was probably a buffalo chip or a length of sunflower stem. Somewhere in the procession there was a sardine can with a horned toad for captain. I think the proudest thing I can recollect of my youth was the time I sent the *Daisy* away. The *Daisy* was a toy given me on my birthday, a skiff eight inches long, perhaps, unpainted soft wood, worth a quarter. But what was it worth to my soul! Like quicksilver in a sluice it gathered into itself the gold of fantasy; the winter cargoes it had borne across the sitting-room carpet and around Cape Sofa would have foundered the *Flying Cloud* herself; no treasure quite like the *Daisy* have I ever had.

But if a man would save his treasure, he must lose it. One summer day at the High Line, manned by a sand lizard and some beetles, I waved the ship out of the harbor formed by the hole in the bank at the Flack ditch gate, and quite suddenly, once I had seen it clear and falling away on the brown tide that discolors the waters off the mouth of the Amazon, I turned myself around and stared in another direction, resolute never to look and never to see it again.

I am proud, I say. By that act I first created. I begat a life. From the corner there of my eye of renunciation the *Daisy* stood away on a voyage that after thirty years is not yet run. How many times has she not encircled the blue globe by now? How many times, stunned by cold and repeated blows of the whirlpool, has she not looked at the black cliffs of Magellan, or, more sweetly wind-borne, at the cerulean wraith of Table Mountain, or, becalmed, into the slant eyes of pirates along her bulwarks in the China Seas? How many deaths has she not skirted on coral reefs with that magic keel of whitewood (with carpet lint caught in it) which neither barnacle may encrust nor weed befoul? How many others, in the narrowing leads of ice floes, in the white wake of the whale?

I thought I was alone that day. I had meant to be. With the *Daisy* hidden in the bulge of my blouse I had sneaked away from the horse ring, leaving the others deep in the stories herd boys tell in the sleepy early afternoon. Ray Bleeker would not have understood. He had his greatness; he could chew tobacco in school and swallow the

spittle, he was a genius, his stomach was so strong. But this business he would not have fathomed; he would have run along the bank with a stick, prodding the *Daisy* off of sunken tumbleweeds.

But as I stood there, staring dead south and swallowing my heart, there came to my ears a faint note of screeching. And there, away across the alfalfa, beyond the melons, deep in the corn as I had last seen her, was the woman with the big stomach and the little head, still (it seemed) denouncing me shrilly and waggling at me accusing hands. It was hard to catch her words, but I thought I made out, "That's one of 'em." Then I wanted to run. I was not alone, after all.

The new ranchman, who had come up unremarked and was standing behind me watching in a muse the departure of the *Daisy*, was more than six feet tall, and built like a slab. He had on denim pants, a cloth vest, a collarless shirt printed in forget-me-nots, and carried a gunny sack of tools. This he let fall beside the ditch gate, which was a new one, not quite finished, with cuttings of lumber all around. Frozen as I was, as soon as he opened his mouth I knew him for none of us, on account of his "R's."

"Where's she for?" was what he said.

"Wh-wh-where's who for?"

"The vessel off there? 'Round the Horn?"

"Oh, mister!" (Where was there ever a man like that?) "Oh, m-m-mister!"

He sat down on the crossbar of the sluice, so his head was nearly level with mine. He had a large mouth and large ears, and leathery sunken cheeks that made the cheek bones stand out like knobs beneath his rather small gray eyes. The woman was still carrying on down in the fodder, the thirsty whine of a mosquito, itching at the nerves. The red crept up to his temples.

"Aw, shut up! shut up!" He winced. He scowled. He hardened his neck. But then, ashamed that I had heard his muttering, and penitent, he fell to upbraiding me, if with no more than half a heart.

"You kids ought not to be into my melons; you know you oughtn't to."

Here was my chance. I began to pour out the tale of Flack's infamy. He distended the bellows of his cheeks as he listened, and as if to avoid my eyes turned his own away along the ditch. A crease appeared between them.

"Gone down!" he exclaimed.

At that I forgot injustice and remembered the ship. "Sunk?"

"No, no," he said in haste. "Down out of sight, I mean. Hull down under the skyline. Hatches battened, watches set, off soundings, snug at sea."

As Flack I can never forgive, Coffin I can never repay. Winking and snuffing, I picked up a remnant of two-by-six, and had my knife open and at it before I recollected in whose company I was. Then I made haste to hesitate.

"You going to use this, mister? I couldn't have it, I don't suppose."

"Why not? Whittle ahead!" He got up, waved his arms at that swollen mosquito of a woman, and with a spurious energy pawed among his tools and got a hammer from his sack. He put a spike at random in the flat of a board and pounded. The blows rang loud down the bare declivity of the plain. They accomplished their purpose; his wife turned and went back toward the ranch buildings. Between the legs of the horses at a distance I saw the kids aroused and spying, their mouths open (I could imagine) to see me at my ease up there with that man. I stood out in better silhouette and went on hacking at my wood.

But already the spurious energy was failing. Half-way of a second spike the hammering ceased. The man, his shoulders fallen forward, sat looking down over his fence and across the dusty green rectangle of his acres and the rusty red cubes of his house and barns, and so I thought he would fall asleep there before he was through, he seemed so dull.

But then: "What you think you're doing there?" I heard from him, and found his attention shifted to me and the bit of lumber I was trying, with my dull blade, to give a prow. "Ship building, eh?" He looked funny. He flushed to his ears. He yanked his shoulders about, took his hammer head from the dust and hit the half-driven spike a blow.

But after that he turned quickly, as if exasperated, and said, holding out a hand: "You'll never get a great ways that way, sonny. Lend it here a sec'."

He fished a saw out of his bag, and in a minute he had given the block one end like a paling and another like half a hexagon. "See? You'd have taken all night to it, son. Your knife's none too sharp, anyhow." He whipped his own from a pocket. "Always keep mine in trim. Watch here."

He fell to rounding off the rough angles of the sawing, and his words were true. Longer and longer curled the pale feathers of the pine. A light waxed in his eyes. Sweat rolled down the gutters of his nose.

The sun stood at its hottest—half past two. Half the cows were down, catching naps over their cuds. The pale blue mountains danced. A far stridor of grasshoppers, that was all the sound there was in a hundred miles, save when Coffin, wiping his sleeve across his face, clattered after something new inside his sack. A gouge. A pinch of brads. An end of pipe, like a napkin ring: he sawed the lead with the saw.

There I sat, mouth wide open. Water into wine! What's water into wine? Never before, never since, have I so really been to school; it still stands today as the vividest single piece of my education. To see a man take heterogeneous homely things, dead scraps, and from them to bring out one thing alive and strange and brave and beautiful, his only magic his two hands. It was a hollow shell, finned with lead, bearing on a slender mast a sail cut of one of my father's handkerchiefs. So he took it, and lying, feet up and head down the embankment, sent it away on the muddy stream.

For a moment, after it had left his hand, it arrowed on with the impetus given it, across the lazy current. There was always an instant so, with all my ships, of aim and willfulness, before they surrendered to the stream.

The stream came from the south. The wind blew thin from the south and west. Everything that was borne or blown went north. Any fool knew that.

When the boat the man had made before my eyes from a hanky, a pipe, and a butt of pine went east, not north, something happened to the cosmic scheme that can happen so disastrously only once. It was like seeing God caught off his guard.

The wind blew that shell, and blew it down, till the water was over and into it next second, every second I was sure. The current dragged it, and dragged it down, but with its head half meeting the stream and a tiny wake behind it, it would not *be* dragged down; amazing, it swam straight on across the High Line Ditch.

The man made sounds in his windpipe. "Go it!" His face grew crimson, if only with all the blood running down from his legs into his head. "Carry it! Hold her up to it! Drive her! Go on!" While I kneeled and stared.

Nothing could wake me but the voyage's end. When that happened abruptly, in the thorns of a Russian thistle half submerged on the other shore, I jumped up from my knees in a fever and began to put off the straps of my overalls. But the man was ahead of me. Shoes and socks, pants and everything, into the water he went, waist-deep across, like Gulliver in the frontispiece.

Rescuing the creature from her spiny anchorage, he clambered up the bank, and I thought he wanted her and was afraid I would ask for her, he set off at such a pace upstream. But when he had gone thirty yards he stopped and calculated, moved a few more paces, got down on his stomach, and launched her away on her return.

Now of course, with the wind on her other side, she came with the current, but all the same she came sailing, sailing. Northward drifting, but Westward Ho! And he had figured it so nicely that when she had won to within two arm's-lengths of my coast, right there was the eddy reaching seaward from between the harbor heads of the ditch gate to bring her in. And in she came sweetly, mast spiring, cloth aflutter in the lee of the sun-cracked foreland, her way dying, toward the mud.

But no mud was she to reach. In the nick of time I had grabbed a board and pressed it into the bank to take the tiny impact of

her arrival. My heart turned over. If a man had made a ship, a boy had made a dock.

I had done more—I had made a seaport, a sudden city. By the time my strangest of ranchmen came thinlegged and squelching down my coast I had reared the first of my buildings, a cutting of two-by-four, tall at the dock's head, and he gave me a grin and blew out his cheeks.

"Got a customhouse already, eh, all ready to skin us alive?"

But immediately then he was dissatisfied. Heels higher than head once more, down he came meddling.

"Not there. Over here at the *left* of the dock it stands, like so. The *street* goes up from *there*."

Either he was difficult or I was dumb. I had no more than started to make a furrow with my thumb where he said the street was, when you would have thought I was doing a crime, so roughly did he push me out.

"Broad!" He used the whole heel of his hand up the steep earth. "Wide and stinky." He cherished a file of sickly weeds. "Mahogany trees, poincianas, and silk-cottons. The black midges are hellishing all along under there. And here she bears sharp to the port hand; and here, look-a-here, it's the same as steps, she climbs so fast. And here at the turn—" He pawed behind him among the debris on the heights till he found a block. "Here's Papa Jacobi's. Know Papa Jacobi's, son?" Elbows dug in the earth, the ranchman recollected. "It's a chandlery for one thing; it's a corner grocery; it's a bar; it's a sailor's post office, and a dancing hall. And next door, here, there's a Chinaman; and here's the church and the priest's house. And here's the square with the well, where the girls bring their pitchers, and Gaff Bjorkman put a head on the soldier. And here's the benches where the old boys loaf, under the peppers, yarning till there's no end."

Swiftly from there, this way, that, zigzag, the street climbed. And suddenly, where it came out of the shadow cast by the heights beyond the harbor and into sunlight, there was another building set by magic, as big as a four-inch butt of unplaned two-by-four. And as suddenly, by another magic, I saw it had flagstones like a piazza before it, and iron tables and iron chairs, and above these a trellis, and over the trellis a vine sprawling, throwing shadow patterns, swollen flowers, wispy leaves.

Above that, then, there sprang a second building thrice as big. A high, blank, whited wall was all I could make of that, and up this wall the line of dusk crept, racing. Yes, just that. Already, between one breath and another, the bank's shadow had overtaken the house with the trellis, and before my eyes it swallowed the one that was like a convent or a monastery. There in the city of inches the sun was setting in vivid miniature, and dusk that ran up over the steep, wild, flower-hung port was as wide as the night of the world to me.

I do not know whether the ones I saw come rolling up that road were the same that Coffin saw; they hardly would be. But one of mine had a wooden leg, and one a hook for a hand, and one tall fellow built like a slab had two hearts tattooed on his bare right forearm, a blue one over a red one, and through both the scar of a knife wound that had pinned them together, I wonder if by chance. And all of them sang in a windy basso, things about "Rio" and about dead men and bottles of rum.

Rum they drank. Or wine they drank, lolling in the iron chairs, their elbows on the iron tables, from which the dusk had chased the flower shadows. Ale, brandy, Canary, Hollands, port. What they drank I cannot say. They ate queer fabulous fruits that the brown-skinned women brought them, mangoes, custard apples, avocado pears. At least I think they did. There were dishes of stewed kid hot with peppers, I believe. And I know for sure they had cakes fried in oil, as thin as paper and as sweet as honey.

"As thin as paper," my strange alfalfa farmer played with his own words, rapt, waving his long legs against the sky. "And sweet as honey in the comb."

Far away and below in the bottom of the darkening harbor there is a confusion of faint sounds, creak of cases, thud of bales, boom of puncheons, where they are still

heaving the cargo out of the hold of that ship of ours at dock. Mid-distant, other sounds, strange birds, laughter, an accordion, a guitar. The brown women are putting lamps in the glassless windows.

But above, beyond a thornbrake, a thinner, cooler light falls on the whitewashed wall without windows, and that is the light of the moon. But I have been mistaken. There is a shadow on the wall, the shadow of a sea rover with hearts on his arm, six feet and better in his boots, built like a slab. From his shadow another goes on up, narrow and rectangular, and that is a deep window full of darkness and barred with bars.

"What have they got you here for, my lovely? What's your name, my love?" The man's voice is wheedling, caressing. "Why don't you speak? Don't be scared of me. Can't you speak? Yes, but speak white, talk Christian, so I can understand. *'O, marinero, marinero!'* That all you can say? That won't tell me what's your name, what's your trouble, or how old you are? Damn, can't you tell me that much, even, by counting of these soft, white, silky little fingers I've got of yours?"

So there are hands in the dark between the bars. Never have I seen such hands again, so slim, so pale, so yearning.

"*'Marinero, marinero!'* Sure. But can't your sweet red lips say anything but that? Can't your big black eyes look anything else but 'O sailor, sailor!', so breathless, so scared, so sad?"

So there is a face in the dark behind the bars. Never have I seen such a face again, so heartbreaking in the tender oval of its beauty, so mysterious, so tragical, so pure in the sudden whiteness of the lightning, so young beyond the veil of the rain.

Rain? Lightning? Where is the moon? But after all, what's weather? What's time in the enchanted city of make-believe? Whether it's another night, another week, or another year?

"*'Marinero, marinero?'* Yes, your sailor's here."

Again the lightning cuts from cliff to cliff. The great pit full of houses and tree tops, water and ships, is blacker after it. Down rolls the thunder like the tumbling of an empty cask. Down the wall rolls the rain.

"I can't see you, sweetheart, it's so dark. Where's your hands? Your lips? Damn these bars! Stand clear a second. Give me a hold on 'em. If I part the hands from my arms, I'll fetch 'em out, and the stone with 'em, and the whole damnation wall. And then we'll run. Run, you and me; you hear? What? *'O marinero!'* O sailor, sailor! So, that's why, is it—why you say it so scared and so sad? No, don't you worry, I'd never leave you. I'm done with voyaging for good and all. Where we'll go, you and me, is a thousand miles from the rotten salt. What we'll do, we'll get us a farm, a snug little place with cows and pigs and hens, and a tight little house, and you and me, like I've always wanted, away quiet inland, where I'll never have to set a top or pump bilge or eat maggots any more. . . . Tight, eh? I'm drunk, you say? Now listen, pretty barmaid, put your blue eyes into this mug. Think a mug of beer that size could make me drunk on a cold night like this? So if you won't give me a kiss, give me another pint, while I tell you . . ."

A cold night like this? Pretty barmaid? But what's time, what's temperature, what's geography, what's sense, on the coasts of remembrance?

Where is the rain? The rain is there, over the slate roof and spattering on Cornish cobbles outside the public-house door, half sleet. Where are the fruity perfumes of the tropic seaport night? Blown away before the nose-pinching wind from a thousand Dickens chimney pots with Kingsley sweeps in half of them. And the girl behind the bars? Gay pun! A girl behind a bar.

Never shall I see the like of that girl again, so entrancing in the red and white of her, so merry with her lips, so valiant with the blue-green eyes that have twin shadows in them, one of wisdom and one of wist. So beset in this loudness and beleaguered in this reek of men, yet so inviolate.

"'Sailor,' you say? 'Sailor, sailor,' you say, you've heard that guff before? Well, I'll tell you something; if you can't see the God's truth when you look a man between the eyes

——No, hell, look at me! When I've hunted the world three times around to find a love like you, you'll leave those scabby lime-suckers wait a minute; you'll listen to me. Think I'm a boy, sweetheart, I don't know when I'm in love? Sailor? Hellnation, no! I'm done with sailoring, and that's sure. You come with me, and where we'll go we'll go a thousand miles from the rotten salt. What we'll do, we'll get a little farm, with cows and pigs and hens——Sheer off o' me, you big bum you'. Who do you think you're shoving? *What?* You want a mouth put to you big enough to suck a dozen limes at once? Yow! Swallow that! Wow! And that one! Guh! Kickin', eh? Knives, eh, now, you dirty Italians! You lousy Turks! Take a bite of the broken end of this bottle, and see how—— *God!"*

Where's the bar? Where's the maid? Where are the lights?

Where is any light at all? Where are we trying to slop and stumble to? What are we cursing and groaning for?

"Where we going, mister?"

"Down to the vessel. Down to the river. Down as fast as the devil'll let us. Down!"

What are all these things that come up to hinder us, blind walls to hit us, gutters howling to grab our feet? And what's all that yelling coming down?

"Who's that after us, mister? What they calling to us for?"

But the sailor is heavy with rain and blood. "Get down. Get down and get aboard and beat 'em. Cast off. Go clear." His words are sodden in the rain; the gale blows them away.

All day it has been hot as a furnace on the plain of eastern Colorado, and cool in the mountain valleys to the west. The wind, thin awhile ago, has a weight in it now. It rushes down between the iron walls of the Cornish estuary and out to gray the tops of the black Channel swells.

"Come on, son, heave aboard. We'll show 'em. We'll get clean of the stinking land and clear away."

But, "No-no!" I cried of a sudden, fairy-land fading and greed coming in. "Looky the wind! Looky the ditch! it'll blow upside down and wreck itself—and that lead on its bottom——Good-by!"

"Cast off! Shove off! Come about! Pay off! Fill away!"

"Aw, mister, naw! No foolin'. Listen, can't you hear 'em hollerin' to me? The herd's goin'. I got to go. Gi'me the boat; le'me have it; you don't want it. Oh, mister, le'me take it home: Naw! Catch it—*quick!"*

"There she fills, mate. Down your helm, though. Don't put us *over!"*

"Aw, mister; aw, say! Look what you gone and——"

"Drive, girl! Boil! Boil white water astern of us, and let 'em all go chase theirselves. Them and their land that's good for nothing but growing turnips and vegetables on. Who wants to be a turnip? When the whole world's ocean's ahead, and all the ports and sights. Clean of the stinkin' land, by—by——"

"Now look!"

"—by God!"

For an instant after she capsized in that mid-ditch gust and filled, the sloop's sail remained visible on the water, distended by the air caught beneath. So it circled, the dead plaything of daylight and matter-of-fact, once and once again, before the High Line swallowed it.

I could have wept. I could have howled: "Now see what you gone and done, all for nothin'!" But I dared not. The owner of one of the chasing voices had caught us. Ray Bleeker's face appeared above the bank, half hidden and half framed by the shipwrecked ranchman's quiet legs, and all one side of it was carmine with the ray of the declining sun.

"Hey, Dan, get a move!" He was full of bravado, for the other kid's benefit, but ready to duck and put heels to his invisible horse at need. "Looky the time it is. We're startin' the herd home, if you're comin' with us."

Coffin got right end up on the embankment, working his joints as though they all had "cricks" in them. He rolled down his sleeves over the serpents, the anchors, and the red and blue hearts pinned together by a cicatrice. A dark color ran up his cheeks.

"Yes, yes, yes, *yes!"*

The woman had come halfway up through

the alfalfa this time. There she stood, submerged to the middle of her inflated wrapper, screeching, like a buoy lifting its note on a bright-green vegetable sea.

The man took his hammer up and hit the neglected spike. The sound of his blows, flat and laggard, came after me only a little way down the hill of prickly pear and buffalo grass; the wind from the mountains was against it. Ahead of me the wind blew the dust of the herd in a red streak to the north and east.

The kids kept at me. "Where you been to? What was he givin' you all that while?"

"He says we should keep out o' his melons, or we'll see."

Sex Education[1]

DOROTHY CANFIELD

IT WAS three times—but at intervals of many years—that I heard my aunt Minnie tell about an experience of her girlhood that had made a never-to-be-forgotten impression on her. The first time she was in her thirties, still young. But she had then been married for ten years, so that to my group of friends, all in the early teens, she seemed quite of another generation.

The day she told us the story we had been idling on one end of her porch as we made casual plans for a picnic supper in the woods. Darning stockings at the other end, she paid no attention to us until one of the girls said, "Let's take blankets and sleep out there. It'd be fun."

"No," Aunt Minnie broke in sharply, "you mustn't do that."

"Oh, for goodness' sakes, why not!" said one of the younger girls rebelliously. "The boys are always doing it. Why can't we, just once?"

Aunt Minnie laid down her sewing. "Come here, girls," she said, "I want you should hear something that happened to me when I was your age."

Her voice had a special quality which perhaps young people of today would not recognize. But we did. We knew from experience that it was the dark voice grown-ups used when they were going to say something about sex.

Yet at first what she had to say was like any dull family anecdote. She had been ill when she was fifteen; and afterward she was run down, thin, with no appetite. Her folks thought a change of air would do her good, and sent her from Vermont out to Ohio—or was it Illinois? I don't remember. Anyway, one of those places where the corn grows high. Her mother's Cousin Ella lived there, keeping house for her son-in-law.

The son-in-law was the minister of the village church. His wife had died some years before, leaving him a young widower with two little girls and a baby boy. He had been a normally personable man then, but the next summer, on the Fourth of July when he was trying to set off some fireworks to amuse his children, an imperfectly manufactured rocket had burst in his face. The explosion had left one side of his face badly scarred. Aunt Minnie made us see it, as she still saw it, in horrid detail—the stiffened, scarlet scar-tissue distorting one cheek, the lower lip turned so far out at one corner that the moist red mucous-membrane lining always showed, one lower eyelid hanging loose, the eye watering.

After the accident, his face had been a long time healing. It was then that his wife's elderly mother had gone to keep house and take care of the children. When he was well enough to be about again, he found his position as pastor of the little church waiting for him. The farmers and village people in his congregation, moved by his misfortune,

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by his faithful service and by his unblemished character, said they would rather have Mr. Fairchild, even with his scarred face, than any other minister. He was a good preacher, Aunt Minnie told us, "and the way he prayed was kind of exciting. I'd never known a preacher, not to live in the same house with him, before. And when he was in the pulpit, with everybody looking up at him, I felt the way his children did, kind of proud to think we had just eaten breakfast at the same table. I liked to call him 'Cousin Malcolm' before folks. One side of his face was all right, anyhow. You could see from that that he *had* been a good-looking man. In fact, probably one of those ministers that all the women—" Aunt Minnie paused, drew her lips together, and looked at us uncertainly.

Then she went back to the story as it happened—as it happened that first time I heard her tell it. "I thought he was a saint. Everybody out there did. That was all *they* knew. Of course it made a person sick to look at that awful scar—the drooling corner of his mouth was the worst. He tried to keep that side of his face turned away from folks. But you always knew it was there. That was what kept him from marrying again, so Cousin Ella said. I heard her say lots of times that he knew no woman would touch any man who looked the way he did, not with a ten-foot pole.

"Well, the change of air did do me good. I got my appetite back, and ate a lot and played outdoors a lot with my cousins. They were younger than I (I had my sixteenth birthday there) but I still liked to play games. I got taller and laid on some weight. Cousin Ella used to say I grew as fast as the corn did. Their house stood at the edge of the village. Beyond it was one of those big cornfields they have out West. At the time when I first got there, the stalks were only up to a person's knee. You could see over their tops. But it grew like lightning, and before long it was the way thick woods are here, 'way over your head, the stalks growing so close together it was dark under them.

"Cousin Ella told us youngsters that it was lots worse for getting lost in than woods, because there were'nt any landmarks in it. One spot in a cornfield looked just like any other. 'You children keep out of it,' she used to tell us almost every day, '*especially you girls.* It's no place for a decent girl. You could easy get so far from the house nobody could hear you if you hollered. There are plenty of men in this town that wouldn't like anything better than—' She never said what.

"In spite of what she said, my little cousins and I had figured out that if we went across one corner of the field it would be a short cut to the village, and sometimes, without letting on to Cousin Ella, we'd go that way After the corn got really tall the farmer stopped cultivating, and we soon beat a path in the loose dirt. The minute you were inside the field it was dark. You felt as if you were miles from anywhere. It sort of scared you. But in no time the path turned and brought you out on the far end of Main Street. Your breath was coming fast, maybe, but that was what made you like to do it.

"One day I missed the turn. Maybe I didn't keep my mind on it. Maybe it had rained and blurred the tramped-down look of the path. I don't know what. All of a sudden I knew I was lost. And the minute I knew that, I began to run, just as hard as I could run. I couldn't help it, any more than you can help snatching your hand off a hot stove. I didn't know what I was scared of, I didn't even know I *was* running, till my heart was pounding so hard I had to stop.

"The minute I stood still I could hear Cousin Ella saying, 'There are plenty of men in this town that wouldn't like anything better than—' I didn't know, not really, what she meant. But I knew she meant something horrible. I opened my mouth to scream. But I put both hands over my mouth to keep the scream in. If I made any noise, one of those men would hear me. I thought I heard one just behind me, and whirled around. And then I thought another one had tiptoed up behind me, the other way, and I spun around so fast I almost fell over. I stuffed my hands hard up against my mouth. And then—I couldn't help it—I ran again, but my legs were shaking so I soon had to stop. There I stood, scared to move for fear of

rustling the corn and letting the men know where I was. My hair had come down, all over my face. I kept pushing it back and looking around, quick, to make sure one of the men hadn't found out where I was. Then I thought I saw a man coming toward me and I ran away from him—and fell down, and burst some of the buttons off my dress, and was sick to my stomach—and thought I heard a man close to me and got up and staggered around, knocking into the corn because I couldn't even see where I was going.

"And then, off to one side, I saw Cousin Malcolm. Not a man—The minister. He was standing still, one hand up to his face, thinking. He hadn't heard me.

"I was so *terrible* glad to see him, instead of one of those men, I ran as fast as I could and just flung myself on him, to make myself feel how safe I was . . ."

Aunt Minnie had become strangely agitated. Her hands were shaking, her face was crimson. She frightened us. We could not look away from her. As we waited for her to go on I felt little spasms twitch at the muscles inside my body. "And what do you think that *saint*, that holy minister of the Gospel, did to an innocent child who clung to him for safety? The most terrible look came into his eyes—you girls are too young to know what he looked like. But once you're married, you'll find out. He grabbed hold of me—that dreadful face of his was *right on mine* —and began clawing the clothes off my back."

She stopped for a moment, panting. We were too frightened to speak. She went on: "He had torn my dress right down to the waist before I—Then I *did* scream—all I could—and pulled away from him so hard I almost fell down, and ran and all of a sudden I came out of the corn, right in the back yard of the Fairchild house. The children were staring at the corn, and Cousin Ella ran out of the kitchen door. They had heard me screaming. Cousin Ella shrieked out, 'What is it? What happened? Did a man scare you?' And I said, 'Yes, yes, yes, a man— I ran—!' And then I fainted away. I must have. The next thing I knew I was on the sofa in the living room and Cousin Ella was slapping my face with a wet towel."

She had to wet her lips with her tongue before she could go on. Her face was gray now. "There! that's the kind of thing girls' folks ought to tell them about—so they'll know what men are like."

She finished her story as if she were dismissing us. We wanted to go away, but we were too horrified to stir. Finally one of the youngest girls asked in a low trembling voice, "Aunt Minnie, did you tell on him?"

"No, I was ashamed to," she said briefly. "They sent me home the next day, anyhow. Nobody ever said a word to me about it. And I never did either. Till now . . ."

By what gets printed in some of the modern child-psychology books you would think that girls to whom such a story had been told would never develop normally. Yet, as far as I can remember what happened to the girls in that group, we all grew up about like anybody. Most of us married, some happily, some not so well. We kept house. We learned —more or less—how to live with our husbands; we had children and struggled to bring them up right. We went forward into life just as if we had never been warned not to.

Perhaps, young as we were that day, we had already had enough experience of life so that we were not quite blank paper for Aunt Minnie's frightening story. Whether we thought of it then or not, we couldn't have failed to see that at this very time Aunt Minnie had been married for ten years or more, comfortably and well married too. Against what she tried by that story to brand into our minds stood the cheerful home life in that house, the good-natured, kind, hard-working husband, and the children—the three rough-and-tumble, nice little boys, so adored by their parents, and the sweet girl baby who died, of whom they could never speak without tears. It was such actual contact with adult life that probably kept generation after generation of girls from being scared by tales like Aunt Minnie's into a neurotic horror of living. . . .

Of course, since Aunt Minnie was so much older than we, her boys grew up to be

adolescents and young men while our children were still little enough so that our worries over them were nothing more serious than whooping cough and trying to get them to make their own beds. Two of our aunt's three boys followed, without losing their footing, the narrow path which leads across adolescence into normal adult life. But the middle one, Jake, repeatedly fell off into the morass. "Girl trouble," as the succinct family phrase put it. He was one of those boys who have "charm," whatever we mean by that, and he was always being snatched at by girls who would be "all wrong" for him to marry. And once, at nineteen, he ran away from home, whether with one of these girls or not we never heard, for through all her ups and downs with this son Aunt Minnie tried fiercely to protect him from scandal that might cloud his later life.

Her husband had to stay on his job to earn the family living. She was the one who went to find Jake. When it was gossiped around that Jake was in "bad company" his mother drew some money from the family savings-bank account, and silent, white-cheeked, took the train to the city where rumor said he had gone.

Some weeks later he came back with her. With no girl. She had cleared him of that entanglement. As of others, which followed, later. Her troubles seemed over when, at a "suitable" age, he fell in love with a "suitable" girl, married her, and took her to live in our shire town, sixteen miles away, where he had a good position. Jake was always bright enough.

Sometimes, idly, people speculated as to what Aunt Minnie had seen that time she went after her runaway son, wondering where her search for him had taken her—very queer places for Aunt Minnie to be in, we imagined. And how could such an ignorant homekeeping woman ever have known what to say to an errant willful boy to set him straight?

Well, of course, we reflected, watching her later struggles with Jake's erratic ways, she certainly could not have remained ignorant, after seeing over and over what she probably had; after talking with Jake about the things which, a good many times, must have come up with desperate openness between them.

She kept her own counsel. We never knew anything definite about the facts of those experiences of hers. But one day she told a group of us—all then married women—something which gave us a notion about what she had learned from them . . .

We were hastily making a layette for a not especially welcome baby in a poor family. In those days our town had no such thing as a district-nursing service. Aunt Minnie, a vigorous woman of fifty-five, had come in to help. As we sewed, we talked, of course; and because our daughters were near or in their teens, we were comparing notes about the bewildering responsibility of bringing up girls.

After a while Aunt Minnie remarked: "Well, I hope you teach your girls some *sense*. From what I read, I know you're great on telling them 'the facts'—facts we never heard of when we were girls. Like as not some facts I don't know, now. But knowing the facts isn't going to do them any more good than *not* knowing the facts ever did, unless they have some sense taught them too."

"What do you mean, Aunt Minnie?" one of us asked her uncertainly.

She reflected, threading a needle: "Well, I don't know but what the best way to tell you what I mean is to tell you about something that happened to me forty years ago. I've never said anything about it before. But I've thought about it a good deal. Maybe—"

She had hardly begun when I recognized the story—her visit to her Cousin Ella's Midwestern home, the widower with his scarred face and saintly reputation and, very vividly, her getting lost in the great cornfield. I knew every word she was going to say—to the very end, I thought.

But no, I did not. Not at all.

She broke off suddenly, to exclaim with impatience: "Wasn't I the big ninny? But not so big a ninny as that old cousin of mine. I could wring her neck for getting me in such a state. Only she didn't know any better herself. That was the way they brought

young people up in those days, scaring them out of their wits about the awfulness of getting lost, but not telling them a thing about how *not* to get lost. Or how to act, if they did.

"If I had had the sense I was born with, I'd have known that running my legs off in a zigzag was the worst thing I could do. I couldn't have been more than a few feet from the path when I noticed I wasn't on it. My tracks in the loose plowed dirt must have been perfectly plain. If I'd h'stood still, and collected my wits, I could have looked down to see which way my footsteps went and just walked back over them to the path and gone on about my business.

"Now I ask you, if I'd been told how to do that, wouldn't it have been a lot better protection for me—if protection was what my cousin thought she wanted to give me—than to scare me so at the idea of being lost that I turned deef, dumb, and blind when I thought I was?

"And anyhow that patch of corn wasn't as big as she let on. And she knew it wasn't. It was no more than a big field in a farming country. I was a well-grown girl of sixteen, as tall as I am now. If I couldn't have found the path, I could have just walked along one line of cornstalks—*straight*—and I'd have come out somewhere in ten minutes. Fifteen at the most. Maybe not just where I wanted to go. But all right, safe, where decent folks were living."

She paused, as if she had finished. But at the inquiring blankness in our faces she went on: "Well now, why isn't teaching girls—and boys, too, for the Lord's sake don't forget they need it as much as the girls—about this man-and-woman business, something like that? If you give them the idea—no matter whether it's *as* you tell them the facts, or as you *don't* tell them the facts, that it is such a terribly scary thing that if they take a step into it something's likely to happen to them so awful that you're ashamed to tell them what—well, they'll lose their heads and run around like crazy things first time they take one step away from the path.

"For they'll be trying out the paths all right. You can't keep them from it. And a good thing too. How else are they going to find out what it's like? Boys and girls going together is a path across one corner of growing up. And when they go together, they're likely to get off the path some. Seems to me it's up to their folks to bring them up so, when they do, they don't start screaming and running in circles, but stand still, right where they are, and get their breath and figure out how to get back.

"And, anyhow, you don't tell 'em the truth about sex" (I was astonished to hear her use the actual word, tabu to women of her generation) "if they get the idea from you that it's all there is to living. It's not. If you don't get to where you want to go in it, well, there's a lot of landscape all around it a person can have a good time in.

"D'you know, I believe one thing that gives girls and boys the wrong idea is the way folks *look!* My old cousin's face, I can see her now, it was as red as a rooster's comb when she was telling me about men in that cornfield. I believe now she kind of *liked* to talk about it."

(Oh, Aunt Minnie—and yours! I thought.)

Someone asked, "But how *did* you get out, Aunt Minnie?"

She shook her head, laid down her sewing. "More foolishness. That minister my mother's cousin was keeping house for—her son-in-law—I caught sight of him, down along one of the aisles of cornstalks, looking down at the ground, thinking, the way he often did. And I was so glad to see him I rushed right up to him, and flung my arms around his neck and hugged him. He hadn't heard me coming. He gave a great start, put one arm around me, and turned his face full toward me—I suppose for just a second he had forgotten how awful one side of it was. His expression, his eyes—Well, you're all married women, you know how he looked, the way any able-bodied man thirty-six or -seven, who'd been married and begotten children, would look, for a minute, anyhow, if a full-blooded girl of sixteen, who ought to have known better, flung herself at him without any warning, her hair tumbling down, her dress half-unbuttoned, and hugged him with all her might.

"I was what they called innocent in those days. That is, I knew just as little about what men are like as my folks could manage I should. But I was old enough to know all right what that look meant. And it gave me a start. But of course the real thing of it was that dreadful scar of his so close to my face—that wet corner of his mouth, his eye drawn down with the red inside of the lower eyelid showing—

"It turned me so sick, I pulled away with all my might, so fast that I ripped one sleeve nearly loose, and let out a screech like a wildcat. And ran. Did I run! And in a minute I was through the corn and had come in the back yard of the house. I hadn't been more than a few feet from it, probably, any of the time. And then I fainted away. Girls were always fainting away; it was the way our corset strings were pulled tight, I suppose, and then—oh, a lot of fuss.

"But, anyhow," she finished, picking up her work and going on, setting neat, firm stitches with steady hands, "there's one thing, I never told anybody it was Cousin Malcolm I had met in the cornfield. I told my old cousin that 'a man had scared me.' And nobody said anything more about it to me, not ever. That was the way they did in those days. They thought if they didn't let on about something, maybe it wouldn't have happened. I was sent back to Vermont right away, and Cousin Malcolm went on being minister of the church.

"I've always been," said Aunt Minnie moderately, "kind of proud that I didn't go and ruin a man's life for just one second's slip-up. If you could have called it that. For it *would* have ruined him. You know how hard as stone people are about other folks' letdowns. If I'd have told, not one person in that town would have had any charity. Not one would have tried to understand. One slip, *once*, and they'd have pushed him down in the mud. If I had told, I'd have felt pretty bad about it, later—when I came to have more sense. But I declare, I can't see how I came to have the decency, dumb as I was then, to know that it wouldn't be fair . . ."

It was not long after this talk that Aunt Minnie's elderly husband died, mourned by her, by all of us. She lived alone then. It was peaceful October weather for her, in which she kept a firm roundness of face and figure, as quiet-living countrywomen often do, on into her late sixties.

But then Jake, the boy who had girl trouble, had wife trouble. We heard he had taken to running after a young girl, or was it that she was running after him? It was something serious. For his nice wife left him and came back with the children to live with her mother in our town. Poor Aunt Minnie used to go to see her for long talks which made them both cry. And she went to keep house for Jake, for months at a time.

She grew old during those years. When finally she (or something) managed to get the marriage mended so that Jake's wife relented and went back to live with him, there was no trace of her pleasant, brisk freshness. She was stooped and slow-footed and shrunken. We, her kinspeople, although we would have given our lives for any one of our own children, wondered whether Jake was worth what it had cost his mother to—well, steady him, or reform him. Or perhaps just understand him. Whatever it took.

She came of a long-lived family and was able to go on keeping house for herself well into her eighties. Of course we and the other neighbors stepped in often to make sure she was all right. Mostly, during those brief calls, the talk turned on nothing more vital than her geraniums. But one midwinter afternoon, sitting with her in front of her cozy stove, I chanced to speak in rather hasty blame of someone who had, I thought, acted badly. To my surprise this brought from her the story about the cornfield which she had evidently quite forgotten telling me twice before.

This time she told it almost dreamily, swaying to and fro in her rocking chair, her eyes fixed on the long slope of snow outside her window. When she came to the encounter with the minister she said, looking away from the distance and back into my eyes: "I know now that I had been, all along, kind of *interested* in him, the way any girl as old as I was would be in any youngish man living in the same house with her. And a

minister too. They have to have the gift of gab so much more than most men; women get to thinking they are more alive than men who can't talk so well. I *thought* the reason I threw my arms around him was because I had been so scared. And I certainly had been scared, by my old cousin's horrible talk about the cornfield being full of men waiting to grab girls. But that wasn't all the reason I flung myself at Malcolm Fairchild and hugged him. I know that now. Why in the world shouldn't I have been taught *some* notion of it then? 'Twould do girls good to know that they are just like everybody else—human nature *and* sex are mixed up together. I didn't have to hug him. I wouldn't have, if he'd been dirty or fat and old, or chewed tobacco."

I stirred in my chair, ready to say, "But it's not so simple as all that to tell girls—" and she hastily answered my unspoken protest. "I know, I know, most of it can't be put into words. There just aren't any words to say something that's so both-ways-at-once all the time as this man-and-woman business. But look here, you know as well as I do that there are lots more ways than in words to teach young folks what you want 'em to know."

The old woman stopped her swaying rocker to peer far back into the past with honest eyes. "What was in my mind back there in the cornfield—partly, anyhow—was what had been there all the time I was living in the same house with Cousin Malcolm—that he had long straight legs, and broad shoulders, and lots of curly brown hair, and was nice and flat in front, and that one side of his face was good-looking. But most of all, that he and I were really alone, for the first time, without anybody to see us.

"I suppose, if it hadn't been for that dreadful scar, he'd have drawn me up tight, and —most any man would—kissed me. I know how I must have looked, all red and hot and my hair down and my dress torn open. And, used as he was to big cornfields, he probably never dreamed that the reason I looked that way was because I was scared to be by myself in one. He may have thought —You know what he may have thought.

"Well, if his face had been like anybody's, when he looked at me the way he did, the way a man does look at a woman he wants to have, it would have scared me—some. I'd have cried, maybe. And probably he'd have kissed me again. You know how such things go. I might have come out of the cornfield halfway engaged to marry him. Why not? I was old enough, as people thought then. That would have been nature. That was probably what he thought of in that first instant.

"But what did I do? I had one look at his poor horrible face, and started back as though I'd stepped on a snake. And screamed and ran.

"What do you suppose *he* felt, left there in the corn? He must have been sure that I would tell everybody he had attacked me. He probably thought that when he came out and went back to the village he'd already be in disgrace and put out of the pulpit.

"But the worst must have been to find out, so rough, so plain from the way I acted —as if somebody had hit him with an ax— the way he would look to any woman he might try to get close to.

"That must have been"—she drew a long breath—"well, pretty hard on him."

After a silence she murmured pityingly, "Poor man!"

The Lottery[1]

SHIRLEY JACKSON

THE MORNING of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26th, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it would begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix—the villagers pronounced this name "Dellacroy"—eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys, and the very small children rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their menfolk. They greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conducted—as were the square dances, the teen-age club, the Halloween program—by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called, "Little late today, folks." The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three-legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Mr. Summers said, "Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?" there was a hesitation before two men, Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a

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new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year; by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued, had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into the black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them into the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put away, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves' barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up—of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper swearing-in of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Thought my old man was out back stacking wood," Mrs. Hutchinson went on, "and then I looked out the window and the kids was gone, and then I remembered it was the twenty-seventh and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humoredly to let her through; two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully, "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs.

Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?," and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

"Well, now," Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can get back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

"Dunbar," several people said. "Dunbar, Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar," he said. "That's right. He's broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me, I guess," a woman said, and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband," Mr. Summers said, "Don't you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?" Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.

"Horace's not but sixteen yet," Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right," Mr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for m'mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like "Good fellow, Jack," and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"

"Here," a voice said, and Mr. Summers nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready?" he called. "Now, I'll read the names—heads of families first—and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions; most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, "Adams." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi, Steve," Mr. Summers said, and Mr. Adams said, "Hi, Joe." They grinned at one another humorlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box and took out a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family, not looking down at his hand.

"Allen," Mr. Summers said. "Anderson. . . . Bentham."

"Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries any more," Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row. "Seems like we got through with the last one only last week."

"Time sure goes fast," Mrs. Graves said.

"Clark . . . Delacroix."

"There goes my old man," Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath while her husband went forward.

"Dunbar," Mr. Summers said, and Mrs. Dunbar went steadily to the box while one of the women said, "Go on, Janey," and another said, "There she goes."

"We're next," Mrs. Graves said. She watched while Mr. Graves came around from the side of the box, greeted Mr. Summers gravely, and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hands, turning them over and over nervously. Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.

"Harburt . . . Hutchinson."

"Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said, and the people near her laughed.

"Jones."

"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for *them*. Next thing

you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live *that* way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's *always* been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody."

"Some places have already quit lotteries," Mrs. Adams said.

"Nothing but trouble in *that*," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke. . . . Percy."

"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.

Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called, "Warner."

"Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd. "Seventy-seventh time."

"Watson." The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

"Zanini."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Mr. Summers, holding his slip of paper in the air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened. Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saying, "Who is it?," "Who's got it?," "Is it the Dunbars?," "Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."

"Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son.

People began to look around to see the Hutchinsons. Bill Hutchinson was standing quiet, staring down at the paper in his hand. Suddenly, Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers, "You didn't give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair!"

"Be a good sport, Tessie," Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."

"Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.

"Well, everyone," Mr. Summers said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little more to get done in time." He consulted his next list. "Bill," he said, "you draw for the Hutchinson family. You got any other households in the Hutchinsons?"

"There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make *them* take their chance!"

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently. "You know that as well as anyone else."

"It wasn't *fair*," Tessie said.

"I guess not, Joe," Bill Hutchinson said regretfully. "My daughter draws with her husband's family, that's only fair. And I've got no other family except the kids."

"Then, as far as drawing for families is concerned, it's you," Mr. Summers said in explanation, "and as far as drawing for households is concerned, that's you, too. Right?"

"Right," Bill Hutchinson said.

"How many kids, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked formally.

"Three," Bill Hutchinson said. "There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."

"All right, then," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you got their tickets back?"

Mr. Graves nodded and held up the slips of paper. "Put them in the box, then," Mr. Summers directed. "Take Bill's and put it in."

"I think we ought to start over," Mrs. Hutchinson said, as quietly as she could. "I tell you it wasn't *fair*. You didn't give him time enough to choose. *Everybody* saw that."

Mr. Graves had selected the five slips and put them in the box, and he dropped all the papers but those onto the ground, where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

"Listen, everybody," Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.

"Ready, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked, and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance at his wife and children, nodded.

"Remember," Mr. Summers said, "take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one. Harry, you help little Dave." Mr. Graves took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. "Take a paper out of the box, Davy," Mr. Summers said. Davy put his hand into the box and laughed. "Take just *one* paper," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you hold it for him." Mr. Graves took the child's hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Dave stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

"Nancy next," Mr. Summers said. Nancy was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward, switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box. "Bill, Jr.," Mr. Summers said, and Billy, his face red and his feet overlarge, nearly knocked the box over as he got a paper out. "Tessie," Mr. Summers said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly, and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

"Bill," Mr. Summers said, and Bill Hutchinson reached into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, "I hope it's not Nancy," and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

"It's not the way it used to be," Old Man Warner said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be."

"All right," Mr. Summers said. "Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave's."

Mr. Graves opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Nancy and Bill, Jr., opened theirs at the same time, and both beamed and laughed, turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

"Tessie," Mr. Summers said. There was a pause, and then Mr. Summers looked at Bill Hutchinson, and Bill unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank.

"It's Tessie," Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. "Show us her paper, Bill."

Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the coal-company office. Bill Hutchinson held it up, and there was a stir in the crowd.

"All right, folks," Mr. Summers said. "Let's finish quickly."

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box. Mrs. Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar. "Come on," she said. "Hurry up."

Mrs. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath, "I can't run at all. You'll have to go ahead and I'll catch up with you."

The children had stones already, and someone gave little Davy Hutchinson a few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. "It isn't fair," she said. A stone hit her on the side of the head.

Old Man Warner was saying, "Come on, come on, everyone." Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

"It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.

The Wind and the Snow of Winter[1]

WALTER VAN TILBURG CLARK

IT WAS near sunset when Mike Braneen came onto the last pitch of the old wagon road which had led into Gold Rock from the east since the Comstock days. The road was just two ruts in the hard earth, with sagebrush growing between them, and was full of steep pitches and sharp turns. From the summit it descended even more steeply into Gold Rock, in a series of short switchbacks down the slope of the canyon. There was a paved highway on the other side of the pass now, but Mike never used that. Cars coming from behind made him uneasy, so that he couldn't follow his own thoughts long, but had to keep turning around every few minutes, to see that his burro, Annie, was staying out on the shoulder of the road, where she would be safe. Mike didn't like cars anyway, and on the old road he could forget about them and feel more like himself. He could forget about Annie too, except when the light, quick tapping of her hoofs behind him stopped. Even then he didn't really break his thoughts. It was more as if the tapping were another sound from his own inner machinery, and when it stopped he stopped too, and turned around to see what she was doing. When he began to walk ahead at the same slow, unvarying pace, his arms scarcely swinging at all, his body bent a little forward from the waist, he would not be aware that there had been any interruption of the memory of the story that was going on in his head. Mike did not like to have his stories interrupted except by an idea of his own, something to do with his prospecting, or the arrival of his story at an actual memory which warmed him to closer recollection or led into a new and more attractive story.

An intense, golden light, almost liquid, fanned out from the peaks above him and reached eastward under the gray sky, and the snow which occasionally swarmed across this light was fine and dry. Such little squalls had been going on all day, and still there was nothing like real snow down, but only a fine powder which the wind swept along until it caught under the brush, leaving the ground bare. Yet Mike Braneen was not deceived. This was not just a flurrying day; it was the beginning of winter. If not tonight, then tomorrow, or the next day, the snow would begin which shut off the mountains, so that a man might as well be on a great plain for all he could see, perhaps even the snow which blinded a man at once and blanketed the desert in an hour. Fifty-two years in this country had made Mike Braneen sure about such things, although he didn't give much thought to them, but only to what he had to do because of them. Three nights before he had been awakened by a change in the wind. It was no longer a wind born in the near mountains, cold with night and altitude, but a wind from far places, full of a damp chill which got through his blankets and into his bones. The stars had still been clear and close above the dark humps of the mountains, and overhead the constellations had moved slowly in full panoply, unbroken by any invisible lower darkness; yet he had lain there half awake for a few minutes, hearing the new wind beat the brush around him, hearing Annie stirring restlessly and thumping in her hobble. He had thought drowsily, "Smells like winter this time," and then, "It's held off a long time this year, pretty near the end of December." Then he had gone back to sleep, mildly happy because the change meant he would be going back to Gold Rock. Gold Rock was the other half of Mike Braneen's life. When the smell of winter came he always started back for Gold Rock. From March or April until the smell of winter he wandered slowly about among the

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mountains, anywhere between the White Pines and the Virginias, with only his burro for company. Then there would come the change, and they would head back for Gold Rock.

Mike had traveled with a good many burros during that time, eighteen or twenty, he thought, although he was not sure. He could not remember them all, but only those he had had first, when he was a young man and always thought most about seeing women when he got back to Gold Rock, or those with something queer about them, like Baldy, who'd had a great pale patch, like a bald spot, on one side of his belly, or those who'd had something queer happen to them, like Maria. He could remember just how it had been that night. He could remember it as if it were last night. It had been in Hamilton. He had felt unhappy, because he could remember Hamilton when the whole hollow was full of people and buildings, and everything was new and active. He had gone to sleep in the hollow shell of the Wells Fargo Building, hearing an old iron shutter banging against the wall in the wind. In the morning Maria had been gone. He had followed the scuffing track she made on account of her loose hobble, and it had led far up the old snow-gullied road to Treasure Hill, and then ended at one of the black shafts that opened like mouths right at the edge of the road. A man remembered a thing like that. There weren't many burros that foolish. But burros with nothing particular about them were hard to remember—especially those he'd had in the last twenty years or so, when he had gradually stopped feeling so personal about them and had begun to call all the jennies Annie and all the burros Jack.

The clicking of the little hoofs behind him stopped, and Mike stopped too, and turned around. Annie was pulling at a line of yellow grass along the edge of the road.

"Come on, Maria," Mike said patiently. The burro at once stopped pulling at the dead grass and came on up toward him, her small black nose working, the ends of the grass standing out on each side of it like whiskers. Mike began to climb again, ahead of her.

It was a long time since he had been caught by a winter, too. He could not remember how long. All the beginnings ran together in his mind, as if they were all the beginning of one winter so far back that he had almost forgotten it. He could still remember clearly, though, the winter he had stayed out on purpose, clear into January. He had been a young man then, thirty-five or forty or forty-five, somewhere in there. He would have to stop and try to bring back a whole string of memories about what had happened just before, in order to remember just how old he had been, and it wasn't worth the trouble. Besides, sometimes even that system didn't work. It would lead him into an old camp where he had been a number of times, and the dates would get mixed up. It was impossible to remember any other way, because all his comings and goings had been so much alike. He had been young, anyhow, and not much afraid of anything except running out of water in the wrong place; not even afraid of the winter. He had stayed out because he'd thought he had a good thing, and he had wanted to prove it. He could remember how it felt to be out in the clear winter weather on the mountains, the piñon trees and the junipers weighted down with feathery snow, and making sharp blue shadows on the white slopes. The hills had made blue shadows on one another too, and in the still air his pick had made the beginning of a sound like a bell's. He knew he had been young, because he could remember taking a day off now and then, just to go tramping around those hills, up and down the white and through the blue shadows, on a kind of holiday. He had pretended to his common sense that he was seriously prospecting, and had carried his hammer and even his drill along, but he had really just been gallivanting, playing colt. Maybe he had been even younger than thirty-five, though he could still be stirred a little, for that matter, by the memory of the kind of weather which had sent him gallivanting. High-blue weather, he

called it. There were two kinds of high-blue weather, besides the winter kind, which didn't set him off very often, spring and fall. In the spring it would have a soft, puffy wind and soft, puffy white clouds which made separate shadows that traveled silently across hills that looked soft too. In the fall it would be still, and there would be no clouds at all in the blue, but there would be something in the golden air and the soft, steady sunlight on the mountains that made a man as uneasy as the spring blowing, though in a different way, more sad and not so excited. In the spring high-blue a man had been likely to think about women he had slept with, or wanted to sleep with, or imaginary women made up with the help of newspaper pictures of actresses or young society matrons, or of the old oil paintings in the Lucky Boy Saloon, which showed pale, almost naked women against dark, sumptuous backgrounds—women with long hair or braided hair, calm, virtuous faces, small hands and feet, and ponderous limbs, breasts, and buttocks. In the fall high-blue, though it had been much longer since he had seen a woman, or heard a woman's voice, he was more likely to think about old friends, men, or places he had heard about, or places he hadn't seen for a long time. He himself thought most often about Goldfield the way he had last seen it in the summer in 1912. That was as far south as Mike had ever been in Nevada. Since then he had never been south of Tonopah. When the high-blue weather was past, though, and the season worked toward winter, he began to think about Gold Rock. There were only three or four winters out of the fifty-two when he hadn't gone home to Gold Rock, to his old room at Mrs. Wright's, up on Fourth Street, and to his meals in the dining room at the International House, and to the Lucky Boy, where he could talk to Tom Connover and his other friends, and play cards, or have a drink to hold in his hand while he sat and remembered.

This journey had seemed a little different from most, though. It had started the same as usual, but as he had come across the two vast valleys, and through the pass in the low range between them, he hadn't felt quite the same. He'd felt younger and more awake, it seemed to him, and yet, in a way, older too, suddenly older. He had been sure that there was plenty of time, and yet he had been a little afraid of getting caught in the storm. He had kept looking ahead to see if the mountains on the horizon were still clearly outlined, or if they had been cut off by a lowering of the clouds. He had thought more than once how bad it would be to get caught out there when the real snow began, and he had been disturbed by the first flakes. It had seemed hard to him to have to walk so far too. He had kept thinking about distance. Also the snowy cold had searched out the regions of his body where old injuries had healed. He had taken off his left mitten a good many times, to blow on the fingers which had been frosted the year he was sixty-three, so that now it didn't take much cold to turn them white and stiffen them. The queer tingling, partly like an itch and partly like a pain, in the patch on his back that had been burned in that old powder blast was sharper than he could remember its ever having been before. The rheumatism in his joints, which was so old a companion that it usually made him feel no more than tight-knit and stiff, and the place where his leg had been broken and torn when that ladder broke in '97 ached, and had a pulse he could count. All this made him believe that he was walking more slowly than usual, although nothing, probably not even a deliberate attempt, could actually have changed his pace. Sometimes he even thought, with a moment of fear, that he was getting tired.

On the other hand, he felt unusually clear and strong in his mind. He remembered things with a clarity which was like living them again—nearly all of them events from many years back, from the time when he had been really active and fearless and every burro had had its own name. Some of these events, like the night he had spent in Eureka with the little brown-haired whore, a night in the fall in 1888 or '89, somewhere in there,

he had not once thought of for years. Now he could remember even her name. Armandy, she had called herself: a funny name. They all picked names for their business, of course, romantic names like Cecily or Rosamunde or Belle or Claire, or hard names like Diamond Gert or Horseshoe Sal, or names that were pinned on them, like Indian Kate or Roman Mary, but Armandy was different.

He could remember Armandy as if he were with her now, not the way she had behaved in bed; he couldn't remember anything particular about that. In fact he couldn't be sure that he remembered anything about that at all. There were others he could remember more clearly for the way they had behaved in bed, women he had been with more often. He had been with Armandy only that one night. He remembered little things about being with her, things that made it seem good to think of being with her again. Armandy had a room upstairs in a hotel. They could hear a piano playing in a club across the street. He could hear the tune, and it was one he knew, although he didn't know its name. It was a gay tune that went on and on the same, but still it sounded sad when you heard it through the hotel window, with the lights from the bars and hotels shining on the street, and the people coming and going through the lights, and then, beyond the lights, the darkness where the mountains were. Armandy wore a white silk dress with a high waist, and a locket on a gold chain. The dress made her look very brown and like a young girl. She used a white powder on her face, that smelled like violets, but this could not hide her brownness. The locket was heart-shaped, and it opened to show a cameo of a man's hand holding a woman's hand very gently, just their fingers laid out long together, and the thumbs holding, the way they were sometimes on tombstones. There were two little gold initials on each hand, but Armandy would never tell what they stood for, or even if the locket was really her own. He stood in the window, looking down at the club from which the piano music was coming, and Armandy stood beside him, with her shoulder against his arm, and a glass of wine in her hand. He could see the toe of her white satin slipper showing from under the edge of her skirt. Her big hat, loaded with black and white plumes, lay on the dresser behind them. His own leather coat, with the sheepskin lining, lay across the foot of the bed. It was a big bed, with a knobby brass foot and head. There was one oil lamp burning in the chandelier in the middle of the room. Armandy was soft-spoken, gentle, and a little fearful, always looking at him to see what he was thinking. He stood with his arms folded. His arms felt big and strong upon his heavily muscled chest. He stood there, pretending to be in no hurry, but really thinking eagerly about what he would do with Armandy, who had something about her which tempted him to be cruel. He stood there, with his chin down into his heavy, dark beard, and watched a man come riding down the middle of the street from the west. The horse was a fine black, which lifted its head and feet with pride. The man sat very straight, with a high rein, and something about his clothes and hat made him appear to be in uniform, although it wasn't a uniform he was wearing. The man also saluted friends upon the sidewalks like an officer, bending his head just slightly, and touching his hat instead of lifting it. Mike Braneen asked Armandy who the man was, and then felt angry because she could tell him, and because he was an important man who owned a mine that was in bonanza. He mocked the airs with which the man rode, and his princely greetings. He mocked the man cleverly, and Armandy laughed and repeated what he said, and made him drink a little of her wine as a reward. Mike had been drinking whisky, and he did not like wine anyway, but this was not the moment in which to refuse such an invitation.

Old Mike remembered all this, which had been completely forgotten for years. He could not remember what he and Armandy had said, but he remembered everything else, and he felt very lonesome for Armandy, and for the room with the red, figured carpet and the brass chandelier with oil lamps in it, and the open window with the long tune coming up through it, and the young

summer night outside on the mountains. This loneliness was so much more intense than his familiar loneliness that it made him feel very young. Memories like this had come up again and again during these three days. It was like beginning life over again. It had tricked him into thinking, more than once, "Next summer I'll make the strike, and this time I'll put it into something safe for the rest of my life, and stop this fool wandering around while I've still got some time left"—a way of thinking which he had really stopped a long time before.

It was getting darker rapidly in the pass. When the gust of wind brought the snow against Mike's face so hard that he noticed the flakes felt larger, he looked up. The light was still there, although the fire was dying out of it, and the snow swarmed across it more thickly. Mike remembered God. He did not think anything exact. He did not think about his own relationship to God. He merely felt the idea as a comforting presence. He'd always had a feeling about God whenever he looked at a sunset, especially a sunset which came through under a stormy sky. It had been the strongest feeling left in him until these memories like the one about Armandy had begun. Even in this last pass his strange fear of the storm had come on him again a couple of times, but now that he had looked at the light and thought of God it was gone. In a few minutes he would come to the summit and look down into his lighted city. He felt happily hurried by this anticipation.

He would take the burro down and stable her in John Hammersmith's shed, where he always kept her. He would spread fresh straw for her, and see that the shed was tight against the wind and snow, and get a measure of grain for her from John. Then he would go up to Mrs. Wright's house at the top of Fourth Street, and leave his things in the same room he always had, the one in front, which looked down over the roofs and chimneys of his city, and across at the east wall of the canyon, from which the sun rose late. He would trim his beard with Mrs. Wright's shears, and shave the upper part of his cheeks. He would bathe out of the blue bowl and pitcher, and wipe himself with the towel with yellow flowers on it, and dress in the good dark suit and the good black shoes with the gleaming box toes, and the good black hat which he had left in the chest in his room. In this way he would perform the ceremony which ended the life of the desert and began the life of Gold Rock. Then he would go down to the International House, and greet Arthur Morris in the gleaming bar, and go into the dining room and eat the best supper they had, with fresh meat and vegetables, and new-made pie, and two cups of hot clear coffee. He would be served by the plump blond waitress who always joked with him, and gave him many little extra things with his first supper, including the drink which Arthur Morris always sent in from the bar.

At this point Mike Braneen stumbled in his mind, and his anticipation wavered. He could not be sure that the plump blond waitress would serve him. For a moment he saw her in a long skirt, and the dining room of the International House, behind her, had potted palms standing in the corners, and was full of the laughter and loud, manly talk of many customers who wore high vests and mustaches and beards. These men leaned back from tables covered with empty dishes. They patted their tight vests and lighted expensive cigars. He knew all their faces. If he were to walk down the aisle between the tables on his side they would all speak to him. But he also seemed to remember the dining room with only a few tables, with oilcloth on them instead of linen, and with moody young men sitting at them in their work clothes—strangers who worked for the highway department, or were just passing through, or talked mining in terms which he did not understand or which made him angry.

No, it would not be the plump blond waitress. He did not know who it would be. It didn't matter. After supper he would go up Canyon Street under the arcade to the Lucky Boy Saloon, and there it would be the same as ever. There would be the laurel wreaths on the frosted glass panels of the doors, and the old sign upon the window,

the sign that was older than Tom Connover, almost as old as Mike Braneen himself. He would open the door and see the bottles and the white women in the paintings, and the card table in the back corner and the big stove and chairs along the wall. Tom would look around from his place behind the bar. "Well, now," he would roar, "look who's here, boys. Now will you believe it's winter?" he would roar at them.

Some of them would be the younger men, of course, and there might even be a few strangers, but this would only add to the dignity of his reception, and there would also be his friends. There would be Henry Bray with the gray walrus mustache, and Mark Wilton and Pat Gallagher. They would all welcome him loudly.

"Mike, how are you, anyway?" Tom would roar, leaning across the bar to shake hands with his big, heavy, soft hand with the diamond ring on it. "And what'll it be, Mike? The same?" he'd ask, as if Mike had been in there no longer ago than the night before.

Mike would play that game too. "The same," he would say.

Then he would really be back in Gold Rock; never mind the plump blond waitress.

Mike came to the summit of the old road and stopped and looked down. For a moment he felt lost again, as he had when he'd thought about the plump blond waitress. He had expected Canyon Street to look much brighter. He had expected a lot of orange windows close together on the other side of the canyon. Instead there were only a few scattered lights across the darkness and they were white. They made no communal glow upon the steep slope, but gave out only single white needles of light, which pierced the darkness secretly and lonesomely, as if nothing could ever pass from one house to another over there. Canyon Street was very dark too. There it went, the street he loved, steeply down into the bottom of the canyon, and down its length there were only the few street lights, more than a block apart, swinging in the wind and darting about that cold, small light. The snow whirled and swooped under the nearest street light below.

"You are getting to be an old fool," Mike Braneen said out loud to himself, and felt better. This was the way Gold Rock was now, of course, and he loved it all the better. It was a place that grew old with a man, that was going to die sometime too. There could be an understanding with it.

He worked his way slowly down into Canyon Street, with Annie slipping and checking behind him. Slowly, with the blown snow behind them, they came to the first built-up block and passed the first dim light showing through a smudged window under the arcade. They passed the dark places after it, and the second light. Then Mike Braneen stopped in the middle of the street, and Annie stopped beside him, pulling her rump in and turning her head away from the snow. A highway truck, coming down from the head of the canyon, had to get way over onto the wrong side of the street to pass them. The driver leaned out as he went by, and yelled, "Pull over, Pop. You're in town now."

Mike Braneen didn't hear him. He was staring at the Lucky Boy. The Lucky Boy was dark, and there were boards nailed across the big window that had shown the sign. At last Mike went over onto the boardwalk to look more closely. Annie followed him, but stopped at the edge of the walk and scratched her neck against a post of the arcade. There was the other sign, hanging crossways under the arcade, and even in that gloom Mike could see that it said Lucky Boy and had a Jack of Diamonds painted on it. There was no mistake. The Lucky Boy sign, and others like it under the arcade, creaked and rattled in the wind.

There were footsteps coming along the boards. The boards sounded hollow, and sometimes one of them rattled. Mike Braneen looked down slowly from the sign and peered at the approaching figure. It was a man wearing a sheepskin coat with the collar turned up around his head. He was walking quickly, like a man who knew where he was going, and why, and where he had been. Mike almost let him pass. Then he spoke.

"Say, fella—"

He even reached out a hand as if to catch

hold of the man's sleeve, though he didn't touch it. The man stopped and asked, impatiently, "Yeah?" and Mike let the hand down again slowly.

"Well, what is it?" the man asked.

"I don't want anything," Mike said. "I got plenty."

"Okay, okay," the man said. "What's the matter?"

Mike moved his hand toward the Lucky Boy. "It's closed," he said.

"I see it is, Dad," the man said. He laughed a little. He didn't seem to be in quite so much of a hurry now.

"How long has it been closed?" Mike asked.

"Since about June, I guess," the man said. "Old Tom Connover, the guy that ran it, died last June."

Mike waited for a moment. "Tom died?" he asked.

"Yup. I guess he'd just kept it open out of love of the place anyway. There hasn't been any real business for years. Nobody cared to keep it open after him."

The man started to move on, but then he waited, peering, trying to see Mike better.

"This June?" Mike asked finally.

"Yup. This last June."

"Oh," Mike said. Then he just stood there. He wasn't thinking anything. There didn't seem to be anything to think.

"You knew him?" the man asked.

"Thirty years," Mike said. "No, more'n that," he said, and started to figure out how long he had known Tom Connover, but lost it, and said, as if it would do just as well, "He was a lot younger than I am, though."

"Hey," said the man, coming closer, and peering again. "You're Mike Braneen, aren't you?"

"Yes," Mike said.

"Gee, I didn't recognize you at first. I'm sorry."

"That's all right," Mike said. He didn't know who the man was, or what he was sorry about.

He turned his head slowly and looked out into the street. The snow was coming down heavily now. The street was all white. He saw Annie with her head and shoulders in under the arcade, but the snow settling on her rump.

"Well, I guess I'd better get Molly under cover," he said. He moved toward the burro a step, but then halted.

"Say, fella—"

The man had started on, but he turned back. He had to wait for Mike to speak.

"I guess this about Tom's mixed me up."

"Sure," the man said. "It's tough, an old friend like that."

"Where do I turn up to get to Mrs. Wright's place?"

"Mrs. Wright?"

"Mrs. William Wright," Mike said. "Her husband used to be a foreman in the Aztec. Got killed in the fire."

"Oh," the man said. He didn't say anything more, but just stood there, looking at the shadowy bulk of old Mike.

"She's not dead too, is she?" Mike asked slowly.

"Yeah, I'm afraid she is, Mr. Braneen," the man said. "Look," he said more cheerfully. "It's Mrs. Branley's house you want right now, isn't it? Place where you stayed last winter?"

Finally Mike said, "Yeah. Yeah, I guess it is."

"I'm going up that way. I'll walk up with you," the man said.

After they had started Mike thought that he ought to take the burro down to John Hammersmith's first, but he was afraid to ask about it. They walked on down Canyon Street, with Annie walking along beside them in the gutter. At the first side street they turned right and began to climb the steep hill toward another of the little street lights dancing over a crossing. There was no sidewalk here, and Annie followed right at their heels. That one street light was the only light showing up ahead.

When they were halfway up to the light Mike asked, "She die this summer too?"

The man turned his body half around, so that he could hear inside his collar.

"What?"

"Did she die this summer too?"

"Who?"

"Mrs. Wright," Mike said.

The man looked at him, trying to see his face as they came up toward the light. Then he turned back again, and his voice was muffled by the collar.

"No, she died quite a while ago, Mr. Braneen."

"Oh," Mike said finally.

They came up onto the crossing under the light, and the snow-laden wind whirled around them again. They passed under the light, and their three lengthening shadows before them were obscured by the innumerable tiny shadows of the flakes.

Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe[1]

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

A YOUNG fellow, a tobacco pedlar by trade, was on his way from Morristown, where he had dealt largely with the Deacon of the Shaker settlement, to the village of Parker's Falls, on Salmon River. He had a neat little cart, painted green, with a box of cigars depicted on each side panel, and an Indian chief, holding a pipe and a golden tobacco stalk, on the rear. The pedlar drove a smart little mare, and was a young man of excellent character, keen at a bargain, but none the worse liked by the Yankees; who, as I have heard them say, would rather be shaved with a sharp razor than a dull one. Especially was he beloved by the pretty girls along the Connecticut, whose favor he used to court by presents of the best smoking tobacco in his stock; knowing well that the country lasses of New England are generally great performers on pipes. Moreover, as will be seen in the course of my story, the pedlar was inquisitive, and something of a tattler, always itching to hear the news and anxious to tell it again.

After an early breakfast at Morristown, the tobacco pedlar, whose name was Dominicus Pike, had travelled seven miles through a solitary piece of woods, without speaking a word to anybody but himself and his little gray mare. It being nearly seven o'clock, he was as eager to hold a morning gossip as a city shopkeeper to read the morning paper. An opportunity seemed at hand when, after lighting a cigar with a sun-glass, he looked up, and perceived a man coming over the brow of the hill, at the foot of which the pedlar had stopped his green cart. Dominicus watched him as he descended, and noticed that he carried a bundle over his shoulder on the end of a stick, and travelled with a weary, yet determined pace. He did not look as if he had started in the freshness of the morning, but had footed it all night, and meant to do the same all day.

"Good morning, mister," said Dominicus, when within speaking distance. "You go a pretty good jog. What's the latest news at Parker's Falls?"

The man pulled the broad brim of a gray hat over his eyes, and answered, rather sullenly, that he did not come from Parker's Falls, which, as being the limit of his own day's journey, the pedlar had naturally mentioned in his inquiry.

"Well then," rejoined Dominicus Pike, "let's have the latest news where you did come from. I'm not particular about Parker's Falls. Any place will answer."

Being thus importuned, the traveller—who was as ill looking a fellow as one would desire to meet in a solitary piece of woods—appeared to hesitate a little, as if he was either searching his memory for news, or weighing the expediency of telling it. At last, mounting on the step of the cart, he whispered in the ear of Dominicus, though he might have shouted aloud and no other mortal would have heard him.

[1] From *Twice-Told Tales*. By permission of the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.

"I do remember one little trifle of news," said he. "Old Mr. Higginbotham, of Kimballton, was murdered in his orchard, at eight o'clock last night, by an Irishman and a nigger. They strung him up to the branch of a Saint Michael's pear-tree, where nobody would find him till the morning."

As soon as this horrible intelligence was communicated, the stranger betook himself to his journey again, with more speed than ever, not even turning his head when Dominicus invited him to smoke a Spanish cigar and relate all the particulars. The pedlar whistled to his mare and went up the hill, pondering on the doleful fate of Mr. Higginbotham, whom he had known in the way of trade, having sold him many a bunch of long nines, and a great deal of pigtail, lady's twist, and fig tobacco. He was rather astonished at the rapidity with which the news had spread. Kimballton was nearly sixty miles distant in a straight line; the murder had been perpetrated only at eight o'clock the preceding night; yet Dominicus had heard of it at seven in the morning, when, in all probability, poor Mr. Higginbotham's own family had but just discovered his corpse, hanging on the Saint Michael's pear-tree. The stranger on foot must have worn seven-league boots to travel at such a rate.

"Ill news flies fast, they say," thought Dominicus Pike; "but this beats railroads. The fellow ought to be hired to go express with the President's Message."

The difficulty was solved by supposing that the narrator had made a mistake of one day in the date of the occurrence; so that our friend did not hesitate to introduce the story at every tavern and country store along the road, expending a whole bunch of Spanish wrappers among at least twenty horrified audiences. He found himself invariably the first bearer of the intelligence, and was so pestered with questions that he could not avoid filling up the outline, till it became quite a respectable narrative. He met with one piece of corroborative evidence. Mr. Higginbotham was a trader; and a former clerk of his, to whom Dominicus related the facts, testified that the old gentleman was accustomed to return home through the orchard about nightfall, with the money and valuable papers on the store in his pocket. The clerk manifested but little grief at Mr. Higginbotham's catastrophe, hinting, what the pedlar had discovered in his own dealings with him, that he was a crusty old fellow, as close as a vice. His property would descend to a pretty niece who was now keeping school in Kimballton.

What with telling the news for the public good, and driving bargains for his own, Dominicus was so much delayed on the road that he chose to put up at a tavern, about five miles short of Parker's Falls. After supper, lighting one of his prime cigars, he seated himself in the bar-room, and went through the story of the murder, which had grown so fast that it took him half an hour to tell. There were as many as twenty people in the room, nineteen of whom received it all for gospel. But the twentieth was an elderly farmer, who had arrived on horseback a short time before, and was now seated in a corner smoking his pipe. When the story was concluded, he rose up very deliberately, brought his chair right in front of Dominicus, and stared him full in the face, puffing out the vilest tobacco smoke the pedlar had ever smelt.

"Will you make affidavit," demanded he, in the tone of a country justice taking an examination, "that old Squire Higginbotham of Kimballton was murdered in his orchard the night before last, and found hanging on his great pear-tree yesterday morning?"

"I tell the story as I heard it, mister," answered Dominicus, dropping his half-burnt cigar; "I don't say that I saw the thing done. So I can't take my oath that he was murdered exactly in that way."

"But I can take mine," said the farmer, "that if Squire Higginbotham was murdered night before last, I drank a glass of bitters with his ghost this morning. Being a neighbor of mine, he called me into his store, as I was riding by, and treated me, and then asked me to do a little business for him on the road. He didn't seem to know any more about his own murder than I did."

"Why, then, it can't be a fact!" exclaimed Dominicus Pike.

"I guess he'd have mentioned, if it was," said the old farmer; and he removed his chair back to the corner, leaving Dominicus quite down in the mouth.

Here was a sad resurrection of old Mr. Higginbotham! The pedlar had no heart to mingle in the conversation any more, but comforted himself with a glass of gin and water, and went to bed, where, all night long, he dreamed of hanging on the Saint Michael's pear-tree. To avoid the old farmer (whom he so detested that his suspension would have pleased him better than Mr. Higginbotham's), Dominicus rose in the gray of the morning, put the little mare into the green cart, and trotted swiftly away towards Parker's Falls. The fresh breeze, the dewy road, and the pleasant summer dawn, revived his spirits, and might have encouraged him to repeat the old story had there been anybody awake to hear it. But he met neither ox team, light wagon, chaise, horseman, nor foot traveller, till, just as he crossed Salmon River, a man came trudging down to the bridge with a bundle over his shoulder, on the end of a stick.

"Good morning, mister," said the pedlar, reining in his mare. "If you come from Kimballton or that neighborhood, may be you can tell me the real fact about this affair of old Mr. Higginbotham. Was the old fellow actually murdered two or three nights ago, by an Irishman and a nigger?"

Dominicus had spoken in too great a hurry to observe, at first, that the stranger himself had a deep tinge of negro blood. On hearing this sudden question, the Ethiopian appeared to change his skin, its yellow hue becoming a ghastly white, while, shaking and stammering, he thus replied:

"No! no! There was no colored man! It was an Irishman that hanged him last night, at eight o'clock. I came away at seven! His folks can't have looked for him in the orchard yet."

Scarcely had the yellow man spoken, when he interrupted himself, and though he seemed weary enough before, continued his journey at a pace which would have kept the pedlar's mare on a smart trot. Dominicus stared after him in great perplexity. If the murder had not been committed till Tuesday night, who was the prophet that had foretold it, in all its circumstances, on Tuesday morning? If Mr. Higginbotham's corpse were not yet discovered by his own family, how came the mulatto, at above thirty miles' distance, to know that he was hanging in the orchard, especially as he had left Kimballton before the unfortunate man was hanged at all? These ambiguous circumstances, with the stranger's surprise and terror, made Dominicus think of raising a hue and cry after him, as an accomplice in the murder; since a murder, it seemed, had really been perpetrated.

"But let the poor devil go," thought the pedlar. "I don't want his black blood on my head; and hanging the nigger wouldn't unhang Mr. Higginbotham. Unhang the old gentleman! It's a sin, I know; but I should hate to have him come to life a second time, and give me the lie!"

With these meditations, Dominicus Pike drove into the street of Parker's Falls, which, as everybody knows, is as thriving a village as three cotton factories and a slitting mill can make it. The machinery was not in motion, and but a few of the shop doors unbarred, when he alighted in the stable yard of the tavern, and made it his first business to order the mare four quarts of oats. His second duty, of course, was to impart Mr. Higginbotham's catastrophe to the hostler. He deemed it advisable, however, not to be too positive as to the date of the direful fact, and also to be uncertain whether it were perpetrated by an Irishman and a mulatto, or by the son of Erin alone. Neither did he profess to relate it on his own authority, or that of any one person; but mentioned it as a report generally diffused.

The story ran through the town like fire among girdled trees, and became so much the universal talk that nobody could tell whence it had originated. Mr. Higginbotham was as well known at Parker's Falls as any citizen of the place, being part owner of the slitting mill, and a considerable stockholder in the cotton factories. The inhabitants felt their own prosperity interested in his fate. Such was the excitement, that the Parker's

Falls *Gazette* anticipated its regular day of publication, and came out with half a form of blank paper and a column of double pica emphasized with capitals, and headed HORRID MURDER OF MR. HIGGINBOTHAM! Among other dreadful details, the printed account described the mark of the cord round the dead man's neck, and stated the number of thousand dollars of which he had been robbed; there was much pathos also about the affliction of his niece, who had gone from one fainting fit to another, ever since her uncle was found hanging on the Saint Michael's pear-tree with his pockets inside out. The village poet likewise commemorated the young lady's grief in seventeen stanzas of a ballad. The selectmen held a meeting, and, in consideration of Mr. Higginbotham's claims on the town, determined to issue handbills, offering a reward of five hundred dollars for the apprehension of his murderers, and the recovery of the stolen property.

Meanwhile, the whole population of Parker's Falls, consisting of shopkeepers, mistresses of boarding-houses, factory girls, millmen, and school-boys, rushed into the street and kept up such a terrible loquacity as more than compensated for the silence of the cotton machines, which refrained from their usual din out of respect to the deceased. Had Mr. Higginbotham cared about posthumous renown, his untimely ghost would have exulted in this tumult. Our friend Dominicus, in his vanity of heart, forgot his intended precautions, and mounting on the town pump, announced himself as the bearer of the authentic intelligence which had caused so wonderful a sensation. He immediately became the great man of the moment, and had just begun a new edition of the narrative, with a voice like a field preacher, when the mail stage drove into the village street. It had travelled all night, and must have shifted horses at Kimballton, at three in the morning.

"Now we shall hear all the particulars," shouted the crowd.

The coach rumbled up to the piazza of the tavern, followed by a thousand people; for if any man had been minding his own business till then, he now left it at sixes and sevens, to hear the news. The pedlar, foremost in the race, discovered two passengers, both of whom had been startled from a comfortable nap to find themselves in the centre of a mob. Every man assailing them with separate questions, all propounded at once, the couple were struck speechless, though one was a lawyer and the other a young lady.

"Mr. Higginbotham! Mr. Higginbotham! Tell us the particulars about old Mr. Higginbotham!" bawled the mob. "What is the coroner's verdict? Are the murderers apprehended? Is Mr. Higginbotham's niece come out of her fainting fits? Mr. Higginbotham! Mr. Higginbotham!!"

The coachman said not a word, except to swear awfully at the hostler for not bringing him a fresh team of horses. The lawyer inside had generally his wits about him even when asleep; the first thing he did, after learning the cause of the excitement, was to produce a large, red pocket-book. Meantime Dominicus Pike, being an extremely polite young man, and also suspecting that a female tongue would tell the story as glibly as a lawyer's, had handed the lady out of the coach. She was a fine, smart girl, now wide awake and bright as a button, and had such a sweet pretty mouth, that Dominicus would almost as lief have heard a love tale from it as a tale of murder.

"Gentlemen and ladies," said the lawyer to the shopkeepers, the millmen, and the factory girls, "I can assure you that some unaccountable mistake, or, more probably, a wilful falsehood, maliciously contrived to injure Mr. Higginbotham's credit, has excited this singular uproar. We passed through Kimballton at three o'clock this morning, and most certainly should have been informed of the murder, had any been perpetrated. But I have proof nearly as strong as Mr. Higginbotham's own oral testimony, in the negative. Here is a note relating to a suit of his in the Connecticut courts, which was delivered me from that gentleman himself. I find it dated at ten o'clock last evening."

So saying, the lawyer exhibited the date and signature of the note, which irrefrag-

ably proved, either that this perverse Mr. Higginbotham was alive when he wrote it, or —as some deemed the more probable case, of two doubtful ones—that he was so absorbed in worldly business as to continue to transact it even after his death. But unexpected evidence was forthcoming. The young lady, after listening to the pedlar's explanation, merely seized a moment to smooth her gown and put her curls in order, and then appeared at the tavern door, making a modest signal to be heard.

"Good people," said she, "I am Mr. Higginbotham's niece."

A wondering murmur passed through the crowd on beholding her so rosy and bright; that same unhappy niece, whom they had supposed, on the authority of the Parker's Falls *Gazette*, to be lying at death's door in a fainting fit. But some shrewd fellows had doubted, all along, whether a young lady would be quite so desperate at the hanging of a rich old uncle.

"You see," continued Miss Higginbotham, with a smile, "that this strange story is quite unfounded as to myself; and I believe I may affirm it to be equally so in regard to my dear uncle Higginbotham. He has the kindness to give me a home in his house, though I contribute to my own support by teaching a school. I left Kimballton this morning to spend the vacation of commencement week with a friend, about five miles from Parker's Falls. My generous uncle, when he heard me on the stairs, called me to his bedside, and gave me two dollars and fifty cents to pay my stage fare, and another dollar for my extra expenses. He then laid his pocketbook under his pillow, shook hands with me, and advised me to take some biscuit in my bag, instead of breakfasting on the road. I feel confident, therefore, that I left my beloved relative alive, and trust that I shall find him so on my return."

The young lady courtesied at the close of her speech, which was so sensible and well worded, and delivered with such grace and propriety, that everybody thought her fit to be preceptress of the best academy in the State. But a stranger would have supposed that Mr. Higginbotham was an object of abhorrence at Parker's Falls, and that a thanksgiving had been proclaimed for his murder; so excessive was the wrath of the inhabitants on learning their mistake. The millmen resolved to bestow public honors on Dominicus Pike, only hesitating whether to tar and feather him, ride him on a rail, or refresh him with an ablution at the town pump, on the top of which he had declared himself the bearer of the news. The selectmen, by advice of the lawyer, spoke of prosecuting him for a misdemeanor, in circulating unfounded reports, to the great disturbance of the peace of the Commonwealth. Nothing saved Dominicus, either from mob law or a court of justice, but an eloquent appeal made by the young lady in his behalf. Addressing a few words of heartfelt gratitude to his benefactress, he mounted the green cart and rode out of town, under a discharge of artillery from the school-boys, who found plenty of ammunition in the neighboring claypits and mud holes. As he turned his head to exchange a farewell glance with Mr. Higginbotham's niece, a ball, of the consistence of hasty pudding, hit him slap in the mouth, giving him a most grim aspect. His whole person was so bespattered with the like filthy missiles, that he had almost a mind to ride back, and supplicate for the threatened ablution at the town pump; for, though not meant in kindness, it would now have been a deed of charity.

However, the sun shone bright on poor Dominicus, and the mud, an emblem of all stains of undeserved opprobrium, was easily brushed off when dry. Being a funny rogue, his heart soon cheered up; nor could he refrain from a hearty laugh at the uproar which his story had excited. The handbills of the selectmen would cause the commitment of all the vagabonds in the State; the paragraph in the Parker's Falls *Gazette* would be reprinted from Maine to Florida, and perhaps form an item in the London newspapers; and many a miser would tremble for his money bags and life, on learning the catastrophe of Mr. Higginbotham. The pedlar meditated with much fervor on the charms of the young schoolmistress, and swore that Daniel Webster never spoke nor looked so

like an angel as Miss Higginbotham, while defending him from the wrathful populace at Parker's Falls.

Dominicus was now on the Kimballton turnpike, having all along determined to visit that place, though business had drawn him out of the most direct road from Morristown. As he approached the scene of the supposed murder, he continued to revolve the circumstances in his mind, and was astonished at the aspect which the whole case assumed. Had nothing occurred to corroborate the story of the first traveller, it might now have been considered as a hoax; but the yellow man was evidently acquainted either with the report or the fact; and there was a mystery in his dismayed and guilty look on being abruptly questioned. When, to this singular combination of incidents, it was added that the rumor tallied exactly with Mr. Higginbotham's character and habits of life; and that he had an orchard, and a Saint Michael's pear-tree, near which he always passed at nightfall: the circumstantial evidence appeared so strong that Dominicus doubted whether the autograph produced by the lawyer, or even the niece's direct testimony, ought to be equivalent. Making cautious inquiries along the road, the pedlar further learned that Mr. Higginbotham had in his service an Irishman of doubtful character, whom he had hired without a recommendation, on the score of economy.

"May I be hanged myself," exclaimed Dominicus Pike aloud, on reaching the top of a lonely hill, "if I'll believe old Higginbotham is unhanged, till I see him with my own eyes, and hear it from his own mouth! And as he's a real shaver, I'll have the minister or some other responsible man for an indorser."

It was growing dusk when he reached the toll-house on Kimballton turnpike, about a quarter of a mile from the village of this name. His little mare was fast bringing him up with a man on horseback, who trotted through the gate a few rods in advance of him, nodded to the toll-gatherer, and kept on towards the village. Dominicus was acquainted with the tollman, and, while making change, the usual remarks on the weather passed between them.

"I suppose," said the pedlar, throwing back his whiplash, to bring it down like a feather on the mare's flank, "you have not seen anything of old Mr. Higginbotham within a day or two?"

"Yes," answered the toll-gatherer. "He passed the gate just before you drove up, and yonder he rides now, if you can see him through the dusk. He's been to Woodfield this afternoon, attending a sheriff's sale there. The old man generally shakes hands and has a little chat with me; but to-night, he nodded—as if to say, 'Charge my toll,'—and jogged on; for wherever he goes, he must always be at home by eight o'clock."

"So they tell me," said Dominicus.

"I never saw a man look so yellow and thin as the squire does," continued the toll-gatherer. "Says I to myself, tonight, he's more like a ghost or an old mummy than good flesh and blood."

The pedlar strained his eyes through the twilight, and could just discern the horseman now far ahead on the village road. He seemed to recognize the rear of Mr. Higginbotham; but through the evening shadows, and amid the dust from the horse's feet, the figure appeared dim and unsubstantial; as if the shape of the mysterious old man were faintly moulded of darkness and gray light. Dominicus shivered.

"Mr. Higginbotham has come back from the other world, by way of the Kimballton turnpike," thought he.

He shook the reins and rode forward, keeping about the same distance in the rear of the gray old shadow, till the latter was concealed by a bend of the road. On reaching this point, the pedlar no longer saw the man on horseback, but found himself at the head of the village street, not far from a number of stores and two taverns, clustered round the meeting-house steeple. On his left were a stone wall and a gate, the boundary of a wood-lot, beyond which lay an orchard, farther still, a mowing field, and last of all, a house. These were the premises of Mr. Higginbotham, whose dwelling stood beside the old highway, but had been left in the

background by the Kimballton turnpike. Dominicus knew the place; and the little mare stopped short by instinct; for he was not conscious of tightening the reins.

"For the soul of me, I cannot get by this gate!" said he, trembling. "I never shall be my own man again, till I see whether Mr. Higginbotham is hanging on the Saint Michael's pear-tree!"

He leaped from the cart, gave the rein a turn round the gate post, and ran along the green path of the wood-lot as if Old Nick were chasing behind. Just then the village clock tolled eight, and as each deep stroke fell, Dominicus gave a fresh bound and flew faster than before, till, dim in the solitary centre of the orchard, he saw the fated pear-tree. One great branch stretched from the old contorted trunk across the path, and threw the darkest shadow on that one spot. But something seemed to struggle beneath the branch!

The pedlar had never pretended to more courage than befits a man of peaceable occupation, nor could he account for his valor on this awful emergency. Certain it is, however, that he rushed forward, prostrated a sturdy Irishman with the butt end of his whip, and found—not indeed hanging on the Saint Michael's pear-tree, but trembling beneath it, with a halter round his neck—the old, identical Mr. Higginbotham!

"Mr. Higginbotham," said Dominicus tremulously, "you're an honest man, and I'll take your word for it. Have you been hanged or not?"

If the riddle be not already guessed, a few words will explain the simple machinery by which this "coming event" was made to "cast its shadow before." Three men had plotted the robbery and murder of Mr. Higginbotham; two of them, successively, lost courage and fled, each delaying the crime one night by their disappearance; the third was in the act of perpetration, when a champion, blindly obeying the call of fate, like the heroes of old romance, appeared in the person of Dominicus Pike.

It only remains to say, that Mr. Higginbotham took the pedlar into high favor, sanctioned his addresses to the pretty schoolmistress, and settled his whole property on their children, allowing themselves the interest. In due time, the old gentleman capped the climax of his favors, by dying a Christian death, in bed, since which melancholy event Dominicus Pike has removed from Kimballton, and established a large tobacco manufactory in my native village.

The Real Thing[1]

I

WHEN THE PORTER'S WIFE (she used to answer the house-bell), announced "A gentleman—with a lady, sir," I had, as I often had in those days, for the wish was father to the thought, an immediate vision of sitters. Sitters my visitors in this case proved to be; but not in the sense I should have preferred. However, there was nothing at first to indicate that they might have come for a portrait. The gentleman, a man of fifty, very high and very straight, with a moustache slightly grizzled and a dark grey walking-coat admirably fitted, both of which I noted professionally—I don't mean as a barber or yet as a tailor—would have struck me as a celebrity if celebrities often were striking. It was a truth of which I had for some time been conscious that a figure with a good deal of frontage was, as one might say, almost never a public institution. A glance at the lady helped to remind me of this paradoxical law: she also looked too distinguished to be

[1] The selection from Henry James, *The Real Thing and Other Stories*. Copyright 1893, 1921 by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission. Circulated in Canada by permission of Paul R. Reynolds & Son.

a "personality." Moreover one would scarcely come across two variations together.

Neither of the pair spoke immediately—they only prolonged the preliminary gaze which suggested that each wished to give the other a chance. They were visibly shy; they stood there letting me take them in—which, as I afterwards perceived, was the most practical thing they could have done. In this way their embarrassment served their cause. I had seen people painfully reluctant to mention that they desired anything so gross as to be represented on canvas; but the scruples of my new friends appeared almost insurmountable. Yet the gentleman might have said "I should like a portrait of my wife," and the lady might have said "I should like a portrait of my husband." Perhaps they were not husband and wife—this naturally would make the matter more delicate. Perhaps they wished to be done together—in which case they ought to have brought a third person to break the news.

"We come from Mr. Rivet," the lady said at last, with a dim smile which had the effect of a moist sponge passed over a "sunk" piece of painting, as well as of a vague allusion to vanished beauty. She was as tall and straight, in her degree, as her companion, and with ten years less to carry. She looked as sad as a woman could look whose face was not charged with expression; that is, her tinted oval mask showed friction as an exposed surface shows it. The hand of time had played over her freely, but only to simplify. She was slim and stiff, and so well-dressed, in dark blue cloth, with lappets and pockets and buttons, that it was clear she employed the same tailor as her husband. The couple had an indefinable air of prosperous thrift—they evidently got a good deal of luxury for their money. If I was to be one of their luxuries it would behove me to consider my terms.

"Ah, Claude Rivet recommended me?" I inquired; and I added that it was very kind of him, though I could reflect that, as he only painted landscape, this was not a sacrifice.

The lady looked very hard at the gentleman, and the gentleman looked round the room. Then staring at the floor a moment and stroking his moustache, he rested his pleasant eyes on me with the remark: "He said you were the right one."

"I try to be, when people want to sit."

"Yes, we should like to," said the lady anxiously.

"Do you mean together?"

My visitors exchanged a glance. "If you could do anything with *me*, I suppose it would be double," the gentleman stammered.

"Oh, yes, there's naturally a higher charge for two figures than for one."

"We should like to make it pay," the husband confessed.

"That's very good of you," I returned, appreciating so unwonted a sympathy—for I supposed he meant pay the artist.

A sense of strangeness seemed to dawn on the lady. "We mean for the illustrations—Mr. Rivet said you might put one in."

"Put one in—an illustration?" I was equally confused.

"Sketch her off, you know," said the gentleman, colouring.

It was only then that I understood the service Claude Rivet had rendered me; he had told them that I worked in black and white, for magazines, for story-books, for sketches of contemporary life, and consequently had frequent employment for models. These things were true, but it was not less true (I may confess it now—whether because the aspiration was to lead to everything or to nothing I leave the reader to guess), that I couldn't get the honours, to say nothing of the emoluments, of a great painter of portraits out of my head. My "illustrations" were my pot-boilers; I looked to a different branch of art (far and away the most interesting it had always seemed to me), to perpetuate my fame. There was no shame in looking to it also to make my fortune; but that fortune was by so much further from being made from the moment my visitors wished to be "done" for nothing. I was disappointed; for in the pictorial sense I had immediately *seen* them. I had seized their type—I had already settled what I would do with it. Something that wouldn't absolutely have pleased them, I afterwards reflected.

"Ah, you're—you're—a—?" I began, as soon

as I had mastered my surprise. I couldn't bring out the dingy word "models"; it seemed to fit the case so little.

"We haven't had much practice," said the lady.

"We've got to *do* something, and we've thought that an artist in your line might perhaps make something of us," her husband threw off. He further mentioned that they didn't know many artists and that they had gone first, on the off-chance (he painted views of course, but sometimes put in figures—perhaps I remembered), to Mr. Rivet, whom they had met a few years before at a place in Norfolk where he was sketching.

"We used to sketch a little ourselves," the lady hinted.

"It's very awkward, but we absolutely *must* do something," her husband went on.

"Of course, we're not so *very* young," she admitted, with a wan smile.

With the remark that I might as well know something more about them, the husband had handed me a card extracted from a neat new pocket-book (their appurtenances were all of the freshest) and inscribed with the words "Major Monarch." Impressive as these words were they didn't carry my knowledge much further; but my visitor presently added: "I've left the army, and we've had the misfortune to lose our money. In fact our means are dreadfully small."

"It's an awful bore," said Mrs. Monarch.

They evidently wished to be discreet—to take care not to swagger because they were gentlefolks. I perceived they would have been willing to recognise this as something of a drawback, at the same time that I guessed at an underlying sense—their consolation in adversity—that they *had* their points. They certainly had; but these advantages struck me as preponderantly social; such for instance as would help to make a drawing-room look well. However, a drawing-room was always, or ought to be, a picture.

In consequence of his wife's allusion to their age Major Monarch observed: "Naturally, it's more for the figure that we thought of going in. We can still hold ourselves up." On the instant I saw that the figure was indeed their strong point. His "naturally" didn't sound vain, but it lighted up the question. "*She* has got the best," he continued, nodding at his wife, with a pleasant after-dinner absence of circumlocution. I could only reply, as if we were in fact sitting over our wine, that this didn't prevent his own from being very good; which led him in turn to rejoin: "We thought that if you ever have to do people like us, we might be something like it. *She*, particularly—for a lady in a book, you know."

I was so amused by them that, to get more of it, I did my best to take their point of view; and though it was an embarrassment to find myself appraising physically, as if they were animals on hire or useful blacks, a pair whom I should have expected to meet only in one of the relations in which criticism is tacit, I looked at Mrs. Monarch judicially enough to be able to exclaim, after a moment, with conviction: "Oh yes, a lady in a book!" She was singularly like a bad illustration.

"We'll stand up, if you like," said the Major; and he raised himself before me with a really grand air.

I could take his measure at a glance—he was six feet two and a perfect gentleman. It would have paid any club in process of formation and in want of a stamp to engage him at a salary to stand in the principal window. What struck me immediately was that in coming to me they had rather missed their vocation; they could surely have been turned to better account for advertising purposes. I couldn't of course see the thing in detail, but I could see them make someone's fortune—I don't mean their own. There was something in them for a waistcoat maker, an hotel-keeper or a soap-vendor. I could imagine "We always use it" pinned on their bosoms with the greatest effect; I had a vision of the promptitude with which they would launch a table d'hôte.

Mrs. Monarch sat still, not from pride but from shyness, and presently her husband said to her: "Get up my dear and show how smart you are." She obeyed, but she had no need to get up to show it. She walked to the end of the studio, and then she came back blushing, with her fluttered eyes on her husband. I was reminded of an incident I had acci-

dentally had a glimpse of in Paris—being with a friend there, a dramatist about to produce a play—when an actress came to him to ask to be intrusted with a part. She went through her paces before him, walked up and down as Mrs. Monarch was doing. Mrs. Monarch did it quite as well, but I abstained from applauding. It was very odd to see such people apply for such poor pay. She looked as if she had ten thousand a year. Her husband had used the word that described her: she was, in the London current jargon, essentially and typically "smart." Her figure was, in the same order of ideas, conspicuously and irreproachably "good." For a woman of her age her waist was surprisingly small; her elbow moreover had the orthodox crook. She held her head at the conventional angle; but why did she come to *me!* She ought to have tried on jackets at a big shop. I feared my visitors were not only destitute, but "artistic" —which would be a great complication. When she sat down again I thanked her, observing that what a draughtsman most valued in his model was the faculty of keeping quiet.

"Oh, *she* can keep quiet," said Major Monarch. Then he added, jocosely: "I've always kept her quiet."

"I'm not a nasty fidget, am I?" Mrs. Monarch appealed to her husband.

He addressed his answers to me. "Perhaps it isn't out of place to mention—because we ought to be quite business-like, oughtn't we? —that when I married her she was known as the Beautiful Statue."

"Oh dear!" said Mrs. Monarch, ruefully.

"Of course I should want a certain amount of expression," I rejoined.

"Of *course!*" they both exclaimed.

"And then I suppose you know that you'll get awfully tired."

"Oh, we *never* get tired!" they eagerly cried.

"Have you had any kind of practice?"

They hesitated—they looked at each other. "We've been photographed, *immensely*," said Mrs. Monarch.

"She means the fellows have asked us," added the Major.

"I see—because you're so good-looking."

"I don't know what they thought, but they were always after us."

"We always got our photographs for nothing," smiled Mrs. Monarch.

"We might have brought some, my dear," her husband remarked.

"I'm not sure we have any left. We've given quantities away," she explained to me.

"With our autographs and that sort of thing," said the Major.

"Are they to be got in the shops?" I inquired, as a harmless pleasantry.

"Oh, yes; *hers*—they used to be."

"Not now," said Mrs. Monarch, with her eyes on the floor.

II

I could fancy the "sort of thing" they put on the presentation-copies of their photographs, and I was sure they wrote a beautiful hand. It was odd how quickly I was sure of everything that concerned them. If they were now so poor as to have to earn shillings and pence, they never had had much of a margin. Their good looks had been their capital, and they had good-humouredly made the most of the career that this resource marked out for them. It was in their faces, the blankness, the deep intellectual repose of the twenty years of country-house visiting which had given them pleasant intonations. I could see the sunny drawing-rooms, sprinkled with periodicals she didn't read, in which Mrs. Monarch had continuously sat; I could see the wet shrubberies in which she had walked, equipped to admiration for either exercise. I could see the rich covers the Major had helped to shoot and the wonderful garments in which, late at night, he repaired to the smoking-room to talk about them. I could imagine their leggings and waterproofs, their knowing tweeds and rugs, their rolls of sticks and cases of tackle and neat umbrellas; and I could evoke the exact appearance of their servants and the compact variety of their luggage on the platforms of country stations.

They gave small tips, but they were liked; they didn't do anything themselves, but they were welcome. They looked so well

everywhere; they gratified the general relish for stature, complexion and "form." They knew it without fatuity or vulgarity, and they respected themselves in consequence. They were not superficial; they were thorough and kept themselves up—it had been their line. People with such a taste for activity had to have some line. I could feel how, even in a dull house, they could have been counted upon for cheerfulness. At present something had happened—it didn't matter what, their little income had grown less, it had grown least—and they had to do something for pocket-money. Their friends liked them, but didn't like to support them. There was something about them that represented credit—their clothes, their manners, their type; but if credit is a large empty pocket in which an occasional chink reverberates, the chink at least must be audible. What they wanted of me was to help to make it so. Fortunately they had no children—I soon divined that. They would also perhaps wish our relations to be kept secret: this was why it was "for the figure"—the reproduction of the face would betray them.

I liked them—they were so simple; and I had no objection to them if they would suit. But, somehow, with all their perfections I didn't easily believe in them. After all they were amateurs, and the ruling passion of my life was the detestation of the amateur. Combined with this was another perversity—an innate preference for the represented subject over the real one: the defect of the real one was so apt to be a lack of representation. I liked things that appeared; then one was sure. Whether they *were* or not was a subordinate and almost always a profitless question. There were other considerations, the first of which was that I already had two or three people in use, notably a young person with big feet, in alpaca, from Kilburn, who for a couple of years had come to me regularly for my illustrations and with whom I was still—perhaps ignobly—satisfied. I frankly explained to my visitors how the case stood; but they had taken more precautions than I supposed. They had reasoned out their opportunity, for Claude Rivet had told them of the projected *édition de luxe* of one of the writers of our day—the rarest of the novelists—who, long neglected by the multitudinous vulgar and dearly prized by the attentive (need I mention Philip Vincent?) had had the happy fortune of seeing, late in life, the dawn and then the full light of a higher criticism—an estimate in which, on the part of the public, there was something really of expiation. The edition in question, planned by a publisher of taste, was practically an act of high reparation; the woodcuts with which it was to be enriched were the homage of English art to one of the most independent representatives of English letters. Major and Mrs. Monarch confessed to me that they had hoped I might be able to work *them* into my share of the enterprise. They knew I was to do the first of the books, "Rutland Ramsay," but I had to make clear to them that my participation in the rest of the affair—this first book was to be a test—was to depend on the satisfaction I should give. If this should be limited my employers would drop me without a scruple. It was therefore a crisis for me, and naturally I was making special preparations, looking about for new people, if they should be necessary, and securing the best types. I admitted however that I should like to settle down to two or three good models who would do for everything.

"Should we have often to—a—put on special clothes?" Mrs. Monarch timidly demanded.

"Dear, yes—that's half the business."

"And should we be expected to supply our own costumes?"

"Oh, no; I've got a lot of things. A painter's models put on—or put off—anything he likes."

"And do you mean—a—the same?"

"The same?"

Mrs. Monarch looked at her husband again.

"Oh, she was just wondering," he explained, "if the costumes are in *general* use." I had to confess that they were, and I mentioned further that some of them (I had a lot of genuine, greasy last-century things), had served their time, a hundred years ago, on living, world-stained men and women.

"We'll put on anything that *fits*," said the Major.

"Oh, I arrange that—they fit in the pictures."

"I'm afraid I should do better for the modern books. I would come as you like," said Mrs. Monarch.

"She has got a lot of clothes at home: they might do for contemporary life," her husband continued.

"Oh, I can fancy scenes in which you'd be quite natural." And indeed I could see the slipshod rearrangements of stale properties—the stories I tried to produce pictures for without the exasperation of reading them—whose sandy tracts the good lady might help to people. But I had to return to the fact that for this sort of work—the daily mechanical grind—I was already equipped; the people I was working with were fully adequate.

"We only thought we might be more like *some* characters," said Mrs. Monarch mildly, getting up.

Her husband also rose; he stood looking at me with a dim wistfulness that was touching in so fine a man. "Wouldn't it be rather a pull sometimes to have—a—to have?" He hung fire; he wanted me to help him by phrasing what he meant. But I couldn't—I didn't know. So he brought it out, awkwardly: "The *real* thing; a gentleman, you know, or a lady." I was quite ready to give a general assent—I admitted that there was a great deal in that. This encouraged Major Monarch to say, following up his appeal with an unacted gulp; "It's awfully hard—we've tried everything." The gulp was communicative; it proved too much for his wife. Before I knew it Mrs. Monarch had dropped again upon a divan and burst into tears. Her husband sat down beside her, holding one of her hands; whereupon she quickly dried her eyes with the other, while I felt embarrassed as she looked up at me. "There isn't a confounded job I haven't applied for—waited for—prayed for. You can fancy we'd be pretty bad first. Secretaryships and that sort of thing? You might as well ask for a peerage. I'd be *anything*—I'm strong; a messenger or a coalheaver. I'd put on a gold-laced cap and open carriage-doors in front of the haberdasher's; I'd hang about a station, to carry portmanteaus; I'd be a postman. But they won't *look* at you; there are thousands, as good as yourself, already on the ground. *Gentlemen*, poor beggars, who have drunk their wine, who have kept their hunters!"

I was as reassuring as I knew how to be, and my visitors were presently on their feet again while, for the experiment, we agreed on an hour. We were discussing it when the door opened and Miss Churm came in with a wet umbrella. Miss Churm had to take the omnibus to Maida Vale and then walk half-a-mile. She looked a trifle blowsy and slightly splashed. I scarcely ever saw her come in without thinking afresh how odd it was that, being so little in herself, she should yet be so much in others. She was a meagre little Miss Churm, but she was an ample heroine of romance. She was only a freckled cockney, but she could represent everything, from a fine lady to a shepherdess; she had the faculty, as she might have had a fine voice or long hair. She couldn't spell, and she loved beer, but she had two or three "points," and practice, and a knack, and mother-wit, and a kind of whimsical sensibility, and a love of the theatre, and seven sisters, and not an ounce of respect, especially for the *h*. The first thing my visitors saw was that her umbrella was wet, and in their spotless perfection they visibly winced at it. The rain had come on since their arrival.

"I'm all in a soak; there *was* a mess of people in the 'bus. I wish you lived near a stytion," said Miss Churm. I requested her to get ready as quickly as possible, and she passed into the room in which she always changed her dress. But before going out she asked me what she was to get into this time.

"It's the Russian princess, don't you know?" I answered; "the one with the 'golden eyes,' in black velvet, for the long thing in the *Cheapside*."

"Golden eyes? I *say!*" cried Miss Churm, while my companions watched her with intensity as she withdrew. She always arranged herself, when she was late, before I could turn round; and I kept my visitors a little,

on purpose, so that they might get an idea, from seeing her, what would be expected of themselves. I mentioned that she was quite my notion of an excellent model—she was really very clever.

"Do you think she looks like a Russian princess?" Major Monarch asked, with lurking alarm.

"When I make her, yes."

"Oh, if you have to *make* her—!" he reasoned, acutely.

"That's the most you can ask. There are so many that are not makeable."

"Well now, *here's* a lady"—and with a persuasive smile he passed his arm into his wife's—"who's already made!"

"Oh, I'm not a Russian princess," Mrs. Monarch protested, a little coldly. I could see that she had known some and didn't like them. There, immediately, was a complication of a kind that I never had to fear with Miss Churm.

This young lady came back in black velvet—the gown was rather rusty and very low on her lean shoulders—and with a Japanese fan in her red hands. I reminded her that in the scene I was doing she had to look over someone's head. "I forget whose it is; but it doesn't matter. Just look over a head."

"I'd rather look over a stove," said Miss Churm; and she took her station near the fire. She fell into position, settled herself into a tall attitude, gave a certain backward inclination to her head and a certain forward droop to her fan, and looked, at least to my prejudiced sense, distinguished and charming, foreign and dangerous. We left her looking so, while I went down-stairs with Major and Mrs. Monarch.

"I think I could come about as near it as that," said Mrs. Monarch.

"Oh, you think she's shabby, but you must allow for the alchemy of art."

However, they went off with an evident increase of comfort, founded on their demonstrable advantage in being the real thing. I could fancy them shuddering over Miss Churm. She was very droll about them when I went back, for I told her what they wanted.

"Well, if *she* can sit I'll tyke to bookkeeping," said my model.

"She's very lady-like," I replied, as an innocent form of aggravation.

"So much the worse for *you*. That means she can't turn round."

"She'll do for the fashionable novels."

"Oh yes, she'll *do* for them!" my model humorously declared. "Ain't they bad enough without her?" I had often sociably denounced them to Miss Churm.

III

It was for the elucidation of a mystery in one of these works that I first tried Mrs. Monarch. Her husband came with her, to be useful if necessary—it was sufficiently clear that as a general thing he would prefer to come with her. At first I wondered if this were for "propriety's" sake—if he were going to be jealous and meddling. The idea was too tiresome, and if it had been confirmed it would speedily have brought our acquaintance to a close. But I soon saw there was nothing in it and that if he accompanied Mrs. Monarch it was (in addition to the chance of being wanted), simply because he had nothing else to do. When she was away from him his occupation was gone—she never *had* been away from him. I judged, rightly, that in their awkward situation their close union was their main comfort and that this union had no weak spot. It was a real marriage, an encouragement to the hesitating, a nut for pessimists to crack. Their address was humble (I remember afterwards thinking it had been the only thing about them that was really professional), and I could fancy the lamentable lodgings in which the Major would have been left alone. He could bear them with his wife—he couldn't bear them without her.

He had too much tact to try and make himself agreeable when he couldn't be useful; so he simply sat and waited, when I was too absorbed in my work to talk. But I liked to make him talk—it made my work, when it didn't interrupt it, less sordid, less special. To listen to him was to combine the excitement of going out with the economy of stay-

ing at home. There was only one hindrance: that I seemed not to know any of the people he and his wife had known. I think he wondered extremely, during the term of our intercourse, whom the deuce I *did* know. He hadn't a stray sixpence of an idea to fumble for; so we didn't spin it very fine—we confined ourselves to questions of leather and even of liquor (saddlers and breeches-makers and how to get good claret cheap), and matters like "good trains" and the habits of small game. His lore on these last subjects was astonishing, he managed to interweave the station-master with the ornithologist When he couldn't talk about greater things he could talk cheerfully about smaller, and since I couldn't accompany him into reminiscences of the fashionable world he could lower the conversation without a visible effort to my level.

So earnest a desire to please was touching in a man who could so easily have knocked one down. He looked after the fire and had an opinion on the draught of the stove, without my asking him, and I could see that he thought many of my arrangements not half clever enough. I remember telling him that if I were only rich I would offer him a salary to come and teach me how to live. Sometimes he gave a random sigh, of which the essence was: "Give me even such a bare old barrack as *this*, and I'd do something with it!" When I wanted to use him he came alone; which was an illustration of the superior courage of women. His wife could bear her solitary second floor, and she was in general more discreet; showing by various small reserves that she was alive to the propriety of keeping our relations markedly professional —not letting them slide into sociability. She wished it to remain clear that she and the Major were employed, not cultivated, and if she approved of me as a superior, who could be kept in his place, she never thought me quite good enough for an equal.

She sat with great intensity, giving the whole of her mind to it, and was capable of remaining for an hour almost as motionless as if she were before a photographer's lens. I could see she had been photographed often, but somehow the very habit that made her good for that purpose unfitted her for mine. At first I was extremely pleased with her lady-like air, and it was a satisfaction, on coming to follow her lines, to see how good they were and how far they could lead the pencil. But after a few times I began to find her too insurmountably stiff; do what I would with it my drawing looked like a photograph or a copy of a photograph. Her figure had no variety of expression—she herself had no sense of variety. You may say that this was my business, was only a question of placing her. I placed her in every conceivable position, but she managed to obliterate their differences. She was always a lady certainly, and into the bargain was always the same lady. She was the real thing, but always the same thing. There were moments when I was oppressed by the serenity of her confidence that she *was* the real thing. All her dealings with me and all her husband's were an implication that this was lucky for *me*. Meanwhile I found myself trying to invent types that approached her own, instead of making her own transform itself—in the clever way that was not impossible, for instance, to poor Miss Churm. Arrange as I would and take the precautions I would, she always, in my pictures, came out too tall—landing me in the dilemma of having represented a fascinating woman as seven feet high, which, out of respect perhaps to my own very much scantier inches, was far from my idea of such a personage.

The case was worse with the Major—nothing I could do would keep *him* down, so that he became useful only for the representation of brawny giants. I adored variety and range, I cherished human accidents, the illustrative note; I wanted to characterise closely, and the thing in the world I most hated was the danger of being ridden by a type. I had quarrelled with some of my friends about it—I had parted company with them for maintaining that one *had* to be, and that if the type was beautiful (witness Raphael and Leonardo), the servitude was only a gain. I was neither Leonardo nor Raphael; I might only be a presumptuous young modern searcher, but I held that

everything was to be sacrificed sooner than character. When they averred that the haunting type in question could easily *be* character, I retorted, perhaps superficially: "Whose?" It couldn't be everybody's—it might end in being nobody's.

After I had drawn Mrs. Monarch a dozen times I perceived more clearly than before that the value of such a model as Miss Churm resided precisely in the fact that she had no positive stamp, combined of course with the other fact that what she did have was a curious and inexplicable talent for imitation. Her usual appearance was like a curtain which she could draw up at request for a capital performance. This performance was simply suggestive; but it was a word to the wise—it was vivid and pretty. Sometimes, even, I thought it, though she was plain herself, too insipidly pretty; I made it a reproach to her that the figures drawn from her were monotonously (*bêtement*, as we used to say) graceful. Nothing made her more angry: it was so much her pride to feel that she could sit for characters that had nothing in common with each other. She would accuse me at such moments of taking away her "reputytion."

It suffered a certain shrinkage, this queer quantity, from the repeated visits of my new friends. Miss Churm was greatly in demand, never in want of employment, so I had no scruple in putting her off occasionally, to try them more at my ease. It was certainly amusing at first to do the real thing—it was amusing to do Major Monarch's trousers. They *were* the real thing, even if he did come out colossal. It was amusing to do his wife's back hair (it was so mathematically neat,) and the particular "smart" tension of her tight stays. She lent herself especially to positions in which the face was somewhat averted or blurred; she abounded in ladylike back views and *profils perdus*. When she stood erect she took naturally one of the attitudes in which court-painters represent queens and princesses; so that I found myself wondering whether, to draw out this accomplishment, I couldn't get the editor of the *Cheapside* to publish a really royal romance, "A Tale of Buckingham Palace." Sometimes, however, the real thing and the make-believe came into contact; by which I mean that Miss Churm, keeping an appointment or coming to make one on days when I had much work in hand, encountered her invidious rivals. The encounter was not on their part, for they noticed her no more than if she had been the housemaid; not from intentional loftiness, but simply because, as yet, professionally, they didn't know how to fraternise, as I could guess that they would have liked—or at least that the Major would. They couldn't talk about the omnibus—they always walked; and they didn't know what else to try—she wasn't interested in good trains or cheap claret. Besides, they must have felt—in the air—that she was amused at them, secretly derisive of their ever knowing how. She was not a person to conceal her scepticism if she had had a chance to show it. On the other hand Mrs. Monarch didn't think her tidy; for why else did she take pains to say to me (it was going out of the way, for Mrs. Monarch), that she didn't like dirty women?

One day when my young lady happened to be present with my other sitters (she even dropped in, when it was convenient, for a chat), I asked her to be so good as to lend a hand in getting tea—a service with which she was familiar and which was one of a class that, living as I did in a small way, with slender domestic resources, I often appealed to my models to render. They liked to lay hands on my property, to break the sitting, and sometimes the china—I made them feel Bohemian. The next time I saw Miss Churm after this incident she surprised me greatly by making a scene about it—she accused me of having wished to humiliate her. She had not resented the outrage at the time, but had seemed obliging and amused, enjoying the comedy of asking Mrs. Monarch, who sat vague and silent, whether she would have cream and sugar, and putting an exaggerated simper into the question. She had tried intonations—as if she too wished to pass for the real thing; till I was afraid my other visitors would take offence.

Oh, *they* were determined not to do this; and their touching patience was the measure

of their great need. They would sit by the hour, uncomplaining, till I was ready to use them; they would come back on the chance of being wanted and would walk away cheerfully if they were not. I used to go to the door with them to see in what magnificent order they retreated. I tried to find other employment for them—I introduced them to several artists. But they didn't "take," for reasons I could appreciate, and I became conscious, rather anxiously, that after such disappointment they fell back upon me with a heavier weight. They did me the honour to think that it was I who was most *their* form. They were not picturesque enough for the painters, and in those days there were not so many serious workers in black and white. Besides, they had an eye to the great job I had mentioned to them—they had secretly set their hearts on supplying the right essence for my pictorial vindication of our fine novelist. They knew that for this undertaking I should want no costume-effects, none of the frippery of past ages—that it was a case in which everything would be contemporary and satirical and, presumably, genteel. If I could work them into it their future would be assured, for the labour would of course be long and the occupation steady.

One day, Mrs. Monarch came without her husband—she explained his absence by his having had to go to the City. While she sat there in her usual anxious stiffness there came, at the door, a knock which I immediately recognised as the subdued appeal of a model out of work. It was followed by the entrance of a young man whom I easily perceived to be a foreigner and who proved in fact an Italian acquainted with no English word but my name, which he uttered in a way that made it seem to include all others. I had not then visited his country, nor was I proficient in his tongue; but as he was not so meanly constituted—what Italian is?—as to depend only on that member for expression he conveyed to me, in familiar but graceful mimicry, that he was in search of exactly the employment in which the lady before me was engaged, I was not struck with him at first, and while I continued to draw I emitted rough sounds of discouragement and dismissal. He stood his ground, however, not importunately, but with a dumb, dog-like fidelity in his eyes which amounted to innocent impudence—the manner of a devoted servant (he might have been in the house for years), unjustly suspected. Suddenly I saw that this very attitude and expression made a picture, whereupon I told him to sit down and wait till I should be free. There was another picture in the way he obeyed me, and I observed as I worked that there were others still in the way he looked wonderingly, with his head thrown back, about the high studio. He might have been crossing himself in St. Peter's. Before I finished I said to myself: "The fellow's a bankrupt orange-monger, but he's a treasure."

When Mrs. Monarch withdrew he passed across the room like a flash to open the door for her, standing there with the rapt, pure gaze of the young Dante spellbound by the young Beatrice. As I never insisted, in such situations, on the blankness of the British domestic, I reflected that he had the making of a servant (and I needed one, but couldn't pay him to be only that), as well as of a model; in short I made up my mind to adopt my bright adventurer if he would agree to officiate in the double capacity. He jumped at my offer, and in the event my rashness (for I had known nothing about him) was not brought home to me. He proved a sympathetic though a desultory ministrant, and had in a wonderful degree the *sentiment de la pose*. It was uncultivated, instinctive; a part of the happy instinct which had guided him to my door and helped him to spell out my name on the card nailed to it. He had had no other introduction to me than a guess, from the shape of my high north window, seen outside, that my place was a studio and that as a studio it would contain an artist. He had wandered to England in search of fortune, like other itinerants, and had embarked, with a partner and a small green handcart, on the sale of penny ices. The ices had melted away and the partner had dissolved in their train. My young man wore tight yellow trousers with reddish stripes and his name was Oronte. He was sallow but fair, and when I put him into some old

clothes of my own he looked like an Englishman. He was as good as Miss Churm, who could look, when required, like an Italian.

IV

I thought Mrs. Monarch's face slightly convulsed when, on her coming back with her husband, she found Oronte installed. It was strange to have to recognise in a scrap of a lazzarone a competitor to her magnificent Major. It was she who scented danger first, for the Major was anecdotically unconscious. But Oronte gave us tea, with a hundred eager confusions (he had never seen such a queer process), and I think she thought better of me for having at last an "establishment." They saw a couple of drawings that I had made of the establishment, and Mrs. Monarch hinted that it never would have struck her that he had sat for them. "Now the drawings you make from *us*, they look exactly like us," she reminded me, smiling in triumph; and I recognised that this was indeed just their defect. When I drew the Monarchs I couldn't, somehow, get away from them—get into the character I wanted to represent; and I had not the least desire my model should be discoverable in my picture. Miss Churm never was, and Mrs. Monarch thought I hid her, very properly, because she was vulgar; whereas if she was lost it was only as the dead who go to heaven are lost—in the gain of an angel the more.

By this time I had got a certain start with "Rutland Ramsay," the first novel in the great projected series; that is, I had produced a dozen drawings, several with the help of the Major and his wife, and I had sent them in for approval. My understanding with the publishers, as I have already hinted, had been that I was to be left to do my work, in this particular case, as I liked, with the whole book committed to me; but my connection with the rest of the series was only contingent. There were moments when, frankly, it *was* a comfort to have the real thing under one's hand; for there were characters in "Rutland Ramsay" that were very much like it. There were people presumably as straight as the Major and women of as good a fashion as Mrs. Monarch. There was a great deal of country-house life—treated, it is true, in a fine, fanciful, ironical, generalized way—and there was a considerable implication of knickerbockers and kilts. There were certain things I had to settle at the outset; such things for instance as the exact appearance of the hero, the particular bloom of the heroine. The author of course gave me a lead, but there was a margin for interpretation. I took the Monarchs into my confidence, I told them frankly what I was about, I mentioned my embarrassments and alternatives. "Oh, take *him!*" Mrs. Monarch murmured sweetly, looking at her husband; and "What could you want better than my wife?" the Major inquired, with the comfortable candour that now prevailed between us.

I was not obliged to answer these remarks —I was only obliged to place my sitters. I was not easy in mind, and I postponed, a little timidly perhaps, the solution of the question. The book was a large canvas, the other figures were numerous, and I worked off at first some of the episodes in which the hero and the heroine were not concerned. When once I had set *them* up I should have to stick to them—I couldn't make my young man seven feet high in one place and five feet nine in another. I inclined on the whole to the latter measurement, though the Major more than once reminded me that *he* looked about as young as anyone. It was indeed quite possible to arrange him, for the figure, so that it would have been difficult to detect his age. After the spontaneous Oronte had been with me a month, and after I had given him to understand several different times that his native exuberance would presently constitute an insurmountable barrier to our further intercourse, I waked to a sense of his heroic capacity. He was only five feet seven, but the remaining inches were latent. I tried him almost secretly at first, for I was really rather afraid of the judgment my other models would pass on such a choice. If they regarded Miss Churm as little better than a snare, what would they think of the representation by a person so little the real thing as an Italian street-vendor of a protagonist formed by a public school?

If I went a little in fear of them it was not because they bullied me, because they had got an oppressive foothold, but because in their really pathetic decorum and mysteriously permanent newness they counted on me so intensely. I was therefore very glad when Jack Hawley came home: he was always of such good counsel. He painted badly himself, but there was no one like him for putting his finger on the place. He had been absent from England for a year; he had been somewhere—I don't remember where—to get a fresh eye. I was in a good deal of dread of any such organ; but we were old friends; he had been away for months and a sense of emptiness was creeping into my life. I hadn't dodged a missile for a year.

He came back with a fresh eye, but with the same old black velvet blouse, and the first evening he spent in my studio we smoked cigarettes till the small hours. He had done no work himself, he had only got the eye; so the field was clear for the production of my little things. He wanted to see what I had done for the *Cheapside*, but he was disappointed in the exhibition. That at least seemed the meaning of two or three comprehensive groans which, as he lounged on my big divan, on a folded leg, looking at my latest drawings, issued from his lips with the smoke of the cigarette.

"What's the matter with you?" I asked.

"What's the matter with *you!*"

"Nothing save that I'm mystified."

"You are indeed. You're quite off the hinge. What's the meaning of this new fad?" And he tossed me, with visible irreverence, a drawing in which I happened to have depicted both my majestic models. I asked if he didn't think it good, and he replied that it struck him as execrable, given the sort of thing I had always represented myself to him as wishing to arrive at; but I let that pass. I was too anxious to see exactly what he meant. The two figures in the picture looked colossal, but I supposed this was *not* what he meant, inasmuch as, for aught he knew to the contrary, I might have been trying for that. I maintained that I was working exactly in the same way as when he last had done me the honour to commend me. "Well, there's a big hole somewhere," he answered; "wait a bit and I'll discover it." I depended upon him to do so: where else was the fresh eye? But he produced at last nothing more luminous than "I don't know—I don't like your types." This was lame, for a critic who had never consented to discuss with me anything but the question of execution, the direction of strokes and the mystery of values.

"In the drawings you've been looking at I think my types are very handsome."

"Oh, they won't do!"

"I've had a couple of new models."

"I see you have. *They* won't do."

"Are you very sure of that?"

"Absolutely—they're stupid."

"You mean *I* am—for I ought to get round that."

"You *can't*—with such people. Who are they?"

I told him, as far as was necessary, and he declared, heartlessly: "*Ce sont des gens qu'il faut mettre à la porte.*"

"You've never seen them; they're awfully good," I compassionately objected.

"Not seen them? Why, all this recent work of yours drops to pieces with them. It's all I want to see of them."

"No one else has said anything against it—the *Cheapside* people are pleased."

"Everyone else is an ass, and the *Cheapside* people the biggest asses of all. Come, don't pretend, at this time of day, to have pretty illusions about the public, especially about publishers and editors. It's not for *such* animals you work—it's for those who know, *coloro che sanno;* so keep straight for *me* if you can't keep straight for yourself. There's a certain sort of thing you tried for from the first—and a very good thing it is. But this twaddle isn't *in* it." When I talked with Hawley later about "Rutland Ramsay" and its possible successors he declared that I must get back into my boat again or I would go to the bottom. His voice in short was the voice of warning.

I noted the warning, but I didn't turn my friends out of doors. They bored me a good deal; but the very fact that they bored me admonished me not to sacrifice them—if there was anything to be done with them—

simply to irritation. As I look back at this phase they seem to me to have pervaded my life not a little. I have a vision of them as most of the time in my studio, seated, against the wall, on an old velvet bench to be out of the way, and looking like a pair of patient courtiers in a royal ante-chamber. I am convinced that during the coldest weeks of the winter they held their ground because it saved them fire. Their newness was losing its gloss, and it was impossible not to feel that they were objects of charity. Whenever Miss Churm arrived they went away, and after I was fairly launched in "Rutland Ramsay" Miss Churm arrived pretty often. They managed to express to me tacitly that they supposed I wanted her for the low life of the book, and I let them suppose it, since they had attempted to study the work—it was lying about the studio—without discovering that it dealt only with the highest circles. They had dipped into the most brilliant of our novelists, without deciphering many passages. I still took an hour from them, now and again, in spite of Jack Hawley's warning: it would be time enough to dismiss them, if dismissal should be necessary, when the rigour of the season was over. Hawley had made their acquaintance—he had met them at my fireside—and thought them a ridiculous pair. Learning that he was a painter they tried to approach him, to show him too that they were the real thing; but he looked at them, across the big room, as if they were miles away: they were a compendium of everything that he most objected to in the social system of his country. Such people as that, all convention and patent-leather, with ejaculations that stopped conversation, had no business in a studio. A studio was a place to learn to see, and how could you see through a pair of feather beds?

The main inconvenience I suffered at their hands was that, at first, I was shy of letting them discover how my artful little servant had begun to sit to me for "Rutland Ramsay." They knew that I had been odd enough (they were prepared by this time to allow oddity to artists,) to pick a foreign vagabond out of the streets, when I might have had a person with whiskers and credentials; but it was some time before they learned how high I rated his accomplishments. They found him in an attitude more than once, but they never doubted I was doing him as an organ-grinder. There were several things they never guessed, and one of them was that for a striking scene in the novel, in which a footman briefly figured, it occurred to me to make use of Major Monarch as the menial. I kept putting this off, I didn't like to ask him to don the livery—besides the difficulty of finding a livery to fit him. At last, one day late in the winter, when I was at work on the despised Oronte (he caught one's idea in an instant), and was in the glow of feeling that I was going very straight, they came in, the Major and his wife, with their society laugh about nothing (there was less and less to laugh at), like country-callers—they always reminded me of that—who have walked across the park after church and are presently persuaded to stay to luncheon. Luncheon was over, but they could stay to tea—I knew they wanted it. The fit was on me, however, and I couldn't let my ardour cool and my work wait, with the fading daylight, while my model prepared it. So I asked Mrs. Monarch if she would mind laying it out—a request which, for an instant, brought all the blood to her face. Her eyes were on her husband's for a second, and some mute telegraphy passed between them. Their folly was over the next instant; his cheerful shrewdness put an end to it. So far from pitying their wounded pride, I must add, I was moved to give it as complete a lesson as I could. They bustled about together and got out the cups and saucers and made the kettle boil. I know they felt as if they were waiting on my servant, and when the tea was prepared I said: "He'll have a cup, please—he's tired." Mrs. Monarch brought him one where he stood, and he took it from her as if he had been a gentleman at a party, squeezing a crush-hat with an elbow.

Then it came over me that she had made a great effort for me—made it with a kind of nobleness—and that I owed her a compensation. Each time I saw her after this I wondered what the compensation could be.

I couldn't go on doing the wrong thing to oblige them. Oh, it *was* the wrong thing, the stamp of the work for which they sat—Hawley was not the only person to say it now. I sent in a large number of the drawings I had made for "Rutland Ramsay," and I received a warning that was more to the point than Hawley's. The artistic adviser of the house for which I was working was of opinion that many of my illustrations were not what had been looked for. Most of these illustrations were the subjects in which the Monarchs had figured. Without going into the question of what *had* been looked for, I saw at this rate I shouldn't get the other books to do. I hurled myself in despair upon Miss Churm, I put her through all her paces. I not only adopted Oronte publicly as my hero, but one morning when the Major looked in to see if I didn't require him to finish a figure for the *Cheapside*, for which he had begun to sit the week before. I told him that I had changed my mind—I would do the drawing from my man. At this my visitor turned pale and stood looking at me. "Is *he* your idea of an English gentleman?" he asked.

I was disappointed, I was nervous, I wanted to get on with my work; so I replied with irritation: "Oh, my dear Major—I can't be ruined for *you!*"

He stood another moment; then, without a word, he quitted the studio. I drew a long breath when he was gone, for I said to myself that I shouldn't see him again. I had not told him definitely that I was in danger of having my work rejected, but I was vexed at his not having felt the catastrophe in the air, read with me the moral of our fruitless collaboration, the lesson that, in the deceptive atmosphere of art, even the highest respectability may fail of being plastic.

I didn't owe my friends money, but I did see them again. They re-appeared together, three days later, and under the circumstances there was something tragic in the fact. It was a proof to me that they could find nothing else in life to do. They had threshed the matter out in a dismal conference—they had digested the bad news that they were not in for the series. If they were not useful to me even for the *Cheapside* their function seemed difficult to determine, and I could only judge at first that they had come, forgivingly, decorously, to take a last leave. This made me rejoice in secret that I had little leisure for a scene; for I had placed both my other models in position together and I was pegging away at a drawing from which I hoped to derive glory. It had been suggested by the passage in which Rutland Ramsay, drawing up a chair to Artemisia's piano-stool, says extraordinary things to her while she ostensibly fingers out a difficult piece of music. I had done Miss Churm at the piano before—it was an attitude in which she knew how to take on an absolutely poetic grace. I wished the two figures to "compose" together, intensely, and my little Italian had entered perfectly into my conception. The pair were vividly before me, the piano had been pulled out; it was a charming picture of blended youth and murmured love, which I had only to catch and keep. My visitors stood and looked at it, and I was friendly to them over my shoulder.

They made no response, but I was used to silent company and went on with my work, only a little disconcerted (even though exhilarated by the sense that *this* was at least the ideal thing), at not having got rid of them after all. Presently I heard Mrs. Monarch's sweet voice beside, or rather above me: "I wish her hair was a little better done." I looked up and she was staring with a strange fixedness at Miss Churm whose back was turned to her. "Do you mind my just touching it?" she went on—a question which made me spring up for an instant, as with the instinctive fear that she might do the young lady a harm. But she quieted me with a glance I shall never forget—I confess I should like to have been able to paint *that* —and went for a moment to my model. She spoke to her softly, laying a hand upon her shoulder and bending over her; and as the girl, understandingly, gratefully assented, she disposed her rough curls, with a few quick passes, in such a way as to make Miss Churm's head twice as charming. It was one of the most heroic personal services I have ever seen rendered. Then Mrs. Monarch

turned away with a low sigh and, looking about her as if for something to do, stooped to the floor with a noble humility and picked up a dirty rag that had dropped out of my paint-box.

The Major meanwhile had also been looking for something to do and, wandering to the other end of the studio, saw before him my breakfast things, neglected, unremoved. "I say, can't I be useful *here?*" he called out to me with an irrepressible quaver. I assented with a laugh that I fear was awkward and for the next ten minutes, while I worked, I heard the light clatter of china and the tinkle of spoons and glass. Mrs. Monarch assisted her husband—they washed up my crockery, they put it away. They wandered off into my little scullery, and I afterwards found that they had cleaned my knives and that my slender stock of plate had an unprecedented surface. When it came over me, the latent eloquence of what they were doing, I confess that my drawing was blurred for a moment—the picture swam. They had accepted their failure, but they couldn't accept their fate. They had bowed their heads in bewilderment to the perverse and cruel law in virtue of which the real thing could be so much less precious than the unreal; but they didn't want to starve. If my servants were my models, my models might be my servants. They would reverse the parts—the others would sit for the ladies and gentlemen, and *they* would do the work. They would still be in the studio—it was an intense dumb appeal to me not to turn them out. "Take us on," they wanted to say—"we'll do *anything.*"

When all this hung before me the *afflatus* vanished—my pencil dropped from my hand. My sitting was spoiled and I got rid of my sitters, who were also evidently rather mystified and awestruck. Then, alone with the Major and his wife, I had a most uncomfortable moment. He put their prayer into a single sentence: "I say, you know—just let *us* do for you, can't you?" I couldn't—it was dreadful to see them emptying my slops; but I pretended I could, to oblige them, for about a week. Then I gave them a sum of money to go away; and I never saw them again. I obtained the remaining books, but my friend Hawley repeats that Major and Mrs. Monarch did me a permanent harm, got me into a second-rate trick. If it be true I am content to have paid the price—for the memory.

Poetry

Eye, Ear, Mind

1

The Narrative Poem

THE FIRST stories were told as poems. Kipling recalled that timeless time when he said, "There arose a masterless man, who had taken no part in the action of his fellows, who had no special virtue, but who was afflicted . . . with the magic of the necessary word. He saw, he told, he described the merits of the notable deed in such a fashion, we are assured, that the words 'became alive and walked up and down in the hearts of all his hearers.'" Mrs. Case tells such a story, in "At Midnight on the Thirty-first of March." It walks up and down in the heart, as you try to tell it after reading it.

In a cosmic April Fool joke, God forgot Saugersville, a village somewhere north in the United States. The countryside, perhaps the world, had become primeval wilderness again, but left the half-sick and lonely John Herbert; Ed Winterhaus; Abe Givets and his large family; Earl Backus, who knew how to think for others, and Dolf Wick who could do his own thinking; and two hundred more ordinary people, to figure the thing out, and to make out. This number included the Rev. Ephraim Yule, who made it plain he thought God's joke was no joke at all, but a trial of the human spirit, and a good thing, too, though difficult.

This, as we say, couldn't happen here. But after the first few pages, after the gasoline and mail and bread trucks stop coming, and the men return silent and shaken from the impenetrable forest, and the village has begun to count its supplies, we know it *has* happened. And we know it has happened to us. We are deeply concerned in the obvious, the immediate, the desperately practical problems of food and cooperation, of fear and selfishness and love. And salt. How do you ration what gasoline there is in all the village gas-pumps when there will never be any more? What do you teach the children about history if the world has ended? Some people can get along without history or gasoline, and some can't. This is the story.

Why tell it as a poem? The longest short story would not have room enough or time enough; the novel would be not too long, yet could not be as swift and as suggestive. It might be a three-act play: someone ought to make a play out of it. But poetry concentrates, poetry speeds. Time and the blood hurry with the beat of poetry. Try outlining this story as it might be told in prose, and see how many more thousands of words would be needed. The poet's transitions can be faster, the suggested emotion greater because it happens with the reader, and the pace brisker because little by little the rhythm of the low pitched iambic pentameter takes the pulse. By word, and word, by beat and beat of homely speech, one is carried into the story, and carried away. We live it, the best of all reading experience.

Courage, faith, hope and endurance come alive. This story is what the old minister said it is, a trial of the soul, and it becomes in the end a story of redemption. Whatever kind of person you are, you can find yourself in this tale, and whatever you would do to survive, someone in this book does. We see every aspect of human character, good and bad, and know everything that can happen to it, everything it can achieve. In the gallery of people ranged before us, the simple and the unselfish come through best—the children, the old minister, the willing, the responsible. For many others the new hardship is a satisfaction when they learn they can face it successfully.

Reading this poem is an unusual experience; at some point not even noticed, we have accepted the new condition of life just as the people of Saugersville do. We come down with a thump to the actual day and year in which we are reading the last page. We are back in the real world. But it is not the same world, and never will be. We have been through too much. We have been changed in our own lives by reading a story. The power that does it is the power of poetry, and this poem becomes allegory, with universal meanings.

At Midnight on the Thirty-first of March[1]

JOSEPHINE YOUNG CASE

I

I

At midnight on the thirty-first of March
No light shone out upon the village street
And every head in all of Saugersville
Was laid upon its pillow, sleep or wake.
Patches of white, the last of winter's snow,
Collected all the little light there was
Under a cloudy sky, between dark hills,
To shine alone of all things visible.
Only the slippery road, the roaring creek,
Two dozen houses in a valley cleft,
A mill, a store, two steeples pointing up,
A school, garage, the hotel, and the grange

[1] At Midnight on the Thirty-First of March by Josephine Young Case, published by Houghton Mifflin Company. Copyright, 1938, by Josephine Young Case, and reprinted by permission.

Were Saugersville, for anyone to see,
Given light to see by, or an eye to see.

Back upon the hill a restless head,
Too hot upon the pillow, called for light,
And restless hands reached for the switch; the bulb
As quick and brilliant as a lightning flash
Answered obedient and set forth the scene.
Tortured by solitude, and thought, and pain,
The young man's face shone bright before the lamp,
And homesick eyes looked straight into its light
As though it were his friend, a modern friend,
An urban banner in a rural land.
Desiring always what his health forbade—
The city's life and all the city's ways,
Which had been always his, until disease
Had sent him out to lead another life
Close to the earth, in sunshine and the air:
A lonely life, alone upon the hill;
A garden, and his house, and in it books,
Books always—now he turned again to read,
Seeking forever in philosophy
The answers he had sought for in his life
And nothing in his life had helped to find.
The sentences went on and on; his mind
Only half knew what moved before his eyes.
He rubbed his head and thought, 'This light's not good.'
And now indeed the bulb was not so bright
And faded every second, till it seemed
Almost a candle in the shadowy room.
Entranced, he watched it fade until a glow,
A gleaming end as on a candlewick,
Shone, and went out, and dark swept all around.
Lighting a match, he found another bulb
And screwed it in, but this too gave no light.
Stepping across the room, familiar, quick,
He found the switch that lit the kitchen light;
It clicked, and dark remained. The power was off.
He cursed the company and went to bed.

April the first was grey, a smoky dawn
That lifted sullenly behind the hill.
The air smelled strange. Muttering to himself,
Ed Winterhaus went slowly to the barn.
'There'll be a storm today or I'm a liar.'
The barn was dark inside, the cows smelled sweet.
He went to switch the light on, get to work,—
Even with machines there's work to do to milk.
No lights answered the switch his careless hand
Turned with a habit that required no thought.
But thought flashed on when no lights came to life.
He tried again; no answer. And the switch
That worked the milk machine was also dead.
He scratched his head, then tried what little ways
He knew to fix the thing, but soon found out
There was no power, nor any to be had.
He went to get a lantern, call his wife,
And saw the kitchen lit by kerosene—
A dusty lamp that stood upon the shelf
These fifteen years.—He shook his head and called,
'Come on Maria get to work. The cows
Will get a taste of oldtime milking now.'

By eight o'clock the farmer's milk is down
And teams and trucks and cars have brought their cans
To load on George's truck which, red and big,
Travels the thirteen miles to Centerfield,
The creamery and railroad. George is gone
By eight-fifteen, and everybody comes
To market at the store, to get the mail,
And talk about the government or the weather.
Upon that Monday morning, April first,
There was no talk except about the power,
And anger, curiosity, and spleen,
Varied in talk with well-contented words
From those, too poor or too conservative,
That had no electricity in their homes.
At last Earl Backus said—a man so slow
To move one would not guess the agile brain
Behind the grey and angled face—'Say, Bert,
Why don't you call the company and ask
What kind of service they are giving us?'
Bert Snyder, merchant general, a man
Little and sharp and kind, went to the phone
While the group around the stove said, 'Yes

That's what we'll do, call up the company
And ask them what the hell.' Bert turned the crank
And listened. Now outside the store the grey
Reluctant morning lightened up to show
The concrete road that ran straight through the town
White and untravelled. Everything was still
But for the few and quiet calls and cries
Of children walking down the road to school.
Bert rang again, and anxious rang once more,
While silence dropped around the stove and all
Listened as still as he. At last he turned
And puzzled said, 'Don't get no answer here.
The line seems dead. There must be something wrong.

There was no curses now, but baffled looks
And words on every lip that tried to find
The answer. 'If there'd been a storm, or snow
To break the poles and wires, that'd be one thing,
But wind ain't blowed and water ain't so high
It could do damage. Last year when the flood
Was down the valley, lights and phones were good.'
Now George came in, that drove the big red truck,
An hour before his time, and crossed the room
To warm his hands before the stove that showed
Such scarlet warmth in little window panes.
Bert went to say, 'Why, George, you here?'—and stopped
Because he saw his face. And all were still
And said no word, but looked at him and waited.
He was a burly man, and handsome too,
As easy-going as they come, and good,
But hated work, and found his big red truck
Better companion than a plow or hoe.
I don't suppose he ever had a thought
Except of what was standing right in front of him.
You wouldn't say he had much mind to lose,
But now he looked like all he had was gone.
They waited, and it might have been an hour
Before he spoke. 'The road ain't there no more.'
He sat down in a chair that creaked, and none
Replied. His hands that hung between his knees
Were shaking and his face was grey. He said,
'The mist hung down the valley, so I drove
Real slow. I couldn't hardly see my way
Down through Green Hollow. And the road seemed rough.
There round that biggest curve 'twas awful rough,
And then--there wasn't any road at all.
The bridge, the concrete bridge down just beyond—
Well, I could see it wasn't there. And then
I had to back—I couldn't turn—and backed
A half a mile, and came here quick's I could.'

No one said much, but finally Earl got up
And slowly went to get his car, and more
Went after, till a cavalcade of cars
Moved down the road as fast as they could go.
All went but Bert who had to mind the store
Come Judgement Day.

Ede Salzenbach, who lived across the way,
Had seen the men come out and go. She ran
To ask Mis' Snyder what the trouble was,
And soon a little group of puzzled wives
Stood looking down the road. Was this new thing
Another aberration of the men,
More serious, but still a male defect?
Or was it really some unheard-of fate,
That meant—as all catastrophe must mean—
More to the women than the men, who must
Bear their own sorrow and their menfolks too?
With sharp uncertain eyes they watched the road
While fear moved in their hearts and chilled their hands.

Over the dinner—for a man must eat
Even though the earth is rolling out from under—
The Warder family talked so fast their mouths

Could hardly keep up with both words and food.
Gus Warder had been one of those to go
To see the road that was no more a road.
'And then we went the other roads besides,
And everyone was just the same as that.
The road up Beeman's hill was good as far
As Ed's back field, and then it disappeared,
Ran out to nothing in a stand of woods
Where there haven't been no woods since I been here.
The western road goes by Abe Givets' place
To where it drops down in that marshy field—
The cat-tails grew right where the gravel was.'
Ma Warder and the pair of little boys
Were thick with questions, but the daughter May
Said nothing and her eyes were full and bright
As though she saw a vision in this thing.
Taking the dishes to the sink Ma paused
To try the switch again. Gus shook his head.
'That's no use. For all the wires are gone.
Down by the bridge they just plain stop.
I couldn't see a sign of those big poles
Of the high-tension line; and great big trees
Are growing where their clearing used to go.'

Taking the car as far as possible
Earl Backus and his brother John and Gus
Went out that afternoon to get to town,
Eight miles beyond the place the road had stopped
Down in Green Hollow. It was late at night
When weary-footed they came back at last
To a village that burned lamps and candles now
Later than electricity before.
Too tired to tell more than the barest tale,
They said they got there—a heart-breaking task
Through woods as thick as jungle, so at last
They tried the stream bed and made better time.
They saw no sign of any human thing.
But deer were there, and once a startled bear
That crashed back through the brush as suddenly
As he had come. And when they found at last
The place the Sauger Creek runs in the river
Where Centerfield had stood two hundred years
There was no town. The still and mighty trees
Loomed by the water where the railroad tracks
Were noisy day and night beside the town.
The current ran on slow and seeming still
A broad and quiet surface, mirrored grey.
Beyond that unbridged width the wooded hills
Stood back against the sky and showed no sign.

II

After another day of futile search
By parties that set out south, east, and west,
And found the very same as on the north—
The endless woods, the silent hills, the streams
Unchecked, unbridged, and nowhere any house
Or any sign of man, there now or ever,
Not anything at all but deer—Roy Smith,
Who went armed with his gun, had shot a buck
And dragged it to the road. He grinned and said,
'If everything is gone I guess the law
Ain't stuck around to bother me for this.'

After these weary men, by twos and threes,
Had come back home, to look with puzzled eyes
Along the roads that were no longer roads,
They asked each other with particular stare
If one and all were raving lunatics,
Or if indeed there was no Centerfield,
No Schuylers Falls, no Indiantown, no Springs,
No state, no city, no America,
But only Saugersville in all the world.
They held a meeting in the school that night,
And every living soul in Saugersville
That could get up upon two legs was there.

Old Grandma Smith, that laid abed so long
She said she was like to stick, got up and dressed
And hobbled to the school, with every step
Calling a murrain on these lying mouths
That said such foolish things. And Dick Van Snell,
That had two legs, but one of wood and wire,
Walked all the way to tell the company
How rough the road before his place was now.
The children scampered in the vestibule;
The babies cried and sucked and slept again.
Bert Snyder put more wood into the stove
Until it glowed and everybody steamed.
When every soul was there, and talk ran on
Now low and slow, now high-hysterical,
Earl Backus rose and knocked on teacher's desk.
'We'd better talk it over one by one
So all can hear. I will begin and state
That by some chance we cannot understand
The rest of the world has changed, though Saugersville
Is much the same as ever. Sunday last
I went to Schuylers Falls, and others here
Were different places in the country round
And all was just as we're accustomed to.
But Monday morning things were not the same.
The power was off, the roads were gone, the phone
Was dead, as all of you here know yourselves.
What has come over us, or what has come
To everybody else but us, is more
Than I can even start to understand.'
He paused. 'Before we talk we'd better have
A prayer from Reverend Yule.' The old man rose;
But ten years back he had come here to take
The little church whose few parishioners
Were still enough to keep a minister,
Although the other church was always dark.
A quiet humdrum man, that did his work
Like anyone, and spoke but once a week—
Or so it seemed. But now his eyes were fire.
He opened out his hands and spoke to God.
'Our Father, that looks down upon us now,
That made the world, and doomed it once in rain
Except for Noah and his Ark of life,
That opened up the sea for Israel,
Now by thy will another fate has come
Upon thy people, who look up for aid
Now to our hills, beyond our hills to thee.
Whatever be this thing has come to us,
Guide us to do thy will, who sent a dove
To Noah in the endless sea, and then
Another dove upon thy Son to show
Who came to save us. For his sake we ask
Thy blessing on thy troubled people, Lord.'
And every trembling mouth said low 'Amen.'
Earl Backus said, 'Let's see if we can tell
Just how this came. Can anybody say?'
The young man in the solitary house,
John Herbert, rose and said, 'On Sunday night
I couldn't sleep, and lit the light to read.
I saw the bulb go out; it faded out
As though the power went off by slow degrees.'
Gus Warder said, 'What time would that have been?'
'About eleven ten I took my book
And read almost an hour—midnight, I guess.'
Backus from the teacher's desk went on,
'We've been to Centerfield, and Indiantown,
As far as Sulphur Springs—it's all the same,
No towns at all, not any house or road.
Only the river and the creeks are there
Of all the land and villages we knew.
On Indian Hill Roy Smith climbed up a tree.
You know how all the country lies spread out
From that hilltop. You used to see the smoke
Of half a dozen towns, from engines too,
And sometimes hear the whistle of the train.
You tell 'em, Roy, just how it looked to you.'
The young and silent hunter stiffly rose,
More frightened now to hear himself speak out
Than at that moment in the pine tree top.
'I saw just trees,' he said, 'trees all the way.'

Now Robert Munn, that owned the small garage
And tinkered all the cars and trucks, spoke up.

'I connected up my radio last night
With batteries, and listened in, and tried
Out all the tricks I know. 'Twas half-past eight
When lots is on the air, or used to be.
I couldn't get a sound. I heard the static
Crack and break. Of anything at all
But that there wasn't even the faintest sound.'
Ede Salzenbach got up and shouted out—
A voice like Doomsday trumpet any day
And now more strident than it ever was—
'What's come to everyone? And where are they
Except for us? And what will come to us?
Maybe tomorrow there'll be only trees
In Saugersville. And where will we be then?'
Earl Backus rapped upon the desk and said,
'There's all of us got friends in other towns
Out in that world which doesn't seem to be,
And some have got relations too, and yet—'
He paused and looked around, and everyone
Looked here and there and counted families
And for a space said nothing. There was Gert,
Ed Winterhaus's girl that went to school
In River City to the Normal School,—
She had come home because she had a cold
And needed rest and sleep and country air.
There were Bill and Mabel Countryman,
Who went to fetch his mother from the town
Where she lived in winter, being cold
On Beeman's hill, and Sunday brought her back.
And everyone was there that really lived
In Saugersville, and no one that did not.
Relations to be sure and many a friend
Were lost along with all the vanished world,
But families for the most were all intact—
'We're mostly here, us that have always lived
Here in this town and made our living here.
Barring some kind of fate that's after us
And hasn't quite caught up, we're going to live
Here in this town awhile. The trouble is
To find just how we're going to do it now.'

And then a silence wavered in the room
As thoughts went tumbling on in every head,
So much to need, so much to puzzle out,
And over all the cloud of secret fate.
For once these human beings saw and felt
Catastrophe on others could be worse
Than on themselves. Now being left alone
When everyone was gone, they almost wished
They too had disappeared; a common fate
Seemed better than survival all alone.
The faces, set or working, stared in space.
Ma Warder cried into her handkerchief; but May
Looked secretly to where John Herbert sat
And thought, 'The city cannot get him now.'

Old Grandma Smith thumped down her heavy stick
And said right out, 'A passel here of fools!
I'm going down to Centerfield to live.'
The men were silent, till Abe Givets spoke.
'Got a tarnation lot of milk to home,
We'll all be throwing milk away, for calves
And pigs and people, butter or cheese,
Won't take it all.' Ed Winterhaus replied,
'We'll likely have to eat the cows and then
Keep just enough for what we need ourselves
For milk and cream and butter, veal and beef.
And pigs—we'd better breed a lot, and hens,
Each one will have to see he's got enough.'
Earl Backus spoke again: 'We're luckier 'n hell
That this is spring. We'll plan to plant the stuff
We need for food and fodder for the year.
We must count all the things we have to have
That used to come from otherwheres and see
Just how we can replace them for ourselves.
There's gasoline'—he looked at Robert Munn.
'I've got twelve hundred gallons in my tanks.
The truck came Saturday.' He paused and thought
How Bill the driver had gone on so fast,
So confident and loud, his heavy wheels
Thundering out of Saugersville—to where?
'I've kerosene, and oil, enough to last
An ordinary month or month and a half.
Of course there isn't any road to go
Except right here, a mile or two and back,

But there's the farm machinery to run.'
Earl Backus frowned. 'It looks to me, my friends,
As though we'll have to have as they did once
A Committee of Safety—five or seven men
To tell us what to do and when to do it.
If you agree let's settle that right now.'

Under the stars that looked so far away,
Blown by a fierce spring wind that whacked the trees,
The people hurried home to light their lamps.
Walking with new responsibility
And courage that even now did not desert,
The elected members of the Safety Board—
Gus Warder, William Countryman, young Smith,
Bert Snyder, and Earl Backus as the head—
Went home as well, to bed if not to sleep.

III

When Maria Winterhaus came down to make
The cookstove fire, she crumpled paper up
Half seeing print, *The Schuylers Falls Tribune*,
And news of happenings in another world
Now gone as it was gone. She stopped halfway,
Smoothed out the paper, folded it, and put
It safe away. With care she laid the fire
Of little sticks that lighted to one match
And even that one she looked at longingly
And shut the matchbox lid with firm despair
The coffee can was full; she put it by,
And heated milk, then made her buckwheat cakes.
The sausage, syrup, butter, bread, and jam
Went on the table with celerity.
She nodded as she set each plate down hard
As though to say, 'At least all these are mine.'
Her daughter Gert, still sniffling in her nose,
Although the excitement had most cured the cold
That brought her home to Saugersville and life,
Stood at the door, her pretty, sleepy face
All discontented at the thought of milk
Instead of coffee; shook her head at Ma
Who brought her buckwheat cakes. 'You know I won't
Eat cakes and get all fat. I'll make some toast.'
Her mother's face was filled with secret joy,
For this catastrophe had brought her home
To keep the presence which she wanted most.
'No need to talk that way. Your stylish friends
In River City won't be caring now
If you are fat or thin. We've got to live
For just ourselves. We might as well be happy.'
The girl said nothing, for her thoughts were dark.
To leave the little village all her life
Had been her deep desire. This year at last
She had succeeded, and begrudged the time
She must be home. She saw a future bright
Though vague awaiting her, the one thing sure
That it would be not here but in the city.
She shrugged and listened to her mother's voice.
'Not but what you've got friends here, you know.
You've always treated young Roy Smith real mean,
The nicest boy of anywheres around.'
'Oh mother leave me be. I've got to live
Now here with you whatever sort of life
We're going to have now all the worth-while things
Are gone. Don't pester me; I'll do my best.
I don't know how I'll stand it but I will.'

The Safety Board met in the school at nine
When chores were done—by puzzled men who tried
To disentangle in their complex scene
What things were really theirs and what had come
From far away and now would come no more.
The quickest survey left them all appalled,
And set within them hard the will to live
As well as may be upon what they had.

The problem first was to look to their food,
For nothing yet nor for some months to come
Could grow in gardens or the sodden fields.
'There's milk enough for twenty towns, and cream,
And we'll be making butter and what cheese
We can. Meat too we'll have in plenty now
With cows to kill—there won't be feed enough
For many head. We'll need our horses most,
And must take care of them and breed them too.
I guess the hardest thing will be the flour.
There'll be some in the mill, and grain to grind—
We can't spare much of that, we need the seed—
But bread will likely be some scarce by fall.
We must plant wheat, we must plant corn for us,
Not only for the stock, potatoes too—'
Gus Warder stopped, his eyes alight with plans,
As though he saw the fertile fields all green
And bearing for the village sustenance.
'We'd better make a list,' Earl Backus said,
'Of everyone in town. We've got to know
How many mouths there are to feed, and what
They have already. Then we must decide
Just how to portion out our food and goods.
The stuff belongs of course to different ones,
You've got the food right in your store there, Bert,
And Robert has the oil and gas, while Jake
Has all the grain and flour down in the mill,
And others of us have got other things.
You, Bill, have got the beer in your hotel,
And I've a little honey from my hive.
The only market for the stuff we have
Is now right here, where people need it more
Than ever before. We must see what is best
And how we can be fair to everyone.'
They shook their heads and set their minds to work,
More thinking needed than in all their days
Summed up together. Fear and love of life
Worked in them strongly; some sort of justice too
Held back the greed that could not help but burn.

IV

May Warder, standing at the woodhouse door
To rest her arms from churning, smelled the air
That came so sweetly from the melting fields,
The banks where water ran between the grass,
The furrows where the ice of winter ran,
And felt spring in her heart, and looked away
To where the far and wooded hills were blue
Above the brown-spotted slopes nearby.
Across the valley, on the northern hill,
Above the road that windingly went down
Deep in the valley to the little town,
She saw the smoke that showed the chimney set
Among the apple trees—John Herbert's house,
Where she had looked in longing more than once.
She drew deep breaths, and saw beyond the smoke
The hill rise up, the barrier to the north
Beyond which lay the wilderness, unknown.
Deep in her breast and spreading through her body
She felt fierce love for home, for this small place
That had been always home. Today it seemed
No narrower than before, for here was all:
The farm, the house, the hills and fields of home,
The family warm beneath the sagging roof.
Yes here is all her lips were saying soft,
Her eyes upon the smoke between the trees.

Jake Cramer shut the doors of his garage
That leaned against the mill, a modern growth
Upon that century-old and sturdy stone.
Behind the doors he still could see the shine
Of paint and chromium, his new sedan;
So hardly bought, so dearly loved, and now
No more than junk, a useless thing, a wreck.
The gas had been apportioned out, to those

Who needed it for farm machinery,
A little left, reserved, in case of need.
What flour and grain Jake had had in the mill
Were all divided up by high fiat,
And written down most carefully in the books
Against the day when cash might be some use.
Jake and Bert and Robert Munn as well
Were promised wood and milk and meat and eggs
From each that got his share, to pay in part
The debt that stood against him in the books.
Jake went to grind, blessing the ancient wheel
That turned the stones so faithfully still for him
Though but this year he had been plotting how
A gasoline engine might do better work,
And in the dust of milling he forgot
To grieve again about the new sedan.

Looking down in the entangled swamp
Where once the road ran hard to Indiantown,
Abe Givets swore and wrinkled up his eyes
And pulled his mouth down sideways so his face
Looked tough and furrowed as a butternut.
The outside world had not been much to Abe,
And Indiantown was just a place to drink,
But this high-handed wholesale wiping out
Of all he knew beyond the narrow hills
Was like a blow directed just to him,
A sharp affront to one who knew his rights.
He kicked the ground and Red, his feeble hound,
Ran sideways in the swamp as though he felt
That cruel toe between his ribs again.
'Those birds that call themselves the Safety Board
Have passelled out a niggling bit of food.
I'll bet they've got a plenty for themselves.
They said each man should keep his money fast
And so I will. There'll be a time some day
That some of them'll be glad to see my cash.
You can't cut money out, for them that has
Are going to have, no matter what they say.'
He shook his fist and kicked the ground again,
And hunched into himself went home to find
The family which with blows he called his own.

The men went homeward in the dusk, their deer
Slung up on poles, their faces looking down
Silent and eager to the valley cleft,
Because they feared that in this day it too
Might be a wilderness and they alone,
An even smaller band left here to face
In twos and threes a strange and hostile world.
The reassuring shine of roof and wall
Broke down their silence and they laughed and said
How sweet the meat would taste, how fine the skin.
But when John Backus asked how many shot
Each man had here, or home, and said how much
Was in the store, the silence fell again.
'I'll make myself a bow of hickory.
I know that I could hit a deer,' said Roy.
'They're pretty tame. I hit a squirrel once
When I was a kid. It was a lucky chance.
But arrows tipped with steel would kill a deer.
The Indians did it once. I guess I can.'

John Herbert dug his garden deep and wide
And planted all the seeds that he could get.
The sun was hot upon his bended back,
The earth was sweet with promise for his seeds.
Making the little furrows as he went,
He thought, 'There'd be more worry and less fun
Making a garden, for a family man.
I should be glad I've got no mouths to feed
But just my own—that's big but only one.'
He straightened up to look beyond the hills
Where lay more hills that climbed up to the sky.
Across the valley now he saw the team
And Gus behind them, plowing up the lot
That lay between the wood-piece and the road
And had been pasture for these many years.

He thought how still the valley looked, how sane.
'I really must be going back to town.
I haven't seen the city for two months.'
And then, 'It can't be true. I know it is a dream.
Tonight I'll waken in the dark and hear
Far on the wind the whistle of a train.'

Ed Winterhaus was not much used to thought
Except for crops and cattle, which he loved.
But he was thinking while his busy fork
Spread out manure to make the garden grow.
'I been here all my life; it's fifty years
And then some more, since I was born right there.
I haven't been away from here, but once
To go to the Fair—that's twenty years ago—
Except for trips to Schuylers Falls and such.
I ain't never hankered after going away.
It seemed to me that I belonged right here
And might not fit in other people's towns.
And now I can't go away. There's some I guess
Will be real anxious when they know they can't
And pine to go. Now I don't feel that way.
It's going to mean a lot of work to live
And lots to do without, but that's all right;
I've got the farm, and all the family here,
And living's always work. And when it's done
I'll think of lying there where I can see
My father's stone shine white upon the hill,
Just as I've always thought. There's not much change.'

The Reverend Yule on Sundays found his church
Full to the doors; not only absent ones
From his own congregation but as well
The Methodists and Universalists,
And some that never saw a church before
On the inside, that came so strangely in.
Fired by the faces looking up at him
The old man preached repentance like a John
Crying in this new wilderness. He prayed
Until his hearers trembled at his voice.
'Think not,' he cried, 'you have been singled out
By special virtue for this special fate.
Say not you are the sons of Abraham;
God could make better ones of stones than you.
For very sin you may have been allowed
To live your lives and have another chance,
And you must show that you are worthy now.'
The feeble organ had a trumpet sound,
With earnest feet Miss Elkins pedalled hard
And drew a swelling peal that urged the tune,
'Oh God our help in ages past.'

Abe Givets' wife was only half as old,
A good deal less than half as mean as he.
One of too many children in a crowded house,
At seventeen she had been given to him,
Her father wanting one less mouth to feed.
Thinking to be a woman she was willing,
And proud to have a house to call her own
Until she found not even her soul was that
And she was less a woman than a slave.
The babies came too fast, but were her own,
Something to love, to nourish and keep warm,
At least until they reached an age to work,
An age which they reached young in Givets' house.
Sometimes when Abe was out in distant fields
She took the children and in breathless haste
Went down the steep three quarters of a mile
To the village and the store—to life.
She had no money, but could spend her eyes
Upon the few bright things Bert Snyder had:
The rolls of printed calico, their flowers
As lovely to her as Chinese brocade;
The ribbons in the case, the greeting cards,
Even the soap that smelled as sweet as flowers.
Set in the narrow circle of her face
Her eyes were big as rabbits' and as soft.
She looked a bigger child among her own,
As tender, pitiful, and ignorant.
To everyone she saw she said a word
Eager and low, that dared not speak at home.
And few thought twice of her except to say,
'She has no easy life that girl I bet.'

Sometimes big George would stop and say hello,
And once he took them in his big red truck
As near to home as she had dared to go
Lest Abe should spy them and get out his strap.
She did not think at all of George except
That here was someone kind who laughed and joked.
But he looked sideways at the childish face
And laughed a little louder at the joke.
George had a wife, but where he did not know,
For tired of boyish tricks and lazy ways
She had been gone two years or more and he
Lived as he could, alone and at his ease.
But now the darling of his life, his truck,
Stood useless in the barn. No more it went
To Centerfield and back with rattling cans;
And now no more those other jaunts by night,
The truck as faithful as a handsomer steed
And girls as pleased to ride in it, with George.
For most a week George had been nearly dumb
After that day he found the road was gone.
But such profound amazement did not serve
To keep him still for long. His loud guffaw
Was heard again about Bert Snyder's stove.
Like everyone he found that every day
That life went on made life more credible
And Saugersville the same as ever before.

'We'd better have a dance,' Earl Backus said.
'There's some that think too much about it all.
They're getting touchy. Yesterday I saw
Bill Countryman as hot as he could be,
And just because Jake Cramer wanted beer
And offered Bill a load of wood for it.
Maybe it wasn't enough, but Bill was mad
And swore that Jake would get no beer from him
And looked as though he meant to knock him down,
And Jake was just as set to do the same.
We'll have a dance and maybe keep our minds
From wondering just how crazy each man is.
Let's say next Saturday night. We'll get Dolf Wick
To find the music and call off the dances.
You put a notice in the store now, Bert.
We'll have a better party than we've seen
Since Grandpa Winterhaus fell down the well.'

The Ladies' Aid served up a splendid feast
With new-killed pork and lots of fried corn mush
Floating in maple syrup, cake and pie
A little coarse, of home-ground flour, but good;
And as the crown, the summit of the feast,
Bert Snyder gave three cans of coffee from
His small and careful store. The odor ran
Along the rooms and hallways of the Grange
And met folk at the door and made them shout.
(The Ladies saved the grounds and took them home
And several households had a washy brew.)
After the lightened tables, cleared and stacked
Against the wall, were gone, Dolf Wick
Stood up and said, 'I know you folks been used
To fancier music than we got here now,
But Rudy Vallee never tried so hard
Nor played with half the will that these boys do.
They aim to please you and I know they will.'
The little man, all grey and shrunk with age,
Was dressed with every care and looked as bright
As a small chickadee whose cheerful voice
Is quite undimmed by snow and winter's storms.
John Backus had a fiddle and his son
Young Richard had a drum; Jake played the horn
And old Ponowski, Ellen Givets' pa,
Wheezed out the tune upon the accordion.
And everybody danced. Not just the young
Or halfway young that usually filled the floor,
But everyone that had a leg to stand
Came out for Lancers and the Virginia Reel.
The girls, who wore their best and looked as gay
Among the older ones as flowers or birds,
Went lightly to and fro. Gert Winterhaus,

The handsomest there—and knew it too—
wore red
And tossed her black and curly head and
laughed
And found a Grange dance not so bad at all.
May Warder wore a yellow dress that looked
Just like the daffodils in her own yard;
Her eyes were bright as spring, her hair as
soft.
She watched John Herbert's back and saw
him go
To Gert, and saw them dance, and how they
laughed.
But George did not watch Gert. His eyes
were on
A slighter figure in the corner where
Amongst the sleepy children Ellen sat.
The most remarkable effect of all
The changes that their world had had to
make
Sat there beside her—Givets at a dance!
Long since had Ellen found how valueless
It was to beg to go, and shut her mouth.
Tonight she nearly fainted when he said,
'Get on your decent dress and get the kids.
We're going down to town tonight to dance.'
His mouth pulled down upon the last two
words.
She knew that he had never danced nor
would.
Her dress was old and worn upon the seams,
But the warm faded rose brought to her face
What color poverty and work and grief
Had left within her blood. She sat so still,
But smiled at everyone and sang the tune.
When George, who danced with every
woman there,
Came and invited her, she looked to Abe
Who said, 'How do George' and said nothing
more.
And so she danced, and heard the music
swing
Around her head like angel music high,
And weary feet that worked all day were glad
To tread a lighter step, and carried her on.

Roy Smith was like a crazy man that night.
From some small hoard of his or of his
friends
He'd swallowed a drink or two, enough to
warm
A heart that seemed already warm enough,
Within a body young and powerful.
And if he pined for Gert, no one would
know,
Though Gert thought laughing in herself, 'I
think
Those eyes are moony when he looks at me.'
She circled twice before she looked again
To where he stood uproarious at the door
Waving at Adolf Wick across the hall
And making noise enough for seven men—
'Oh land alive he is a handsome man.'

The music lasted till past one o'clock
And everyone was like to drop for tired.
Gus Warder said, 'This is a better dance
Than those we had with fancy orchestras
From Schuylers Falls. There wasn't much
to drink,
But all the young men seemed to have good
fun
And everyone was gay. Maybe we feel
As though we had our backs against a wall
And must be gay or die. I don't think so.
It looks to me as though we felt so strong
That we could live, and dance, in spite of all.'

The children wondered least of all to find
Their world so changed. To them it was not
changed,
For everything at hand was just the same,
And what few times they had been some-
wheres else
Were soon forgotten in the world of home.
Jack Warder, who was ten, had been to town
Enough to think of stores and bicycles,
And to be sorry for a day or two.
But life was busy in the spring for him.
The fish were jumping down below the dam;
Now it was warmer he could go and build
The house he started in the woods last fall.
He asked his father half a dozen times
Why this had happened and what made it
come.
Although he thought that Pa knew every-
thing
He had to be content with 'I don't know.'

Only in school there seemed to be a change,
And that was for the better. Aura Smith,

Who taught the little school and lived at home—
Beyond Ed Winterhaus, the upper road—
Was wholly puzzled by the fearful fate
And asked the Board of Safety what to do.
'There isn't any use in teaching them
About these places which they'll never see,
Because they don't exist, as far as we know.
Maybe they do and we can't see them plain.
Maybe it's in our eyes or in our hearts
And all the world is really just the same.
I've tried to teach them things that would be good
When they were grown, although of course I knew
I taught them lots that they would never use.
But when they learned the population of
The cities of the east, at least I knew
The cities were right there. And you could go
And count the people if you wanted to.
But now—what can I say? What can I teach?'
This was a poser. Five men sat and stared,
And no one made an answer. Backus at last
Spoke slowly with his eyes upon the trees
That showed beyond the window, budded thick.
'There's some things in the past we can't forget,
And kids should know about. So you can teach
The history just the same. And for our life
Even here alone a bit of figuring's good
As ever 'twas. Yes, they should read and write,
Although we haven't much to read and less
To write. Still, all we have should be theirs too,
We cannot give them less than we have had.
About geography, which seems to be
The greatest bother, I should think you'd find
You could cut down, and teach them how things were
And not say how they are, which we don't know.'
Bert Snyder said, 'A different kind of thing
Is what we got to teach these children now.
They've got to learn to make the things they need
Just as folks used to in the days gone by.
We've got a handful still of older ones
Can tell us how to make a candle mould
And fix the fat to fill it, make a spade,
Or hammer out a plow. The girls must learn
To spin and weave, and manufacture soap,
And all the hundred things they'll have to do.'
'I don't see why,' said Countryman, 'they need
Book-learning any more at all. We learned
Because it might be 'twould come handy once
Somewhere outside. But now—there isn't more
Than twenty shelves of books in all the town.
There won't be time for reading either when
The things we got wear out and we must make
All that we need to live by for ourselves.'
Gus Warder spoke, who was a minister's son
And owned at least a quarter of the books
Which Countryman described. 'They have to read
And have to write, they all must learn it well,
Or else before we realize none will know,
And we'll be back to where we started from
More years ago than we can count or tell.
There's too much danger here, as we are now,
That we'll be savages again. I say
They must be taught and made to read although
It wears out every book in town to do.'
Roy nodded, who was fifth and last to speak.
'I guess they ought to read. You can't tell what
May happen yet. It may be good to know.'
Earl Backus waited for a while, then spoke,
'It seems the best that we can do is say
Teach just the same as you've been used to do,
Although geography and such will be
Really a part of history—what we knew
Instead of what we know. Maybe sometime
We can work out a plan, when we can tell
Better than now what children should be taught.
As for the other things Bert speaks about,
We must have school for everyone in those,
And anyone who can remember how
They used to do such things can teach us all.'

v

Unhampered by their grief and loss the spring
Came surely on the brown and soaking land.
Now only in the shadows lay the snow
Which was no longer white but mocked itself
Pretending to be earth all stained with earth.
Upon its melting edges pricks of grass
Greener than hope fulfilled shot up to sun,
And in the woods hepaticas began
To stir within their furry silver hoods.
The clouds came over fast, and moved away,
The rain came down, the sun shone out again.
Old Peter Winterhaus, Ed's uncle Pete,
Ninety-two come fall, said 'Yesterday
I heard the phoebe holler in the woods.'

Across the hills the wind blew sharp and cold
But in the hollows breathed the warmth of spring
And everywhere the water shouted loud.
The creek went roaring like unending surf,
Bank-full and brown and foaming up in cream
In day and night a strong exultant noise.

Ten times a week in all the time he'd lived
In Saugersville John Herbert thought he'd die
Of this slow rural life, the night and day
That moved so slowly on the sloping hills
And brought for him the season's change alone.
He had sickened of the quiet in the nights,
And of the faces which he saw each day
That said the very things they said before—
'Nice day.' 'This wind'll bring some rain to-night,'
'Got winter enough to suit you now, my boy?'
He watched for letters in his little box
Like pigeons bringing news from far away,
And read their message half a dozen times,
Seeing before his eyes the city's life,
Hearing among his trees the traffic roar.
As often as his money would permit,
More often than was good for nerves and heart,
He went to spend a week-end with delight,
Refresh his lungs with gaseous smoky air
And feast his eyes on beauty's ugliness,
Till worn and sick he would come back again,
Cursing his luck and Saugersville as well.
Now since catastrophe he had been stunned,
And waited first to see a world come back
He could not quite believe had gone away.
It did not come. He went to look for it,
Pressed further down the river in his search
Than anyone had gone, but found no more.
Standing in the shadowy undergrowth,
His eyes upon the river that moved on
So slow, so certain, so mysterious,
He felt his body ache as though his heart
Too worn with journeying had given at last
Acceptance of the ending of his world.
'If I could build a boat'—he turned away,
Shaking his head and kicking at the stones.
He had no skill for such a task, and now
No wish. He could get help perhaps from those
Who knew, and set forth on a voyage to find—
What would he find? He turned back toward the hills,
Shifting his rifle in his hands, his eyes
Watching among the trees, his belly gaunt,
And in his heart the fear of nothing known.

Some there were that ate the wonder up
And found it lay too heavy on their stomachs,
And brooded nights and said few words all day.
Abe Givets, to be sure, was just the same
To all appearance, though none knew the thoughts
That burned the very tissue of his brain—
That he, a free-born citizen, should be
Deprived by such unlikely fate of rights
And privileges that were his very own.
(That others shared them and had lost as well
Was not a part of Givets' grievances.)
But other men were seen to wear thin.
Herbert himself would hardly speak a word,
Although before a pleasant-spoken lad.
But now returning from the river's edge
Bringing no news, his mouth was shut, his eyes
Looked out at nothing from a face of stone.
The greatest change was in old Dick Van Snell,

The wooden-legged man that lived alone
Down in the hollow where the road went dead.
For Dick, though well supplied with poverty,
A cripple and a lonely man, had been
As good a natured man as you could find.
His little shack was set close by the road
On half an ell of land beside the creek,
And there he used to sell some bootleg stuff
And made some cash, enough to keep alive.
He lived alone and yet in company,
For every car that hastened by his door
Brought news to him although it knew it not.
His chair propped back against the shanty wall,
His wooden leg a-cock, his sharp old eyes
Watched makes and number plates, drivers and freight,
And hardly missed a car from morn till night.
The double S that curved on either side
Slowed down the fastest so he saw them well.
'There's Willard with his milk, he's late today;
The kids won't be on time for school again.
That's Harvey Deck, his wife's in with him too.
She must be sick, he wouldn't take her else
To see the doctor or the undertaker.
And Myron Winterhaus, it beats me how
He can find jobs to take him down this way
Past Mary Sawyer's house.' And then the trucks
Whose routing took them past at certain times,
The oil trucks, beer trucks, stone trucks, bread trucks, all
Thundering by his house to shake the walls;
Some dragging trailers, some without, some red,
Some white, some old, some new, but every one
A friend of his, whose driver waved and yelled
'Hey, Dick!' and blew his horn, until the gulf
Echoed again with engine, wheels, and horn.
Even at night, when blinding lights flashed in
Upon his poor possessions, on his bed
Which he had set to see the lower curve,
He knew by lights and sound the most that passed
And in his sleep would murmur to himself,
'That's Conway's trucking gang from Oppendam;
There goes the Oklahoma Oil. That's Jack,
And drunk again. What will his woman say?'
But now, the road lay still. The grass began
To edge the cracks, the grass so quick to find
The least neglect of man, to push its blades
As sharp as swords and stronger than their steel
Between the firmest stones were ever laid.
The littlest animals had made themselves
At home upon its surface. Insects ran
About their business here and there and built
Their cities in the cracks where now no wind
Ferocious in its sudden passing swirled.
The nights were silent and the water's talk
That had been once a low accompaniment
To intermittent more exciting sounds
Was now a loud monotony of grief
Unbroken as the darkness of the night.
At dawn old Dick would rise to stare and stare
Both up and down the road and shake his head
And hardly care to eat his scanty meal,
His ears so pressed with silence and his heart
Weighed down with loneliness, his eyes half shut,
And not a word to any when he came
To trade his little stock, now smaller still.
He used to be so full of news and tales
He was the busiest member round the stove
And knew the gossip of the country round.
But now he did not stay, and said no word,
But plodded to the hollow down the road,
His wooden leg a sharp and lonely sound.

Old Grandma Smith was not the least perturbed
By any sense of world default, for she
Ignored steadfastly any sign of change
And clung alone to what had always been.
Rocking her chair with firm, determined tread
She shut her ears to talk of newer ways
That were but older ways come back again—
And she a wise consultant if she would.
Her daughter-in-law Eliza tried to get
Advice on making soap from her who knew
Too well the iron kettle and the smell

'Go buy your soap,' said Gran and nothing more.
There was a bitter scene when all her store
Of cough-drops—her own favorite kind—was gone,
And Bert had none. In vain Eliza made
A brew of herbs and honey for her throat.
In vain they said, 'We can't go buy you more,'
And told her once again how matters were.
She stormed at them. 'You thankless hearts, you crew
Of faithless children, may Elisha's bears
Come eat you up. I will have none of this
And none of this unlikely lie you tell.
Go leave me be and tell me nothing more.'

The men that did not brood upon their fate
Were driven with restless energy to make
The best of what there was, and plowed and sowed,
And planned and worked to get the most from all.
Gus Warder was a man who used his head
And did his farming there, then on the land.
And now he planned for all and told each one,
As well as he could figure, how much corn
And how much grain and grass and beets and all
They each must have to see the winter through.
The most of them had come and asked him this
And most were glad, but some looked glum and said,
'I guess we know as well as him, we do.'
But Gus and all the Board of Safety men
Were anxious that no weaker links should break
In this close-joined dependent chain which fate
Had forced upon these independent men,
Who had been used to living for themselves
And finding that no easy thing to do.

VI

The summer came upon them like a storm,
A rush of green that swept up over the land
And covered deep the delicate shades of spring
That grew in moister soil and fainter sun.
The grass stood up and stretched in every night.
The new set gardens sprouted thick and green,
And in new fields the grain began to wave.
May Warder in her garden bent her arms
And tugged the hearty weeds from out the rows
Of feathery carrot green. Her garden now
Was flowered with radishes and peas and beans
Instead of blossoms which she loved to grow.
But by the wall the faithful climbing rose
Was breaking into flower and at its foot
Her woodland violets were blooming still.
'I love it, how I love it' in her mind
Went singing on, although she hardly knew
What it could be she loved, unless the smell
Of warming earth and roses newly flowered,
Or sun upon the back, or far the sight
Of birds that circled in a brilliant sky.
She sat back on her heels to look, and then
Felt suddenly a loneliness that bit
And hurt her in her breast until she cried,
And went to work so furious at the weeds
That half the carrots showed their golden sides.

Dolf Wick was nearly eighty and a man
Who weighed each year with speculative thought
And looked both back and forward—though of late
He looked behind more often than before—
Compared the times and valued everything,
And on the whole he thought old times were best.
Now suddenly it seemed to him threescore
Of years that changed so much were changed themselves
And lost away in nothingness till now
The face of things were as it was before
When he was young. Again the trees were tall.
Now here again a larger, stiller breath
Blew in upon a group of families
That walled themselves together against death—

As once before along this creek, he thought,
In days when his great-grandfather was young.
He swelled his chest a bit and said, 'To hell
With all this modern world that came in here
And fixed us with a lot of fancy stuff
We didn't really need. We're just the same
As we were then, just like our ancestors,
And more to start with than they ever had.'
He watched Ed's team come up the village street.
It pleased him now to see the horses go
So constantly upon the concrete road.
He used to say he never learned to like
An engine's sound as well as iron feet.
He waved to Ed and thought within himself,
'We'll show them how to live, those city folks.
We don't need help to keep us safe and warm.'
But then he thought there wasn't anyone,
Most probably, to profit by the show;
And as he turned to go into the house
Again he felt the fierce regret that came
Because his little money which he saved
Had all been put in Continental bonds,
And where were dividends to come from now,
And in what jungle growth of mighty trees
Were capital and interest buried deep?

It happened then as summer came, and work
Was plentiful for more hands than there were,
That even George gave up his lazy ways
And went to work on Abram Givets' farm.
Abe offered him the right to cut his wood
In the back wood-lot, and a bag apiece
Of corn and oats and buckwheat for his food
Come winter, and his keep while working there.
Hard under Givet's sharp demanding gaze
George stiffened muscles had been soft for years
And tanned his face and hands and lost some weight.
He wasn't very handy in the fields;
Abe, at half his size, could hoe more rows
And pitch hay twice as quick. But in the barn,
With every animal upon the farm,
George didn't think but knew just what to do.
The three remaining cows of Givets' herd
Would give more milk and easier for George,
The horses came up to the pasture bars
Before he called to them, and even the sows
Suffered his presence near among their young.
In spite of work and summer sun and Abe,
Whom no one could pretend to like since he
So plainly by his actions said to all,
'I do not like you and expect the same,'
George liked the farm and knew the reason why.
When on the farmhouse stoop the dinner bell
Called from the heated fields to hotter room
The sweating men whose waiting appetite
No heat could quell, George knew that he would find
His reason serving dinner by the stove.
The little Ellen liked to have George there
Because it kept Abe quiet, whose complaints
Had choked her throat a hundred dinner-times.
He did complain, but not so frequently
And not with blows. Then George's face was new,
A welcome face that was not even unkind
Much less a hostile thing that made you creep.
She came to look for him and felt a pinch
Of disappointment when some farther field
Must needs be worked and Abe would send to him
A child with dinner covered in a pail.
It happened once or twice when Abe was gone
George would appear and ask a drink of milk
And stay and say to her a few slow words
That moved her even while her anxious eyes
Watched the lengthening shadows on the road.
Abe had no thought of this at all. His mind
Was on more valuable property—
What he could do with money, and his farm.
He thought of rights and privileges denied
By fate and providence, but gave no heed
To robbery of another sort at home.
And Ellen, to be sure, was just as blind
And in her childishness was only glad
That here was someone who was nice to her

And called her pretty-eyes and laughed at her
And stirred a blood which love had never stirred.
George for his part was perfectly intent,
Knew what he wanted, what he meant to get,
And only figured how to get it best
Knowing that Abe was half at least a devil.

VII

Their world's contraction made their blood run hot.
Not only that the young men looked at home
For every chance of love, but felt besides
A fierce desire to carry on his home,
Asserting by their potency their power
To outface fate and make mankind survive.
And other men with wives were eager too
And found new life in effort and in fear,
Seeing themselves alone among these hills
And, shuddering at the wilderness without,
Desired more lovingly their homes and wives;
And more than one smiled to herself; but some
Remembered doctors too were gone, and feared.

With disappointment harsh upon his tongue
John Herbert felt at last he must give up
The world he knew and what it meant to him,
Accept the steep horizon which now bound
Himself and twice a hundred more in one,
And seek for any solace he could find.
'For what is Saugersville to me,' he said,
'Only a desert island where I live
Because I can live nowhere else but here.
Death in the city would have been to me
No more than death, but here I live and die
And have no being worth the name of life.
I am no part of this community;
Their ideas are not mine. I will not live
A narrow choked and miserable life
Save as I must, which will be bad enough.'
He went to get his gun, to hunt his food,
And seeing it was moved to say again,
'I will not live a miserable life.
I do not have to live my life at all,
And know the key to silence if I need.'

The only other one in Saugersville
Who cared about the outside world so much
That loss without seemed more than need within
Was Gertrude Winterhaus, who looked to find
Like John some compensation for her loss.
It did not take them long to find in each
A ready ear, and equally sad complaint.
They talked of city lights and shows and songs,
Nostalgic as two pole discoverers
Huddled in an igloo in the snow.
He did not like her really, for her wit
Was on the surface like her handsome ways.
She might be quick and eager as a bird
With plumage shining like a lovely jay's,
But like the lovely jay her voice was harsh,
Her laugh too sudden and her eye too bold.
Of far and secret inner depths that flowed
Not dark but hidden in his inmost mind
She saw no trace and cared no whit at all.
But for the time indeed he was content
To play upon the surface when the depths
Offered such opportunity for pain.
The summer gave them sweet and shining nights
And many lovely places in the green
Recesses which she knew, and not alone
From childhood exploration but of late,
She who was the belle of Saugersville.
Returning late at night to his own house
He thought, 'I do not want to marry her;
I do not love her nor does she love me,
And yet before we know we'll be engaged.'
Maria worried over Gertrude's ways
And wept to find her acting as she feared
She always acted when away from home.
Her feeble countermands made Gertrude laugh,
And easy-going Ed would never frown.
'She's young and wants her fun; you let her be.'
Her so-called virtue Gert was quick to guard,
Knowing the fierceness of the little round
Of gossip and the strict communal ways,
And knowing well its value if she lived
Forever here where everyone knew all.

Young Robert Munn, who kept the one garage,

Had lost his job most certainly of all.
His gasoline had been divided up
But for a hundred gallons in reserve.
And some had used their farm machinery
Until their share was gone; others had kept
Theirs put away or used it miserly.
There was some work on various machines,
But few were now employed and he was left
To tend his garden and to chop his wood
And figure how to use his hard-earned skill
Which once had served him well and made him rich
By village standards. Robert kept his house
Well painted, with a furnace in the cellar,
His pretty wife in pretty clothes, two cars,
One for his business and a pleasure car,
And felt he was the coming man in town.
But now he was a poorer man than most,
With little strength to work upon the land
And little knowledge of the farming job;
But work he must and did to live at all.
He and his Bessie were deprived of more
Because more cash had brought them from the store
More boughten goods, to eat, to wear, to use.
And Robert, who when things went well was gay
And somber when they didn't, as are all,
But he more gay more somber, felt the depths
Of fierce despair that wakened him at night
For all the achings of his weary frame.
Not he nor anyone in Saugersville
Could feel a wholly personal despair
Since equally on all the burden fell;
But Robert, whose well-earned prosperity
Had faded with the world from which it grew,
Was tortured by an individual grief
That he must bow his head who had been proud.
Young Bessie was so loving and so close
That she must feel it too, although she cared
Mainly because of him; until the day
When rising early to prepare his food
That he might meet the sun at work, she felt
The waves of nausea that pushed her down
And knew that what she thought and feared was true.
She said no word to Robert, for she knew
How hard upon his head this news would break.
Till he, who even in despondency
Was always loving, full of care for her,
Noticed, and saw, and understood, and wept.

His ordinary life for Reverend Yule
Was not so different now; his shed was full
Of well-split wood, his chickens still laid eggs,
And he was given flour and milk, and made
From his tall maple trees his sugar brown.
Though there were some who said, in muttered breath,
The old man and his wife were useless weight,
The most were glad to take their pay in words,
Not only Sundays when the lightnings flashed,
But weekdays in a gentler kind of talk.
No man more eager than this parson now
To be of aid, to offer what he could.
He battled down his shyness, his desire
To sink into himself, his shadowy thoughts
And speculations on another life,
In order to come out and fight in this.
There were not many who asked help of him
By speaking out directly; but they came
To ease their minds of overwhelming awe
And fear and wonder and a kind of pain
Of newness at the different state of things.
To minds worn down by years of changelessness
The sudden earthquake of familiar ways
Brought agony of thinking and despair.
There were not many who were sure of God
And sure this was his will; they did not ask
The minister concerning this, but talked
Of crops and cattle and the old new arts
Which now they learned from elders such as he.
The still courageous face, the quiet eyes
That knew the wakening of an inner fire
That burned and sank but did not ever die—
These counselled them of strength and will to toil
And sent them home refreshed and comforted.

They did not know the dark uncertain nights
When Ephraim Yule demanded of his God
The reason for the destruction of his world,
And listening heard no answer, and despaired,
Until the deepest hours when all the stars
Are moving out of sight behind the sky
And what there is of outer strength for man
Must rally to him then, for he has none—
The minister found it, whether God or no,
And faced his people with a quiet heart.

It seemed as though the summer had not been
So quick was it departed, and the nights
Tasting of chill, the days of apple smell.
May Warder covered her tomato vines
With rhubarb leaves against the chance of frost.
Beside the mill Jake Cramer cleaned his trees
Of every apple—seven barrels full.
And chimneys smoked with all the busy stoves
Where women canned and bottled everything
That could be saved and kept for winter's use.
Upon the hill John Herbert dug a hole
For winter vegetables, and saw the red
Come on the maple tree beside the road.
Gus watched the corn as dearly as a mother
And prayed the frost would keep until next moon.
His wife was thinking of another kind
Of frost that comes before its time, and said,
'Gus, May's not looking good, I don't know why.'
She had suspicions but she let them lie,
And thought he might say something to agree.
'Well, I don't know. Maybe she works too hard.
She's always quiet and no quieter now.'
'Oh, men,' sighed Mabel to herself, and then,
'It makes a body worry so these days,
The way we are, no doctor or no nurse.
You can't help fearing somebody'll fall sick.'
'Oh let that be,' said Gus. 'She's not sick yet,
Nor like to be, a healthy girl like her.
I know she's pale, but make her drink more milk,
And if you need to, get Maria in
To help you out, and let Mary rest a bit.'
His wife said nothing, but resolved to have
A talk with May, although she knew too well
For all the love between them, she would fail,
And find no answer for her worried heart.

The summer had made clear to May the truth
That he cared nothing for her. Every day
Or so it seemed, she saw the two of them
Together, heard them speak of one another,
And saw within her mind a close embrace.
At picnics in the summer, when they went
In those cool woods above the waterfall
Where limestone rocks had made a sort of cave,
'Twas always John and Gert that went alone
To explore its chambers with a candle end,
Or hide in spray behind the outsprung fall.
And hence together were the other two,
May and Roy Smith, and good friends to be sure,
But each the lover of another heart,
Impatient, miserable, and hard to please.
They did not speak of what they both well knew,
And made no accusations nor complaint,
But clung together when those other two
Went brazenly apart and looked not back.

Now John was weary in his mind of Gert,
But mind was not the captain to command,
And he could feel he would capitulate
To orders he would rather not have given.
His house was lonelier than ever now,
His nights more wakeful and his tender nerves,
Too near the surface at the quietest times,
Were like a festering wound that will not heal.
Though many a night before this later fate
Had found him brooding on unkindly life,
Now he would weep, or shiver with the cold,
And find no solace anywhere at all.
Distrustful of a creed, he did not go
To talk with Reverend Yule, though if he had
He might have found a clearer mind than his
To show if not the why the how of life.
He talked with no one really, only Gert,

And that was only reminiscences
Of what there might have been, not what there was.
Seeing no better wall for loneliness
And desperate nights, he thought at last he must
Propound the question which he knew would have
An answer which he did not want to hear.

Days got a chill which made Bert light his stove
And brought together once again the House
That sat and steamed and talked and hacked and spit
And settled what to do and how and when—
Provided that the Board confirmed it too.
But when the grey beards wagged about the stove
The talk was all of fifty years ago,
The what had been, the past that had come back
To throw its shadow on these present days.
'When we were young,' said Dolf, 'in olden days,
We didn't think to look to anywheres
But here to have our fun. Of course the fairs
Were in the towns, but only once a year.
The rest of the time there were so many bees,
All kinds of bees, where folks would husk their corn,
Or raise a house; most any excuse would do
To get the folks together, work and play.
Then there was general training when the men
Would meet and train, and all the women too
Would come to watch the men-folks strut themselves.
Then in winter we'd go visiting round—
There wa'n't no work to do—to see our friends—
Leave in the morning when the chores were done,
And spend the day, and eat all you could hold—
That being the women's pride, to set more food
Than anyone could eat; my, it was good;
There ain't no pride in cooking nowadays—
And then drive home to feed and milk the cows,
The sleighbells ringing in the dark and snow.
And then folks took to driving cars and went
So far, and saw so many things, so new,
They weren't content to play at home no more.
I guess the movies got to be for them
What fairs and bees and dances used to be,
If they could see some fancy show like that
They didn't need to visit with their friends.
And now you see it's like it used to be.
We've got no movies nor no cars to drive;
We must stick home, and do the best we can.
I think it's better now as it used to be.'
John Backus filled his pipe and lit a match,
But halfway to the bowl he stopped to speak.
'There's something else to that I tell you, Dolf,
That's part of it. Now I remember well
When Saugersville set fashions for itself,
I mean to say we had our own ways here
That weren't the ways of Centerfield or Steck,
Much less the ways of any city place
Where most of us had never been at all.
What ways were good and what were not we knew
And needed no one else to tell us which.
And no one wanted to be richer then
Than old Dave Vanderbeck, that lived right here
And had a carpet on his bedroom floor.'
The match burnt out; he lit another one
And puffed his pipe, and took it out and said,
'We wanted houses that were neat and clean,
Tight in the winter, good, and solid built,
With furniture to use, and please the eye.
We wanted plenty in the cellar room
To pile the table heavy all the year,
And cider in the barrel getting hard.
A nice-matched team of horses was the most
A man could want besides his house and farm.'
He shook his head and spit into the box.
'And then—you know the way it went; the wife
Would travel over to Schuylers Falls and see
Some brand newfangled stove her cousin had,
And work to get one like it till she did.
Or else the movies made her think her clothes

Were just not fit to wear, although that coat
Had got at least three years' more wear in it.
Don't blame it all upon the women-folks.
We're just as bad, with cars and radios.
And every cent we spent on them two things
Would cost us twenty cents before we're through,
Because they showed us things we had to buy
Or thought we had, which costs about the same.—
Oh well they're gone, and money too is gone.
We didn't want this, but we're free again
To follow out the ways we think are best,
And try our hands again at right and wrong,
And set the fashions now for Saugersville.'

II

I

October first now brought them half a year
Completed in this world that was so new
And so tarnation old. They were the same,
Men and boys and girls and wives and maids,
As on that midnight in the spring of fate,
The same as on the day before that night
That saw the last strange wheels go down their road.
But in each heart burned now a stronger fire
That flamed because of darkness roundabout
And burned the brighter for the winds that blew.
United by the implacable forest wall
That hung behind the cultivated hills,
United more by fear and need of strength,
They knew each other as they never had,
And bonds that irked were still dependable.
The horror of catastrophe had gone
As even horror must, into past time.
The sense of doom was there, but buried deep
In hearts that mostly only longed to live
And looked to find the means through all the days.
Their eyes looked now to winter and the snow,
The test to search them out, if they were strong.
They knew the answer if their strength should fail.

But one there was whom thought of winter shook
More coldly than the rest, who moaned at night
And turned and turned and waited for the light,
And watching sunrise wished for night again,
Thinking of snow and bitter days alone;
Though all his days were lonely, it was worse
To know you could not travel if you wished.
So Dick Van Snell met fall with shaking lips,
And if he slept woke always with a cry
Hearing again upon the road his wheels.
Seeing the man come slowly to the store,
Bringing the jug of cider which he used
To trade for food—hard cider too,
As good as any washed a gullet yet;
And Dick had found his ample store more good
Than if his barrelsfull went down his throat;
(This jug the next to last, and then what then?)—
Seeing him come so slowly, and his face
All loose with loneliness and grief, Earl said,
'Now Dick, here's something I've been thinking of.
The winter's coming, and I need a man
To help split wood and other chores about.
Come cold, why don't you come and live with us?
I'll feed and lodge you for the work you do.'
He knew Earl meant it kindly, but he said,
'I guess I'll stick down by my place awhile.'
'It's lonely there, and most a mile beyond
The Havins' place; you'd better come up here.
There's room enough, and food, and company.'
'No, no. I'll stay at home. I like it there.'
He took his little load and headed home,
Thinking with fierce distaste of any house
Where he might live except his own, his own.
The Backus farm was set back on the hill;
You could not see the road, a little road
That even in other days had few to pass,
The trees were all around it like a wall.
If he must live, and life was hardly worth
The trouble that it took to eat, to breathe,

He would be here upon the road, his road,
And if by some unapprehended chance
This bitter state of things should cease to be,
There he would wait to hear the wheels again,
To watch the world come rolling by his door.
His house was dark, he lit a candle end,
Threw wood upon the fire, and ate some meat
Left over from his hunt of yesterday.
The silence burned his ears. He looked about
And counted all he saw his own, and yet—
Now to what end should he stay here, alone?
And wall himself within his house, alone?
And there await a world now gone alone?
The jug of cider on the corner shelf
Seemed to provide an answer, or at least
Some solace if no answer could be found.
Regardless of its worth and rarity
He drew the plug and set to work to drink.

Seeking the last of summer and its sun
That was not now so burning bright as trees
Turned riotous and ruddy with the cold,
John Herbert and his Gertrude went to walk,
He with his gun against the chance of meat,
She with a line and hook for other food.
Below the Havins' place, before the gulf
Enclosed in shadow both the brook and road
The Sauger's widened to a quiet pool
Hung over by a rock, a fishes' haven—
And Gertrude was the one to catch them out.
But John was restless and his feet were loud
In leaves upon the bank. She scolded him
And he grew sultry, for his heart was tried
And bitter with his unresolved desire.
At last they quarrelled and the words were hot
And glittered in the pale descending sun
And hurt them both and festered in the blood.
Until in rage he took her by the arms
And shook her hard, and she came close and fought.
So then at last they clasped each other tight
And anger seemed to do what love could not,
Hot as they were and burnt beyond control.
A part of him that was not so stood out
And watched and hated him and said, you fool,
The while his hands were busy at her breast.
And she as well could not be wholly mad
But said deep in her mind, 'I've got him now.
We'll have to marry if we like or not.'
He pulled her down upon the ground. The leaves
Of willows dropped about them and the creek
Made unregenerate noises in its bed.
The road was fifty yards away, as still
As that old Indian trail that used to run
Among the ancient hemlocks on the bank.
Even the wind was still. And then a sound,
A shattering shot broke out, and slammed their ears
And wrenched their minds and made them both jump up,
Leaving with some regret and some relief
Their purpose and desire behind them with
The impress of their bodies in the grass.
'Who would be hunting here?' said John aloud,
'So near to Dick Van Snell's—his house is there
Beyond the curve. We'd better go and see.'
They reached the road but had not far to go
To see upon its surface what replied
To all their questions and its own as well.
For here upon the cracking grass-grown road
And at the curve where trucks were used to blow
Their horns to warn him of their passing by,
And where the lights at night struck on his house,
Here where no one could stand in other days
For fear of sudden death around the curve,
Here Dick Van Snell had ended his own life,
Seeing no reason not to leave a world
Which had already left him, taking away
All that he cared for, all his life for him.

Earl Backus thought, 'I should have made him come.
This is my fault, or partly. Well, I tried.
He had not much to live for, true enough.'
He stood a moment by the empty grave
That would be filled so soon. It was the first
In Saugersville since fate had marked them out.
The ground was not yet frozen and the smell
Of earth rose up and smote him like a blow.

He sighed and looked to where the hills
Rolled back in ridges to the distant sky,
First showing in their colors, then afar
One blank and uncommunicative blue.
He said aloud, 'Now Dick, 'twas easy done—
You had no chick nor child to think upon,
Nor any cared if you were quick or dead—
Not many men are free to do their will.'
He thought of Mate, his wife, their crippled girl,
And even of the town, that looked to him
For guiding where there were few hands to guide.
The weariness of living and despair,
The fear of doom that waited in his heart
And knew no date for fear to fasten on,
The weight of strength this small embattled group
Required of him and found in him each day—
These bore him down, and for this moment here
He thought of Dick and thought he had done well.
The wild geese cried above him in the sun,
The geese that flew as certain of their goal
As though no world of men had been wiped out—
No doubt they thought it for their good alone
That lakes were free and men and guns were few—
And with that stirring cry Earl turned again
And saw below the hillside plot of graves
The village visible through thinning leaves,
A compact shining group of white and grey
Below the V of birds that passed so high.
A fierce convulsion tightened up his chest,
He clenched his hands and dug his heels in earth.
'This is our place, by life and death and work;
We've lost one man, we must be strong to live
And fight this enemy we cannot see
Our weakness and our loneliness and fear;
We must be strong or we will all lie here.'

II

Abe Givets thought, 'He was a puny man
To give up rights and privileges
And hang ahold of just that one—the right,
Or so some say it is—the right to die.
In spite of all we've been deprived of here—
And by what law 'twas done I'd like to know—
I'll say for one I'm not the man to die,
But mean to live and get the best of things.'
Now what he meant by 'get the best of things'
Was hatching in a plan within his brain
That looked always to the main—or Givets'—chance.
Off to the westward of his house the fields
Sloped sharply down and met a fringe of trees.
Below that bank a small wild hollow lay,
A tangled place and waterless; and there
Amongst the rocks that showed on every side
A great hole gaped, deep in the ground,—
A curious ugly place, cut down in rock
By some old underground collapse that sent
The surface down into the earth and left
This dangerous and mysterious aperture.
There shone the bones of many hapless cows,
That, strayed or thrown in dead, had left
Chalky mementos in the damp and gloom.
Curious children every year or so
Would view the place and throw some rocks below.
And once Roy Smith, before he was half grown,
Had rigged a rope and let himself down in,
A candle in his pocket. He could see
From where his feet struck bottom nothing much
But walls of rock and all the dark debris
Of years about him on the rocky floor.
Even his heart the damp had chilled, and sent
Him climbing out to daylight and the sun.
Now Abe had need of stone to make a wall,
His fences broken and no wire to hand,
And brought his team, with George along to help,
Down in the field beside the fringe of trees
As near the hole as they could get.
And he and George picked likely stones and rolled
Or carried them together to the cart.
They worked about the mouth, a tricky job.

For stones were loose and slid and clattered down;
A man might fall as well with softer sound,
But here the best and handiest stones were found.
They had almost a load and needed one
To top it off, which Abe went back to get
While George turned round the team. There at the edge
Abe looked down in, the first he had today,
And saw that frost or rain or age had sunk
One part of the great hole, down at one side
Far, far below. There water glistened now
Where had been only damp and chill before.
He saw it shine; and something else as well,
A glimmer of whiteness at the water's edge
Like frost or snow. But now the air was warm
And even down there it could not be that cold.
He stared and stared and drew his shoulders in
And wrapped his arms about himself and stared.
Then hearing George, that reined the horses in,
He went back quickly from the hole and said,
'Now George we've got enough. That was too big
And fastened down too hard. We'll let it go.
We won't have time to draw more stone today.'
George thought, 'I never knew Abe leave behind
A thing he set to get. He must be tired,
But tired is something that he never is.'
At home that night, with Ellen gone to bed,
Abe sat beside the table thinking hard
Of that small gleaming whiteness in the hole.
'There used to be a tale, I mind it well,
My old granduncle telling me, that once
The Indians came to get their salt above
Our farm, back in the hollow by his place—
A spring that disappeared so long ago
Not even his grandfather ever saw it.
Maybe it went down underground and now
Has burst out in my hole. Maybe there was
Always some salt down there, but no one went
To get it out of such a dangerous place.'
He laughed low to himself, an ugly sound
That fluttered the candle and awoke the dog.

Next day he made a ladder in the barn
Of rope and slats, and nailed it to a tree
Above his hole, and made his way below—
A dangerous journey, but he feared it not.
His dream was true. The crystals tasted salt.
The water too. It could be boiled to leave
The precious grains that would make Givets rich.
He scraped away the white so nothing showed,
And climbed his ropes, and hid them in the tree,
Then silent as a buzzard in the sky
Awaited time that was to be his own.

George did not think of anything these days
Except the woman that he wanted most.
He did not contemplate his other days
With brighter birds of love than this small wren,
And certainly he had forgot his wife.
He only knew he wanted Ellen most,
And thought by now she wanted him as well.
The summer's ending waked in Ellen's heart
A kind of restlessness she had not known
Since windy days in childhood on the hill
Where all the countryside lay spread to see
And she, wind-blown, a small and eager thing,
Had longed to go, to see, to find, to live.
Now George's hand that sometimes handled hers
Could bring the same vibration to the blood,
The same deep breath, the sense of warm desire.
She waited for him now, and watched him come,
And saddened when he went. Her eyes were bright,
Her cheeks had even color and her hair
Shone with more brushing than it ever had.
Even the husband that denied her life
Could not prevent the quickening of her breath.
She thought less now of Abe's dark cruel ways,

And fear, which made her clumsy, lessened too.
She went about the little ugly house
With grace and eagerness, as though a light
Were shining in her always even there.

III

May Warder fought the summer's battles through
And kept her heart in bounds, that would leap out,
Seeing the man she loved and her he loved
Go always hand in hand forgetting her.
By fall she thought, 'I am recovering now;
This sickness is not fatal; I will live,
And likely love some man that will love me.'
But nothing that she felt supported this.
The death of Dick Van Snell meant only that
Again she knew these two were out alone.
She did not know this time would be the last.
She put him from her mind as best she could,
And watched the other single men and boys,
Knowing that she would marry one of them,
Or never marry, in their island world.

Today she went to Bessie Munn's, to help
With work, that Bessie was hard put to do,
Now growing large and always miserable.
She went there every week to help and cheer;
She wanted no return, but Robert tried
To help her father any way he could.
May did the wash, as Bessie sat and sewed,
Making from scraps of cloth she had put by
The clothes she needed for the waiting one.
They talked of all the news in Saugersville.
Which having but itself to talk of found
In every least detail something to tell.
'They say that Mr. Yule looks poorly now.
I haven't seen him much, not going to church.'
'I hear Ed's horse he liked so much is dead,
The red, white-footed one he's had for years.'
'And every horse we got is needed bad,
There are some colts, but they're no good to work.
There'll be a time when most we have are gone
Before the ones we raise are old enough.'
May, like her father, looked ahead and planned,
But planning was a chancy thing in days
When this today might be the end of all.
She saw the tears come into Bessie's eyes
That mostly nowadays were filled with tears,
And shook herself and wrung out all the clothes.
'We're doing pretty well, we pioneers,
Surely as well as our great-grandmas did,
Although it's harder for us, knowing how
To live another and an easier way.
I guess it's like all pioneering too.
The women get the worst, but they're the best
And bravest always. You know that now, Bess.'
So Bessie dried her tears and tried to think
Of how her great-great-grandmother had come
To settle in these parts before the war,
And spent the winter in a covered sleigh
Before their hut was built, and bore her child
By its rude hearth, their first established home.
The clothes hung out, May said good-bye and went
Downstreet to see if Bert could let her have
A spool of thread she needed for a dress.
The store was empty, as it often was,
No more the going in and coming out,
The heavy feet upon the deep-worn sill,
The old latch clicking with the earthy hands.
The stove was lit, the men still came and sat
About its warmth, the council of the old,
That could not leave their habits if they tried.
But now there was no changing to and fro,
No trucks that stopped to bring the store more goods,
No mail man, waited by the daily crowd.
Bert stayed there always—habit there again,
Though few there were to buy and few to sell—
A little trade in things some people had
And others did not have—butter or eggs,
Honey and syrup, apples, pears, or quince;
But of the goods, the irreplaceable goods,
Division had been made and record taken.
Bert counted up his spools and searched the list.

'Your mother had one black, one white, last month,
You've right to half a dozen more, I see,
Three white, three colored. Take your choice here, May.'
The pretty spools were like a row of flowers.
She picked the yellow that she liked so well,
And saw him write her name, 'One spool of thread,'
And thought of that old store-book Father had
Where every old inhabitant was named
And what they bought, and when, how much it cost
In pounds and pence, so old a book it was,
So that you saw them in the vanished store
Buy Hyson tea and indigo and nails
And every other one a gill of rum.
Thinking of them and what she said to Bess,
She filled her lungs with air that seemed to give
A strength like theirs to all who still lived here
And followed in their ways and fought their fight.

Not since that day more sultry in their hearts
That in the autumn sunshine by the pool
Had John and Gertrude met; as though that day,
That spanned both life and death so close, so strong,
That brought their bodies to the burning edge
And froze them stiff with horror at the sight
Of death so weary and intolerant,
Had showed them both a knowledge that was old
Within their hearts but only now made clear,
That said to each, 'Look, this is not the one.'
So that they shunned each other, shamed enough
That such relief should gather in their hearts.
For once Maria found her girl some help.
Gert did her chores with no complaints, and stayed
At home until her father said, 'Now Gert,
Your feller ain't been round this way at all.
What's come to him? Maybe he's gone away
Down river like he did that other time.
I guess he won't be finding more'n he did,
And might as well make up his mind to stay.'
'If you mean John,' said Gert, who knew quite well
All that he meant and more than what he said,
'He's not my feller nor intends to be,
Nor I intend to have him.' Maria looked
Behind Gert's back at Ed and shook her head,
So he said nothing but went back to read
The Bible, which he read of evenings now,
Which did not serve as well as papers did
For sleeping under; but he found it good
And read laboriously the Book of Job.

Ede Salzenbach knew more than anyone
About all business which was not her own
And was not prone to keep it to herself.
Her house was right across the street from Bert's,
Her kitchen on the side where she could see
Each car and team that stopped, and stood, and went;
They said she knew how many hairs there were
In every horse's tail that went that way.
Whatever facts she had she did not wait
To find them true before repeating them,
Of if she lacked, conjecture gave the rest.
And now she said that Gert had jilted John,
'After the way they carried on,' she said.
'I'd think it shame to act the way they did
And not get married afterwards for keeps.'

Embittered by the knowledge that his life
Was no more private than all other lives
That lived so close, so open to the gaze,
John suffered half from disappointed love—
Desire perhaps would be the better word—
And half from publicly reviewed chagrin
That he must play the part of failure here,
When really he was glad, and wished to say so.
Before at least there had been Gert for talk,
But now his words grew bottled up within
Until at last in need he tried the man
Whose work he scorned and thought of no account.
Beyond the store an open space of land,
A sort of common, gave a pleasant air
To those few houses, set on either side,

Their backs against the hills, that were the best,
The neatest, most substantial in the town—
Ede Salzenbach's, the Cramers', and the Yules',
With one or two between not quite so proud.
The minister's house faced out on all the rest
Across the common's end, as though it watched
With quiet shining eyes the secular world,
Not so much in reproof as kindliness,—
Its yellow clapboards faded in the sun
Its aged roof a soft, declining grey.
Descending from his hillside to the town
In late November light that shone and paled
And left the valley deepening into night,
John Herbert thought, 'This is a quiet place'—
The first time he had thought like that in praise,
He who despaired in its monotony.
So coming to the doorway in the dusk
He felt already in his heart some hope
That life was better than he thought it was,
And even if it wasn't, men might bear
Troubles like his with equanimity.
The minister was cracking butternuts
From last year's crop, well dried and wrinkled black,
The very devil to crack, but paying well
With sweet, rich meats the hammer and the toil.
Seeing who came, the reverend pushed away
Hammer and iron and bowl of nuts, and gave
His guest a handful of his hard-won prize.
The two had never met to talk like this;
At first they tried each other out to see
What thoughts there were behind the wall of words,
What title each could give to reason's name.
At last John said, 'Do you know what to think
Of this our special fate, these seven months
Of isolation in a world destroyed?
Don't tell me God, or Providence, has willed
That this be so, not any other so.
What do you really think the answer is?'
The old man moved his hands and turned them up.
His candle shone on weathered, empty palms.
'You know there is no answer to this thing
Except the one that means two things to us—
The one you will not have, and I can give
No other to your question, as you know.
And if I say God in his wisdom made
The mystery; and if you say blind fate
Playing an aimless game let fall this trick,
Why, what's the difference? We're bound to live
Because some strength within us says we must;
It's taking all our time to find out how
And keep the breath within us warm.' He paused
And watched John's face and said again, 'I see
You think there is a difference. I too—
I have not always felt as I do now
Submission to God's will in this his world,
Nor can I counsel that you bow your head,
For youth must fight and with its fighting learn.'
The younger man said then, 'I've fought so long
And learned so little that I'm tired of it.
My life was never much of a success,
Although it looked to be before I found
That I must leave it all to go away
And spend my days in quiet in the air.
But here again I have not made my life
What I would have it be. I used to think
Forever of the city, all it meant,
And thought I could do nothing if not there.
And when I found not being there had saved
The life I valued nowhere else, why then
What had I left? I have been lost, and done
More than one foolish thing in loneliness.'
The old man smiled and looked at him and said,
'But now those things are past?' And John said, 'Yes';
And that was all the requiem for Gert.

When John went home, and it was late that night,
He felt his heart beat lighter in his breast
And watched the stars come up behind the hill
And thought they looked more kindly on his house
That showed a gable-end against the sky
Than they had used to look in nights gone by.

IV

November days were very cold and still
With yet no snow to cover frozen fields;
The roads were rock, whereon the horses' hoofs
Sounded like blows, their breaths were thick as smoke,
And every teamster jumped and clapped his arms.
Earl Backus, piling his potatoes up
In bins waist-high against the cellar wall—
A hearty bunch of sober-sided spuds—
Attempted once again to figure up
The tale of villagers, their heads and needs,
And what they had to fight the winter with.
'I know there's some we'll have to help to live
Before the snow is gone; there's bound to be,
And none of us will be right smart by spring.
But spring we'll see, and all of us, I hope,
Providing what has come don't come to us.'
He shook his head and shut the cover down
And went upstairs, whistling a tune to hide
The thought that maybe one, his crippled girl,
Would not be here to see the snowdrifts go.

On Saturday nights the men still went to Bill's,
Although he had no beer to offer them,
And cider was still sweet inside the keg.
Bill leant across the bar and said, 'Next year
I'm going to grow some hops. I found a place
Where they grow wild, what's left I guess
Of someone's hop yard twenty years ago.
You'll see some beer will make you smack your lips.'
He grinned, his easy face red in the light
Of half a dozen candles on the bar.
Around the table four attentive heads
Bent over pinochle cards. Some others watched,
And others tipped their chairs back on the wall
Behind the stove, and talked and coughed and spat.
Sometimes they grouched about nothing to drink.
'Our old stone mill down on the holler road
Was built for a distillery, they say,
Way back before the Civil War,' said Bill.
'But no one now knows how to make the stuff.
You have to have more tools than we have got.'
'Yes, I remember it,' said Adolf Wick.
'When I was a boy they still made whiskey there.
The difference between folks then and now,
They didn't have as much as we have here,
But made the most of what they had, while we
Can hardly handle what we've got to hand
Much less go figure out some new ideas.'
'There may be time for that,' John Backus said.
'We've only just begun to live these lives
Since we were born in this new world last spring.
You can't expect such babies to be smart.
Give us some time, we'll make as many things
And have as many comforts as they had.'
They all began to talk at once, each man
With some idea he had been pondering on
To fill a need now newly felt again;
As though their minds, long dulled with great supply
Of every tool to hand, had come alive,
And that thin streak of sharp inventiveness
That Yankee minds have never wholly lost
Sprang into action and went hard to work.
'I'm goin' to hitch my thrasher to a horse.'—
'I'm going to build a little water wheel.'—
'I think that I can fix that engine up,
That old steam engine that my uncle had.
It used to go real well. You could burn wood.'—
'Young Robert Munn says maybe he can make
A dynamo and harness up the creek
And make some electricity of our own.'
That was the best idea; they turned to Jake
The miller: 'Couldn't we use that wheel of yours?'—
They talked on late that night and quite forgot
How sober they had been with naught to drink,
Intoxicated by their own designs.
'It's very well to talk about such things.'

Said Mrs. Cramer as they went to bed
And Jake was telling her about the plans.
'But there's some things we really got to have,
And that before next summer or next spring,
And one of them is salt. The last bag's gone
Out of the mill. It's all divided up,
And though I s'pose some folks have got some still,
The cattle need it now. They'll need it bad
'Fore many weeks, and folks will need it too.'
Jake did not relish much the thought of food
Without its savor; and knew no answer either
To where it could be found; so went to sleep
And dreamt of pickling hams in maple sugar.

Thanksgiving came and went and still no snow.
They kept no great festivity that day,
Though Reverend Yule reminded them indeed
How fortunate they were to be alive
And well provided for, their cellars full,
Their barns stuffed out to bursting and the shocks
Of hay and corn still standing in the fields—
'More blessed far than those impoverished ones
Who faced the winter in Massachusetts Bay
With little food and no conveniences,
Their backs against the wilderness of death.
And though we are more lonely even than they
And face a peril that is yet unknown,
We have their courage and three hundred years
Of courage on American frontiers
To make us brave and steadfast even here,
Even upon the last of all frontiers.'
But in their homes some shook their heads and sighed
And thought how many men had starved to death
To make the nation which was now no more.
While others sat around a festal board
No less well burdened than it ever was.
Maria Winterhaus was proud of hers.
The turkey, which she raised, was big and fat,
The pork was newly killed, a noble pig
With noble spare-ribs, browned just to a turn.
Pickles and sauce and even cranberries
From the cedar swamp, put up last summertime,
A little sour for lack of sugar to spare,
But excellent, and she was proud of them.
The pumpkin pie was just as good as ever.
The family did full justice to the food.
The Countrymans were there—Bill's wife and Ed
Were brother and sister; and Bill's mother too,
Who had no teeth but managed to consume
At least as much as anybody else.
They talked of other Thanksgivings, of days
When all the families came home to dine
And there would be a score at any table.
'Folks had good families in those days,' said Ed,
'Half a dozen children anyway, and more.'
'They needed 'em,' said old Mis' Countryman,
'And need 'em now again. You young folks here
Had better get to work.' She leered at Gert,
And made the younger boy, Eugene, turn red.
'Those days of going places don't seem real.'
Bill pulled his waistcoat down, shook off the crumbs
'We used to be a-travelling all the time,
But I don't miss it much. It don't seem real,
As though we ain't the same as we were then.'
'Maria's cooking's just the same,' said Lize.
'I don't see how you do it nowadays.'
Maria laughed, pretending not to care.
'I guess it ain't so good. We get along
And have most things the same. But I declare
I don't know what we'll do without no salt.'
'We'll have to get it someways pretty soon.
I'm damned if I know how,' said Countryman.
Young Ed, the older boy, spoke up: 'Roy Smith
Allows that he could go and find some salt
Out west of here, where Swago used to be.
The salt would still be there, he says.' The boy
Was shining at the thought of such a trip.
'It's more'n a hundred miles to there,' said Ed,

'And hard to find the way, with all roads gone.'
'And God knows what to meet him on the way,—
The women shook their heads, the men thought how
This could be done, to go and then bring back
Sufficient salt for all, if salt there was.
To Gert, who had said nothing all this time,
Not liking family feasts or family talk,
There came a sudden and surprising pull
Somewhere beneath her heart. With more distaste
Than any other feeling she reviewed
Her thoughts and found uprising there in her
A sudden fear and sorrow and regret
That Roy—whom she disliked—should go so far
And face upon so bold an escapade
All dangers of a known and common kind
As cold and toil and hunger, and as well
The looming horrors of the far unknown.

Abe Givets heard the talk of salt and said
Nothing to anyone, but watched his chance
And sometimes went alone to the big hole.
He had a gnawing fear someone would find
That silver secret in the hidden dark,
And always watched that way from where he was
Or went where he could see there from the house.
Hearing one day a team upon the road
Where no teams passed, because this was the end,
He hurried to the house where he could see
The track that led to where his secret was.
He went into the woodshed where he could
Look down the road without his being seen—
As quiet as a cat that watches mice.
He saw the team come slowly up the hill,
Gus Warder's team and wearied with the pull,
And still a distance from his private track.
And through the door into the house he saw
Something that took his mind even from his salt.
He had left George to clear the barn and stack
Manure about the bottom of the house
To keep them warm against the winter wind,
While he himself went to the farthest shed
To oil his gear—a good full morning's work
And not one he'd be apt to interrupt
For anything but this suspicious watch.
Now he saw he might indeed suspect
But not that anyone would take his salt;
This was a sight so unexpected to him
He hardly could take in just what it meant,
Not having thought that Ellen was a woman
Or anything but one to cook and wash,
And sometimes be a convenience to himself.
That anyone should want her, or that George—
Without a sound he drew himself away
And met Gus Warder as he stopped his team
Just at the track that led into the house,
Asking if Abe would lend his scaffolding
So he could mend his leaking cow-barn roof.

The teacher had no paper for her class,
What little was in town was valuable
And not for ABC. They used the slates
That had been almost out of use before,
And wrote upon the blackboard with what bits
Of softened stone and slate Miss Smith could find.
They liked it just as well. She kept the books
Locked up behind her desk, a precious hoard,
Passed out with care to those who read the best.
Oblivious though they were it seemed as if
The children felt responsibility,
As though they knew now in a special sense
They were the hope and prospect of the world.
They seemed to pay attention and discern
What things would aid them in existence here,
What things they must remember and pass on,
And drink them eagerly and ask for more.
There were no calls to lead them far away,
No cars to watch, no radio to hear,
No towns to see, and little enough to read.
So they were ready to forget the world
That once surrounded them, and face alone
Self-preservation in a wilderness.

v

The sun went southward in declining days.
The houses in the valley only saw
Six hours of sunshine in the best of skies.
The air was very cold, but still the snow
Waited beyond its long-accustomed time
And left the ground uncovered, rough and brown.
The children were distressed lest Christmas come
And find no snow to celebrate it with.
And even darker fears were in their minds;
Jack Warder after long and worrying thought
Said, 'Pa, I wonder about Santa Claus,
And if he's gone away like everything.
I wonder if we'll hang our stockings up
And if we do—' He could not finish out
A thought so terrible. His father smiled.
'I don't believe that Santa Claus, my son,
Is much affected by this little change.
I guess he'll be around, about the same.'
But Christmas, to be sure, could hardly be
The same as when a wagonload of toys,
Or nearly that, was purchased at the stores
In towns about, and brought to Saugersville
By parent hands as eager to give out
As little hands to take—when even the poor
Had some ten-cent-store toy, and not a child
But had some candy and a stick of gum.
So hands must set to work and make the best
That head and hands and few materials
Could manufacture for the Christmas tree.
John Herbert, who was quite a handy man,
And needed milk and eggs and maple sugar,
Devised a plan to suit this Christmas need.
With soft pine wood in plenty and his knife
He set to work to whittle animals,
And made a Noah's Ark as full of live
And antic creatures as there ever was.
Then, tiring of giraffes and elephants,
He made a farmyard and a barn as well
And needed only men to make it real.
This led him to the making of a doll,
And with a humor half-ironical
He carved a pretty girl so much like Gert
He sometimes thought she looked at him and laughed.
Seeing her, done at last, upon his table,
Her naked body bright in fresh-cut wood,
He suddenly went hot, and turned away,
And made as though to put her in the fire.
But loving well the product of his hands
He threw a cover over her and thought,
'This lass must have some clothes. I'll find for her
Couturiers and milliners of style.'

Next day was lowering as though the sky
Was resting on the hills above the town.
He felt too near the ceiling of the clouds;
His heart was bursting out with restlessness
So after dinner (of potato soup
And bacon, and cabbage from his buried hoard)
He set out for a walk, stung by the cold
That cramped his hands within his tattered gloves.
The air was heavy and appalling still
As though it waited some unknown event.
He shivered as he walked, and felt again
The fear of hostile woods and walling hills
That slept behind the still security
Of day by day that dulled the sting of fear.
He went along the old cart track that led
Upon the hill's smooth crest, a stretch of land
Untenanted and bare of trees or brush,
A high and rolling sweep, a windy moor,
A down that crowned the ridge above the town
He saw the road below, the huddled stand
Of houses set about the small church spires,
The stone bulk of the mill, the tiny gleam—
The golden eagle on the flagpole top—
And quick and dark, the ever-flowing stream.
He turned away, but to the north no hills
No blue and distant prospect of the world
To tell that even without men there was
A country not their own, another land;
No hills, no view, no other world at all,
But grey and heavy clouds that pressed around
As though they too were walls of wilderness
Impenetrable to foot as well as eye.
And here a panic fear assailed his mind,
A terror that was ignorant of what
Was terrible, a blind and sickening thing
That reason had no power to smother down.
He stumbled on, as though the rutted way
Could bring him out of panic into light
And he must hurry lest the devils gain.

And so like one beleaguered who descries
Across the plain the flag that brings relief,
He saw approaching him another one
Who fought the darkness of the heavy air
And walked in thought and maybe in despair.
He saw it was a woman; soon he saw
May Warder's face that was an angel's face
That looks down into hell and knows the pain.
He drew a breath as though to live again,
Released from that dark pit he might have found
Because here was another living being
That looked out on the hills, the heavy clouds,
And faced with him the threat of doom and fear.
They stood together in an air grown grey,
And for a moment's time that seemed as long
As all the months gone by since April first,
They said nothing at all. Above them now
As though this moment was the fated one
Long attended till these two were met
There came the silent messenger that fell
So still, so soft, so few, they saw it not
Until May felt upon her cheek its cold
And turned to him, just as he turned to her
To say the very words in the same breath—
'It's going to snow.' They laughed and felt their hearts
Rise up with joy as sudden as the snow.
Then suddenly the hill and all the field,
The town, the stream, the reaches of the road
Were gone behind the onslaught of the snow
That spread about them like a wall of fire.
They breathed the snow, their faces were beset,
Their eyes encrusted with the clinging flakes,
Their cheeks turned red with cold and pleasure in it.
'We'd better go,' said John. 'It's awfully thick.'
They bent their heads and pulled their collars up
Against the tickling fingers that crept in.
They could not talk, but walked the little road
Already covered with a scattered white
And soon to be obliterate entire.
Outside his house John stopped and said, 'Oh please,
I wish you would come in. I've something here—
I need some help. Come in, I'll show it to you.'
If there was hesitation, it was joy,
And there was none to see. May hastened in.
He shut the door behind. That first deep breath
They drew of warmth and shelter from the snow
Brought them together for a second's time
And made them one that sheltered against fear
And shut the door upon the wilderness.
It was as though someone had cast a stone
That disappeared within a darkened pool
But left a movement that betrayed its place.
May shook her clothes and held her hood and mitts
Before the fire that warmed the old black stove.
Her eyes were bright, for she at last was here.
John told her how he manufactured toys
And showed the Ark, the farmyard, and the dolls,
And drew at last his Gertrude from her shroud.
He thought the likeness was for him alone,
And if May saw it she did not remark,
But praised the pretty features and the joints
That moved the little limbs so gracefully.
'I'll make her lovely clothes,' she promised him,
'For Mother has a ragbag full of scraps
Will make her petticoats and hats and gowns—
I'll warrant you'll be proud of her.' He laughed.
'And if I sell her you will have your half.
We'd better go in business. We might make
Ten pounds of maple sugar or five cords
Of well-split wood, or anything else we need.'
They laughed together, and the warmth that spread
Throughout their bodies was a pleasant warmth

And not all generated by the stove.
The dark outside warned May she must get home.
She wrapped the doll inside her coat with care;
He saw her to the road and then turned back
And found his little house less lonely now.

VI

Lying awake in darkness by the side
Of one who slept and breathed so peacefully
She could have felt no guilt, nor did she feel,
Abe Givets planned what might the outcome be
Of this unlikely thing had come to pass.
He did not know how guilty George might be,
How long this matter had been going on,
What part his Ellen played, who seemed so still,
And had attacked him in this vulnerable
And wholly unpremeditated way.
Following his nature, which detested noise,
And thought a secret better than a scene,
He knew he would say nothing, since he knew
Not yet what he might say, if time should come
When something must be said, and said by him.
Meanwhile the old and never-healing sore
That marked his mind in that part where his 'rights'
Were placed, awoke again to bleed
And poison all his being with the fear
Lest he be cheated out of everything.

The snow grew deep, the children's hearts were glad,
And grown folks too found something in them rise
With pleasure at the brilliance all around.
The horses wore their bells, and men their boots,
A smell like Christmas seemed to fill the air.
The children in the school made toys of sticks
And painted them with what few paints they had.
'We'll have a Christmas party,' teacher said,
'And ask them all to come, yes everyone,
And have a tree, and presents if we can.
We'll plan it out so everything will be
As near to what it was as possible.'
She taught them songs and thought back lovingly
Of Christmas music and her radio.
There was an old victrola in the school
And thirty records that she knew by heart,
And could use only sparingly, for wear.
She thought, 'That music, all there was before,
Cannot just disappear and be no more.
It must be somewhere else now, singing still,
Though I can't hear it any more.' The tears
That came so easy to her pale blue eyes
Came now and blurred the room. She shook her head
And said, her voice a little sad but clear,
'We'll sing our carols over, now sing loud:
"Oh, little town of Bethlehem."'

By mid-December Grandma Smith was sure
The world was not worth living in. She said,
'Folks act so queer, they rile me most to death.
I don't care much for things the way they are,
And everyone deceitful. It was good
When I was young and God arranged things better.'
In vain the Reverend Yule urged resignation
And prayed with her, or rather by her side.
Her family had long since stopped arguing,
And could not interest her now in life.
Only to Roy, her favorite of her clan,
She spoke in words not wholly mutinous.
'I see there's changes, boy. You'll have to make
Your mark in Saugersville. The rest can go
Wherever these poor idiots say it's gone.
It doesn't matter anyway. The world
Is mostly right around a body's place
And doesn't need a radio to tell
You and your family what it thinks of you.
And even what the neighbors say don't matter
So long as you are strong enough to know
That what it says inside your head is right

And strong enough to listen and take heed.
For me, I've lived my share of life, and seen
This place spread out and now draw in again.
I haven't noticed folks at any time
Have differed much from any other time.
And everything comes out about the same.
I'm tired of it. I'll give you what I've got,
Although the money is no good to you,
At least not now. The land is pretty good.
You'd best get married, boy, and settle down.'
The old face smiled at him, the old eyes winked,
And for a moment an old twisted hand
Unused to give caresses, lay on his.
It did not take her long to do her will.
Another week of slow disfranchisement,
Of sinking lower down than breath can stand
Or heart recover for another beat,
And she was still forever, peacefully.

Earl Backus bought the lovely wooden doll
For his lame Mildred, who was old for dolls
But loved them dearly for their company.
It was a darling creature; May had made
As pretty a wardrobe as a doll could ask.
John got his eggs and honey; for her share
May took some tea from Mrs. Backus' store,
Enough to brew a pot on Christmas Day.
The Reverend Yule held church on Christmas Eve,
His little building all ablaze with lights.
(He had collected candles all the fall
Instead of pennies in the collection plate.)
And everybody came, or nearly so;
Not even Christmas in a frozen world
Would bring Abe Givets to church, though Ellen begged
With new-found bravery that she might go,
Till he said yes at last, with such a mouth
She was more frightened than if he'd said no.
But now she sat with eyes that shone with light,
The candles and the music in her heart,
The children like startled rabbits at her side.
But George was fast asleep at home; no thought
Of Ellen or of Christmas bothered him.
Save these, and others sick, or old, or young,
All Saugersville was there, as it had not
Spent Christmas Eve in church these many years.
The minister watched the faces that watched him,
And thought, 'We're doing well, they look awake.
The will of God works out in devious ways.'
He rose to pray: 'O God our Father, wise
And most benevolent, that blesses us
Although we know it not, give us to keep
Here in our hearts the memory of Christ,
Whose birth we celebrate now for the first
In our new world of loneliness and toil.
His story we will read and tell and love
That all may know that follow after here
The blessing that thou gave us in thy son.'
Jake Cramer listened with his head bent down,
And thought, 'This is the truth; it's up to us
To keep this thing alive. We mustn't forget.'
Earl Backus sighed a little to himself and thought,
'But this is just a little part of all
We must pass on. Our duty is so heavy
How can we ever do all that is right?'
Ede Salzenbach smoothed down her rabbit furs
She bought from Roy for half a box of shells
Left in the attic by her late deceased—
'Roy Smith could get his girl now if he would.'
May Warder listened with her heart so warm
It seemed as though the candles were all fires
That warmed her mind and made her glad and proud
And confident of all that lay ahead,
That she was strong, to bear the burden on.
John Herbert watched and did not close his eyes
And thought, 'She looks so good, so sweet, so true,
A part of these strong hills, and fit to live
And carry here a life that will be good.'
The organ played, they all stood up and sang,
The candles flickered, and the old man's hair
Shone silver in the pulpit. Like a cord
The music bound them all and made them strong:
'Oh come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant.'

The children found no lack on Christmas Day,

For there were toys enough, and Christmas trees
Hung with last Christmas' shining balls of glass,
And with some newer strings of cranberries
And popcorn white as snow; no lights of course,
But here and there a candle moulded small.
Treasures exchanged were tokens full of love,
For he who gave must spite himself to do it
And all were bought with dearer coin than money.
So even those who set most store by things,
Young girls, and women, and some men as well,
Were not ill pleased with what their Christmas brought,
And pride was added to the store of pride
Which lay already in the hearts of most
That things were going well in Saugersville
And fate was cheated—or at least so far.

But Christmas was not merry with the Munns,
Whose child was yet unborn, unwanted too,
And made them both as sad as though this were
Some strange calamity of unknown kind,
A part and parcel of the greater ill
That made a birth seem terrible and odd.
Robert watched his wife, who looked so thin,
The child a great excrescence on a frame
That hardly seemed to bear itself upright,
And always shook with tears and tears of fright.
On Christmas Day itself this fear came out
And stood bold in her eyes and on her face
And took voice in her mouth so that she cried
And fell upon her bed and clutched her hands—
'Oh Bob it is not time—it cannot be.
It lacks a month and more the way we count—
There's something wrong. Oh pain! Oh God —oh, Bob.'
Bob ran out to the road and looked and called;
Bill Countryman replied from the hotel.
'Quick, tell your wife. Get Mrs. Warder too.
I must get back. It's come a month too soon.'
It was a long and bitter day and night,
Mis' Warder tried to make a cheerful face
To face poor Robert with. But Bess screamed on
And nothing seemed of any help or good.
The women were as wise as they could be
With own experience, and old wives' tales,
And knew at least a little modern lore.
But Bess grew weaker and it seemed as though
She would not have the power to bear the babe.
They did all that they knew and asked advice.
The whole town helped with this, a town that leaned
With fierce anxiety about the bed
Of this their first-born child in their new world.
At last, in morning light, the girl was born.
But Robert did not care. He sat close by
And watched the face that was too pale to live.
Mis' Warder in the kitchen wrung her hands.
'She bled so much—if anybody knew,
Or had the tools to give transfusion now,
Or maybe the right stimulant to give,
Or if—or if—–' She cried into her apron,
And there was none to answer or to help.
The tiny baby squalled; they wrapped it warm
And nursed it by the fire. Robert sat on,
Waiting for some faint sign, a look, a breath,
But knowing now that she would never stir
And never waken to his touch again.
They led him out at last. The Reverend Yule
Spoke gently to him as he passed, and went—
Beneath ecclesiastic calm the old
And burning tumult rising once again.
'She did not need to die, nor would have died
Had Schuylers Falls and its great hospital
And doctors, anaesthetics, and new blood
Remained to us, to us that need it so,
Being so frail, and ill equipped to keep
Our race continuing upon its earth.
Are we to be stripped naked to the cold
And primitive malevolence of earth
Just as we make an armor strong against
The force that fights so hard to keep us down,
Using for its tools our feeble bodies?'

He checked himself, that thought so wildly now,
So little like a minister of God.
But God seemed far away. The woman's screams
That yet were in his ears spoke older tongues
And made him tremble at the earth he walked.

And so with Dick Van Snell, and Grandma Smith,
Who both had wished to go nor felt regret,
They put the young and unsuccessful mother
That would have stayed had she had help enough
But by herself lacked the essential strength
To live and make life in a harder world.
The baby lived. The Warders took it home
And fed it drops of milk and water till
It lost its peaked look and tried to grow.
But Robert would not talk or even eat
Except as he was made to by his friends,
Not able even to think that Bess was gone,
But dull with anger at the burning thought,
'She might have lived; she might have still been here.'

As though Bess' death were signal to a fate
That waited to torment them, though it kept
Its final doom a secret in the hills,
Now sickness came upon them, young and old.
A cold, a fever, chills and aching pain,
A shattering weakness deep in blood and bone—
These bore them down like grain beneath the hail.
The clear and shining cold dissolved in rain,
The 'January thaw' brought mist and warmth
That made a body sick to feel the air
So wet, and sickly soft, and always grey.
In every house someone was sick, and some
Had more in bed than on their feet to nurse.
There were few remedies to give the sick
And only home-made doctors to attend.
What kind of thing it was they did not know,
Some bitter influenza, or a grippe,
That brought a terror with it worse than chills,
A terror justified. John Backus died,
A man they could not spare, both strong and wise,
And clever in the woods, a hunting man,
And hunting men were now again become
Leaders and providers to their town.
And then Jake Cramer's wife, who worked so hard
That there was nothing left, when she was ill,
To fight the sickness with; at last were still
The hands that never rested from the broom
That made her house a shining piece of glass
And kept her men in terror of their lives.
The youngest Countryman, a little boy,
Departed too. These three were all, and then
The plague diminished, and they hoped was gone.

May Warder was not sick, but worked so hard
She glimmered like a ghost before it went.
She went where she could be most help; one week
She spent at Winterhaus', where all were sick
Except Eugene, who kept the fires alight
And washed the pots and even the dirty sheets,
While May looked after everyone, alone.
Gert was the worst. The sickness took her bad
As though it meant to kill her if it could.
But May fought back and did the best she knew,
Watching the pretty face, so ugly now,
That once she hated worse than death itself.
And now thought only, 'Is she cooler now?
She must not die. I will not let her die.'
It was a struggle that allowed no time
For any thought except of life and death,
And May would think of nothing but of life.
Sometimes in fever Gert would cry out, 'John!'
And mutter words that did not make much sense,
And May had not the time to think of them,
Though sometimes she would hold her breath upon
The name that sounded like a call to her.
She won the fight, and beat not only death
But Gert's harsh cold reserve, that had been like

A wall between them since they were grown up.
She left the house, when they could tend themselves,
More nearly like a friend than Gert had had
Among her sex in all her selfish life.

While Gert was sick, Roy Smith had come to ask
Each day of May how things were going with her,
Until he too fell sick and in his fever
Raved on about her till his mother wept,
And made his father in anxiety swear.
'God damn the boy!' he cried. 'He must get well
And bed the girl to get her off his mind.'

John Herbert was not sick; he lent a hand
Wherever he could help. He carried wood,
And carried a corpse as well, when Backus died,
And tended cattle where the men were sick
And served as errand boy and handy man.
The ground below the mud was frozen hard,
They put the dead into the little vault—
A chancy thing, no undertaker there—
Though John suggested that they make a pyre
And burn the bodies as a safer course.
But such cremation would not do at all
To minds unmindful of ancestral rites
And busied only with the decent thing.

Earl Backus pondered on the many deaths—
For four were many of two hundred souls—
And he was shadowed by his brother's death
Who had been always with him, fifty years.
'The sickness, yes, they might have died the same,
If we'd had doctors and the hospital,
For people died of flu—whatever it was—
With every kind of medicine and help.
But Bess—she did not need to die. It's bad
If women can't have babies nowadays—
We must have babies here to carry on.
But then I guess we can. Poor Bess was weak;
She did not have much guts to do it with.
And there are others here could do it, sure.'
He thought of May, and Gert, and other girls
That looked as though they could have babies well
Without a doctor or a hospital.
'We must be careful, though, and all keep well.
We can't let sickness get a foothold here
Like this thing did. We shouldn't ketch diseases,
Not having traffic with the outside world.'
He grinned now to himself, but still his thoughts
Were trying always to plan out the way
The little group could live. No grief of his
Could darken wholly his ambitious mind
That looked forever to the future time.
The year had shown, until this date at least,
That they could winter over comfortably
On all that they had raised, with what they had
Left over from the richer times before.
No diet was as full, no food as good
As what they used to have. But no one starved
Or even hungered, and the cattle fed
Sufficiently from granary and loft.
He could not see but what another year,
Although their stores were gone, they would know more
About their needs and could again do well,
Providing providence provided rain
And sun enough to make their plantings grow.
Their clothes would wear, their houses need repair,
But there were deer for leather coats, and trees
That waited to be cut and sawed and planed.
Their greatest lack was sheep. They had no wool.
And salt—what would they do for that?
He brooded over these until at last
The greater question clouded over the less:
'What will become of us? We seem to be
The only human beings left alive.
If there are ever going to be again
Races of men, and cities, governments,—
At least upon this continent, like us,
Americans,—we are their fathers now,
And they depend on us and what we bring.
I do not think this can be really so.
There must be other villages alive.

One day we will discover them, they us,
And meeting fall to talking of a day
When we were all so near we did not care
Who lived or died or what became of us,
Too sure of everything—heat, light and power
And public education and the roads,—
Too little parts of a machine too great
For us to understand, or anyone,
So that we blamed ourselves no more at all
For anything that happened—that was bad;
I guess we took some credit for the good—
Complaining always of the government
Or capital, or labor, or the weather.
The last is all we can complain of now
With no one to account for but ourselves,
And near enough to see where blame is due,
If blame there is where everyone works hard
And does his best to keep himself alive.'
He chewed upon his empty pipe that now
Had smoked away his carefully guarded hoard
And stayed from habit only in his mouth.
('Next summer I must look out in the woods
For that wild plant that's something like tobacco.)
There's nothing I can find the answer to
By worrying on the future. Let it come.
We've not done bad so far. We'll just keep on.
I wish that John were here to help us go.'

III

I

Because the need of salt was dominant,
And people now as well as stock were sick
To get a taste of it, that could not eat
Without these little grains to fill the blood,
Abe Givets meant to tell the Safety Board.
He had spent days and nights in planning this,
In thinking what to do, to get the most
Of his most lucky find. He cared for law
So much himself he felt all-powerful
Because by law he owned the stuff. He thought
Of all that he could get for it—enough
To keep him idle for a year at least
With produce, labor, all exchanged for salt.
But then he thought, 'The money is the best.
Some time, somewhere, the dollars will be good.
And if I take it now, when it is worth
Nothing to them, they'll give me more for salt
And then, when it is good, I will be rich.'
He brooded over this, and found it wise.
'Tomorrow I will tell, and they will pay.'
But sickness came upon him in the night;
He was the last to take it, who had said,
'My hide's too thick to ketch a bug like that.'
His Ellen nursed him with distaste but care,
And he was very sick and raving too.
And talked incessantly of something hid,
And then of salt and then he said, 'Be still.'
She did not listen. George was in her mind
And in her heart as well, and in her house.
He slept there now to do the chores and keep
A watch on things, but most of all a watch
On her whom he desired. The second night
Beside Abe's bed, where she had sat so long,
She looked upon the gnarled and working face,
The mouth that twisted down and muttered still,
The eyes that shut or open seemed to stare
Into her own that shrank to look at them.
He seemed more quiet now. She left her chair
And with no looking back went swiftly out
And shut the door and leaned her back upon it.
Her heart replied so loud to what she thought
She could not hear a sound. At last she knew
There was no sound behind her, nor above
Where in their beds the children were asleep.
Unthinking now, but answering her heart
She crept downstairs and into the back room.
George lay in darkness there but not asleep.

At some hour in the night the fever grew
And Abe flung restlessly about the bed
Talking of salt and riches and men's rights
Until at last he thought he must get up
To go and guard his valuable find.
He heard them crying for it, calling him,
And bringing wads of money in their hands.
Somehow he struggled up, put on his pants,

But could not find his shoes. He went without,
And like the ghost of an unburied man
Slipped down the stairs and out into the snow.
The cold came in upon him like a wind;
He did not feel it nor his naked feet.
It gave him strength but could not clear his mind;
Hot with intent he ran across the field.

Behind, the unlatched door swung open wide,
The cold blew in the house and banged the door
Where George and Ellen slept. She stirred and waked,
Then slid out of the bed and shut the door.
She crept upstairs and went into the room
Where on the chest the candle flickered still.
She called out 'Abe' and looked all round the room,
Then ran downstairs, the candle in her hand.
She looked into the privy; nothing there.
And then she saw the footsteps in the snow.
It seemed an hour before she could wake George
And make him understand that Abe was gone.
At last he was awake, and dressed, while she
Pulled on a coat and boots and followed him,
His lantern shining feeble in the night.
Across the field the naked footsteps went
And they hard after them. At last they came
To where the brush grew round the hidden hole—
And there upon his knees, deep in the snow,
Abe Givets reached with eager freezing hands
To fasten his rope ladder to the tree,
Avid to descend to opulence.
George came up to him suddenly. He screamed,
A wild inhuman sound, and staggered up.
George held the lantern up and spoke to him,
Trying to tell him to come back to bed
And showing him his face that he might know
He was a friend and here was Ellen too.
But Abe screamed out again and leapt at George
Shouting such ugly words that both at once
Realized their love was not a secret to him.
The lantern fell as George put up his hands,
But Ellen snatched it up before it died
And had a light to see the battle by.
At first George tried to catch the sick man's hands
And bring him safely home; he knew him mad
From fever and the sickness in his blood.
But Abe fought on, so furious in his strength
That George for all his weight was beaten off
And could get nowhere near to capture him.
Almost beneath their feet the snow gave way
And showed the precipitous rim of the deep hole.
Abe would not draw back but stood his ground,
Behind his back his precious hidden salt.
Ellen, who shivered in her nightgown, cold
With more than wind and snow, so strange a sight
So fierce a novelty before her eyes,
Called out to Abe, 'Come home and get to bed.
Oh can't you catch him, George, he's crazy wild.
Look out! The hole is close. Don't fall. Take care!'
George lumbered in again and reached for Abe,
Who fought more strongly back as though he saw
Now was his chance to kill, for wife and wealth.
He grabbed so tight of George, and pulled, and pushed,
That it was clear he meant to throw him down,
And Ellen screamed again, 'Oh George, watch out!'
The snow was trodden slippery underneath,
Where footing was not good at any time.
George with his boots was harder put to keep
A purchase on the snow until he could
Push back the madman to a safer spot.
He could not do it. Suddenly he fell.
Abe held him still but struggled to get clear.
They balanced on the edge; George half got up;

It seemed as though he could—then down again
And just as Ellen ran to grab them both
George went down backwards in the gaping hole
And with him Abe, who would not lose his hold.

* * *

So loud her heart was pounding in her ears
That Ellen could not hear, but felt the cries
Vibrating in the air, the crash of rock,
The shuffle and descent of muffling snow.
There was a moan, a cough, a rattle. The night
Was silent once again, and Ellen stood
Struck dumb and motionless, before she woke
And screamed, and called, and crept up to the edge
Her lantern in her hand. It was too dark,
And no one answered to her sobbing calls.

Earl Backus thought, when morning came again,
'There's something here besides a crazy fight
Between a man that's sick and one that's well.
Why did Abe go out in the field at night?
And where was Ellen then, and where was George?
Well, Abe is dead enough, and would have been
Without the fall, out in the snow at night
With fever in his blood. And as for George,
He's like to die. I guess he probably will,
Without a doctor or a way to find
Just where he's hurt inside, or what to do.
We ought to have an inquest held on Abe.
We've got to keep some sort of law a-going,
And there is something here that's mighty queer.'

George did not die, but lived to be a cripple
And Ellen's charge. The inquest which they held
When he was well enough to talk, though not
To walk and that he never was, absolved
All guilt, though there were heads that shook,
And tongues that wagged and ears that listened too
About the state of things at Givets' farm.
If there were sin in Ellen's artless love,
She saw that she would dearly pay for it
With George a useless and embittered man
Forever in his chair, forever cross;
Her husband he could be in proper time,
But worthless to her or to anyone.
The children helped her with the daily chores.
They lived somehow, and all the village helped,
Paying in kind for what they took of salt,
Abe's priceless treasure which was hid no more.
For those who found the bodies found the salt,
The ladder, and the place where Abe had dug.
Then Ellen remembered hearing Abe cry 'Salt!'
The Board of Safety cleared the spring and gave
A just division, ordering everyone
To pay the widow something that she needed.
So Ellen had a legacy of life
From him who figured only upon coin,
A currency of death, and death he had.

II

February brought such drifts of snow
That all the roads were filled and houses deep,
Half-buried in. The blue ascending smoke
Showed everywhere where people kept indoors
And only dug the small and difficult paths
To tend their stock or get the water in.
Now there was time to talk and time to think
Of these ten months which they had lived alone.
They counted over once again the goods
And evils which had come to them, and said,
'We've made out pretty well. We're mostly here.
There's sickness taken three, and childbirth one,

And one that died of just old age, and one
A suicide, and one an accident.
We can't be sure we mightn't have lost as many
In any year in which we had bad luck.
We've had enough to eat, we're warm enough.
The life is harder than it used to be,
But troubles are more real. We're thankful that
What's bad, or good, is right beneath your hand,
You know just where you're at, and what to do.
We're all of us more real, and more alive,
And Saugersville is real, more like a town,
And not a gas-pump on a concrete road.'

And there was time as well to make their plans,
Those Saturday night designs, so much discussed.
And now, with that assurance which the mind
Demands and manufactures if there's none,
Deciding they would live forever, they planned
To live as well as possible, as well
As in those other days—in which, alas,
They had spent little time in learning things
Would serve them well at such a time as this.
They had at least one man who understood
The whys and ways of electricity
And engines and machinery, a man
Born with the century and grown with it,
Along with twenty million other boys who made
Models of aeroplanes and wireless sets
When no one dreamt such things were any use.
Some natural understanding of their ways,
Some half-unknown affinity that told
The secrets that were strange to other men—
These made mechanics that were half inspired,
An essential product of a modern world.
Of these was Robert Munn, whose life was gone
With that machinery which made him live.
But now new plans, for steam, for electric power,
Awakened him, who had been dead with grief,
Abandoned by his world and by his wife.
They made their plan to use the water power,
Their faithful creek whose water never failed,
And Robert went to work and drew his plans
To see if he could make a dynamo.
And others with Gus Warder planned the crops.
In fact so many schemes were set afoot
The Board of Safety set a day each week
When everyone could meet and help discuss
The values of their schemes, and make new ones
And so devise a master plan for all.
Such meetings were not lacking fire and heat,
Embittered argument and sharp retort,
But Backus kept the fights within some bounds,
And finally emerged their plan for life
Their plan for Saugersville and for themselves.

With careful certainty the sun returned;
The valley days were longer; on the hills
The west was light till after five o'clock.
The brilliance of the February snow
That heartened everyone with double sun
Was kept intact by long-continued cold.
John Herbert found his skis that had been used
Not yet this winter—so much work to do
For others and himself, he had no time.
But now he waxed them well, and tightened straps
And set forth on the hills light-shod to fly.
The light had wakened so intense a scene
The eye could hardly bear the unending snow,
The purple distance, the staggering shadow blue,
The green of hemlocks in the surrounding woods.
He climbed, he turned, he sped down sloping fields,
With fences covered deep in drifts of snow
And nothing anywhere to stop his flight.
Here was a sudden strange intoxicant,
A wine of freedom and a song of change,

That set him suddenly apart from all
The labor and regret and loneliness.
His heart was opened out as though the wind
Enabled him to breathe new stronger air
And blew away the shadows in his head.
The sun burned down, the shining snow looked up,
And suddenly surrender made him king.
Denying any value to his life
He valued it too high, these months gone by,
Till now he saw at once it was no use
Unless it interwove with all that lay
Now clear before him, hills and trees and fields,
And in the valley far the smoke of fires.
The cold intoxicating air went deep
Into his lungs; he felt his heart grow big
And cried out suddenly across the snow
'I am alive and this is where I live.'
He thrust his poles deep in the snow and sped
Anew down shining fields. Across the hill
Beyond the buried valley and the trees,
He saw the red barns of the Warder farm,
And smiled, and cried out loud again for joy.

Their world was held within a frozen bowl
Of snowy earth and still and brilliant sky.
The cold kept all things motionless, the air
Was brittle and unyielding as a glass.
It seemed as though their fears were frozen up;
They felt themselves suspended in a world
So cold, so still, that it would never change.
Although the sun came northward day by day
The year's great wheel moved imperceptible
To bring again the anniversary.
'Maybe a year is all that's granted us,'
Earl Backus pondered with his restless mind,
Seeking forever answers where were none,
'And we'll be cast into the general doom
Upon the midnight of the end of March.
I doubt it though. I think our year's an earnest
We will go on in Saugersville a while.
And that's how we must live, to make the most
Of what we have as quickly as we can,
And plan to live at least a hundred years.
We know that we can live, so live we must.'

Then suddenly the end of winter came.
The drifts of snow caved in and sank right down
In little streams of water on the ground.
The creek broke out of ice and roared;
The wind blew riotous and wild all day
And shook the chimneys and the roofs at night.
Again the ground appeared, all dank and brown,
But bearing promise in its secret heart
Now running with the blood of winter springs.
The sun was burning hot and men came out
And turned their faces to its shining warmth
And felt the change of season in their limbs.

Coming upon May Warder in the woods,
Where she had gone not knowing any why
Except that it was spring, the sun was warm,
And she must wander and control her heart,
John Herbert took her hands and said at once,
'I think it's time we thought about our lives
And Saugersville and what the future is—'
His eyes were laughing and his mouth looked warm.
She looked a question, but her heart was sure.
'We are the future of the world,' he said,
'And what we have we will perpetuate;
I think perhaps this is the finest place
God could have chosen, as maybe he chose,
To keep intact amid catastrophe.
We have the power, the strength, the will to live
Here all around us in these fields, this creek,
We can survive because we have the land
I see it now. I see this is the best.
And you—you are my land, my "Newfoundland,"
And you and I will plow, and sow, and reap.'

They went together to the Reverend Yule,
Who smiled at them, and held May's hand, and touched
John's shoulder with a friendly tap, and said,

'Of course I will. We'll have it when you please.
I never made one would delight me more.
I think that there is hope for Saugersville,
A future in young hands. For yesterday
Roy Smith and Gertrude Winterhaus were here
To make the same request which you have made.'

As though remorseful for the bitter cold
Which held so long, the year now suddenly
Broke into spring a month ahead of time.
The snow went down the creek so rapidly
It seemed as though the earth had shed its coat
All in one hasty shrug. The ground lay warm
And sweet and soaking in the unclouded sun.
As though their hearts were equally unbound
The people stepped abroad and smiled and spoke
As though they knew their remnant of a world
Had better weather than it used to have,
And from now on the sun would be more bright,
The land more rich, the rain more plentiful,
And they, the last and desperate garrison,
More fortunate than any men before.
Sensing this deepening coursing of the blood,
This now enhanced, communal enterprise,
Earl with his wisdom which had not yet failed
Suggested they should hold a meeting soon,
A supper, and a dance, come one, come all.
And feeling something now within his heart
Said to the Board that planned this jubilee,
'I think that we should have it April first.'
He went that night to May and said to her,
'We're having a party on the first of April;
We want to celebrate our year's success.
Why don't you have your wedding on that day
And Gert and Roy as well? I don't know how
We could do better than to celebrate
Two weddings on that day, our New Year's Day.'
The girls said yes, the boys agreed as well,
Although John Herbert smiled a little smile
That was not wholly pleasant at the thought
That he and Gertrude should be married at once,
'To make,' he said, 'a Roman holiday.'
There was not much to eat left in the town.
There were potatoes, which began to sprout;
The apples and the cabbages were gone,
And turnips rotten, and the flour was low.
But there was corn in plenty for cornmeal,
And chickens still, though they were old and tough
And more were killed than should have been for eggs.
And there was milk, and sometimes meat as well,
A cow that had outlived her usefulness,
Or still a ham hung in the woodhouse roof,
And always there was game out in the woods.
Now that the green was showing in the gulfs,
A leaf of cowslip in a marshy spot,
They did not fear starvation, though they knew
They might be hungry before harvest time.

Though there was small complaint of gov ernment
Now that the Board had brought them through a year
With all the care and foresight that might be,
Their chairman now reminded them that law
Demanded new election now and then.
'What law?' they said, having forgotten law,
Being themselves the law in Saugersville.
'American law,' Earl Backus said. 'You know
We didn't use to think much of the law,
Being bothered out of mind with legislators.
The country was quite overcome with law,
There were too many, and yet not enough,
Until we were in doubt which was the best—
To scrap them all, or make a whole new batch.'
He laughed. 'And then they were all scrapped for us.
We didn't have to raise a hand. But now
We must think back to those beginning laws
Which aimed for justice in a place like this,
The few and simple rules of government
That were enough for small American towns
In days before there were so many towns,
So many people and so many miles
The only answer seemed so many laws.

And one of those ideas, original
To groups of men like us, is that
Each one must have his turn at government—
Or each that others want and will elect.
We'll have election on the very day
We held it last, I think the third of April,
And everyone will vote for the new Board.'

Beside the old mill-dam a heap of stone
And new-cut logs lay ready for the time,
High water past, they could build up a dam
Big enough to make electric power.
In his garage, long quiet and shut up,
Now Robert labored to make power a fact,
Hindered and aided both at once by boys
Eager to learn, who saw in him their guide.
'We could have automobiles that run by steam,'
One said, 'There used to be such things, I know.'
'And we'll have tractors too, and all the things
They used to have before the power went off.'
Already in their minds a year had pushed
All previous time away, apart from them.
Their world was taken for granted without thought.
But Robert smiled, who knew how many things
Were lacking to the plans they planned so free.
Yet even he, his hands at work again
Providing some remittance of his grief
In hard construction in a makeshift scheme,
Felt how his heart was eager, how his mind
Concocted plans at least as bold as theirs.

Gus Warder looked out over muddy fields
That were already drying in the sun
And would be fit to plow and harrow and sow
Before many weeks were gone. He turned again
Within his mind the plan of crops and stock
He had worked out in winter with the Board,
That all might have enough of everything
And seed to spare, and cattle growing fat.
It could be done. The land was rich and deep,
And there were men to work that would work hard,
Their minds no longer on a wage or loan
But always at their backs a fierce demand,
A more insistent pressure, knowing well
How fine the line had grown that kept apart
The living and the dead, the dead who starved.
It would be difficult, this working out
Of independent living. This past year
They had been carried by the year before
And all the sane and reasonable years
They'd known before this mad unreason came.
It would be difficult. But given sun
And rain enough, no late or early frosts,
The sweat of every back that could be bent,
They would succeed. Gus folded over his arms
And dug his feet more deeply in the earth.
This was his kingdom and he would succeed.

Behind him in the house May's mother sat
And sewed and sewed upon the wedding dress,
The silver shining silk long put away,
A gift to her herself when she was young,
And never used, and now made up for May.
The scanty dinner cooked upon the stove;
The sun shone in on the geraniums;
Ma Warder smiled, and rocked her squeaky chair.

III

The thirty-first of March was like a day
Two months ahead of time. The snow was gone,
And even here and there the grass was green.
That cold and bitter day a year ago
With snow still deep along the snow-fences,
And chilly air, and summer far away,
Was like a memory of winter's cold,
The shadow that was real but now is gone.
And all the day, as everyone worked hard
In preparation for tomorrow's feast,
The bright encircling sun that lighted up
The village with a soft and generous warmth
Seemed to find answer in new-warming hearts.

'There won't be many fancy things to eat,'
Said Maria Winterhaus, bent over her stove,
Concocting dainties out of anything;
'But we'll all do our part to see there's lots
Of such plain food as folks has got to give.'

Young Roy had shot a deer, some partridge too,
Poor skinny things, but would be savory,
When well cooked up with herbs and butter fat.
Fast-hoarded stores of things not eaten now—
White sugar, and some chocolate, and a can
Of grapefruit and a box of apricots—
Were brought from secret shelves for this great day.
May Warder tried her dress for the last time,
Her mother worrying round it like a hen.
The shining silk was a soft benison,
A blessing to the lovely warming face
That never looked so pretty or so bright.
And in her house the other bride as well
Worked on a wedding dress, which once had been
The gayest at the River City Ball,
And now with decorous changes would suffice
To deck her at the altar. This girl too
Had shining eyes, that while she answered back
In petulant voice her mother's platitudes
Showed something deep and happy in her heart.

John Herbert brushed his one good suit of clothes
And whistled to himself. He had worked hard
To make his little house fit for his May;
He'd had Mis' Countryman come in to clean.
The windows shone like ice. The stove was blacked,
The floors were white, and on the mantel shelf
His two brass candlesticks were bright as gold.
'She'll fix it as she likes,' he thought; 'two rooms
Is not so very much; but we could make
The attic livable with dormers there,
Or even build an ell out to the west.'
His mind looked far ahead, and in the haze
Which his warm heart engendered now he saw
A family at his hearth, himself the head.
Like some old picture in an antique frame
He saw the children at his knee, his wife
Knitting across from him, her face bent down
Smiling in secret happiness. And he,
The teacher and protector of his flock,
Read to them from a book, the firelight bright
On small attentive heads and on the wall
Where hung behind him his old hunting gun.
John shook himself and laughed and thought again,
'There's something to it, though. We're back to that.'

Ede Salzenbach took out her taffeta dress,
Her uniform for funerals and weddings,
And smoothed its pleats and thought, 'This is the last.
There'll be no clothes like this for anyone
In years to come. We'll all go dressed in hides.'
She grinned at thinking how some folks she knew
Would look dressed up in skins. Her eager mind,
Which had fed always on things close at hand
And knew no larger world, was not dismayed
So long as there was gossip to be had,
And there was gossip while folks lived at all.
Now prospect of two weddings and a feast
Was more than wealth to her; her eyes were bright.
'Of course it's not so comfortable a life,
But folks don't get away. They're all right here,
And I can see them from my kitchen door.'

Lighting his candle with a splinter's end
The Reverend Yule sat down to his plain meal,
Watching across the table to the west
Where only now the last clear light declined.
The western hill rose upward like a wall,
Its battlement the interlocking trees
Which seemed already thick with spring's advance.

'The light lasts late,' he thought, 'but night will come,
The very night of March that brought us woe.
One year gone by. A year—so little time
In even human life, and in God's sight
A breath, a heart beat, or a drop of rain.'
He ate his smoky meat, and drank his milk.
'There must be other men. I think there are,
But isolated too. Some day we'll meet;
But for the time, and maybe even then,
We are the ones to carry knowledge on.
We are the messengers must bear the weight
Of even more than we can understand.'
He shook his head. 'There does not seem much chance
Of keeping anything but here and there
A principle, an old long-tested truth
We can pass on to others like a light
To help in darkness which must now be more
Than ever darkness to men's feeble lights.'
He pushed away his plate, and covering his face
He prayed the stillest and most fervent prayer
That any man can pray, that he be strong
And do his part and more and may not fail.
'It may be we were given this very fate
That we may see thee better. God,' he prayed,
'Now let me know thee more, inspire my heart
With strength not just to bear but to lead on
That men who have heard once of thee may know
They too must tell thy strength, so that the day
May never come when our descendants turn
And look with questioning eyes and ask again,
"Christ Jesus? Who was he? What did he do?"

IV

The night fell sweetly on the little town
Deep in its hills that breathed like cows asleep
The fragrant odors of the earth. The creek
Rushed down into the valley with a sound
Loud and full-throated; of its score of falls,
Each with a private song, it made a chord
That sounded like an organ in the night.
Earl Backus stood upon the bridge. The sound
Pressed in and out upon his ears until
He did not know which beat the steadiest,
The water or his blood. 'They are the same,
For I am of that creek and it of me.
We are but different parts of the same thing.'
The air was good. He breathed it deep. His heart
Beat strongly in his chest. He clenched his hands
Upon the bridge rail, looked into the night.
'Another hour, and all our year is spent.
The time has come full circle. Oh a year,
It's nothing but a measurement of man.
And this has been the longest of our years.
Maybe the shortest. It may be the last,
If God keeps anniversaries, and likes
To do things on the proper date again.
Maybe at midnight then, upon the hour
As when John Herbert saw his light go dim,
We will depart upon as blind a road
As took all we had known, a year ago.
It seems as though the end at least was quick,
Unless our time is all balled up, and years
And centuries can happen in between
Midnight and midnight-one. It may be so.'
He drew so deep a sigh his throat swelled up.
His hands unclenched and dropped. He turned away
And paced the road. There were few lights that showed,
For folks were mostly all abed, tired out
Preparing for the party, sleeping deep
In preparation for a gay night's work.
'We have done well so far. That'll give us strength
To keep on doing well. I hope we can,
But there's more work here than we half conceive,
And every year will be a fight to live,
Just to survive. That's why it will be hard
To keep and to pass on the best we have,
Those things of our old world which should go on,
Showing that men have lived so many years,
So many thousand years, and learned a few,
A very few directions for the way.
I think perhaps we cannot do this thing;
Our children's children will start to forget

And from then on they will descend again
The path that once they worked so hard to climb.
I see them dressed in furs, and living here
Along this stream, where in the grass and weeds
A few old stones will be our Saugersville.'
He shook his head. 'I think that this may be.
I hope that it will not. I'll do my best,
And I am strong, and most of us are strong.
If we get by this fatal hour tonight,
We will keep on, and be the human race.'

John Herbert was still working in his house,
Burning his candles at a reckless rate,
Thinking, 'We'll have no need of them tomorrow;
Our darkness will be sweeter than my light.'
He banked his fire and swept the ashes up,
Conscious of night that pressed upon the panes
A dark and maybe hostile world outside.
He looked into the brilliant coals of wood
And saw in them his city and her towers,
And thought of lights and noise and multitudes
He would not see again. His chest grew tight
And for a moment in his heart he wept,
Feeling his sorrow gnaw him once again.
But that departed and he thought of May
And of the life that now came forward, fair
With smiling face, and hands stretched out to him.
He blew out all his lights but one, and said,
Looking into the flame that burned so clear,
'The time has come again. The year is gone.
I do not think my candle will fade out.
We have come closer to the heart of things.
Maybe'—he laughed, and looked out to the night—
'Maybe instead we'll see our lights come on.
Maybe at midnight will our world return,
And all this year become a moment's dream
Which I and others, perhaps only I,
Have dreamed in some few seconds of one night.
And at that hour, when power flows on in lines
Not ever really empty, and below
I hear upon the road the trucks go by,
I will forget, we'll all forget this year
That was a moment's dream of something real.'
He stood as still as though he were all thought,
Knowing for one that he was better now
Than on that night a year gone by, more strong
More able to take hold of life, and joy.
'Maybe,' he said again, and shrugged and grinned
And started now for bed. He wound his watch
And saw the hands move slowly onward toward
The midnight of the thirty-first of March.

The Language of Poetry

I

THE DIFFERENCE between poetry and prose is that poetry contains more imagery. Imagery is the poet's way of naming his subject-matter; intensity doubled by what appears to be indirectness. But all strong feeling, Emerson said, beats itself into a meter-making argument, so that poetry, being more intense, more concentrated, than prose, runs in a more pronounced rhythm, as if a more passionate and urgent heart sang out, while prose moves on in its patterned

logic and more impersonal mood. Much poetry has the decoration of rhyme, and of infinite verbal music – chords and echoes modulated or increased; much, but not all. Still the chief difference is in the language of imagery.

An image may be the plain picture of a thing named, or a quality of the thing, or it may liken one thing to another. The image-making mind is the poet's mind, and gives what he writes a double force. In this book old and new poems have been grouped so as to show what imagery is, and how it makes the language of poetry different from the language of prose. Rhyme has always been incidental. Rhythm matches the emotional pitch of the subject-matter and echoes the poet's excitement. But without image there is no poem.

If you say, "tree," your hearer sees in his mind's eye a tree he has seen somewhere, probably often, and that shape, height, and color mean tree to him. If you say, "the bare tree, tall in the November air," the hearer again supplies a tree he has seen, but more selectively. If you say, "the running trees," or "the fountain elm," then in each instance two pictures must merge. What is true of running must seem true of trees. Trees lean, they move in rhythm, they seem to be going somewhere, and since the hearer has run, he adds his own feeling of leaning forward, of moving arms and legs, and going. A fountain rushes up, opens at the top, and falls; the shape of the elm is like the shape of a fountain, and the green ends of the boughs seem to pour down. The movement is like water, the color is like water. The fountain elm.

Such images intensify emotion and imagination. The reader of a poem brings forward from memory two experiences, one of fountains, one of elms; one of running, one of trees. Two areas of his past are lighted now, and merged, and in the one image still other visual or emotional associations rise. A new kind of excitement grows. It comes partly from this double stirring in the memory, partly from the recognition and acceptance of a vision: trees do run: an elm is a fountain.

II

We read poetry more often than we hear it, though most poetry should be heard. We read the new and old poetry in college courses in literature, or find it in current magazines, or books we buy. We hear it in the college lectures, or from the rich and increasing store of recordings, or we hear a poet reading in public. But however a poem comes to us, it is received by three channels, all of them open at the same time.

First, the poem comes through the ear, even when not read aloud. The ear acknowledges rhythm; verbal devices such as alliteration; and tone. Dancing, drums, the heartbeat, walking, or water dripping, all have rhythms of their own. What we know at the moment the poem is coming is that the rhythm is nervous, or solemn, or very regular, like marching. The beat, beat of the words tells as much as the meanings of the words. It is a poem about trouble—so many poems are about trouble—and there is a broken but intense throb as we listen. Or it is funny, and the rhythm is crisp, fast, sharp. Or it may be thoughtful, and the rhythm slows. The poet himself beats to his own rhythm.

Anger is hard, heavy, and persistent; love is a more rounded, musical, and dwelling movement; neither would be anything like the rhythm of serene contemplation of skyscape, water, and far hills.

The ear also hears the verbal devices poets employ. It is not necessary to know the names of the mechanics, but it is impossible not to hear them unless one is physically deaf. Rhyme is the first of these. A Dutch woman recited to some Americans a humorous verse in her language—about eating, as she explained later, but no explanation was necessary. The rhymes were so obviously right, so plainly tricks and plays, in whatever language, that the ear knew the meaning. In one's own language rhyme is more clearly heard. There is a physical satisfaction in the returned sound, the completion; we know it in hymns, limericks, game-rhymes. The ear is satisfied, even amused, when rhyme is true, and surprised and satisfied when it is unexpected.

Rhyme is usually exact. *Wood* and *good, air* and *stare, ship* and *whip*—these sound tight and final. But half-rhyme adds further effect. *Meadow* and *shadow, edge* and *bridge, low* and *blue,* make more subtle and suspensive music. Chords of vowels play through the length of a line, as if a pianist were improvising, and when he resolves his *l's, m's,* and *b's* with a rhyme, the grateful ear knows. Rhyme is mute, as in words paired and ending in tight hard *d's, t's,* and *b's;* or it is semi-mute, as with rhymed words ending in *f's;* or it is open, as with words ending in *o's, e's,* and *a's.* Rhymes are simple, like team and scream, or polysyllabic, like *uninteresting* and *manifesting.* Rhyme ties a poem into its pattern. Without knowing the name of the pattern, and no need to know, we hear rhyme ending a line as definitely as periods end a sentence, or woodwork defines a wall-edge. But the music of rhyme is more important than its value as punctuation.

"When Coleridge composed—in a dream, as he alleged—

> In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
> A stately pleasure-dome decree,
> Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
> Through caverns measureless to man,
> Down to a sunless sea,

was he aware that, as Stevenson showed later on, he was running hard, all through, a certain chord or group of letters—KANDLSR, the first being built on a kind of framework of KANDL, the second on KDLSR, the third on all the letters of the chord, the fourth on KANSLR, and the fifth on NDLS? Did he chop and change words in his dream, perhaps using at first the word 'sombre' in the third line, and then saying, 'No, I must work in that K and D, and so substituting the word 'sacred?'"

"We may well doubt that. Quite as probably he just kept turning each line over and over in his mind in some form which it took first, felt something gritty or obstructive here and there—perhaps in 'sombre'—mused over possible alternative words, and feeling, when he tried 'sacred,' that the grit was gone, popped the word in, and there an end, without any consciousness of having stuck stoutly to the chord KANDLSR, and having escaped the seductions of the rival chord SMBR (which sounds like a useful dominant for an Ode to September). But there the strong consonantal skeleton is, however it came in."[1]

[1] C. E. Montague, *A Writer's Notes on His Trade.*

The tone of a poem is the sound it makes, partly in rhythm, partly in the weight of its words, as if one heard people talking beyond a closed door, or in an unknown language. No actual words are heard, no meanings are defined by parts of speech, but one is certain the talkers are conspiring, or are angry, or frightened, or very happy out there. The ear translates this tone; I. A. Richards calls it the attitude of the poet to his reader, but tone is simpler than that. A singer with a guitar comes to your table in a restaurant—his first song is sad—someone is far from home, working hard, remembering without hope. The next is tender—the phrase-length is different, the rhymes lingering and gentle. Then the humorous song, the lines short, the syllables edged, an obvious play on words. The song flourishes, the strings ring, and the hearers smile as if they had sung that language all their lives. What they understand is the tone, the manner. Afterward the hearer remembers only that tone, the special ache—and that is where the poem began, in the poet's ear and his heart, first with a feeling and no words.

Second, at the same time the poem is being received by the ear it is being received by the mind. One translates the total of music, rhythm, and image into a simple silent statement, "This poem is about war, and the poet hates waste." "This poem is about girls and apple trees, both beautiful." "This one resents old age." "This poem says exactly something I have been trying to say for years (this something may be good possible love, world-sorrow, salt-smart, the colors of autumn) and here it is. I wish I had said it this way." Here the tone, too, reports to the mind almost as much as the direct meaning of the words. Tone is what one knows about words whispered the other side of a door, talk heard round a corner—not the meanings, but the meaning.

The listener who has never known what it is to be sad in happiness, who has never had ironic, intellectual, religious, physical or spatial experience of unusual kind, cannot wholly respond to a poem about it. But he may have the experience through the poem. Poetry stretches a mind that can be stretched. Imaginatively the mind of the reader can share even the "terrible" sonnets of Hopkins, the Yeats poems about age, and know a nobility, a despair, a bite of conscience, a worship, or a crazy joy that never was in autobiography. But the unstretchable mind wastes time in reading poetry, and is unhappier by the page.

The mind *must* translate a poem: a powerful instinct for self-preservation demands it. In any new situation we must know where we stand. What goes on here? Who's in charge? What do I do next? Unless we are utterly careless, we act instinctively and immediately to make the unknown the known. This is as true with a poem in a current magazine as it is with a long, specialized, and difficult poem. A twenty-year time-lag had to be overcome before readers generally knew the meaning of "The Waste Land," yet the instinct to understand is always powerful in some; denial of such a deep instinct is a kind of death. The easy effort asked by easy poems is the reason for their worthlessness—that, and the poet who took no trouble to write what it is no trouble to read. To have great poets, Whitman said, we must have great audiences, too. Great may be read to mean large in number; or maturing, seeking, working in mind.

Third, the poem is received by the eye. But this eye is the picture-making eye, the inner eye, that looks long into the memory at all the images stored there.

This eye is the mind's eye, that gathers and creates from memory, as the poem stimulates it. This mind's eye sees first of all the setting of the poem, the place described. It somehow knows the coasts of Ireland and Monterey, and all the rain, stone walls, rooms, and landscapes in the poem. This eye obeys the commanding nouns and adjectives of the poem, yet it must supply some of its own lake-shores, ship-decks, kisses, temples, and mountain tops. But the eye remembers more than the mind, more than the ear.

Most important of all, the eye and mind work together to see the figures of speech. Such or such a figure of speech never occurred in real life, because the two things brought together in likeness had never before been likened, but now there is projected on a timeless screen "bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang," or "troubles, all that troop with music," or "earth's wheels run oiled with blood."

Poetry is not easy, but nothing is easy. The greatest moments an individual knows, the greatest moments a nation records, come as climax, at the end of an effort, and are valued more for that reason. Yet for the listener to poetry, the long effort is that of having been alive, of having used fully the mind, the ear, the eye. Most of the difficulty in reading poetry comes from something or someone unpleasantly related to poetry; some silly adorer of the "beautiful"; some painfully emotional occasion. Children refuse food before they taste it; growing human beings do not reject experience.

The eye, inner and outer, brings more information of life than any other sense. It should always be remembered that much is supplied from the memory; that the memory of no two persons can be the same, and that even literal descriptive parts of a poem will be visualized differently. No harm is done to truth. It should be known, too, that the ability to see the figure of speech, with the inner eye, is the whole secret of understanding poetry. This is the center of the mystery, and all the mystery there is. There is no magical gift required, nothing held back; there is no secret the few are born with, and the many without. The secret is an open one· see with the inner eye, feel with your life, and any poem is yours.

The poems in this book have been put in groups according to the ways the eye, the ear, and the mind work in the poet, and in the reader. Subject-matter—that is, theme, opinion, emotion, description—may recur from one group to another, but the poetry is in the treatment. It is the enduring satisfaction of recognizing poetry we seek here, from all times, of many patterns, but poetry for poetry's sake.

2

The Shape of the Thought

The shape of the thought makes the shape of all poems. Good poets, like any good performers, think well, argue logically, build their brief appearance to a climax and a close. It is as true of a poem as it is of a painting that the golden mean holds true—the proportion of five-eighths to three-eighths—the center of interest never in the exact middle, nor where it quarters the design. It is often, but not always, to the right of center. In paintings, plays, rituals, even in the course of lives, loves, careers, this is countable. In the hang of tools, weapons, dishware, in the proportions of books, furniture, ships, and the human body, this golden mean operates. It is a rhythm of thought and therefore has a shape. A good poem is a shapely poem.

The traditional sonnet is the best approximation: the statement or description made in eight lines, the parallel or comparison in the last six. In poetry the sonnet proportion is the golden mean. It is the most conventional and the most obvious proportion, and the deviations range far. Refrain, coming like a comment, is one. The change of line-length to match a change of tone is another. The shape of the whole printed poem is another—the pattern of indentation, the stanza block, the capitalization or the lack of it. But these are surface signs of the shape of the thought. The development of the thought, reaching its turn two-thirds, five-eighths, three-fourths of the way through—the turn in the development of the thought is the most important rhythm in any poem.

The Silken Tent[1]

She is as in a field a silken tent
At midday when a sunny summer breeze
Has dried the dew and all the ropes relent,
So that in guys it gently sways at ease,
And its supporting central cedar pole,
That is its pinnacle to heavenward
And signifies the sureness of the soul,
Seems to owe naught to any single cord,
But strictly held by none, is loosely bound
By countless silken ties of love and thought
To everything on earth the compass round,
And only by one's going slightly taut
In the capriciousness of summer air
Is of the slightest bondage made aware.

Robert Frost

[1] From *Complete Poems of Robert Frost, 1949*, by Robert Frost. Copyright, 1949, by Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

Fear No More

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
  Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
  Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great;
  Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;

Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finished joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
Nothing ill come near thee!
Quiet consummation have;
And renownèd be thy grave!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

IN MEMORY OF W. B. YEATS [2]

1

He disappeared in the dead of winter:
The brooks were frozen, the air-ports almost deserted,
And snow disfigured the public statues;
The mercury sank in the mouth of the dying day.
O all the instruments agree
The day of his death was a dark cold day.

Far from his illness
The wolves ran on through the evergreen forests,
The peasant river was untempted by the fashionable quays;
By mourning tongues
The death of the poet was kept from his poems.

But for him it was his last afternoon as himself,
An afternoon of nurses and rumours;
The provinces of his body revolted,
The current of his feeling failed: he became his admirers.
Now he is scattered among a hundred cities
And wholly given over to unfamiliar affections;
To find his happiness in another kind of wood
And be punished under a foreign code of conscience.
The words of a dead man
Are modified in the guts of the living.

But in the importance and noise of tomorrow
When the brokers are roaring like beasts on the floor of the Bourse,
And the poor have the sufferings to which they are fairly accustomed,
And each in the cell of himself is almost convinced of his freedom;
A few thousand will think of this day
As one thinks of a day when one did something slightly unusual.
O all the instruments agree
The day of his death was a dark cold day.

2

You were silly like us: your gift survived it all;
The parish of rich women, physical decay,
Yourself; mad Ireland hurt you into poetry.
Now Ireland has her madness and her weather still,
For poetry makes nothing happen: it survives
In the valley of its saying where executives
Would never want to tamper; it flows south
From ranches of isolation and the busy griefs,
Raw towns that we believe and die in; it survives,
A way of happening; a mouth.

3

Earth receive an honoured guest;
William Yeats is laid to rest:
Let the Irish vessel lie
Emptied of its poetry.

Time that is intolerant
Of the brave and innocent,
And indifferent in a week
To a beautiful physique,

[2] From *Collected Poetry of W. H. Auden*. Copyright, 1945, by W. H. Auden. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc. Circulated in Canada by permission of Faber and Faber Limited, publishers.

Worships language and forgives
Everyone by whom it lives;
Pardons cowardice, conceit,
Lays its honours at their feet.

In the nightmare of the dark
All the dogs of Europe bark,
And the living nations wait,
Each sequestered in its hate;

Intellectual disgrace
Stares from every human face,
And the seas of pity lie
Locked and frozen in each eye.

Follow, poet, follow right
To the bottom of the night,
With your unconstraining voice
Still persuade us to rejoice;

With the farming of a verse
Make a vineyard of the curse,
Sing of human unsuccess
In a rapture of distress;

In the deserts of the heart
Let the healing fountain start,
In the prison of his days
Teach the free man how to praise.

W. H. AUDEN

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with these
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centered in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep

Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to fail.

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

ODE TO HIMSELF

Come, leave the loathèd stage,
And the more loathsome age;
Where pride and impudence, in faction knit,
Usurp the chair of wit!
Indicting and arraigning every day
Something they call a play.
Let their fastidious, vain
Commission of the brain
Run on and rage, sweat, censure, and condemn;
They were not made for thee, less thou for them.

Say that thou pour'st them wheat,
And they will acorns eat;
'Twere simple fury still thyself to waste
On such as have no taste!
To offer them a surfeit of pure bread,
Whose appetites are dead!
No, give them grains their fill,
Husks, draff to drink and swill.
If they love lees, and leave the lusty wine,
Envy them not, their palate's with the swine.

No doubt some moldy tale,
Like Pericles, and stale
As the shrieve's crusts, and nasty as his fish—
Scraps, out of every dish
Thrown forth, and raked into the common tub,
May keep up the Play-club.
There sweepings do as well
As the best-ordered meal;
For who the relish of these guests will fit
Needs set them but the alms-basket of wit.

And much good do't you then.
Brave plush and velvet-men
Can feed on orts; and, safe in your stage-clothes,
Dare quit, upon your oaths,
The stagers and the stage-wrights too, your peers,
Of larding your large ears
With their foul comic socks,
Wrought upon twenty blocks;
Which if they are torn, and turned, and patched enough,
The gamesters share your gilt, and you their stuff.—

Leave things so prostitute,
And take the Alcaic lute;
Or thine own Horace, or Anacreon's lyre;
Warm thee by Pindar's fire.
And though thy nerves be shrunk, and blood be cold
Ere years have made thee old,
Strike that disdainful heat
Throughout, to their defeat,
As curious fools, and envious of thy strain,
May, blushing, swear no palsy's in thy brain.

But when they hear thee sing
The glories of thy king,
His zeal to God, and his just awe o'er men,
They may, blood-shaken then,
Feel such a flesh-quake to possess their powers
As they shall cry, like ours,
In sound of peace or wars,
No harp e'er hit the stars,
In tuning forth the acts of his sweet reign;
And raising Charles his chariot 'bove h Wain.

BEN JONSON

Death Be Not Proud

Death be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadfull, for, thou art not soe,
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poore death, nor yet canst thou kill mee.
From rest and sleepe, which but thy pictures bee,
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee doe goe,
Rest of their bones, and soules deliverie.
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poyson, warre, and sicknesse dwell,
And poppie, or charmes can make us sleepe as well,
And better than thy stroake; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleepe past, wee wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.

John Donne

Home-Thoughts, From Abroad

1

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

2

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

Robert Browning

A Passer-By[8]

Whither, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,
That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding,
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest?
Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales opprest,
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hurling
Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before thee, in the country that well thou knowest,
Already arrived am inhaling the odorous air:
I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goest,
And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,
Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts bare;
Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-capped, grandest
Peak, that is over the feather palms more fair
Than thou, so upright, so stately, and still thou standest.

[8] From Robert Bridges' *Shorter Poems*. By permission of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhailed and nameless,
I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine
That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blameless,
Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.
But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is thine,
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails crowding.

ROBERT BRIDGES

POETRY[4]

I, too, dislike it: there are things that are important beyond all this fiddle.
Reading it however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers in
it after all, a place for the genuine.
Hands that can grasp, eyes
that can dilate, hair that can rise
if it must, these things are important not because a

high-sounding interpretation can be put upon them but because they are
useful. When they become so derivative as to become unintelligible,
the same thing may be said for all of us,
that we do not admire what
we cannot understand: the bat
holding on upside down or in quest of something to

eat, elephants pushing, a wild horse taking a roll, a tireless wolf under
a tree, the immovable critic twitching his skin like a horse that feels a flea, the base-
ball fan, the statistician—
nor is it valid
to discriminate against 'business documents and

school-books'; all these phenomena are important. One must make a distinction
however: when dragged into prominence
by half poets, the
result is not poetry,
nor till the poets among us can be
'literalists of
the imagination'—above
insolence and triviality and can present

for inspection, imaginary gardens with real toads in them, shall we have
it. In the meantime, if you demand on the one hand,
the raw material of poetry in
all its rawness and
that which is on the other hand
genuine, then you are interested in poetry.

MARIANNE MOORE

[4] From Marianne Moore: *Selected Poems.* Copyright, 1935, by Marianne Moore. Used by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

3

The Dominant Image

A dominant image often controls the shape of the thought, and makes the poem remembered. Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" was made whole in the poet's mind on the single image of a receding tide. The urns and statuary brought to England by Lord Elgin, seen by Keats, had one among them with figures in pursuit that seemed the most desirable of all actions, forever almost attaining; this single image is the poem. The metaphysical and devotional poets often turned and turned one image—for instance, "The Pulley"—and named the poem for it. Robert Frost looked out at a tree, remembered it in storm, thought how like his own moods it was, and there is no other image in "Tree At My Window," and none needed; the weather that shook the boughs, the weather that shook the heart and mind. When we refer to a poem with a dominant image, we do not have to remember the title, we think of the one image.

Dover Beach

The sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægaean, and it brought
Into his mind, the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.
Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Dover Beach — A Note to That Poem [1]

The wave withdrawing
Withers with seaward rustle of flimsy water
Sucking the sand down: dragging at empty shells:
The roil after it settling: too smooth: smothered . . .

After forty a man's a fool to wait in the
Sea's face for the full force and the roaring of
Surf to come over him: droves of careening water.
After forty the tug's out and the salt and the
Sea follow it: less sound and violence:
Nevertheless the ebb has its own beauty—
Shells sand and all and the whispering rustle.
There's earth in it then and the bubbles of foam gone.

Moreover—and this too has its lovely uses—
It's the outward wave that spills the inward forward
Tripping the proud piled mute virginal
Mountain of water in wallowing welter of light and
Sound enough—thunder for miles back: it's a fine and a
Wild smother to vanish in: pulling down—
Tripping with outward ebb the urgent inward.

Speaking alone for myself it's the steep hill and the
Toppling lift of the young men I am toward now—
Waiting for that as the wave for the next wave.
Let them go over us all I say with the thunder of
What's to be next in the world. It's we will be under it!

Archibald MacLeish

[1] From *Public Speech*, copyright, 1936, by Archibald MacLeish. Reprinted by permission of Rinehart & Company, Inc., publishers.

Ode on a Grecian Urn

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?

What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul, to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity. Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.'

JOHN KEATS

THE WINDHOVER

I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding.
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend; the hurl and gliding
Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
Stirred for a bird,—the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!

Brute beauty and valor and act, oh, air, pride, plume here
Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!

No wonder of it: sheer plod makes plough down sillion
Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

SAND-QUARRY WITH MOVING FIGURES[2]

Father and I drove to the sand-quarry across the ruined marshlands,
miles of black grass, burned for next summer's green.
I reached my hand to his beneath the lap-robe,
we looked at the stripe of fire, the blasted scene.

"It's all right," he said, "they can control the flames,
on one side men are standing, and on the other the sea;"
but I was terrified of stubble and waste of black
and his ugly villages he built and was showing me.

The countryside turned right and left about the car,
straight through October we drove to the pit's heart;
sand, and its yellow canyon and standing pools
and the wealth of the split country set us farther apart.
"Look," he said, "this quarry means rows of little houses,
stucco and a new bracelet for you are buried there;"
but I remembered the ruined patches, and I saw the land ruined,
exploded, burned away, and the fiery marshes bare.

"We'll own the countryside, you'll see how soon I will,
you'll have acres to play in": I saw the written name
painted on stone in the face of the steep hill:
"That's your name, Father!" "And yours!" he shouted, laughing.
"No, Father, no!" He caught my hand as I cried,
and smiling, entered the pit, ran laughing down its side.

MURIEL RUKEYSER

[2] From *Theory of Flight* by Muriel Rukeyser, published by the Yale University Press, 1935, and used with their permission.

The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner [3]

From my mother's sleep I fell into the State,
And I hunched in its belly till my wet fur froze.
Six miles from earth, loosed from its dream of life,
I woke to black flak and the nightmare fighters.
When I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose.

Randall Jarrell

The Wind-Struck Music [4]

Ed Stiles and old Tom Birnam went up to their cattle on the bare hills
Above Mal Paso; they'd ridden under the stars' white death, when they reached the ridge the huge tiger-lily
Of a certain cloud-lapped astonishing autumn sunrise opened all its petals. Ed Stiles pulled in his horse,
That flashy palamino he rode—cream-color, heavy white mane, white tail, his pride—and said
"Look, Tom. My God. Ain't that a beautiful sunrise?" Birnam drew down his mouth, set the hard old chin,
And whined: "Now, Ed, listen here: I haven't an ounce of poetry in all my body. It's cows we're after."
Ed laughed and followed; they began to sort the heifers out of the herd.
One red little deer-legged creature
Rolled her wild eyes and ran away down the hill, the old man hard after her. She ran through a deep-cut gully,
And Birnam's piebald would have made a clean jump but the clay lip
Crumbled under his take-off, he slipped and
Spilled in the pit, flailed with four hooves and came out scrambling. Stiles saw them vanish,
Then the pawing horse and the flapping stirrups. He rode and looked down and saw the old man in the gully-bottom
Flat on his back, most grimly gazing up at the sky. He saw the earth banks, the sparse white grass,
The strong sea a thousand feet down below, red with reflections of clouds.
He said "My God,
Tom, are you hurt?" Who answered slowly, "No, Ed.
I'm only lying here thinking o' my four sons"—biting the words
Carefully between his lips—"big handsome men, at present lolling in bed in their . . . silk . . . pyjamas . . .
And why the devil I keep on working?" He stood up slowly and wiped the dirt from his cheek, groaned, spat,
And climbed up the clay bank. Stiles laughed: "Tom, I can't tell you: I guess you like to. By God I guess
You like the sunrises." The old man growled in his throat and said
"Catch me my horse."

This old man died last winter,
having lived eighty-one years under open sky,
Concerned with cattle, horses and hunting, no thought nor emotion that all his ancestors since the ice-age
Could not have comprehended. I call that a good life; narrow, but vastly better than most
Men's lives, and beyond comparison more beautiful; the wind-struck music man's bones were moulded to be the harp for.

Robinson Jeffers

The World

I saw Eternity the other night
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright;
And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres
Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world

[3] Reprinted from *Little Friend, Little Friend* by Randall Jarrell, by permission of Dial Press, Inc. Copyright 1945, by Dial Press, Inc.

[4] From *Such Counsels You Gave to Me.* Copyright, 1937, by Random House, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

And all her train were hurled;
The doting lover in his quaintest strain
Did there complain,
Near him, his lute, his fancy, and his flights,
Wit's sour delights,
With gloves and knots, the silly snares of pleasure,
Yet his dear treasure
All scattered lay, while he his eyes did pour
Upon a flower.

The darksome statesman, hung with weights and woe,
Like a thick midnight-fog moved there so slow
He did not stay, nor go;
Condemning thoughts (like sad eclipses) scowl
Upon his soul,
And clouds of crying witnesses without
Pursued him with one shout.
Yet digged the mole, and lest his ways be found
Worked under ground,
Where he did clutch his prey, but one did see
That policy;
Churches and altars fed him, perjuries
Were gnats and flies;
It rained about him blood and tears, but he
Drank them as free.

The fearful miser on a heap of rust
Sat pining all his life there, did scarce trust
His own hands with the dust,
Yet would not place one piece above, but lives
In fear of thieves.
Thousands there were as frantic as himself
And hugged each one his pelf,
The downright epicure placed heaven in sense
And scorned pretense,
While others slipped into a wide excess,
Said little less;
The weaker sort slight trivial wares inslave,
Who think them brave,
And poor, despiséd truth sat counting by
Their victory.

Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
And sing, and weep, soared up into the Ring;
But most would use no wing.
O fools (said I) thus to prefer dark night
Before true light,
To live in grots and caves, and hate the day
Because it shows the way,
The way which from this dead and dark abode
Leads up to God,
A way where you might tread the sun and be
More bright than he.
But as I did their madness so discuss,
One whispered thus:
This Ring the bridegroom did for none provide
But for his bride.

HENRY VAUGHAN

THE RELIC

When my grave is broke up again
Some second guest to entertain,
—For graves have learned that womanhead,
To be to more than one a bed—
And he that digs it spies
A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,
Will not he let us alone,
And think that there a loving couple lies,
Who thought that this device might be some way
To make their souls at the last busy day
Meet at this grave, and make a little stay?

If this fall in a time, or land,
Where mis-devotion doth command,
Then he that digs us up will bring
Us to the bishop and the king,
To make us relics; then
Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I
A something else thereby;
All women shall adore us, and some men.
And, since at such time miracles are sought,
I would have that age by this paper taught
What miracles we harmless lovers wrought.

First, we loved well and faithfully,
Yet knew not what we loved, nor why;
Difference of sex no more we knew,
Than our guardian angels do;
Coming and going we

Perchance might kiss, but not between those meals;
Our hands ne'er touched the seals
Which nature, injured by late law, sets free.
These miracles we did; but now, alas!
All measure and all language I should pass,
Should I tell what a miracle she was.

JOHN DONNE

TREE AT MY WINDOW[5]

Tree at my window, window tree,
My sash is lowered when night comes on;
But let there never be curtain drawn
Between you and me.

Vague dream-head lifted out of the ground,
And thing next most diffuse to cloud,
Not all your light tongues talking aloud
Could be profound.

But tree, I have seen you taken and tossed,
And if you have seen me when I slept,
You have seen me when I was taken and swept
And all but lost.

That day she put our heads together,
Fate had her imagination about her,
Your head so much concerned with outer,
Mine with inner, weather.

ROBERT FROST

[5] From *Complete Poems of Robert Frost, 1949* by Robert Frost. Copyright, 1949, by Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

4

Multiple Images

Multiple images are sometimes needed to deal with a subject complex in detail of description, or in thought. The rich Shakespearean multiplicity of image is in a way the simplest sort, he and his audiences loved a profusion of figures, such as we get in the famous soliloquies, or passages like the description of Cleopatra's barge, or "this realm, this England." Irwin Edman calls it psychological provocative. Again, meditation plays over changing states of mind. It is true that one purpose shapes any succession of images, as in the opening pages of MacLeish's radio play "Air Raid," and quite as true in Donne's "Go and catch a falling star," but in such poems a variety of unrelated yet never incongruous images accumulates to make the whole. A bad poet can all too easily string together an absurd sequence of images, which if actually pictured would be comic nonsense, but a great poet can range far and bring the most extraordinary images under the control of his imagination. The poem of multiple images is likely to be more subtle, to ask of the reader a more rapid realization of each, in its place in the whole.

THE BARGE SHE SAT IN

The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke and made

The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggar'd all description: she did lie
In her pavilion, cloth-of-gold of tissue,
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature: on each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-color'd fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

From AIR RAID[1]

STUDIO DIRECTOR
Ladies and gentlemen:
You have only one thought tonight all of you

You who fish the fathoms of the night
With poles on roof-tops and long loops of wire

Those of you who driving from some visit
Finger the button on the dashboard dial
Until the metal trembles like a medium in a trance
And tells you what is happening in France
Or China or in Spain or some such country

You have one thought tonight and only one:
Will there be war? Has war come?
Is Europe burning from the Tiber to the Somme?

You think you hear the sudden double thudding of the drum

You don't though . . .

Not now . . .

But what your ears will hear within the hour
No one living in this world will try to tell you.
We take you there to wait it for yourselves.

Stand by; we'll try to take you through . . .

(The station cuts out: there is a moment's delay: it cuts in again)

STUDIO DIRECTOR
One moment please: we'll try to make it.
We'll try to make it. Wait please we're trying.

The ultimatum you remember was for sunrise by their clock:
Midnight by ours. Now ours is long past midnight.

The sun is up on the whole curve of that continent.

The weather is fair with winds southwest going southerly:
A few clouds at ten thousand—cumulus:
Mists among the passes of the upper Julian Alps:
Some fog on the east Baltic but lifting:
Otherwise sun: the Tyrrhenian Sea all sunshine:
The Adriatic creased with curling light.

The Atlantic tumbles forward into morning on those beaches.

The whole continent lolls in summer sunlight:
Spain is drifting eastward with the shapes of clouds:
France is smooth with morning like a turf:
Germany is checkered with the squares of green and grain:

The visibility is perfect . . .

You think you hear the lonely droning danger of the planes

You don't though . . .

Not yet . . .

(The station cuts out: cuts in again.)

STUDIO DIRECTOR
One moment now we'll try to take you through.

[1] From *Air Raid*, copyright, 1938, by Archibald MacLeish. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

We still can't seem to make it. Wait, we're trying.
We're trying for a town behind the border—
One of those old-time hill-towns where the papers
Come tomorrow morning and the wars
Come years ago or in another country:

The planes will come though—if they come at all:

The pass above the border is to eastward in those mountains.
Our men are on a roof above the houses of the town.

Strange and curious times these times we live in:
You watch from kitchens for the bloody signs:
You watch for breaking war above the washing on the lines.

In the old days they watched along the borders:
They called their warfare in the old days wars
And fought with men and men who fought were killed:

We call it peace and kill the women and the children.

Our women die in peace beneath the lintels of their doors.

We have learned much: civilization has gentled us:
We have learned to take the dying and the wounds without the wars.

Stand by please: we take you through now . . .

(The note of the station changes: the Studio Director's voice falls away as he speaks. At the end it is almost lost.)

We take you now across the traveler's sea

Across the trawler's coast

the parson's orchard

Across the merchant's villa with the vine above the porch

Across the laborer's city with the flames above the forges

Across the drover's plain

the planter's valley . . .

The poplar trees in alleys are the roads

The linden trees in couples are the doors

The willows are the wandering water flowing

The pines in double lines are where the north wind burns the orchards

Those are the mountains where no meadow is squared nor a

Stream straight: nor a road; nor water quiet

The town is in those mountains: you are there

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

DAYS

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
I, in my pleachëd garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Go and Catch a Falling Star

Go and catch a falling star,
  Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,
  Or who cleft the devil's foot;
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
  And find
  What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be'st born to strange sights,
  Things invisible go see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights
  Till Age snow white hairs on thee;
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee,
  And swear
  No where
Lives a woman true and fair.

If thou find'st one, let me know;
  Such a pilgrimage were sweet.
Yet do not; I would not go,
  Though at next door we might meet.
Though she were true when you met her,
And last till you write your letter,
  Yet she
  Will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

John Donne

V-J Day[2]

On the tallest day in time the dead came back.
Clouds met us in the pastures past a world.
By short wave the releases of a rack
Exploded on the interphone's new word.

Half way past Iwo we jettisoned to sea
Our cherished bombs like tears and tears like bombs
To spring a frolic fountain daintily
Out of the blue metallic seas of doom.

No fire-shot cloud pursued us going home.
No cities cringed and wallowed in the flame.
Far out to sea a blank millennium
Changed us alive, and left us still the same.

Lightened, we banked like jays, antennae squawking.
The four wild metal halos of our props
Blurred into time. The interphone was talking
Abracadabra to the cumulus tops:

Dreamboat three-one to Yearsend—loud and clear,
Angels one-two, on course at one-six-nine.
Magellan to Balboa. Propwash to Century.
How do you read me? Bombay to Valentine.

Fading and out. And all the dead were homing.
(*Wisecrack to Halfmast. Doom to Memory.*)
On the tallest day in time we saw them coming,
Wheels up and flaming on a metal sea.

John Ciardi

The Dawn Stone[3]

This was the Phi Beta Kappa poem at Harvard in 1938, and was published in June of that year on the first page of the Boston Evening Transcript; *it has never appeared elsewhere. The author says that the idea for the poem came to him after reading a somewhat controversial article in the official publication of the Appalachian Mountain Club, but that he also finds in a note of his own, in his copy of Sir William Osler's* Aequanimitas, *which he first read in April, 1938, evidence of additional influence. "As we travel farther from the East, our salvation lies in keeping our faces toward the rising sun, and in letting the fates drag us, like Cacus his oxen, backward into the cave of oblivion." One or two topical references near the end, to events of the year in which the poem was written and delivered, only emphasize the timelessness of the subject and the symbol.*

1

West of all else, one would suppose and I suppose it now:
A man looks east. The world is full of men

[2] From *Other Skies* by John Ciardi, by permission of Little, Brown & Co. Copyright 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, by John Ciardi.

[3] Printed in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, 1938. Reprinted by kind permission of David McCord.

Who live to see their way of going gone; fail, disavow
Their star, their sun, their soul, and then
Face backward—O but when
Clear evening light falls kindlier on the brow.

So man might be a mountain, like a mountain have *two* suns,
And tower the first in light, the last in dark;
And let light follow him what way the sky can train her guns
Sharp-sighted, certain of their mark:
For him alone, the spark,
The golden sweep, the soundless clarions.

Where man is mixed with distance, vexed with north, south, east, and west,
He turns the same face to both ends of day;
The early sun that filled the eyes of childhood burned the best,
But homeward levels of the ray
Find him too far away,
Certain alone of some uncertain quest.

A creature of the sun, he'll sometimes weigh the mountain part:
Not double-faced, but borrowing the crown
And finding in the after-flash of dawn some strength of heart,
Some relative and rare renown
Borne suddenly shining down
To save him from the false or footless start.

West is the way of cloudy mind refocusing in fire,
The Golden Gate no straight American dream;
The reach of life, the warmth of wine, the fibre of desire
No stronger than one waning gleam,
One rapier through the seam
Of frail disturbance round the sunset pyre.

East is the answer to the question all the earthbound ask:
Glory of coming day! Day after night;
Day for a man to act in, cast aside obsequious mask,
Rise with a universal might,
Fight the empiric fight—
Subside in clerkdom, fevering at his task.

Perhaps the dawnmarks of the world hold visions for him still,
And his repair to local heights is known
In Deuteronomy and back to prehistoric hill,
Where man's a maxillary bone
But the crude earth is shown
Twirling twixt hope and fate with ample skill.

2

Ktaadn is the dawnstone of New England by some strange
Coincidence of light and natural law
Since Indian myth first drifted down the Appalachian Range:
The obvious fact without a flaw
Which some Thoreauvian saw
Before Thoreau, and now too late to change.

First mountain of our continent to catch the morning bead
Of sunlight tangent to Atlantic salt,
Whose ancient rock ("cloud-factory" said Thoreau) has split the seed
And source of life through blue-cobalt,
Swift to its first default,
And scattered dayspring as the law decreed.

But Euclid touched with geodetic algebra does prove
Another dawnstone in West Quoddy Head;
And since light flowing landward fills the international groove,
It may be some is sooner shed
Round Halifax instead,
Whence the last boulder shuddered and ceased to move.

The bras d'or and the Labrador, the Forillon Gaspé—
My old Ktaadn myth must falter there!
Six hundred miles to windward, when the east is making grey,
Who knows what unrecorded stair
Climbs the cold resinous air
To reach the red rim rising from the bay?

A week of testing altitude with calipers will leave
As much of doubt as there be answer found;

The state might set a marker and its granite
head retrieve
The sun today on scheduled round,
Yet where he's brought to ground
Tomorrow none but eagles could achieve.

Relieved of relativity, the old half-truth may
stand,
Or Maine might cede to Canada such claim;
Light bends indifferent still to Quoddies,
politics, and land,
Though pure equation chance to name
Strange mountains taking aim
For sunshaft one might catch with open
hand.

3

New England full of dawnstone is a different
kind of crop
Than boulder fields abandoned or condensed
In practice polygons, and squares, and walls
that never stop
Until the fathers' land is fenced
And their first duty sensed
As finished—so their gravestone lies on top.

And where New England moved across a
continent in search
Of something glimpsed in planting glacial
waste
The westward eye grew sombre as wide
plains succeeded birch,
Until the plains at length erased
Themselves in the god-graced
Stupendous Rockies, sun-capped like a
church.

Then what the fathers carved in stone the
west constrained to hope,
As arrowhead and rutless wheel attest;
They carried into Oregon the fortitude to
cope
With fullness as in days oppressed
They prospered and never guessed,
For so the vine strays toward the sunny
slope.

The miracle of light is in itself, not in the
source;
And first-light is one principle of truth
So piercing strong that man must always
reckon with its force,
Not as an accent of lost youth
Or fortune teller's booth,
But the great beacon of immortal course.

A race whose roots throve in the soil, whose
blood is of the sea,
Will range through longitudes nor lose its
star;
Such constancy in light is still the reaching
of the tree,
The spinning of the seed borne far
Beyond the ploughed earth scar,
The swallow's wing flown home, the flower-
ing bee.

Ktaadn on one granite face may bear the
young blade's stroke,
But still the sword has flashed in eyes asleep,
The brighter man has blown his fire, the
higher climbed his smoke,
The better grain he has to reap,
The finer friends to keep—
The sweeter rang the steel before it broke.

4

It may be true that cities are a tax against the
creed
Of light, against authority of sky:
They raise a flaming barrier to sanctify the
deed,
Yet issue the direct defy
To something you and I
Would not exchange for supersonic speed.

And towers in the age of wings will rise with
each fresh glance,
The part component of an urge to soar;
Though little of the sun they spear will find
the morning slants
Through back-yard wash and traffic roar
To the fast-bolted door
Against the marvels of our swift advance.

The more he lives for stainless steel, the more
a man goes soft:
To burnish his poor streamlined subway
soul,

Here is a dawnstone (eighty floors) with
restaurant aloft;
And somewhere toward some doubtful goal
The Diesel-dowered roll
Whose fathers froze in air-conditioned croft.

O world of waste and wonder, filth and
plenty, hate and health!
America, my world, where is the fife,
The battle air we played before the monster
in his stealth
Cracked down with fierce loud-speakered
life,
Gave us the ringside wife,
And choked the highways with a false-front
wealth?

Beyond our shores, both shores, the clouds of
fear have scudded low;
And half the world still stammering with
pain,
Frightened behind the eyes, awaits the un-
pragmatic blow:
New nightfall on the China slain,
The bloody beast of Spain,
The time-fused manna where there's corn to
grow.

Great searchlights premising the dark with
boreal design
Report the restless power that is no myth:
Their long clean fingers draw dead white the
world-invasion line,
But bear no gleam of kin or kith,
Strike the false eolith,
To fade uneasy in the strong sunshine.

Who has not sinned in light against the light?
These fever-chills
Of man afraid of man, the sorry spawn
Of life afraid of life: how shall we name such
disparate ills?
Where is the field we're fighting on?
Where in the distant dawn
Will eyes be lifted to the stainless hills?

DAVID MCCORD

5

Sound Remembered

Some poems, no matter what they have to say, are forever *remembered sound.* Hymns, songs from musical shows, enduring tunes, are so wholly, so closely woven of tune and words that nothing can tear them apart. Burns wrote a simple lyric poem, "Flow gently, sweet Afton—" but who reads the four words without the tune starting in his head, "among thy green braes," and so to the end, because the remembered sound demands fulfillment. We must and we do sing it through, round it out, and even titles are enough to begin the sound. "Come, Thou Almighty King." "God of our fathers, known of old." "Old Man River." "Oh, what a beautiful morning." "D'ye ken John Peel." "It came upon a midnight clear."

But there is a remembered music of words as ringing and unforgettable as any setting of notes. The subtle shifting of cadence in "Peter Quince at the Clavier," the wind in the trees that moves in the words of Hopkins' "Binsey Poplars"—this is the sound of poetry to be heard again and again, the pure music of words as words. These two are serious poems. The sound matches the feeling. But so does the sound of the amusing couplets of "Gay go up and gay go down," that old rhyme on the London bells,

EVE[1]

Eve, with her basket, was
Deep in the bells and grass,
Wading in bells and grass
Up to her knees,
Picking a dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Down in the bells and grass
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a
Corner the cobra lay,
Curled round a bough of the
Cinnamon tall . . .
Now to get even and
Humble proud heaven and
Now was the moment or
Never at all.

"Eva!" Each syllable
Light as a flower fell,
"Eva!" he whispered the
Wondering maid,
Soft as a bubble sung
Out of a linnet's lung,
Soft and most silverly
"Eva!" he said.

Picture that orchard sprite,
Eve, with her body white,
Supple and smooth to her
Slim finger tips,
Wondering, listening,
Listening, wondering,
Eve with a berry
Half-way to her lips.

Oh had our simple Eve
Seen through the make-believe!
Had she but known the
Pretender he was!
Out of the boughs he came,
Whispering still her name,
Tumbling in twenty rings
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair
In the world anywhere,
Eve in the bells and grass
Kneeling, and he
Telling his story low. . . .
Singing birds saw them go
Down the dark path to
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh what a chatter when
Titmouse and Jenny Wren
Saw him successful and
Taking his leave!
How the birds rated him,
How they all hated him!
How they all pitied
Poor motherless Eve!

Picture her crying
Outside in the lane,
Eve, with no dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Haunting the gate of the
Orchard in vain. . . .
Picture the lewd delight
Under the hill to-night—
"Eva!" the toast goes round,
"Eva!" again.

RALPH HODGSON

FLOW GENTLY, SWEET AFTON

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes!
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise!
My Mary's asleep by the murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream!

Thou stock-dove, whose echo resounds thro' the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear,
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair!

[1] From Ralph Hodgson: *Poems*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighboring hills,
Far marked with the courses of clear winding rills!
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow!
There oft, as mild Evening weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides!
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As gathering sweet flowerets she stems thy clear wave!

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays!
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream!

ROBERT BURNS

GAY GO UP

Gay go up, and gay go down,
To ring the bells of London town.

Bull's eyes and targets,
Say the bells of St. Marg'rets.

Brickbats and tiles,
Say the bells of St. Giles'.

Halfpence and farthings,
Say the bells of St. Martin's.

Oranges and lemons,
Say the bells of St. Clement's.

Pancakes and fritters,
Say the bells of St. Peter's.

Two sticks and an apple,
Say the bells at Whitechapel.

Old Father Baldpate,
Say the slow bells at Aldgate.

You owe me ten shillings,
Say the bells at St. Helen's.

Pokers and tongs,
Say the bells at St. John's.

Kettles and pans,
Say the bells at St. Ann's.

When will you pay me?
Say the bells at Old Bailey.

When I grow rich,
Say the bells at Shoreditch.

Pray when will that be?
Say the bells at Stepney.

I am sure I don't know,
Says the great bell at Bow.

Here comes a candle
To light you to bed,
And here comes a chopper
To chop off your head.

ANONYMOUS

PETER QUINCE AT THE CLAVIER[2]

1

Just as my fingers on these keys
Make music, so the self-same sounds
On my spirit make a music too.

Music is feeling then, not sound;
And thus it is that what I feel,
Here in this room, desiring you,

[2] Reprinted from *Harmonium* by Wallace Stevens, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright 1923, 1931 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Thinking of your blue-shadowed silk,
Is music. It is like the strain
Waked in the elders by Susanna.

Of a green evening, clear and warm,
She bathed in her still garden, while
The red-eyed elders, watching, felt

The basses of their being throb
In witching chords, and their thin blood
Pulse pizzicati of Hosanna.

2

In the green evening, clear and warm,
Susanna lay.
She searched
The touch of springs,
And found
Concealed imaginings.

She sighed
For so much melody.

Upon the bank she stood
In the cool
Of spent emotions
She felt, among the leaves,
The dew
Of old devotions.

She walked upon the grass,
Still quavering.
The winds were like her maids,
On timid feet,
Fetching her woven scarves,
Yet wavering.

A breath upon her hand
Muted the night.
She turned—
A cymbal clashed,
And roaring horns.

3

Soon, with a noise like tambourines,
Came her attendant Byzantines.

They wondered why Susanna cried
And as they whispered, the refrain
Was like a willow swept by rain.

Anon, their lamps' uplifted flame
Revealed Susanna and her shame.

And then, the simpering Byzantines
Fled, with a noise like tambourines.

4

Beauty is momentary in the mind—
The fitful tracing of a portal;
But in the flesh it is immortal.

The body dies; the body's beauty lives.
So evenings die, in their green going,
A wave, interminably flowing.
So gardens die, their meek breath scenting
The cowl of Winter, done repenting.
So maidens die, to the auroral
Celebration of a maiden's choral.

Susanna's music touched the bawdy strings
Of those white elders; but, escaping,
Left only Death's ironic scraping.
Now, in its immortality, it plays
On the clear viol of her memory,
And makes a constant sacrament of praise.

WALLACE STEVENS

BINSEY POPLARS[3]

My aspens dear, whose airy cages quelled,
Quelled or quenched in leaves the leaping sun,
Are felled, felled, are all felled;
Of a fresh and following folded rank
Not spared, not one
That dandled a sandalled
Shadow that swam or sank
On meadow and river and wind-wandering weed-winding bank.

O if we but knew what we do
When we delve or hew—
Hack and rack the growing green!
Since country is so tender
To touch, her being so slender,

[3] Acknowledgment is made to the owners of the copyright of Gerard Manley Hopkins for permission to reprint this poem from *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, published by Oxford University Press, Lon-

That, like this sleek and seeing ball
But a prick will make no eye at all,
Where we, even where we mean
To mend her we end her,
When we hew or delve:
After-comers cannot guess the beauty been.
Ten or twelve, only ten or twelve
Strokes of havoc unselve
The sweet especial scene,
Rural scene, a rural scene,
Sweet especial rural scene.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

THIS TRAIN

This train is bound for glory, this train,
This train is bound for glory, this train,
This train is bound for glory,
If you ride in it, you must be holy, this train.

This train don' pull no extras, this train,
Don' pull nothin' but de Midnight Special.
This train is bound for glory,
If you ride in it, you must be holy, this train.

This train don' pull no sleepers, this train,
Don' pull nothin' but the righteous people,
this train.
This train is bound for glory,
If you ride in it, you must be holy, this train.

This train don' pull no jokers, this train,
Neither don' pull no cigar smokers, this train.
This train is bound for glory,
If you ride in it, you must be holy, this train.

ANONYMOUS

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Here, where the world is quiet,
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers,
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labor,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes,
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
  She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
  The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
  And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
  The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
  And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
  Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
  And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
  Time stoops to no man's lure;
And Love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
  Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
  From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
  Whatever gods may be,
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
  Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
  Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of water shaken,
  Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
  In an eternal night.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

LADY GREENSLEEVES

Greensleeves was all my joy,
  Greensleeves was my delight;
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
  And who but Lady Greensleeves?

ANONYMOUS

TOM O' BEDLAM

With a heart of furious fancies,
  Whereof I am commander:
    With a burning spear,
    And a horse of air,
  To the wilderness I wander;

With a Knight of ghosts and shadows,
  I summoned am to Tourney:
    Ten leagues beyond
    The wide world's end;
  Methinks it is no journey.

ANONYMOUS

THANNE LONGEN FOLK TO GOON ON PILGRIMAGES

Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halve cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open yë,
So priketh hem nature in hir corages:
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

A SEA DIRGE

Full fathom five thy father lies:
  Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
  Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
  Hark! now I hear them,—
    Ding, dong, Bell.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

REQUIEM [4]

Under the wide and starry sky,
  Dig the grave and let me lie:
Glad did I live and gladly die,
  And I laid me down with a will.
Here may the winds about me blow;
  Here the clouds may come and go;
Here shall be rest for evermo,
  And the heart for aye shall be still.
This be the verse you grave for me:
  Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
  And the hunter home from the hill.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

PIPPA'S SONG

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world!

ROBERT BROWNING

I TO MY PERILS [5]

I to my perils
  Of cheat and charmer
  Came clad in armour
    By stars benign.
Hope lies to mortals
  And most believe her,
  But man's deceiver
    Was never mine.

The thoughts of others
  Were light and fleeting,
  Of lovers' meeting
    Or luck or fame.
Mine were of trouble,
  And mine were steady,
  So I was ready
    When trouble came.

A. E. HOUSMAN

WESTERN WIND

Western wind, when will thou blow
  The small rain down can rain?
Christ, if my love were in my arms
  And I in my bed again!

ANONYMOUS

INVERSNAID [6]

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning,
It rounds and round Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook
  treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the
  burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

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[4] Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.

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[6] Acknowledgment is made to the owners of the copyright of Gerard Manley Hopkins for permission to reprint this poem from *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins,* published by Oxford University Press, London.

6

Theme Sets the Tone

The theme sets the tone of a poem sometimes, and subordinates all the other elements to it—rhyme does not matter, line-length comes of itself, the rhythm beats out the pulse of the driving emotion. Such a poem, if heard at a distance, or in another language, would send its full meaning to the reader. In Winfield Townley Scott's "Fine Morning" is the tone of gaiety mixed with nostalgia mixed with gratitude mixed with a little terror hidden under a grave amusement—the mood of several war-exiled European professors at an American university—one knows all this from the tone. Or, when Dr. Williams harangues his townsmen on the honest way of conducting a funeral, the tone changes, and so does the rhythm, and the language. He is indignant, and blunt. He *is* tender, too, but he *is* desperately honest. One would know this tone of scolding, this example of dignity, in the phrasing, the very voicing.

FINE MORNING[1]

It is a fine May morning. Professor Arturo
Esposito observes it shyly at 8.40 in Providence, R. I.,
By leaving hatless for the campus and neglecting
His little twisted cigar. All this he recognizes.
Or, spring is strange everywhere
So even here it is meeting with a beautiful
woman, new and (perhaps) unattached.

Well, he is a 50-year-old exile with not
enough hair and too much belly, he says,
Remarking on the day to his colleague,
Vicquart, whom he encounters at the corner.
Together they go up the hill along maple-dappled brick wall and walk,
The meeting-house steeple shining below
them. 'Look,' says Esposito: 'even the
pigeons shine.'

M. Louis Vicquart, recently of Sorbonne and
a discovered Jewish strain, is young,
Is serious, is gentle, is correct, is immaculate
in morning clothes and a cane.
Esposito likes to make him laugh; Vicquart
very earnestly wants to oblige;
And though the Frenchman is tense as his
wing-collar, and the Italian's gaiety is unpressed,

Still, everything is O.K. Vicquart says always
by way of applause: 'That is O.K.'
'Love moves the sun, et cetera, and only
geese get moved by goosestep—eh?
Imagine a General marching past those lilacs
on such a morning, Vicquart.
Flowers are just pretty—eh?—but why do
they make so much else seem half-wit?'

'That is O.K.' says Vicquart. 'O.K., O.K.,
O.K.,' sing all the robins in international
English.
The sun shines and the robins sing: and even
three blocks away at the corner by the
tulip tree,

[1] From *Wind the Clock* by Winfield Townley Scott, published by The Decker Press and used by their permission.

Because old Professor Heinrich Werner, bent
over his beard and pipe, pauses
Much longer than traffic requires on Angell
Street. 'Everything smells good,' he says
aloud.

'It is not Heidelberg, but no: it is not Heidelberg and
Everything smells good.' And it does two
blocks the other side of the campus where
Vladimir Samolkin, the round, the gleaming,
the Russian mathematician, hums a bar
From last night's Bach, smiles blindly past
wisteria as if breathing Bach alone.

So there they come: Esposito, Vicquart, Werner, Samolkin, into the elm-laved campus
sun,
As the bell starts for 9-o'clocks, and students
leave the paths to cross wet grass,
And all the dormitory windows are open, and
voices loafing on the early breeze,
Classroom doors all open. All O.K. All on a
fine May morning.

WINFIELD TOWNLEY SCOTT

TRACT[2]

I will teach you my townspeople
how to perform a funeral—
for you have it over a troop
of artists—
unless one should scour the world—
you have the ground sense necessary.

See! the hearse leads.
I begin with a design for a hearse.
For Christ's sake not black—
nor white either—and not polished!
Let it be weathered—like a farm wagon—
with gilt wheels (this could be
applied fresh at small expense)
or no wheels at all:
a rough dray to drag over the ground.

Knock the glass out!
My God—glass, my townspeople!
For what purpose? Is it for the dead
to look out or for us to see
how well he is housed or to see
the flowers or the lack of them—
or what?
To keep the rain and snow from him?

He will have a heavier rain soon:
pebbles and dirt and what not.
Let there be no glass—
and no upholstery phew!
and no little brass rollers
and small easy wheels on the bottom—
my townspeople what are you thinking of?

A rough plain hearse then
with gilt wheels and no top at all.
On this the coffin lies
by its own weight.

No wreaths please—
especially no hot house flowers.
Some common memento is better,
something he prized and is known by:
his old clothes—a few books perhaps—
God knows what! You realize
how we are about these things
my townspeople—
something will be found—anything
even flowers if he had come to that.
So much for the hearse.

For heaven's sake though see to the driver!
Take off the silk hat! In fact
that's no place at all for him—
up there unceremoniously
dragging our friend out to his own dignity!
Bring him down—bring him down!
Low and inconspicuous! I'd not have him ride
on the wagon at all—damn him—
the undertaker's understrapper!
Let him hold the reins
and walk at the side
and inconspicuously too!

Then briefly as to yourselves:
Walk behind—as they do in France,
seventh class, or if you ride
Hell take curtains! Go with some show
of inconvenience; sit openly—
to the weather as to grief.
Or do you think you can shut grief in?

[2] Reprinted from *Complete Collected Poems* of William Carlos Williams, by permission of New Directions, publishers.

What—from us? We who have perhaps
nothing to lose? share with us
share with us—it will be money
in your pockets.
Go now
I think you are ready.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

GERONTION[3]

Here I am, an old man, in a dry month,
Being read to by a boy, waiting for rain.
I was neither at the hot gates
Nor fought in the warm rain
Nor knee deep in the salt marsh, heaving a cutlass,
Bitten by flies, fought.
My house is a decayed house,
And the jew squats on the window sill, the owner,
Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp,
Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London.
The goat coughs at night in the field overhead;
Rocks, moss, stonecrop, iron, merds.
The woman keeps the kitchen, makes tea,
Sneezes at evening, poking the peevish gutter.
I an old man
A dull head among windy spaces.

Signs are taken for wonders. "We would see a sign!"
The word within a word, unable to speak a word,
Swaddled with darkness. In the juvescence of the year
Came Christ the tiger
In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut, flowering judas,
To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk
Among whispers; by Mr. Silvero
With caressing hands at Limoges
Who walked all night in the next room;
By Hakagawa, bowing among the Titians;
By Madame de Tornquist, in the dark room
Shifting the candles; Fraulein von Kulp
Who turned in the hall, one hand on the door.
Vacant shuttles
Weave the wind. I have no ghosts,
An old man in a draughty house
Under a windy knob.

After such knowledge, what forgiveness? Think now
History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors
And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,
Guides us by vanities. Think now
She gives when our attention is distracted
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late
What's not believed in, or if still believed,
In memory only, reconsidered passion. Gives too soon
Into weak hands, what's thought can be dispensed with
Till the refusal propagates a fear. Think
Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices
Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues
Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.
These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree.

The tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours. Think at last
We have not reached conclusion, when I
Stiffen in a rented house. Think at last
I have not made this show purposelessly
And it is not by any concitation
Of the backward devils
I would meet you upon this honestly.
I that was near your heart was removed therefrom
To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.
I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
Since what is kept must be adulterated?
I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch:
How should I use them for your closer contact?

[3] From *Collected Poems 1909-1935* by T. S. Eliot, copyright, 1936, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., and used with their permission. Circulated in Canada by permission of Faber and Faber Limited, publishers.

These with a thousand small deliberations
Protract the profit of their chilled delirium,
Excite the membrane, when the sense has cooled,
With pungent sauces, multiply variety
In a wilderness of mirrors. What will the spider do,
Suspend its operations, will the weevil
Delay? De Bailhache, Fresca, Mrs. Cammel, whirled
Beyond the circuit of the shuddering Bear
In fractured atoms. Gull against the wind, in the windy straits
Of Belle Isle, or running on the Horn,
White feathers in the snow, the Gulf claims,
And an old man driven by the Trades
To a sleepy corner.
Tenants of the house,
Thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season.

T. S. Eliot

On the Late Massacre in Piedmont

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who having learned thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

John Milton

Ozymandias

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

Percy Bysshe Shelley

The World Is Too Much With Us

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

William Wordsworth

The Sun Rising

Busy old fool, unruly sun,
Why dost thou thus
Through windows and through curtains call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide

Late schoolboys and sour prentices,
Go tell court-huntsmen that the King will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices;
Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

Thy beams, so reverend and strong
Why shouldst thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long;
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and to-morrow late tell me
Whether both the Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, all here in one bed lay.

She is all states, and all princes I;
Nothing else is.
Princes do but play us; compared to this,
All honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
Thou, sun, art half as happy as we,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere.

JOHN DONNE

HAME, HAME, HAME

Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be,
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie!

When the flower is i' the bud and the leaf is on the tree,
The larks shall sing me home in my ain countrie.
Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be,
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie!

The green leaf o' loyaltie's beginning for to fa',
The bonnie white rose it is withering and a';
But I'll water 't wi' the blud of usurping tyrannie,
An' green it will graw in my ain countrie.

O, there's nocht now frae ruin my countrie can save,
But the keys o' kind heaven, to open the grave:
That a' the noble martyrs wha died for loyaltie,
May rise again and fight for their ain countrie.

The great now are gane, a' wha ventured to save,
The new grass is springing on the tap o' their grave;
But the sun thro' the mirk blinks blythe in my e'e,
'I'll shine on ye yet in your ain countrie.'

Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be,
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie!

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

SONG

All the flowers of the spring
Meet to perfume our burying;
These have but their growing prime,
And man does flourish but his time.

Survey our progress from our birth:
We're set, we grow, we turn to earth,
Courts adieu, and all delights,
All bewitching appetites!

Sweetest breath and clearest eye
Like perfumes go out and die;
And consequently this is done
As shadows wait upon the sun.

Vain the ambition of kings
Who seek by trophies and dead things
To leave a living name behind,
And weave but nets to catch the wind.

JOHN WEBSTER

COME IN[4]

As I came to the edge of the woods,
Thrush music—hark!
Now if it was dusk outside,
Inside it was dark.

Too dark in the woods for a bird
By sleight of wing
To better its perch for the night,
Though it still could sing.

The last of the light of the sun
That had died in the west
Still lived for one song more
In a thrush's breast.

Far in the pillared dark
Thrush music went—
Almost like a call to come in
To the dark and lament.

But no, I was out for stars:
I would not come in.
I meant not even if asked,
And I hadn't been.

ROBERT FROST

[4] From *Complete Poems of Robert Frost, 1949* by Robert Frost. Copyright, 1949, by Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

THAT TIME OF YEAR

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

7

Image Serves the Idea

The swimmer who gets across the river faster and easier than the other fellows is an image that serves Rolfe Humphries well in a poem of dark overtones of ruthlessness, indifference, and absolute selfishness. What seems a familiar summer picture of boys swimming becomes a powerful moral observation on the presence in the simplest situation of the cruelest realists. The local scene is suddenly and frighteningly the world. The idea had to have been in the poet's mind first, and for a long time; it took no more than a casual word by "the good swimmer" to provide the image.

Keats sought every possible image to serve his idea of melancholy coming close on joy, the moments overlapping. There is in W. T. Scott's beautiful straw angel all the shining and passing a child ever knew. It can be said of

"The Second Wonder" that the poet had long had the idea of what the news does not tell—the millions of children not kidnaped, the murders not committed, the wars not declared. News, he thought, is always of a deviation from the strong and settled pattern. In this poem, storm is the image he chose to serve his idea; little less than a sermon, much more than a poem.

Oneness, the inescapable singleness of being, God in man like a stone down a well, or a violin string stopped and bowed, was Hopkins' idea. The idea ruled him, and he sought through his experience for the necessary images—the bell, the dragonfly—anything that must be and do what it can do and is. The two tramps out of the woods, Robert Frost knew, quickened his idea of avocation and vocation, because they threatened that valued unity. After describing them, he comes to the serving image: as my two eyes make one in sight.

At some time, any poet will write his "Ars Poetica," his poetic credo, as MacLeish has, defining what for him is truly poetry. MacLeish's idea was of poetry as gesture, as a wordless act; he sought such images as the "medallion to the thumb," and "the globed fruit," and the more difficult relativity of the moon slowly climbing behind the motionless trees, a thing not to be explained, but to be. Throwing the hammer, which is a round iron ball at the end of a long-linked chain, is turned by Reuel Denney into a poem about the perfect creative act. His image is of the athlete's rehearsal, alone in a college autumn afternoon, of this somewhat specialized track event. Like most of the track contests, it has ancient origins. But this image, more than most, is like the creative effort: a crescendo of expended skill, then the fling, and then the trembling emptiness. It is an athlete's poem, but it is even more a poet's poem. The image of throwing the hammer has served one of the most important of all ideas, perfect release of high skill. This is real catharsis, as are all the poems in this section. Each one of these poems began with an idea, long held by the poet, as conviction, as necessary temperamental truth, or as an observation of life. The poet has only (only!) to find the right image. But the thing for the student to realize is that this instinctive search goes on, and that in such examples as these, it succeeds and makes poetry.

THE HAMMER-THROW[1]

Now he will close the book, walk toward the window,
Stretch, shift, and turn, and saunter down
Through the afternoon that brings the leaves
down slowly,
To kick those leaves before him through the
town.
As he comes out he feels all loosely made,
His jaunty striding wears the very sun;
And he seems golden-jointed, and new-eyed.
Legs, arms, and lungs are all a happy one.
The wide and level field becalms the daylight
Except when airs bring in the sudden sound
Of shoutings dimmed in sleepy distances.
He rubs his hands. He walks upon the
ground.
On spike, and nervy, and the nostrils sharpened,
Won by the weight as the weight is whirled
by him,
He pivots!—and the nerves cry out their
question,
Centrifugal to heart and every limb,
Whether the world complete might be so
lifted,
Whether it could be drawn so into the dervish
Of these locked knuckles and senses tight
with joy:
Until, let slip, the iron leaps from hand,

[1] From *Connecticut River* by Reuel Denney, and reprinted by permission of the Yale University Press, publishers.

And from his throat a noise, a kind of laughter,
Follows from that spent body, robbed and trembling,
The way the ball flies, with the chain drawn after.

Ars Poetica[2]

A poem should be palpable and mute
As a globed fruit

Dumb
As old medallions to the thumb

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

A poem should be wordless
As the flight of birds

. . . . . .

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs

Leaving, as the moon releases
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,
Memory by memory the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs

. . . . . .

A poem should be equal to:
Not true

For all the history of grief
An empty doorway and a maple leaf

For love
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—

A poem should not mean
But be.

Archibald MacLeish

Swedish Angel[3]

The Swedish angel is nine inches high and shaped all of blonde straw,
All of blonde straw is her little body and her great seven-inch wings.
Her small head is of painted wood and she stands in a slim wood base.
Shining and shining in the Christmas candles, shines her golden halo.

Even all round her is a kind of shining, circle on circle, because
She has—as if—lighted upon a round lake of clear glass
Surrounded by ground-pine and red berries which gleam also
In the candlelight that moves on her stilled blonde wings.

In this immaculate doll of heaven has been conceived, as though
No hands had shaped her, an uninvented innocence bequeathing grace
Ring upon ring in halos all around her, and not remote nor kind
But only there, dispensing of all the brought light a total larger light.

Even now her wings have assumed such shields of glory and the pool beneath
Wheels with such wreaths of shining, the room is gathered and filled
By her tall and burning stillness and, an actual angel, her suspension wars
For a whole minute against all the dark, as if I were a child.

Winfield Townley Scott

[2] From *Streets in the Moon* by Archibald MacLeish. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

[3] From *Wind the Clock* by Winfield Townley Scott, published by The Decker Press, and used by their permission.

The Second Wonder[4]

I climbed the cliff alone, and it was true:
The sky the night after the end of the world
Would look like this one, wild with falling rain.
The beaten grass would lie in the lightning so.
This was the marvel, and my neighbors' fear.
Torn heaven's everlasting black of wind
On the headland when I stood there soaked and sore,
Threatened aloud my kind, and drowned in rain
My shout and tasted salt in breath at the mouth.
That night I was the first man, or the last,
Under the sky over sea battering earth,
And the riding world was shaken. I was there.

But not at world's end yet. And down the cliff
I ran in rain, I ran with words to the wind
And local men, that both in their way would last,
And heaven do nothing final to their earth.

At dawn, on the headland, sun like even rain
Fell, and their marvel was one of nature's days;
A holiday morning; sea-day; warm at noon.
The four o'clock sunlight slanting not yet low,
But for the last time full across the room,
Caught color as it meant itself to show,
And warmed it into a high and homely bloom.
The unspeakable wonder was the roof and chair,
The table with silver calm, and supper soon.
The house-fire dulled the evening edge of chill,
The child slept, and the old stories in the books
Retold themselves to one another. Safe
As the inland sailor watching wind in vines,
I dreamed of gales and the savage weather gone.

But no one broke his knuckles on my door
To shout that the world was not about to end.
The walls in firelight said, and past the walls
It was there for the seeing in the grass and skies,
That weather over all, with stars and storms
Trying the house, was history to read,
And tomorrow's page a long way from the last.

John Holmes

[4] From *Map of My Country* by John Holmes. Copyright 1943 by John Holmes. Reprinted by permission of Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc., publishers.

Ode On Melancholy

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globed peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to Poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of delight
Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

John Keats

THE GOOD SWIMMER[5]

The strongest swimmer, the first one over, comes
Wading the last few yards, and over the sands
To firmer, greener ground. And there he stands
Clean from the water, clean in the light and air,
In his own element, with another light,
Not out of time, but his own glory and pride
Shining around him. He raises both his hands
And runs them over his hair,
And down his sides, and lifts one hand again
To shield his eyes against the river's glare.

And watches the struggle, and tries to count the rest,
Heads bobbing, no two together, some halfway over,
Some more, some less, upstream and down, the gleam
Of the wet arm or breast
Fighting the current, or letting it sweep them close
To the jagged rock that lies below the stream
With deep and quiet water all around,
And some tread water till a log goes past,
Or, tired, turn over and float a little while,
Themselves like driftwood, thrash again, and swim.

And he grows tired of watching. He sits down,
Gets up again, and takes a few steps nearer,
Impatient and a little scornful, calling
"Hurry up, come on, snap out of it, you guys!"
Frowning at the river,
He sees the river, running swift and brown,
Under the livid cloud, and darkness falling,
Nor will it come as any great surprise,
At least, not any great surprise to him,
That some of the weaker ones should sink and drown.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

[5] Reprinted from *Summer Landscape* by Rolfe Humphries; copyright, 1944, by Charles Scribner's Sons; used by permission of the publishers.

AS KINGFISHERS CATCH FIRE[6]

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves—goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,
Crying *What I do is me: for that I came.*

I say more: the just man justices;
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is—
Christ—for Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

TWO TRAMPS IN MUD TIME[7]

Out of the mud two strangers came
And caught me splitting wood in the yard.
And one of them put me off my aim
By hailing cheerily 'Hit them hard!'
I knew pretty well why he dropped behind
And let the other go on a way.
I knew pretty well what he had in mind:
He wanted to take my job for pay.

Good blocks of beech it was I split,
As large around as the chopping block;
And every piece I squarely hit
Fell splinterless as a cloven rock.
The blows that a life of self-control
Spares to strike for the common good
That day, giving a loose to my soul,
I spent on the unimportant wood.

[6] Acknowledgment is made to the owners of the copyright of Gerard Manley Hopkins for permission to reprint this poem from *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, published by Oxford University Press, London.

[7] From *Complete Poems of Robert Frost, 1949* by Robert Frost. Copyright, 1949, by Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

The sun was warm but the wind was chill.
You know how it is with an April day
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak,
A cloud comes over the sunlit arch,
A wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March.

A bluebird comes tenderly up to alight
And fronts the wind to unruffle a plume
His song so pitched as not to excite
A single flower as yet to bloom.
It is snowing a flake: and he half knew
Winter was only playing possum.
Except in color he isn't blue,
But he wouldn't advise a thing to blossom.

The water for which we may have to look
In summertime with a witching-wand,
In every wheelrut's now a brook,
In every print of a hoof a pond.
Be glad of water, but don't forget
The lurking frost in the earth beneath
That will steal forth after the sun is set
And show on the water its crystal teeth.

The time when most I loved my task
These two must make me love it more
By coming with what they came to ask.
You'd think I never had felt before
The weight of an ax-head poised aloft,
The grip on earth of outspread feet.
The life of muscles rocking soft
And smooth and moist in vernal heat.

Out of the woods two hulking tramps
(From sleeping God knows where last night,
But not long since in the lumber camps).
They thought all chopping was theirs of right.
Men of the woods and lumberjacks,
They judged me by their appropriate tool.
Except as a fellow handled an ax,
They had no way of knowing a fool.

Nothing on either side was said.
They knew they had but to stay their stay
And all their logic would fill my head:
As that I had no right to play
With what was another man's work for gain.
My right might be love but theirs was need.
And where the two exist in twain
Theirs was the better right—agreed.

But yield who will to their separation,
My object in living is to unite
My avocation and my vocation
As my two eyes make one in sight.
Only where love and need are one,
And the work is play for mortal stakes,
Is the deed ever really done
For heaven and the future's sakes.

ROBERT FROST

JERUSALEM

And did those feet in ancient time
  Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
  On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine
  Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
  Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold.
  Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
  Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
  Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
  In England's green and pleasant land.

WILLIAM BLAKE

8

Images for Great Themes

The great themes of poetry are the contemplation of death, awareness of age, and defiance of the swift passing of time. Death is feared, welcomed, or prepared for, as the poet feels, perhaps according to the period in which he lives. Age he fights against more often than he hopes for it. Time's passing takes up more of the poets' thought than the end of his own time. To Herrick, and to Housman, love and youth are brief. Love mingles, too, in the great poems on time, age, and death. Marvell, with a grave amusement, reminds his lady that it is later than she thinks, or will let him think. Now, now—the poets say. When Robert Graves, in "The Cool Web," speaks of the incommunicability of love, terror, and beauty, he is talking about all the great themes at once, with the pressure of time hard on him.

All the great themes may be called one—an urgent sense of the passing of life. It is what poets in love write about, what poets of the war think of most often, and what those who meditate on age and death speak of. It is notable that the poets of World War II wrote more of homesickness and of the waste of lives by interruption to the business of life as well as by the fatalities of combat. The lyric poets capture the high moments as they pass, knowing how swift that passing is.

To an Athlete Dying Young [1]

The time you won your town the race
We chaired you through the market-place;
Man and boy stood cheering by,
And home we brought you shoulder-high.

To-day, the road all runners come,
Shoulder-high we bring you home,
And set you at your threshold down,
Townsman of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
From fields where glory does not stay
And early though the laurel grows
It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
Cannot see the laurel cut,
And silence sounds no worse than cheers
After earth has stopped the ears:

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honors out,
Runners whom renown outran
And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,
The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
And hold to the low lintel up
The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head
Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
And find unwithered on its curls
The garland briefer than a girl's.

A. E. Housman

[1] From *A Shropshire Lad* by A. E. Housman. Reproduced by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc. Permission for Canadian circulation has been granted by the Society of Authors as the Literary Representative of the late A. E. Housman, and Messrs. Jonathan Cape, Ltd., publishers of A. E. Housman's *Collected Poems*.

The Cool Web[2]

Children are dumb to say how hot the day is;
How hot the scent is of the summer rose,
How dreadful the black wastes of evening sky,
How dreadful the tall soldiers drumming by.

But we have speech, that cools the hottest sun,
And speech that dulls the hottest rose's scent.
We spell away the overhanging night,
We spell away the soldiers and the fright.

There's a cool web of language winds us in,
Retreat from too much gladness, too much fear:
We grow sea-green at last and coldly die
In brininess and volubility.

But if we let our tongues lose self-possession,
Throwing off language and its wateriness
Before our death, instead of when death comes,
Facing the brightness of the children's day,
Facing the rose, the dark sky and the drums,
We shall go mad no doubt and die that way.

Robert Graves

To His Coy Mistress

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down, and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find: I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews;
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires and more slow;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.
But at my back I always hear
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near,
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long-preserved virginity,
And your quaint honor turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.
Now, therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapped power,
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough the iron gates of life;
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

Andrew Marvell

Prelude LVII[3]

One star fell and another as we walked.
Lifting his hand toward the west, he said—
—How prodigal that sky is of its stars!
They fall and fall, and still the sky is sky.
Two more have gone, but heaven is heaven still.

Then let us not be precious of our thought,
Nor of our words, nor hoard them up as though
We thought our minds a heaven which might change
And lose its virtue when the word had fallen.

[2] Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

[3] Reprinted from *Preludes for Memnon* by Conrad Aiken; copyright, 1930, 1931, by Conrad Aiken; used by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

Let us be prodigal, as heaven is;
Lose what we lose, and give what we may give,—
Ourselves are still the same. Lost you a planet—?
Is Saturn gone? Then let him take his rings
Into the Limbo of forgotten things.

O little foplings of the pride of mind,
Who wrap the phrase in lavender, and keep it
In order to display it: and you, who save your loves
As if we had not worlds of love enough—:

Let us be reckless of our words and worlds,
And spend them freely as the tree his leaves;
And give them where the giving is most blest.
What should we save them for,—a night of frost . . . ?
All lost for nothing, and ourselves a ghost.

CONRAD AIKEN

THE GROUNDHOG[4]

In June, amid the golden fields,
I saw a groundhog lying dead.
Dead lay he; my senses shook,
And mind outshot our naked frailty.
There lowly in the vigorous summer
His form began its senseless change,
And made my senses waver dim
Seeing nature ferocious in him.
Inspecting close his maggots' might
And seething cauldron of his being,
Half with loathing, half with a strange love,
I poked him with an angry stick.
The fever arose, became a flame
And Vigour circumscribed the skies,
Immense energy in the sun,
And through my frame a sunless trembling.
My stick had done nor good nor harm.
Then stood I silent in the day
Watching the object, as before;
And kept my reverence for knowledge
Trying for control, to be still,
To quell the passion of the blood;
Until I had bent down on my knees
Praying for joy in the sight of decay.
And so I left; and I returned
In Autumn strict of eye, to see
The sap gone out of the groundhog,
But the bony sodden hulk remained.
But the year had lost its meaning,
And in intellectual chains
I lost both love and loathing,
Mured up in the wall of wisdom.
Another summer took the fields again
Massive and burning, full of life,
But when I chanced upon the spot
There was only a little hair left,
And bones bleaching in the sunlight
Beautiful as architecture;
I watched them like a geometer,
And cut a walking stick from a birch.
It has been three years, now.
There is no sign of the groundhog.
I stood there in the whirling summer,
My hand capped a withered heart,
And thought of China and of Greece,
Of Alexander in his tent;
Of Montaigne in his tower,
Of Saint Theresa in her wild lament.

RICHARD EBERHART

TO DAFFODILS

Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attained his noon.
Stay, stay
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew
Ne'er to be found again.

ROBERT HERRICK

[4] From *Reading the Spirit* by Richard Eberhart. Reprinted by permission of the Oxford University Press, publishers. Circulated in Canada by permission of Chatto & Windus, publishers.

To the Stone-Cutters[5]

Stone-cutters fighting time with marble, you foredefeated
Challengers of oblivion
Eat cynical earnings, knowing rock splits, records fall down,
The square-limbed Roman letters
Scale in the thaws, wear in the rain. The poet as well
Builds his monument mockingly;
For man will be blotted out, the blithe earth die, the brave sun
Die blind, his heart blackening:
Yet stones have stood for a thousand years, and pained thoughts found
The honey peace in old poems.

Robinson Jeffers

Discipline

Throw away thy rod,
Throw away thy wrath:
O my God,
Take the gentle path.

For my heart's desire
Unto thine is bent:
I aspire
To a full consent.

Not a word or look
I affect to own,
But by book,
And thy book alone.

Though I fail, I weep:
Though I halt in pace,
Yet I creep
To the throne of grace.

Then let wrath remove;
Love will do the deed:
For with love
Stony hearts will bleed.

Love is swift of foot;
Love's a man of war,
And can shoot,
And can hit from far.

Who can scape his bow?
That which wrought on thee,
Brought thee low,
Needs must work on me.

Throw away thy rod;
Though man frailties hath,
Thou art God;
Throw away thy wrath.

George Herbert

Peace

My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged sentry
All skillful in the wars;
There above noise and danger
Sweet peace sits crowned with smiles,
And one born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files;
He is thy gracious friend,
And (O my soul, awake!)
Did in pure love descend
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of peace,
The rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease;
Leave then thy foolish ranges:
For none can thee secure,
But one, who never changes,
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

Henry Vaughan

[5] From *Tamar and Other Poems*. Copyright, 1924, by Peter G. Boyle. Copyright, 1925, by Boni & Liveright. Copyright, 1935, by Modern Library. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

9

Satire and Humor

In every age, since the Greeks and Romans, and long before, satire and humor have made up a lively and ample part of poetry. The manner changes, from decade to decade, as we may notice in our own time, and the subjects, except for a few undying ones, change with the times. But humor and satire are commentary, and as long as life goes on, and man has his weaknesses, there will be light verse and the corrective of laughter and ridicule in poetry.

Humorous and satirical poetry is written by men of quick sense, deft with words, and readier with laughter than with grimness. Much of the delight for the reader is in the words, and many of those words are the rhymes. A good light verse writer must above all things be spontaneous, inventive, pleased with his own invention and the flash of his skill.

Parody is to poetry what the caricature or cartoon is to drawing: it more or less gently makes fun of the most obvious traits of style, as the caricature makes fun of physical features or mannerisms. No one doubts Whitman's greatness, but no one denies that he is vulnerable to parody, as is anyone of powerful and positive personality or literary style. We hardly parody the weak and colorless, which would be cruelty; but parody is a salute to strength. It is also most amusing. It provides a special sort of relief from the seriousness of Wordsworth, the lyric melancholy of Housman, to read clever imitations of the great style turned on ridiculous subjects. It hurts neither Wordsworth nor Housman.

Beyond the delight in verbal acrobatics, beyond the appreciative joking of parody—which is one of the most exact forms of literary criticism—is true satire, knife-edged, merciless, and one of reading's saltiest pleasures. Poetic satire is a weapon to make kings tremble, as many have. A keen sense of perfection, a savage wit, and a ready rhyme do as much as new laws or no laws to correct wrong. If an Irish poet threatened to "write a poem against you" you might well fear him, even so much as not to realize the tribute of your fear to the power of satiric poetry, to the power of words themselves.

Shall I, Wasting In Despair?

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care,
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flowery meads in May;
If she think not well of me,
What care I how fair she be.

Shall my heart be grieved or pined
'Cause I see a woman kind?
Or a well disposéd nature,
Joinéd with a lovely feature?
Be she meeker, kinder, than
Turtle-dove or pelican;
If she be not so to me,
What care I how kind she be.

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love?

Or, her well-deservings known,
Make me quite forget my own?
Be she with that goodness blessed
Which may merit name of Best;
If she be not such to me,
What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool and die?
Those that bear a noble mind,
Where they want of riches find,
Think, what with them, they would do,
That, without them, dare to woo:
And, unless that mind I see,
What care I how great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair
I will ne'er the more despair;
If she love me, this believe,
I will die, ere she shall grieve;
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn and let her go:
For if she be not for me,
What care I for whom she be?

GEORGE WITHER

A CLASSIC WAITS FOR ME[1]

(*With Apologies to Walt Whitman, Plus a Trial Membership in the Classics Club*)
A classic waits for me, it contains all, nothing is lacking,
Yet all were lacking if taste were lacking, or if the endorsement of the right man were lacking.
O clublife, and the pleasures of membership,
O volumes for sheer fascination unrivalled.
Into an armchair endlessly rocking,
Walter J. Black my president,
I, freely invited, cordially welcomed to membership,
My arm around John Kieran, Hendrik Willem van Loon, Pearl S. Buck,
My taste in books guarded by the spirit of William Lyon Phelps
(From your memories, sad brothers, from the fitful risings and callings I heard),
I to the classics devoted, brother of rough mechanics, beauty-parlor technicians, spot welders, radio-program directors
(It is not necessary to have a higher education to appreciate these books),
I, connoisseur of good reading, friend of connoisseurs of good reading everywhere,
I, not obligated to take any specific number of books, free to reject any volume, perfectly free to reject Montaigne, Erasmus, Milton,
I, in perfect health except for a slight cold, pressed for time, having only a few more years to live,
Now celebrate this opportunity.
Come, I will make the club indissoluble,
I will read the most splendid books the sun ever shone upon,
I will start divine magnetic groups,
With the love of comrades,
With the life-long love of distinguished committees.

I strike up for an Old Book.
Long the best-read figure in America, my dues paid, sitter in armchairs everywhere, wanderer in populous cities, weeping with Hecuba and with the late William Lyon Phelps,
Free to cancel my membership whenever I wish.
Turbulent, fleshy, sensible,
Never tiring of clublife,
Always ready to read another masterpiece provided it has the approval of my president, Walter J. Black,
Me imperturbe, standing at ease among writers,
Rais'd by a perfect mother and now belonging to a perfect book club,
Bearded, sunburnt, gray-neck'd, astigmatic,
Loving the masters and the masters only
(I am mad for them to be in contact with me),
My arm around Pearl S. Buck, only American woman to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature,
I celebrate this opportunity.
And I will not read a book nor the least part of a book but has the approval of the Committee,

[1] Reprinted from *The New Yorker* by permission. Copyright 1944 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

For all is useless without that which you may guess at many times and not hit, that which they hinted at,
A is useless without readability.
By God! I will accept nothing which all can-not have their counterpart of on the same terms (89¢ for the Regular Edition or $1.69 for the De Luxe Edition, plus a few cents postage).
I will make inseparable readers with their arms around each other's necks,
By the love of the classics,
By the manly love of the classics.

E. B. WHITE

From SPECTATOR AB EXTRA

As I sat at the café I said to myself,
They may talk as they please about what they call pelf,
They may sneer as they like about eating and drinking,
But help it I cannot, I cannot help thinking
How pleasant it is to have money, heigh-ho!
How pleasant it is to have money. . . .

They may talk as they please about what they call pelf,
And how one ought never to think of one's self,
How pleasures of thought surpass eating and drinking,
My pleasure of thought is the pleasure of thinking
How pleasant it is to have money, heigh-ho!
How pleasant it is to have money. . . .

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

OZYMANDIAS REVISITED[2]

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings!
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Also the names of Emory P. Gray,
Mr. and Mrs. Dukes, and Oscar Baer,
Of 17 West 4th Street, Oyster Bay.

MORRIS BISHOP

RESERVATION[3]

Buffalo Moon and Sun-Go-Under
Lived with the loon by the Lake of Thunder,
Hunted the deer with a queer quartz arrow;
Now they've a cow and a plow and harrow.

Buffalo Moon and Sun-Go-Under
Lay by the spruce where the moose would blunder
Down to the stream and the gleam of water;
Sold for a dram and a lamb to slaughter.

Buffalo Moon and Sun-Go-Under
Rode with the proud in a cloud of wonder,
Rode all day till the rain came heavy;
Now it's the wheel of a real good Chevvy.

Buffalo Moon and Sun-Go-Under
Stood by the Canyon's grand asunder,
Looked on the stars, learned myth and fable;
The white men gave them West and Gable.

Buffalo Moon and Sun-Go-Under,
One rotund and the other rotunder,
Live in a village (no pillage or plunder);
Live in peace (as the Soviet works)
Under the breeze of the national networks.

DAVID MCCORD

[2] From *Spilt Milk*, by Morris Bishop. Copyright, 1929, 1942, by Morris Bishop. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

[3] Reprinted from *Bay Window Ballads* by David McCord; copyright 1935 by Charles Scribner's Sons; used by permission of the publishers.

Survey of Literature[4]

In all the good Greek of Plato
I lack my roastbeef and potato.

A better man was Aristotle,
Pulling steady on the bottle.

I dip my hat to Chaucer,
Swilling soup from his saucer,

And to Master Shakespeare
Who wrote big on small beer.

The abstemious Wordsworth
Subsisted on a curd's-worth,

But a slick one was Tennyson,
Putting gravy on his venison.

What these men had to eat and drink
Is what we say and what we think.

The influence of Milton
Came wry out of Stilton.

Sing a song for Percy Shelley,
Drowned in pale lemon jelly,

And for precious John Keats,
Dripping blood of pickled beets.

Then there was poor Willie Blake,
He foundered on sweet cake.

God have mercy on the sinner
Who must write with no dinner,

No gravy and no grub,
No pewter and no pub,

No belly and no bowels,
Only consonants and vowels.

John Crowe Ransom

[4] Reprinted from *Selected Poems of John Crowe Ransom* by John Crowe Ransom, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright 1927, 1945 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Jabberwocky

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
  Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves,
  And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
  The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
  The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand;
  Long time the manxsome foe he sought—
So rested he by the tumtum tree,
  And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
  The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgy wood,
  And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
  The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
  He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
  Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
  He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
  Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves,
  And the mome raths outgrabe.

Lewis Carroll

As I Was Laying on the Green

As I was laying on the green,
A small English book I seen.
Carlyle's *Essay on Burns* was the edition.
So I left it laying in the same position.

Anonymous

EDGAR A. GUEST CONSIDERS "THE OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE" AND THE GOOD OLD VERITIES AT THE SAME TIME [5]

It takes a heap o' children to make a home
that's true,
And home can be a palace grand or just a
plain, old shoe;
But if it has a mother dear and a good old
dad or two,
Why, that's the sort of good old home for
good old me and you.

Of all the institutions this side the Vale of
Rest
Howe'er it be it seems to me a good old
mother's best;
And fathers are a blessing, too, they give the
place a tone;
In fact each child should try and have some
parents of his own.

The food can be quite simple; just a sop of
milk and bread
Are plenty when the kiddies know it's time to
go to bed.
And every little sleepy-head will dream about
the day
When he can go to work because a Man's
Work is his Play.

And, oh, how sweet his life will seem, with
nought to make him cross,
And he will never watch the clock and always
mind the boss.
And when he thinks (as may occur), this
thought will please him best:
That ninety million think the same—including
Eddie Guest.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER

[5] From *Selected Poems and Parodies of Louis Untermeyer*, copyright, 1935, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., and used with their permission.

I WAS A BUSTLE-MAKER ONCE, GIRLS [6]

When I was a lad of twenty
And was working in High Street, Ken.,
I made quite a pile in a very little while—
I was a bustle-maker then.
Then there was work in plenty,
And I was a thriving man;
But things have decayed in the bustle-making trade
Since the bustle-making trade began.

I built bustles with a will then;
I built bustles with a wit;
I built bustles as a Yankee hustles,
Simply for the love of it.
I built bustles with a skill then
Surpassed, they say, by none;
But those were the days when bustles were the craze,
And now those days are done.

I built bustles to enchant, girls—
I built bustles to amaze;
I built bustles for the skirt that rustles,
And bustles for the skirt that sways.
I built bustles for my aunt, girls,
When other business fled;
But a bustle-maker can't make bustles for his aunt
When a bustle-maker's aunt is dead.

I built bustles for the slender;
I built bustles for the stout;
I built bustles for the girls with muscles
And bustles for the girls without.
I built bustles by the thousands once
In the good old days of yore;
But things have decayed in the bustle-making trade,
And I don't build bustles any more.

PATRICK BARRINGTON

[6] This portion of Mr. Barrington's poem is reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of *Punch*.

§ 10 §

In the Classroom

Because this book has been put together for the college man and woman first of all (though not only for them) a group of verses about them seems right. Probably more poets teach in the colleges than earn a living in any other profession. In time, a poet writes about everything that occupies his mind; his students occupy much of a professor's mind, time, and energy—his emotions, too. Thus these several pieces, all by poets who are college professors, in the group called "In the Classroom." None of us would claim any of them to be great poems, though as they reflect life, they are all poems, and not verse, because they were all written with real love. This love lights all the selections, yet Donald Babcock's "One Who Dropped the Course," and "Philosophy Class Dismissed" perhaps express more of the never-ending care a great-hearted teacher feels than any of the others. This care is implicit in all; the poems may be most sharply felt by other teachers, but what we really have here is an expression for all teachers of what a few have said.

One Who Dropped the Course[1]

I sometimes think these cards marked *"Drop and Add"*
Ought not to bear my signature alone.
Something persists, unconscionably sad,
Some trace of you, who yet have never known
The wizardry that haunts the studied thought.
I shall go on, nor grieve for this divorce;
I shall pursue the truths you might have caught
Among the mergent twilights of the course.
But on the roll of names your cancelled one
Through all the term will cause my pride to shrink.
By any gauge this thing was badly done.
And I, who might—no less—have made you think,
Have now become, by horrible mischance,
The merest item in your circumstance.

Donald Babcock

[1] From *The Durham Chapbook*, reprinted by permission of the author.

Philosophy Class Dismissed[2]

You, whose measured minutes make
  Such a little narrative,
You, whose thirst a drop can slake,
  Ask for more than I can give:
How to name the flowing deep
  Of the fleeting thing called Time,—
Ah, but I must gird for sleep,
  Though it be your hour of prime.

Scatter through the college yard,—
  There is still some daylight left.
Leave me here, a lonely guard,
  Watching where our thought has cleft
Through the verbiage strangely dumb,
  Through the barriers books have made,
Till the flashing stroke has come
  To the core that turns the blade.

Though I uttered all I think,
  From your flight is no returning.
Press your own way to the brink,

[2] *Ibid.*

Then, like brands plucked from the burning,
To the thing you ask me now
Be each one his own reply.
Youth must reckon only *How*,
Age must stay to ponder *Why*.

DONALD BABCOCK

THE OLD PROFESSOR[3]

It isn't the young men sprawling in chairs I mind,
Though when I was a student we sat straight.
It isn't that I mind much the coughing, or cutting
My classes, or their ignorant ignorance of the past.
When I was a student, we said Sir, stood to recite.
It isn't that I mind ideas. I had some, too,
And was told it wasn't right, and it wouldn't do,
And it couldn't be, and I had them, just the same.
It isn't the clothes. It isn't the swing music.
But sometimes I walk the college streets at night,
Hands rammed into topcoat pockets, collar up,
Kicking the leaves before me, cursing the College,
Cursing the dull dear young indifferent damned,
The boys and girls who never wanted to know,
And never will, but can be passed in the course.

JOHN HOLMES

IN THE DEAN'S OFFICE[4]

When I am tired with teaching what I love,
And crouch for safety in the official skull,
I think that helping the young to choose is easy,
And suggest what I know the college rules require.
But see in young eyes a queer sudden glitter
Once in five or six interviews, maybe seven.
Will you tell me, a boy says, the sense of
A rule for the rule's sake, and not my vision's?
Then it is not easy for me, and is more like life.
I say, Sit down, and tell me about your vision.
If he'll talk, I smile, and throw away the rules,
And make plans to break law for one life in seven,
To open doors the spirit within wants open.

JOHN HOLMES

TEACHING PROGRAM[5]

Hating some as I do,
Loving some as I must,
Hoping greatly for a few
In whom I put trust,
I stare at them every day
Wondering by what way
They come now to me.
What griefs I cannot see,
And terrors, and wild joys,
Sit in the twenty skulls
Of girls and boys
Who sit before me ready
For the year's study?
Ten years of teaching dulls
Some teachers I have known
To everything but fact.
I hope never to forget
That I owe a human debt.
I swear never to act
From a need not my own,
Or truth I could not sing;
Never to tell them anything
I would not say again
As a man among men.
I have looked into their eyes
And cannot tell them lies.

JOHN HOLMES

[3] From *Along the Row* by John Holmes. Reprinted by permission of the author.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*

HERESY FOR A CLASSROOM[6]

Green willows are for girls to study under
When that green lady, Spring, strolls down the street:
Look out the window, Jean, look and wonder
About their unseen earth-embedded feet.
Under the dark uncolored mouldy clay
Where willow roots are thrust, their life is drawn
Up through the limbs, to burst in bud, and sway
Slow-shaken green festoons above the lawn.

So never doubt that gloom turns into light
As winter into April, or as bloom
Breaks on the barren branches over-night—
Little enough is learned in any room
With blackboard walls, on afternoons like these,—
O Jean, look out the window at the trees!

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

CRYPTOGRAM FOR MY STUDENTS[7]

Among the shrubbery the persistent sparrows
Gossip of Spring. The open window chokes
With memory-stirring odors of opening furrow.
And instinct answers, lineal as your faces.

Whatever magic you expect of dreams
Is heavy on the air. The window gives
Onto mythologies instead of gasworks.
Nostalgia's country swells at the hills' skyline.

And one by one the recurring paraphernalia—
The off-stage cricket, the entering robin,
Chorus of jays and starlings, Juliet bluebird,
Romeo with a worm, the villainous mole—

All take their places on the prepared lawn.
By night, the moon upon a second scene.
The audience is warned against dark corners.
I promise to cough approaching the vestibules.

Fair warning: the ancestral sweet-tooth
Is permissible for one more season. Pity only
The ugly girl and the unaccepted boy
Who walk with none but the stars beside them.

Rise to hope's country by the usual devices.
The night breeze sweetens on the hill. The moon
Glows down impartially on corpse and lover.
But only the living are worth an estimate.

One of you perhaps of this present hundred
Will see into that second thicket. The rest may wonder,
Measuring years on the belt-line, where it all went.
If any arrive at heaven it is unforeseen.

Futures and the season's mechanics come to one:
Both baffle you. But you will know how to shrug,
And your eyes are gifted with blinders. Let us say
The moon will find no corpses, and Spring endures.

JOHN CIARDI

AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM IN A SLUM[8]

Far from gusty waves, these children's faces.
Like rootless weeds the torn hair round their paleness.
The tall girl with her weighed-down head. The paper-
seeming boy with rat's eyes. The stunted unlucky heir
Of twisted bones, reciting a father's gnarled disease,

[6] Reprinted from *Out of the Jewel* by Rolfe Humphries; copyright, 1942, by Charles Scribner's Sons; used by permission of the publishers.

[7] From *Other Skies* by John Ciardi, by permission of Little Brown & Co. Copyright 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, by John Ciardi.

[8] From *Still Centre*. Copyright, 1942, by Stephen Spender. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

His lesson from his desk. At back of the dim class
One unnoted, mild and young: his eyes live in a dream
Of squirrels' game, in tree room, other than this.

On sour cream walls, donations. Shakespeare's head
Cloudless at dawn, civilized dome riding all cities.
Belled, flowery, Tyrolese valley. Open-handed map
Awarding the world its world. And yet, for these
Children, these windows, not this world, are world,
Where all their future's painted with a fog,
A narrow street sealed in with a lead sky,
Far, far from rivers, capes, and stars of words.

Surely Shakespeare is wicked, the map a bad example
With ships and sun and love tempting them to steal—
For lives that slyly turn in their cramped holes
From fog to endless night? On their slag heap, these children
Wear skins peeped through by bones, and spectacles of steel
With mended glass, like bottle bits in slag.
Tyrol is wicked; map's promising a fable:
All of their time and space are foggy slum,
So blot their maps with slums as big as doom.
Unless, dowager, governor, these pictures, in a room
Columned above childishness, like our day's future drift
Of smoke concealing war, are voices shouting
O that beauty has words and works which break
Through colored walls and towers. The children stand
As in a climbing mountain train. This lesson illustrates
The world green in their many valleys beneath:
The total summer heavy with their flowers.

STEPHEN SPENDER

ACADEMIC ROLL CALL[9]

PEDANT

On campuses remote and shaded
You find the pedant,
Dry and faded,
Who, once mistaking books
For bread,
By incunabula is fed.
His mind is recondite
But tidy,
Arranged for Monday's class through Friday
With data
Learnéd and congealed
On the minutiae of his field.
An academic look has he.
Dear God,
Preserve the faculty!

PRIMA DONNA

He scintillates.
He gives off sparks
And some say perfume. His remarks
Bring students tumbling to his classes,
Inebriate and dazed
In masses,
To hear with laudable emotion
But what,
Nobody has a notion.
So fine a turn deserves a stage,
And proper fame
(And better wage).

STUFFED SHIRT

Pomposity upon a seat
Of learning
Gives a solemn bleat,
Confers with God,
Consults a note,
And elegantly clears his throat
To mouth, with piety, what chance
Nugget
Has least significance.
Yet words of wisdom,
Love, or wit
He would make dull and exquisite.

[9] From *Dr. Johnson's Waterfall*, by Helen Bevington. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

TEACHER

He rides no hobbyhorse,
No wreath
Of laurel does he trot beneath,
One of the passionate
Few, the kind
Of scholar with a humble mind
Who, lacking histrionic bent,
Communicates
Enlightenment,
Not dusty answers from a shelf.
He teaches who has taught himself,
Who saw a star
And hitched his cart.
With him gay companies depart,
And by his little stratagem
He makes stargazers
Out of them.

HELEN BEVINGTON

[10] From *Dr. Johnson's Waterfall*, by Helen Bevington. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

THE FLOWERING TREE[10]

What an unreasonable hour,
Still April, barely 9 a.m.,
To look up and encounter them!

A time for Judas tree in flower
Were rightly by my reckoning
Delayed a little, till 9.10.

I had been safe in classroom then,
Oblivious of such happening.
Now, fifty minutes in that room

Am I allotted, leaving half
For Section III, the Paragraph,
And half for Judas trees in bloom,

Which lesson in profundities
Being too large, I shall go forth
To a cold campus further north,

And fool no more with Judas trees.

HELEN BEVINGTON

11

Offered Without Comment

"TERENCE, THIS IS STUPID STUFF—"[1]

'Terence, this is stupid stuff:
You eat your victuals fast enough;
There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,
To see the rate you drink your beer.
But oh, good Lord, the verse you make,
It gives a chap the belly-ache.
The cow, the old cow, she is dead;
It sleeps well, the horned head:
We poor lads, 'tis our turn now
To hear such tunes as killed the cow.

Pretty friendship 'tis to rhyme
Your friends to death before their time
Moping melancholy mad:
Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad.'

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,
There's brisker pipes than poetry.
Say, for what were hop-yards meant,
Or why was Burton built on Trent?
Oh many a peer of England brews
Livelier liquor than the Muse,
And malt does more than Milton can
To justify God's ways to man.
Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink
For fellows whom it hurts to think:
Look into the pewter pot
To see the world as the world's not.
And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis past:

[1] From *A Shropshire Lad* by A. E. Housman. Reproduced by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc. Permission for Canadian circulation has been granted by The Society of Authors as the Literary Representative of the Trustees of the Estate of the late A. E. Housman, and Messrs. Jonathan Cape, Ltd., publishers of A. E. Housman's *Collected Poems*.

The mischief is that 'twill not last.
Oh I have been to Ludlow fair
And left my necktie God knows where,
And carried half-way home, or near,
Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer:
Then the world seemed none so bad,
And I myself a sterling lad;
And down in lovely muck I've lain,
Happy till I woke again.
Then I saw the morning sky:
Heigho, the tale was all a lie;
The world, it was the old world yet,
I was I, my things were wet,
And nothing now remained to do
But begin the game anew.

Therefore, since the world has still
Much good, but much less good than ill,
And while the sun and moon endure
Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,
I'd face it as a wise man would,
And train for ill and not for good.
'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale
Is not so brisk a brew as ale:
Out of a stem that scored the hand
I wrung it in a weary land.
But take it: if the smack is sour,
The better for the embittered hour;
It should do good to heart and head
When your soul is in my soul's stead;
And I will friend you, if I may,
In the dark and cloudy day.

There was a king reigned in the East:
There, when kings will sit to feast,
They get their fill before they think
With poisoned meat and poisoned drink.
He gathered all that springs to birth
From the many-venomed earth;
First a little, thence to more,
He sampled all her killing store;
And easy, smiling, seasoned sound
Sate the king when healths went round.
They put arsenic in his meat
And stared aghast to watch him eat;
They poured strychnine in his cup
And shook to see him drink it up:
They shook, they stared as white's their shirt:
Them it was their poison hurt.
—I tell the tale that I heard told.
Mithridates, he died old.

A. E. HOUSMAN

I WAKE AND FEEL THE FELL OF DARK[2]

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.
What hours, O what black hours we have spent
This night! What sights you, heart, saw; ways you went!
And more must, in yet longer light's delay.
With witness I speak this. But where I say
Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away.

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.
Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

WAS IT THE PROUD FULL SAIL?

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write,
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonishéd.
He nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors of my silence cannot boast,
I was not sick from any fear from thence.
But when your countenance filled up his line,
Then lacked I matter, that enfeebled mine.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

[2] Acknowledgment is made to the owners of the copyright of Gerard Manley Hopkins for permission to reprint this poem from *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, published by Oxford University Press, London.

Since There's No Help

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part,—
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain!
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,
—Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

Michael Drayton

Our Revels Now are Ended

Our revels now are ended: these our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve:
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind! We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

William Shakespeare

Petition[3]

Sir, no man's enemy, forgiving all
But will his negative inversion, be prodigal:
Send to us power and light, a sovereign touch
Curing the intolerable neural itch,
The exhaustion of weaning, the liar's quinsy,
And the distortions of ingrown virginity.
Prohibit sharply the rehearsed response
And gradually correct the coward's stance;
Cover in time with beams those in retreat
That, spotted, they turn though the reverse were great;
Publish each healer that in city lives
Or country houses at the end of drives;
Harrow the house of the dead; look shining at
New styles of architecture, a change of heart.

W. H. Auden

A Peck of Gold[4]

Dust always blowing about the town,
Except when sea-fog laid it down,
And I was one of the children told
Some of the blowing dust was gold.

All the dust the wind blew high
Appeared like gold in the sunset sky,
But I was one of the children told
Some of the dust was really gold.

Such was life in the Golden Gate:
Gold dusted all we drank and ate,
And I was one of the children told,
'We all must eat our peck of gold.'

Robert Frost

The March Into Virginia

(Ending in the First Manassas, July 1861)

Did all the lets and bars appear
To every just or larger end,
Whence should come the trust and cheer?
Youth must its ignorant impulse end—
Age finds place in the rear.
All wars are boyish and are fought by boys,
The champions and enthusiasts of the state;
Turbid ardours and vain joys
Not barrenly abate—
Stimulants to the power mature,
Preparatives of fate.

Who here forecasteth the event?
What heart but spurns at precedent
And warnings of the wise,
Contemned forolosures of surprise?
The banners play, the bugles call,
The air is blue and prodigal.

[3] From *Collected Poetry* of W. H. Auden. Copyright, 1945, by W. H. Auden. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

[4] From *Complete Poems of Robert Frost, 1949*, by Robert Frost. Copyright, 1949, by Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

No berrying-party, pleasure-wooed,
No picnic party in the May,
Ever went less loth than they
Into that leafy neighborhood.
In Bacchic glee they file toward Fate,
Moloch's uninitiate;
Expectancy, and glad surmise
Of battle's unknown mysteries.
All they feel is this: 'tis glory,
A rapture sharp, though transitory,
Yet lasting in belaurelled story.
So they gaily go to fight,
Chatting left and laughing right.

But some who this blithe mood present,
As on in lightsome files they fare,
Shall die experienced ere three days are spent—
Perish, enlightened by the volleyed glare;
Or shame survive, and like to adamant,
The throes of Second Manassas share.

HERMAN MELVILLE

INSENSIBILITY[5]

1

Happy are men who yet before they are killed
Can let their veins run cold.
Whom no compassion fleers
Or makes their feet
Sore on the alleys cobbled with their brothers.
The front line withers,
But they are troops who fade, not flowers
For poets' tearful fooling:
Men, gaps for filling:
Losses who might have fought
Longer; but no one bothers.

2

And some cease feeling
Even themselves or for themselves.
Dullness best solves
The tease and doubt of shelling,
And chance's strange arithmetic
Comes simpler than the reckoning of their shilling.
They keep no check on armies' decimation.

3

Happy are those who lose imagination:
They have enough to carry with ammunition.
Their spirit drags no pack,
Their old wounds save with cold can not more ache.
Having seen all things red,
Their eyes are rid
Of the hurt of the colour of blood for ever.
And terror's first constriction over,
Their hearts remain small-drawn.
Their senses in some scorching cautery of battle
Now long since ironed,
Can laugh among the dying, unconcerned.

4

Happy the soldier home, with not a notion
How somewhere, every dawn, some men attack,
And many sighs are drained.
Happy the lad whose mind was never trained:
His days are worth forgetting more than not.
He sings along the march
Which we march taciturn, because of dusk,
The long, forlorn, relentless trend
From larger day to huger night.

5

We wise, who with a thought besmirch
Blood all over our soul,
How should we see our task
But through his blunt and lashless eyes?
Alive, he is not vital overmuch;
Dying, not mortal overmuch;
Nor sad, nor proud,
Nor curious at all.
He cannot tell
Old men's placidity from his.

6

But cursed are dullards whom no cannon stuns,
That they should be as stones;
Wretched are they, and mean
With paucity that never was simplicity.
By choice they made themselves immune
To pity and whatever moans in man
Before the last sea and the hapless stars;
Whatever mourns when many leave these shores;
Whatever shares
The eternal reciprocity of tears.

WILFRED OWEN

[5] Reprinted from *Poems*, by Wilfred Owen, with permission of New Directions, publishers.

'Not Marble Nor the Gilded Monuments'[6]

The praisers of women in their proud and beautiful poems
Naming the grave mouth and the hair and the eyes
Boasted those they loved should be forever remembered
These were lies

The words sound but the face in the Istrian sun is forgotten
The poet speaks but to her dead ears no more
The sleek throat is gone—and the breast that was troubled to listen
Shadow from door

Therefore I will not praise your knees nor your fine walking
Telling you men shall remember your name as long
As lips move or breath is spent or the iron of English
Rings from a tongue

I shall say you were young and your arms straight and your mouth scarlet
I shall say you will die and none will remember you
Your arms change and none remember the swish of your garments
Nor the click of your shoe

Not with my hand's strength not with difficult labor
Springing the obstinate words to the bones of your breast
And the stubborn line to your young stride and the breath to your breathing
And the beat to your haste
Shall I prevail on the hearts of unborn men to remember

(What is a dead girl but a shadowy ghost
Or a dead man's voice but a distant and vain affirmation
Like dream words most)

Therefore I will not speak of the undying glory of women
I will say you were young and straight and your skin fair
And you stood in the door and the sun was a shadow of leaves on your shoulders
And a leaf on your hair

I will not speak of the famous beauty of dead women
I will say the shape of a leaf lay once on your hair
Till the world ends and the eyes are out and the mouths broken
Look! It is there.

Archibald MacLeish

[6] From *Poems, 1924-1933*, by Archibald MacLeish. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

To the Muses

Whether on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air,
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove,—
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoyed in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sound is forced, the notes are few.

William Blake

The Key of the Kingdom

This is the Key of the Kingdom:
In that Kingdom is a city;
In that city is a town;
In that town there is a street;
In that street there winds a lane;
In that lane there is a house;
In that yard there is a house;
In that house there waits a room;
In that room an empty bed;

And on that bed a basket—
A Basket of Sweet Flowers:
Of Flowers, of Flowers;
A Basket of Sweet Flowers.
Flowers in a Basket;
Basket on the bed;
Bed in the chamber;
Chamber in the house;
House in the weedy yard;
Yard in the winding lane;
Lane in the broad street;
Street in the high town;
Town in the city;
City in the Kingdom—
This is the Key of the Kingdom;
Of the Kingdom this is the Key.

ANONYMOUS

12

The Figure a Poem Makes[1]

Robert Frost

Abstraction is an old story with the philosophers, but it has been like a new toy in the hands of the artists of our day. Why can't we have any one quality of poetry we choose by itself? We can have in thought. Then it will go hard if we can't in practice. Our lives for it.

Granted no one but a humanist much cares how sound a poem is if it is only *a* sound. The sound is the gold in the ore. Then we will have the sound out alone and dispense with the inessential. We do till we make the discovery that the object in writing poetry is to make all poems sound as different as possible from each other, and the resources for that of vowels, consonants, punctuation, syntax, words, sentences, meter are not enough. We need the help of context—meaning—subject matter. That is the greatest help toward variety. All that can be done with words is soon told. So also with meters—particularly in our language where there are virtually but two, strict iambic and loose iambic. The ancients with many were still poor if they depended on meters for all tune. It is painful to watch our young sprung-rhythmists straining at the point of omitting one short from a foot for relief from monotony. The possibilities for tune from the dramatic tones of meaning struck across the rigidity of a limited meter are endless, and we are back in poetry as merely one more art of having something to say, sound or unsound. Probably better if sound, because deeper and from wider experience.

Then there is this wildness whereof it is spoken. We bring up as aberrationists, giving way to undirected associations and kicking ourselves from one chance suggestion to another in all directions as of a hot afternoon in the life of a grasshopper. Theme alone can steady us down. Just as the first mystery was how a poem could have a tune in such straightness as meter, so the second mystery is how a poem can have wildness and at the same time a subject that shall be fulfilled.

It should be of the pleasure of a poem itself to tell how it can. The figure a poem makes. It begins in delight and ends in wisdom. The figure is the same as for love. No one can really hold that the ecstasy should be static and stand still in one place. It begins in delight, it inclines to the impulse, it assumes

[1] From *Complete Poems of Robert Frost, 1949*, by Robert Frost. Copyright, 1949, by Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

direction with the first line laid down, it runs a course of lucky events, and ends in a clarification of life—not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but in a momentary stay against confusion. It has denouement. It has an outcome that though unforeseen was predestined from the first image of the original mood—and indeed from the very mood. It is but a trick poem and no poem at all if the best of it was thought of first and saved for the last. It finds its own name as it goes and discovers the best waiting for it in some final phrase at once wise and sad—the happy-sad blend of the drinking song.

No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader. No surprise for the writer, no surprise for the reader. For me the initial delight is in the surprise of remembering something I didn't know I knew. I am in a place, a situation, as if I had materialized from cloud or risen out of the ground. There is a glad recognition of the long lost and the rest follows. Step by step the wonder of unexpected supply keeps growing. The impressions most useful to my purpose seem always those I was unaware of and so made no note of at the time when taken, and the conclusion is come to that like giants we are always hurling experience ahead of us to pave the future with against the day when we may want to strike a line of purpose across it for somewhere. The line will have the more charm for not being mechanically straight. We enjoy the straight crookedness of a good walking stick. Modern instruments of precision are being used to make things crooked as if by eye and hand in the old days.

I tell how there may be a better wildness of logic than of inconsequence. But the logic is backward, in retrospect, after the act. It must be more felt than seen ahead like prophecy. It must be a revelation, or a series of revelations, as much for the poet as for the reader. For it to be that there must have been the greatest freedom of the material to move about in it and to establish relations in it regardless of time and space, previous relation, and everything but affinity. We prate of freedom. We call our schools free because we are not free to stay away from them till we are sixteen years of age. I have given up my democratic prejudices and now willingly set the lower classes free to be completely taken care of by the upper classes. Political freedom is nothing to me. I bestow it right and left. All I would keep for myself is the freedom of my material—the condition of body and mind now and then to summons aptly from the vast chaos of all I have lived through.

Scholars and artists thrown together are often annoyed at the puzzle of where they differ. Both work from knowledge; but I suspect they differ most importantly in the way their knowledge is come by. Scholars get theirs with conscientious thoroughness along projected lines of logic; poets theirs cavalierly and as it happens in and out of books. They stick to nothing deliberately, but let what will stick to them like burrs where they walk in the fields. No acquirement is on assignment, or even self-assignment. Knowledge of the second kind is much more available in the wild free ways of wit and art. A schoolboy may be defined as one who can tell you what he knows in the order in which he learned it. The artist must value himself as he snatches a thing from some previous order in time and space into a new order with not so much as a ligature clinging to it of the old place where it was organic.

More than once I should have lost my soul to radicalism if it had been the originality it was mistaken for by its young converts. Originality and initiative are what I ask for my country. For myself the originality need be no more than the freshness of a poem run in the way I have described: from delight to wisdom. The figure is the same as for love. Like a piece of ice on a hot stove the poem must ride on its own melting. A poem may be worked over once it is in being, but may not be worried into being. Its most precious quality will remain its having run itself and carried away the poet with it. Read it a hundred times: it will forever keep its freshness as a metal keeps its fragrance. It can never lose its sense of a meaning that once unfolded by surprise as it went.

The Novel

Character in Action

WE READ the best novels, not to kill time (surely one of the most terrible, i deliberate, murders ever planned), but to live beyond what our own living ca be. We do not live by chapters, with a neat plot and a tight climax. Our live take a long time. We seldom know the high moment at the moment. Older peopl looking back, can begin to see pattern and will talk, but they forget much becaus they wish to, and they remember what seems good. Our lives are run by Some one Else, we think—luck, parents, the state, history. There is much to tell, an no one to tell it. But the novelist is the arranger of lives, making a meaningfu pattern of the cruel losses, ridiculous rewards, and crazy joys that come to u in such explosions of event, or are delayed for year after dull year. The novelis causes things to happen at the dramatically right time, weaving the lives o people into a plan, with a beginning and an end. If he is a good novelist, ther comes forth a kind of meaning. Often it is not easy to put this maning into word unless "So that's what life is like!" But if the characters are real, if their impac on each other leads to events believable as true, there will certainly come a flas of insight, when the reader knows he knows about life, these characters, an himself as never before.

The novel is an account of human character in action, and is longer than short story, but shorter than the history of the world. Forty thousand words ar barely enough to depict a handful of human beings during a brief action an time, but a hundred thousand may not be ample. The novelist has only to kno where in the story to begin to write it, and where to stop writing it. It will hav started in the reader's mind long before the written part, and run on long afte No one tells that sort of thing to a writer; knowing it is what makes him a write He also knows unity of place, motivation, and argument must hold the boo together.

Much as people have always liked stories, the novel as we know it is almo a newcomer. It was long thought sinful to read about someone who never live doing things that never happened, and to get pleasure from it. Only a mora purpose could lay the curse of pleasure. The moral purpose of *Pilgrim's Progress*

is above reproach, but it was the story that got its grip on readers. Much of *Moll Flanders*, by the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, is a tale of shameless and "wholehearted wrong-doing," but the author prayed all this away by conversion and repentance in the end. An eighteenth-century printer, Samuel Richardson, was commissioned to do a book on the polite art of letter-writing. But story—the creative arrangement of life—was stronger, and so *Pamela*, the "history" of a servant-girl who shames and tantalizes her would-be seducer into marriage, became perhaps the first great English novel. Today we read *Pamela* not for the moral Richardson was obliged to intend, that virtue always triumphs. We read it for the brilliantly human complex of righteousness and practicality he has conjured up, a reflection of his age, in which we imaginatively live.

It was a long time before the novel was free of the carefully pointed moral, which sometimes twisted a story out of all probability. But Richardson's greater contemporary, Fielding, hastened the day by jeering at Pamela's primness in a novel of his own. He fought vice by satire, as Richardson had by solemn example. Yet the emphasis was changing, and characters in stories became more and more interesting as people alive, less and less mere sticks to hang a moral on. So Jane Austen's young ladies behaved sensibly, married well, and lived happily ever after. Or some of them were giddy, unwise, and doomed to discontent. But they were drawn from real life, and so were their mothers and fathers, and the whole quiet way of their English countryside. This is why they delight us now. In Dickens, too, good always triumphed, but he drew such real people, and with such gusto, that Mr. Pickwick, Fagin, and Little Nell are more important than the triumph of the virtuous and the downfall of the wicked. By this time it was not a sin of idleness to read novels. Novels were both a means of instruction and a lively pleasure, and the age approved the mixture. The moral was still there, but the story was the story, and readers could hardly wait for the next magazine instalment of Mr. Dickens's latest book.

They were reading about themselves. That is what we always do when we read novels, whether of our time or a past time. Ourselves never really change, though our clothes do, and our speeds, and our weapons. And the morals, in fact, do not change. It would be interesting to make a comparison of any half dozen novels of today with any half dozen from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Is F. Scott Fitzgerald, or Ernest Hemingway, any more or less moralistic or representational than Dickens or Jane Austen? Probably not. John Galsworthy founded a tremendous triple trilogy of novels about the Forsyte family, historical fiction of the time before and after the first World War. He is Charles Dickens, or Thackeray, for his time, and for his time not so very different: the sense of time and tribe, the sense of contemporary picture, the sense of conflict in moral value. We read ourselves.

Of course there are novels in which the story is everything. Adventure and effort. Do you remember in *Treasure Island*, where "all of a sudden there was a tremendous explosion of oaths and other noises—the chair and table went over in a lump, a clash of steel followed, and then a cry of pain, and the next instant I saw Black Dog in full flight, and the captain hotly pursuing, both with drawn cutlasses, and the former streaming blood from the left shoulder. Just at the door, the captain aimed at the fugitive one last tremendous cut, which would cer-

tainly have split him to the chine had it not been intercepted by our big sign-board of Admiral Benbow. You may see the notch on the lower side of the frame to this day."

Excitement and mystification and sometimes the fun of solving a puzzle, carry most detective novels. No one asks more of *Ivanhoe* than its first-rate story and its romantic, idealized picture of life in the Middle Ages, which we know never existed, yet is all the more exciting for that reason—here is the novelist arranging life again, this time as it might have been. So also *Anthony Adverse,* and *Gone With the Wind,* and the host of other historical novels, some better and some worse, give us good story, high adventure, and a glimpse of a romantic past. All such books can be fun. The only objection to this fun is that it is so often an escape into a life from which one does not return enriched in wisdom and experience. The popularity of historical and detective novels is probably a comment on our anxiety; we would rather read of a past than face the present. Escape, the newer name for that old sin of idleness, is no longer a crime, or if it is, the average reader is in a large and distinguished company. Presidents and prime ministers relax with these books, and so do highly serious novelists, and so do you and I.

But just as often the fun of make-believe, the relief of escape, is not enough, and one wants to lose one's self in a different way, into the lives of "real" characters, and in the beliefs and feelings of a writer who has the courage to face life. He may be concerned with the struggles of a sensitive young man, like Thomas Wolfe, who wrote himself down in *Look Homeward, Angel,* or with an American idealist in the Spanish civil war, like Ernest Hemingway in *For Whom the Bell Tolls;* or like F. Scott Fitzgerald, who put all the blocked effort of the twenties for a good life into *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender Is the Night.* The theme may be childhood, social struggle, war, injustice, divorce, love—any of the thousand things that make human life. Or the novel one turns to may have no theme at all, but merely set forth a group of people so real, so funny or so unusual (or so usual!) that we know why the writer was impelled to make a story about them. Here is the opposite, surely, of the reason for reading when *Pamela* first came out. We feel now that to see life as it is is an experience deeper than pleasure.

To recount even thus briefly is to wake the richest memories of good reading. The almost actual physical and emotional experience of Dickens's London, or Marquand's Boston, or Conrad's ships, becomes, as we read, a part of our own memories. But the thing is more than geographical. The personal history of novel-reading is interior and intangible. It has to do with the meaning of life, and the right, and the truth, and the penalties for violating them. In a way that Samuel Richardson and his readers might have some trouble to understand, novels are still highly moral. Insofar as we have read the great novels, we have suffered or succeeded in life, and have read our way into new experience.

For a long time after reading *My Ántonia,* the impression that remains is of great spaces of sky, of wind over it, fresh and vigorous from the endless prairies, and all the wide land clean and warm under the sun. There are people, but they had not been there long. You could still smell the land and the wind. The people

in this story move under this enormous sky to make a better way of living, but measured by the sky they are small, and they know it. Yet as Willa Cather measures them, against time and all the other pioneers, they are big people. They have names—Ántonia (said as we say Anthony)—the Bohemian girl Ántonia Shimerda, who is the heart and body and the personification of the never-again time and place of this story; Jim Burden, who tells the story for Willa Cather; Jake Marpole; the Harlings; Lena; and the generations and the neighbors.

The place is Nebraska, in the midlands under the big sky, and the place in Nebraska is Black Hawk. Jim Burden remembers how it was, not so long after nothing had a name. He hears it from someone who heard it told. His reach in memory and experience scarcely gets back to the beginnings. The more one thinks back over the book, the better one understands that Miss Cather herself is reaching back through and beyond Jim Burden, back through Ántonia's more direct experience of the second pioneering in the west, and far, far back to a time when the land knew no man and no name.

The theme of this story is not a theme at all, though the novelist's intent is quite deliberate. Miss Cather wrote with a moral purpose, in her several novels of several frontiers. She wished to show that the finest possible spiritual motivation was a dream of perfection, an idealistic search. She chose for the scene of her best novels a frontier where the ideals worked according to the seasons, suffering terrible cold, enduring grinding hardship, and hours of great exaltation. She wanted to show the sturdiness of the human spirit, and its love for the life of this earth. She believed that the human spirit is at its best when first it meets earth's growth and air, year by year mastering and mellowing it. But she always felt a sadness about this struggle. If she praises Ántonia's family for doing what they can and must do, she mourns the unstained sky and the untracked land. She stands, a skilled and sensitive recorder, alone at a turning-point in human history.

A novel is said to have a theme when the novelist takes one of two sides and proves it better than the other. The vast, green and wind-washed midlands of America are about to be owned by the human race, and Willa Cather is torn by two loves. She loves unconquered early America, yet so loves its kindest conquerers that her frontier novels are tributes to life itself, sought and seen at the instant of its shout and pouring over the border, to break or to build. She writes much about the builders, but she knows the breaking, too.

She persuades the reader with symbols. The land itself is her chief and reiterated symbol. Again and again she glorifies the land, and makes it breathe and be, in a life apart from and infinitely larger than man. She says,

> Presently we saw a curious thing. There were no clouds, the sun was going down in a limpid, gold-washed sky. Just as the lower edge of the red disc rested on the high fields against the horizon, a great black figure suddenly appeared on the face of the sun. . . . On some upland farm, a plough had been left standing in the field. The sun was sinking just behind it. Magnified across the distance by the horizontal light, it stood out against the sun, was exactly contained within the circle of the disc; the handles, the tongue, the share—black against the molten red. There it was, heroic in size, a picture writing on the sun. Even while we whispered about it, our vision

> disappeared; the ball dropped and dropped until the red tip went beneath the earth. The fields below us were dark, the sky was growing pale, and that forgotten plow had sunk back to its own littleness somewhere on the prairie.

This passage characterizes Willa Cather's feeling about men and nature. Man in her frontier novels always appears in reduced scale. Nature is inexorable, vast, indifferent, and forever necessary to man, who must live on what he can by cunning, by courage, by hardness take from it. Yet something more is needed. His victory must always be a surrender, never a triumphal conquest. Man must enter into the rhythm of nature, taking his place with stoic submission and ethical courage in what she calls the huge scheme of the seasons. Man must love this antagonist, and be both sad and proud to win against him—the question is forever which feeling is strongest.

That she herself loved the land, and gave herself wholly to it, is more evident in her novels than in her comment on them. All the draftsman's wisdom so exactly, briefly, and modestly set down in her few letters and essays on writing is swept away by one passage from *Death Comes For the Archbishop*. No one can teach anyone else how to write like this, and no writer can tell anyone how he did it.

> Beautiful surroundings, the society of learned men, the charm of noble women, the graces of art, could not make up to him for the loss of those light-hearted mornings of the desert, for that wind that made one a boy again. He had noticed that this particular quality in the air of new countries vanished after they were tamed by man and made to bear harvests. Parts of Texas and Kansas that he had first known as open range had since been made into rich farming districts, and the air had quite lost that lightness, that dry aromatic odour. The moisture of plowed land, the heaviness of labour and growth and grain-bearing, utterly on the great grass plains or the sage-brush desert. That air would disappear from the whole earth in time, perhaps; but long after his day. He did not know just when it had become so necessary to him, but he had come back to die in exile for the sake of it. Something soft and wild and free, something that whispered to the ear on the pillow, lightened the heart, softly, softly picked the lock, slid the bolts, and released the prisoned spirit of man into the wind, into the blue and gold, into the morning, into the morning.

So the air, the space, the smell of new country is Will Cather's real theme. She found and used in her frontier novels "the bright edges of the world" where man meets nature and learns his place in it, or dies of it. But he must not die. He must learn. This is what the novelist knew—her pronoun "he" for the old archbishop, who came back from his European terraces and music before gilt mirrors to die in peace on the frontier, is really and always "I." Willa Cather knew the Nebraska air would change, though not in her time, and the bright edges of the world slowly dull. She had smelt it, wild and free; she would come back to die in its blue and gold morning.

But a novelist does not obviously say "I," and so in *My Ántonia* the girl is the pronoun, and thus the symbol. Ántonia is the abundant and living land, a personification of golden air and enduring green. Jim Burden comes along one

step behind her, lost in the third wave of pioneers, knowing it but cut off from it. We ignore the device by which Jim is the narrator in Miss Cather's place—he merely serves, well enough, her driving concern to tell by whatever means she can the story of the frontier. A moral intent almost but never quite shadows her great art with its mechanics; love and idealism prevent.

Willa Cather knew, because she lived there, that for a short time in human history her Nebraska was a bright edge of the world of hope and effort. Her own love of that land comes out warm and clear in Alexandra, the girl in *O Pioneers!*, and in Antonia. She has them speak or dream of the land as she did. She makes them symbols and actors in the great cause, as she felt it, the conflict between materialism and idealism. Existence, she thought, is a struggle against barbarism, with peace as a goal. She gives us examples we might well try in our time to meet. There are always frontiers.

MY ÁNTONIA[1]

WILLA CATHER

Optima dies . . . prima fugit.
—VIRGIL

INTRODUCTION

Last summer, in a season of intense heat, Jim Burden and I happened to be crossing Iowa on the same train. He and I are old friends, we grew up together in the same Nebraska town, and we had a great deal to say to each other. While the train flashed through never-ending miles of ripe wheat, by country towns and bright-flowered pastures and oak groves wilting in the sun, we sat in the observation car, where the woodwork was hot to the touch and red dust lay deep over everything. The dust and heat, the burning wind, reminded us of many things. We were talking about what it is like to spend one's childhood in little towns like these, buried in wheat and corn, under stimulating extremes of climate: burning summers when the world lies green and billowy beneath a brilliant sky, when one is fairly stifled in vegetation, in the colour and smell of strong weeds and heavy harvests; blustery winters with little snow, when the whole country is stripped bare and grey as sheet-iron. We agreed that no one who had not grown up in a little prairie town could know anything about it. It was a kind of freemasonry, we said.

Although Jim Burden and I both live in New York, I do not see much of him there. He is legal counsel for one of the great Western railways and is often away from his office for weeks together. That is one reason why we seldom meet. Another is that I do not like his wife. She is handsome, energetic, executive, but to me she seems unimpressionable and temperamentally incapable of enthusiasm. Her husband's quiet tastes irritate her, I think, and she finds it worth while

[1] Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company and of the estate of Willa Cather. Copyright, 1918, 1926, and 1946, by Willa Sibert Cather. Copyright, 1949, by Houghton Mifflin Company.

to play the patroness to a group of young poets and painters of advanced ideas and mediocre ability. She has her own fortune and lives her own life. For some reason, she wishes to remain Mrs. James Burden.

As for Jim, disappointments have not changed him. The romantic disposition which often made him seem very funny as a boy, has been one of the strongest elements in his success. He loves with a personal passion the great country through which his railway runs and branches. His faith in it and his knowledge of it have played an important part in its development.

During that burning day when we were crossing Iowa, our talk kept returning to a central figure, a Bohemian girl whom we had both known long ago. More than any other person we remembered, this girl seemed to mean to us the country, the conditions, the whole adventure of our childhood. I had lost sight of her altogether, but Jim had found her again after long years, and had renewed a friendship that meant a great deal to him. His mind was full of her that day. He made me see her again, feel her presence, revived all my old affection for her.

'From time to time I've been writing down what I remember about Antonia,' he told me. 'On my long trips across the country, I amuse myself like that, in my stateroom.'

When I told him that I would like to read his account of her, he said I should certainly see it—if it were ever finished.

Months afterward, Jim called at my apartment one stormy winter afternoon, carrying a legal portfolio. He brought it into the sitting-room with him, and said, as he stood warming his hands,

'Here is the thing about Antonia. Do you still want to read it? I finished it last night. I didn't take time to arrange it; I simply wrote down pretty much all that her name recalls to me. I suppose it hasn't any form. It hasn't any title, either.' He went into the next room, sat down at my desk and wrote across the face of the portfolio the word 'Antonia.' He frowned at this a moment, then prefixed another word, making it 'My Antonia.' That seemed to satisfy him.

BOOK I

THE SHIMERDAS

1

I first heard of Ántonia[2] on what seemed to me an interminable journey across the great midland plain of North America. I was ten years old then; I had lost both my father and mother within a year, and my Virginia relatives were sending me out to my grandparents, who lived in Nebraska. I travelled in the care of a mountain boy, Jake Marpole, one of the 'hands' on my father's old farm under the Blue Ridge, who was now going West to work for my grandfather. Jake's experience of the world was not much wider than mine. He had never been in a railway train until the morning when we set out together to try our fortunes in a new world.

We went all the way in day-coaches, becoming more sticky and grimy with each stage of the journey. Jake bought everything the newsboys offered him: candy, oranges, brass collar buttons, a watch-charm, and for me a 'Life of Jesse James,' which I remember as one of the most satisfactory books I have ever read. Beyond Chicago, we were under the protection of a friendly passenger conductor, who knew all about the country to which we were going and gave us a great deal of advice in exchange for our confidence. He seemed to us an experienced and worldly man who had been almost everywhere; in his conversation he threw out lightly the names of distant states and cities. He wore the rings and pins and badges of different fraternal orders to which he belonged. Even his cuff-buttons were engraved with hieroglyphics, and he was more inscribed than an Egyptian obelisk.

Once when he sat down to chat, he told us that in the immigrant car ahead there was a family from 'across the water' whose destination was the same as ours.

[2] The Bohemian name *Ántonia* is strongly accented on the first syllable, like the English name *Anthony*, and the *i* is, of course, given the sound of long *e*. The name is pronounced An'-ton-ee-ah.

'They can't any of them speak English, except one little girl, and all she can say is "We go Black Hawk, Nebraska." She's not much older than you, twelve or thirteen, maybe, and she's as bright as a new dollar. Don't you want to go ahead and see her, Jimmy? She's got the pretty brown eyes, too!'

This last remark made me bashful, and I shook my head and settled down to 'Jesse James.' Jake nodded at me approvingly and said you were likely to get diseases from foreigners.

I do not remember crossing the Missouri River, or anything about the long day's journey through Nebraska. Probably by that time I had crossed so many rivers that I was dull to them. The only thing very noticeable about Nebraska was that it was still, all day long, Nebraska.

I had been sleeping, curled up in a red plush seat, for a long while when we reached Black Hawk. Jake roused me and took me by the hand. We stumbled down from the train to a wooden siding, where men were running about with lanterns. I couldn't see any town, or even distant lights; we were surrounded by utter darkness. The engine was panting heavily after its long run. In the red glow from the fire-box, a group of people stood huddled together on the platform, encumbered by bundles and boxes. I knew this must be the immigrant family the conductor had told us about. The woman wore a fringed shawl tied over her head, and she carried a little tin trunk in her arms, hugging it as if it were a baby. There was an old man, tall and stooped. Two half-grown boys and a girl stood holding oilcloth bundles, and a little girl clung to her mother's skirts. Presently a man with a lantern approached them and began to talk, shouting and exclaiming. I pricked up my ears, for it was positively the first time I had ever heard a foreign tongue.

Another lantern came along. A bantering voice called out: 'Hello, are you Mr. Burden's folks? If you are, it's me you're looking for. I'm Otto Fuchs. I'm Mr. Burden's hired man, and I'm to drive you out. Hello, Jimmy, ain't you scared to come so far west?'

I looked up with interest at the new face in the lantern-light. He might have stepped out of the pages of 'Jesse James.' He wore a sombrero hat, with a wide leather band and a bright buckle, and the ends of his moustache were twisted up stiffly, like little horns. He looked lively and ferocious, I thought, and as if he had a history. A long scar ran across one cheek and drew the corners of his mouth up in a sinister curl. The top of his left ear was gone, and his skin was brown as an Indian's. Surely this was the face of a desperado. As he walked about the platform in his high-heeled boots, looking for our trunks, I saw that he was a rather slight man, quick and wiry, and light on his feet. He told us we had a long night drive ahead of us, and had better be on the hike. He led us to a hitching-bar where two farm-wagons were tied, and I saw the foreign family crowding into one of them. The other was for us. Jake got on the front seat with Otto Fuchs, and I rode on the straw in the bottom of the wagon-box, covered up with a buffalo hide. The immigrants rumbled off into the empty darkness, and we followed them.

I tried to go to sleep, but the jolting made me bite my tongue, and I soon began to ache all over. When the straw settled down, I had a hard bed. Cautiously I slipped from under the buffalo hide, got up on my knees and peered over the side of the wagon. There seemed to be nothing to see; no fences, no creeks or trees, no hills or fields. If there was a road, I could not make it out in the faint starlight. There was nothing but land: not a country at all, but the material out of which countries are made. No, there was nothing but land—slightly undulating, I knew, because often our wheels ground against the brake as we went down into a hollow and lurched up again on the other side. I had the feeling that the world was left behind, that we had got over the edge of it, and were outside man's jurisdiction. I had never before looked up at the sky when there was not a familiar mountain ridge against it. But this was the complete dome of heaven, all there was of it. I did not believe that my dead father and mother were watching me from up there; they would still be looking for me at the sheepfold down by the creek, or

ılong the white road that led to the mountain ɔastures. I had left even their spirits behind ne. The wagon jolted on, carrying me I knew ıot whither. I don't think I was homesick. If we never arrived anywhere, it did not mater. Between that earth and that sky I felt ɛrased, blotted out. I did not say my prayers hat night: here, I felt, what would be would ɔe.

2

I do not remember our arrival at my grandather's farm sometime before daybreak, after ı drive of nearly twenty miles with heavy vork-horses. When I awoke, it was afterıoon. I was lying in a little room, scarcely arger than the bed that held me, and the vindow-shade at my head was flapping ;oftly in a warm wind. A tall woman, with vrinkled brown skin and black hair, stood ooking down at me; I knew that she must ɔe my grandmother. She had been crying, I ɔould see, but when I opened my eyes she ;miled, peered at me anxiously, and sat down ɔn the foot of my bed.

'Had a good sleep, Jimmy?' she asked ɔriskly. Then in a very different tone she said, ıs if to herself, 'My, how you do look like /our father!' I remembered that my father ıad been her little boy; she must often have ɔome to wake him like this when he over;lept. 'Here are your clean clothes,' she went ɔn, stroking my coverlid with her brown ıand as she talked. 'But first you come down o the kitchen with me, and have a nice warm ɔath behind the stove. Bring your things; here's nobody about.'

'Down to the kitchen' struck me as curious; t was always 'out in the kitchen' at home. picked up my shoes and stockings and folowed her through the living-room and down ı flight of stairs into a basement. This baseıent was divided into a dining-room at the ight of the stairs and a kitchen at the left. Both rooms were plastered and whitewashed –the plaster laid directly upon the earth valls, as it used to be in dugouts. The floor vas of hard cement. Up under the wooden ɛeiling there were little half-windows with white curtains, and pots of geraniums and wandering Jew in the deep sills. As I entered the kitchen, I sniffed a pleasant smell of gingerbread baking. The stove was very large, with bright nickel trimmings, and behind it there was a long wooden bench against the wall, and a tin washtub, into which grandmother poured hot and cold water. When she brought the soap and towels, I told her that I was used to taking my bath without help.

'Can you do your ears, Jimmy? Are you sure? Well, now, I call you a right smart little boy.'

It was pleasant there in the kitchen. The sun shone into my bath-water through the west half-window, and a big Maltese cat came up and rubbed himself against the tub, watching me curiously. While I scrubbed, my grandmother busied herself in the dining-room until I called anxiously, 'Grandmother, I'm afraid the cakes are burning!' Then she came laughing, waving her apron before her as if she were shooing chickens.

She was a spare, tall woman, a little stooped, and she was apt to carry her head thrust forward in an attitude of attention, as if she were looking at something, or listening to something, far away. As I grew older, I came to believe that it was only because she was so often thinking of things that were far away. She was quick-footed and energetic in all her movements. Her voice was high and rather shrill, and she often spoke with an anxious inflection, for she was exceedingly desirous that everything should go with due order and decorum. Her laugh, too, was high, and perhaps a little strident, but there was a lively intelligence in it. She was then fifty-five years old, a strong woman, of unusual endurance.

After I was dressed, I explored the long cellar next the kitchen. It was dug out under the wing of the house, was plastered and cemented, with a stairway and an outside door by which the men came and went. Under one of the windows there was a place for them to wash when they came in from work.

While my grandmother was busy about supper, I settled myself on the wooden bench behind the stove and got acquainted with the cat—he caught not only rats and

mice, but gophers, I was told. The patch of yellow sunlight on the floor travelled back toward the stairway, and grandmother and I talked about my journey, and about the arrival of the new Bohemian family; she said they were to be our nearest neighbours. We did not talk about the farm in Virginia, which had been her home for so many years. But after the men came in from the fields, and we were all seated at the supper table, then she asked Jake about the old place and about our friends and neighbours there.

My grandfather said little. When he first came in he kissed me and spoke kindly to me, but was not demonstrative. I felt at once his deliberateness and personal dignity, and was a little in awe of him. The thing one immediately noticed about him was his beautiful, crinkly, snow-white beard. I once heard a missionary say it was like the beard of an Arabian sheik. His bald crown only made it more impressive.

Grandfather's eyes were not at all like those of an old man; they were bright blue, and had a fresh, frosty sparkle. His teeth were white and regular—so sound that he had never been to a dentist in his life. He had a delicate skin, easily roughened by sun and wind. When he was a young man his hair and beard were red; his eyebrows were still coppery.

As we sat at the table, Otto Fuchs and I kept stealing covert glances at each other. Grandmother had told me while she was getting supper that he was an Austrian who came to this country a young boy and had led an adventurous life in the Far West among mining-camps and cow outfits. His iron constitution was somewhat broken by mountain pneumonia, and he had drifted back to live in a milder country for a while. He had relatives in Bismarck, a German settlement to the north of us, but for a year now he had been working for grandfather.

The minute supper was over, Otto took me into the kitchen to whisper to me about a pony down in the barn that had been bought for me at a sale; he had been riding him to find out whether he had any bad tricks, but he was a 'perfect gentleman,' and his name was Dude. Fuchs told me everything I wanted to know: how he had lost his ear in a Wyoming blizzard when he was a stage driver, and how to throw a lasso. He promised to rope a steer for me before sundown next day. He got out his 'chaps' and silver spurs to show them to Jake and me, and his best cowboy boots, with tops stitched in bold design—roses, and true-lover's knots, and undraped female figures. These, he solemnly explained, were angels.

Before we went to bed, Jake and Otto were called up to the living-room for prayers. Grandfather put on silver-rimmed spectacles and read several Psalms. His voice was so sympathetic and he read so interestingly that I wished he had chosen one of my favourite chapters in the Book of Kings. I was awed by his intonation of the word 'Selah.' 'He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom He loved. Selah.' I had no idea what the word meant; perhaps he had not. But, as he uttered it, it became oracular, the most sacred of words.

Early the next morning I ran out-of-doors to look about me. I had been told that ours was the only wooden house west of Black Hawk—until you came to the Norwegian settlement, where there were several. Our neighbours lived in sod houses and dugouts—comfortable, but not very roomy. Our white frame house, with a storey and half-storey above the basement, stood at the east end of what I might call the farmyard, with the windmill close by the kitchen door. From the windmill the ground sloped westward, down to the barns and granaries and pig-yards. This slope was trampled hard and bare, and washed out in winding gullies by the rain. Beyond the corncribs, at the bottom of the shallow draw, was a muddy little pond, with rusty willow bushes growing about it. The road from the post-office came directly by our door, crossed the farmyard, and curved round this little pond, beyond which it began to climb the gentle swell of unbroken prairie to the west. There, along the western sky-line it skirted a great cornfield, much larger than any field I had ever seen. This cornfield, and the sorghum patch behind the barn, were the

only broken land in sight. Everywhere, as far as the eye could reach, there was nothing but rough, shaggy, red grass, most of it as tall as I.

North of the house, inside the ploughed fire-breaks, grew a thick-set strip of box-elder trees, low and bushy, their leaves already turning yellow. This hedge was nearly a quarter of a mile long, but I had to look very hard to see it at all. The little trees were insignificant against the grass. It seemed as if the grass were about to run over them, and over the plum-patch behind the sod chicken-house.

As I looked about me I felt that the grass was the country, as the water is the sea. The red of the grass made all the great prairie the colour of wine-stains, or of certain seaweeds when they are first washed up. And there was so much motion in it; the whole country seemed, somehow, to be running.

I had almost forgotten that I had a grandmother, when she came out, her sunbonnet on her head, a grain-sack in her hand, and asked me if I did not want to go to the garden with her to dig potatoes for dinner.

The garden, curiously enough, was a quarter of a mile from the house, and the way to it led up a shallow draw past the cattle corral. Grandmother called my attention to a stout hickory cane, tipped with copper, which hung by a leather thong from her belt. This, she said, was her rattlesnake cane. I must never go to the garden without a heavy stick or a corn-knife; she had killed a good many rattlers on her way back and forth. A little girl who lived on the Black Hawk road was bitten on the ankle and had been sick all summer.

I can remember exactly how the country looked to me as I walked beside my grandmother along the faint wagon-tracks on that early September morning. Perhaps the glide of long railway travel was still with me, for more than anything else I felt motion in the landscape; in the fresh, easy-blowing morning wind, and in the earth itself, as if the shaggy grass were a sort of loose hide, and underneath it herds of wild buffalo were galloping, galloping . . .

Alone, I should never have found the garden—except, perhaps, for the big yellow pumpkins that lay about unprotected by their withering vines—and I felt very little interest in it when I got there. I wanted to walk straight on through the red grass and over the edge of the world, which could not be very far away. The light air about me told me that the world ended here: only the ground and sun and sky were left, and if one went a little farther there would be only sun and sky, and one would float off into them, like the tawny hawks which sailed over our heads making slow shadows on the grass. While grandmother took the pitchfork we found standing in one of the rows and dug potatoes, while I picked them up out of the soft brown earth and put them into the bag, I kept looking up at the hawks that were doing what I might so easily do.

When grandmother was ready to go, I said I would like to stay up there in the garden awhile.

She peered down at me from under her sunbonnet. 'Aren't you afraid of snakes?'

'A little,' I admitted, 'but I'd like to stay, anyhow.'

'Well, if you see one, don't have anything to do with him. The big yellow and brown ones won't hurt you; they're bull-snakes and help to keep the gophers down. Don't be scared if you see anything look out of that hole in the bank over there. That's a badger hole. He's about as big as a big 'possum, and his face is striped, black and white. He takes a chicken once in a while, but I won't let the men harm him. In a new country a body feels friendly to the animals. I like to have him come out and watch me when I'm at work.'

Grandmother swung the bag of potatoes over her shoulder and went down the path, leaning forward a little. The road followed the windings of the draw; when she came to the first bend, she waved at me and disappeared. I was left alone with this new feeling of lightness and content.

I sat down in the middle of the garden, where snakes could scarcely approach unseen, and leaned my back against a warm yellow pumpkin. There were some ground-cherry bushes growing along the furrows, full of fruit. I turned back the papery triangular sheaths that protected the berries and ate

a few. All about me giant grasshoppers, twice as big as any I had ever seen, were doing acrobatic feats among the dried vines. The gophers scurried up and down the ploughed ground. There in the sheltered draw-bottom the wind did not blow very hard, but I could hear it singing its humming tune up on the level, and I could see the tall grasses wave. The earth was warm under me, and warm as I crumbled it through my fingers. Queer little red bugs came out and moved in slow squadrons around me. Their backs were polished vermilion, with black spots. I kept as still as I could. Nothing happened. I did not expect anything to happen. I was something that lay under the sun and felt it, like the pumpkins, and I did not want to be anything more. I was entirely happy. Perhaps we feel like that when we die and become a part of something entire, whether it is sun and air, or goodness and knowledge. At any rate, that is happiness; to be dissolved into something complete and great. When it comes to one, it comes as naturally as sleep.

3

On Sunday morning Otto Fuchs was to drive us over to make the acquaintance of our new Bohemian neighbours. We were taking them some provisions, as they had come to live on a wild place where there was no garden or chicken-house, and very little broken land. Fuchs brought up a sack of potatoes and a piece of cured pork from the cellar, and grandmother packed some loaves of Saturday's bread, a jar of butter, and several pumpkin pies in the straw of the wagon-box. We clambered up to the front seat and jolted off past the little pond and along the road that climbed to the big cornfield.

I could hardly wait to see what lay beyond that cornfield; but there was only red grass like ours, and nothing else, though from the high wagon-seat one could look off a long way. The road ran about like a wild thing, avoiding the deep draws, crossing them where they were wide and shallow. And all along it, wherever it looped or ran, the sunflowers grew; some of them were as big as little trees, with great rough leaves and many branches which bore dozens of blossoms. They made a gold ribbon across the prairie. Occasionally one of the horses would tear off with his teeth a plant full of blossoms, and walk along munching it, the flowers nodding in time to his bites as he ate down toward them.

The Bohemian family, grandmother told me as we drove along, had bought the homestead of a fellow countryman, Peter Krajiek, and had paid him more than it was worth. Their agreement with him was made before they left the old country, through a cousin of his, who was also a relative of Mrs. Shimerda. The Shimerdas were the first Bohemian family to come to this part of the county, Krajiek was their only interpreter, and could tell them anything he chose. They could not speak enough English to ask for advice, or even to make their most pressing wants known. One son, Fuchs said, was well-grown, and strong enough to work the land; but the father was old and frail and knew nothing about farming. He was a weaver by trade; had been a skilled workman on tapestries and upholstery materials. He had brought his fiddle with him, which wouldn't be of much use here, though he used to pick up money by it at home.

'If they're nice people, I hate to think of them spending the winter in that cave of Krajiek's,' said grandmother. 'It's no better than a badger hole; no proper dugout at all. And I hear he's made them pay twenty dollars for his old cookstove that ain't worth ten.'

'Yes'm,' said Otto; 'and he's sold 'em his oxen and his two bony old horses for the price of good work-teams. I'd have interfered about the horses—the old man can understand some German—if I'd 'a' thought it would do any good. But Bohemians has a natural distrust of Austrians.'

Grandmother looked interested. 'Now, why is that, Otto?'

Fuchs wrinkled his brow and nose. 'Well, ma'am, it's politics. It would take me a long while to explain.'

The land was growing rougher; I was told that we were approaching Squaw Creek, which cut up the west half of the Shimerdas'

place and made the land of little value for farming. Soon we could see the broken, grassy clay cliffs which indicated the windings of the stream, and the glittering tops of the cottonwoods and ash trees that grew down in the ravine. Some of the cottonwoods had already turned, and the yellow leaves and shining white bark made them look like the gold and silver trees in fairy tales.

As we approached the Shimerdas' dwelling, I could still see nothing but rough red hillocks, and draws with shelving banks and long roots hanging out where the earth had crumbled away. Presently, against one of those banks, I saw a sort of shed, thatched with the same wine-coloured grass that grew everywhere. Near it tinted a shattered windmill frame, that had no wheel. We drove up to this skeleton to tie our horses, and then I saw a door and window sunk deep in the drawbank. The door stood open, and a woman and a girl of fourteen ran out and looked up at us hopefully. A little girl trailed along behind them. The woman had on her head the same embroidered shawl with silk fringes that she wore when she had alighted from the train at Black Hawk. She was not old, but she was certainly not young. Her face was alert and lively, with a sharp chin and shrewd little eyes. She shook grandmother's hand energetically.

'Very glad, very glad!' she ejaculated. Immediately she pointed to the bank out of which she had emerged and said, 'House no good, house no good!'

Grandmother nodded consolingly. 'You'll get fixed up comfortable after while, Mrs. Shimerda; make good house.'

My grandmother always spoke in a very loud tone to foreigners, as if they were deaf. She made Mrs. Shimerda understand the friendly intention of our visit, and the Bohemian woman handled the loaves of bread and even smelled them, and examined the pies with lively curiosity, exclaiming, 'Much good, much thank!'—and again she wrung grandmother's hand.

The oldest son, Ambrož—they called it Ambrosch—came out of the cave and stood beside his mother. He was nineteen years old, short and broad-backed, with a close-cropped, flat head, and a wide, flat face. His hazel eyes were little and shrewd, like his mother's, but more sly and suspicious; they fairly snapped at the food. The family had been living on corn-cakes and sorghum molasses for three days.

The little girl was pretty, but Án-tonia—they accented the name thus, strongly, when they spoke to her—was still prettier. I remembered what the conductor had said about her eyes. They were big and warm and full of light, like the sun shining on brown pools in the wood. Her skin was brown, too, and in her cheeks she had a glow of rich, dark colour. Her brown hair was curly and wild-looking. The little sister, whom they called Yulka (Julka), was fair, and seemed mild and obedient. While I stood awkwardly confronting the two girls, Krajiek came up from the barn to see what was going on. With him was another Shimerda son. Even from a distance one could see that there was something strange about this boy. As he approached us, he began to make uncouth noises, and held up his hands to show us his fingers, which were webbed to the first knuckle, like a duck's foot. When he saw me draw back, he began to crow delightedly, 'Hoo, hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo!' like a rooster. His mother scowled and said sternly, 'Marek!' then spoke rapidly to Krajiek in Bohemian.

'She wants me to tell you he won't hurt nobody, Mrs. Burden. He was born like that. The others are smart. Ambrosch, he make good farmer.' He struck Ambrosch on the back, and the boy smiled knowingly.

At that moment the father came out of the hole in the bank. He wore no hat, and his thick, iron-grey hair was brushed straight back from his forehead. It was so long that it brushed out behind his ears, and made him look like the old portraits I remembered in Virginia. He was tall and slender, and his thin shoulders stooped. He looked at us understandingly, then took grandmother's hand and bent over it. I noticed how white and well-shaped his own hands were. They looked calm, somehow, and skilled. His eyes were melancholy, and were set back deep under his brow. His face was ruggedly formed, but it looked like ashes—like some-

thing from which all the warmth and light had died out. Everything about this old man was in keeping with his dignified manner. He was neatly dressed. Under his coat he wore a knitted gray vest, and, instead of a collar, a silk scarf of a dark bronze-green, carefully crossed and held together by a red coral pin. While Krajiek was translating for Mr. Shimerda, Ántonia came up to me and held out her hand coaxingly. In a moment we were running up the steep drawside together, Yulka trotting after us.

When we reached the level and could see the gold tree-tops, I pointed toward them, and Ántonia laughed and squeezed my hand as if to tell me how glad she was I had come. We raced off toward Squaw Creek and did not stop until the ground itself stopped—fell away before us so abruptly that the next step would have been out into the tree-tops. We stood panting on the edge of the ravine, looking down at the trees and bushes that grew below us. The wind was so strong that I had to hold my hat on, and the girls' skirts were blown out before them. Ántonia seemed to like it; she held her little sister by the hand and chattered away in that language which seemed to me spoken so much more rapidly than mine. She looked at me, her eyes fairly blazing with things she could not say.

'Name? What name?' she asked, touching me on the shoulder. I told her my name, and she repeated it after me and made Yulka say it. She pointed into the gold cottonwood tree behind whose top we stood and said again, 'What name?'

We sat down and made a nest in the long red grass. Yulka curled up like a baby rabbit and played with a grasshopper. Ántonia pointed up to the sky and questioned me with her glance. I gave her the word, but she was not satisfied and pointed to my eyes. I told her, and she repeated the word, making it sound like 'ice.' She pointed up to the sky, then to my eyes, then back to the sky, with movements so quick and impulsive that she distracted me, and I had no idea what she wanted. She got up on her knees and wrung her hands. She pointed to her own eyes and shook her head, then to mine and to the sky, nodding violently.

'Oh,' I exclaimed, 'blue; blue sky.'

She clapped her hands and murmured, 'Blue sky, blue eyes,' as if it amused her. While we snuggled down there out of the wind, she learned a score of words. She was quick, and very eager. We were so deep in the grass that we could see nothing but the blue sky over us and the gold tree in front of us. It was wonderfully pleasant. After Ántonia had said the new words over and over, she wanted to give me a little chased silver ring she wore on her middle finger. When she coaxed and insisted, I repulsed her quite sternly. I didn't want her ring, and I felt there was something reckless and extravagant about her wishing to give it away to a boy she had never seen before. No wonder Krajiek got the better of these people, if this was how they behaved.

While we were disputing about the ring, I heard a mournful voice calling, 'Án-tonia, Án-tonia!' She sprang up like a hare. '*Tatinek! Tatinek!*' she shouted, and we ran to meet the old man who was coming toward us. Ántonia reached him first, took his hand and kissed it. When I came up, he touched my shoulder and looked searchingly down into my face for several seconds. I became somewhat embarrassed, for I was used to being taken for granted by my elders.

We went with Mr. Shimerda back to the dugout, where grandmother was waiting for me. Before I got into the wagon, he took a book out of his pocket, opened it, and showed me a page with two alphabets, one English and the other Bohemian. He placed this book in my grandmother's hands, looked at her entreatingly, and said, with an earnestness which I shall never forget, 'Te-e-ach, te-e-ach my Ántonia!'

4

On the afternoon of that same Sunday I took my first long ride on my pony, under Otto's direction. After that Dude and I went twice a week to the post-office, six miles east of us, and I saved the men a good deal of time by riding on errands to our neighbours. When we had to borrow anything, or to send about word that there would be preaching

at the sod schoolhouse, I was always the messenger. Formerly Fuchs attended to such things after working hours.

All the years that have passed have not dimmed my memory of that first glorious autumn. The new country lay open before me: there were no fences in those days, and I could choose my own way over the grass uplands, trusting the pony to get me home again. Sometimes I followed the sunflower-bordered roads. Fuchs told me that the sunflowers were introduced into that country by the Mormons; that at the time of the persecution, when they left Missouri and struck out into the wilderness to find a place where they could worship God in their own way, the members of the first exploring party, crossing the plains to Utah, scattered sunflower seed as they went. The next summer, when the long trains of wagons came through with all the women and children, they had the sunflower trail to follow. I believe that botanists do not confirm Fuchs's story, but insist that the sunflower was native to those plains. Nevertheless, that legend has stuck in my mind, and sunflower-bordered roads always seem to me the roads to freedom.

I used to love to drift along the pale-yellow cornfields, looking for the damp spots one sometimes found at their edges, where the smartweed soon turned a rich copper colour and the narrow brown leaves hung curled like cocoons about the swollen joints of the stem. Sometimes I went south to visit our German neighbours and to admire their catalpa grove, or to see the big elm tree that grew up out of a deep crack in the earth and had a hawk's nest in its branches. Trees were so rare in that country, and they had to make such a hard fight to grow, that we used to feel anxious about them, and visit them as if they were persons. It must have been the scarcity of detail in that tawny landscape that made details so precious.

Sometimes I rode north to the big prairie-dog town to watch the brown earth-owls fly home in the late afternoon and go down to their nests underground with the dogs. Antonia Shimerda liked to go with me, and we used to wonder a great deal about these birds of subterranean habit. We had to be on our guard there, for rattlesnakes were always lurking about. They came to pick up an easy living among the dogs and owls, which were quite defenceless against them; took possession of their comfortable houses and ate the eggs and puppies. We felt sorry for the owls. It was always mournful to see them come flying home at sunset and disappear under the earth. But, after all, we felt, winged things who would live like that must be rather degraded creatures. The dog-town was a long way from any pond or creek. Otto Fuchs said he had seen populous dog-towns in the desert where there was no surface water for fifty miles; he insisted that some of the holes must go down to water—nearly two hundred feet, hereabouts. Antonia said she didn't believe it; that the dogs probably lapped up the dew in the early morning, like the rabbits.

Antonia had opinions about everything, and she was soon able to make them known. Almost every day she came running across the prairie to have her reading lesson with me. Mrs. Shimerda grumbled, but realized it was important that one member of the family should learn English. When the lesson was over, we used to go up to the watermelon patch behind the garden. I split the melons with an old corn-knife, and we lifted out the hearts and ate them with the juice trickling through our fingers. The white Christmas melons we did not touch, but we watched them with curiosity. They were to be picked late, when the hard frosts had set in, and put away for winter use. After weeks on the ocean, the Shimerdas were famished for fruit. The two girls would wander for miles along the edge of the cornfields, hunting for ground-cherries.

Antonia loved to help grandmother in the kitchen and to learn about cooking and housekeeping. She would stand beside her, watching her every movement. We were willing to believe that Mrs. Shimerda was a good housewife in her own country, but she managed poorly under new conditions: the conditions were bad enough, certainly!

I remember how horrified we were at the sour, ashy-grey bread she gave her family to eat. She mixed her dough, we discovered, in an old tin peck-measure that Krajiek had

used about the barn. When she took the paste out to bake it, she left smears of dough sticking to the sides of the measure, put the measure on the shelf behind the stove, and let this residue ferment. The next time she made bread, she scraped this sour stuff down into the fresh dough to serve as yeast.

During those first months the Shimerdas never went to town. Krajiek encouraged them in the belief that in Black Hawk they would somehow be mysteriously separated from their money. They hated Krajiek, but they clung to him because he was the only human being with whom they could talk or from whom they could get information. He slept with the old man and the two boys in the dugout barn, along with the oxen. They kept him in their hole and fed him for the same reason that the prairie-dogs and the brown owls house the rattlesnakes—because they did not know how to get rid of him.

5

We knew that things were hard for our Bohemian neighbours, but the two girls were lighthearted and never complained. They were always ready to forget their troubles at home, and to run away with me over the prairie, scaring rabbits or starting up flocks of quail.

I remember Antonia's excitement when she came into our kitchen one afternoon and announced: 'My papa find friends up north, with Russian mans. Last night he take me for see, and I can understand very much talk. Nice mans, Mrs. Burden. One is fat and all the time laugh. Everybody laugh. The first time I see my papa laugh in this kawn-tree. Oh, very nice!'

I asked her if she meant the two Russians who lived up by the big dog-town. I had often been tempted to go to see them when I was riding in that direction, but one of them was a wild-looking fellow and I was a little afraid of him. Russia seemed to me more remote than any other country—farther away than China, almost as far as the North Pole. Of all the strange, uprooted people among the first settlers, those two men were the strangest and the most aloof. Their last names were unpronounceable, so they were called Pavel and Peter. They went about making signs to people, and until the Shimerdas came they had no friends. Krajiek could understand them a little, but he had cheated them in a trade, so they avoided him. Pavel, the tall one, was said to be an anarchist; since he had no means of imparting his opinions, probably his wild gesticulations and his generally excited and rebellious manner gave rise to this supposition. He must once have been a very strong man, but now his great frame, with big, knotty joints, had a wasted look, and the skin was drawn tight over his high cheekbones. His breathing was hoarse, and he always had a cough.

Peter, his companion, was a very different sort of fellow; short, bow-legged, and as fat as butter. He always seemed pleased when he met people on the road, smiled and took off his cap to everyone, men as well as women. At a distance, on his wagon, he looked like an old man; his hair and beard were of such a pale flaxen colour that they seemed white in the sun. They were as thick and curly as carded wool. His rosy face, with its snub nose, set in this fleece, was like a melon among its leaves. He was usually called 'Curly Peter,' or 'Rooshian Peter.'

The two Russians made good farm-hands, and in summer they worked out together. I had heard our neighbours laughing when they told how Peter always had to go home at night to milk his cow. Other bachelor homesteaders used canned milk, to save trouble. Sometimes Peter came to church at the sod schoolhouse. It was there I first saw him, sitting on a low bench by the door, his plush cap in his hands, his bare feet tucked apologetically under the seat.

After Mr. Shimerda discovered the Russians, he went to see them almost every evening, and sometimes took Antonia with him. She said they came from a part of Russia where the language was not very different from Bohemian, and if I wanted to go to their place, she could talk to them for me. One afternoon, before the heavy frosts began, we rode up there together on my pony.

The Russians had a neat log house built on a grassy slope, with a windlass well beside

the door. As we rode up the draw, we skirted a big melon patch, and a garden where squashes and yellow cucumbers lay about on the sod. We found Peter out behind his kitchen, bending over a washtub. He was working so hard that he did not hear us coming. His whole body moved up and down as he rubbed, and he was a funny sight from the rear, with his shaggy head and bandy legs. When he straightened himself up to greet us, drops of perspiration were rolling from his thick nose down onto his curly beard. Peter dried his hands and seemed glad to leave his washing. He took us down to see his chickens, and his cow that was grazing on the hillside. He told Ántonia that in his country only rich people had cows, but here any man could have one who would take care of her. The milk was good for Pavel, who was often sick, and he could make butter by beating sour cream with a wooden spoon. Peter was very fond of his cow. He patted her flanks and talked to her in Russian while he pulled up her lariat pin and set it in a new place.

After he had shown us his garden, Peter trundled a load of watermelons up the hill in his wheelbarrow. Pavel was not at home. He was off somewhere helping to dig a well. The house I thought very comfortable for two men who were 'batching.' Besides the kitchen, there was a living-room, with a wide double bed built against the wall, properly made up with blue gingham sheets and pillows. There was a little storeroom, too, with a window, where they kept guns and saddles and tools, and old coats and boots. That day the floor was covered with garden things, drying for winter; corn and beans and fat yellow cucumbers. There were no screens or window-blinds in the house, and all the doors and windows stood wide open, letting in flies and sunshine alike.

Peter put the melons in a row on the oil-cloth-covered table and stood over them, brandishing a butcher knife. Before the blade got fairly into them, they split of their own ripeness, with a delicious sound. He gave us knives, but no plates, and the top of the table was soon swimming with juice and seeds. I had never seen anyone eat so many melons as Peter ate. He assured us that they were good for one—better than medicine; in his country people lived on them at this time of year. He was very hospitable and jolly. Once, while he was looking at Ántonia, he sighed and told us that if he had stayed home in Russia perhaps by this time he would have had a pretty daughter of his own to cook and keep house for him. He said he had left his country because of a 'great trouble.'

When we got up to go, Peter looked about in perplexity for something that would entertain us. He ran into the storeroom and brought out a gaudily painted harmonica, sat down on a bench, and spreading his fat legs apart began to play like a whole band. The tunes were either very lively or very doleful, and he sang words to some of them.

Before we left, Peter put ripe cucumbers into a sack for Mrs. Shimerda and gave us a lard-pail full of milk to cook them in. I had never heard of cooking cucumbers, but Ántonia assured me they were very good. We had to walk the pony all the way home to keep from spilling the milk.

6

One afternoon we were having our reading lesson on the warm, grassy bank where the badger lived. It was a day of amber sunlight, but there was a shiver of coming winter in the air. I had seen ice on the little horse-pond that morning, and as we went through the garden we found the tall asparagus, with its red berries, lying on the ground, a mass of slimy green.

Tony was barefooted, and she shivered in her cotton dress and was comfortable only when we were tucked down on the baked earth, in the full blaze of the sun. She could talk to me about almost anything by this time. That afternoon she was telling me how highly esteemed our friend the badger was in her part of the world, and how men kept a special kind of dog, with very short legs, to hunt him. Those dogs, she said, went down into the hole after the badger and killed him

there in a terrific struggle underground; you could hear the barks and yelps outside. Then the dog dragged himself back, covered with bites and scratches, to be rewarded and petted by his master. She knew a dog who had a star on his collar for every badger he had killed.

The rabbits were unusually spry that afternoon. They kept starting up all about us, and dashing off down the draw as if they were playing a game of some kind. But the little buzzing things that lived in the grass were all dead—all but one. While we were lying there against the warm bank, a little insect of the palest, frailest green hopped painfully out of the buffalo grass and tried to leap into a bunch of bluestem. He missed it, fell back, and sat with his head sunk between his long legs, his antennae quivering, as if he were waiting for something to come and finish him. Tony made a warm nest for him in her hands; talked to him gaily and indulgently in Bohemian. Presently he began to sing for us—a thin, rusty little chirp. She held him close to her ear and laughed, but a moment afterward I saw there were tears in her eyes. She told me that in her village at home there was an old beggar woman who went about selling herbs and roots she had dug in the forest. If you took her in and gave her a warm place by the fire, she sang old songs to the children in a cracked voice, like this. Old Hata, she was called, and the children loved to see her coming and saved their cakes and sweets for her.

When the bank on the other side of the draw began to throw a narrow shelf of shadow, we knew we ought to be starting homeward; the chill came on quickly when the sun got low, and Antonia's dress was thin. What were we to do with the frail little creature we had lured back to life by false pretences? I offered my pockets, but Tony shook her head and carefully put the green insect in her hair, tying her big handkerchief down loosely over her curls. I said I would go with her until we could see Squaw Creek, and then turn and run home. We drifted along lazily, very happy, through the magical light of the late afternoon.

All those fall afternoons were the same, but I never got used to them. As far as we could see, the miles of copper-red grass were drenched in sunlight that was stronger and fiercer than at any other time of the day. The blond cornfields were red gold, the haystacks turned rosy and threw long shadows. The whole prairie was like the bush that burned with fire and was not consumed. That hour always had the exultation of victory, of triumphant ending, like a hero's death—heroes who died young and gloriously. It was a sudden transfiguration, a lifting-up of day.

How many an afternoon Antonia and I have trailed along the prairie under that magnificence! And always two long black shadows flitted before us or followed after, dark spots on the ruddy grass.

We had been silent a long time, and the edge of the sun sank nearer and nearer the prairie floor, when we saw a figure moving on the edge of the upland, a gun over his shoulder. He was walking slowly, dragging his feet along as if he had no purpose. We broke into a run to overtake him.

'My papa sick all the time,' Tony panted as we flew. 'He not look good, Jim.'

As we neared Mr. Shimerda she shouted, and he lifted his head and peered about. Tony ran up to him, caught his hand and pressed it against her cheek. She was the only one of his family who could rouse the old man from the torpor in which he seemed to live. He took the bag from his belt and showed us three rabbits he had shot, looked at Antonia with a wintry flicker of a smile and began to tell her something. She turned to me.

'My *tatinek* make me little hat with the skins, little hat for win-ter!' she exclaimed joyfully. 'Meat for eat, skin for hat'—she told off these benefits on her fingers.

Her father put his hand on her hair, but she caught his wrist and lifted it carefully away, talking to him rapidly. I heard the name of old Hata. He untied the handkerchief, separated her hair with his fingers, and stood looking down at the green insect. When

it began to chirp faintly, he listened as if it were a beautiful sound.

I picked up the gun he had dropped; a queer piece from the old country, short and heavy, with a stag's head on the cock. When he saw me examining it, he turned to me with his far-away look that always made me feel as if I were down at the bottom of a well. He spoke kindly and gravely, and Ántonia translated:

'My *tatinek* say when you are big boy, he give you his gun. Very fine, from Bohemie. It was belong to a great man, very rich, like what you not got here; many fields, many forests, many big house. My papa play for his wedding, and he give my papa fine gun, and my papa give you.'

I was glad that this project was one of futurity. There never were such people as the Shimerdas for wanting to give away everything they had. Even the mother was always offering me things, though I knew she expected substantial presents in return. We stood there in friendly silence, while the feeble minstrel sheltered in Ántonia's hair went on with its scratchy chirp. The old man's smile, as he listened, was so full of sadness, of pity for things, that I never afterward forgot it. As the sun sank there came a sudden coolness and the strong smell of earth and drying grass. Ántonia and her father went off hand in hand, and I buttoned up my jacket and raced my shadow home.

7

Much as I liked Ántonia, I hated a superior tone that she sometimes took with me. She was four years older than I, to be sure, and had seen more of the world; but I was a boy and she was a girl, and I resented her protecting manner. Before the autumn was over, she began to treat me more like an equal and to defer to me in other things than reading lessons. This change came about from an adventure we had together.

One day when I rode over to the Shimerdas' I found Ántonia starting off on foot for Russian Peter's house, to borrow a spade Ambrosch needed. I offered to take her on the pony, and she got up behind me. There had been another black frost the night before, and the air was clear and heady as wine. Within a week all the blooming roads had been despoiled, hundreds of miles of yellow sunflowers had been transformed into brown, rattling, burry stalks.

We found Russian Peter digging his potatoes. We were glad to go in and get warm by his kitchen stove and to see his squashes and Christmas melons, heaped in the storeroom for winter. As we rode away with the spade, Ántonia suggested that we stop at the prairie-dog-town and dig into one of the holes. We could find out whether they ran straight down, or were horizontal, like mole-holes; whether they had underground connections; whether the owls had nests down there, lined with feathers. We might get some puppies, or owl eggs, or snakeskins.

The dog-town was spread out over perhaps ten acres. The grass had been nibbled short and even, so this stretch was not shaggy and red like the surrounding country, but grey and velvety. The holes were several yards apart, and were disposed with a good deal of regularity, almost as if the town had been laid out in streets and avenues. One always felt that an orderly and very sociable kind of life was going on there. I picketed Dude down in a draw, and we went wandering about, looking for a hole that would be easy to dig. The dogs were out, as usual, dozens of them, sitting up on their hind legs over the doors of their houses. As we approached, they barked, shook their tails at us, and scurried underground. Before the mouths of the holes were little patches of sand and gravel, scratched up, we supposed, from a long way below the surface. Here and there, in the town, we came on larger gravel patches, several yards away from any hole. If the dogs had scratched the sand up in excavating, how had they carried it so far? It was on one of these gravel beds that I met my adventure.

We were examining a big hole with two entrances. The burrow sloped into the ground at a gentle angle, so that we could see where the two corridors united, and the floor was dusty from use, like a little highway over

which much travel went. I was walking backward, in a crouching position, when I heard Ántonia scream. She was standing opposite me, pointing behind me and shouting something in Bohemian. I whirled round, and there, on one of those dry gravel beds, was the biggest snake I had ever seen. He was sunning himself, after the cold night, and he must have been asleep when Ántonia screamed. When I turned he was lying in long loose waves, like a letter 'W.' He twitched and began to coil slowly. He was not merely a big snake, I thought—he was a circus monstrosity. His abominable muscularity, his loathsome, fluid motion, somehow made me sick. He was as thick as my leg, and looked as if millstones couldn't crush the disgusting vitality out of him. He lifted his hideous little head, and rattled. I didn't run because I didn't think of it—if my back had been against a stone wall I couldn't have felt more cornered. I saw his coils tighten—now he would spring, spring his length, I remembered. I ran up and drove at his head with my spade, struck him fairly across the neck, and in a minute he was all about my feet in wavy loops. I struck now from hate. Ántonia, barefooted as she was, ran up behind me. Even after I had pounded his ugly head flat, his body kept on coiling and winding, doubling and falling back on itself. I walked away and turned my back. I felt seasick.

Ántonia came after me, crying, 'O Jimmy, he not bite you? You sure? Why you not run when I say?'

'What did you jabber Bohunk for? You might have told me there was a snake behind me!' I said petulantly.

'I know I am just awful, Jim, I was so scared.' She took my handkerchief from my pocket and tried to wipe my face with it, but I snatched it away from her. I suppose I looked as sick as I felt.

'I never knew you was so brave, Jim,' she went on comfortingly. 'You is just like big mans; you wait for him lift his head and then you go for him. Ain't you feel scared a bit? Now we take that snake home and show everybody. Nobody ain't seen in this kawntree so big a snake like you kill.'

She went on in this strain until I began to think that I had longed for this opportunity, and had hailed it with joy. Cautiously we went back to the snake; he was still groping with his tail, turning up his ugly belly in the light. A faint, fetid smell came from him, and a thread of green liquid oozed from his crushed head.

'Look, Tony, that's his poison,' I said.

I took a long piece of string from my pocket, and she lifted his head with the spade while I tied a noose around it. We pulled him out straight and measured him by my riding-quirt, he was about five and a half feet long. He had twelve rattles, but they were broken off before they began to taper, so I insisted that he must once have had twenty-four. I explained to Ántonia how this meant that he was twenty-four years old, that he must have been there when white men first came, left on from buffalo and Indian times. As I turned him over, I began to feel proud of him, to have a kind of respect for his age and size. He seemed like the ancient, eldest Evil. Certainly his kind have left horrible unconscious memories in all warm-blooded life. When we dragged him down into the draw, Dude sprang off to the end of his tether and shivered all over—wouldn't let us come near him.

We decided that Ántonia should ride Dude home, and I would walk. As she rode along slowly, her bare legs swinging against the pony's sides, she kept shouting back to me about how astonished everybody would be. I followed with the spade over my shoulder, dragging my snake. Her exultation was contagious. The great land had never looked to me so big and free. If the red grass were full of rattlers, I was equal to them all. Nevertheless, I stole furtive glances behind me now and then to see that no avenging mate, older and bigger than my quarry, was racing up from the rear.

The sun had set when we reached our garden and went down the draw toward the house. Otto Fuchs was the first one we met. He was sitting on the edge of the cattle-pond, having a quiet pipe before supper. Ántonia called him to come quick and look. He did not say anything for a minute, but

scratched his head and turned the snake over with his boot.

'Where did you run onto that beauty, Jim?'

'Up at the dog-town,' I answered laconically.

'Kill him yourself? How come you to have a weepon?'

'We'd been up to Russian Peter's, to borrow a spade for Ambrosch.'

Otto shook the ashes out of his pipe and squatted down to count the rattles. 'It was just luck you had a tool,' he said cautiously. 'Gosh! I wouldn't want to do any business with that fellow myself, unless I had a fence-post along. Your grandmother's snake-cane wouldn't more than tickle him. He could stand right up and talk to you, he could. Did he fight hard?'

Ántonia broke in: 'He fight something awful! He is all over Jimmy's boots. I scream for him to run, but he just hit and hit that snake like he was crazy.'

Otto winked at me. After Ántonia rode on he said: 'Got him in the head first crack, didn't you? That was just as well.'

We hung him up to the windmill, and when I went down to the kitchen, I found Ántonia standing in the middle of the floor, telling the story with a great deal of colour.

Subsequent experiences with rattlesnakes taught me that my first encounter was fortunate in circumstance. My big rattler was old, and had led too easy a life; there was not much fight in him. He had probably lived there for years, with a fat prairie-dog for breakfast whenever he felt like it, a sheltered home, even an owl-feather bed, perhaps, and he had forgot that the world doesn't owe rattlers a living. A snake of his size, in fighting trim, would be more than any boy could handle. So in reality it was a mock adventure; the game was fixed for me by chance, as it probably was for many a dragon-slayer. I had been adequately armed by Russian Peter; the snake was old and lazy; and I had Ántonia beside me, to appreciate and admire.

That snake hung on our corral fence for several days; some of the neighbours came to see it and agreed that it was the biggest rattler ever killed in those parts. This was enough for Ántonia. She liked me better from that time on, and she never took a supercilious air with me again. I had killed a big snake—I was now a big fellow.

8

While the autumn colour was growing pale on the grass and cornfields, things went badly with our friends the Russians. Peter told his troubles to Mr. Shimerda: he was unable to meet a note which fell due on the first of November; had to pay an exorbitant bonus on renewing it, and to give a mortgage on his pigs and horses and even his milk cow. His creditor was Wick Cutter, the merciless Black Hawk money-lender, a man of evil name throughout the county, of whom I shall have more to say later. Peter could give no very clear account of his transactions with Cutter. He only knew that he had first borrowed two hundred dollars, then another hundred, then fifty—that each time a bonus was added to the principal, and the debt grew faster than any crop he planted. Now everything was plastered with mortgages.

Soon after Peter renewed his note, Pavel strained himself lifting timbers for a new barn, and fell over among the shavings with such a gush of blood from the lungs that his fellow workmen thought he would die on the spot. They hauled him home and put him into his bed, and there he lay, very ill indeed. Misfortune seemed to settle like an evil bird on the roof of the log house, and to flap its wings there, warning human beings away. The Russians had such bad luck that people were afraid of them and liked to put them out of mind.

One afternoon Ántonia and her father came over to our house to get buttermilk, and lingered, as they usually did, until the sun was low. Just as they were leaving, Russian Peter drove up. Pavel was very bad, he said, and wanted to talk to Mr. Shimerda and his daughter; he had come to fetch them. When Ántonia and her father got into the wagon, I entreated grandmother to let me go with them: I would gladly go without my supper, I would sleep in the Shimerdas' barn and run home in the morning. My plan must have seemed very foolish to her, but she was

often large-minded about humouring the desires of other people. She asked Peter to wait a moment, and when she came back from the kitchen she brought a bag of sandwiches and doughnuts for us.

Mr. Shimerda and Peter were on the front seat; Ántonia and I sat in the straw behind and ate our lunch as we bumped along. After the sun sank, a cold wind sprang up and moaned over the prairie. If this turn in the weather had come sooner, I should not have got away. We burrowed down in the straw and curled up close together, watching the angry red die out of the west and the stars begin to shine in the clear, windy sky. Peter kept sighing and groaning. Tony whispered to me that he was afraid Pavel would never get well. We lay still and did not talk. Up there the stars grew magnificently bright. Though we had come from such different parts of the world, in both of us there was some dusky superstition that those shining groups have their influence upon what is and what is not to be. Perhaps Russian Peter, come from farther away than any of us, had brought from his land, too, some such belief.

The little house on the hillside was so much the colour of the night that we could not see it as we came up the draw. The ruddy windows guided us—the light from the kitchen stove, for there was no lamp burning.

We entered softly. The man in the wide bed seemed to be asleep. Tony and I sat down on the bench by the wall and leaned our arms on the table in front of us. The firelight flickered on the hewn logs that supported the thatch overhead. Pavel made a rasping sound when he breathed, and he kept moaning. We waited. The wind shook the doors and windows impatiently, then swept on again, singing through the big spaces. Each gust, as it bore down, rattled the panes, and swelled off like the others. They made me think of defeated armies, retreating; or of ghosts who were trying desperately to get in for shelter, and then went moaning on. Presently, in one of those sobbing intervals between the blasts, the coyotes turned up with their whining howl; one, two, three, then all together—to tell us that winter was coming. This sound brought an answer from the bed—a long complaining cry—as if Pavel were having bad dreams or were waking to some old misery. Peter listened, but did not stir. He was sitting on the floor by the kitchen stove. The coyotes broke out again: yap, yap, yap—then the high whine. Pavel called for something and struggled up on his elbow.

'He is scared of the wolves,' Ántonia whispered to me. 'In his country there are very many, and they eat men and women.' We slid closer together along the bench.

I could not take my eyes off the man in the bed. His shirt was hanging open, and his emaciated chest, covered with yellow bristle, rose and fell horribly. He began to cough. Peter shuffled to his feet, caught up the teakettle and mixed him some hot water and whiskey. The sharp smell of spirits went through the room.

Pavel snatched the cup and drank, then made Peter give him the bottle and slipped it under his pillow, grinning disagreeably, as if he had outwitted someone. His eyes followed Peter about the room with a contemptuous, unfriendly expression. It seemed to me that he despised him for being so simple and docile.

Presently Pavel began to talk to Mr. Shimerda, scarcely above a whisper. He was telling a long story, and as he went on, Ántonia took my hand under the table and held it tight. She leaned forward and strained her ears to hear him. He grew more and more excited, and kept pointing all around his bed, as if there were things there and he wanted Mr. Shimerda to see them.

'It's wolves, Jimmy,' Ántonia whispered. 'It's awful, what he says!'

The sick man raged and shook his fist. He seemed to be cursing people who had wronged him. Mr. Shimerda caught him by the shoulders, but could hardly hold him in bed. At last he was shut off by a coughing fit which fairly choked him. He pulled a cloth from under his pillow and held it to his mouth. Quickly it was covered with bright red spots—I thought I had never seen any blood so bright. When he lay down and turned his face to the wall, all the rage had gone out of him. He lay patiently fighting for breath, like a child with croup. Ántonia's

father uncovered one of his long bony legs and rubbed it rhythmically. From our bench we could see what a hollow case his body was. His spine and shoulder-blades stood out like the bones under the hide of a dead steer left in the fields. That sharp backbone must have hurt him when he lay on it.

Gradually, relief came to all of us. Whatever it was, the worst was over. Mr. Shimerda signed to us that Pavel was asleep. Without a word Peter got up and lit his lantern. He was going out to get his team to drive us home. Mr. Shimerda went with him. We sat and watched the long bowed back under the blue sheet, scarcely daring to breathe.

On the way home, when we were lying in the straw, under the jolting and rattling Ántonia told me as much of the story as she could. What she did not tell me then, she told later; we talked of nothing else for days afterward.

When Pavel and Peter were young men, living at home in Russia, they were asked to be groomsmen for a friend who was to marry the belle of another village. It was in the dead of winter and the groom's party went over to the wedding in sledges. Peter and Pavel drove in the groom's sledge, and six sledges followed with all his relatives and friends.

After the ceremony at the church, the party went to a dinner given by the parents of the bride. The dinner lasted all afternoon; then it became a supper and continued far into the night. There was much dancing and drinking. At midnight the parents of the bride said good-bye to her and blessed her. The groom took her up in his arms and carried her out to his sledge and tucked her under the blankets. He sprang in beside her, and Pavel and Peter (our Pavel and Peter!) took the front seat. Pavel drove. The party set out with singing and the jingle of sleigh-bells, the groom's sledge going first. All the drivers were more or less the worse for merry-making, and the groom was absorbed in his bride.

The wolves were bad that winter, and everyone knew it, yet when they heard the first wolf-cry, the drivers were not much alarmed. They had too much good food and drink inside them. The first howls were taken up and echoed and with quickening repetitions. The wolves were coming together. There was no moon, but the starlight was clear on the snow. A black drove came up over the hill behind the wedding party. The wolves ran like streaks of shadow; they looked no bigger than dogs, but there were hundreds of them.

Something happened to the hindmost sledge: the driver lost control—he was probably very drunk—the horses left the road, the sledge was caught in a clump of trees, and overturned. The occupants rolled out over the snow, and the fleetest of the wolves sprang upon them. The shrieks that followed made everybody sober. The drivers stood up and lashed their horses. The groom had the best team and his sledge was lightest—all the others carried from six to a dozen people.

Another driver lost control. The screams of the horses were more terrible to hear than the cries of the men and women. Nothing seemed to check the wolves. It was hard to tell what was happening in the rear; the people who were falling behind shrieked as piteously as those who were already lost. The little bride hid her face on the groom's shoulder and sobbed. Pavel sat still and watched his horses. The road was clear and white, and the groom's three blacks went like the wind. It was only necessary to be calm and to guide them carefully.

At length, as they breasted a long hill, Peter rose cautiously and looked back. 'There are only three sledges left,' he whispered.

'And the wolves?' Pavel asked.

'Enough! Enough for all of us.'

Pavel reached the brow of the hill, but only two sledges followed him down the other side. In that moment on the hilltop, they saw behind them a whirling black group on the snow. Presently the groom screamed. He saw his father's sledge overturned, with his mother and sisters. He sprang up as if he meant to jump, but the girl shrieked and held him back. It was even then too late. The black ground-shadows were already crowding over the heap in the road, and one horse ran out

across the fields, his harness hanging to him, wolves at his heels. But the groom's movement had given Pavel an idea.

They were within a few miles of their village now. The only sledge left out of six was not very far behind them, and Pavel's middle horse was failing. Beside a frozen pond something happened to the other sledge; Peter saw it plainly. Three big wolves got abreast of the horses, and the horses went crazy. They tried to jump over each other, got tangled up in the harness, and overturned the sledge.

When the shrieking behind them died away, Pavel realized that he was alone upon the familiar road. 'They still come?' he asked Peter.

'Yes.'

'How many?'

'Twenty, thirty—enough.'

Now his middle horse was being almost dragged by the other two. Pavel gave Peter the reins and stepped carefully into the back of the sledge. He called to the groom that they must lighten—and pointed to the bride. The young man cursed him and held her tighter. Pavel tried to drag her away. In the struggle, the groom rose. Pavel knocked him over the side of the sledge and threw the girl after him. He said he never remembered exactly how he did it, or what happened afterward. Peter, crouching in the front seat, saw nothing. The first thing either of them noticed was a new sound that broke into the clear air, louder than they had ever heard it before—the bell of the monastery of their own village, ringing for early prayers.

Pavel and Peter drove into the village alone, and they had been alone ever since. They were run out of their village. Pavel's own mother would not look at him. They went away to strange towns, but when people learned where they came from, they were always asked if they knew the two men who had fed the bride to the wolves. Wherever they went, the story followed them. It took them five years to save money enough to come to America. They worked in Chicago, Des Moines, Fort Wayne, but they were always unfortunate. When Pavel's health grew so bad, they decided to try farming.

Pavel died a few days after he unburdened his mind to Mr. Shimerda, and was buried in the Norwegian graveyard. Peter sold off everything, and left the county—went to be cook in a railway construction camp where gangs of Russians were employed.

At his sale we bought Peter's wheelbarrow and some of his harness. During the auction he went about with his head down, and never lifted his eyes. He seemed not to care about anything. The Black Hawk money-lender who held mortgages on Peter's livestock was there, and he bought in the sale notes at about fifty cents on the dollar. Everyone said Peter kissed the cow before she was led away by her new owner. I did not see him do it, but this I know: after all his furniture and his cook-stove and pots and pans had been hauled off by the purchasers, when his house was stripped and bare, he sat down on the floor with his clasp-knife and ate all the melons that he had put away for winter. When Mr. Shimerda and Krajiek drove up in their wagon to take Peter to the train, they found him with a dripping beard, surrounded by heaps of melon rinds.

The loss of his two friends had a depressing effect upon old Mr. Shimerda. When he was out hunting, he used to go into the empty log house and sit there, brooding. This cabin was his hermitage until the winter snows penned him in his cave. For Antonia and me, the story of the wedding party was never at an end. We did not tell Pavel's secret to anyone, but guarded it jealously—as if the wolves of the Ukraine had gathered that night long ago, and the wedding party been sacrificed, to give us a painful and peculiar pleasure. At night, before I went to sleep, I often found myself in a sledge drawn by three horses, dashing through a country that looked something like Nebraska and something like Virginia.

9

The first snowfall came early in December. I remember how the world looked from our sitting-room window as I dressed behind the stove that morning: the low sky was like a sheet of metal; the blond cornfields had

faded out into ghostliness at last; the little pond was frozen under its stiff willow bushes. Big white flakes were whirling over everything and disappearing in the red grass.

Beyond the pond, on the slope that climbed to the cornfield, there was, faintly marked in the grass, a great circle where the Indians used to ride. Jake and Otto were sure that when they galloped round that ring the Indians tortured prisoners, bound to a stake in the centre; but grandfather thought they merely ran races or trained horses there. Whenever one looked at this slope against the setting sun, the circle showed like a pattern in the grass; and this morning, when the first light spray of snow lay over it, came out with wonderful distinctness, like strokes of Chinese white on canvas. The old figure stirred me as it had never done before and seemed a good omen for the winter.

As soon as the snow had packed hard, I began to drive about the country in a clumsy sleigh that Otto Fuchs made for me by fastening a wooden goods-box on bobs. Fuchs had been apprenticed to a cabinetmaker in the old country and was very handy with tools. He would have done a better job if I hadn't hurried him. My first trip was to the post-office, and the next day I went over to take Yulka and Ántonia for a sleigh-ride.

It was a bright, cold day. I piled straw and buffalo robes into the box, and took two hot bricks wrapped in old blankets. When I got to the Shimerdas', I did not go up to the house, but sat in my sleigh at the bottom of the draw and called. Ántonia and Yulka came running out, wearing little rabbit-skin hats their father had made for them. They had heard about my sledge from Ambrosch and knew why I had come. They tumbled in beside me and we set off toward the north, along a road that happened to be broken.

The sky was brilliantly blue, and the sunlight on the glittering white stretches of prairie was almost blinding. As Ántonia said, the whole world was changed by the snow; we kept looking in vain for familiar landmarks. The deep arroyo through which Squaw Creek wound was now only a cleft between snowdrifts—very blue when one looked down into it. The tree-tops that had been gold all the autumn were dwarfed and twisted, as if they would never have any life in them again. The few little cedars, which were so dull and dingy before, now stood out a strong, dusky green. The wind had the burning taste of fresh snow; my throat and nostrils smarted as if someone had opened a hartshorn bottle. The cold stung, and at the same time delighted one. My horse's breath rose like steam, and whenever we stopped he smoked all over. The cornfields got back a little of their colour under the dazzling light, and stood the palest possible gold in the sun and snow. All about us the snow was crusted in shallow terraces, with tracings like ripple-marks at the edges, curly waves that were the actual impression of the stinging lash in the wind.

The girls had on cotton dresses under their shawls; they kept shivering beneath the buffalo robes and hugging each other for warmth. But they were so glad to get away from their ugly cave and their mother's scolding that they begged me to go on and on, as far as Russian Peter's house. The great fresh open, after the stupefying warmth indoors, made them behave like wild things. They laughed and shouted, and said they never wanted to go home again. Couldn't we settle down and live in Russian Peter's house, Yulka asked, and couldn't I go to town and buy things for us to keep house with?

All the way to Russian Peter's we were extravagantly happy, but when we turned back—it must have been about four o'clock—the east wind grew stronger and began to howl; the sun lost its heartening power and the sky became grey and sombre. I took off my long woollen comforter and wound it around Yulka's throat. She got so cold that we made her hide her head under the buffalo robe. Ántonia and I sat erect, but I held the reins clumsily, and my eyes were blinded by the wind a good deal of the time. It was growing dark when we got to their house, but I refused to go in with them and get warm. I knew my hands would ache terribly if I went near a fire. Yulka forgot to give me back my comforter, and I had to drive home di-

rectly against the wind. The next day I came down with an attack of quinsy, which kept me in the house for nearly two weeks.

The basement kitchen seemed heavenly safe and warm in those days—like a tight little boat in a winter sea. The men were out in the fields all day, husking corn, and when they came in at noon, with long caps pulled down over their ears and their feet in red-lined overshoes, I used to think they were like Arctic explorers. In the afternoons, when grandmother sat upstairs darning, or making husking-gloves, I read 'The Swiss Family Robinson' aloud to her, and I felt that the Swiss family had no advantages over us in the way of an adventurous life. I was convinced that man's strongest antagonist is the cold. I admired the cheerful zest with which grandmother went about keeping us warm and comfortable and well-fed. She often reminded me, when she was preparing for the return of the hungry men, that this country was not like Virginia; and that here a cook had, as she said, 'very little to do with.' On Sundays she gave us as much chicken as we could eat, and on other days we had ham or bacon or sausage meat. She baked either pies or cake for us every day, unless, for a change, she made my favourite pudding, striped with currants and boiled in a bag.

Next to getting warm and keeping warm, dinner and supper were the most interesting things we had to think about. Our lives centred around warmth and food and the return of the men at nightfall. I used to wonder, when they came in tired from the fields, their feet numb and their hands cracked and sore, how they could do all the chores so conscientiously: feed and water and bed the horses, milk the cows, and look after the pigs. When supper was over, it took them a long while to get the cold out of their bones. While grandmother and I washed the dishes and grandfather read his paper upstairs, Jake and Otto sat on the long bench behind the stove, 'easing' their inside boots, or rubbing mutton tallow into their cracked hands.

Every Saturday night we popped corn or made taffy, and Otto Fuchs used to sing, 'For I Am a Cowboy and Know I've Done Wrong,' or 'Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairee.' He had a good baritone voice and always led the singing when we went to church services at the sod school-house.

I can still see those two men sitting on the bench; Otto's close-clipped head and Jake's shaggy hair slicked flat in front by a wet comb. I can see the sag of their tired shoulders against the whitewashed wall. What good fellows they were, how much they knew, and how many things they had kept faith with!

Fuchs had been a cowboy, a stage-driver, a bartender, a miner; had wandered all over that great Western country and done hard work everywhere, though, as grandmother said, he had nothing to show for it. Jake was duller than Otto. He could scarcely read, wrote even his name with difficulty, and he had a violent temper which sometimes made him behave like a crazy man—tore him all to pieces and actually made him ill. But he was so soft-hearted that anyone could impose upon him. If he, as he said, 'forgot himself' and swore before grandmother, he went about depressed and shamefaced all day. They were both of them jovial about the cold in winter and the heat in summer, always ready to work overtime and to meet emergencies. It was a matter of pride with them not to spare themselves. Yet they were the sort of men who never get on, somehow, or do anything but work hard for a dollar or two a day.

On those bitter, starlit nights, as we sat around the old stove that fed us and warmed us and kept us cheerful, we could hear the coyotes howling down by the corrals, and their hungry, wintry cry used to remind the boys of wonderful animal stories; about grey wolves and bears in the Rockies, wildcats and panthers in the Virginia mountains. Sometimes Fuchs could be persuaded to talk about the outlaws and desperate characters he had known. I remember one funny story about himself that made grandmother, who was working her bread on the breadboard, laugh until she wiped her eyes with her bare arm, her hands being floury. It was like this:

When Otto left Austria to come to America, he was asked by one of his relatives to look after a woman who was crossing on the same

boat, to join her husband in Chicago. The woman started off with two children, but it was clear that her family might grow larger on the journey. Fuchs said he 'got on fine with the kids,' and liked the mother, though she played a sorry trick on him. In mid-ocean she proceeded to have not one baby, but three! This event made Fuchs the object of undeserved notoriety, since he was travelling with her. The steerage stewardess was indignant with him, the doctor regarded him with suspicion. The first-cabin passengers, who made up a purse for the woman, took an embarrassing interest in Otto, and often enquired of him about his charge. When the triplets were taken ashore at New York, he had, as he said, 'to carry some of them.' The trip to Chicago was even worse than the ocean voyage. On the train it was very difficult to get milk for the babies and to keep their bottles clean. The mother did her best, but no woman, out of her natural resources, could feed three babies. The husband, in Chicago, was working in a furniture factory for modest wages, and when he met his family at the station he was rather crushed by the size of it. He, too, seemed to consider Fuchs in some fashion to blame. 'I was sure glad,' Otto concluded, 'that he didn't take his hard feeling out on that poor woman; but he had a sullen eye for me, all right! Now, did you ever hear of a young feller's having such hard luck, Mrs. Burden?'

Grandmother told him she was sure the Lord had remembered these things to his credit, and had helped him out of many a scrape when he didn't realize that he was being protected by Providence.

10

For several weeks after my sleigh-ride, we heard nothing from the Shimerdas. My sore throat kept me indoors, and grandmother had a cold which made the housework heavy for her. When Sunday came she was glad to have a day of rest. One night at supper Fuchs told us he had seen Mr. Shimerda out hunting.

'He's made himself a rabbit-skin cap, Jim, and a rabbit-skin collar that he buttons on outside his coat. They ain't got but one overcoat among 'em over there, and they take turns wearing it. They seem awful scared of cold, and stick in that hole in the bank like badgers.'

'All but the crazy boy,' Jake put in. 'He never wears the coat. Krajiek says he's turrible strong and can stand anything. I guess rabbits must be getting scarce in this locality. Ambrosch come along by the cornfield yesterday where I was at work and showed me three prairie dogs he'd shot. He asked me if they was good to eat. I spit and made a face and took on, to scare him, but he just looked like he was smarter'n me and put 'em back in his sack and walked off.'

Grandmother looked up in alarm and spoke to grandfather. 'Josiah, you don't suppose Krajiek would let them poor creatures eat prairie dogs, do you?'

'You had better go over and see our neighbours tomorrow, Emmaline,' he replied gravely.

Fuchs put in a cheerful word and said prairie dogs were clean beasts and ought to be good for food, but their family connections were against them. I asked what he meant, and he grinned and said they belonged to the rat family.

When I went downstairs in the morning, I found grandmother and Jake packing a hamper basket in the kitchen.

'Now, Jake,' grandmother was saying, 'if you can find that old rooster that got his comb froze, just give his neck a twist, and we'll take him along. There's no good reason why Mrs. Shimerda couldn't have got hens from her neighbours last fall and had a henhouse going by now. I reckon she was confused and didn't know where to begin. I've come strange to a new country myself, but I never forgot hens are a good thing to have, no matter what you don't have.'

'Just as you say, ma'am,' said Jake, 'but I hate to think of Krajiek getting a leg of that old rooster.' He tramped out through the long cellar and dropped the heavy door behind him.

After breakfast grandmother and Jake and I bundled ourselves up and climbed into the cold front wagon-seat. As we approached the

Shimerdas', we heard the frosty whine of the pump and saw Antonia, her head tied up and her cotton dress blown about her, throwing all her weight on the pump-handle as it went up and down. She heard our wagon, looked back over her shoulder, and, catching up her pail of water, started at a run for the hole in the bank.

Jake helped grandmother to the ground, saying he would bring the provisions after he had blanketed his horses. We went slowly up the icy path toward the door sunk in the drawside. Blue puffs of smoke came from the stovepipe that stuck out through the grass and snow, but the wind whisked them roughly away.

Mrs. Shimerda opened the door before we knocked and seized grandmother's hand. She did not say 'How do!' as usual, but at once began to cry, talking very fast in her own language, pointing to her feet which were tied up in rags, and looking about accusingly at everyone.

The old man was sitting on a stump behind the stove, crouching over as if he were trying to hide from us. Yulka was on the floor at his feet, her kitten in her lap. She peeped out at me and smiled, but, glancing up at her mother, hid again. Antonia was washing pans and dishes in a dark corner. The crazy boy lay under the only window, stretched on a gunny-sack stuffed with straw. As soon as we entered, he threw a grain-sack over the crack at the bottom of the door. The air in the cave was stifling, and it was very dark, too. A lighted lantern, hung over the stove, threw out a feeble yellow glimmer.

Mrs. Shimerda snatched off the covers of two barrels behind the door, and made us look into them. In one there were some potatoes that had been frozen and were rotting, in the other was a little pile of flour. Grandmother murmured something in embarrassment, but the Bohemian woman laughed scornfully, a kind of whinny-laugh, and, catching up an empty coffee-pot from the shelf, shook it at us with a look positively vindictive.

Grandmother went on talking in her polite Virginia way, not admitting their stark need or her own remissness, until Jake arrived with the hamper, as if in direct answer to Mrs. Shimerda's reproaches. Then the poor woman broke down. She dropped on the floor beside her crazy son, hid her face on her knees, and sat crying bitterly. Grandmother paid no heed to her, but called Antonia to come and help empty the basket. Tony left her corner reluctantly. I had never seen her crushed like this before.

'You do not mind my poor *mamenka,* Mrs. Burden. She is so sad,' she whispered, as she wiped her wet hands on her skirt and took the things grandmother handed her.

The crazy boy, seeing the food, began to make soft, gurgling noises and stroked his stomach. Jake came in again, this time with a sack of potatoes. Grandmother looked about in perplexity.

'Haven't you got any sort of cave or cellar outside, Antonia? This is no place to keep vegetables. How did your potatoes get frozen?'

'We get from Mr. Bushy, at the post-office —what he throw out. We got no potatoes, Mrs. Burden,' Tony admitted mournfully.

When Jake went out, Marek crawled along the floor and stuffed up the door-crack again. Then, quietly as a shadow, Mr. Shimerda came out from behind the stove. He stood brushing his hand over his smooth grey hair, as if he were trying to clear away a fog about his head. He was clean and neat as usual, with his green neckcloth and his coral pin. He took grandmother's arm and led her behind the stove, to the back of the room. In the rear wall was another little cave; a round hole, not much bigger than an oil barrel, scooped out in the black earth. When I got up on one of the stools and peered into it, I saw some quilts and a pile of straw. The old man held the lantern. 'Yulka,' he said in a low, despairing voice, 'Yulka; my Antonia!'

Grandmother drew back. 'You mean they sleep in there—your girls?' He bowed his head.

Tony slipped under his arm. 'It is very cold on the floor, and this is warm like the badger hole. I like for sleep there,' she insisted eagerly. 'My *mamenka* have nice bed, with pillows from our own geese in Bohemie. See, Jim?' She pointed to the narrow bunk which

Krajiek had built against the wall for himself before the Shimerdas came.

Grandmother sighed. 'Sure enough, where *would* you sleep, dear! I don't doubt you're warm there, you'll have a better house after while, Ántonia, and then you will forget these hard times.'

Mr. Shimerda made grandmother sit down on the only chair and pointed his wife to a stool beside her. Standing before them with his hand on Ántonia's shoulder, he talked in a low tone, and his daughter translated. He wanted us to know that they were not beggars in the old country; he made good wages, and his family were respected there. He left Bohemia with more than a thousand dollars in savings, after their passage money was paid. He had in some way lost on exchange in New York, and the railway fare to Nebraska was more than they had expected. By the time they paid Krajiek for the land, and bought his horses and oxen and some old farm machinery, they had very little money left. He wished grandmother to know, however, that he still had some money. If they could get through until spring came, they would buy a cow and chickens and plant a garden, and would then do very well. Ambrosch and Ántonia were both old enough to work in the fields, and they were willing to work. But the snow and the bitter weather had disheartened them all.

Ántonia explained that her father meant to build a new house for them in the spring; he and Ambrosch had already split the logs for it, but the logs were all buried in the snow, along the creek where they had been felled.

While grandmother encouraged and gave them advice, I sat down on the floor with Yulka and let her show me her kitten. Marek slid cautiously toward us and began to exhibit his webbed fingers. I knew he wanted to make his queer noises for me—to bark like a dog or whinny like a horse—but he did not dare in the presence of his elders. Marek was always trying to be agreeable, poor fellow, as if he had it on his mind that he must make up for his deficiencies.

Mrs. Shimerda grew more calm and reasonable before our visit was over, and, while Ántonia translated, put in a word now and then on her own account. The woman had a quick ear, and caught up phrases whenever she heard English spoken. As we rose to go, she opened her wooden chest and brought out a bag made of bed-ticking, about as long as a flour sack and half as wide, stuffed full of something. At sight of it, the crazy boy began to smack his lips. When Mrs. Shimerda opened the bag and stirred the contents with her hand, it gave out a salty, earthy smell, very pungent, even among the other odours of that cave. She measured a teacup full, tied it up in a bit of sacking, and presented it ceremoniously to grandmother.

'For cook,' she announced. 'Little now; be very much when cook,' spreading out her hands as if to indicate that the pint would swell to a gallon. 'Very good. You no have in this country. All things for eat better in my country.'

'Maybe so, Mrs. Shimerda,' grandmother said dryly. 'I can't say but I prefer our bread to yours, myself.'

Ántonia undertook to explain. 'This very good, Mrs. Burden'—she clasped her hands as if she could not express how good—'it make very much when you cook, like what my mama say. Cook with rabbit, cook with chicken, in the gravy—oh, so good!'

All the way home grandmother and Jake talked about how easily good Christian people could forget they were their brothers' keepers.

'I will say, Jake, some of our brothers and sisters are hard to keep. Where's a body to begin, with these people? They're wanting in everything, and most of all in horse-sense. Nobody can give 'em that, I guess. Jimmy, here, is about as able to take over a homestead as they are. Do you reckon that boy Ambrosch has any real push in him?'

'He's a worker, all right, ma'am, and he's got some ketch-on about him; but he's a mean one. Folks can be mean enough to get on in this world; and then, ag'in, they can be too mean.'

That night, while grandmother was getting supper, we opened the package Mrs. Shimerda had given her. It was full of little brown chips that looked like the shavings of some

root. They were as light as feathers, and the most noticeable thing about them was their penetrating, earthy odour. We could not determine whether they were animal or vegetable.

'They might be dried meat from some queer beast, Jim. They ain't dried fish, and they never grew on stalk or vine. I'm afraid of 'em. Anyhow, I shouldn't want to eat anything that had been shut up for months with old clothes and goose pillows.'

She threw the package into the stove, but I bit off a corner of one of the chips I held in my hand, and chewed it tentatively. I never forgot the strange taste; though it was many years before I knew that those little brown shavings, which the Shimerdas had brought so far and treasured so jealously, were dried mushrooms. They had been gathered, probably, in some deep Bohemian forest. . . .

11

During the week before Christmas, Jake was the most important person of our household, for he was to go to town and do all our Christmas shopping. But on the twenty-first of December, the snow began to fall. The flakes came down so thickly that from the sitting-room windows I could not see beyond the windmill—its frame looked dim and grey, unsubstantial like a shadow. The snow did not stop falling all day, or during the night that followed. The cold was not severe, but the storm was quiet and resistless. The men could not go farther than the barns and corral. They sat about the house most of the day as if it were Sunday; greasing their boots, mending their suspenders, plaiting whiplashes.

On the morning of the twenty-second, grandfather announced at breakfast that it would be impossible to go to Black Hawk for Christmas purchases. Jake was sure he could get through on horseback, and bring home our things in saddle-bags; but grandfather told him the roads would be obliterated, and a newcomer in the country would be lost ten times over. Anyway, he would never allow one of his horses to be put to such a strain.

We decided to have a country Christmas, without any help from town. I had wanted to get some picture books for Yulka and Antonia; even Yulka was able to read a little now. Grandmother took me into the ice-cold storeroom, where she had some bolts of gingham and sheeting. She cut squares of cotton cloth and we sewed them together into a book. We bound it between pasteboards, which I covered with brilliant calico, representing scenes from a circus. For two days I sat at the dining-room table, pasting this book full of pictures for Yulka. We had files of those good old family magazines which used to publish coloured lithographs of popular paintings, and I was allowed to use some of these. I took 'Napoleon Announcing the Divorce to Josephine' for my frontispiece. On the white pages I grouped Sunday-School cards and advertising cards which I had brought from my 'old country.' Fuchs got out the old candle-moulds and made tallow candles. Grandmother hunted up her fancy cake-cutters and baked gingerbread men and roosters, which we decorated with burnt sugar and red cinnamon drops.

On the day before Christmas, Jake packed the things we were sending to the Shimerdas in his saddle bags and set off on grandfather's grey gelding. When he mounted his horse at the door, I saw that he had a hatchet slung to his belt, and he gave grandmother a meaning look which told me he was planning a surprise for me. That afternoon I watched long and eagerly from the sitting-room window. At last I saw a dark spot moving on the west hill, beside the half-buried cornfield, where the sky was taking on a coppery flush from the sun that did not quite break through. I put on my cap and ran out to meet Jake. When I got to the pond, I could see that he was bringing in a little cedar tree across his pommel. He used to help my father cut Christmas trees for me in Virginia, and he had not forgotten how much I liked them.

By the time we had placed the cold, fresh-smelling little tree in a corner of the sitting-room, it was already Christmas Eve. After supper we all gathered there, and even grandfather, reading his paper by the table, looked up with friendly interest now and

then. The cedar was about five feet high and very shapely. We hung it with the gingerbread animals, strings of popcorn, and bits of candle which Fuchs had fitted into pasteboard sockets. Its real splendours, however, came from the most unlikely place in the world—from Otto's cowboy trunk. I had never seen anything in that trunk but old boots and spurs and pistols, and a fascinating mixture of yellow leather thongs, cartridges, and shoemaker's wax. From under the lining he now produced a collection of brilliantly coloured paper figures, several inches high and stiff enough to stand alone. They had been sent to him year after year, by his old mother in Austria. There was a bleeding heart, in tufts of paper lace; there were the three kings, gorgeously apparelled, and the ox and the ass and the shepherds; there was the Baby in the manger, and a group of angels, singing; there were camels and leopards, held by the black slaves of the three kings. Our tree became the talking tree of the fairy tale; legends and stories nestled like birds in its branches. Grandmother said it reminded her of the Tree of Knowledge. We put sheets of cotton wool under it for a snow-field, and Jake's pocket-mirror for a frozen lake.

I can see them now, exactly as they looked, working about the table in the lamplight: Jake with his heavy features, so rudely moulded that his face seemed, somehow, unfinished; Otto with his half-ear and the savage scar that made his upper lip curl so ferociously under his twisted moustache. As I remember them, what unprotected faces they were; their very roughness and violence made them defenceless. These boys had no practised manner behind which they could retreat and hold people at a distance. They had only their hard fists to batter at the world with. Otto was already one of those drifting, case-hardened labourers who never marry or have children of their own. Yet he was so fond of children!

12

On Christmas morning, when I got down to the kitchen, the men were just coming in from their morning chores—the horses and pigs always had their breakfast before we did. Jake and Otto shouted 'Merry Christmas!' to me, and winked at each other when they saw the waffle-irons on the stove. Grandfather came down, wearing a white shirt and his Sunday coat. Morning prayers were longer than usual. He read the chapters from Saint Matthew about the birth of Christ, and as we listened, it all seemed like something that had happened lately, and near at hand. In his prayer he thanked the Lord for the first Christmas, and for all that it had meant to the world ever since. He gave thanks for our food and comfort, and prayed for the poor and destitute in great cities, where the struggle for life was harder than it was here with us. Grandfather's prayers were often very interesting. He had the gift of simple and moving expression. Because he talked so little, his words had a peculiar force; they were not worn dull from constant use. His prayers reflected what he was thinking about at the time, and it was chiefly through them that we got to know his feelings and his views about things.

After we sat down to our waffles and sausage, Jake told us how pleased the Shimerdas had been with their presents; even Ambrosch was friendly and went to the creek with him to cut the Christmas tree. It was a soft grey day outside, with heavy clouds working across the sky, and occasional squalls of snow. There were always odd jobs to be done about the barn on holidays, and the men were busy until afternoon. Then Jake and I played dominoes, while Otto wrote a long letter home to his mother. He always wrote to her on Christmas Day, he said, no matter where he was, and no matter how long it had been since his last letter. All afternoon he sat in the dining-room. He would write for a while, then sit idle, his clenched fist lying on the table, his eyes following the pattern of the oilcloth. He spoke and wrote his own language so seldom that it came to him awkwardly. His effort to remember entirely absorbed him.

At about four o'clock a visitor appeared: Mr. Shimerda, wearing his rabbit-skin cap and collar, and new mittens his wife had knitted. He had come to thank us for the

presents, and for all grandmother's kindness to his family. Jake and Otto joined us from the basement and we sat about the stove, enjoying the deepening grey of the winter afternoon and the atmosphere of comfort and security in my grandfather's house. This feeling seemed completely to take possession of Mr. Shimerda. I suppose; in the crowded clutter of their cave, the old man had come to believe that peace and order had vanished from the earth, or existed only in the old world he had left so far behind. He sat still and passive, his head resting against the back of the wooden rocking-chair, his hands relaxed upon the arms. His face had a look of weariness and pleasure, like that of sick people when they feel relief from pain. Grandmother insisted on his drinking a glass of Virginia apple-brandy after his long walk in the cold, and when a faint flush came up in his cheeks, his features might have been cut out of a shell, they were so transparent. He said almost nothing, and smiled rarely; but as he rested there we all had a sense of his utter content.

As it grew dark, I asked whether I might light the Christmas tree before the lamp was brought. When the candle-ends sent up their conical yellow flames, all the coloured figures from Austria stood out clear and full of meaning against the green boughs. Mr. Shimerda rose, crossed himself, and quietly knelt down before the tree, his head sunk forward. His long body formed a letter 'S.' I saw grandmother look apprehensively at grandfather. He was rather narrow in religious matters, and sometimes spoke out and hurt people's feelings. There had been nothing strange about the tree before, but now, with someone kneeling before it—images, candles . . . Grandfather merely put his finger-tips to his brow and bowed his venerable head, thus Protestantizing the atmosphere.

We persuaded our guest to stay for supper with us. He needed little urging. As we sat down to the table, it occurred to me that he liked to look at us, and that our faces were open books to him. When his deep seeing eyes rested on me, I felt as if he were looking far ahead into the future for me, down the road I would have to travel.

At nine o'clock, Mr. Shimerda lighted one of our lanterns and put on his overcoat and fur collar. He stood in the little entry hall, the lantern and his fur cap under his arm, shaking hands with us. When he took grandmother's hand, he bent over it as he always did, and said slowly, 'Good wo-man!' He made the sign of the cross over me, put on his cap and went off in the dark. As we turned back to the sitting-room, grandfather looked at me searchingly. 'The prayers of all good people are good,' he said quietly.

13

The week following Christmas brought in a thaw, and by New Year's Day all the world about us was a broth of grey slush, and the guttered slope between the windmill and the barn was running black water. The soft black earth stood out in patches along the roadsides. I resumed all my chores, carried in the cobs and wood and water, and spent the afternoons at the barn, watching Jake shell corn with a hand-sheller.

One morning, during this interval of fine weather, Ántonia and her mother rode over on one of their shaggy old horses to pay us a visit. It was the first time Mrs. Shimerda had been to our house, and she ran about examining our carpets and curtains and furniture, all the while commenting upon them to her daughter in an envious, complaining tone. In the kitchen she caught up an iron pot that stood on the back of the stove and said: 'You got many, Shimerdas no got.' I thought it weak-minded of grandmother to give the pot to her.

After dinner, when she was helping to wash the dishes, she said, tossing her head: 'You got many things for cook. If I got all things like you, I make much better.'

She was a conceited, boastful old thing, and even misfortune could not humble her. I was so annoyed that I felt coldly even toward Ántonia and listened unsympathetically when she told me her father was not well.

'My papa sad for the old country. He not look good. He never make music any more. At home he play violin all the time; for weddings and for dance. Here never. When I beg him for play, he shake his head no. Some days he take his violin out of his box and make with his fingers on the strings, like this, but never he make the music. He don't like this kawn-tree.'

'People who don't like this country ought to stay home,' I said severely. 'We don't make them come here.'

'He not want to come, nev-erl' she burst out. 'My *mamenka* make him come. All the time she say: "America big country; much money, much land for my boys, much husband for my girls." My papa, he cry for leave his old friends what make music with him. He love very much the man what play the long horn like this'—she indicated a slide trombone. 'They go to school together and are friends from boys. But my mama, she want Ambrosch for be rich, with many cattle.'

'Your mama,' I said angrily, 'wants other people's things.'

'Your grandfather is rich,' she retorted fiercely. 'Why he not help my papa? Ambrosch be rich, too, after while, and he pay back. He is very smart boy. For Ambrosch my mama come here.'

Ambrosch was considered the important person in the family. Mrs. Shimerda and Ántonia always deferred to him, though he was often surly with them and contemptuous toward his father. Ambrosch and his mother had everything their own way. Though Ántonia loved her father more than she did anyone else, she stood in awe of her elder brother.

After I watched Ántonia and her mother go over the hill on their miserable horse, carrying our iron pot with them, I turned to grandmother, who had taken up her darning, and said I hoped that snooping old woman wouldn't come to see us any more.

Grandmother chuckled and drove her bright needle across a hole in Otto's sock. 'She's not old, Jim, though I expect she seems old to you. No, I wouldn't mourn if she never came again. But, you see, a body never knows what traits poverty might bring out in 'em. It makes a woman grasping to see her children want for things. Now read me a chapter in "The Prince of the House of David." Let's forget the Bohemians.'

We had three weeks of this mild, open weather. The cattle in the corral ate corn almost as fast as the men could shell it for them, and we hoped they would be ready for an early market. One morning the two big bulls, Gladstone and Brigham Young, thought spring had come, and they began to tease and butt at each other across the barbed wire that separated them. Soon they got angry. They bellowed and pawed up the soft earth with their hoofs, rolling their eyes and tossing their heads. Each withdrew to a far corner of his own corral, and then they made for each other at a gallop. Thud, thud, we could hear the impact of their great heads, and their bellowing shook the pans on the kitchen shelves. Had they not been dehorned, they would have torn each other to pieces. Pretty soon the fat steers took it up and began butting and horning each other. Clearly, the affair had to be stopped. We all stood by and watched admiringly while Fuchs rode into the corral with a pitchfork and prodded the bulls again and again, finally driving them apart.

The big storm of the winter began on my eleventh birthday, the twentieth of January. When I went down to breakfast that morning, Jake and Otto came in white as snowmen, beating their hands and stamping their feet. They began to laugh boisterously when they saw me, calling:

'You've got a birthday present this time, Jim, and no mistake. They was a full-grown blizzard ordered for you.'

All day the storm went on. The snow did not fall this time, it simply spilled out of heaven, like thousands of feather-beds being emptied. That afternoon the kitchen was a carpenter-shop; the men brought in their tools and made two great wooden shovels with long handles. Neither grandmother nor I could go out in the storm, so Jake fed the chickens and brought in a pitiful contribution of eggs.

Next day our men had to shovel until noon

to reach the barn—and the snow was still falling! There had not been such a storm in the ten years my grandfather had lived in Nebraska. He said at dinner that we would not try to reach the cattle—they were fat enough to go without their corn for a day or two; but tomorrow we must feed them and thaw out their water-tap so that they could drink. We could not so much as see the corrals, but we knew the steers were over there, huddled together under the north bank. Our ferocious bulls, subdued enough by this time, were probably warming each other's backs. 'This'll take the bile out of 'em!' Fuchs remarked gleefully.

At noon that day the hens had not been heard from. After dinner Jake and Otto, their damp clothes now dried on them, stretched their stiff arms and plunged again into the drifts. They made a tunnel through the snow to the hen-house, with walls so solid that grandmother and I could walk back and forth in it. We found the chickens asleep; perhaps they thought night had come to stay. One old rooster was stirring about, pecking at the solid lump of ice in their water-tin. When we flashed the lantern in their eyes, the hens set up a great cackling and flew about clumsily, scattering down-feathers. The mottled, pin-headed guinea-hens, always resentful of captivity, ran screeching out into the tunnel and tried to poke their ugly, painted faces through the snow walls. By five o'clock the chores were done—just when it was time to begin them all over again! That was a strange, unnatural sort of day.

14

On the morning of the twenty-second I wakened with a start. Before I opened my eyes, I seemed to know that something had happened. I heard excited voices in the kitchen—grandmother's was so shrill that I knew she must be almost beside herself. I looked forward to any new crisis with delight. What could it be, I wondered, as I hurried into my clothes. Perhaps the barn had burned; perhaps the cattle had frozen to death; perhaps a neighbour was lost in the storm!

Down in the kitchen grandfather was standing before the stove with his hands behind him. Jake and Otto had taken off their boots and were rubbing their woollen socks. Their clothes and boots were steaming, and they both looked exhausted. On the bench behind the stove lay a man, covered up with a blanket. Grandmother motioned me to the dining-room. I obeyed reluctantly. I watched her as she came and went, carrying dishes. Her lips were tightly compressed and she kept whispering to herself: 'Oh, dear Saviour!' 'Lord, Thou knowest!'

Presently grandfather came in and spoke to me: 'Jimmy, we will not have prayers this morning, because we have a great deal to do. Old Mr. Shimerda is dead, and his family are in great distress. Ambrosch came over here in the middle of the night, and Jake and Otto went back with him. The boys have had a hard night, and you must not bother them with questions. That is Ambrosch, asleep on the bench. Come in to breakfast, boys.'

After Jake and Otto had swallowed their first cup of coffee, they began to talk excitedly, disregarding grandmother's warning glances. I held my tongue, but I listened with all my ears.

'No, sir,' Fuchs said in answer to a question from grandfather, 'nobody heard the gun go off. Ambrosch was out with the ox-team, trying to break a road, and the women-folks was shut up tight in their cave. When Ambrosch come in, it was dark and he didn't see nothing, but the oxen acted kind of queer. One of 'em ripped around and got away from him—bolted clean out of the stable. His hands is blistered where the rope run through. He got a lantern and went back and found the old man, just as we seen him.'

'Poor soul, poor soul!' grandmother groaned. 'I'd like to think he never done it. He was always considerate and un-wishful to give trouble. How could he forget himself and bring this on us!'

'I don't think he was out of his head for a minute, Mrs. Burden,' Fuchs declared. 'He done everything natural. You know he was always sort of fixy, and fixy he was to the last. He shaved after dinner, and washed hisself all over after the girls had done the dishes.

Ántonia heated the water for him. Then he put on a clean shirt and clean socks, and after he was dressed he kissed her and the little one and took his gun and said he was going out to hunt rabbits. He must have gone right down to the barn and done it then. He layed down on that bunk-bed, close to the ox stalls, where he always slept. When we found him, everything was decent except'—Fuchs wrinkled his brow and hesitated—'except what he couldn't nowise foresee. His coat was hung on a peg, and his boots was under the bed. He'd took off that silk neckcloth he always wore, and folded it smooth and stuck his pin through it. He turned back his shirt at the neck and rolled up his sleeves.'

'I don't see how he could do it!' grandmother kept saying.

Otto misunderstood her. 'Why, ma'am, it was simple enough; he pulled the trigger with his big toe. He layed over on his side and put the end of the barrel in his mouth, then he drew up one foot and felt for the trigger. He found it all right!'

'Maybe he did,' said Jake grimly. 'There's something mighty queer about it.'

'Now what do you mean, Jake?' grandmother asked sharply.

'Well, ma'am, I found Krajiek's axe under the manger, and I picks it up and carries it over to the corpse, and I take my oath it just fit the gash in the front of the old man's face. That there Krajiek had been sneakin' round, pale and quiet, and when he seen me examinin' the axe, he begun whimperin', "My God, man, don't do that!" "I reckon I'm a-goin' to look into this," says I. Then he begun to squeal like a rat and run about wringin' his hands. "They'll hang me!" says he. "My God, they'll hang me sure!" '

Fuchs spoke up impatiently. 'Krajiek's gone silly, Jake, and so have you. The old man wouldn't have made all them preparations for Krajiek to murder him, would he? It don't hang together. The gun was right beside him when Ambrosch found him.'

'Krajiek could 'a' put it there, couldn't he?' Jake demanded.

Grandmother broke in excitedly: 'See here, Jake Marpole, don't you go trying to add murder to suicide. We're deep enough in trouble. Otto reads you too many of them detective stories.'

'It will be easy to decide all that, Emmaline,' said grandfather quietly. 'If he shot himself in the way they think, the gash will be torn from the inside outward.'

'Just so it is, Mr. Burden,' Otto affirmed, 'I seen bunches of hair and stuff sticking to the poles and straw along the roof. They was blown up there by gunshot, no question.'

Grandmother told grandfather she meant to go over to the Shimerdas' with him.

'There is nothing you can do,' he said doubtfully. 'The body can't be touched until we get the coroner here from Black Hawk, and that will be a matter of several days, this weather.'

'Well, I can take them some victuals, anyway, and say a word of comfort to them poor little girls. The oldest one was his darling, and was like a right hand to him. He might have thought of her. He's left her alone in a hard world.' She glanced distrustfully at Ambrosch, who was now eating his breakfast at the kitchen table.

Fuchs, although he had been up in the cold nearly all night, was going to make the long ride to Black Hawk to fetch the priest and the coroner. On the grey gelding, our best horse, he would try to pick his way across the country with no roads to guide him.

'Don't you worry about me, Mrs. Burden,' he said cheerfully, as he put on a second pair of socks. 'I've got a good nose for directions, and I never did need much sleep. It's the grey I'm worried about. I'll save him what I can, but it'll strain him, as sure as I'm telling you!'

'This is no time to be over-considerate of animals, Otto; do the best you can for yourself. Stop at the Widow Steavens's for dinner. She's a good woman, and she'll do well by you.'

After Fuchs rode away, I was left with Ambrosch. I saw a side of him I had not seen before. He was deeply, even slavishly, devout. He did not say a word all morning, but sat with his rosary in his hands, praying, now silently, now aloud. He never looked away from his beads, nor lifted his hands except to

cross himself. Several times the poor boy fell asleep where he sat, wakened with a start, and began to pray again.

No wagon could be got to the Shimerdas' until a road was broken, and that would be a day's job. Grandfather came from the barn on one of our big black horses, and Jake lifted grandmother up behind him. She wore her black hood and was bundled up in shawls. Grandfather tucked his bushy white beard inside his overcoat. They looked very Biblical as they set off, I thought. Jake and Ambrosch followed them, riding the other black and my pony, carrying bundles of clothes that we had got together for Mrs. Shimerda. I watched them go past the pond and over the hill by the drifted cornfield. Then, for the first time, I realized that I was alone in the house.

I felt a considerable extension of power and authority, and was anxious to acquit myself creditably. I carried in cobs and wood from the long cellar, and filled both the stoves. I remembered that in the hurry and excitement of the morning nobody had thought of the chickens, and the eggs had not been gathered. Going out through the tunnel, I gave the hens their corn, emptied the ice from their drinking-pan, and filled it with water. After the cat had had his milk, I could think of nothing else to do, and I sat down to get warm. The quiet was delightful, and the ticking clock was the most pleasant of companions. I got 'Robinson Crusoe' and tried to read, but his life on the island seemed dull compared with ours. Presently, as I looked with satisfaction about our comfortable sitting-room, it flashed upon me that if Mr. Shimerda's soul were lingering about in this world at all, it would be here, in our house, which had been more to his liking than any other in the neighbourhood. I remembered his contented face when he was with us on Christmas Day. If he could have lived with us, this terrible thing would never have happened.

I knew it was homesickness that had killed Mr. Shimerda, and I wondered whether his released spirit would not eventually find its way back to his own country. I thought of how far it was to Chicago, and then to Virginia, to Baltimore—and then the great wintry ocean. No, he would not at once set out upon that long journey. Surely, his exhausted spirit, so tired of cold and crowding and the struggle with the ever-falling snow, was resting now in this quiet house.

I was not frightened, but I made no noise. I did not wish to disturb him. I went softly down to the kitchen which, tucked away so snugly underground, always seemed to me the heart and centre of the house. There, on the bench behind the stove, I thought and thought about Mr. Shimerda. Outside I could hear the wind singing over hundreds of miles of snow. It was as if I had let the old man in out of the tormenting winter, and were sitting there with him. I went over all that Ántonia had ever told me about his life before he came to this country; how he used to play the fiddle at weddings and dances. I thought about the friends he had mourned to leave, the trombone-player, the great forest full of game—belonging, as Ántonia said, to the 'nobles'—from which she and her mother used to steal wood on moonlight nights. There was a white hart that lived in that forest, and if anyone killed it, he would be hanged, she said. Such vivid pictures came to me that they might have been Mr. Shimerda's memories, not yet faded out from the air in which they had haunted him.

It had begun to grow dark when my household returned, and grandmother was so tired that she went at once to bed. Jake and I got supper, and while we were washing the dishes he told me in loud whispers about the state of things over at the Shimerdas'. Nobody could touch the body until the coroner came. If anyone did, something terrible would happen, apparently. The dead man was frozen through, 'just as stiff as a dressed turkey you hang out to freeze,' Jake said. The horses and oxen would not go into the barn until he was frozen so hard that there was no longer any smell of blood. They were stabled there now, with the dead man, because there was no other place to keep them. A lighted lantern was kept hanging over Mr. Shimerda's head. Ántonia and Ambrosch and the mother took turns going down to pray beside him. The crazy boy went with them,

because he did not feel the cold. I believed he felt cold as much as anyone else, but he liked to be thought insensible to it. He was always coveting distinction, poor Marek!

Ambrosch, Jake said, showed more human feeling than he would have supposed him capable of; but he was chiefly concerned about getting a priest, and about his father's soul, which he believed was in a place of torment and would remain there until his family and the priest had prayed a great deal for him. 'As I understand it,' Jake concluded, 'it will be a matter of years to pray his soul out of Purgatory, and right now he's in torment.'

'I don't believe it,' I said stoutly. 'I almost know it isn't true.' I did not, of course, say that I believed he had been in that very kitchen all afternoon, on his way back to his own country. Nevertheless, after I went to bed, this idea of punishment and Purgatory came back on me crushingly. I remembered the account of Dives in torment, and shuddered. But Mr. Shimerda had not been rich and selfish; he had only been so unhappy that he could not live any longer.

15

Otto Fuchs got back from Black Hawk at noon the next day. He reported that the coroner would reach the Shimerdas' sometime that afternoon, but the missionary priest was at the other end of his parish, a hundred miles away, and the trains were not running. Fuchs had got a few hours' sleep at the livery barn in town, but he was afraid the grey gelding had strained himself. Indeed, he was never the same horse afterward. That long trip through the deep snow had taken all the endurance out of him.

Fuchs brought home with him a stranger, a young Bohemian who had taken a homestead near Black Hawk, and who came on his only horse to help his fellow countrymen in their trouble. That was the first time I ever saw Anton Jelinek. He was a strapping young fellow in the early twenties then, handsome, warm-hearted, and full of life, and he came to us like a miracle in the midst of that grim business. I remember exactly how he strode into the kitchen in his felt boots and long wolfskin coat, his eyes and cheeks bright with the cold. At sight of grandmother, he snatched off his fur cap, greeting her in a deep, rolling voice which seemed older than he.

'I want to thank you very much, Mrs. Burden, for that you are so kind to poor strangers from my kawn-tree.'

He did not hesitate like a farmer boy, but looked one eagerly in the eye when he spoke. Everything about him was warm and spontaneous. He said he would have come to see the Shimerdas before, but he had hired out to husk corn all the fall, and since winter began he had been going to the school by the mill, to learn English, along with the little children. He told me he had a nice 'lady-teacher' and that he liked to go to school.

At dinner grandfather talked to Jelinek more than he usually did to strangers.

'Will they be much disappointed because we cannot get a priest?' he asked.

Jelinek looked serious.

'Yes, sir, that is very bad for them. Their father has done a great sin'—he looked straight at grandfather. 'Our Lord has said that.'

Grandfather seemed to like his frankness.

'We believe that, too, Jelinek. But we believe that Mr. Shimerda's soul will come to its Creator as well off without a priest. We believe that Christ is our only intercessor.'

The young man shook his head. 'I know how you think. My teacher at the school has explain. But I have seen too much. I believe in prayer for the dead. I have seen too much.'

We asked him what he meant.

He glanced around the table. 'You want I shall tell you? When I was a little boy like this one, I begin to help the priest at the altar. I make my first communion very young; what the Church teach seem plain to me. By 'n' by wartimes come, when the Prussians fight us. We have very many soldiers in camp near my village, and the cholera break out in that camp, and the men die like flies. All day long our priest go about there to give the Sacrament to dying men, and I go with him to carry the vessels with the Holy Sacrament. Everybody that go near that camp

catch the sickness but me and the priest. But we have no sickness, we have no fear, because we carry that blood and that body of Christ, and it preserve us.' He paused, looking at grandfather. 'That I know, Mr. Burden, for it happened to myself. All the soldiers know, too. When we walk along the road, the old priest and me, we meet all the time soldiers marching and officers on horse. All those officers, when they see what I carry under the cloth, pull up their horses and kneel down on the ground in the road until we pass. So I feel very bad for my kawntree-man to die without the Sacrament, and to die in a bad way for his soul, and I feel sad for his family.'

We had listened attentively. It was impossible not to admire his frank, manly faith.

'I am always glad to meet a young man who thinks seriously about these things,' said grandfather, 'and I would never be the one to say you were not in God's care when you were among the soldiers.'

After dinner it was decided that young Jelinek should hook our two strong black farm-horses to the scraper and break a road through to the Shimerdas', so that a wagon could go when it was necessary. Fuchs, who was the only cabinet-maker in the neighbourhood, was set to work on a coffin.

Jelinek put on his long wolfskin coat, and when we admired it, he told us that he had shot and skinned the coyotes, and the young man who 'batched' with him, Jan Bouska, who had been a fur-worker in Vienna, made the coat. From the windmill I watched Jelinek come out of the barn with the blacks, and work his way up the hillside toward the cornfield. Sometimes he was completely hidden by the clouds of snow that rose about him; then he and the horses would emerge black and shining.

Our heavy carpenter's bench had to be brought from the barn and carried down into the kitchen. Fuchs selected boards from a pile of planks grandfather had hauled out from town in the fall to make a new floor for the oats-bin. When at last the lumber and tools were assembled, and the doors were closed again and the cold draughts shut out, grandfather rode away to meet the coroner at the Shimerdas', and Fuchs took off his coat and settled down to work. I sat on his work-table and watched him. He did not touch his tools at first, but figured for a long while on a piece of paper, and measured the planks and made marks on them. While he was thus engaged, he whistled softly to himself, or teasingly pulled at his half-ear. Grandmother moved about quietly, so as not to disturb him. At last he folded his ruler and turned a cheerful face to us.

'The hardest part of my job's done,' he announced. 'It's the head end of it that comes hard with me, especially when I'm out of practice. The last time I made one of these, Mrs. Burden,' he continued, as he sorted and tried his chisels, 'was for a fellow in the Black Tiger Mine, up above Silverton, Colorado. The mouth of that mine goes right into the face of the cliff, and they used to put us in a bucket and run us over on a trolley and shoot us into the shaft. The bucket travelled across a box cañon three hundred feet deep, and about a third full of water. Two Swedes had fell out of that bucket once, and hit the water, feet down. If you'll believe it, they went to work the next day. You can't kill a Swede. But in my time a little Eyetalian tried the high dive, and it turned out different with him. We was snowed in then, like we are now, and I happened to be the only man in camp that could make a coffin for him. It's a handy thing to know when you knock about like I've done.'

'We'd be hard put to it now, if you didn't know, Otto,' grandmother said.

'Yes, 'm,' Fuchs admitted with modest pride. 'So few folks does know how to make a good tight box that'll turn water. I sometimes wonder if there'll be anybody about to do it for me. However, I'm not at all particular that way.'

All afternoon, wherever one went in the house, one could hear the panting wheeze of the saw or the pleasant purring of the plane. They were such cheerful noises, seeming to promise new things for living people: it was a pity that those freshly planed pine boards were to be put underground so soon. The lumber was hard to work because it was full of frost, and the boards gave off a sweet smell

of pine woods, as the heap of yellow shavings grew higher and higher. I wondered why Fuchs had not stuck to cabinet-work, he settled down to it with such ease and content. He handled the tools as if he liked the feel of them; and when he planed, his hands went back and forth over the boards in an eager, beneficent way as if he were blessing them. He broke out now and then into German hymns, as if this occupation brought back old times to him.

At four o'clock Mr. Bushy, the postmaster, with another neighbour who lived east of us, stopped in to get warm. They were on their way to the Shimerdas'. The news of what had happened over there had somehow got abroad through the snow-blocked country. Grandmother gave the visitors sugar-cakes and hot coffee. Before these callers were gone, the brother of the Widow Steavens, who lived on the Black Hawk road, drew up at our door, and after him came the father of the German family, our nearest neighbours on the south. They dismounted and joined us in the dining-room. They were all eager for any details about the suicide, and they were greatly concerned as to where Mr. Shimerda would be buried. The nearest Catholic cemetery was at Black Hawk, and it might be weeks before a wagon could get so far. Besides, Mr. Bushy and grandmother were sure that a man who had killed himself could not be buried in a Catholic graveyard. There was a burying ground over by the Norwegian church, west of Squaw Creek; perhaps the Norwegians would take Mr. Shimerda in.

After our visitors rode away in single file over the hill, we returned to the kitchen. Grandmother began to make the icing for a chocolate cake, and Otto again filled the house with the exciting, expectant song of the plane. One pleasant thing about this time was that everybody talked more than usual. I had never heard the postmaster say anything but 'Only papers, to-day,' or, 'I've got a sackful of mail for ye,' until this afternoon. Grandmother always talked, dear woman: to herself or to the Lord, if there was no one else to listen; but grandfather was naturally taciturn, and Jake and Otto were often so tired after supper that I used to feel as if I were surrounded by a wall of silence. Now everyone seemed eager to talk. That afternoon Fuchs told me story after story: about the Black Tiger Mine, and about violent deaths and casual buryings, and the queer fancies of dying men. You never really knew a man, he said, until you saw him die. Most men were game, and went without a grudge.

The postmaster, going home, stopped to say that grandfather would bring the coroner back with him to spend the night. The officers of the Norwegian church, he told us, had held a meeting and decided that the Norwegian graveyard could not extend its hospitality to Mr. Shimerda.

Grandmother was indignant. 'If these foreigners are so clannish, Mr. Bushy, we'll have to have an American graveyard that will be more liberal-minded. I'll get right after Josiah to start one in the spring. If anything was to happen to me, I don't want the Norwegians holding inquisitions over me to see whether I'm good enough to be laid amongst 'em.'

Soon grandfather returned, bringing with him Anton Jelinek, and that important person, the coroner. He was a mild, flurried old man, a Civil War veteran, with one sleeve hanging empty. He seemed to find this case very perplexing, and said if it had not been for grandfather he would have sworn out a warrant against Krajiek. 'The way he acted, and the way his axe fit the wound, was enough to convict any man.'

Although it was perfectly clear that Mr. Shimerda had killed himself, Jake and the coroner thought something ought to be done to Krajiek, because he behaved like a guilty man. He was badly frightened, certainly, and perhaps he even felt some stirrings of remorse for his indifference to the old man's misery and loneliness.

At supper the men ate like vikings, and the chocolate cake, which I had hoped would linger on until to-morrow in a mutilated condition, disappeared on the second round. They talked excitedly about where they should bury Mr. Shimerda; I gathered that the neighbours were all disturbed and shocked about something. It developed that Mrs. Shimerda and Ambrosch wanted the old man buried on the southwest corner of

their own land; indeed, under the very stake that marked the corner. Grandfather had explained to Ambrosch that some day, when the country was put under fence and the roads were confined to section lines, two roads would cross exactly on that corner. But Ambrosch only said, 'It makes no matter.'

Grandfather asked Jelinek whether in the old country there was some superstition to the effect that a suicide must be buried at the cross-roads.

Jelinek said he didn't know; he seemed to remember hearing there had once been such a custom in Bohemia. 'Mrs. Shimerda is made up her mind,' he added. 'I try to persuade her, and say it looks bad for her to all the neighbours; but she say so it must be. "There I will bury him, if I dig the grave myself," she say. I have to promise her I help Ambrosch make the grave tomorrow.'

Grandfather smoothed his beard and looked judicial. 'I don't know whose wish should decide the matter, if not hers. But if she thinks she will live to see the people of this country ride over that old man's head, she is mistaken.'

16

Mr. Shimerda lay dead in the barn four days, and on the fifth they buried him. All day Friday Jelinek was off with Ambrosch digging the grave, chopping out the frozen earth with old axes. On Saturday we breakfasted before daylight and got into the wagon with the coffin. Jake and Jelinek went ahead on horseback to cut the body loose from the pool of blood in which it was frozen fast to the ground.

When grandmother and I went into the Shimerdas' house, we found the women-folk alone; Ambrosch and Marek were at the barn. Mrs. Shimerda sat crouching by the stove, Antonia was washing dishes. When she saw me, she ran out of her dark corner and threw her arms around me. 'Oh, Jimmy,' she sobbed, 'what you tink for my lovely papa!' It seemed to me that I could feel her heart breaking as she clung to me.

Mrs. Shimerda, sitting on the stump by the stove, kept looking over her shoulder toward the door while the neighbours were arriving. They came on horseback, all except the postmaster, who brought his family in a wagon over the only broken wagon-trail. The Widow Steavens rode up from her farm eight miles down the Black Hawk road. The cold drove the women into the cave-house, and it was soon crowded. A fine, sleety snow was beginning to fall, and everyone was afraid of another storm and anxious to have the burial over with.

Grandfather and Jelinek came to tell Mrs. Shimerda that it was time to start. After bundling her mother up in clothes the neighbours had brought, Antonia put on an old cape from our house and the rabbit-skin hat her father had made for her. Four men carried Mr. Shimerda's box up the hill; Krajiek slunk along behind them. The coffin was too wide for the door, so it was put down on the slope outside. I slipped out from the cave and looked at Mr. Shimerda. He was lying on his side, with his knees drawn up. His body was draped in a black shawl, and his head was bandaged in white muslin. like a mummy's; one of his long, shapely hands lay out on the black cloth; that was all one could see of him.

Mrs. Shimerda came out and placed an open prayerbook against the body, making the sign of the cross on the bandaged head with her fingers. Ambrosch knelt down and made the same gesture, and after him Antonia and Marek. Yulka hung back. Her mother pushed her forward, and kept saying something to her over and over. Yulka knelt down, shut her eyes, and put out her hand a little way, but she drew it back and began to cry wildly. She was afraid to touch the bandage. Mrs. Shimerda caught her by the shoulders and pushed her toward the coffin, but grandmother interfered.

'No, Mrs. Shimerda,' she said firmly, 'I won't stand by and see that child frightened into spasms. She is too little to understand what you want of her. Let her alone.'

At a look from grandfather, Fuchs and Jelinek placed the lid on the box, and began to nail it down over Mr. Shimerda. I was afraid to look at Antonia. She put her arms round Yulka and held the little girl close to her.

The coffin was put into the wagon. We drove slowly away, against the fine, icy snow which cut our faces like a sand-blast. When we reached the grave, it looked a very little spot in that snow-covered waste. The men took the coffin to the edge of the hole and lowered it with ropes. We stood about watching them, and the powdery snow lay without melting on the caps and shoulders of the men and the shawls of the women. Jelinek spoke in a persuasive tone to Mrs. Shimerda, and then turned to grandfather.

'She says, Mr. Burden, she is very glad if you can make some prayer for him here in English, for the neighbours to understand.'

Grandmother looked anxiously at grandfather. He took off his hat, and the other men did likewise. I thought his prayer remarkable. I still remember it. He began, 'Oh, great and just God, no man among us knows what the sleeper knows, nor is it for us to judge what lies between him and Thee.' He prayed that if any man there had been remiss toward the stranger come to a far country, God would forgive him and soften his heart. He recalled the promises to the widow and the fatherless, and asked God to smooth the way before this widow and her children, and to 'incline the hearts of men to deal justly with her.' In closing, he said we were leaving Mr. Shimerda at 'Thy judgment seat, which is also Thy mercy seat.'

All the time he was praying, grandmother watched him through the black fingers of her glove, and when he said 'Amen,' I thought she looked satisfied with him. She turned to Otto and whispered, 'Can't you start a hymn, Fuchs? It would seem less heathenish.'

Fuchs glanced about to see if there was a general approval of her suggestion, then began, 'Jesus, Lover of My Soul,' and all the men and women took it up after him. Whenever I have heard that hymn since, it has made me remember that white waste and the little group of people; and the bluish air, full of fine, eddying snow, like long veils flying:

'While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.'

. . . . . .

Years afterward, when the open-grazing days were over, and the red grass had been ploughed under and under until it had almost disappeared from the prairie; when all the fields were under fence, and the roads no longer ran about like wild things, but followed the surveyed section-lines, Mr. Shimerda's grave was still there, with a sagging wire fence around it, and an unpainted wooden cross. As grandfather had predicted, Mrs. Shimerda never saw the roads going over his head. The road from the north curved a little to the east just there, and the road from the west swung out a little to the south; so that the grave, with its tall red grass that was never mowed, was like a little island; and at twilight, under a new moon or the clear evening star, the dusty roads used to look like soft grey rivers flowing past it. I never came upon the place without emotion, and in all that country it was the spot most dear to me. I loved the dim superstition, the propitiatory intent, that had put the grave there; and still more I loved the spirit that could not carry out the sentence—the error from the surveyed lines, the clemency of the soft earth roads along which the home-coming wagons rattled after sunset. Never a tired driver passed the wooden cross, I am sure, without wishing well to the sleeper.

17

When spring came, after that hard winter, one could not get enough of the nimble air. Every morning I wakened with a fresh consciousness that winter was over. There were none of the signs of spring for which I used to watch in Virginia, no budding woods or blooming gardens. There was only—spring itself; the throb of it, the light restlessness, the vital essence of it everywhere: in the sky, in the swift clouds, in the pale sunshine, and in the warm, high wind—rising suddenly, sinking suddenly, impulsive and playful like a big puppy that pawed you and then lay down to be petted. If I had been tossed down blindfold on that red prairie, I should have known that it was spring.

Everywhere now there was the smell of burning grass. Our neighbours burned off

their pasture before the new grass made a start, so that the fresh growth would not be mixed with the dead stand of last year. Those light, swift fires, running about the country, seemed a part of the same kindling that was in the air.

The Shimerdas were in their new log house by then. The neighbours had helped them to build it in March. It stood directly in front of their old cave, which they used as a cellar. The family were now fairly equipped to begin their struggle with the soil. They had four comfortable rooms to live in, a new windmill—bought on credit—a chicken-house and poultry. Mrs. Shimerda had paid grandfather ten dollars for a milk cow, and was to give him fifteen more as soon as they harvested their first crop.

When I rode up to the Shimerdas' one bright windy afternoon in April, Yulka ran out to meet me. It was to her, now, that I gave reading lessons; Antonia was busy with other things. I tied my pony and went into the kitchen where Mrs. Shimerda was baking bread, chewing poppy seeds as she worked. By this time she could speak enough English to ask me a great many questions about what our men were doing in the fields. She seemed to think that my elders withheld helpful information, and that from me she might get valuable secrets. On this occasion she asked me very craftily when grandfather expected to begin planting corn. I told her, adding that he thought we should have a dry spring and that the corn would not be held back by too much rain, as it had been last year.

She gave me a shrewd glance. 'He not Jesus,' she blustered; 'he not know about the wet and the dry.'

I did not answer her; what was the use? As I sat waiting for the hour when Ambrosch and Antonia would return from the fields, I watched Mrs. Shimerda at her work. She took from the oven a coffee-cake which she wanted to keep warm for supper, and wrapped it in a quill stuffed with feathers. I have seen her put even a roast goose in this quilt to keep it hot. When the neighbours were there building the new house, they saw her do this, and the story got abroad that the Shimerdas kept their food in their feather-beds.

When the sun was dropping low, Antonia came up the big south draw with her team. How much older she had grown in eight months! She had come to us a child, and now she was a tall, strong young girl, although her fifteenth birthday had just slipped by. I ran out and met her as she brought her horses up to the windmill to water them. She wore the boots her father had so thoughtfully taken off before he shot himself, and his old fur cap. Her outgrown cotton dress switched about her calves, over the boot-tops. She kept her sleeves rolled up all day, and her arms and throat were burned as brown as a sailor's. Her neck came up strongly out of her shoulders, like the bole of a tree out of the turf. One sees that draught-horse neck among the peasant women in all old countries.

She greeted me gaily, and began at once to tell me how much ploughing she had done that day. Ambrosch, she said, was on the north quarter, breaking sod with the oxen.

'Jim, you ask Jake how much he ploughed to-day. I don't want that Jake get more done in one day than me. I want we have very much corn this fall.'

While the horses drew in the water, and nosed each other, and then drank again, Antonia sat down on the windmill step and rested her head on her hand.

'You see the big prairie fire from your place last night? I hope your grandpa ain't lose no stacks?'

'No, we didn't. I came to ask you something, Tony. Grandmother wants to know if you can't go to the term of school that begins next week over at the sod school-house. She says there's a good teacher, and you'd learn a lot.'

Antonia stood up, lifting and dropping her shoulders as if they were stiff. 'I ain't got time to learn. I can work like mans now. My mother can't say no more how Amborsch do all and nobody to help him. I can work as much as him. School is all right for little boys. I help make this land one good farm.'

She clucked to her team and started for the barn. I walked beside her, feeling vexed.

Was she going to grow up boastful like her mother, I wondered? Before we reached the stable, I felt something tense in her silence, and glancing up I saw that she was crying. She turned her face from me and looked off at the red streak of dying light, over the dark prairie.

I climbed up into the loft and threw down the hay for her, while she unharnessed her team. We walked slowly back toward the house. Ambrosch had come in from the north quarter, and was watering his oxen at the tank.

Ántonia took my hand. 'Sometime you will tell me all those nice things you learn at the school, won't you, Jimmy?' she asked with a sudden rush of feeling in her voice. 'My father, he went much to school. He know a great deal; how to make the fine cloth like what you not got here. He play horn and violin, and he read so many books that the priests in Bohemie come to talk to him. You won't forget my father, Jim?'

'No,' I said, 'I will never forget him.'

Mrs. Shimerda asked me to stay for supper. After Ambrosch and Ántonia had washed the field dust from their hands and faces at the wash-basin by the kitchen door, we sat down at the oilcloth-covered table. Mrs. Shimerda ladled meal mush out of an iron pot and poured milk on it. After the mush we had fresh bread and sorghum molasses, and coffee with the cake that had been kept warm in the feathers. Ántonia and Ambrosch were talking in Bohemian; disputing about which of them had done more ploughing that day. Mrs. Shimerda egged them on, chuckling while she gobbled her food.

Presently Ambrosch said sullenly in English: 'You take them ox to-morrow and try the sod plough. Then you not be so smart.'

His sister laughed. 'Don't be mad. I know it's awful hard work for break sod. I milk the cow for you to-morrow, if you want.'

Mrs. Shimerda turned quickly to me. 'That cow not give so much milk like what your grandpa say. If he make talk about fifteen dollars, I send him back the cow.'

'He doesn't talk about the fifteen dollars,' I exclaimed indignantly. 'He doesn't find fault with people.'

'He say I break his saw when we build, and I never,' grumbled Ambrosch.

I knew he had broken the saw, and then hid it and lied about it. I began to wish I had not stayed for supper. Everything was disagreeable to me. Ántonia ate so noisily now, like a man, and she yawned often at the table and kept stretching her arms over her head, as if they ached. Grandmother had said, 'Heavy field work'll spoil that girl. She'll lose all her nice ways and get rough ones.' She had lost them already.

After supper I rode home through the sad, soft spring twilight. Since winter I had seen very little of Ántonia. She was out in the fields from sunup until sundown. If I rode over to see her where she was ploughing, she stopped at the end of a row to chat for a moment, then gripped her plough-handles, clucked to her team, and waded on down the furrow, making me feel that she was now grown up and had no time for me. On Sundays she helped her mother make garden or sewed all day. Grandfather was pleased with Ántonia. When we complained of her, he only smiled and said, 'She will help some fellow get ahead in the world.'

Nowadays Tony could talk of nothing but the prices of things, or how much she could lift and endure. She was too proud of her strength. I knew, too, that Ambrosch put upon her some chores a girl ought not to do, and that the farm-hands around the country joked in a nasty way about it. Whenever I saw her come up the furrow, shouting to her beasts, sunburned, sweaty, her dress open at the neck, and her throat and chest dust-plastered, I used to think of the tone in which poor Mr. Shimerda, who could say so little, yet managed to say so much when he exclaimed, 'My Án-tonia!'

18

After I began to go to the country school, I saw less of the Bohemians. We were sixteen pupils at the sod school-house, and we all came on horseback and brought our dinner.

My schoolmates were none of them very interesting, but I somehow felt that, by making comrades of them, I was getting even with Antonia for her indifference. Since the father's death, Ambrosch was more than ever the head of the house, and he seemed to direct the feelings as well as the fortunes of his women-folk. Antonia often quoted his opinions to me, and she let me see that she admired him, while she thought of me only as a little boy. Before the spring was over, there was a distinct coldness between us and the Shimerdas. It came about in this way.

One Sunday I rode over there with Jake to get a horse-collar which Ambrosch had borrowed from him and had not returned. It was a beautiful blue morning. The buffalo-peas were blooming in pink and purple masses along the roadside, and the larks, perched on last year's dried sunflower stalks, were singing straight at the sun, their heads thrown back and their yellow breasts a-quiver. The wind blew about us in warm, sweet gusts. We rode slowly, with a pleasant sense of Sunday indolence.

We found the Shimerdas working just as if it were a week-day. Marek was cleaning out the stable, and Antonia and her mother were making garden, off across the pond in the drawhead. Ambrosch was up on the windmill tower, oiling the wheel. He came down, not very cordially. When Jake asked for the collar, he grunted and scratched his head. The collar belonged to grandfather, of course, and Jake, feeling responsible for it, flared up.

'Now, don't you say you haven't got it, Ambrosch, because I know you have, and if you ain't a-going to look for it, I will.'

Ambrosch shrugged his shoulders and sauntered down the hill toward the stable. I could see that it was one of his mean days. Presently he returned, carrying a collar that had been badly used—trampled in the dirt and gnawed by rats until the hair was sticking out of it.

'This what you want?' he asked surlily.

Jake jumped off his horse. I saw a wave of red come up under the rough stubble on his face. 'That ain't the piece of harness I loaned you, Ambrosch; or, if it is, you've used it shameful. I ain't a-going to carry such a looking thing back to Mr. Burden.'

Ambrosch dropped the collar on the ground. 'All right,' he said coolly, took up his oil-can, and began to climb the mill. Jake caught him by the belt of his trousers and yanked him back. Ambrosch's feet had scarcely touched the ground when he lunged out with a vicious kick at Jake's stomach. Fortunately, Jake was in such a position that he could dodge it. This was not the sort of thing country boys did when they played at fisticuffs, and Jake was furious. He landed Ambrosch a blow on the head—it sounded like the crack of an axe on a cow-pumpkin. Ambrosch dropped over, stunned.

We heard squeals, and looking up saw Antonia and her mother coming on the run. They did not take the path around the pond, but plunged through the muddy water, without even lifting their skirts. They came on, screaming and clawing the air. By this time Ambrosch had come to his senses and was sputtering with nose-bleed.

Jake sprang into his saddle. 'Let's get out of this, Jim,' he called.

Mrs. Shimerda threw her hands over her head and clutched as if she were going to pull down lightning. 'Law, law!' she shrieked after us. 'Law for knock my Ambrosch down!'

'I never like you no more, Jake and Jim Burden,' Antonia panted. 'No friends any more!'

Jake stopped and turned his horse for a second. 'Well, you're a damned ungrateful lot, the whole pack of you,' he shouted back. 'I guess the Burdens can get along without you. You've been a sight of trouble to them, anyhow!'

We rode away, feeling so outraged that the fine morning was spoiled for us. I hadn't a word to say, and poor Jake was white as paper and trembling all over. It made him sick to get so angry.

'They ain't the same, Jimmy,' he kept saying in a hurt tone. 'These foreigners ain't the same. You can't trust 'em to be fair. It's dirty to kick a feller. You heard how the women turned on you—and after all we went

through on account of 'em last winter! They ain't to be trusted. I don't want to see you get too thick with any of 'em.'

'I'll never be friends with them again, Jake,' I declared hotly. 'I believe they are all like Krajiek and Ambrosch underneath.'

Grandfather heard our story with a twinkle in his eye. He advised Jake to ride to town to-morrow, go to a justice of the peace, tell him he had knocked young Shimerda down, and pay his fine. Then if Mrs. Shimerda was inclined to make trouble—her son was still under age—she would be forestalled. Jake said he might as well take the wagon and haul to market the pig he had been fattening. On Monday, about an hour after Jake had started, we saw Mrs. Shimerda and her Ambrosch proudly driving by, looking neither to the right nor left. As they rattled out of sight down the Black Hawk road, grandfather chuckled, saying he had rather expected she would follow the matter up.

Jake paid his fine with a ten-dollar bill grandfather had given him for that purpose. But when the Shimerdas found that Jake sold his pig in town that day, Ambrosch worked it out in his shrewd head that Jake had to sell his pig to pay his fine. This theory afforded the Shimerdas great satisfaction, apparently. For weeks afterwards, whenever Jake and I met Ántonia on her way to the post-office, or going along the road with her work-team, she would clap her hands and call to us in a spiteful, crowing voice:

'Jake-y, Jake-y, sell the pig and pay the slap!'

Otto pretended not to be surprised at Antonia's behaviour. He only lifted his brows and said, 'You can't tell me anything new about a Czech; I'm an Austrian.'

Grandfather was never a party to what Jake called our feud with the Shimerdas. Ambrosch and Ántonia always greeted him respectfully, and he asked them about their affairs and gave them advice as usual. He thought the future looked hopeful for them. Ambrosch was a far-seeing fellow; he soon realized that his oxen were too heavy for any work except breaking sod, and he succeeded in selling them to a newly arrived German. With the money he bought another team of horses, which grandfather selected for him. Marek was strong, and Ambrosch worked him hard; but he could never teach him to cultivate corn, I remember. The one idea that had ever got through poor Marek's thick head was that all exertion was meritorious. He always bore down on the handles of the cultivator and drove the blades so deep into the earth that the horses were soon exhausted.

In June, Ambrosch went to work at Mr. Bushy's for a week, and took Marek with him at full wages. Mrs. Shimerda then drove the second cultivator; she and Ántonia worked in the fields all day and did the chores at night. While the two women were running the place alone, one of the new horses got colic and gave them a terrible fright.

Ántonia had gone down to the barn one night to see that all was well before she went to bed, and she noticed that one of the roans was swollen about the middle and stood with his head hanging. She mounted another horse, without waiting to saddle him, and hammered on our door just as we were going to bed. Grandfather answered her knock. He did not send one of his men, but rode back with her himself, taking a syringe and an old piece of carpet he kept for hot applications when our horses were sick. He found Mrs. Shimerda sitting by the horse with her lantern, groaning and wringing her hands. It took but a few moments to release the gases pent up in the poor beast, and the two women heard the rush of wind and saw the roan visibly diminish in girth.

'If I lose that horse, Mr. Burden,' Ántonia exclaimed, 'I never stay here till Ambrosch come home! I go drown myself in the pond before morning.'

When Ambrosch came back from Mr. Bushy's, we learned that he had given Marek's wages to the priest at Black Hawk, for Masses for their father's soul. Grandmother thought Ántonia needed shoes more than Mr. Shimerda needed prayers, but grandfather said tolerantly, 'If he can spare six dollars, pinched as he is, it shows he believes what he professes.'

It was grandfather who brought about a

reconciliation with the Shimerdas. One morning he told us that the small grain was coming on so well, he thought he would begin to cut his wheat on the first of July. He would need more men, and if it were agreeable to everyone he would engage Ambrosch for the reaping and threshing, as the Shimerdas had no small grain of their own.

'I think, Emmaline,' he concluded, 'I will ask Antonia to come over and help you in the kitchen. She will be glad to earn something, and it will be a good time to end misunderstandings. I may as well ride over this morning and make arrangements. Do you want to go with me, Jim?' His tone told me that he had already decided for me.

After breakfast we set off together. When Mrs. Shimerda saw us coming, she ran from her door down into the draw behind the stable, as if she did not want to meet us. Grandfather smiled to himself while he tied his horse, and we followed her.

Behind the barn we came upon a funny sight. The cow had evidently been grazing somewhere in the draw. Mrs. Shimerda had run to the animal, pulled up the lariat pin, and, when we came upon her, she was trying to hide the cow in an old cave in the bank. As the hole was narrow and dark, the cow held back, and the old woman was slapping and pushing at her hindquarters, trying to spank her into the draw-side.

Granfather ignored her singular occupation and greeted her politely. 'Good morning, Mrs. Shimerda. Can you tell me where I will find Ambrosch? Which field?

'He with the sod corn.' She pointed toward the north, still standing in front of the cow as if she hoped to conceal it.

'His sod corn will be good for fodder this winter,' said grandfather encouragingly. 'And where is Antonia?'

'She go with.' Mrs. Shimerda kept wiggling her bare feet about nervously in the dust.

'Very well. I will ride up there. I want them to come over and help me cut my oats and wheat next month. I will pay them wages. Good morning. By the way, Mrs. Shimerda,' he said as he turned up the path, 'I think we may as well call it square about the cow.'

She started and clutched the rope tighter. Seeing that she did not understand, grandfather turned back. 'You need not pay me anything more; no more money. The cow is yours.'

'Pay no more, keep cow?' she asked in a bewildered tone, her narrow eyes snapping at us in the sunlight.

'Exactly. Pay no more, keep cow.' He nodded.

Mrs. Shimerda dropped the rope, ran after us, and, crouching down beside grandfather, she took his hand and kissed it. I doubt if he had ever been so much embarrassed before. I was a little startled, too. Somehow, that seemed to bring the Old World very close.

We rode away laughing, and grandfather said: 'I expect she thought we had come to take the cow away for certain, Jim. I wonder if she wouldn't have scratched a little if we'd laid hold of that lariat rope!'

Our neighbours seemed glad to make peace with us. The next Sunday Mrs. Shimerda came over and brought Jake a pair of socks she had knitted. She presented them with an air of great magnanimity, saying, 'Now you not come any more for knock my Ambrosch down?'

Jake laughed sheepishly. 'I don't want to have no trouble with Ambrosch. If he'll let me alone, I'll let him alone.'

'If he slap you, we ain't got no pig to pay the fine,' she said insinuatingly.

Jake was not at all disconcerted. 'Have the last word, ma'am,' he said cheerfully. 'It's a lady's privilege.'

19

July came on with that breathless, brilliant heat which makes the plains of Kansas and Nebraska the best corn country in the world. It seemed as if we could hear the corn growing in the night; under the stars one caught a faint crackling in the dewy, heavy-odoured cornfields where the feathered stalk stood so juicy and green. If all the great plain from the Missouri to the Rocky Mountains had been under glass, and the heat regulated by a thermometer, it could not have been better for the yellow tassels that were ripening and fertilizing the silk day by day. The cornfields were far apart in those times, with

miles of wild grazing land between. It took a clear, meditative eye like my grandfather's to foresee that they would enlarge and multiply until they would be, not the Shimerdas' cornfields, or Mr. Bushy's, but the world's cornfields; that their yield would be one of the great economic facts, like the wheat crop of Russia, which underlie all the activities of men, in peace or war.

The burning sun of those few weeks, with occasional rains at night, secured the corn. After the milky ears were once formed, we had little to fear from dry weather. The men were working so hard in the wheatfields that they did not notice the heat—though I was kept busy carrying water for them—and grandmother and Ántonia had so much to do in the kitchen that they could not have told whether one day was hotter than another. Each morning, while the dew was still on the grass, Ántonia went with me up to the garden to get early vegetables for dinner. Grandmother made her wear a sunbonnet, but as soon as we reached the garden she threw it on the grass and let her hair fly in the breeze. I remember how, as we bent over the pea-vines, beads of perspiration used to gather on her upper lip like a little moustache.

'Oh, better I like to work out-of-doors than in a house!' she used to sing joyfully. 'I not care that your grandmother say it makes me like a man. I like to be like a man.' She would toss her head and ask me to feel the muscles swell in her brown arm.

We were glad to have her in the house. She was so gay and responsive that one did not mind her heavy, running step, or her clattery way with pans. Grandmother was in high spirits during the weeks that Ántonia worked for us.

All the nights were close and hot during that harvest season. The harvesters slept in the hayloft because it was cooler there than in the house. I used to lie in my bed by the open window, watching the heat lightning play softly along the horizon, or looking up at the gaunt frame of the windmill against the blue night sky. One night there was a beautiful electric storm, though not enough rain fell to damage the cut grain. The men went down to the barn immediately after supper, and when the dishes were washed, Ántonia and I climbed up on the slanting roof of the chicken-house to watch the clouds. The thunder was loud and metallic, like the rattle of sheet iron, and the lightning broke in great zigzags across the heavens, making everything stand out and come close to us for a moment. Half the sky was chequered with black thunderheads, but all the west was luminous and clear: in the lightning flashes it looked like deep blue water, with the sheen of moonlight on it; and the mottled part of the sky was like marble pavement, like the quay of some splendid seacoast city, doomed to destruction. Great warm splashes of rain fell on our upturned faces. One black cloud, no bigger than a little boat, drifted out into the clear space unattended, and kept moving westward. All about us we could hear the felty beat of the raindrops on the soft dust of the farmyard. Grandmother came to the door and said it was late, and we would get wet out there.

'In a minute we come,' Ántonia called back to her. 'I like your grandmother, and all things here,' she sighed. 'I wish my papa live to see this summer. I wish no winter ever come again.'

'It will be summer a long while yet,' I reassured her. 'Why aren't you always nice like this, Tony?'

'How nice?'

'Why just like this; like yourself. Why do you all the time try to be like Ambrosch?'

She put her arms under her head and lay back, looking up at the sky. 'If I live here, like you, that is different. Things will be easy for you. But they will be hard for us.'

BOOK II

The Hired Girls

1

I had been living with my grandfather for nearly three years when he decided to move to Black Hawk. He and grandmother were getting old for the heavy work of a farm, and as I was now thirteen they thought I ought

to be going to school. Accordingly our homestead was rented to 'that good woman, the Widow Steavens,' and her bachelor brother, and we bought Preacher White's house, at the north end of Black Hawk. This was the first town house one passed driving in from the farm, a landmark which told country people their long ride was over.

We were to move to Black Hawk in March, and as soon as grandfather had fixed the date he let Jake and Otto know of his intention. Otto said he would not be likely to find another place that suited him so well; that he was tired of farming and thought he would go back to what he called the 'wild West.' Jake Marpole, lured by Otto's stories of adventure, decided to go with him. We did our best to dissuade Jake. He was so handicapped by illiteracy and by his trusting disposition that he would be an easy prey to sharpers. Grandmother begged him to stay among kindly, Christian people, where he was known; but there was no reasoning with him. He wanted to be a prospector. He thought a silver mine was waiting for him in Colorado.

Jake and Otto served us to the last. They moved us into town, put down the carpets in our new house, made shelves and cupboards for grandmother's kitchen, and seemed loath to leave us. But at last they went, without warning. Those two fellows had been faithful to us through sun and storm, had given us things that cannot be bought in any market in the world. With me they had been like older brothers; had restrained their speech and manners out of care for me, and given me so much good comradeship. Now they got on the westbound train one morning, in their Sunday clothes, and their oilcloth valises—and I never saw them again. Months afterward we got a card from Otto, saying that Jake had been down with mountain fever, but now they were both working in the Yankee Girl Mine, and were doing well. I wrote to them at that address, but my letter was returned to me, 'Unclaimed.' After that we never heard from them.

Black Hawk, the new world in which we had come to live, was a clean, well-planted little prairie town, with white fences and good green yards about the dwellings, wide, dusty streets, and shapely little trees growing along the wooden sidewalks. In the centre of the town there were two rows of new brick 'store' buildings, a brick school-house, the court-house, and four white churches. Our own house looked down over the town, and from our upstairs windows we could see the winding line of the river bluffs, two miles south of us. That river was to be my compensation for the lost freedom of the farming country.

We came to Black Hawk in March, and by the end of April we felt like town people. Grandfather was a deacon in the new Baptist Church, grandmother was busy with church suppers and missionary societies, and I was quite another boy, or thought I was. Suddenly put down among boys of my own age, I found I had a great deal to learn. Before the spring term of school was over, I could fight, play 'keeps,' tease the little girls, and use forbidden words as well as any boy in my class. I was restrained from utter savagery only by the fact that Mrs. Harling, our nearest neighbour, kept an eye on me, and if my behaviour went beyond certain bounds I was not permitted to come into her yard or play with her jolly children.

We saw more of our country neighbours now than when we lived on the farm. Our house was a convenient stopping-place for them. We had a big barn where the farmers could put up their teams, and their womenfolk more often accompanied them, now that they could stay with us for dinner, and rest and set their bonnets right before they went shopping. The more our house was like a country hotel, the better I liked it. I was glad, when I came home from school at noon, to see a farm-wagon standing in the back yard, and I was always ready to run downtown to get beefsteak or baker's bread for unexpected company. All through that first spring and summer I kept hoping that Ambrosch would bring Antonia and Yulka to see our new house. I wanted to show them our red plush furniture, and the trumpet-blowing cherubs the German paperhanger had put on our parlour ceiling.

When Ambrosch came to town, however, he came alone, and though he put his horses in our barn, he would never stay for dinner, or tell us anything about his mother and sisters. If we ran out and questioned him as he was slipping through the yard, he would merely work his shoulders about in his coat and say, 'They all right, I guess.'

Mrs. Steavens, who now lived on our farm, grew as fond of Ántonia as we had been, and always brought us news of her. All through the wheat season, she told us, Ambrosch hired his sister out like a man, and she went from farm to farm, binding sheaves or working with the threshers. The farmers liked her and were kind to her; said they would rather have her for a hand than Ambrosch. When fall came she was to husk corn for the neighbours until Christmas, as she had done the year before; but grandmother saved her from this by getting her a place to work with our neighbours, the Harlings.

2

Grandmother often said that if she had to live in town, she thanked God she lived next the Harlings. They had been farming people, like ourselves, and their place was like a little farm, with a big barn and a garden, and an orchard and grazing lots—even a windmill. The Harlings were Norwegians, and Mrs. Harling had lived in Christiania until she was ten years old. Her husband was born in Minnesota. He was a grain merchant and cattle-buyer, and was generally considered the most enterprising business man in our county. He controlled a line of grain elevators in the little towns along the railroad to the west of us, and was away from home a great deal. In his absence his wife was the head of the household.

Mrs. Harling was short and square and sturdy-looking, like her house. Every inch of her was charged with an energy that made itself felt the moment she entered a room. Her face was rosy and solid, with bright, twinkling eyes and a stubborn little chin. She was quick to anger, quick to laughter, and jolly from the depths of her soul. How well I remember her laugh; it had in it the same sudden recognition that flashed into her eyes, was a burst of humour, short and intelligent. Her rapid footsteps shook her own floors, and she routed lassitude and indifference wherever she came. She could not be negative or perfunctory about anything. Her enthusiasm, and her violent likes and dislikes, asserted themselves in all the everyday occupations of life. Wash-day was interesting, never dreary, at the Harlings'. Preserving time was a prolonged festival, and housecleaning was like a revolution. When Mrs. Harling made garden that spring, we could feel the stir of her undertaking through the willow hedge that separated our place from hers.

Three of the Harling children were near me in age. Charley, the only son—they had lost an older boy—was sixteen; Julia, who was known as the musical one, was fourteen when I was; and Sally, the tomboy with short hair, was a year younger. She was nearly as strong as I, and uncannily clever at all boys' sports. Sally was a wild thing, with sunburned yellow hair, bobbed about her ears, and a brown skin, for she never wore a hat. She raced all over town on one roller skate, often cheated at 'keeps,' but was such a quick shot one couldn't catch her at it.

The grown-up daughter, Frances, was a very important person in our world. She was her father's chief clerk, and virtually managed his Black Hawk office during his frequent absences. Because of her unusual business ability, he was stern and exacting with her. He paid her a good salary, but she had few holidays and never got away from her responsibilities. Even on Sundays she went to the office to open the mail and read the markets. With Charley, who was not interested in business, but was already preparing for Annapolis, Mr. Harling was very indulgent; bought him guns and tools and electric batteries, and never asked what he did with them.

Frances was dark, like her father, and quite as tall. In winter she wore a sealskin coat and cap, and she and Mr. Harling used to walk home together in the evening, talking about grain-cars and cattle, like two men. Sometimes she came over to see grandfather

after supper, and her visits flattered him. More than once they put their wits together to rescue some unfortunate farmer from the clutches of Wick Cutter, the Black Hawk money-lender. Grandfather said Frances Harling was as good a judge of credits as any banker in the county. The two or three men who had tried to take advantage of her in a deal acquired celebrity by their defeat. She knew every farmer for miles about: how much land he had under cultivation, how many cattle he was feeding, what his liabilities were. Her interest in these people was more than a business interest. She carried them all in her mind as if they were characters in a book or a play.

When Frances drove out into the country on business, she would go miles out of her way to call on some of the old people, or to see the women who seldom got to town. She was quick at understanding the grandmothers who spoke no English, and the most reticent and distrustful of them would tell her their story without realizing they were doing so. She went to country funerals and weddings in all weathers. A farmer's daughter who was to be married could count on a wedding present from Frances Harling.

In August the Harlings' Danish cook had to leave them. Grandmother entreated them to try Ántonia. She cornered Ambrosch the next time he came to town, and pointed out to him that any connection with Christian Harling would strengthen his credit and be of advantage to him. One Sunday Mrs. Harling took the long ride out to the Shimerdas' with Frances. She said she wanted to see 'what the girl came from' and to have a clear understanding with her mother. I was in our yard when they came driving home, just before sunset. They laughed and waved to me as they passed, and I could see they were in great good humour. After supper, when grandfather set off to church, grandmother and I took my short cut through the willow hedge and went over to hear about the visit to the Shimerdas'.

We found Mrs. Harling with Charley and Sally on the front porch, resting after her hard drive. Julia was in the hammock—she was fond of repose—and Frances was at the piano, playing without a light and talking to her mother through the open window.

Mrs. Harling laughed when she saw us coming. 'I expect you left your dishes on the table to-night, Mrs. Burden,' she called. Frances shut the piano and came out to join us.

They had liked Ántonia from their first glimpse of her; felt they knew exactly what kind of girl she was. As for Mrs. Shimerda, they found her very amusing. Mrs. Harling chuckled whenever she spoke of her. 'I expect I am more at home with that sort of bird than you are, Mrs. Burden. They're a pair, Ambrosch and that old woman!'

They had had a long argument with Ambrosch about Ántonia's allowance for clothes and pocket-money. It was his plan that every cent of his sister's wages should be paid over to him each month, and he would provide her with such clothing as he thought necessary. When Mrs. Harling told him firmly that she would keep fifty dollars a year for Ántonia's own use, he declared they wanted to take his sister to town and dress her up and make a fool of her. Mrs. Harling gave us a lively account of Ambrosch's behaviour throughout the interview; how he kept jumping up and putting on his cap as if he were through with the whole business, and how his mother tweaked his coat-tail and prompted him in Bohemian. Mrs. Harling finally agreed to pay three dollars a week for Ántonia's services—good wages in those days—and to keep her in shoes. There had been hot dispute about the shoes, Mrs. Shimerda finally saying persuasively that she would send Mrs. Harling three fat geese every year to 'make even.'. Ambrosch was to bring his sister to town next Saturday.

'She'll be awkward and rough at first, like enough,' grandmother said anxiously, 'but unless she's been spoiled by the hard life she's led, she has it in her to be a real helpful girl.'

Mrs. Harling laughed her quick, decided laugh. 'Oh, I'm not worrying, Mrs. Burden! I can bring something out of that girl. She's barely seventeen, not too old to learn new ways. She's good-looking, too!' she added warmly.

Frances turned to grandmother. 'Oh, yes, Mrs. Burden, you didn't tell us that! She was working in the garden when we got there, barefoot and ragged. But she has such fine brown legs and arms, and splendid colour in her cheeks—like those big dark red plums.'

We were pleased at this praise. Grandmother spoke feelingly. 'When she first came to this country, Frances, and had that genteel old man to watch over her, she was as pretty a girl as ever I saw. But, dear me, what a life she's led, out in the fields with those rough threshers! Things would have been very different with poor Ántonia if her father had lived.'

The Harlings begged us to tell them about Mr. Shimerda's death and the big snowstorm. By the time we saw grandfather coming home from church, we had told them pretty much all we knew of the Shimerdas.

'The girl will be happy here, and she'll forget those things,' said Mrs. Harling confidently, as we rose to take our leave.

3

On Saturday Ambrosch drove up to the back gate, and Ántonia jumped down from the wagon and ran into our kitchen just as she used to do. She was wearing shoes and stockings, and was breathless and excited. She gave me a playful shake by the shoulders. 'You ain't forget about me, Jim?'

Grandmother kissed her. 'God bless you, child! Now you've come, you must try to do right and be a credit to us.'

Ántonia looked eagerly about the house and admired everything. 'Maybe I be the kind of girl you like better, now I come to town,' she suggested hopefully.

How good it was to have Ántonia near us again; to see her every day and almost every night! Her greatest fault, Mrs. Harling found, was that she so often stopped her work and fell to playing with the children. She would race about the orchard with us, or take sides in our hay-fights in the barn, or be the old bear that came down from the mountain and carried off Nina. Tony learned English so quickly that by the time school began she could speak as well as any of us.

I was jealous of Tony's admiration for Charley Harling. Because he was always first in his classes at school, and could mend the water-pipes or the doorbell and take the clock to pieces, she seemed to think him a sort of prince. Nothing that Charley wanted was too much trouble for her. She loved to put up lunches for him when he went hunting, to mend his ball-gloves and sew buttons on his shooting-coat, baked the kind of nut-cake he liked, and fed his setter dog when he was away on trips with his father. Ántonia had made herself cloth working-slippers out of Mr. Harling's old coats, and in these she went padding about after Charley, fairly panting with eagerness to please him.

Next to Charley, I think she loved Nina best. Nina was only six, and she was rather more complex than the other children. She was fanciful, had all sorts of unspoken preferences, and was easily offended. At the slightest disappointment or displeasure her velvety brown eyes filled with tears, and she would lift her chin and walk silently away. If we ran after her and tried to appease her, it did no good. She walked on unmollified. I used to think that no eyes in the world could grow so large or hold so many tears as Nina's. Mrs. Harling and Ántonia invariably took her part. We were never given a chance to explain. The charge was simply: 'You have made Nina cry. Now, Jimmy can go home, and Sally must get her arithmetic.' I liked Nina, too; she was so quaint and unexpected, and her eyes were lovely; but I often wanted to shake her.

We had jolly evenings at the Harlings' when the father was away. If he was at home, the children had to go to bed early, or they came over to my house to play. Mr. Harling not only demanded a quiet house, he demanded all his wife's attention. He used to take her away to their room in the west ell, and talk over his business with her all evening. Though we did not realize it then, Mrs. Harling was our audience when we played, and we always looked to her for suggestions. Nothing flattered one like her quick laugh.

Mr. Harling had a desk in his bedroom, and his own easy-chair by the window, in which no one else ever sat. On the nights

when he was at home, I could see his shadow on the blind, and it seemed to me an arrogant shadow. Mrs. Harling paid no heed to anyone else if he was there. Before he went to bed she always got him a lunch of smoked salmon or anchovies and beer. He kept an alcohol lamp in his room, and a French coffee-pot, and his wife made coffee for him at any hour of the night he happened to want it.

Most Black Hawk fathers had no personal habits outside their domestic ones; they paid the bills, pushed the baby-carriage after office hours, moved the sprinkler about over the lawn, and took the family driving on Sunday. Mr. Harling, therefore, seemed to me autocratic and imperial in his ways. He walked, talked, put on his gloves, shook hands, like a man who felt that he had power. He was not tall, but he carried his head so haughtily that he looked a commanding figure, and there was something daring and challenging in his eyes. I used to imagine that the 'nobles' of whom Antonia was always talking probably looked very much like Christian Harling, wore caped overcoats like his, and just such a glittering diamond upon the little finger.

Except when the father was at home, the Harling house was never quiet. Mrs. Harling and Nina and Antonia made as much noise as a houseful of children, and there was usually somebody at the piano. Julia was the only one who was held down to regular hours of practising, but they all played. When Frances came home at noon, she played until dinner was ready. When Sally got back from school, she sat down in her hat and coat and drummed the plantation melodies that Negro minstrel troupes brought to town. Even Nina played the Swedish Wedding March.

Mrs. Harling had studied the piano under a good teacher, and somehow she managed to practise every day. I soon learned that if I were sent over on an errand and found Mrs. Harling at the piano, I must sit down and wait quietly until she turned to me. I can see her at this moment: her short, square person planted firmly on the stool, her little fat hands moving quickly and neatly over the keys, her eyes fixed on the music with intelligent concentration.

4

'I won't have none of your weevily wheat, and
I won't have none of your barley,
But I'll take a measure of fine white flour, to
make a cake for Charley.'

We were singing rhymes to tease Antonia while she was beating up one of Charley's favourite cakes in her big mixing-bowl.

It was a crisp autumn evening, just cold enough to make one glad to quit playing tag in the yard, and retreat into the kitchen. We had begun to roll popcorn balls with syrup when we heard a knock at the back door, and Tony dropped her spoon and went to open it.

A plump, fair-skinned girl was standing in the doorway. She looked demure and pretty, and made a graceful picture in her blue cashmere dress and little blue hat, with a plaid shawl drawn neatly about her shoulders and a clumsy pocket-book in her hand.

'Hello, Tony. Don't you know me?' she asked in a smooth, low voice, looking in at us archly.

Antonia gasped and stepped back.

'Why, it's Lena! Of course I didn't know you, so dressed up!'

Lena Lingard laughed, as if this pleased her. I had not recognized her for a moment, either. I had never seen her before with a hat on her head—or with shoes and stockings on her feet, for that matter. And here she was, brushed and smoothed and dressed like a town girl, smiling at us with perfect composure.

'Hello, Jim,' she said carelessly as she walked into the kitchen and looked about her. 'I've come to town to work, too, Tony.'

'Have you, now? Well, ain't that funny!' Antonia stood ill at ease. and didn't seem to know just what to do with her visitor.

The door was open into the dining-room, where Mrs. Harling sat crocheting and Frances was reading. Frances asked Lena to come in and join them.

'You are Lena Lingard, aren't you? I've been to see your mother, but you were off herding cattle that day. Mama, this is Chris Lingard's oldest girl.'

Mrs. Harling dropped her worsted and examined the visitor with quick, keen eyes. Lena was not at all disconcerted. She sat down in the chair Francs pointed out, carefully arranging her pocket-book and grey cotton gloves on her lap. We followed with our popcorn, but Ántonia hung back—said she had to get her cake into the oven.

'So you have come to town,' said Mrs. Harling, her eyes still fixed on Lena. 'Where are you working?'

'For Mrs. Thomas, the dressmaker. She is going to teach me to sew. She says I have quite a knack. I'm through with the farm. There ain't any end to the work on a farm, and always so much trouble happens. I'm going to be a dressmaker.'

'Well, there have to be dressmakers. It's a good trade. But I wouldn't run down the farm, if I were you,' said Mrs. Harling rather severely. 'How is your mother?'

'Oh, mother's never very well; she has too much to do. She'd get away from the farm, too, if she could. She was willing for me to come. After I learn to do sewing, I can make money and help her.'

'See that you don't forget to,' said Mrs. Harling sceptically, as she took up her crocheting again and sent the hook in and out with nimble fingers.

'No, 'm, I won't,' said Lena blandly. She took a few grains of the popcorn we pressed upon her, eating them discreetly and taking care not to get her fingers sticky.

Frances drew her chair up nearer to the visitor. 'I thought you were going to be married, Lena,' she said teasingly. 'Didn't I hear Nick Svendsen was rushing you pretty hard?'

Lena looked up with her curiously innocent smile. 'He did go with me quite a while. But his father made a fuss about it and said he wouldn't give Nick any land if he married me, so he's going to marry Annie Iverson. I wouldn't like to be her; Nick's awful sullen, and he'll take it out on her. He ain't spoke to his father since he promised.'

Frances laughed. 'And how do you feel about it?'

'I don't want to marry Nick, or any other man,' Lena murmured. 'I've seen a good deal of married life, and I don't care for it. I want to be so I can help my mother and the children at home, and not have to ask lief of anybody.'

'That's right,' said Frances. 'And Mrs. Thomas thinks you can learn dressmaking?'

'Yes', 'm. I've always liked to sew, but I never had much to do with. Mrs. Thomas makes lovely things for all the town ladies. Did you know Mrs. Gardener is having a purple velvet made? The velvet came from Omaha. My, but it's lovely!' Lena sighed softly and stroked her cashmere folds. 'Tony knows I never did like out-of-door work,' she added.

Mrs. Harling glanced at her. 'I expect you'll learn to sew all right, Lena, if you'll only keep your head and not go gadding about to dances all the time and neglect your work, the way some country girls do.'

'Yes, 'm. Tiny Soderball is coming to town, too. She's going to work at the Boys' Home Hotel. She'll see lots of strangers,' Lena added wistfully.

'Too many, like enough,' said Mrs. Harling. 'I don't think a hotel is a good place for a girl; though I guess Mrs. Gardener keeps an eye on her waitresses.'

Lena's candid eyes, that always looked a little sleepy under their long lashes, kept straying about the cheerful rooms with naïve admiration. Presently she drew on her cotton gloves. 'I guess I must be leaving,' she said irresolutely.

Frances told her to come again, whenever she was lonesome or wanted advice about anything. Lena replied that she didn't believe she would ever get lonesome in Black Hawk.

She lingered at the kitchen door and begged Ántonia to come and see her often. 'I've got a room of my own at Mrs. Thomas's, with a carpet.'

Tony shuffled uneasily in her cloth slippers. 'I'll come sometime, but Mrs. Harling don't like to have me run much,' she said evasively.

'You can do what you please when you go out, can't you?' Lena asked in a guarded

whisper. 'Ain't you crazy about town, Tony? I don't care what anybody says, I'm done with the farm!' She glanced back over her shoulder toward the dining-room, where Mrs. Harling sat.

When Lena was gone, Frances asked Antonia why she hadn't been a little more cordial to her.

'I didn't know if your mother would like her coming here,' said Antonia, looking troubled. 'She was kind of talked about, out there.'

'Yes, I know. But mother won't hold it against her if she behaves well here. You needn't say anything about that to the children. I guess Jim has heard all that gossip?'

When I nodded, she pulled my hair and told me I knew too much, anyhow. We were good friends, Frances and I.

I ran home to tell grandmother that Lena Lingard had come to town. We were glad of it, for she had a hard life on the farm.

Lena lived in the Norwegian settlement west of Squaw Creek, and she used to herd her father's cattle in the open country between his place and the Shimerdas'. Whenever we rode over in that direction we saw her out among her cattle, bareheaded and barefooted, scantily dressed in tattered clothing, always knitting as she watched her herd. Before I knew Lena, I thought of her as something wild, that always lived on the prairie, because I had never seen her under a roof. Her yellow hair was burned to a ruddy thatch on her head; but her legs and arms, curiously enough, in spite of constant exposure to the sun, kept a miraculous whiteness which somehow made her seem more undressed than other girls who went scantily clad. The first time I stopped to talk to her, I was astonished at her soft voice and easy, gentle ways. The girls out there usually got rough and mannish after they went to herding. But Lena asked Jake and me to get off our horses and stay awhile, and behaved exactly as if she were in a house and were accustomed to having visitors. She was not embarrassed by her ragged clothes, and treated us as if we were old acquaintances. Even then I noticed the unusual colour of her eyes—a shade of deep violet—and their soft, confiding expression.

Chris Lingard was not a very successful farmer, and he had a large family. Lena was always knitting stockings for little brothers and sisters, and even the Norwegian women, who disapproved of her, admitted that she was a good daughter to her mother. As Tony said, she had been talked about. She was accused of making Ole Benson lose the little sense he had – and that at an age when she should still have been in pinafores.

Ole lived in a leaky dugout somewhere at the edge of the settlement. He was fat and lazy and discouraged, and bad luck had become a habit with him. After he had had every other kind of misfortune, his wife, 'Crazy Mary,' tried to set a neighbour's barn on fire, and was sent to the asylum at Lincoln. She was kept there for a few months, then escaped and walked all the way home, nearly two hundred miles, travelling by night and hiding in barns and haystacks by day. When she got back to the Norwegian settlement, her poor feet were as hard as hoofs. She promised to be good, and was allowed to stay at home—though everyone realized she was as crazy as ever, and she still ran about barefooted through the snow, telling her domestic troubles to her neighbours.

Not long after Mary came back from the asylum, I heard a young Dane, who was helping us to thresh, tell Jake and Otto that Chris Lingard's oldest girl had put Ole Benson out of his head, until he had no more sense than his crazy wife. When Ole was cultivating his corn that summer, he used to get discouraged in the field, tie up his team, and wander off to wherever Lena Lingard was herding. There he would sit down on the drawside and help her watch her cattle. All the settlement was talking about it. The Norwegian preacher's wife went to Lena and told her she ought not to allow this; she begged Lena to come to church on Sundays. Lena said she hadn't a dress in the world any less ragged than the one on her back. Then the minister's wife went through her old trunks and found some things she had worn before her marriage.

The next Sunday Lena appeared at church, a little late, with her hair done up neatly on her head, like a young woman, wearing shoes and stockings, and the new dress, which she had made over for herself very becomingly. The congregation stared at her. Until that morning no one—unless it were Ole—had realized how pretty she was, or that she was growing up. The swelling lines of her figure had been hidden under the shapeless rags she wore in the fields. After the last hymn had been sung, and the congregation was dismissed, Ole slipped out to the hitch-bar and lifted Lena on her horse. That, in itself, was shocking; a married man was not expected to do such things. But it was nothing to the scene that followed. Crazy Mary darted out from the group of women at the church door, and ran down the road after Lena, shouting horrible threats.

'Look out, you Lena Lingard, look out! I'll come over with a corn-knife one day and trim some of that shape off you. Then you won't sail round so fine, making eyes at the men! . . .'

The Norwegian women didn't know where to look. They were formal housewives, most of them, with a severe sense of decorum. But Lena Lingard only laughed her lazy, good-natured laugh and rode on, gazing back over her shoulder at Ole's infuriated wife.

The time came, however, when Lena didn't laugh. More than once Crazy Mary chased her across the prairie and round and round the Shimerdas' cornfield. Lena never told her father; perhaps she was ashamed; perhaps she was more afraid of his anger than of the corn-knife. I was at the Shimerdas' one afternoon when Lena came bounding through the red grass as fast as her white legs could carry her. She ran straight into the house and hid in Ántonia's feather-bed. Mary was not far behind: she came right up to the door and made us feel how sharp her blade was, showing us very graphically just what she meant to do to Lena. Mrs. Shimerda, leaning out of the window, enjoyed the situation keenly, and was sorry when Ántonia sent Mary away, mollified by an apronful of bottle-tomatoes. Lena came out from Tony's room behind the kitchen, very pink from the heat of the feathers, but otherwise calm. She begged Ántonia and me to go with her, and help get her cattle together; they were scattered and might be gorging themselves in somebody's cornfield.

'Maybe you lose a steer and learn not to make somethings with your eyes at married men,' Mrs. Shimerda told her hectoringly.

Lena only smiled her sleepy smile. 'I never made anything to him with my eyes. I can't help it if he hangs around, and I can't order him off. It ain't my prairie.'

5

After Lena came to Black Hawk, I often met her downtown, where she would be matching sewing silk or buying 'findings' for Mrs. Thomas. If I happened to walk home with her, she told me all about the dresses she was helping to make, or about what she saw and heard when she was with Tiny Soderball at the hotel on Saturday nights.

The Boys' Home was the best hotel on our branch of the Burlington, and all the commercial travellers in that territory tried to get into Black Hawk for Sunday. They used to assemble in the parlour after supper on Saturday nights. Marshall Field's man, Anson Kirkpatrick, played the piano and sang all the latest sentimental songs. After Tiny had helped the cook wash the dishes, she and Lena sat on the other side of the double doors between the parlour and the dining-room, listening to the music and giggling at the jokes and stories. Lena often said she hoped I would be a travelling man when I grew up. They had a gay life of it; nothing to do but ride about on trains all day and go to theatres when they were in big cities. Behind the hotel there was an old store building, where the salesmen opened their big trunks and spread out their samples on the counters. The Black Hawk merchants went to look at these things and order goods, and Mrs. Thomas, though she was 'retail trade,' was permitted to see them and to 'get ideas.' They were all generous, these travelling men; they gave Tiny Soderball handkerchiefs and gloves and ribbons and striped stockings,

and so many bottles of perfume and cakes of scented soap that she bestowed some of them on Lena.

One afternoon in the week before Christmas, I came upon Lena and her funny, square-headed little brother Chris, standing before the drugstore, gazing in at the wax dolls and blocks and Noah's Arks arranged in the frosty show window. The boy had come to town with a neighbour to do his Christmas shopping, for he had money of his own this year. He was only twelve, but that winter he had got the job of sweeping out the Norwegian church and making the fire in it every Sunday morning. A cold job it must have been, too!

We went into Duckford's dry-goods store, and Chris unwrapped all his presents and showed them to me—something for each of the six younger than himself, even a rubber pig for the baby. Lena had given him one of Tiny Soderball's bottles of perfume for his mother, and he thought he would get some handkerchiefs to go with it. They were cheap, and he hadn't much money left. We found a tableful of handkerchiefs spread out for view at Duckford's. Chris wanted those with initial letters in the corner, because he had never seen any before. He studied them seriously, while Lena looked over his shoulder, telling him she thought the red letters would hold their colour best. He seemed so perplexed that I thought perhaps he hadn't enough money, after all. Presently he said gravely:

'Sister, you know mother's name is Berthe. I don't know if I ought to get B for Berthe, or M for Mother.'

Lena patted his bristly head. 'I'd get the B, Chrissy. It will please her for you to think about her name. Nobody ever calls her by it now.'

That satisfied him. His face cleared at once, and he took three reds and three blues. When the neighbour came in to say that it was time to start, Lena wound Chris's comforter about his neck and turned up his jacket collar—he had no overcoat—and we watched him climb into the wagon and start on his long, cold drive. As we walked together up the back of her woollen glove. 'I get awful homesick for them, all the same,' she murmured, as if she were answering some remembered reproach.

6

Winter comes down savagely over a little town on the prairie. The wind that sweeps in from the open country strips away all the leafy screens that hide one yard from another in summer, and the houses seem to draw closer together. The roofs, that looked so far away across the green tree-tops, now stare you in the face, and they are so much uglier than when their angles were softened by vines and shrubs.

In the morning, when I was fighting my way to school against the wind, I couldn't see anything but the road in front of me; but in the late afternoon, when I was coming home, the town looked bleak and desolate to me. The pale, cold light of the winter sunset did not beautify—it was like the light of truth itself. When the smoky clouds hung low in the west and the red sun went down behind them, leaving a pink flush on the snowy roofs and the blue drifts, then the wind sprang up afresh, with a kind of bitter song, as if it said: 'This is reality, whether you like it or not. All those frivolities of summer, the light and shadow, the living mask of green that trembled over everything, they were lies, and this is what was underneath. This is the truth.' It was as if we were being punished for loving the loveliness of summer.

If I loitered on the playground after school, or went to the post-office for the mail and lingered to hear the gossip about the cigar-stand, it would be growing dark by the time I came home. The sun was gone; the frozen streets stretched long and blue before me; the lights were shining pale in kitchen windows, and I could smell the suppers cooking as I passed. Few people were abroad, and each one of them was hurrying toward a fire. The glowing stoves in the houses were like magnets. When one passed an old man, one could see nothing of his face but a red nose sticking out between a frosted beard

capered along with their hands in their pockets, and sometimes tried a slide on the icy sidewalk. The children, in their bright hoods and comforters, never walked, but always ran from the moment they left their door, beating their mittens against their sides. When I got as far as the Methodist Church, I was about halfway home. I can remember how glad I was when there happened to be a light in the church, and the painted glass window shone out at us as we came along the frozen street. In the winter bleakness a hunger for colour came over people, like the Laplander's craving for fats and sugar. Without knowing why, we used to linger on the sidewalk outside the church when the lamps were lighted early for choir practice or prayer-meeting, shivering and talking until our feet were like lumps of ice. The crude reds and greens and blues of that coloured glass held us there.

On winter nights, the lights in the Harlings' windows drew me like the painted glass. Inside that warm, roomy house there was colour, too. After supper I used to catch up my cap, stick my hands in my pockets, and dive through the willow hedge as if witches were after me. Of course, if Mr. Harling was at home, if his shadow stood out on the blind of the west room, I did not go in, but turned and walked home by the long way, through the street, wondering what book I should read as I sat down with the two old people.

Such disappointments only gave greater zest to the nights when we acted charades, or had a costume ball in the back parlour, with Sally always dressed like a boy. Frances taught us to dance that winter, and she said, from the first lesson, that Ántonia would make the best dancer among us. On Saturday nights, Mrs. Harling used to play the old operas for us—'Martha,' 'Norma,' 'Rigoletto'—telling us the story while she played. Every Saturday night was like a party. The parlour, the back parlour, and the dining-room were warm and brightly lighted, with comfortable chairs and sofas, and gay pictures on the walls. One always felt at east there. Ántonia brought her sewing and sat with us—she was already beginning to make pretty clothes for herself. After the long winter evenings on the prairie, with Ambrosch's sullen silences and her mother's complaints, the Harlings' house seemed, as she said, 'like Heaven' to her. She was never too tired to make taffy or chocolate cookies for us. If Sally whispered in her ear, or Charley gave her three winks, Tony would rush into the kitchen and build a fire in the range on which she had already cooked three meals that day.

While we sat in the kitchen waiting for the cookies to bake or the taffy to cool, Nina used to coax Ántonia to tell her stories—about the calf that broke its leg, or how Yulka saved her little turkeys from drowning in the freshet, or about old Christmases and weddings in Bohemia. Nina interpreted the stories about the crêche fancifully, and in spite of our derision she cherished a belief that Christ was born in Bohemia a short time before the Shimerdas left that country. We all liked Tony's stories. Her voice had a peculiarly engaging quality; it was deep, a little husky, and one always heard the breath vibrating behind it. Everything she said seemed to come right out of her heart.

One evening when we were picking out kernels for walnut taffy, Tony told us a new story.

'Mrs. Harling, did you ever hear about what happened up in the Norwegian settlement last summer, when I was threshing there? We were at Iversons', and I was driving one of the grainwagons.'

Mrs. Harling came out and sat down among us. 'Could you throw the wheat into the bin yourself, Tony?' She knew what heavy work it was.

'Yes, ma'm, I did. I could shovel just as fast as that fat Andern boy that drove the other wagon. One day it was just awful hot. When we got back to the field from dinner, we took things kind of easy. The men put in the horses and got the machine going, and Ole Iverson was up on the deck, cutting bands. I was sitting against a straw-stack, trying to get some shade. My wagon wasn't going out first, and somehow I felt the heat awful that day. The sun was so hot like it was going to burn the world up. After a while I see a man coming across the stubble, and when he got

close I see it was a tramp. His toes stuck out of his shoes, and he hadn't shaved for a long while, and his eyes was awful red and wild, like he had some sickness. He comes right up and begins to talk like he knows me already. He says: "The ponds in this country is done got so low a man couldn't drownd himself in one of 'em."

'I told him nobody wanted to drownd themselves, but if we didn't have rain soon we'd have to pump water for the cattle.

'"Oh, cattle," he says, "you'll all take care of your cattle! Ain't you got no beer here?" I told him he'd have to go to the Bohemians for beer; the Norwegians didn't have none when they threshed. "My God!" he says, "so it's Norwegians now, is it? I thought this was Americy."

'Then he goes up to the machine and yells out to Ole Iverson, "Hello, partner, let me up there. I can cut bands, and I'm tired of trampin'. I won't go no farther."

'I tried to make signs to Ole, 'cause I thought that man was crazy and might get the machine stopped up. But Ole, he was glad to get down out of the sun and chaff—it gets down your neck and sticks to you something awful when it's hot like that. So Ole jumped down and crawled under one of the wagons for shade, and the tramp got on the machine. He cut bands all right for a few minutes, and then, Mrs. Harling, he waved his hand to me and jumped head-first right into the threshing machine after the wheat.

'I begun to scream, and the men run to stop the horses, but the belt had sucked him down, and by the time they got her stopped, he was all beat and cut to pieces. He was wedged in so tight it was a hard job to get him out, and the machine ain't never worked right since.'

'Was he clear dead, Tony?' we cried.

'Was he dead? Well, I guess so! There, now, Nina's all upset. We won't talk about it. Don't you cry, Nina. No old tramp won't get you while Tony's here.'

Mrs. Harling spoke up sternly. 'Stop crying, Nina, or I'll always send you upstairs when Antonia tells us about the country. Did they never find out where he came from, Antonia?'

'Never, ma'm. He hadn't been seen nowhere except in a little town they call Conway. He tried to get beer there, but there wasn't any saloon. Maybe he came in on a freight, but the brakeman hadn't seen him. They couldn't find no letters nor nothing on him; nothing but an old penknife in his pocket and the wish-bone of a chicken wrapped up in a piece of paper, and some poetry.'

'Some poetry?' we exclaimed.

'I remember,' said Frances. 'It was "The Old Oaken Bucket," cut out of a newspaper and nearly worn out. Ole Iverson brought it into the office and showed it to me.'

'Now, wasn't that strange, Miss Frances?' Tony asked thoughtfully. 'What would anybody want to kill themselves in summer for? In threshing time, too! It's nice everywhere then.'

'So it is, Antonia,' said Mrs. Harling heartily. 'Maybe I'll go home and help you thresh next summer. Isn't that taffy nearly ready to eat? I've been smelling it a long while.'

There was a basic harmony between Antonia and her mistress. They had strong, independent natures, both of them. They knew what they liked, and were not always trying to imitate other people. They loved children and animals and music, and rough play and digging in the earth. They liked to prepare rich, hearty food and to see people eat it; to make up soft white beds and to see youngsters asleep in them. They ridiculed conceited people and were quick to help unfortunate ones. Deep down in each of them there was a kind of hearty joviality, a relish of life, not over-delicate, but very invigorating. I never tried to define it, but I was distinctly conscious of it. I could not imagine Antonia's living for a week in any other house in Black Hawk than the Harlings'.

7

Winter lies too long in country towns; hangs on until it is stale and shabby, old and sullen. On the farm the weather was the great fact, and men's affairs went on underneath it, as the streams creep under the ice.

But in Black Hawk the scene of human life was spread out shrunken and pinched, frozen down to the bare stalk.

Through January and February I went to the river with the Harlings on clear nights, and we skated up to the big island and made bonfires on the frozen sand. But by March the ice was rough and choppy, and the snow on the river bluffs was grey and mournful-looking. I was tired of school, tired of winter clothes, of the rutted streets, of the dirty drifts and the piles of cinders that had lain in the yards so long. There was only one break in the dreary monotony of that month: when Blind d'Arnault, the Negro pianist, came to town. He gave a concert at the Opera House on Monday night, and he and his manager spent Saturday and Sunday at our comfortable hotel. Mrs. Harling had known d'Arnault for years. She told Ántonia she had better go to see Tiny that Saturday evening, as there would certainly be music at the Boys' Home.

Saturday night after supper I ran down-town to the hotel and slipped quietly into the parlour. The chairs and sofas were already occupied, and the air smelled pleasantly of cigar smoke. The parlour had once been two rooms, and the floor was sway-backed where the partition had been cut away. The wind from without made waves in the long carpet. A coal stove glowed at either end of the room, and the grand piano in the middle stood open.

There was an atmosphere of unusual freedom about the house that night, for Mrs. Gardener had gone to Omaha for a week. Johnnie had been having drinks with the guests until he was rather absent-minded. It was Mrs. Gardener who ran the business and looked after everything. Her husband stood at the desk and welcomed incoming travellers. He was a popular fellow, but no manager.

Mrs. Gardener was admittedly the best-dressed woman in Black Hawk, drove the best horse, and had a smart trap and a little white-and-gold sleigh. She seemed indifferent to her possessions, was not half so solicitous about them as her friends were. She was tall, dark, severe, with something Indian-like in the rigid immobility of her face. Her manner was cold, and she talked little. Guests felt that they were receiving, not conferring, a favour when they stayed at her house. Even the smartest travelling men were flattered when Mrs. Gardener stopped to chat with them for a moment. The patrons of the hotel were divided into two classes: those who had seen Mrs. Gardener's diamonds, and those who had not.

When I stole into the parlour, Anson Kirkpatrick, Marshall Field's man, was at the piano, playing airs from a musical comedy then running in Chicago. He was a dapper little Irishman, very vain, homely as a monkey, with friends everywhere, and a sweetheart in every port, like a sailor. I did not know all the men who were sitting about, but I recognized a furniture salesman from Kansas City, a drug man, and Willy O'Reilly, who travelled for a jewellery house and sold musical instruments. The talk was all about good and bad hotels, actors and actresses and musical prodigies. I learned that Mrs. Gardener had gone to Omaha to hear Booth and Barrett, who were to play there next week, and that Mary Anderson was having a great success in 'A Winter's Tale,' in London.

The door from the office opened, and Johnnie Gardener came in, directing Blind d'Arnault—he would never consent to be led. He was a heavy, bulky mulatto, on short legs, and he came tapping the floor in front of him with his gold-headed cane. His yellow face was lifted in the light, with a show of white teeth, all grinning, and his shrunken, papery eyelids lay motionless over his blind eyes.

'Good evening, gentlemen. No ladies here? Good evening, gentlemen. We going to have a little music? Some of you gentlemen going to play for me this evening?' It was the soft, amiable Negro voice, like those I remembered from early childhood, with the note of docile subservience in it. He had the Negro head, too; almost no head at all; nothing behind the ears but folds of neck under close-clipped wool. He would have been repulsive if his face had not been so kindly and happy. It was the happiest face I had seen since I left Virginia.

He felt his way directly to the piano. The

moment he sat down, I noticed the nervous infirmity of which Mrs. Harling had told me. When he was sitting, or standing still, he swayed back and forth incessantly, like a rocking toy. At the piano, he swayed in time to the music, and when he was not playing, his body kept up this motion, like an empty mill grinding on. He found the pedals and tried them, ran his yellow hands up and down the keys a few times, tinkling off scales, then turned to the company.

'She seems all right, gentlemen. Nothing happened to her since the last time I was here. Mrs. Gardener, she always has this piano tuned up before I come. Now gentlemen, I expect you've all got grand voices. Seems like we might have some good old plantation songs to-night.'

The men gathered round him, as he began to play 'My Old Kentucky Home.' They sang one Negro melody after another, while the mulatto sat rocking himself, his head thrown back, his yellow face lifted, his shrivelled eyelids never fluttering.

He was born in the Far South, on the d'Arnault plantation, where the spirit if not the fact of slavery persisted. When he was three weeks old, he had an illness which left him totally blind. As soon as he was old enough to sit up alone and toddle about, another affliction, the nervous motion of his body, became apparent. His mother, a buxom young Negro wench who was laundress for the d'Arnaults, concluded that her blind baby was 'not right' in his head, and she was ashamed of him. She loved him devotedly, but he was so ugly, with his sunken eyes and his 'fidgets,' that she hid him away from people. All the dainties she brought down from the Big House were for the blind child, and she beat and cuffed her other children whenever she found them teasing him or trying to get his chicken-bone way from him. He began to talk early, remembered everything he heard, and his mammy said he 'wasn't all wrong.' She named him Samson, because he was blind, but on the plantation he was known as 'yellow Martha's simple child.' He was docile and obedient, but when he was six years old he began to run away from home, always taking the same direction. He felt his way through the lilacs, along the boxwood hedge, up to the south wing of the Big House, where Miss Nellie d'Arnault practised the piano every morning. This angered his mother more than anything else he could have done; she was so ashamed of his ugliness that she couldn't bear to have white folks see him. Whenever she caught him slipping away from the cabin, she whipped him unmercifully, and told him what dreadful things old Mr. d'Arnault would do to him if he ever found him near the Big House. But the next time Samson had a chance, he ran away again. If Miss d'Arnault stopped practising for a moment and went toward the window, she saw this hideous little pickaninny, dressed in an old piece of sacking, standing in the open space between the hollyhock rows, his body rocking automatically, his blind face lifted to the sun and wearing an expression of idiotic rapture. Often she was tempted to tell Martha that the child must be kept at home, but somehow the memory of his foolish, happy face deterred her. She remembered that his sense of hearing was nearly all he had—though it did not occur to her that he might have more of it than other children.

One day Samson was standing thus while Miss Nellie was playing her lesson to her music-teacher. The windows were open. He heard them get up from the piano, talk a little while, and then leave the room. He heard the door close after them. He crept up to the front windows and stuck his head in: there was no one there. He could always detect the presence of anyone in a room. He put one foot over the window-sill and straddled it.

His mother had told him over and over how his master would give him to the big mastiff if he ever found him 'meddling.' Samson had got too near the mastiff's kennel once, and had felt his terrible breath in his face. He thought about that, but he pulled in his other foot.

Through the dark he found his way to the Thing, to its mouth. He touched it softly, and it answered softly, kindly. He shivered and stood still. Then he began to feel it all over, ran his finger-tips along the slippery sides,

embraced the carved legs, tried to get some conception of its shape and size, of the space it occupied in primeval night. It was cold and hard, and like nothing else in his black universe. He went back to its mouth, began at one end of the keyboard and felt his way down into the mellow thunder, as far as he could go. He seemed to know that it must be done with the fingers, not with the fists or the feet. He approached this highly artificial instrument through a mere instinct, and coupled himself to it, as if he knew it was to piece him out and make a whole creature of him. After he had tried over all the sounds, he began to finger out passages from things Miss Nellie had been practising, passages that were already his, that lay under the bone of his pinched, conical little skull, definite as animal desires.

The door opened; Miss Nellie and her music-master stood behind it, but blind Samson, who was so sensitive to presences, did not know they were there. He was feeling out the pattern that lay all ready-made on the big and little keys. When he paused for a moment, because the sound was wrong and he wanted another, Miss Nellie spoke softly. He whirled about in a spasm of terror, leaped forward in the dark, struck his head on the open window, and fell screaming and bleeding to the floor. He had what his mother called a fit. The doctor came and gave him opium.

When Samson was well again, his young mistress led him back to the piano. Several teachers experimented with him. They found he had absolute pitch, and a remarkable memory. As a very young child he could repeat, after a fashion, any composition that was played for him. No matter how many wrong notes he struck, he never lost the intention of a passage, he brought the substance of it across by irregular and astonishing means. He wore his teachers out. He could never learn like other people, never acquired any finish. He was always a Negro prodigy who played barbarously and wonderfully. As piano-playing, it was perhaps abominable, but as music it was something real, vitalized by a sense of rhythm that was stronger than his other physical senses—that not only filled his dark mind, but worried his body incessantly. To hear him, to watch him, was to see a Negro enjoying himself as only a Negro can. It was as if all the agreeable sensations possible to creatures of flesh and blood were heaped up on those black-and-white keys, and he were gloating over them and trickling them through his yellow fingers.

In the middle of a crashing waltz, d'Arnault suddenly began to play softly, and, turning to one of the men who stood behind him, whispered, 'Somebody dancing in there.' He jerked his bullet-head toward the dining-room. 'I hear little feet—girls, I 'spect.'

Anson Kirkpatrick mounted a chair and peeped over the transom. Springing down, he wrenched open the doors and ran out into the dining-room. Tiny and Lena, Ántonia and Mary Dusak, were waltzing in the middle of the floor. They separated and fled toward the kitchen, giggling.

Kirkpatrick caught Tiny by the elbows. 'What's the matter with you girls? Dancing out here by yourselves, when there's a roomful of lonesome men on the other side of the partition! Introduce me to your friends, Tiny.'

The girls, still laughing, were trying to escape. Tiny looked alarmed. 'Mrs. Gardener wouldn't like it,' she protested. 'She'd be awful mad if you was to come out here and dance with us.'

'Mrs. Gardener's in Omaha, girl. Now, you're Lena, are you?—and you're Tony and you're Mary. Have I got you all straight?'

O'Reilly and the others began to pile the chairs on the tables, Johnnie Gardener ran in from the office.

'Easy, boys, easy!' he entreated them. 'You'll wake the cook, and there'll be the devil to pay for me. She won't hear the music, but she'll be down the minute anything's moved in the dining-room.'

'Oh, what do you care, Johnnie? Fire the cook and wire Molly to bring another. Come along, nobody'll tell tales.'

Johnnie shook his head. ''S a fact, boys,' he said confidentially. 'If I take a drink in Black Hawk, Molly knows it in Omaha!'

His guests laughed and slapped him on

the shoulder. 'Oh, we'll make it all right with Molly. Get your back up, Johnnie.'

Molly was Mrs. Gardener's name, of course. 'Molly Bawn' was painted in large blue letters on the glossy white sides of the hotel bus, and 'Molly' was engraved inside Johnnie's ring and on his watch-case—doubtless on his heart, too. He was an affectionate little man, and he thought his wife a wonderful woman; he knew that without her he would hardly be more than a clerk in some other man's hotel.

At a word from Kirkpatrick, d'Arnault spread himself out over the piano, and began to draw the dance music out of it, while the perspiration shone on his short wool and on his uplifted face. He looked like some glistening African god of pleasure, full of strong, savage blood. Whenever the dancers paused to change partners or to catch breath, he would boom out softly, 'Who's that goin' back on me? One of these city gentlemen, I bet! Now, you girls, you ain't goin' to let that floor get cold?'

Antonia seemed frightened at first, and kept looking questioningly at Lena and Tiny over Willy O'Reilly's shoulder. Tiny Soderball was trim and slender, with lively little feet and pretty ankles—she wore her dresses very short. She was quicker in speech, lighter in movement and manner than the other girls. Mary Dusak was broad and brown of countenance, slightly marked by smallpox, but handsome for all that. She had beautiful chestnut hair, coils of it; her forehead was low and smooth, and her commanding dark eyes regarded the world indifferently and fearlessly. She looked bold and resourceful and unscrupulous, and she was all of these. They were handsome girls, had the fresh colour of their country upbringing, and in their eyes that brilliancy which is called—by no metaphor, alas!—'the light of youth.'

D'Arnault played until his manager came and shut the piano. Before he left us, he showed us his gold watch which struck the hours, and a topaz ring, given him by some Russian nobleman who delighted in Negro melodies, and had heard d'Arnault play in New Orleans. At last he tapped his way upstairs, after bowing to everybody, docile and happy. I walked home with Antonia. We were so excited that we dreaded to go to bed. We lingered a long while at the Harlings' gate, whispering in the cold until the restlessness was slowly chilled out of us.

8

The Harling children and I were never happier, never felt more contented and secure, than in the weeks of spring which broke that long winter. We were out all day in the thin sunshine, helping Mrs. Harling and Tony break the ground and plant the garden, dig around the orchard trees, tie up vines and clip the hedges. Every morning, before I was up, I could hear Tony singing in the garden rows. After the apple and cherry trees broke into bloom, we ran about under them, hunting for the new nests the birds were building, throwing clods at each other, and playing hide-and-seek with Nina. Yet the summer which was to change everything was coming nearer every day. When boys and girls are growing up, life can't stand still, not even in the quietest of country towns, and they have to grow up, whether they will or no. That is what their elders are always forgetting.

It must have been in June, for Mrs. Harling and Antonia were preserving cherries, when I stopped one morning to tell them that a dancing pavilion had come to town. I had seen two drays hauling the canvas and painted poles up from the depot.

That afternoon three cheerful-looking Italians strolled about Black Hawk, looking at everything, and with them was a dark, stout woman who wore a long gold watch-chain about her neck and carried a black lace parasol. They seemed especially interested in children and vacant lots. When I overtook them and stopped to say a word, I found them affable and confiding. They told me they worked in Kansas City in the winter, and in summer they went out among the farming towns with their tent and taught dancing. When business fell off in one place, they moved on to another.

The dancing pavilion was put up near the Danish laundry, on a vacant lot surrounded

by tall, arched cottonwood trees. It was very much like a merry-go-round tent, with open sides and gay flags flying from the poles. Before the week was over, all the ambitious mothers were sending their children to the afternoon dancing class. At three o'clock one met little girls in white dresses and little boys in the round-collared shirts of the time, hurrying along the sidewalk on their way to the tent. Mrs. Vanni received them at the entrance, always dressed in lavender with a great deal of black lace, her important watch-chain lying on her bosom. She wore her hair on the top of her head, built up in a black tower, with red coral combs. When she smiled, she showed two rows of strong, crooked yellow teeth. She taught the little children herself, and her husband, the harpist, taught the older ones.

Often the mothers brought their fancy-work and sat on the shady side of the tent during the lesson. The popcorn man wheeled his glass wagon under the big cottonwood by the door, and lounged in the sun, sure of a good trade when the dancing was over. Mr. Jensen, the Danish laundryman, used to bring a chair from his porch and sit out in the grass plot. Some ragged little boys from the depot sold pop and iced lemonade under a white umbrella at the corner, and made faces at the spruce youngsters who came to dance. That vacant lot soon became the most cheerful place in town. Even on the hottest afternoons the cottonwoods made a rustling shade, and the air smelled of popcorn and melted butter, and Bouncing Bets wilting in the sun. Those hardy flowers had run away from the laundryman's garden, and the grass in the middle of the lot was pink with them.

The Vannis kept exemplary order, and closed every evening at the hour suggested by the city council. When Mrs. Vanni gave the signal, and the harp struck up 'Home, Sweet Home,' all Black Hawk knew it was ten o'clock. You could set your watch by that tune as confidently as by the roundhouse whistle.

At last there was something to do in those long, empty summer evenings, when the married people sat like images on their front porches, and the boys and girls tramped and tramped the board sidewalks—northward to the edge of the open prairie, south to the depot, then back again to the post-office, the icre-cream parlour, the butcher shop. Now there was a place where the girls could wear their new dresses, and where one could laugh aloud without being reproved by the ensuing silence. That silence seemed to ooze out of the ground, to hang under the foliage of the black maple trees with the bats and shadows. Now it was broken by lighthearted sounds. First the deep purring of Mr. Vanni's harp came in silvery ripples through the blackness of the dusty-smelling night; then the violins fell in—one of them was almost like a flute. They called so archly, so seductively, that our feet hurried toward the tent of themselves. Why hadn't we had a tent before?

Dancing became popular now, just as roller skating had been the summer before. The Progressive Euchre Club arranged with the Vannis for the exclusive use of the floor on Tuesday and Friday nights. At other times anyone could dance who paid his money and was orderly; the railroad men, the roundhouse mechanics, the delivery boys, the iceman, the farm-hands who lived near enough to ride into town after their day's work was over.

I never missed a Saturday night dance. The tent was open until midnight then. The country boys came in from farms eight and ten miles away, and all the country girls were on the floor—Ántonia and Lena and Tiny, and the Danish laundry girls and their friends. I was not the only boy who found these dances gayer than the others. The young men who belonged to the Progressive Euchre Club used to drop in late and risk a tiff with their sweethearts and general condemnation for a waltz with 'the hired girls.'

9

There was a curious social situation in Black Hawk. All the young men felt the attraction of the fine, well-set-up country girls who had come to town to earn a living, and, in nearly every case, to help the father struggle out of debt, or to make it possible for

the younger children of the family to go to school.

Those girls had grown up in the first bitter-hard times, and had got little schooling themselves. But the younger brothers and sisters, for whom they made such sacrifices and who have had 'advantages,' never seem to me, when I meet them now, half as interesting or as well educated. The older girls, who helped to break up the wild sod, learned so much from life, from poverty, from their mothers and grandmothers; they had all, like Ántonia, been early awakened and made observant by coming at a tender age from an old country to a new.

I can remember a score of these country girls who were in service in Black Hawk during the few years I lived there, and I can remember something unusual and engaging about each of them. Physically they were almost a race apart, and out-of-door work had given them a vigour which, when they got over their first shyness on coming to town, developed into a positive carriage and freedom of movement, and made them conspicuous among Black Hawk women.

That was before the day of high-school athletics. Girls who had to walk more than half a mile to school were pitied. There was not a tennis-court in the town; physical exercise was thought rather inelegant for the daughters of well-to-do families. Some of the high-school girls were jolly and pretty, but they stayed indoors in winter because of the cold, and in summer because of the heat. When one danced with them, their bodies never moved inside their clothes; their muscles seemed to ask but one thing—not to be disturbed. I remember those girls merely as faces in the school-room, gay and rosy, or listless and dull, cut off below the shoulders, like cherubs, by the ink-smeared tops of the high desks that were surely put there to make us round-shouldered and hollow-chested.

The daughters of Black Hawk merchants had a confident, unenquiring belief that they were 'refined,' and that the country girls, who 'worked out,' were not. The American farmers in our county were quite as hard-pressed as their neighbours from other countries. All alike had come to Nebraska with little capital and no knowledge of the soil they must subdue. All had borrowed money on their land. But no matter in what straits the Pennsylvanian or Virginian found himself, he would not let his daughters go out into service. Unless his girls could teach a country school, they sat at home in poverty.

The Bohemian and Scandinavian girls could not get positions as teachers, because they had had no opportunity to learn the language. Determined to help in the struggle to clear the homestead from debt, they had no alternative but to go into service. Some of them, after they came to town, remained as serious and as discreet in behaviour as they had been when they ploughed and herded on their father's farm. Others, like the three Bohemian Marys, tried to make up for the years of youth they had lost. But every one of them did what she had set out to do, and sent home those hard-earned dollars. The girls I knew were always helping to pay for ploughs and reapers, brood-sows, or steers to fatten.

One result of this family solidarity was that the foreign farmers in our county were the first to become prosperous. After the fathers were out of debt, the daughters married the sons of neighbours—usually of like nationality—and the girls who once worked in Black Hawk kitchens are to-day managing big farms and fine families of their own; their children are better off than the children of the town women they used to serve.

I thought the attitude of the town people toward these girls very stupid. If I told my schoolmates that Lena Lingard's grandfather was a clergyman, and much respected in Norway, they looked at me blankly. What did it matter? All foreigners were ignorant people who couldn't speak English. There was not a man in Black Hawk who had the intelligence or cultivation, much less the personal distinction of Ántonia's father. Yet people saw no difference between her and the three Marys; they were all Bohemians, all 'hired girls.'

I always knew I should live long enough to see my country girls come into their own, and I have. To-day the best that a harassed Black Hawk merchant can hope for is to sell

provisions and farm machinery and automobiles to the rich farms where that first crop of stalwart Bohemian and Scandinavian girls are now the mistresses.

The Black Hawk boys looked forward to marrying Black Hawk girls, and living in a brand-new little house with best chairs that must not be sat upon, and hand-painted china that must not be used. But sometimes a young fellow would look up from his ledger, or out through the grating of his father's bank, and let his eyes follow Lena Lingard, as she passed the window with her slow, undulating walk, or Tiny Soderball, tripping by in her short skirt and striped stockings.

The country girls were considered a menace to the social order. Their beauty shone out too boldly against a conventional background. But anxious mothers need have felt no alarm. They mistook the mettle of their sons. The respect for respectability was stronger than any desire in Black Hawk youth.

Our young man of position was like the son of a royal house; the boy who swept out his office or drove his delivery wagon might frolic with the jolly country girls, but he himself must sit all evening in a plush parlour where conversation dragged so perceptibly that the father often came in and made blundering efforts to warm up the atmosphere. On his way home from his dull call, he would perhaps meet Tony and Lena, coming along the sidewalk whispering to each other, or the three Bohemian Marys in their long plush coats and caps, comporting themselves with a dignity that only made their eventful histories the more piquant. If he went to the hotel to see a travelling man on business, there was Tiny, arching her shoulders at him like a kitten. If he went into the laundry to get his collars, there were the four Danish girls, smiling up from their ironing-boards, with their white throats and their pink cheeks.

The three Marys were the heroines of a cycle of scandalous stories, which the old men were fond of relating as they sat about the cigar-stand in the drugstore. Mary Dusak had been housekeeper for a bachelor rancher from Boston, and after several years in his service she was forced to retire from the world for a short time. Later she came back to town to take the place of her friend, Mary Svoboda, who was similarly embarrassed. The three Marys were considered as dangerous as high explosives to have about the kitchen, yet they were such good cooks and such admirable housekeepers that they never had to look for a place.

The Vannis' tent brought the town boys and the country girls together on neutral ground. Sylvester Lovett, who was cashier in his father's bank, always found his way to the tent on Saturday night. He took all the dances Lena Lingard would give him, and even grew bold enough to walk home with her. If his sisters or their friends happened to be among the onlookers on 'popular nights,' Sylvester stood back in the shadow under the cottonwood trees, smoking and watching Lena with a harassed expression. Several times I stumbled upon him there in the dark, and I felt rather sorry for him. He reminded me of Ole Benson, who used to sit on the draw-side and watch Lena herd her cattle. Later in the summer, when Lena went home for a week to visit her mother, I heard from Ántonia that young Lovett drove all the way out there to see her, and took her buggy-riding. In my ingenuousness I hoped that Sylvester would marry Lena, and thus give all the country girls a better position in the town.

Sylvester dallied about Lena until he began to make mistakes in his work; had to stay at the bank until after dark to make his books balance. He was daft about her, and everyone knew it. To escape from his predicament he ran away with a widow six years older than himself, who owned a half-section. This remedy worked, apparently. He never looked at Lena again, nor lifted his eyes as he ceremoniously tipped his hat when he happened to meet her on the sidewalk.

So that was what they were like, I thought, these white-handed, high-collared clerks and bookkeepers! I used to glare at young Lovett from a distance and only wished I had some way of showing my contempt for him.

10

It was at the Vannis' tent that Ántonia was discovered. Hitherto she had been looked upon more as a ward of the Harlings than as one of the hired girls.' She had lived in their house and yard and garden; her thoughts never seemed to stray outside that little kingdom. But after the tent came to town she began to go about with Tiny and Lena and their friends. The Vannis often said that Ántonia was the best dancer of them all. I sometimes heard murmurs in the crowd outside the pavilion that Mrs. Harling would soon have her hands full with that girl. The young men began to joke with each other about 'the Harlings' Tony' as they did about 'the Marshalls' Anna' or 'the Gardeners' Tiny.'

Ántonia talked and thought of nothing but the tent. She hummed the dance tunes all day. When supper was late, she hurried with her dishes, dropped and smashed them in her excitement. At the first call of the music, she became irresponsible. If she hadn't time to dress, she merely flung off her apron and shot out of the kitchen door. Sometimes I went with her; the moment the lighted tent came into view she would break into a run, like a boy. There were always partners waiting for her; she began to dance before she got her breath.

Ántonia's success at the tent had its consequences. The iceman lingered too long now, when he came into the covered porch to fill the refrigerator. The delivery boys hung about the kitchen when they brought the groceries. Young farmers who were in town for Saturday came tramping through the yard to the back door to engage dances, or to invite Tony to parties and picnics. Lena and Norwegian Anna dropped in to help her with her work, so that she could get away early. The boys who brought her home after the dances sometimes laughed at the back gate and wakened Mr. Harling from his first sleep. A crisis was inevitable.

One Saturday night Mr. Harling had gone down to the cellar for beer. As he came up the stairs in the dark, he heard scuffling on the back porch, and then the sound of a vigorous slap. He looked out through the side door in time to see a pair of long legs vaulting over the picket fence. Ántonia was standing there, angry and excited. Young Harry Paine, who was to marry his employer's daughter on Monday, had come to the tent with a crowd of friends and danced all evening. Afterward, he begged Antonia to let him walk home with her. She said she supposed he was a nice young man, as he was one of Miss Frances's friends, and she didn't mind. On the back porch he tried to kiss her, and when she protested—because he was going to be married on Monday—he caught her and kissed her until she got one hand free and slapped him.

Mr. Harling put his beer-bottles down on the table. 'This is what I've been expecting, Ántonia. You've been going with girls who have a reputation for being free and easy, and now you've got the same reputation. I won't have this and that fellow tramping about my back yard all the time. This is the end of it, tonight. It stops, short. You can quit going to these dances, or you can hunt another place. Think it over.'

The next morning when Mrs. Harling and Frances tried to reason with Antonia, they found her agitated but determined. 'Stop going to the tent?' she panted. 'I wouldn't think of it for a minute! My own father couldn't make me stop! Mr. Harling ain't my boss outside my work. I won't give up my friends, either. The boys I go with are nice fellows. I thought Mr. Paine was all right, too, because he used to come here. I guess I gave him a red face for his wedding, all right!' she blazed out indignantly.

'You'll have to do one thing or the other, Ántonia,' Mrs. Harling told her decidedly. 'I can't go back on what Mr. Harling has said. This is his house.'

'Then I'll just leave, Mrs. Harling. Lena's been wanting me to get a place closer to her for a long while. Mary Svoboda's going away from the Cutters' to work at the hotel, and I can have her place.'

Mrs. Harling rose from her chair. 'Ántonia, if you go to the Cutters' to work, you cannot come back to this house again. You know what that man is. It will be the ruin of you.'

Tony snatched up the tea-kettle and began

to pour boiling water over the glasses, laughing excitedly. 'Oh, I can take care of myself! I'm a lot stronger than Cutter is. They pay four dollars there, and there's no children. The work's nothing; I can have every evening, and be out a lot in the afternoons.'

'I thought you liked children. Tony, what's come over you?'

'I don't know, something has.' Ántonia tossed her head and set her jaw. 'A girl like me has got to take her good times when she can. Maybe there won't be any tent next year. I guess I want to have my fling, like the other girls.'

Mrs. Harling gave a short, harsh laugh. 'If you go to work for the Cutters, you're likely to have a fling that you won't get up from in a hurry.'

Frances said, when she told grandmother and me about this scene, that every pan and plate and cup on the shelves trembled when her mother walked out of the kitchen. Mrs. Harling declared bitterly that she wished she had never let herself get fond of Ántonia.

11

Wick Cutter was the money-lender who had fleeced poor Russian Peter. When a farmer once got into the habit of going to Cutter, it was like gambling or the lottery; in an hour of discouragement he went back.

Cutter's first name was Wycliffe, and he liked to talk about his pious bringing-up. He contributed regularly to the Protestant churches, 'for sentiment's sake,' as he said with a flourish of the hand. He came from a town in Iowa where there were a great many Swedes, and could speak a little Swedish, which gave him a great advantage with the early Scandinavian settlers.

In every frontier settlement there are men who have come there to escape restraint. Cutter was one of the 'fast set' of Black Hawk business men. He was an inveterate gambler, though a poor loser. When we saw a light burning in his office late at night, we knew that a game of poker was going on. Cutter boasted that he never drank anything stronger than sherry, and he said he got his start in life by saving the money that other young men spent for cigars. He was full of moral maxims for boys. When he came to our house on business, he quoted 'Poor Richard's Almanack' to me, and told me he was delighted to find a town boy who could milk a cow. He was particularly affable to grandmother, and whenever they met he would begin at once to talk about 'the good old times' and simple living. I detested his pink, bald head, and his yellow whiskers, always soft and glistening. It was said he brushed them every night, as a woman does her hair. His white teeth looked factory-made. His skin was red and rough, as if from perpetual sunburn; he often went away to hot springs to take mud baths. He was notoriously dissolute with women. Two Swedish girls who had lived in his house were the worse for the experience. One of them he had taken to Omaha and established in the business for which he had fitted her. He still visited her.

Cutter lived in a state of perpetual warfare with his wife, and yet, apparently, they never thought of separating. They dwelt in a fussy, scroll-work house, painted white and buried in thick evergreens, with a fussy white fence and barn. Cutter thought he knew a great deal about horses, and usually had a colt which he was training for the track. On Sunday mornings one could see him out at the fair grounds, speeding around the race-course in his trotting buggy, wearing yellow gloves and a black-and-white-check travelling cap, his whiskers blowing back in the breeze. If there were any boys about, Cutter would offer one of them a quarter to hold the stop-watch, and then drive off, saying he had no change and would 'fix it up next time.' No one could cut his lawn or wash his buggy to suit him. He was so fastidious and prim about his place that a boy would go to a good deal of trouble to throw a dead cat into his back yard, or dump a sackful of tin cans in his alley. It was a peculiar combination of old-maidishness and licentiousness that made Cutter seem so despicable.

He had certainly met his match when he married Mrs. Cutter. She was a terrifying-looking person; almost a giantess in height, raw-boned, with iron-grey hair, a face always

flushed, and prominent, hysterical eyes. When she meant to be entertaining and agreeable, she nodded her head incessantly and snapped her eyes at one. Her teeth were long and curved, like a horse's; people said babies always cried if she smiled at them. Her face had a kind of fascination for me: it was the very colour and shape of anger. There was a gleam of something akin to insanity in her full, intense eyes. She was formal in manner, and made calls in rustling, steel-grey brocades and a tall bonnet with bristling aigrettes.

Mrs. Cutter painted china so assiduously that even her wash-bowls and pitchers, and her husband's shaving-mug, were covered with violets and lilies. Once, when Cutter was exhibiting some of his wife's china to a caller, he dropped a piece. Mrs. Cutter put her handkerchief to her lips as if she were going to faint and said grandly: 'Mr. Cutter, you have broken all the Commandments—spare the finger-bowls!'

They quarrelled from the moment Cutter came into the house until they went to bed at night, and their hired girls reported these scenes to the town at large. Mrs. Cutter had several times cut paragraphs about unfaithful husbands out of the newspapers and mailed them to Cutter in a disguised handwriting. Cutter would come home at noon, find the mutilated journal in the paper-rack, and triumphantly fit the clipping into the space from which it had been cut. Those two could quarrel all morning about whether he ought to put on his heavy or his light underwear, and all evening about whether he had taken cold or not.

The Cutters had major as well as minor subjects for dispute. The chief of these was the question of inheritance: Mrs. Cutter told her husband it was plainly his fault they had no children. He insisted Mrs. Cutter had purposely remained childless, with the determination to outlive him and to share his property with her 'people,' whom he detested. To this she would reply that unless he changed his mode of life, she would certainly outlive him. After listening to her insinuations about his physical soundness, Cutter would resume his dumb-bell practice for a month, or rise daily at the hour when his wife most liked to sleep, dress noisily, and drive out to the track with his trotting-horse.

Once when they had quarrelled about household expenses, Mrs. Cutter put on her brocade and went among their friends soliciting orders for painted china, saying that Mr. Cutter had compelled her 'to live by her brush.' Cutter wasn't ashamed as she had expected; he was delighted!

Cutter often threatened to chop down the cedar trees which half-buried the house. His wife declared she would leave him if she were stripped of the 'privacy' which she felt these trees afforded her. That was his opportunity, surely; but he never cut down the trees. The Cutters seemed to find their relations to each other interesting and stimulating, and certainly the rest of us found them so. Wick Cutter was different from any other rascal I have ever known, but I have found Mrs. Cutters all over the world; sometimes founding new religions, sometimes being forcibly fed—easily recognizable, even when superficially tamed.

12

After Ántonia went to live with the Cutters, she seemed to care about nothing but picnics and parties and having a good time. When she was not going to a dance, she sewed until midnight. Her new clothes were the subject of caustic comment. Under Lena's direction she copied Mrs. Gardener's new party dress and Mrs. Smith's street costume so ingeniously in cheap materials that those ladies were greatly annoyed, and Mrs. Cutter, who was jealous of them, was secretly pleased.

Tony wore gloves now, and high-heeled shoes and feathered bonnets, and she went downtown nearly every afternoon with Tiny and Lena and the Marshalls' Norwegian Anna. We high-school boys used to linger on the playground at the afternoon recess to watch them as they came tripping down the hill along the board sidewalk, two and two. They were growing prettier every day, but

as they passed us, I used to think with pride that Ántonia, like Snow-White in the fairy tale, was still 'fairest of them all.'

Being a senior now, I got away from school early. Sometimes I overtook the girls downtown and coaxed them into the ice-cream parlour, where they would sit chattering and laughing, telling me all the news from the country.

I remember how angry Tiny Soderball made me one afternoon. She declared she had heard grandmother was going to make a Baptist preacher of me. 'I guess you'll have to stop dancing and wear a white necktie then. Won't he look funny, girls?'

Lena laughed. 'You'll have to hurry up, Jim. If you're going to be a preacher, I want you to marry me. You must promise to marry us all, and then baptize the babies.'

Norwegian Anna, always dignified, looked at her reprovingly.

'Baptists don't believe in christening babies, do they, Jim?'

I told her I didn't know what they believed, and didn't care, and that I certainly wasn't going to be a preacher.

'That's too bad,' Tiny simpered. She was in a teasing mood. 'You'd make such a good one. You're so studious. Maybe you'd like to be a professor. You used to teach Tony, didn't you?'

Ántonia broke in. 'I've set my heart on Jim being a doctor. You'd be good with sick people, Jim. Your grandmother's trained you up so nice. My papa always said you were an awful smart boy.'

I said I was going to be whatever I pleased. 'Won't you be surprised, Miss Tiny, if I turn out to be a regular devil of a fellow?'

They laughed until a glance from Norwegian Anna checked them; the high-school principal had just come into the front part of the shop to buy bread for supper. Anna knew the whisper was going about that I was a sly one. People said there must be something queer about a boy who showed no interest in girls of his own age, but who could be lively enough when he was with Tony and Lena or the three Marys.

The enthusiasm for the dance, which the Vannis had kindled, did not at once die out. After the tent left town, the Euchre Club became the Owl Club, and gave dances in the Masonic Hall once a week. I was invited to join, but declined. I was moody and restless that winter, and tired of the people I saw every day. Charley Harling was already at Annapolis, while I was still sitting in Black Hawk, answering to my name at roll-call every morning, rising from my desk at the sound of a bell and marching out like the grammar-school children. Mrs. Harling was a little cool toward me, because I continued to champion Ántonia. What was there for me to do after supper? Usually I had learned next day's lessons by the time I left the school buildings, and I couldn't sit still and read forever.

In the evening I used to prowl about, hunting for diversion. There lay the familiar streets, frozen with snow or liquid with mud. They led to the houses of good people who were putting the babies to bed, or simply sitting still before the parlour stove, digesting their supper. Black Hawk had two saloons. One of them was admitted, even by the church people, to be as respectable as a saloon could be. Handsome Anton Jelinek, who had rented his homestead and come to town, was the proprietor. In his saloon there were long tables where the Bohemian and German farmers could eat the lunches they brought from home while they drank their beer. Jelinek kept rye bread on hand and smoked fish and strong imported cheeses to please the foreign palate. I liked to drop into his bar-room and listen to the talk. But one day he overtook me on the street and clapped me on the shoulder.

'Jim,' he said, 'I am good friends with you and I always like to see you. But you know how the church people think about saloons. Your grandpa has always treated me fine, and I don't like to have you come into my place, because I know he don't like it, and it puts me in bad with him.'

So I was shut out of that.

One could hang about the drugstore, and listen to the old men who sat there every

evening, talking politics and telling raw stories. One could go to the cigar factory and chat with the old German who raised canaries for sale, and look at his stuffed birds. But whatever you began with him, the talk went back to taxidermy. There was the depot, of course; I often went down to see the night train come in, and afterward sat awhile with the disconsolate telegrapher who was always hoping to be transferred to Omaha or Denver, 'where there was some life.' He was sure to bring out his pictures of actresses and dancers. He got them with cigarette coupons, and nearly smoked himself to death to possess these desired forms and faces. For a change, one could talk to the station agent; but he was another malcontent; spent all his spare time writing letters to officials requesting a transfer. He wanted to get back to Wyoming where he could go trout-fishing on Sundays. He used to say 'there was nothing in life for him but trout streams,' ever since he'd lost his twins.

These were the distractions I had to choose from. There were no other lights burning downtown after nine o'clock. On starlight nights I used to pace up and down those long, cold streets, scowling at the little, sleeping houses on either side, with their storm-windows and covered back porches. They were flimsy shelters, most of them poorly built of light wood, with spindle porch-posts horribly mutilated by the turning-lathe. Yet for all their frailness, how much jealousy and envy and unhappiness some of them managed to contain! The life that went on in them seemed to me made up of evasions and negations; shifts to save cooking, to save washing and cleaning, devices to propitiate the tongue of gossip. This guarded mode of existence was like living under a tyranny. People's speech, their voices, their very glances, became furtive and repressed. Every individual taste, every natural appetite, was bridled by caution. The people asleep in those houses, I thought, tried to live like the mice in their own kitchens; to make no noise, to leave no trace, to slip over the surface of things in the dark. The growing piles of ashes and cinders in the back yards were the only evidence that the wasteful, consuming process of life went on at all. On Tuesday nights the Owl Club danced; then there was a little stir in the streets, and here and there one could see a lighted window until midnight. But the next night all was dark again.

After I refused to join 'the Owls,' as they were called, I made a bold resolve to go to the Saturday night dances at Firemen's Hall. I knew it would be useless to acquaint my elders with any such plan. Grandfather didn't approve of dancing, anyway; he would only say that if I wanted to dance I could go to the Masonic Hall, among 'the people we knew.' It was just my point that I saw altogether too much of the people we knew.

My bedroom was on the ground floor, and as I studied there, I had a stove in it. I used to retire to my room early on Saturday night, change my shirt and collar and put on my Sunday coat. I waited until all was quiet and the old people were asleep, then raised my window, climbed out, and went softly through the yard. The first time I deceived my grandparents I felt rather shabby, perhaps even the second time, but I soon ceased to think about it.

The dance at the Firemen's Hall was the one thing I looked forward to all the week. There I met the same people I used to see at the Vannis' tent. Sometimes there were Bohemians from Wilber, or German boys who came down on the afternoon freight from Bismarck. Tony and Lena and Tiny were always there, and the three Bohemian Marys, and the Danish laundry girls.

The four Danish girls lived with the laundryman and his wife in their house behind the laundry, with a big garden where the clothes were hung out to dry. The laundryman was a kind, wise old fellow, who paid his girls well, looked out for them, and gave them a good home. He told me once that his own daughter died just as she was getting old enough to help her mother, and that he had been 'trying to make up for it ever since.' On summer afternoons he used to sit for hours on the sidewalk in front of his laundry, his newspaper lying on his knee, watching his girls through the big open win-

dow while they ironed and talked in Danish. The clouds of white dust that blew up the street, the gusts of hot wind that withered his vegetable garden, never disturbed his calm. His droll expression seemed to say that he had found the secret of contentment. Morning and evening he drove about in his spring wagon, distributing freshly ironed clothes, and collecting bags of linen that cried out for his suds and sunny drying-lines. His girls never looked so pretty at the dances as they did standing by the ironing-board, or over the tubs, washing the fine pieces, their white arms and throats bare, their cheeks bright as the brightest wild roses, their gold hair moist with the steam or the heat and curling in little damp spirals about their ears. They had not learned much English, and were not so ambitious as Tony or Lena; but they were kind, simple girls and they were always happy. When one danced with them, one smelled their clean, freshly ironed clothes that had been put away with rosemary leaves from Mr. Jensen's garden.

There were never girls enough to go round at those dances, but everyone wanted a turn with Tony and Lena.

Lena moved without exertion, rather indolently, and her hand often accented the rhythm softly on her partner's shoulder. She smiled if one spoke to her, but seldom answered. The music seemed to put her into a soft, waking dream, and her violet-coloured eyes looked sleepily and confidingly at one from under her long lashes. When she sighed she exhaled a heavy perfume of sachet powder. To dance 'Home, Sweet Home,' with Lena was like coming in with the tide. She danced every dance like a waltz, and it was always the same waltz—the waltz of coming home to something, of inevitable, fated return. After a while one got restless under it, as one does under the heat of a soft, sultry summer day.

When you spun out into the floor with Tony, you didn't return to anything. You set out every time upon a new adventure. I liked to schottische with her; she had so much spring and variety, and was always putting in new steps and slides. She taught me to dance against and around the hard-and-fast beat of the music. If, instead of going to the end of the railroad, old Mr. Shimerda had stayed in New York and picked up a living with his fiddle, how different Ántonia's life might have been!

Ántonia often went to the dances with Larry Donovan, a passenger conductor who was a kind of professional ladies' man, as we said. I remember how admiringly all the boys looked at her the night she first wore her velveteen dress, made like Mrs. Gardener's black velvet. She was lovely to see, with her eyes shining, and her lips always a little parted when she danced. That constant, dark colour in her cheeks never changed.

One evening when Donovan was out on his run, Ántonia came to the hall with Norwegian Anna and her young man, and that night I took her home. When we were in the Cutters' yard, sheltered by the evergreens, I told her she must kiss me good night.

'Why, sure, Jim.' A moment later she drew her face away and whispered indignantly, 'Why, Jim! You know you ain't right to kiss me like that. I'll tell your grandmother on you!'

'Lena Lingard lets me kiss her,' I retorted, 'and I'm not half as fond of her as I am of you.'

'Lena does?' Tony gasped. 'If she's up to any of her nonsense with you, I'll scratch her eyes out!' She took my arm again and we walked out of the gate and up and down the sidewalk. 'Now, don't you go and be a fool like some of these town boys. You're not going to sit around here and whittle store-boxes and tell stories all your life. You are going away to school and make something of yourself. I'm just awful proud of you. You won't go and get mixed up with the Swedes, will you?'

'I don't care anything about any of them but you,' I said. 'And you'll always treat me like a kid, I suppose.'

She laughed and threw her arms around me. 'I expect I will, but you're a kid I'm awful fond of, anyhow! You can like me all you want to, but if I see you hanging around with Lena much, I'll go to your grandmother, as sure as your name's Jim Burden! Lena's all right, only—well, you know yourself she's

soft that way. She can't help it. It's natural to her.'

If she was proud of me, I was so proud of her that I carried my head high as I emerged from the dark cedars and shut the Cutters' gate softly behind me. Her warm, sweet face, her kind arms, and the true heart in her; she was, oh, she was still my Ántonia! I looked with contempt at the dark, silent little houses about me as I walked home, and thought of the stupid young men who were asleep in some of them. I knew where the real women were, though I was only a boy; and I would not be afraid of them, either!

I hated to enter the still house when I went home from the dances, and it was long before I could get to sleep. Toward morning I used to have pleasant dreams: sometimes Tony and I were out in the country, sliding down straw-stacks as we used to do; climbing up the yellow mountains over and over, and slipping down the smooth sides into soft piles of chaff.

One dream I dreamed a great many times, and it was always the same. I was in a harvest-field full of shocks, and I was lying against one of them. Lena Lingard came across the stubble barefoot, in a short skirt, with a curved reaping-hook in her hand, and she was flushed like the dawn, with a kind of luminous rosiness all about her. She sat down beside me, turned to me with a soft sigh and said, 'Now they are all gone, and I can kiss you as much as I like.'

I used to wish I could have this flattering dream about Ántonia, but I never did.

13

I noticed one afternoon that grandmother had been crying. Her feet seemed to drag as she moved about the house, and I got up from the table where I was studying and went to her, asking if she didn't feel well, and if I couldn't help her with her work.

'No, thank you, Jim. I'm troubled, but I guess I'm well enough. Getting a little rusty in the bones, maybe,' she added bitterly.

I stood hesitating. 'What are you fretting about, grandmother? Has grandfather lost any money?'

'No, it ain't money. I wish it was. But I've heard things. You must 'a' known it would come back to me sometime.' She dropped into a chair, and, covering her face with her apron, began to cry. 'Jim,' she said, 'I was never one that claimed old folks could bring up their grandchildren. But it came about so; there wasn't any other way for you, it seemed like.'

I put my arms around her. I couldn't bear to see her cry.

'What is it, grandmother? Is it the Firemen's dances?'

She nodded.

'I'm sorry I sneaked off like that. But there's nothing wrong about the dances, and I haven't done anything wrong. I like all those country girls, and I like to dance with them. That's all there is to it.'

'But it ain't right to deceive us, son, and it brings blame on us. People say you are growing up to be a bad boy, and that ain't just to us.'

'I don't care what they say about me, but if it hurts you, that settles it. I won't go to the Firemen's Hall again.'

I kept my promise, of course, but I found the spring months dull enough. I sat at home with the old people in the evenings now, reading Latin that was not in our high-school course. I had made up my mind to do a lot of college requirement work in the summer, and to enter the freshman class at the university without conditions in the fall. I wanted to get away as soon as possible.

Disapprobation hurt me, I found—even that of people whom I did not admire. As the spring came on, I grew more and more lonely, and fell back on the telegrapher and the cigar-maker and his canaries for companionship. I remember I took a melancholy pleasure in hanging a May-basket for Nina Harling that spring. I bought the flowers from an old German woman who always had more window plants than anyone else, and spent an afternoon trimming a little work-basket. When dusk came on, and the new moon hung in the sky, I went quietly to the Harlings' front door with my offering, rang the bell, and then ran away as was the custom. Through the willow hedge I could

hear Nina's cries of delight, and I felt comforted.

On those warm, soft spring evenings I often lingered downtown to walk home with Frances, and talked to her about my plans and about the reading I was doing. One evening she said she thought Mrs. Harling was not seriously offended with me.

'Mama is as broad-minded as mothers ever are, I guess. But you know she was hurt about Antonia, and she can't understand why you like to be with Tiny and Lena better than with the girls of your own set.'

'Can you?' I asked bluntly.

Frances laughed. 'Yes, I think I can. You knew them in the country, and you like to take sides. In some ways you're older than boys of your age. It will be all right with mama after you pass your college examinations and she sees you're in earnest.'

'If you were a boy,' I persisted, 'you wouldn't belong to the Owl Club, either. You'd be just like me.'

She shook her head. 'I would and I wouldn't. I expect I know the country girls better than you do. You always put a kind of glamour over them. The trouble with you, Jim, is that you're romantic. Mama's going to your Commencement. She asked me the other day if I knew what your oration is to be about. She wants you to do well.'

I thought my oration very good. It stated with fervour a great many things I had lately discovered. Mrs. Harling came to the Opera House to hear the Commencement exercises, and I looked at her most of the time while I made my speech. Her keen, intelligent eyes never left my face. Afterward she came back to the dressing-room where we stood, with our diplomas in our hands, walked up to me, and said heartily: 'You surprised me, Jim. I didn't believe you could do as well as that. You didn't get that speech out of books.' Among my graduation presents there was a silk umbrella from Mrs. Harling, with my name on the handle.

I walked home from the Opera House alone. As I passed the Methodist Church, I saw three white figures ahead of me, pacing up and down under the arching maple trees, where the moonlight filtered through the lush June foliage. They hurried toward me; they were waiting for me—Lena and Tony and Anna Hansen.

'Oh, Jim, it was splendid!' Tony was breathing hard, as she always did when her feelings outran her language. 'There ain't a lawyer in Black Hawk could make a speech like that. I just stopped your grandpa and said so to him. He won't tell you, but he told us he was awful surprised himself, didn't he, girls?'

Lena sidled up to me and said teasingly, 'What made you so solemn? I thought you were scared. I was sure you'd forget.'

Anna spoke wistfully.

'It must make you very happy, Jim, to have fine thoughts like that in your mind all the time, and to have words to put them in. I always wanted to go to school, you know.'

'Oh, I just sat there and wished my papa could hear you! Jim'—Ántonia took hold of my coat lapels—'there was something in your speech that made me think so about my papa!'

'I thought about your papa when I wrote my speech, Tony,' I said. 'I dedicated it to him.'

She threw her arms around me, and her dear face was all wet with tears.

I stood watching their white dresses glimmer smaller and smaller down the sidewalk as they went away. I have had no other success that pulled at my heartstrings like that one.

14

The day after Commencement I moved my books and desk upstairs, to an empty room where I should be undisturbed, and I fell to studying in earnest. I worked off a year's trigonometry that summer, and began Virgil alone. Morning after morning I used to pace up and down my sunny little room, looking off at the distant river bluffs and the roll of the blond pastures between, scanning the 'Aeneid' aloud and committing long passages to memory. Sometimes in the evening Mrs. Harling called to me as I passed her gate, and asked me to come in and let her play for me. She was lonely for Charley, she said,

and liked to have a boy about. Whenever my grandparents had misgivings, and begun to wonder whether I was not too young to go off to college alone, Mrs. Harling took up my cause vigorously. Grandfather had such respect for her judgment that I knew he would not go against her.

I had only one holiday that summer. It was in July. I met Antonia downtown on Saturday afternoon, and learned that she and Tiny and Lena were going to the river next day with Anna Hansen—the elder was all in bloom now, and Anna wanted to make elderblow wine.

'Anna's to drive us down in the Marshalls' delivery wagon, and we'll take a nice lunch and have a picnic. Just us; nobody else. Couldn't you happen along, Jim? It would be like old times.'

I considered a moment. 'Maybe I can, if I won't be in the way.'

On Sunday morning I rose early and got out of Black Hawk while the dew was still heavy on the long meadow grasses. It was the high season for summer flowers. The pink bee-bush stood tall along the sandy roadsides, and the cone-flowers and rose mallow grew everywhere. Across the wire fence, in the long grass, I saw a clump of flaming orange-coloured milkweed, rare in that part of the state. I left the road and went around through a stretch of pasture that was always cropped short in summer, where the gaillardia came up year after year and matted over the ground with the deep, velvety red that is in Bokhara carpets. The country was empty and solitary except for the larks that Sunday morning, and it seemed to lift itself up to me and to come very close.

The river was running strong for midsummer; heavy rains to the west of us had kept it full. I crossed the bridge and went upstream along the wooded shore to a pleasant dressing-room I knew among the dogwood bushes, all overgrown with wild grapevines. I began to undress for a swim. The girls would not be along yet. For the first time it occurred to me that I should be homesick for that river after I left it. The sandbars, with their clean white beaches and their little groves of willows and cottonwood seedlings, were a sort of No Man's Land, little newly created worlds that belonged to the Black Hawk boys. Charley Harling and I had hunted through these woods, fished from the fallen logs, until I knew every inch of the river shores and had a friendly feeling for every bar and shallow.

After my swim, while I was playing about indolently in the water, I heard the sound of hoofs and wheels on the bridge. I struck downstream and shouted, as the open spring wagon came into view on the middle span. They stopped the horse, and the two girls in the bottom of the cart stood up, steadying themselves by the shoulders of the two in front, so that they could see me better. They were charming up there, huddled together in the cart and peering down at me like curious deer when they came out of the thicket to drink. I found bottom near the bridge and stood up, waving to them.

'How pretty you look!' I called.

'So do you!' they shouted together, and broke into peals of laughter. Anna Hansen shook the reins and they drove on, while I zigzagged back to my inlet and clambered up behind an overhanging elm. I dried myself in the sun, and dressed slowly, reluctant to leave that green enclosure where the sunlight flickered so bright through the grapevine leaves and the woodpecker hammered away in the crooked elm that trailed out over the water. As I went along the road back to the bridge, I kept picking off little pieces of scaly chalk from the dried water gullies, and breaking them up in my hands.

When I came upon the Marshalls' delivery horse, tied in the shade, the girls had already taken their baskets and gone down the east road which wound through the sand and scrub. I could hear them calling to each other. The elder bushes did not grow back in the shady ravines between the bluffs, but in the hot, sandy bottoms along the stream, where their roots were always in moisture and their tops in the sun. The blossoms were unusually luxuriant and beautiful that summer.

I followed a cattle path through the thick underbrush until I came to a slope that fell away abruptly to the water's edge. A great

chunk of the shore had been bitten out by some spring freshet, and the scar was masked by elder bushes, growing down to the water in flowery terraces. I did not touch them. I was overcome by content and drowsiness and by the warm silence about me. There was no sound but the high sing-song buzz of wild bees and the sunny gurgle of the water underneath. I peeped over the edge of the bank to see the little stream that made the noise; it flowed along perfectly clear over the sand and gravel, cut off from the muddy main current by a long sandbar. Down there, on the lower shelf of the bank, I saw Ántonia, seated alone under the pagoda-like elders. She looked up when she heard me, and smiled, but I saw that she had been crying. I slid down into the soft sand beside her and asked her what was the matter.

'It makes me homesick, Jimmy, this flower, this smell,' she said softly. 'We have this flower very much at home, in the old country. It always grew in our yard and my papa had a green bench and a table under the bushes. In summer, when they were in bloom, he used to sit there with his friend that played the trombone. When I was little I used to go down there to hear them talk—beautiful talk, like what I never hear in this country.'

'What did they talk about?' I asked her.

She sighed and shook her head. 'Oh, I don't know! About music, and the woods, and about God, and when they were young.' She turned to me suddenly and looked into my eyes. 'You think, Jimmy, that maybe my father's spirit can go back to those old places?'

I told her about the feeling of her father's presence I had on that winter day when my grandparents had gone over to see his dead body and I was left alone in the house. I said I felt sure then that he was on his way back to his own country, and that even now, when I passed his grave, I always thought of him as being among the woods and fields that were so dear to him.

Ántonia had the most trusting, responsive eyes in the world; love and credulousness seemed to look out of them with open faces.

'Why didn't you ever tell me that before? It makes me feel more sure for him.' After a while she said: 'You know, Jim, my father was different from my mother. He did not have to marry my mother, and all his brothers quarrelled with him because he did. I used to hear the old people at home whisper about it. They said he could have paid my mother money, and not married her. But he was older than she was, and he was too kind to treat her like that. He lived in his mother's house, and she was a poor girl come in to do the work. After my father married her, my grandmother never let my mother come into her house again. When I went to my grandmother's funeral was the only time I was ever in my grandmother's house. Don't that seem strange?'

While she talked, I lay back in the hot sand and looked up at the blue sky between the flat bouquets of elder. I could hear the bees humming and singing, but they stayed up in the sun above the flowers and did not come down into the shadow of the leaves. Ántonia seemed to me that day exactly like the little girl who used to come to our house with Mr. Shimerda.

'Some day, Tony, I am going over to your country, and I am going to the little town where you lived. Do you remember all about it?'

'Jim,' she said earnestly, 'if I was put down there in the middle of the night, I could find my way all over that little town; and along the river to the next town, where my grandmother lived. My feet remember all the little paths through the woods, and where the big roots stick out to trip you. I ain't never forgot my own country.'

There was a crackling in the branches above us, and Lena Lingard peered down over the edge of the bank.

'You lazy things!' she cried. 'All this elder, and you two lying there! Didn't you hear us calling you?' Almost as flushed as she had been in my dream, she leaned over the edge of the bank and began to demolish our flowery pagoda. I had never seen her so energetic; she was panting with zeal, and the perspiration stood in drops on her short, yielding upper lip. I sprang to my feet and ran up the bank.

It was noon now, and so hot that the dog-woods and scrub-oaks began to turn up the silvery underside of their leaves, and all the foliage looked soft and wilted. I carried the lunch-basket to the top of one of the chalk bluffs, where even on the calmest days there was always a breeze. The flat-topped, twisted little oaks threw light shadows on the grass. Below us we could see the windings of the river, and Black Hawk, grouped among its trees, and, beyond, the rolling country, swelling gently until it met the sky. We could recognize familiar farm-houses and windmills. Each of the girls pointed out to me the direction in which her father's farm lay, and told me how many acres were in wheat that year and how many in corn.

'My old folks,' said Tiny Soderball, 'have put in twenty acres of rye. They get it ground at the mill, and it makes nice bread. It seems like my mother ain't been so homesick, ever since father's raised rye flour for her.'

'It must have been a trial for our mothers,' said Lena, 'coming out here and having to do everything different. My mother had always lived in town. She says she started behind in farm-work, and never has caught up.'

'Yes, a new country's hard on the old ones, sometimes,' said Anna thoughtfully. 'My grandmother's getting feeble now, and her mind wanders. She's forgot about this country, and thinks she's at home in Norway. She keeps asking mother to take her down to the waterside and the fish market. She craves fish all the time. Whenever I go home I take her canned salmon and mackerel.'

'Mercy, it's hot!' Lena yawned. She was supine under a little oak, resting after the fury of her elder-hunting, and had taken off the high-heeled slippers she had been silly enough to wear. 'Come here, Jim. You never got the sand out of your hair.' She began to draw her fingers slowly through my hair.

Antonia pushed her away. 'You'll never get it out like that,' she said sharply. She gave my head a rough touzling and finished me off with something like a box on the ear. 'Lena, you oughtn't to try to wear those slippers any more. They're too small for your feet. You'd better give them to me for Yulka.'

'All right,' said Lena good-naturedly, tucking her white stockings under her skirt. 'You get all Yulka's things, don't you? I wish father didn't have such bad luck with his farm machinery; then I could buy more things for my sisters. I'm going to get Mary a new coat this fall, if the sulky plough's never paid for!'

Tiny asked her why she didn't wait until after Christmas, when coats would be cheaper. 'What do you think of poor me?' she added; 'with six at home, younger than I am? And they all think I'm rich, because when I go back to the country I'm dressed so fine!' She shrugged her shoulders. 'But, you know, my weakness is playthings. I like to buy them playthings better than what they need.'

'I know how that is,' said Anna. 'When we first came here, and I was little, we were too poor to buy toys. I never got over the loss of a doll somebody gave me before we left Norway. A boy on the boat broke her, and I still hate him for it.'

'I guess after you got here you had plenty of live dolls to nurse, like me!' Lena remarked cynically.

'Yes, the babies came along pretty fast, to be sure. But I never minded. I was fond of them all. The youngest one, that we didn't any of us want, is the one we love best now.'

Lena sighed. 'Oh, the babies are all right; if only they don't come in winter. Ours nearly always did. I don't see how mother stood it. I tell you what, girls'—she sat up with sudden energy—'I'm going to get my mother out of that old sod house where she's lived so many years. The men will never do it. Johnnie, that's my oldest brother, he's wanting to get married now, and build a house for his girl instead of his mother. Mrs. Thomas says she thinks I can move to some other town pretty soon, and go into business for myself. If I don't get into business, I'll maybe marry a rich gambler.'

'That would be a poor way to get on,' said Anna sarcastically. 'I wish I could teach school, like Selma Kronn. Just think! She'll

be the first Scandinavian girl to get a position in the high school. We ought to be proud of her.'

Selma was a studious girl, who had not much tolerance for giddy things like Tiny and Lena; but they always spoke of her with admiration.

Tiny moved about restlessly, fanning herself with her straw hat. 'If I was smart like her, I'd be at my books day and night. But she was born smart—and look how her father's trained her! He was something high up in the old country.'

'So was my mother's father,' murmured Lena, 'but that's all the good it does us! My father's father was smart, too, but he was wild. He married a Lapp. I guess that's what's the matter with me; they say Lapp blood will out.'

'A real Lapp, Lena?' I exclaimed. 'The kind that wear skins?'

'I don't know if she wore skins, but she was a Lapp all right, and his folks felt dreadful about it. He was sent up North on some government job he had, and fell in with her. He would marry her.'

'But I thought Lapland women were fat and ugly, and had squint eyes, like Chinese?' I objected.

'I don't know, maybe. There must be something mighty taking about the Lapp girls, though; mother says the Norwegians up North are always afraid their boys will run after them.'

In the afternoon, when the heat was less oppressive, we had a lively game of 'Pussy Wants a Corner,' on the flat bluff-top, with the little trees for bases. Lena was Pussy so often that she finally said she wouldn't play any more. We threw ourselves down on the grass, out of breath.

'Jim,' Ántonia said dreamily, 'I want you to tell the girls about how the Spanish first came here, like you and Charley Harling used to talk about. I've tried to tell them, but I leave out so much.'

They sat under a little oak, Tony resting against the trunk and the other girls leaning against her and each other, and listened to the little I was able to tell them about Coronado and his search for the Seven Golden Cities. At school we were taught that he had not got so far north as Nebraska, but had given up his quest and turned back somewhere in Kansas. But Charley Harling and I had a strong belief that he had been along this very river. A farmer in the county north of ours, when he was breaking sod, had turned up a metal stirrup of fine workmanship, and a sword with a Spanish inscription on the blade. He lent these relics to Mr. Harling, who brought them home with him. Charley and I scoured them, and they were on exhibition in the Harling office all summer. Father Kelly, the priest, had found the name of the Spanish maker of the sword and an abbreviation that stood for the city of Cordova.

'And that I saw with my own eyes,' Ántonia put in triumphantly. 'So Jim and Charley were right, and the teachers were wrong!'

The girls began to wonder among themselves. Why had the Spaniards come so far? What must this country have been like, then? Why had Coronado never gone back to Spain, to his riches and his castles and his king? I couldn't tell them. I only knew the schoolbooks said he 'died in the wilderness, of a broken heart.'

'More than him has done that,' said Ántonia sadly, and the girls murmured assent.

We sat looking off across the country, watching the sun go down. The curly grass about us was on fire now. The bark of the oaks turned red as copper. There was a shimmer of gold on the brown river. Out in the stream the sandbars glittered like glass, and the light trembled in the willow thickets as if little flames were leaping among them. The breeze sank to stillness. In the ravine a ringdove mourned plaintively, and somewhere off in the bushes an owl hooted. The girls sat listless, leaning against each other. The long fingers of the sun touched their foreheads.

Presently we saw a curious thing: There were no clouds, the sun was going down in a limpid, gold-washed sky. Just as the lower edge of the red disk rested on the high fields against the horizon, a great black figure sud-

denly appeared on the face of the sun. We sprang to our feet, straining our eyes toward it. In a moment we realized what it was. On some upland farm, a plough had been left standing in the field. The sun was sinking just behind it. Magnified across the distance by the horizontal light, it stood out against the sun, was exactly contained within the circle of the disk; the handles, the tongue, the share—black against the molten red. There it was, heroic in size, a picture writing on the sun.

Even while we whispered about it, our vision disappeared; the ball dropped and dropped until the red tip went beneath the earth. The fields below us were dark, the sky was growing pale, and that forgotten plough had sunk back to its own littleness somewhere on the prairie.

15

Late in August the Cutters went to Omaha for a few days, leaving Ántonia in charge of the house. Since the scandal about the Swedish girl, Wick Cutter could never get his wife to stir out of Black Hawk without him.

The day after the Cutters left, Ántonia came over to see us. Grandmother noticed that she seemed troubled and distracted. 'You've got something on your mind, Ántonia,' she said anxiously.

'Yes, Mrs. Burden. I couldn't sleep much last night.' She hesitated, and then told us how strangely Mr. Cutter had behaved before he went away. He put all the silver in a basket and placed it under her bed, and with it a box of papers which he told her were valuable. He made her promise that she would not sleep away from the house, or be out late in the evening, while he was gone. He strictly forbade her to ask any of the girls she knew to stay with her at night. She would be perfectly safe, he said, as he had just put a new Yale lock on the front door.

Cutter had been so insistent in regard to these details that now she felt uncomfortable about staying there alone. She hadn't liked the way he kept coming into the kitchen to instruct her, or the way he looked at her. 'I feel as if he is up to some of his tricks again, and is going to try to scare me, somehow.'

Grandmother was apprehensive at once. 'I don't think it's right for you to stay there, feeling that way. I suppose it wouldn't be right for you to leave the place alone, either, after giving your word. Maybe Jim would be willing to go over there and sleep, and you could come here nights. I'd feel safer, knowing you were under my own roof. I guess Jim could take care of their silver and old usury notes as well as you could.'

Ántonia turned to me eagerly. 'Oh, would you, Jim? I'd make up my bed nice and fresh for you. It's a real cool room, and the bed's right next the window. I was afraid to leave the window open last night.'

I liked my own room, and I didn't like the Cutters' house under any circumstances, but Tony looked so troubled that I consented to try this arrangement. I found that I slept there as well as anywhere, and when I got home in the morning, Tony had a good breakfast waiting for me. After prayers she sat down at the table with us, and it was like old times in the country.

The third night I spent at the Cutters', I awoke suddenly with the impression that I had heard a door open and shut. Everything was still, however, and I must have gone to sleep again immediately.

The next thing I knew, I felt someone sit down on the edge of the bed. I was only half awake, but I decided that he might take the Cutters' silver, whoever he was. Perhaps if I did not move, he would find it and get out without troubling me. I held my breath and lay absolutely still. A hand closed softly on my shoulder, and at the same moment I felt something hairy and cologne-scented brushing my face. If the room had suddenly been flooded with electric light, I couldn't have seen more clearly the detestable bearded countenance that I knew was bending over me. I caught a handful of whiskers and pulled, shouting something. The hand that held my shoulder was instantly at my throat. The man became insane; he stood over me, choking me with one fist and beat-

ing me in the face with the other, hissing and chuckling and letting out a flood of abuse.

'So this is what she's up to when I'm away, is it? Where is she, you nasty whelp, where is she? Under the bed, are you, hussy? I know your tricks! Wait till I get at you! I'll fix this rat you've got in here. He's caught, all right!'

So long as Cutter had me by the throat, there was no chance for me at all. I got hold of his thumb and bent it back, until he let go with a yell. In a bound, I was on my feet, and easily sent him sprawling to the floor. Then I made a dive for the open window, struck the wire screen, knocked it out, and tumbled after it into the yard

Suddenly I found myself running across the north end of Black Hawk in my nightshirt, just as one sometimes finds one's self behaving in bad dreams When I got home, I climbed in at the kitchen window. I was covered with blood from my nose and lip, but I was too sick to do anything about it. I found a shawl and an overcoat on the hatrack, lay down on the parlour sofa, and in spite of my hurts, went to sleep.

Grandmother found me there in the morning. Her cry of fright awakened me. Truly, I was a battered object. As she helped me to my room, I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror. My lip was cut and stood out like a snout. My nose looked like a big blue plum, and one eye was swollen shut and hideously discoloured. Grandmother said we must have the doctor at once, but I implored her, as I had never begged for anything before, not to send for him. I could stand anything, I told her, so long as nobody saw me or knew what had happened to me. I entreated her not to let grandfather, even, come into my room. She seemed to understand, though I was too faint and miserable to go into explanations. When she took off my nightshirt, she found such bruises on my chest and shoulders that she began to cry. She spent the whole morning bathing and poulticing me, and rubbing me with arnica. I heard Ántonia sobbing outside my door, but I asked grandmother to send her away. I felt that I never wanted to see her again. I hated her almost as much as I hated Cutter. She had let me in for all this disgustingness. Grandmother kept saying how thankful we ought to be that I had been there instead of Ántonia. But I lay with my disfigured face to the wall and felt no particular gratitude. My one concern was that grandmother should keep everyone away from me. If the story once got abroad, I would never hear the last of it. I could well imagine what the old men down at the drugstore would do with such a theme.

While grandmother was trying to make me comfortable, grandfather went to the depot and learned that Wick Cutter had come home on the night express from the east, and had left again on the six o'clock train for Denver that morning. The agent said his face was striped with court-plaster, and he carried his left hand in a sling. He looked so used up, that the agent asked him what had happened to him since ten o'clock the night before; whereat Cutter began to swear at him and said he would have him discharged for incivility.

That afternoon, while I was asleep, Ántonia took grandmother with her, and went over to the Cutters' to pack her trunk. They found the place locked up, and they had to break the window to get into Ántonia's bedroom. There everything was in shocking disorder. Her clothes had been taken out of her closet, thrown into the middle of the room, and trampled and torn. My own garments had been treated so badly that I never saw them again; grandmother burned them in the Cutters' kitchen range.

While Ántonia was packing her trunk and putting her room in order, to leave it, the front doorbell rang violently. There stood Mrs. Cutter—locked out, for she had no key to the new lock—her head trembling with rage. 'I advised her to control herself, or she would have a stroke,' grandmother said afterward.

Grandmother would not let her see Ántonia at all, but made her sit down in the parlour while she related to her just what had occurred the night before. Ántonia was frightened, and was going home to stay for a while, she told Mrs. Cutter; it would

be useless to interrogate the girl, for she knew nothing of what had happened.

Then Mrs. Cutter told her story. She and her husband had started home from Omaha together the morning before. They had to stop over several hours at Waymore Junction to catch the Black Hawk train. During the wait, Cutter left her at the depot and went to the Waymore bank to attend to some business. When he returned, he told her that he would have to stay overnight there, but she could go on home. He bought her ticket and put her on the train. She saw him slip a twenty-dollar bill into her handbag with her ticket. That bill, she said, should have aroused her suspicions at once—but did not.

The trains are never called at little junction towns, everybody knows when they come in. Mr. Cutter showed his wife's ticket to the conductor, and settled her in her seat before the train moved off. It was not until nearly nightfall that she discovered she was on the express bound for Kansas City, that her ticket was made out to that point, and that Cutter must have planned it so. The conductor told her the Black Hawk train was due at Waymore twelve minutes after the Kansas City train left. She saw at once that her husband had played this trick in order to get back to Black Hawk without her. She had no choice but to go on to Kansas City and take the first fast train for home.

Cutter could have got home a day earlier than his wife by any one of a dozen simpler devices; he could have left her in the Omaha hotel, and said he was going on to Chicago for a few days. But apparently it was part of his fun to outrage her feelings as much as possible.

'Mr. Cutter will pay for this, Mrs. Burden. He will pay!' Mrs. Cutter avouched, nodding her horse-like head and rolling her eyes.

Grandmother said she hadn't a doubt of it.

Certainly Cutter liked to have his wife think him a devil. In some way he depended upon the excitement he could arouse in her hysterical nature. Perhaps he got the feeling of being a rake more from his wife's rage and amazement than from any experiences of his own. His zest in debauchery might wane, but never Mrs. Cutter's belief in it. The reckoning with his wife at the end of an escapade was something he counted on—like the last powerful liqueur after a long dinner. The one excitement he really couldn't do without was quarrelling with Mrs. Cutter!

BOOK III

LENA LINGARD

1

At the university I had the good fortune to come immediately under the influence of a brilliant and inspiring young scholar. Gaston Cleric had arrived in Lincoln only a few weeks earlier than I, to begin his work as head of the Latin Department. He came West at the suggestion of his physicians, his health having been enfeebled by a long illness in Italy. When I took my entrance examinations, he was my examiner, and my course was arranged under his supervision.

I did not go home for my first summer vacation, but stayed in Lincoln, working off a year's Greek, which had been my only condition on entering the freshman class. Cleric's doctor advised against his going back to New England, and, except for a few weeks in Colorado, he, too, was in Lincoln all that summer. We played tennis, read, and took long walks together. I shall always look back on that time of mental awakening as one of the happiest in my life. Gaston Cleric introduced me to the world of ideas; when one first enters that world everything else fades for a time, and all that went before is as if it had not been. Yet I found curious survivals; some of the figures of my old life seemed to be waiting for me in the new.

In those days there were many serious young men among the students who had come up to the university from the farms and the little towns scattered over the thinly settled state. Some of those boys came straight from the cornfields with only a summer's wages in their pockets, hung on through the four years, shabby and underfed, and completed the course by really

heroic self-sacrifice. Our instructors were oddly assorted; wandering pioneer schoolteachers, stranded ministers of the Gospel, a few enthusiastic young men just out of graduate schools. There was an atmosphere of endeavour, of expectancy and bright hopefulness about the young college that had lifted its head from the prairie only a few years before.

Our personal life was as free as that of our instructors. There were no college dormitories; we lived where we could and as we could. I took rooms with an old couple, early settlers in Lincoln, who had married off their children and now lived quietly in their house at the edge of town, near the open country. The house was inconveniently situated for students, and on that account I got two rooms for the price of one. My bedroom, originally a linen-closet, was unheated and was barely large enough to contain my cot-bed, but it enabled me to call the other room my study. The dresser, and the great walnut wardrobe which held all my clothes, even my hats and shoes, I had pushed out of the way, and I considered them non-existent, as children eliminate incongruous objects when they are playing house. I worked at a commodious green-topped table placed directly in front of the west window which looked out over the prairie. In the corner at my right were all my books, in shelves I had made and painted myself. On the blank wall at my left the dark, old-fashioned wall-paper was covered by a large map of ancient Rome, the work of some German scholar. Cleric had ordered it for me when he was sending for books from abroad. Over the bookcase hung a photograph of the Tragic Theatre at Pompeii, which he had given me from his collection.

When I sat at work I half-faced a deep, upholstered chair which stood at the end of my table, its high back against the wall. I had bought it with great care. My instructor sometimes looked in upon me when he was out for an evening tramp, and I noticed that he was more likely to linger and become talkative if I had a comfortable chair for him to sit in, and if he found a bottle of Bénédictine and plenty of the kind of cigarettes he liked, at his elbow. He was, I had discovered, parsimonious about small expenditures—a trait absolutely inconsistent with his general character. Sometimes when he came he was silent and moody, and after a few sarcastic remarks went away again, to tramp the streets of Lincoln, which were almost as quiet and oppressively domestic as those of Black Hawk. Again, he would sit until nearly midnight, talking about Latin and English poetry, or telling me about his long stay in Italy.

I can give no idea of the peculiar charm and vividness of his talk. In a crowd he was nearly always silent. Even for his classroom he had no platitudes, no stock of professional anecdotes. When he was tired, his lectures were clouded, obscure, elliptical, but when he was interested they were wonderful. I believe that Gaston Cleric narrowly missed being a great poet, and I have sometimes thought that his bursts of imaginative talk were fatal to his poetic gift. He squandered too much in the heat of personal communication. How often I have seen him draw his dark brows together, fix his eyes upon some object on the wall or a figure in the carpet, and the flash into the lamplight the very image that was in his brain. He could bring the drama of antique life before one out of the shadows—white figures against blue backgrounds. I shall never forget his face as it looked one night when he told me about the solitary day he spent among the sea temples at Paestum: the soft wind blowing through the roofless columns, the birds flying low over the flowering marsh grasses, the changing lights on the silver, cloud-hung mountains. He had wilfully stayed the short summer night there, wrapped in his coat and rug, watching the constellations on their path down the sky until 'the bride of old Tithonus' rose out of the sea, and the mountains stood sharp in the dawn. It was there he caught the fever which held him back on the eve of his departure for Greece and of which he lay ill so long in Naples. He was still, indeed, doing penance for it.

I remember vividly another evening, when something led us to talk of Dante's veneration for Virgil, Cleric went through canto af-

ter canto of the 'Comedia,' repeating the discourse between Dante and his 'sweet teacher,' while his cigarette burned itself out unheeded between his long fingers. I can hear him now, speaking the lines of the poet Statius, who spoke for Dante: 'I was famous on earth with the name which endures longest and honours most. The seeds of my ardour were the sparks from that divine flame whereby more than a thousand have kindled; I speak of the "Aeneid," mother to me and to nurse to me in poetry.'

Although I admired scholarship so much in Cleric, I was not deceived about myself, I knew that I should never be a scholar. I could never lose myself for long among impersonal things. Mental excitement was apt to send me with a rush back to my own naked land and the figures scattered upon it. While I was in the very act of yearning toward the new forms that Cleric brought up before me, my mind plunged away from me, and I suddenly found myself thinking of the places and people of my own infinitesimal past. They stood out strengthened and simplified now, like the image of the plough against the sun. They were all I had for an answer to the new appeal. I begrudged the room that Jake and Otto and Russian Peter took up in my memory, which I wanted to crowd with other things. But whenever my consciousness was quickened, all those early friends were quickened within it, and in some strange way they accompanied me through all my new experiences They were so much alive in me that I scarcely stopped to wonder whether they were alive anywhere else, or how.

2

One March evening in my sophomore year I was sitting alone in my room after supper. There had been a warm thaw all day, with mushy yards and little streams of dark water gurgling cheerfully into the streets out of old snow-banks. My window was open, and the earthy wind blowing through made me indolent. On the edge of the prairie, where the sun had gone down, the sky was turquoise blue, like a lake, with gold light throbbing in it. Higher up, in the utter clarity of the western slope, the evening star hung like a lamp suspended by silver chains—like the lamp engraved upon the title-page of old Latin texts, which is always appearing in new heavens, and waking new desires in men. It reminded me, at any rate, to shut my window and light my wick in answer. I did so regretfully, and the dim objects in the room emerged from the shadows and took their place about me with the helpfulness which custom breeds.

I propped my book open and stared listlessly at the page of the 'Georgics' where to-morrow's lesson began. It opened with the melancholy reflection that, in the lives of mortals, the best days are the first to flee. *'Optima dies . . . prima fugit.'* I turned back to the beginning of the third book, which we had read in class that morning. *'Primus ego in patriam mecum . . deducam Musas';* 'for I shall be the first, if I live, to bring the Muse into my country.' Cleric had explained to us that 'patria' here meant, not a nation or even a province, but the little rural neighbourhood of the Mincio where the poet was born. This was not a boast, but a hope, at once bold and devoutly humble, that he might bring the Muse (but lately come to Italy from her cloudy Grecian mountains), not to the capital, the *palatia Romana*, but to his own little 'country'; to his father's fields, 'sloping down to the river and to the old beech trees with broken tops.'

Cleric said he thought Virgil, when he was dying at Brindisi, must have remembered that passage. After he had faced the bitter fact that he was to leave the 'Aeneid' unfinished, and had decreed that the great canvas, crowded with figures of gods and men, should be burned rather than survive him unperfected, then his mind must have gone back to the perfect utterance of the 'Georgics,' where the pen was fitted to the matter as the plough is to the furrow; and he must have said to himself, with the thankfulness of a good man, 'I was the first to bring the Muse into my country.'

We left the classroom quietly, conscious that we had been brushed by the wing of a great feeling, though perhaps I alone knew

Cleric intimately enough to guess what that feeling was. In the evening, as I sat staring at my book, the fervour of his voice stirred through the quantities on the page before me. I was wondering whether that particular rocky strip of New England coast about which he had so often told me was Cleric's *patria.* Before I had got far with my reading, I was disturbed by a knock. I hurried to the door and when I opened it saw a woman standing in the dark hall.

'I expect you hardly know me, Jim.'

The voice seemed familiar, but I did not recognize her until she stepped into the light of my doorway and I beheld—Lena Lingard! She was so quietly conventionalized by city clothes that I might have passed her on the street without seeing her. Her black suit fitted her figure smoothly, and a black lace hat, with pale-blue forget-me-nots, sat demurely on her yellow hair.

I led her toward Cleric's chair, the only comfortable one I had, questioning her confusedly.

She was not disconcerted by my embarrassment. She looked about her with the naive curiosity I remembered so well. 'You are quite comfortable here, aren't you? I live in Lincoln now, too, Jim. I'm in business for myself. I have a dressmaking shop in the Raleigh Block, out on O Street. I've made a real good start.'

'But, Lena, when did you come?'

'Oh, I've been here all winter. Didn't your grandmother ever write you? I've thought about looking you up lots of times. But we've all heard what a studious young man you've got to be, and I felt bashful. I didn't know whether you'd be glad to see me.' She laughed her mellow, easy laugh, that was either very artless or very comprehending, one never quite knew which. 'You seem the same, though—except you're a young man, now, of course. Do you think I've changed?'

'Maybe you're prettier—though you were always pretty enough. Perhaps it's your clothes that make a difference.'

'You like my new suit? I have to dress pretty well in my business.'

She took off her jacket and sat more at ease in her blouse, of some soft, flimsy silk. She was already at home in my place, had slipped quietly into it, as she did into everything. She told me her business was going well, and she had saved a little money.

'This summer I'm going to build the house for mother I've talked about so long. I won't be able to pay up on it at first, but I want her to have it before she is too old to enjoy it. Next summer I'll take her down new furniture and carpets, so she'll have something to look forward to all winter.'

I watched Lena sitting there so smooth and sunny and well-cared-for, and thought of how she used to run barefoot over the prairie until the snow began to fly, and how Crazy Mary chased her round and round the cornfields. It seemed to me wonderful that she should have got on so well in the world. Certainly she had no one but herself to thank for it.

'You must feel proud of yourself, Lena,' I said heartily. 'Look at me; I've never earned a dollar, and I don't know that I'll ever be able to.'

'Tony says you're going to be richer than Mr. Harling some day. She's always bragging about you, you know.'

'Tell me, how *is* Tony?'

'She's fine. She works for Mrs. Gardener at the hotel now. She's housekeeper. Mrs. Gardener's health isn't what it was, and she can't see after everything like she used to. She has great confidence in Tony. Tony's made it up with the Harlings, too. Little Nina is so fond of her that Mrs. Harling kind of overlooked things.'

'Is she still going with Larry Donovan?'

'Oh, that's on, worse than ever! I guess they're engaged. Tony talks about him like he was president of the railroad. Everybody laughs about it, because she was never a girl to be soft. She won't hear a word against him. She's so sort of innocent.'

I said I didn't like Larry, and never would.

Lena's face dimpled. 'Some of us could tell her things, but it wouldn't do any good. She'd always believe him. That's Ántonia's failing, you know; if she once likes people, she won't hear anything against them.'

'I think I'd better go home and look after Ántonia,' I said.

'I think you had.' Lena looked up at me in frank amusement. 'It's a good thing the Harlings are friendly with her again. Larry's afraid of them. They ship so much grain, they have influence with the railroad people. What are you studying?' She leaned her elbows on the table and drew my book toward her. I caught a faint odour of violet sachet. 'So that's Latin, is it? It looks hard. You do go to the theatre sometimes, though, for I've seen you there. Don't you just love a good play, Jim? I can't stay at home in the evening if there's one in town. I'd be willing to work like a slave, it seems to me, to live in a place where there are theatres.'

'Let's go to a show together sometime. You are going to let me come to see you, aren't you?'

'Would you like to? I'd be ever so pleased. I'm never busy after six o'clock, and I let my sewing girls go at half-past five. I board, to save time, but sometimes I cook a chop for myself, and I'd be glad to cook one for you. Well'—she began to put on her white gloves—'it's been awful good to see you, Jim.'

'You needn't hurry, need you? You've hardly told me anything yet.'

'We can talk when you come to see me. I expect you don't often have lady visitors. The old woman downstairs didn't want to let me come up very much. I told her I was from your home town, and had promised your grandmother to come and see you. How surprised Mrs. Burden would be!' Lena laughed softly as she rose.

When I caught up my hat, she shook her head. 'No, I don't want you to go with me. I'm to meet some Swedes at the drugstore. You wouldn't care for them. I wanted to see your room so I could write Tony all about it, but I must tell her how I left you right here with your books. She's always so afraid someone will run off with you!' Lena slipped her silk sleeves into the jacket I held for her, smoothed it over her person, and buttoned it slowly. I walked with her to the door. 'Come and see me sometimes when you're lonesome. But maybe you have all the friends you want. Have you?' She turned her soft cheek to me. 'Have you?' she whispered teasingly in my ear. In a moment I watched her fade down the dusky stairway.

When I turned back to my room the place seemed much pleasanter than before. Lena had left something warm and friendly in the lamplight. How I loved to hear her laugh again! It was so soft and unexcited and appreciative—gave a favourable interpretation to everything. When I closed my eyes I could hear them all laughing—the Danish laundry girls and the three Bohemian Marys. Lena had brought them all back to me. It came over me, as it had never done before, the relation between girls like those and the poetry of Virgil. If there were no girls like them in the world, there would be no poetry. I understood that clearly, for the first time. This revelation seemed to me inestimably precious. I clung to it as if it might suddenly vanish.

As I sat down to my book at last, my old dream about Lena coming across the harvest-field in her short skirt seemed to me like the memory of an actual experience. It floated before me on the page like a picture, and underneath it stood the mournful line: *'Optima dies . . . prima fugit.'*

3

In Lincoln the best part of the theatrical season came late, when the good companies stopped off there for one-night stands, after their long runs in New York and Chicago. That spring Lena went with me to see Joseph Jefferson in 'Rip Van Winkle,' and to a war play called 'Shenandoah.' She was inflexible about paying for her own seat; said she was in business now, and she wouldn't have a schoolboy spending his money on her. I liked to watch a play with Lena; everything was wonderful to her, and everything was true. It was like going to revival meetings with someone who was always being converted. She handed her feelings over to the actors with a kind of fatalistic resignation. Accessories of costume and scene meant much more to her than to me. She sat entranced through 'Robin Hood' and

hung upon the lips of the contralto who sang, 'Oh, Promise Me!'

Toward the end of April, the billboards, which I watched anxiously in those days, bloomed out one morning with gleaming white posters on which two names were impressively printed in blue Gothic letters: the name of an actress of whom I had often heard, and the name 'Camille.'

I called at the Raleigh Block for Lena on Saturday evening, and we walked down to the theatre. The weather was warm and sultry and put us both in a holiday humour. We arrived early, because Lena liked to watch the people come in. There was a note on the programme, saying that the 'incidental music' would be from the opera 'Traviata,' which was made from the same story as the play. We had neither of us read the play, and we did not know what it was about—though I seemed to remember having heard it was a piece in which great actresses shone. 'The Count of Monte Cristo,' which I had seen James O'Neill play that winter, was by the only Alexandre Dumas I knew. This play, I saw, was by his son, and I expected a family resemblance. A couple of jack-rabbits, run in off the prairie, could not have been more innocent of what awaited them than were Lena and I.

Our excitement began with the rise of the curtain, when the moody Varville, seated before the fire, interrogated Nanine. Decidedly, there was a new tang about this dialogue. I had never heard in the theatre lines that were alive, that presupposed and took for granted, like those which passed between Varville and Marguerite in the brief encounter before her friends entered. This introduced the most brilliant, worldly, the most enchantingly gay scene I had ever looked upon. I had never seen champagne bottles opened on the stage before—indeed, I had never seen them opened anywhere. The memory of that supper makes me hungry now; the sight of it then, when I had only a students' boarding-house dinner behind me, was delicate torment. I seem to remember gilded chairs and tables (arranged hurriedly by footmen in white gloves and stockings), linen of dazzling whiteness, glittering glass, silver dishes, a great bowl of fruit, and the reddest of roses. The room was invaded by beautiful women and dashing young men, laughing and talking together. The men were dressed more or less after the period in which the play was written; the women were not. I saw no inconsistency. Their talk seemed to open to one the brilliant world in which they lived; every sentence made one older and wiser, every pleasantry enlarged one's horizon. One could experience excess and satiety without the inconvenience of learning what to do with one's hands in a drawing-room! When the characters all spoke at once I missed some of the phrases they flashed at each other, I was in misery. I strained my ears and eyes to catch every exclamation.

The actress who played Marguerite was even then old-fashioned, though historic. She had been a member of Daly's famous New York company, and afterward a 'star' under his direction. She was a woman who could not be taught, it is said, though she had a crude natural force which carried with people whose feelings were accessible and whose taste was not squeamish. She was already old, with a ravaged countenance and a physique curiously hard and stiff. She moved with difficulty—I think she was lame—I seem to remember some story about a malady of the spine. Her Armand was disproportionately young and slight, a handsome youth, perplexed in the extreme. But what did it matter? I believed devoutly in her power to fascinate him, in her dazzling loveliness. I believed her young, ardent, reckless, disillusioned, under sentence, feverish, avid of pleasure. I wanted to cross the footlights and help the slim-waisted Armand in the frilled shirt to convince her that there was still loyalty and devotion in the world. Her sudden illness, when the gaiety was at its height, her pallor, the handkerchief she crushed against her lips, the cough she smothered under the laughter while Gaston kept playing the piano lightly—it all wrung my heart. But not so much as her cynicism in the long dialogue with her lover which

followed. How far was I from questioning her unbelief! While the charmingly sincere young man pleaded with her—accompanied by the orchestra in the old 'Traviata' duet, *'misterioso, misterios' altero!'*—she maintained her bitter scepticism, and the curtain fell on her dancing recklessly with the others, after Armand had been sent away with his flower.

Between the acts we had no time to forget. The orchestra kept sawing away at the 'Traviata' music, so joyous and sad, so thin and far-away, so clap-trap and yet so heart-breaking. After the second act I left Lena in tearful contemplation of the ceiling, and went out into the lobby to smoke. As I walked about there I congratulated myself that I had not brought some Lincoln girl who would talk during the waits about the junior dances, or whether the cadets would camp at Plattsmouth. Lena was at least a woman, and I was a man.

Through the scene between Marguerite and the elder Duval, Lena wept unceasingly, and I sat helpless to prevent the closing of that chapter of idyllic love, dreading the return of the young man whose ineffable happiness was only to be the measure of his fall.

I suppose no woman could have been further in person, voice, and temperament from Dumas' appealing heroine than the veteran actress who first acquainted me with her. Her conception of the character was as heavy and uncompromising as her diction; she bore hard on the idea and on the consonants. At all times she was highly tragic, devoured by remorse. Lightness of stress or behaviour was far from her. Her voice was heavy and deep: 'Ar-r-r-mond!' she would begin, as if she were summoning him to the bar of Judgment. But the lines were enough. She had only to utter them. They created the character in spite of her.

The heartless world which Marguerite re-entered with Varville had never been so glittering and reckless as on the night when it gathered in Olympe's salon for the fourth act. There were chandeliers hung from the ceiling, I remember, many servants in livery, gaming-tables where the men played with piles of gold, and a staircase down which the guests made their entrance. After all the others had gathered round the card-tables and young Duval had been warned by Prudence, Marguerite descended the staircase with Varville; such a cloak, such a fan, such jewels—and her face! One knew at a glance how it was with her. When Armand, with the terrible words, 'Look, all of you, I owe this woman nothing!' flung the gold and bank-notes at the half-swooning Marguerite, Lena cowered beside me and covered her face with her hands.

The curtain rose on the bedroom scene. By this time there wasn't a nerve in me that hadn't been twisted. Nanine alone could have made me cry. I loved Nanine tenderly, and Gaston, how one clung to that good fellow! The New Year's presents were not too much; nothing could be too much now. I wept unrestrainedly. Even the handkerchief in my breast-pocket, worn for elegance and not at all for use, was wet through by the time that moribund woman sank for the last time into the arms of her lover.

When we reached the door of the theatre, the streets were shining with rain. I had prudently brought along Mrs. Harling's useful Commencement present, and I took Lena home under its shelter. After leaving her, I walked slowly out into the country part of the town where I lived. The lilacs were all blooming in the yards, and the smell of them after the rain, of the new leaves and the blossoms together, blew into my face with a sort of bitter sweetness. I tramped through the puddles and under the showery trees, mourning for Marguerite Gauthier as if she had died only yesterday, sighing with the spirit of 1840, which had sighed so much, and which had reached me only that night, across long years and several languages, through the person of an infirm old actress. The idea is one that no circumstances can frustrate. Wherever and whenever that piece is put on, it is April.

4

How well I remember the stiff little parlour where I used to wait for Lena: the hard horsehair furniture, bought at some auction sale, the long mirror, the fashion-

plates on the wall. If I sat down even for a moment, I was sure to find threads and bits of coloured silk clinging to my clothes after I went away. Lena's success puzzled me. She was so easy-going; had none of the push and self-assertiveness that get people ahead in business. She had come to Lincoln, a country girl, with no introductions except to some cousins of Mrs. Thomas who lived there, and she was already making clothes for the women of 'the young married set.' Evidently she had great natural aptitude for her work. She knew, as she said, 'what people looked well in.' She never tired of poring over fashion-books. Sometimes in the evening I would find her alone in her work-room, draping folds of satin on a wire figure, with a quite blissful expression of countenance. I couldn't help thinking that the years when Lena literally hadn't enough clothes to cover herself might have something to do with her untiring interest in dressing the human figure. Her clients said that Lena 'had style,' and overlooked her habitual inaccuracies. She never, I discovered, finished anything by the time she had promised, and she frequently spent more money on materials than her customer had authorized. Once, when I arrived at six o'clock, Lena was ushering out a fidgety mother and her awkward, overgrown daughter. The woman detained Lena at the door to say apologetically:

'You'll try to keep it under fifty for me, won't you, Miss Lingard? You see, she's really too young to come to an expensive dressmaker, but I knew you could do more with her than anybody else.'

'Oh, that will be all right, Mrs. Herron. I think we'll manage to get a good effect,' Lena replied blandly.

I thought her manner with her customers very good, and wondered where she had learned such self-possession.

Sometimes after my morning classes were over, I used to encounter Lena downtown, in her velvet suit and a little black hat, with a veil tied smoothly over her face, looking as fresh as the spring morning. Maybe she would be carrying home a bunch of jonquils or a hyacinth plant. When we passed a candy store her footsteps would hesitate and linger. 'Don't let me go in,' she would murmur. 'Get me by if you can.' She was very fond of sweets, and was afraid of growing too plump.

We had delightful Sunday breakfasts together at Lena's. At the back of her long work-room was a bay-window, large enough to hold a box-couch and a reading-table. We breakfasted in this recess, after drawing the curtains that shut out the long room, with cutting-tables and wire women and sheet-draped garments on the walls. The sunlight poured in, making everything on the table shine and glitter and the flame of the alcohol lamp disappear altogether. Lena's curly black water-spaniel, Prince, breakfasted with us. He sat beside her on the couch and behaved very well until the Polish violin-teacher across the hall began to practise, when Prince would growl and sniff the air with disgust. Lena's landlord, old Colonel Raleigh, had given her the dog, and at first she was not at all pleased. She had spent too much of her life taking care of animals to have much sentiment about them. But Prince was a knowing little beast, and she grew fond of him. After breakfast I made him do his lessons; play dead dog, shake hands, stand up like a soldier. We used to put my cadet cap on his head—I had to take military drill at the university—and give him a yard-measure to hold with his front leg. His gravity made us laugh immoderately.

Lena's talk always amused me. Ántonia had never talked like the people about her. Even after she learned to speak English readily, there was always something impulsive and foreign in her speech. But Lena had picked up all the conventional expressions she heard at Mrs. Thomas's dressmaking shop. Those formal phrases, the very flower of small-town properties, and the flat commonplaces, nearly all hypocritical in their origin, became very funny, very engaging, when they were uttered in Lena's soft voice, with her caressing intonation and arch naiveté. Nothing could be more diverting than to hear Lena, who was almost as candid as Nature, call a leg a 'limb' or a house a 'home.'

We used to linger a long while over our

coffee in that sunny corner. Lena was never so pretty as in the morning; she wakened fresh with the world every day, and her eyes had a deeper colour then, like the blue flowers that are never so blue as when they first open. I could sit idle all through a Sunday morning and look at her. Ole Benson's behaviour was now no mystery to me.

'There was never any harm in Ole,' she said once. 'People needn't have troubled themselves. He just liked to come over and sit on the draw-side and forget about his bad luck. I liked to have him. Any company's welcome when you're off with cattle all the time.'

'But wasn't he always glum?' I asked. 'People said he never talked at all.'

'Sure he talked, in Norwegian. He'd been a sailor on an English boat and had seen lots of queer places. He had wonderful tattoos. We used to sit and look at them for hours; there wasn't much to look at out there. He was like a picture book. He had a ship and a strawberry girl on one arm, and on the other a girl standing before a little house, with a fence gate and all, waiting for her sweetheart. Farther up his arm, her sailor had come back and was kissing her. "The Sailor's Return," he called it.'

I admitted it was no wonder Ole liked to look at a pretty girl once in a while, with such a fright at home.

'You know,' Lena said confidentially, 'he married Mary because he thought she was strong-minded and would keep him straight. He never could keep straight on shore. The last time he landed in Liverpool he'd been out on a two years' voyage. He was paid off one morning, and by the next he hadn't a cent left, and his watch and compass were gone. He'd got with some women, and they'd taken everything. He worked his way to this country on a little passenger boat. Mary was a stewardess, and she tried to convert him on the way over. He thought she was just the one to keep him steady. Poor Ole! He used to bring me candy from town, hidden in his feed-bag. He couldn't refuse anything to a girl. He'd have given away his tattoos long ago, if he could. He's one of the people I'm sorriest for.'

Lena and stayed late, the Polish violin-teacher across the hall used to come out and watch me descend the stairs, muttering so threateningly that it would have been easy to fall into a quarrel with him. Lena had told him once that she liked to hear him practise, so he always left his door open, and watched who came and went.

There was a coolness between the Pole and Lena's landlord on her account. Old Colonel Raleigh had come to Lincoln from Kentucky and invested an inherited fortune in real estate, at the time of inflated prices. Now he sat day after day in his office in the Raleigh Block, trying to discover where his money had gone and how he could get some of it back. He was a widower, and found very little congenial companionship in this casual Western city. Lena's good looks and gentle manners appealed to him. He said her voice reminded him of Southern voices, and he found as many opportunities of hearing it as possible. He painted and papered her rooms for her that spring, and put in a porcelain bathtub in place of the tin one that had satisfied the former tenant. While these repairs were being made, the old gentleman often dropped in to consult Lena's preferences. She told me with amusement how Ordinsky, the Pole, had presented himself at her door one evening, and said that if the landlord was annoying her by his attentions, he would promptly put a stop to it.

'I don't exactly know what to do about him,' she said, shaking her head, 'he's so sort of wild all the time. I wouldn't like to have him say anything rough to that nice old man. The colonel is long-winded, but then I expect he's lonesome. I don't think he cares much for Ordinsky, either. He said once that if I had any complaints to make of my neighbours, I mustn't hesitate.'

One Saturday evening when I was having supper with Lena, we heard a knock at her parlour door, and there stood the Pole, coatless, in a dress shirt and collar. Prince dropped on his paws and began to growl like a mastiff, while the visitor apologized, saying that he could not possibly come in thus attired, but he begged Lena to lend him some safety pins.

and let me see what's the matter.' She closed the door behind him. 'Jim, won't you make Prince behave?'

I rapped Prince on the nose, while Ordinsky explained that he had not had his dress clothes on for a long time, and to-night, when he was going to play for a concert, his waistcoat had split down the back. He thought he could pin it together until he got it to a tailor.

Lena took him by the elbow and turned him round. She laughed when she saw the long gap in the satin. 'You could never pin that, Mr. Ordinsky. You've kept it folded too long, and the goods is all gone along the crease. Take it off. I can put a new piece of lining-silk in there for you in ten minutes.' She disappeared into her work-room with the vest, leaving me to confront the Pole, who stood against the door like a wooden figure. He folded his arms and glared at me with his excitable, slanting brown eyes. His head was the shape of a chocolate drop, and was covered with dry, straw-coloured hair that fuzzed up about his pointed crown. He had never done more than mutter at me as I passed him, and I was surprised when he now addressed me.

'Miss Lingard,' he said haughtily, 'is a young woman for whom I have the utmost, the utmost respect.'

'So have I,' I said coldly.

He paid no heed to my remark, but began to do rapid finger-exercises on his shirt-sleeves, as he stood with tightly folded arms.

'Kindness of heart,' he went on, staring at the ceiling, 'sentiment, are not understood in a place like this. The noblest qualities are ridiculed. Grinning college boys, ignorant and conceited, what do they know of delicacy!'

I controlled my features and tried to speak seriously.

'If you mean me, Mr. Ordinsky, I have known Miss Lingard a long time, and I think I appreciate her kindness. We come from the same town, and we grew up together.'

His gaze travelled slowly down from the ceiling and rested on me. 'Am I to understand that you have this young woman's interests at heart? That you do not wish to compromise her?'

'That's a word we don't use much here, Mr. Ordinsky. A girl who makes her own living can ask a college boy to supper without being talked about. We take some things for granted.'

'Then I have misjudged you, and I ask your pardon'—he bowed gravely. 'Miss Lingard,' he went on, 'is an absolutely trustful heart. She has not learned the hard lessons of life. As for you and me, *noblesse oblige*'—he watched me narrowly.

Lena returned with the vest. 'Come in and let us look at you as you go out, Mr. Ordinsky. I've never seen you in your dress suit,' she said as she opened the door for him.

A few moments later he reappeared with his violen-case—heavy muffler about his neck and thick woollen gloves on his bony hands. Lena spoke encouragingly to him, and he went off with such an important professional air that we fell to laughing as soon as we had shut the door: 'Poor fellow,' Lena said indulgently, 'he takes everything so hard.'

After that Ordinsky was friendly to me, and behaved as if there were some deep understanding between us. He wrote a furious article, attacking the musical taste of the town, and asked me to do him a great service by taking it to the editor of the morning paper. If the editor refused to print it, I was to tell him that he would be answerable to Ordinsky 'in person.' He declared that he would never retract one word, and that he was quite prepared to lose all his pupils. In spite of the fact that nobody ever mentioned his article to him after it appeared—full of typographical errors which he thought intentional—he got a certain satisfaction from believing that the citizens of Lincoln had meekly accepted the epithet 'coarse barbarians.' 'You see how it is, he said to me, 'where there is no chivalry, there is no *amour-propre*.' When I met him on his rounds now, I thought he carried his head more disdainfully than ever, and strode up the steps of front porches and rang doorbells with more assurance. He told Lena he would never forget how I had stood by him when he was 'under fire.'

All this time, of course, I was drifting. Lena had broken up my serious mood. I wasn't interested in my classes. I played with Lena and Prince, I played with the Pole, I went buggy-riding with the old colonel, who had taken a fancy to me and used to talk to me about Lena and the 'great beauties' he had known in his youth. We were all three in love with Lena.

Before the first of June, Gaston Cleric was offered an instructorship at Harvard College, and accepted it. He suggested that I should follow him in the fall, and complete my course at Harvard. He had found out about Lena—not from me—and he talked to me seriously.

'You won't do anything here now. You should either quit school and go to work, or change your college and begin again in earnest. You won't recover yourself while you are playing about with this handsome Norwegian. Yes, I've seen her with you at the theatre. She's very pretty, and perfectly irresponsible, I should judge.'

Cleric wrote my grandfather that he would like to take me East with him. To my astonishment, grandfather replied that I might go if I wished. I was both glad and sorry on the day when the letter came. I stayed in my room all evening and thought things over. I even tried to persuade myself that I was standing in Lena's way—it is so necessary to be a little noble!—and that if she had not me to play with, she would probably marry and secure her future.

The next evening I went to call on Lena. I found her propped up on the couch in her bay-window, with her foot in a big slipper. An awkward little Russian girl whom she had taken into her work-room had dropped a flat-iron on Lena's toe. On the table beside her there was a basket of early summer flowers which the Pole had left after he heard of the accident. He always managed to know what went on in Lena's apartment.

Lena was telling me some amusing piece of gossip about one of her clients, when I interrupted her and picked up the flower basket.

'This old chap will be proposing to you some day, Lena.'

'Oh, he has—often!' she murmured.

'What! After you've refused him?'

'He doesn't mind that. It seems to cheer him to mention the subject. Old men are like that, you know. It makes them feel important to think they're in love with somebody.'

'The colonel would marry you in a minute. I hope you won't marry some old fellow, not even a rich one.'

Lena shifted her pillows and looked up at me in surprise.

'Why, I'm not going to marry anybody. Didn't you know that?'

'Nonsense, Lena. That's what girls say, but you know better. Every handsome girl like you marries, of course.'

She shook her head. 'Not me.'

'But why not? What makes you say that?' I persisted

Lena laughed.

'Well, it's mainly because I don't want a husband. Men are all right for friends, but as soon as you marry them they turn into cranky old fathers, even the wild ones. They begin to tell you what's sensible and what's foolish, and want you to stick at home all the time. I prefer to be foolish when I feel like it, and be accountable to nobody.'

'But you'll be lonesome. You'll get tired of this sort of life, and you'll want a family.'

'Not me. I like to be lonesome. When I went to work for Mrs. Thomas I was nineteen years old, and I had never slept a night in my life when there weren't three in the bed. I never had a minute to myself except when I was off with the cattle.'

Usually, when Lena referred to her life in the country at all, she dismissed it with a single remark, humorous or mildly cynical. But to-night her mind seemed to dwell on those early years. She told me she couldn't remember a time when she was so little that she wasn't lugging a heavy baby about, helping to wash for babies, trying to keep their little chapped hands and faces clean. She remembered home as a place where there were always too many children, a cross man and work piling up around a sick woman.

'It wasn't mother's fault. She would have made us comfortable if she could. But that

was no life for a girl! After I began to herd and milk, I could never get the smell of the cattle off me. The few underclothes I had I kept in a cracker-box. On Saturday nights, after everybody was in bed, then I could take a bath if I wasn't too tired. I could make two trips to the windmill to carry water, and heat it in the wash-boiler on the stove. While the water was heating, I could bring in a wash-tub out of the cave, and take my bath in the kitchen. Then I could put on a clean night-gown and get into bed with two others, who likely hadn't had a bath unless I'd given it to them. You can't tell me anything about family life. I've had plenty to last me.'

'But it's not all like that,' I objected.

'Near enough. It's all being under somebody's thumb. What's on your mind, Jim? Are you afraid I'll want you to marry me some day?'

Then I told her I was going away.

'What makes you want to go away, Jim? Haven't I been nice to you?'

'You've been just awfully good to me, Lena,' I blurted. 'I don't think about much else. I never shall think about much else while I'm with you. I'll never settle down and grind if I stay here. You know that.'

I dropped down beside her and sat looking at the floor. I seemed to have forgotten all my reasonable explanations.

Lena drew close to me, and the little hesitation in her voice that had hurt me was not there when she spoke again.

'I oughtn't to have begun it, ought I?' she murmured. 'I oughtn't to have gone to see you that first time. But I did want to. I guess I've always been a little foolish about you. I don't know what first put it into my head, unless it was Ántonia, always telling me I mustn't be up to any of my nonsense with you. I let you alone for a long while, though, didn't I?

She was a sweet creature to those she loved, that Lena Lingard!

At last she sent me away with her soft, slow renunciatory kiss.

'You aren't sorry I came to see you that time?' she whispered. 'It seemed so natural. I used to think I'd like to be your first sweetheart. You were such a funny kid!'

She always kissed one as if she were sadly and wisely sending one away forever.

We said many good-byes before I left Lincoln, but she never tried to hinder me or hold me back. 'You are going, but you haven't gone yet, have you?' she used to say.

My Lincoln chapter closed abruptly. I went home to my grandparents for a few weeks, and afterward visited my relatives in Virginia until I joined Cleric in Boston. I was then nineteen years old.

BOOK IV

THE PIONEER WOMAN'S STORY

1

Two years after I left Lincoln, I completed my academic course at Harvard. Before I entered the Law School I went home for the summer vacation. On the night of my arrival, Mrs. Harling and Frances and Sally came over to greet me. Everything seemed just as it used to be. My grandparents looked very little older. Frances Harling was married now, and she and her husband managed the Harling interests in Black Hawk. When we gathered in grandmother's parlour, I could hardly believe that I had been away at all. One subject, however, we avoided all evening.

When I was walking home with Frances, after we had left Mrs. Harling at her gate, she said simply, 'You know, of course, about poor Ántonia.'

Poor Ántonia! Everyone would be saying that now, I thought bitterly. I replied that grandmother had written me how Ántonia went away to marry Larry Donovan at some place where he was working; that he had deserted her, and that there was now a baby. This was all I knew.

'He never married her,' Frances said. 'I haven't seen her since she came back. She lives at home, on the farm, and almost never comes to town. She brought the baby in to show it to mama once. I'm afraid she's settled down to be Ambrosch's drudge for good.'

I tried to shut Ántonia out of my mind.

I was bitterly disappointed in her. I could not forgive her for becoming an object of pity, while Lena Lingard, for whom people had always foretold trouble, was now the leading dressmaker of Lincoln, much respected in Black Hawk. Lena gave her heart away when she felt like it, but she kept her head for her business and had got on in the world.

Just then it was the fashion to speak indulgently of Lena and severely of Tiny Soderball, who had quietly gone West to try her fortune the year before. A Black Hawk boy, just back from Seattle, brought the news that Tiny had not gone to the coast on a venture, as she had allowed people to think, but with very definite plans. One of the roving promoters that used to stop at Mrs. Gardener's hotel owned idle property along the waterfront in Seattle, and he had offered to set Tiny up in business in one of his empty buildings. She was now conducting a sailors' lodging-house. This, everyone said, would be the end of Tiny. Even if she had begun by running a decent place, she couldn't keep it up, all sailors' boarding-houses were alike.

When I thought about it, I discovered that I had never known Tiny as well as I knew the other girls. I remembered her tripping briskly about the dining-room on her high heels, carrying a big trayful of dishes, glancing rather pertly at the spruce travelling men, and contemptuously at the scrubby ones—who were so afraid of her that they didn't dare to ask for two kinds of pie. Now it occurred to me that perhaps the sailors, too, might be afraid of Tiny. How astonished we should have been, as we sat talking about her on Frances Harling's front porch, if we could have known what her future was really to be! Of all the girls and boys who grew up together in Black Hawk, Tiny Soderball was to lead the most adventurous life and to achieve the most solid worldly success.

This is what actually happened to Tiny: While she was running her lodging-house in Seattle, gold was discovered in Alaska. Miners and sailors came back from the North with wonderful stories and pouches of gold. Tiny saw it and weighed it in her hands. That daring, which nobody had ever suspected in her, awoke. She sold her business and set out for Circle City, in company with a carpenter and his wife whom she had persuaded to go along with her. They reached Skaguay in a snow-storm, went in dog-sledges over the Chilkoot Pass, and shot the Yukon in flatboats. They reached Circle City on the very day when some Siwash Indians came into the settlement with the report that there had been a rich gold strike farther up the river, on a certain Klondike Creek. Two days later Tiny and her friends, and nearly everyone else in Circle City, started for the Klondike fields on the last steamer that went up the Yukon before it froze for the winter. That boatload of people founded Dawson City. Within a few weeks there were fifteen hundred homeless men in camp. Tiny and the carpenter's wife began to cook for them, in a tent. The miners gave her a building lot, and the carpenter put up a log hotel for her. There she sometimes fed a hundred and fifty men a day. Miners came in on snow-shoes from their placed claims twenty miles away to buy fresh bread from her, and paid for it in gold.

That winter Tiny kept in her hotel a Swede whose legs had been frozen one night in a storm when he was trying to find his way back to his cabin. The poor fellow thought it great good fortune to be cared for by a woman, and a woman who spoke his own tongue. When he was told that his feet must be amputated, he said he hoped he would not get well; what could a working-man do in this hard world without feet? He did, in fact, die from the operation, but not before he had deeded Tiny Soderball his claim on Hunker Creek. Tiny sold her hotel, invested half her money in Dawson building lots, and with the rest she developed her claim. She went off into the wilds and lived on the claim. She bought other claims from discouraged miners, traded or sold them on percentages.

After nearly ten years in the Klondike, Tiny returned, with a considerable fortune, to live in San Francisco. I met her in Salt Lake City in 1908. She was a thin, hard-faced woman, very well-dressed, very re-

served in manner. Curiously enough, she reminded me of Mrs. Gardener, for whom she had worked in Black Hawk so long ago. She told me about some of the desperate chances she had taken in the gold country, but the thrill of them was quite gone. She said frankly that nothing interested her much now but making money. The only two human beings of whom she spoke with any feeling were the Swede, Johnson, who had given her his claim, and Lena Lingard. She had persuaded Lena to come to San Francisco and go into business there.

'Lincoln was never any place for her,' Tiny remarked. 'In a town of that size Lena would always be gossiped about. Frisco's the right field for her. She has a fine class of trade. Oh, she's just the same as she always was! She's careless, but she's level-headed. She's the only person I know who never gets any older. It's fine for me to have her there, somebody who enjoys things like that. She keeps an eye on me and won't let me be shabby. When she thinks I need a new dress, she makes it and sends it home—with a bill that's long enough, I can tell you!'

Tiny limped slightly when she walked. The claim on Hunker Creek took toll from its possessors. Tiny had been caught in a sudden turn of weather, like poor Johnson. She lost three toes from one of those pretty little feet that used to trip about Black Hawk in pointed slippers and striped stockings. Tiny mentioned this mutilation quite casually—didn't seem sensitive about it. She was satisfied with her success, but not elated. She was like someone in whom the faculty of becoming interested is worn out.

2

Soon after I got home that summer, I persuaded my grandparents to have their photographs taken, and one morning I went into the photographer's shop to arrange for sittings. While I was waiting for him to come out of his developing-room, I walked about trying to recognize the likenesses on his walls: girls in Commencement dresses, country brides and grooms holding hands, family groups of three generations. I noticed, in a heavy frame, one of those depressing crayon enlargements' often seen in farm-house parlours, the subject being a round-eyed baby in short dresses. The photographer came out and gave a constrained, apologetic laugh.

'That's Tony Shimerda's baby. You remember her; she used to be the Harlings' Tony. Too bad! She seems proud of the baby, though, wouldn't hear to a cheap frame for the picture. I expect her brother will be in for it Saturday.'

I went away feeling that I must see Ántonia again. Another girl would have kept her baby out of sight, but Tony, of course, must have its picture on exhibition at the town photographer's, in a great gilt frame. How like her! I could forgive her, I told myself, if she hadn't thrown herself away on such a cheap sort of fellow.

Larry Donovan was a passenger conductor, one of those train-crew aristocrats who are always afraid that someone may ask them to put up a car-window, and who, if requested to perform such a menial service, silently point to the button that calls the porter. Larry wore this air of official aloofness even on the street, where there were no car-windows to compromise his dignity. At the end of his run he stepped indifferently from the train along with the passengers, his street hat on his head and his conductor's cap in an alligator-skin bag, went directly into the station and changed his clothes. It was a matter of the utmost importance to him never to be seen in his blue trousers away from his train. He was usually cold and distant with men, but with all women he had a silent, grave familiarity, a special handshake, accompanied by a significant, deliberate look. He took women, married or single, into his confidence; walked them up and down in the moonlight, telling them what a mistake he had made by not entering the office branch of the service, and how much better fitted he was to fill the post of General Passenger Agent in Denver than the rough-shod man who then bore that title. His unappreciated worth was the tender secret Larry shared with his sweethearts, and he was always able to make some foolish heart ache over it.

As I drew near home that morning, I saw Mrs. Harling out in her yard, digging round her mountain-ash tree. It was a dry summer, and she had now no boy to help her. Charley was off in his battleship, cruising somewhere on the Caribbean sea. I turned in at the gate—it was with a feeling of pleasure that I opened and shut that gate in those days; I liked the feel of it under my hand. I took the spade away from Mrs. Harling, and while I loosened the earth around the tree, she sat down on the steps and talked about the oriole family that had a nest in its branches.

'Mrs. Harling,' I said presently, 'I wish I could find out exactly how Ántonia's marriage fell through.'

'Why don't you go and see your grandfather's tenant, the Widow Steavens? She knows more about it than anybody else. She helped Ántonia get ready to be married, and she was there when Ántonia came back. She took care of her when the baby was born. She could tell you everything. Besides, the Widow Steavens is a good talker, and she has a remarkable memory.'

3

On the first or second day of August I got a horse and cart and set out for the high country, to visit the Widow Steavens. The wheat harvest was over, and here and there along the horizon I could see black puffs of smoke from the steam threshing-machines. The old pasture land was now being broken up into wheatfields and cornfields, the red grass was disappearing, and the whole face of the country was changing. There were wooden houses where the old sod dwellings used to be, and little orchards, and big red barns; all this meant happy children, contented women, and men who saw their lives coming to a fortunate issue. The windy springs and the blazing summers, one after another, had enriched and mellowed that flat tableland; all the human effort that had gone into it was coming back in long, sweeping lines of fertility. The changes seemed beautiful and harmonious to me; it was like watching the growth of a great man or of a great idea. I recognized every tree and sand-bank and rugged draw. I found that I remembered the conformation of the land as one remembers the modelling of human faces.

When I drew up to our old windmill, the Widow Steavens came out to meet me. She was brown as an Indian woman, tall, and very strong. When I was little, her massive head had always seemed to me like a Roman senator's. I told her at once why I had come.

'You'll stay the night with us, Jimmy? I'll talk to you after supper. I can take more interest when my work is off my mind. You've no prejudice against hot biscuit for supper? Some have, these days.'

While I was puting my horse away, I heard a rooster squawking. I looked at my watch and sighed; it was three o'clock, and I knew that I must eat him at six.

After supper Mrs. Steavens and I went upstairs to the old sitting-room, while her grave, silent brother remained in the basement to read his farm papers. All the windows were open. The white summer moon was shining outside, the windmill was pumping lazily in the light breeze. My hostess put the lamp on a stand in the corner, and turned it low because of the heat. She sat down in her favourite rocking-chair and settled a little stool comfortably under her tired feet. 'I'm troubled with calluses, Jim; getting old,' she sighed cheerfully. She crossed her hands in her lap and sat as if she were at a meeting of some kind.

'Now, it's about that dear Ántonia you want to know? Well, you've come to the right person. I've watched her like she'd been my own daughter.

'When she came home to do her sewing that summer before she was to be married, she was over here about every day. They've never had a sewing-machine at the Shimerdas', and she made all her things here. I taught her hemstitching, and I helped her to cut and fit. She used to sit there at that machine by the window, pedalling the life out of it—she was so strong—and always singing them queer Bohemian songs, like she was the happiest thing in the world.

'"Ántonia," I used to say, 'don't run that machine so fast. You won't hasten the day none that way."

'Then she'd laugh and slow down for a little, but she'd soon forget and begin to pedal and sing again. I never saw a girl work harder to go to housekeeping right and well-prepared. Lovely table-linen the Harlings had given her, and Lena Lingard had sent her nice things from Lincoln. We hemstitched all the tablecloths and pillow-cases, and some of the sheets. Old Mrs. Shimerda knit yards and yards of lace for her underclothes. Tony told me just how she meant to have everything in her house. She'd even bought silver spoons and forks, and kept them in her trunk. She was always coaxing brother to go to the post-office. Her young man did write her real often, from different towns along his run.

'The first thing that troubled her was when he wrote that his run had been changed, and they would likely have to live in Denver. "I'm a country girl," she said, "and I doubt if I'll be able to manage so well for him in a city. I was counting on keeping chickens, and maybe a cow." She soon cheered up, though.

'At last she got the letter telling her when to come. She was shaken by it; she broke the seal and read it in this room. I suspected then that she'd begun to get faint-hearted, waiting, though she'd never let me see it.

'Then there was a great time of packing. It was in March, if I remember rightly, and a terrible muddy, raw spell, with the roads bad for hauling her things to town. And here let me say, Ambrosch did the right thing. He went to Black Hawk and bought her a set of plated silver in a purple velvet box, good enough for her station. He gave her three hundred dollars in money; I saw the cheque. He'd collected her wages all these first years she worked out, and it was but right. I shook him by the hand in this room. "You're behaving like a man, Ambrosch," I said, "and I'm glad to see it, son."

'"Twas a cold, raw day he drove her and her three trunks into Black Hawk to take the night train for Denver—the boxes had been shipped before. He stopped the wagon here, and she ran in to tell me good-bye. She threw her arms around me and kissed me, and thanked me for all I'd done for her. She was so happy she was crying and laughing at the same time, and her red cheeks was all wet with rain.

'"You're sure handsome enough for any man," I said, looking her over.

'She laughed kind of flighty like, and whispered, "Good-bye, dear house!" and then ran out to the wagon. I expect she meant that for you and your grandmother, as much as for me, so I'm particular to tell you. This house had always been a refuge to her.

'Well, in a few days we had a letter saying she got to Denver safe, and he was there to meet her. They were to be married in a few days. He was trying to get his promotion before he married, she said. I didn't like that, but I said nothing. The next week Yulka got a postal card, saying she was "well and happy." After that we heard nothing. A month went by, and old Mrs. Shimerda began to get fretful. Ambrosch was as sulky with me as if I'd picked out the man and arranged the match.

'One night brother William came in and said that on his way back from the fields he passed a livery team from town, driving fast out the west road. There was a trunk on the front seat with the driver, and another behind. In the back seat there was a woman all bundled up; but for all her veils, he thought 'twas Ántonia Shimerda, or Ántonia Donovan, as her name ought now to be.

'The next morning I got brother to drive me over. I can walk still, but my feet ain't what they used to be, and I try to save myself. The lines outside the Shimerdas' house was full of washing, though it was the middle of the week. As we got nearer, I saw a sight that made my heart sink—all those underclothes we'd put so much work on, out there swinging in the wind. Yulka came bringing a dishpanful of wrung clothes, but she darted back into the house like she was loath to see us. When I went in, Ántonia was standing over the tubs, just finishing up a big washing. Mrs. Shimerda was going about her work, talking and scolding to herself. She didn't so much as raise her eyes. Tony wiped her hand on her apron and held it out to me, looking at me steady but mournful. When I took her in my arms she drew

away. "Don't, Mrs. Steavens," she says, "you'll make me cry, and I don't want to."

'I whispered and asked her to come out-of-doors with me. I knew she couldn't talk free before her mother. She went out with me, bareheaded, and we walked up toward the garden.

'"I'm not married, Mrs. Steavens," she says to me very quiet and natural-like, "and I ought to be."

'"Oh, my child," says I, "what's happened to you? Don't be afraid to tell me!"

'She sat down on the draw-side, out of sight of the house. "He's run away from me," she said. "I don't know if he ever meant to marry me."

'"You mean he's thrown up his job and quit the country?" says I.

'"He didn't have any job. He'd been fired; blacklisted for knocking down fares. I didn't know. I thought he hadn't been treated right. He was sick when I got there. He'd just come out of the hospital. He lived with me till my money gave out, and afterward I found he hadn't really been hunting work at all. Then he just didn't come back. One nice fellow at the station told me, when I kept going to look for him, to give it up. He said he was afraid Larry'd gone bad and wouldn't come back any more. I guess he's gone to Old Mexico. The conductors get rich down there, collecting half-fares off the natives and robbing the company. He was always talking about fellows who had got ahead that way."

'I asked her, of course, why she didn't insist on a civil marriage at once—that would have given her some hold on him. She leaned her head on her hands, poor child, and said, "I just don't know, Mrs. Steavens. I guess my patience was wore out, waiting so long. I thought if he saw how well I could do for him, he'd want to stay with me."

'Jimmy, I sat right down on that bank beside her and made lament. I cried like a young thing. I couldn't help it. I was just about heart-broke. It was one of them lovely warm May days, and the wind was blowing and the colts jumping around in the pastures; but I felt bowed with despair. My Ántonia, that had so much good in her, had come home disgraced. And that Lena Lingard, that was always a bad one, say what you will, had turned out so well, and was coming home here every summer in her silks and her satins, and doing so much for her mother. I give credit where credit is due, but you know well enough, Jim Burden, there is a great difference in the principles of those two girls. And here it was the good one that had come to grief! I was poor comfort to her. I marvelled at her calm. As we went back to the house, she stopped to feel of her clothes to see if they was drying well, and seemed to take pride in their whiteness—she said she'd been living in a brick block, where she didn't have proper conveniences to wash them.

'The next time I saw Ántonia, she was out in the fields ploughing corn. All that spring and summer she did the work of a man on the farm; it seemed to be an understood thing. Ambrosch didn't get any other hand to help him. Poor Marek had got violent and been sent away to an institution a good while back. We never even saw any of Tony's pretty dresses. She didn't take them out of her trunks. She was quiet and steady. Folks respected her industry and tried to treat her as if nothing had happened. They talked, to be sure; but not like they would if she'd put on airs. She was so crushed and quiet that nobody seemed to want to humble her. She never went anywhere. All that summer she never once came to see me. At first I was hurt, but I got to feel that it was because this house reminded her of too much. I went over there when I could, but the times when she was in from the fields were the times when I was busiest here. She talked about the grain and the weather as if she'd never had another interest, and if I went over at night she always looked dead weary. She was afflicted with toothache; one tooth after another ulcerated, and she went about with her face swollen half the time. She wouldn't go to Black Hawk to a dentist for fear of meeting people she knew. Ambrosch had got over his good spell long ago, and was always surly. Once I told him he ought not to let Ántonia work so hard and pull

herself down. He said, "If you put that in her head, you better stay home." And after that I did.

'Ántonia worked on through harvest and threshing, though she was too modest to go out threshing for the neighbours, like when she was young and free. I didn't see much of her until late that fall when she begun to herd Ambrosch's cattle in the open ground north of here, up toward the big dog-town. Sometimes she used to bring them over the west hill, there, and I would run to meet her and walk north a piece with her. She had thirty cattle in her bunch; it had been dry, and the pasture was short, or she wouldn't have brought them so far.

'It was a fine open fall, and she liked to be alone. While the steers grazed, she used to sit on them grassy banks along the draws and sun herself for hours. Sometimes I slipped up to visit with her, when she hadn't gone too far.

'"It does seem like I ought to make lace, or knit like Lena used to," she said one day, "but if I start to work, I look around and forget to go on. It seems such a little while ago when Jim Burden and I was playing all over this country. Up here I can pick out the very places where my father used to stand. Sometimes I feel like I'm not going to live very long, so I'm just enjoying every day of this fall."

'After the winter begun she wore a man's long overcoat and boots, and a man's felt hat with a wide brim. I used to watch her coming and going, and I could see that her steps were getting heavier. One day in December, the snow began to fall. Late in the afternoon I saw Ántonia driving her cattle homeward across the hill. The snow was flying round her and she bent to face it, looking more lonesome-like to me than usual. "Deary me," I says to myself, "the girl's stayed out too late. It'll be dark before she gets them cattle put into the corral." I seemed to sense she'd been feeling too miserable to get up and drive them.

'That very night, it happened. She got her cattle home, turned them into the corral, and went into the house, into her room behind the kitchen, and shut the door. There, without calling to anybody, without a groan, she lay down on the bed and bore her child.

'I was lifting supper when old Mrs. Shimerda came running down the basement stairs, out of breath and screeching:

'"Baby come, baby come!" she says. "Ambrosch much like devil!"

'Brother William is surely a patient man. He was just ready to sit down to a hot supper after a long day in the fields. Without a word he rose and went down to the barn and hooked up his team. He got us over there as quick as it was humanly possible. I went right in, and began to do for Ántonia; but she laid there with her eyes shut and took no account of me. The old woman got a tubful of warm water to wash the baby. I overlooked what she was doing and I said out loud: "Mrs. Shimerda, don't you put that strong yellow soap near that baby. You'll blister its little skin." I was indignant.

'"Mrs. Steavens," Ántonia said from the bed, 'if you'll look in the top tray of my trunk, you'll see some fine soap." That was the first word she spoke.

'After I'd dressed the baby, I took it out to show it to Ambrosch. He was muttering behind the stove and wouldn't look at it.

'"You'd better put it out in the rain-barrel," he says.

'"Now, see here, Ambrosch," says I, "there's a law in this land, don't forget that. I stand here a witness that this baby has come into the world sound and strong, and I intend to keep an eye on what befalls it." I pride myself I cowed him.

'Well, I expect you're not much interested in babies, but Ántonia's got on fine. She loved it from the first as dearly as if she'd had a ring on her finger, and was never ashamed of it. It's a year and eight months old now, and no baby was ever better cared-for. Ántonia is a natural-born mother. I wish she could marry and raise a family, but I don't know as there's much chance now.'

I slept that night in the room I used to have when I was a little boy, with the summer wind blowing in at the windows, bring-

ing the smell of the ripe fields. I lay awake and watched the moonlight shining over the barn and the stacks and the pond, and the windmill making its old dark shadow against the blue sky.

4

The next afternoon I walked over to the Shimerdas'. Yulka showed me the baby and told me that Ántonia was shocking wheat on the southwest quarter. I went down across the fields, and Tony saw me from a long way off. She stood still by her shocks, leaning on her pitchfork, watching me as I came. We met like the people in the old song, in silence, if not in tears. Her warm hand clasped mine.

'I thought you'd come, Jim. I heard you were at Mrs. Steavens's last night. I've been looking for you all day.'

She was thinner than I had ever seen her, and looked as Mrs. Steavens said, 'worked down,' but there was a new kind of strength in the gravity of her face, and her colour still gave her that look of deep-seated health and ardour. Still? Why, it flashed across me that though so much had happened in her life and in mine, she was barely twenty-four years old.

Ántonia stuck her fork in the ground, and instinctively we walked toward that unploughed patch at the crossing of the roads as the fittest place to talk to each other. We sat down outside the sagging wire fence that shut Mr. Shimerda's plot off from the rest of the world. The tall red grass had never been cut there. It had died down in winter and come up again in the spring until it was as thick and shrubby as some tropical garden-grass. I found myself telling her everything: why I had decided to study law and to go into the law office of one of my mother's relatives in New York City; about Gaston Cleric's death from pneumonia last winter, and the difference it had made in my life. She wanted to know about my friends, and my way of living, and my dearest hopes.

'Of course it means you are going away from us for good,' she said with a sigh. 'But that don't mean I'll lose you. Look at my papa here; he's been dead all these years, and yet he is more real to me than almost anybody else. He never goes out of my life. I talk to him and consult him all the time. The older I grow, the better I know him and the more I understand him.'

She asked me whether I had learned to like big cities. 'I'd always be miserable in a city. I'd die of lonesomeness. I like to be where I know every stack and tree, and where all the ground is friendly. I want to live and die here. Father Kelly says everybody's put into this world for something, and I know what I've got to do. I'm going to see that my little girl has a better chance than ever I had. I'm going to take care of that girl, Jim.'

I told her I knew she would. 'Do you know, Ántonia, since I've been away, I think of you more often than of anyone else in this part of the world I'd have liked to have you for a sweetheart, or a wife, or my mother or my sister—anything that a woman can be to a man. The idea of you is a part of my mind, you influence my likes, and dislikes, all my tastes, hundreds of times when I don't realize it. You really are a part of me.'

She turned her bright, believing eyes to me, and the tears came up in them slowly. 'How can it be like that, when you know so many people, and when I've disappointed you so? Ain't it wonderful, Jim, how much people can mean to each other? I'm so glad we had each other when we were little. I can't wait till my little girl's old enough to tell her about all the things we used to do. You'll always remember me when you think about old times, won't you? And I guess everybody thinks about old times, even the happiest people.'

As we walked homeward across the fields, the sun dropped and lay like a great golden globe in the low west. While it hung there, the moon rose in the east, as big as a cartwheel, pale silver and streaked with rose colour, thin as a bubble or a ghost-moon. For five, perhaps ten minutes, the two luminaries confronted each other across the level land, resting on opposite edges of the world.

In that singular light every little tree and shock of wheat, every sunflower stalk and clump of snow-on-the-mountain, drew itself up high and pointed; the very clods and furrows in the fields seemed to stand up sharply. I felt the old pull of the earth, the solemn magic that comes out of those fields at nightfall. I wished I could be a little boy again, and that my way could end there.

We reached the edge of the field, where our ways parted. I took her hands and held them against my breast, feeling once more how strong and warm and good they were, those brown hands, and remembering how many kind things they had done for me. I held them now a long while, over my heart. About us it was growing darker and darker, and I had to look hard to see her face, which I meant always to carry with me; the closest, realest face, under all the shadows of women's faces, at the very bottom of my memory.

'I'll come back,' I said earnestly, through the soft, intrusive darkness.

'Perhaps you will'—I felt rather than saw her smile. 'But even if you don't you're here, like my father. So I won't be lonesome.'

As I went back alone over that familiar road, I could almost believe that a boy and girl ran along beside me, as our shadows used to do, laughing and whispering to each other in the grass.

BOOK V

CUZAK'S BOYS

1

I told Ántonia I would come back, but life intervened, and it was twenty years before I kept my promise. I heard of her from time to time; that she married, very soon after I last saw her, a young Bohemian, a cousin of Anton Jelinek; that they were poor, and had a large family. Once when I was abroad I went into Bohemia, and from Prague I sent Ántonia some photographs of her native village. Months afterward came a letter from her, telling me the names and ages of her many children, but little else; signed, 'Your old friend, Ántonia Cuzak.' When I met Tiny Soderball in Salt Lake she told me that Ántonia had not 'done very well', that her husband was not a man of much force, and she had had a hard life. Perhaps it was cowardice that kept me away so long. My business took me West several times every year, and it was always in the back of my mind that I would stop in Nebraska some day and go to see Ántonia. But I kept putting it off until the next trip. I did not want to find her aged and broken; I really dreaded it. In the course of twenty crowded years one parts with many illusions. I did not wish to lose the early ones. Some memories are realities, and are better than anything that can ever happen to one again.

I owe it to Lena Lingard that I went to see Ántonia at last. I was in San Francisco two summers ago when both Lena and Tiny Soderball were in town. Tiny lives in a house of her own, and Lena's shop is in an apartment house just around the corner. It interested me, after so many years, to see the two women together. Tiny audits Lena's accounts occasionally, and invests her money for her; and Lena, apparently, takes care that Tiny doesn't grow too miserly. 'If there's anything I can't stand,' she said to me in Tiny's presence, 'it's a shabby rich woman.' Tiny smiled grimly and assured me that Lena would never be either shabby or rich. 'And I don't want to be,' the other agreed complacently.

Lena gave me a cheerful account of Ántonia and urged me to make her a visit.

'You really ought to go, Jim. It would be such a satisfaction to her. Never mind what Tiny says. There's nothing the matter with Cuzak. You'd like him. He isn't a hustler, but a rough man would never have suited Tony. Tony has nice children—ten or eleven of them by this time, I guess. I shouldn't care for a family of that size myself, but somehow it's just right for Tony. She'd love to show them to you.'

On my way East I broke my journey at Hastings, in Nebraska, and set off with an open buggy and a fairly good livery team to find the Cuzak farm. At a little past midday, I knew I must be nearing my destination. Set back on a swell of land at my right, I saw a wide farm-house, with a red barn and

an ash grove, and cattle-yards in front that sloped down to the highroad. I drew up my horses and was wondering whether I should drive in here, when I heard low voices. Ahead of me, in a plum thicket beside the road, I saw two boys bending over a dead dog. The little one, not more than four or five, was on his knees, his hands folded, and his close-clipped, bare head drooping forward in deep dejection. The other stood beside him, a hand on his shoulder, and was comforting him in a language I had not heard for a long while. When I stopped my horses opposite them, the older boy took his brother by the hand and came toward me. He, too, looked grave. This was evidently a sad afternoon for them.

'Are you Mrs. Cuzak's boys?' I asked.

The younger one did not look up; he was submerged in his own feelings, but his brother met me with intelligent grey eyes. 'Yes, sir.'

'Does she live up there on the hill? I am going to see her. Get in and ride up with me.'

He glanced at his reluctant little brother. 'I guess we'd better walk. But we'll open the gate for you.'

I drove along the side-road, and they followed slowly behind. When I pulled up at the windmill, another boy, barefooted and curly-headed, ran out of the barn to tie my team for me. He was a handsome one, this chap, fair-skinned and freckled, with red cheeks and a ruddy pelt as thick as a lamb's wool, growing down on his neck in little tufts. He tied my team with two flourishes of his hands, and nodded when I asked him if his mother was at home. As he glanced at me, his face dimpled with a seizure of irrelevant merriment, and he shot up the windmill tower with a lightness that struck me as disdainful. I knew he was peering down at me as I walked toward the house.

Ducks and geese ran quacking across my path. White cats were sunning themselves among yellow pumpkins on the porch steps. I looked through the wire screen into a big, light kitchen with a white floor. I saw a long table, rows of wooden chairs against the wall, and a shining range in one corner. Two girls were washing dishes at the sink, laughing and chattering, and a little one, in a short pinafore, sat on a stool playing with a rag baby. When I asked for their mother, one of the girls dropped her towel, ran across the floor with noiseless bare feet, and disappeared. The older one, who wore shoes and stockings, came to the door to admit me. She was a buxom girl with dark hair and eyes, calm and self-possessed.

'Won't you come in? Mother will be here in a minute.'

Before I could sit down in the chair she offered me, the miracle happened, one of those quiet moments that clutch the heart, and take more courage than the noisy, excited passages in life. Ántonia came in and stood before me; a stalwart, brown woman, flat-chested, her curly brown hair a little grizzled. It was a shock, of course. It always is, to meet people after long years, especially if they have lived as much and as hard as this woman had. We stood looking at each other. The eyes that peered anxiously at me were—simply Ántonia's eyes. I had seen no others like them since I looked into them last, though I had looked at so many thousands of human faces. As I confronted her, the changes grew less apparent to me, her identity stronger. She was there, in the full vigour of her personality, battered but not diminished, looking at me, speaking to me in the husky, breathy voice I remembered so well.

'My husband's not at home, sir. Can I do anything?'

'Don't you remember me, Ántonia? Have I changed so much?'

She frowned into the slanting sunlight that made her brown hair look redder than it was. Suddenly her eyes widened, her whole face seemed to grow broader. She caught her breath and put out two hard-worked hands.

'Why, it's Jim! Anna, Yulka, it's Jim Burden!' She had no sooner caught my hands than she looked alarmed. 'What's happened? Is anybody dead?'

I patted her arm.

'No. I didn't come to a funeral this time.

I got off the train at Hastings and drove down to see you and your family.'

She dropped my hand and began rushing about. 'Anton, Yulka, Nina, where are you all? Run, Anna, and hunt for the boys. They're off looking for that dog, somewhere. And call Leo. Where is that Leo!' She pulled them out of corners and came bringing them like a mother cat bringing in her kittens. 'You don't have to go right off, Jim? My oldest boy's not here. He's gone with papa to the street fair at Wilber. I won't let you go! You've got to stay and see Rudolph and our papa.' She looked at me imploringly, panting with excitement.

While I reassured her and told her there would be plenty of time, the barefooted boys from outside were slipping into the kitchen and gathering about her.

'Now, tell me their names, and how old they are.'

As she told them off in turn, she made several mistakes about ages, and they roared with laughter. When she came to my light-footed friend of the windmill, she said, 'This is Leo, and he's old enough to be better than he is.'

He ran up to her and butted her playfully with his curly head, like a little ram, but his voice was quite desperate. 'You've forgot! You always forget mine. It's mean! Please tell him, mother!' He clenched his fists in vexation and looked up at her impetuously.

She wound her forefinger in his yellow fleece and pulled it, watching him. 'Well, how old are you?'

'I'm twelve,' he panted, looking not at me but at her; 'I'm twelve years old, and I was born on Easter Day!'

She nodded to me. 'It's true. He was an Easter baby.'

The children all looked at me, as if they expected me to exhibit astonishment or delight at this information. Clearly, they were proud of each other, and of being so many. When they had all been introduced, Anna, the eldest daughter, who had met me at the door, scattered them gently, and came bringing a white apron which she tied round her mother's waist.

'Now, mother, sit down and talk to Mr. Burden. We'll finish the dishes quietly and not disturb you.'

Ántonia looked about, quite distracted. 'Yes, child, but why don't we take him into the parlour, now that we've got a nice parlour for company?'

The daughter laughed indulgently, and took my hat from me. 'Well, you're here, now, mother, and if you talk here, Yulka and I can listen, too. You can show him the parlour after while.' She smiled at me, and went back to the dishes, with her sister. The little girl with the rag doll found a place on the bottom step of an enclosed back stairway, and sat with her toes curled up, looking out at us expectantly.

'She's Nina, after Nina Harling,' Ántonia explained. 'Ain't her eyes like Nina's? I declare, Jim, I loved you children almost as much as I love my own. These children knew all about you and Charley and Sally, like as if they'd grown up with you. I can't think of what I want to say, you've got me so stirred up. And then, I've forgot my English so. I don't often talk it any more. I tell the children I used to speak real well.' She said they always spoke Bohemian at home. The little ones could not speak English at all ——didn't learn it until they went to school.

'I can't believe it's you, sitting here, in my own kitchen. You wouldn't have known me, would you, Jim? You've kept so young, yourself. But it's easier for a man. I can't see how my Anton looks any older than the day I married him. His teeth have kept so nice. I haven't got many left. But I feel young as I used to, and I can do as much work. Oh, we don't have to work so hard now! We've got plenty to help us, papa and me. And how many have you got, Jim?'

When I told her I had no children, she seemed embarrassed. 'Oh, ain't that too bad! Maybe you could take one of my bad ones, now? That Leo; he's the worst of all.' She leaned toward me with a smile. 'And I love him the best,' she whispered.

'Mother!' the two girls murmured reproachfully from the dishes.

Ántonia threw up her head and laughed. 'I can't help it. You know I do. Maybe it's

because he came on Easter Day, I don't know. And he's never out of mischief one minute!'

I was thinking, as I watched her, how little it mattered—about her teeth, for instance. I know so many women who have kept all the things that she had lost, but whose inner glow has faded. Whatever else was gone, Ántonia had not lost the fire of life. Her skin, so brown and hardened, had not that look of flabbiness, as if the sap beneath it had been secretly drawn away.

While we were talking, the little boy whom they called Jan came in and sat down on the step beside Nina, under the hood of the stairway. He wore a funny long gingham apron, like a smock, over his trousers, and his hair was clipped so short that his head looked white and naked. He watched us out of his big, sorrowful grey eyes.

'He wants to tell you about the dog, mother. They found it dead,' Anna said, as she passed us on her way to the cupboard.

Ántonia beckoned the boy to her. He stood by her chair, leaning his elbows on her knees and twisting her apron strings in his slender fingers, while he told her his story softly in Bohemian, and the tears brimmed over and hung on his long lashes. His mother listened, spoke soothingly to him, and in a whisper promised him something that made him give her a quick, teary smile. He slipped away and whispered his secret to Nina, sitting close to her and talking behind his hand.

When Anna finished her work and had washed her hands, she came and stood behind her mother's chair. 'Why don't we show Mr. Burden our new fruit cave?' she asked.

We started off across the yard with the children at our heels. The boys were standing by the windmill, talking about the dog, some of them ran ahead to open the cellar door. When we descended, they all came down after us, and seemed quite as proud of the cave as the girls were.

Ambrosch, the thoughtful-looking one who had directed me down by the plum bushes, called my attention to the stout brick walls and the cement floor. 'Yes, it is a good way from the house,' he admitted. 'But, you see, in winter there are nearly always some of us around to come out and get things.'

Anna and Yulka showed me three small barrels; one full of dill pickles, one full of chopped pickles, and one full of pickled watermelon rinds.

'You wouldn't believe, Jim, what it takes to feed them all!' their mother exclaimed 'You ought to see the bread we bake on Wednesdays and Saturdays! It's no wonder their poor papa can't get rich, he has to buy so much sugar for us to preserve with. We have our own wheat ground for flour—but then there's that much less to sell.'

Nina and Jan, and a little girl named Lucie, kept shyly pointing out to me the shelves of glass jars. They said nothing, but, glancing at me, traced on the glass with their finger-tips the outline of the cherries and strawberries and crabapples within, trying by a blissful expression of countenance to give me some idea of their deliciousness.

'Show him the spiced plums, mother. Americans don't have those,' said one of the older boys. 'Mother uses them to make *kolaches*,' he added.

Leo, in a low voice, tossed off some scornful remark in Bohemian.

I turned to him. 'You think I don't know what *kolaches* are, eh? You're mistaken, young man. I've eaten your mother's *kolaches* long before that Easter Day when you were born.'

'Always too fresh, Leo,' Ambrosch remarked with a shrug.

Leo dived behind his mother and grinned out at me.

We turned to leave the cave; Ántonia and I went up the stairs first, and the children waited. We were standing outside talking, when they all came running up the steps together, big and little, tow heads and gold heads and brown, and flashing little naked legs; a veritable explosion of life out of the dark cave into the sunlight. It made me dizzy for a moment.

The boys escorted us to the front of the house, which I hadn't yet seen; in farmhouses, somehow, life comes and goes by the back door. The roof was so steep that the eaves were not much above the forest

of tall hollyhocks, now brown and in seed. Through July, Ántonia said, the house was buried in them; the Bohemians, I remembered, always planted hollyhocks. The front yard was enclosed by a thorny locust hedge, and at the gate grew two silvery, mothlike trees of the mimosa family. From here one looked down over the cattle-yards, with their two long ponds, and over a wide stretch of stubble which they told me was a ryefield in summer.

At some distance behind the house were an ash grove and two orchards: a cherry orchard, with gooseberry and currant bushes between the rows, and an apple orchard, sheltered by a high hedge from the hot winds. The older children turned back when we reached the hedge, but Jim and Nina and Lucie crept through it by a hole known only to themselves and hid under the low-branching mulberry bushes.

As we walked through the apple orchard, grown up in tall bluegrass, Ántonia kept stopping to tell me about one tree and another. 'I love them as if they were people,' she said, rubbing her hand over the bark. 'There wasn't a tree here when we first came. We planted every one, and used to carry water for them, too—after we'd been working in the fields all day. Anton, he was city man, and he used to get discouraged. But I couldn't feel so tired that I wouldn't get about these trees when there was a dry time. They were on my mind like children. Many a night after he was asleep I've got up and come out and carried water to the poor things. And now, you see, we have the good of them. My man worked in the orange groves in Florida, and he knows all about grafting. There ain't one of our neighbours has an orchard that bears like ours.'

In the middle of the orchard we came upon a grape arbour, with seats built along the sides and a warped plank table. The three children were waiting for us there. They looked up at me bashfully and made some request of their mother.

'They want me to tell you how the teacher has the school picnic here every year. These don't go to school yet, so they think it's all like the picnic.'

After I had admired the arbour sufficiently, the youngsters ran away to an open place where there was a rough jungle of French pinks, and squatted down among them, crawling about and measuring with a string.

'Jan wants to bury his dog there,' Ántonia explained. 'I had to tell him he could. He's kind of like Nina Harling; you remember how hard she used to take little things? He has funny notions, like her.'

We sat down and watched them. Ántonia leaned her elbows on the table. There was the deepest peace in that orchard. It was surrounded by a triple enclosure; the wire fence, then the hedge of thorny locusts, then the mulberry hedge which kept out the hot winds of summer and held fast to the protecting snows of winter. The hedges were so tall that we could see nothing but the blue sky above them, neither the barn roof nor the windmill. The afternoon sun poured down on us through the drying grape leaves. The orchard seemed full of sun, like a cup, and we could smell the ripe apples on the trees. The crabs hung on the branches as thick as beads on a string, purple-red, with a thin silvery glaze over them. Some hens and ducks had crept through the hedge and were pecking at the fallen apples. The drakes were handsome fellows, with pinkish grey bodies, their heads and necks covered with iridescent green feathers which grew close and full, changing to blue like a peacock's neck. Ántonia said they always reminded her of soldiers—some uniform she had seen in the old country when she was a child.

'Are there any quail left now?' I asked. I reminded her how she used to go hunting with me the last summer before we moved to town. 'You weren't a bad shot, Tony. Do you remember how you used to want to run away and go for ducks with Charley Harling and me?'

'I know, but I'm afraid to look at a gun now.' She picked up one of the drakes and ruffled his green capote with her fingers. 'Ever since I've had children, I don't like to kill anything. It makes me kind of faint to wring an old goose's neck. Ain't that strange, Jim?'

'I don't know. The young Queen of Italy

said the same thing once, to a friend of mine. She used to be a great huntswoman, but now she feels as you do, and only shoots clay pigeons.'

'Then I'm sure she's a good mother,' Ántonia said warmly.

She told me how she and her husband had come out to this new country when the farmland was cheap and could be had on easy payments. The first ten years were a hard struggle. Her husband knew very little about farming and often grew discouraged. 'We'd never have got through if I hadn't been so strong. I've always had good health, thank God, and I was able to help him in the fields until right up to the time before my babies came. Our children were good about taking care of each other. Martha, the one you saw when she was a baby, was such a help to me, and she trained Anna to be just like her. My Martha's married now, and has a baby of her own. Think of that, Jim!

'No, I never got down-hearted, Anton's a good man, and I loved my children and always believed they would turn out well. I belong on a farm. I'm never lonesome here like I used to be in town. You remember what sad spells I used to have, when I didn't know what was the matter with me? I've never had them out here. And I don't mind work a bit, if I don't have to put up with sadness.' She leaned her chin on her hand and looked down through the orchard, where the sunlight was growing more and more golden.

'You ought never to have gone to town, Tony,' I said, wondering at her.

She turned to me eagerly.

'Oh, I'm glad I went! I'd never have known anything about cooking or housekeeping if I hadn't. I learned nice ways at the Harlings', and I've been able to bring my children up so much better. Don't you think they are pretty well-behaved for country children? If it hadn't been for what Mrs. Harling taught me, I expect I'd have brought them up like wild rabbits. No, I'm glad I had a chance to learn; but I'm thankful none of my daughters will ever have to work out. The trouble with me was, Jim, I never could believe harm of anybody I loved.'

While we were talking, Ántonia assured me that she could keep me for the night. 'We've plenty of room. Two of the boys sleep in the haymow till cold weather comes, but there's no need for it. Leo always begs to sleep there, and Ambrosch goes along to look after him.'

I told her I would like to sleep in the haymow, with the boys.

'You can do just as you want to. The chest is full of clean blankets, put away for winter. Now I must go, or my girls will be doing all the work, and I want to cook your supper myself.'

As we went toward the house, we met Ambrosch and Anton, starting off with their milking-pails to hunt the cows. I joined them, and Leo accompanied us at some distance, running ahead and starting up at us out of clumps of ironweed, calling, 'I'm a jack rabbit,' or 'I'm a big bull-snake.'

I walked between the two older boys—straight, well-made fellows, with good heads and clear eyes. They talked about their school and the new teacher, told me about the crops and the harvest, and how many steers they would feed that winter. They were easy and confidential with me, as if I were an old friend of the family—and not too old. I felt like a boy in their company, and all manner of forgotten interests revived in me. It seemed, after all, so natural to be walking along a barbed-wire fence beside the sunset, toward a red pond, and to see my shadow moving along at my right, over the close-cropped grass.

'Has mother shown you the pictures you sent her from the old country?' Ambrosch asked. 'We've had them framed and they're hung up in the parlour. She was so glad to get them. I don't believe I ever saw her so pleased about anything.' There was a note of simple gratitude in his voice that made me wish I had given more occasion for it.

I put my hand on his shoulder: 'Your mother, you know, was very much loved by all of us. She was a beautiful girl.'

'Oh, we know!' They both spoke together; seemed a little surprised that I should think it necessary to mention this. 'Everybody liked

her, didn't they? The Harlings and your grandmother, and all the town people.'

'Sometimes,' I ventured, 'it doesn't occur to boys that their mother was ever young and pretty.'

'Oh, we know!' they said again, warmly. 'She's not very old now,' Ambrosch added. 'Not much older than you.'

'Well,' I said, 'if you weren't nice to her, I think I'd take a club and go for the whole lot of you. I couldn't stand it if you boys were inconsiderate, or thought of her as if she were just somebody who looked after you. You see I was very much in love with your mother once, and I know there's nobody like her.'

The boys laughed and seemed pleased and embarrassed.

'She never told us that,' said Anton. 'But she's always talked lots about you, and about what good times you used to have. She has a picture of you that she cut out of the Chicago paper once, and Leo says he recognized you when you drove up to the windmill. You can't tell about Leo, though; sometimes he likes to be smart.'

We brought the cows home to the corner nearest the barn, and the boys milked them while night came on. Everything was as it should be: the strong smell of sunflowers and ironweed in the dew, the clear blue and gold of the sky, the evening star, the purr of the milk into the pails, the grunts and squeals of the pigs fighting over their supper. I began to feel the loneliness of the farm-boy at evening, when the chores seem everlastingly the same, and the world so far away.

What a tableful we were at supper: two long rows of restless heads in the lamplight, and so many eyes fastened excitedly upon Ántonia as she sat at the head of the table, filling the plates and starting the dishes on their way. The children were seated according to a system; a little one next an older one, who was to watch over his behaviour and to see that he got his food. Anna and Yulka left their chairs from time to time to bring fresh plates of *kolaches* and pitchers of milk.

After supper we went into the parlour, so that Yulka and Leo could play for me. Ántonia went first, carrying the lamp. There were not nearly chairs enough to go round, so the younger children sat down on the bare floor. Little Lucie whispered to me that they were going to have a parlour carpet if they got ninety cents for their wheat. Leo, with a good deal of fussing, got out his violin. It was old Mr. Shimerda's instrument, which Ántonia had always kept, and it was too big for him. But he played very well for a self-taught boy. Poor Yulka's efforts were not so successful. While they were playing, little Nina got up from her corner, came out into the middle of the floor, and began to do a pretty little dance on the boards with her bare feet. No one paid the least attention to her, and when she was through she stole back and sat down by her brother.

Ántonia spoke to Leo in Bohemian. He frowned and wrinkled up his face. He seemed to be trying to pout, but his attempt only brought out dimples in unusual places. After twisting and screwing the keys, he played some Bohemian airs, without the organ to hold him back, and that went better. The boy was so restless that I had not had a chance to look at his face before. My first impression was right; he really was faun-like. He hadn't much head behind his ears, and his tawny fleece grew down thick to the back of his neck. His eyes were not frank and wide apart like those of the other boys, but were deep-set, gold-green in colour, and seemed sensitive to the light. His mother said he got hurt oftener than all the others put together. He was always trying to ride the colts before they were broken, teasing the turkey gobbler, seeing just how much red the bull would stand for, or how sharp the new axe was.

After the concert was over, Ántonia brought out a big boxful of photographs: she and Anton in their wedding clothes, holding hands; her brother Ambrosch and his very fat wife, who had a farm of her own, and who bossed her husband, I was delighted to hear; the three Bohemian Marys and their large families.

'You wouldn't believe how steady those girls have turned out,' Ántonia remarked.

'Mary Svoboda's the best butter-maker in all this country, and a fine manager. Her children will have a grand chance.'

As Ántonia turned over the pictures the young Cuzaks stood behind her chair, looking over her shoulder with interested faces. Nina and Jan, after trying to see round the taller ones, quietly brought a chair, climbed up on it, and stood close together, looking. The little boy forgot his shyness and grinned delightedly when familiar faces came into view. In the group about Ántonia I was conscious of a kind of physical harmony. They leaned this way and that, and were not afraid to touch each other. They contemplated the photographs with pleased recognition; looking at some admiringly, as if these characters in their mother's girlhood had been remarkable people. The little children, who could not speak English, murmured comments to each other in their rich old language.

Ántonia held out a photograph of Lena that had come from San Francisco last Christmas. 'Does she still look like that? She hasn't been home for six years now.' Yes, it was exactly like Lena, I told her; a comely woman, a trifle too plump, in a hat a trifle too large, but with the old lazy eyes, and the old dimpled ingenuousness still lurking at the corners of her mouth.

There was a picture of Frances Harling in a befrogged riding costume that I remembered well. 'Isn't she fine!' the girls murmured. They all assented. One could see that Frances had come down as a heroine in the family legend. Only Leo was unmoved.

'And there's Mr. Harling, in his grand fur coat. He was awfully rich, wasn't he, mother?'

'He wasn't any Rockefeller,' put in Master Leo, in a very low tone, which reminded me of the way in which Mrs. Shimerda had once said that my grandfather 'wasn't Jesus.' His habitual scepticism was like a direct inheritance from that old woman.

'None of your smart speeches,' said Ambrosch severely.

Leo poked out a supple red tongue at him, but a moment later broke into a giggle at a tintype of two men, uncomfortably seated, with an awkward-looking boy in baggy clothes standing between them: Jake and Otto and I! We had it taken, I remembered, when we went to Black Hawk on the first Fourth of July I spent in Nebraska. I was glad to see Jake's grin again, and Otto's ferocious moustaches. The young Cuzaks knew all about them.

'He made grandfather's coffin, didn't he?' Anton asked.

'Wasn't they good fellows, Jim?' Ántonia's eyes filled. 'To this day I'm ashamed because I quarrelled with Jake that way. I was saucy and impertinent to him, Leo, like you are with people sometimes, and I wish somebody had made me behave.'

'We aren't through with you, yet,' they warned me. They produced a photograph taken just before I went away to college: a tall youth in striped trousers and a straw hat, trying to look easy and jaunty.

'Tell us, Mr. Burden,' said Charley, 'about the rattler you killed at the dog-town. How long was he? Sometimes mother says six feet and sometimes she says five.'

These children seemed to be upon very much the same terms with Ántonia as the Harling children had been so many years before. They seemed to feel the same pride in her, and to look to her for stories and entertainment as we used to do.

It was eleven o'clock when I at last took my bag and some blankets and started for the barn with the boys. Their mother came to the door with us, and we tarried for a moment to look out at the white slope of the corral and the two ponds asleep in the moonlight, and the long sweep of the pasture under the star-sprinkled sky.

The boys told me to choose my own place in the haymow, and I lay down before a big window, left open in warm weather, that looked out into the stars. Ambrosch and Leo cuddled up in a hay-cave, back under the eaves, and lay giggling and whispering. They tickled each other and tossed and tumbled in the hay; and then, all at once, as if they had been shot, they were still. There was hardly a minute between giggles and bland slumber.

I lay awake for a long while, until the slow-moving moon passed my window on its way

up the heavens. I was thinking about Ántonia and her children; about Anna's solicitude for her, Ambrosch's grave affection, Leo's jealous, animal little love. That moment, when they all came tumbling out of the cave into the light, was a sight any man might have come far to see. Ántonia had always been one to leave images in the mind that did not fade—that grew stronger with time. In my memory there was a succession of such pictures, fixed there like the old woodcuts of one's first primer: Ántonia kicking her bare legs against the sides of my pony when we came home in triumph with our snake; Ántonia in her black shawl and fur cap, as she stood by her father's grave in the snowstorm; Ántonia coming in with her work-team along the evening skyline. She lent herself to immemorial human attitudes which we recognize by instinct as universal and true. I had not been mistaken. She was a battered woman now, not a lovely girl; but she still had that something which fires the imagination, could still stop one's breath for a moment by a look or gesture that somehow revealed the meaning in common things. She had only to stand in the orchard, to put her hand on a little crab tree and look up at the apples, to make you feel the goodness of planting and tending and harvesting at last. All the strong things of her heart came out in her body, that had been so tireless in serving generous emotions.

It was no wonder that her sons stood tall and straight. She was a rich mine of life, like the founders of early races.

2

When I awoke in the morning, long bands of sunshine were coming in at the window and reaching back under the eaves where the two boys lay. Leo was wide awake and was tickling his brother's leg with a dried cone-flower he had pulled out of the hay. Ambrosch kicked at him and turned over. I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep. Leo lay on his back, elevated one foot, and began exercising his toes. He picked up dried flowers with his toes and brandished them in the belt of sunlight. After he had amused himself thus for some time, he rose on one elbow and began to look at me, cautiously, then critically, blinking his eyes in the light. His expression was droll; it dismissed me lightly. 'This old fellow is no different from other people. He doesn't know my secret.' He seemed conscious of possessing a keener power of enjoyment than other people; his quick recognitions made him frantically impatient of deliberate judgments. He always knew what he wanted without thinking.

After dressing in the hay, I washed my face in cold water at the windmill. Breakfast was ready when I entered the kitchen, and Yulka was baking griddle-cakes. The three older boys set off for the fields early. Leo and Yulka were to drive to town to meet their father, who would return from Wilber on the noon train.

'We'll only have a lunch at noon,' Ántonia said, 'and cook the geese for supper, when our papa will be here. I wish my Martha could come down to see you. They have a Ford car now, and she don't seem so far away from me as she used to. But her husband's crazy about his farm and about having everything just right, and they almost never get away except on Sundays. He's a handsome boy, and he'll be rich some day. Everything he takes hold of turns out well. When they bring that baby in here, and unwrap him, he looks like a little prince; Martha takes care of him so beautiful. I'm reconciled to her being away from me now, but at first I cried like I was putting her into her coffin.'

We were alone in the kitchen, except for Anna, who was pouring cream into the churn. She looked up at me. 'Yes, she did. We were just ashamed of mother. She went round crying, when Martha was so happy, and the rest of us were all glad. Joe certainly was patient with you, mother.'

Ántonia nodded and smiled at herself. 'I know it was silly, but I couldn't help it. I wanted her right here. She'd never been away from me a night since she was born. If Anton had made trouble about her when she was a baby, or wanted me to leave her with my mother, I wouldn't have married

him. I couldn't. But he always loved her like she was his own.'

'I didn't even know Martha wasn't my full sister until after she was engaged to Joe,' Anna told me.

Toward the middle of the afternoon, the wagon drove in, with the father and the eldest son. I was smoking in the orchard, and as I went out to meet them, Ántonia came running down from the house and hugged the two men as if they had been away for months.

'Papa,' interested me, from my first glimpse of him. He was shorter than his older sons; a crumpled little man, with run-over bootheels, and he carried one shoulder higher than the other. But he moved very quickly, and there was an air of jaunty liveliness about him. He had a strong, ruddy colour, thick black hair, a little grizzled, a curly moustache, and red lips. His smile showed the strong teeth of which his wife was so proud, and as he saw me his lively, quizzical eyes told me that he knew all about me. He looked like a humorous philosopher who had hitched up one shoulder under the burdens of life, and gone on his way having a good time when he could. He advanced to meet me and gave me a hard hand, burned red on the back and heavily coated with hair. He wore his Sunday clothes, very thick and hot for the weather, an unstarched white shirt, and a blue necktie with big white dots, like a little boy's, tied in a flowing bow. Cuzak began at once to talk about his holiday—from politeness he spoke in English.

'Mama, I wish you had see the lady dance on the slack-wire in the street at night. They throw a bright light on her and she float through the air something beautiful, like a bird! They have a dancing bear, like in the old country, and two-three merry-go-around, and people in balloons, and what you call the big wheel, Rudolph?'

'A Ferris wheel,' Rudolph entered the conversation in a deep baritone voice. He was six foot two, and had a chest like a young blacksmith. 'We went to the big dance in the hall behind the saloon last night, mother, and I danced with all the girls, and so did father. I never saw so many pretty girls. It was a Bohunk crowd, for sure. We didn't hear a word of English on the street, except from the show people, did we, papa?'

Cuzak nodded. 'And very many send word to you, Ántonia. You will excuse'—turning to me—'if I tell her.' While we walked toward the house he related incidents and delivered messages in the tongue he spoke fluently, and I dropped a little behind, curious to know what their relations had become—or remained. The two seemed to be on terms of easy friendliness, touched with humour. Clearly, she was the impulse, and he the corrective. As they went up the hill he kept glancing at her sidewise, to see whether she got his point, or how she received it. I noticed later that he always looked at people sidewise, as a work-horse does at its yokemate. Even when he sat opposite me in the kitchen, talking, he would turn his head a little toward the clock or the stove and look at me from the side, but with frankness and good nature. This trick did not suggest duplicity or secretiveness, but merely long habit, as with the horse.

He had brought a tintype of himself and Rudolph for Ántonia's collection, and several paper bags of candy for the children. He looked a little disappointed when his wife showed him a big box of candy I had got in Denver—she hadn't let the children touch it the night before. He put his candy away in the cupboard, 'for when she rains,' and glanced at the box, chuckling. 'I guess you must have hear about how my family ain't so small,' he said.

Cuzak sat down behind the stove and watched his womenfolk and the little children with equal amusement. He thought they were nice, and he thought they were funny, evidently. He had been off dancing with the girls and forgetting that he was an old fellow, and now his family rather surprised him; he seemed to think it a joke that all these children should belong to him. As the younger ones slipped up to him in his retreat, he kept taking things out of his pockets; penny dolls, a wooden clown, a balloon pig that was inflated by a whistle.

He beckoned to the little boy they called Jan, whispered to him, and presented him with a paper snake, gently, so as not to startle him. Looking over the boy's head he said to me. 'This one is bashful. He gets left.'

Cuzak had brought home with him a roll of illustrated Bohemian papers. He opened them and began to tell his wife the news, much of which seemed to relate to one person. I heard the name Vasakova, Vasakova, repeated several times with lively interest, and presently I asked him whether he were talking about the singer, Maria Vasak.

'You know? You have heard, maybe?' he asked incredulously. When I assured him that I had heard her, he pointed out her picture and told me that Vasak had broken her leg, climbing in the Austrian Alps, and would not be able to fill her engagements. He seemed delighted to find that I had heard her sing in London and in Vienna; got out his pipe and lit it to enjoy our talk the better. She came from his part of Prague. His father used to mend her shoes for her when she was a student. Cuzak questioned me about her looks, her popularity, her voice; but he particularly wanted to know whether I had noticed her tiny feet, and whether I thought she had saved much money. She was extravagant, of course, but he hoped she wouldn't squander everything, and have nothing left when she was old. As a young man, working in Wienn, he had seen a good many artists who were old and poor, making one glass of beer last all evening, and 'it was not very nice, that.'

When the boys came in from milking and feeding, the long table was laid, and two brown geese, stuffed with apples, were put down sizzling before Ántonia. She began to carve, and Rudolph, who sat next his mother, started the plates on their way. When everybody was served, he looked across the table at me.

'Have you been to Black Hawk lately, Mr. Burden? Then I wonder if you've heard about the Cutters?'

No, I had heard nothing at all about them.

'Then you must tell him, son, though it's a terrible thing to talk about at supper. Now, all you children be quiet, Rudolph is going to tell about the murder.'

'Hurrah! The murder!' the children murmured, looking pleased and interested.

Rudolph told his story in great detail, with occasional promptings from his mother and father.

Wick Cutter and his wife had gone on living in the house that Ántonia and I knew so well, and in the way we knew so well. They grew to be very old people. He shrivelled up, Ántonia said, until he looked like a little old yellow monkey, for his beard and his fringe of hair never changed colour. Mrs. Cutter remained flushed and wild-eyed as we had known her, but as the years passed she became afflicted with a shaking palsy which made her nervous nod continuous instead of occasional. Her hands were so uncertain that she could no longer disfigure china, poor woman! As the couple grew older, they quarrelled more and more often about the ultimate disposition of their 'property.' A new law was passed in the state, securing the surviving wife a third of her husband's estate under all conditions. Cutter was tormented by the fear that Mrs. Cutter would live longer than he, and that eventually her 'people,' whom he had always hated so violently, would inherit. Their quarrels on this subject passed the boundary of the close-growing cedars, and were heard in the street by whoever wished to loiter and listen.

One morning, two years ago, Cutter went into the hardware store and bought a pistol, saying he was going to shoot a dog, and adding that he 'thought he would take a shot at an old cat while he was about it.' (Here the children interrupted Rudolph's narrative by smothered giggles.)

Cutter went out behind the hardware store, put up a target, practised for an hour or so, and then went home. At six o'clock that evening, when several men were passing the Cutter house on their way home to supper, they heard a pistol shot. They paused and were looking doubtfully at one another, when another shot came crashing through an upstairs window. They ran into the house

and found Wick Cutter lying on a sofa in his upstairs bedroom, with his throat torn open, bleeding on a roll of sheets he had placed beside his head.

'Walk in, gentlemen,' he said weakly. 'I am alive, you see, and competent. You are witnesses that I have survived my wife. You will find her in her own room. Please make your examination at once, so that there will be no mistake.'

One of the neighbours telephoned for a doctor, while the others went into Mrs. Cutter's room. She was lying on her bed, in her night-gown and wrapper, shot through the heart. Her husband must have come in while she was taking her afternoon nap and shot her, holding the revolver near her breast. Her night-gown was burned from the powder.

The horrified neighbours rushed back to Cutter. He opened his eyes and said distinctly, 'Mrs. Cutter is quite dead, gentlemen, and I am conscious. My affairs are in order.' Then Rudolph said, 'he let go and died.'

On his desk the coroner found a letter, dated at five o'clock that afternoon. It stated that he had just shot his wife; that any will she might secretly have made would be invalid, as he survived her. He meant to shoot himself at six o'clock and would, if he had strength, fire a shot through the window in the hope that passers-by might come in and see him 'before life was extinct' as he wrote.

'Now, would you have thought that man had such a cruel heart?' Antonia turned to me after the story was told. 'To go and do that poor woman out of any comfort she might have from his money after he was gone!'

'Did you ever hear of anybody else that killed himself for spite, Mr. Burden?' asked Rudolph.

I admitted that I hadn't. Every lawyer learns over and over how strong a motive hate can be, but in my collection of legal anecdotes I had nothing to match this one. When I asked how much the estate amounted to, Rudolph said it was a little over a hundred thousand dollars.

Cuzak gave me a twinkling, sidelong glance. 'The lawyers, they got a good deal of it, sure,' he said merrily.

A hundred thousand dollars; so that was the fortune that had been scraped together by such hard dealing, and that Cutter himself had died for in the end!

After supper Cuzak and I took a stroll in the orchard and sat down by the windmill to smoke. He told me his story as if it were my business to know it.

His father was a shoemaker, his uncle a furrier, and he, being a younger son, was apprenticed to the latter's trade. You never got anywhere working for your relatives, he said, so when he was a journeyman he went to Vienna and worked in a big fur shop, earning good money. But a young fellow who liked a good time didn't save anything in Vienna; there were too many pleasant ways of spending every night what he'd made in the day. After three years there, he came to New York. He was badly advised and went to work on furs during a strike, when the factories were offering big wages. The strikers won, and Cuzak was blacklisted. As he had a few hundred dollars ahead, he decided to go to Florida and raise oranges. He had always thought he would like to raise oranges! The second year a hard frost killed his young grove, and he fell ill with malaria. He came to Nebraska to visit his cousin, Anton Jelinek, and to look about. When he began to look about, he saw Antonia, and she was exactly the kind of girl he had always been hunting for. They were married at once, though he had to borrow money from his cousin to buy the wedding ring.

'It was a pretty hard job, breaking up this place and making the first crops grow,' he said, pushing back his hat and scratching his grizzled hair. 'Sometimes I git awful sore on this place and want to quit, but my wife she always say we better stick it out. The babies come along pretty fast, so it look like it be hard to move, anyhow. I guess she was right, all right. We got this place clear now. We pay only twenty dollars an acre then, and I been offered a hundred. We bought

nother quarter ten years ago, and we got it nost paid for. We got plenty boys; we can work a lot of land. Yes, she is a good wife for a poor man. She ain't always so strict with ne, neither. Sometimes maybe I drink a little oo much beer in town, and when I come ome she don't say nothing. She don't ask me o questions. We always get along fine, her nd me, like at first. The children don't make rouble between us, like sometimes happens.' He lit another pipe and pulled on it contentedly.

I found Cuzak a most companionable fellow. He asked me a great many questions about my trip through Bohemia, about Vienna and the Ringstrasse and the theatres.

'Gee! I like to go back there once, when the boys is big enough to farm the place. Sometimes when I read the papers from the old country, I pretty near run away,' he confessed with a little laugh. 'I never did think how I would be a settled man like this.'

He was still, as Ántonia said, a city man. He liked theatres and lighted streets and music and a game of dominoes after the day's work was over. His sociability was stronger than his acquisitive instinct. He liked to live day by day and night by night, sharing in the excitement of the crowd.—Yet his wife had managed to hold him here on a farm, in one of the loneliest countries in the world.

I could see the little chap, sitting here every evening by the windmill, nursing his pipe and listening to the silence, the wheeze of the pump, the grunting of the pigs, an occasional squawking when the hens were disturbed by a rat. It did rather seem to me that Cuzak had been made the instrument of Ántonia's special mission. This was a fine life, certainly, but it wasn't the kind of life he had wanted to live. I wondered whether the life that was right for one was ever right for two!

I asked Cuzak if he didn't find it hard to do without the gay company he had always been used to. He knocked out his pipe against an upright, sighed, and dropped it into his pocket.

'At first I near go crazy with lonesomeness,' he said frankly, 'but my woman is got such a warm heart. She always make it as good for me as she could. Now it ain't so bad; I can begin to have some fun with my boys, already!'

As we walked toward the house, Cuzak cocked his hat jauntily over one ear and looked up at the moon. 'Gee!' he said in a hushed voice, as if he had just wakened up, 'it don't seem like I am away from there twenty-six year!'

8

After dinner the next day I said good-bye and drove back to Hastings to take the train for Black Hawk. Ántonia and her children gathered round my buggy before I started, and even the little ones looked up at me with friendly faces. Leo and Ambrosch ran ahead to open the lane gate. When I reached the bottom of the hill, I glanced back. The group was still there by the windmill. Ántonia was waving her apron.

At the gate Ambrosch lingered beside my buggy, resting his arm on the wheel-rim. Leo slipped through the fence and ran off into the pasture.

'That's like him,' his brother said with a shrug. 'He's a crazy kid. Maybe he's sorry to have you go, and maybe he's jealous. He's jealous of anybody mother makes a fuss over, even the priest.'

I found I hated to leave this boy, with his pleasant voice and his fine head and eyes. He looked very manly as he stood there without a hat, the wind rippling his shirt about his brown neck and shoulders.

'Don't forget that you and Rudolph are going hunting with me up on the Niobrara next summer,' I said. 'Your father's agreed to let you off after harvest.'

He smiled. 'I won't likely forget. I've never had such a nice thing offered to me before. I don't know what makes you so nice to us boys,' he added, blushing.

'Oh, yes, you do!' I said, gathering up my reins.

He made no answer to this, except to smile at me with unabashed pleasure and affection as I drove away.

My day in Black Hawk was disappointing. Most of my old friends were dead or had moved away. Strange children, who meant nothing to me, were playing in the Harlings' big yard when I passed; the mountain ash had been cut down, and only a sprouting stump was left of the tall Lombardy poplar that used to guard the gate. I hurried on. The rest of the morning I spent with Anton Jelinek, under a shady cottonwood tree in the yard behind his saloon. While I was having my midday dinner at the hotel, I met one of the old lawyers who was still in practice, and he took me up to his office and talked over the Cutter case with me. After that, I scarcely knew how to put in the time until the night express was due.

I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures where the land was so rough that it had never been ploughed up, and the long red grass of early times still grew shaggy over the draws and hillocks. Out there I felt at home again. Overhead the sky was that indescribable blue of autumn; bright and shadowless, hard as enamel. To the south I could see the dun-shaded river bluffs that used to look so big to me, and all about stretched drying cornfields, of the pale-gold colour, I remembered so well. Russian thistles were blowing across the uplands and piling against the wire fences like barricades. Along the cattle-paths the plumes of golden-rod were already fading into sun-warmed velvet, grey with gold threads in it. I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns, and my mind was full of pleasant things; trips I meant to take with the Cuzak boys, in the Bad Lands and up on the Stinking Water. There were enough Cuzaks to play with for a long while yet. Even after the boys grew up, and there would always be Cuzak himself! I meant to tramp along a few miles of lighted streets with Cuzak.

As I wandered over those rough pastures, I had the good luck to stumble upon a bit of the first road that went from Black Hawk out to the north country; to my grandfather's farm, then on to the Shimerdas' and to the Norwegian settlement. Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed; this half-mile or so within the pasture fence was all that was left of that old road which used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie, clinging to the high places and circling and doubling like a rabbit before the hounds.

On the level land the tracks had almost disappeared—were mere shadings in the grass, and a stranger would not have noticed them. But wherever the road had crossed a draw, it was easy to find. The rains had made channels of the wheel-ruts and washed them so deeply that the sod had never healed over them. They looked like gashes torn by a grizzly's claws, on the slopes where the farm-wagons used to lurch up out of the hollows with a pull that brought curling muscles on the smooth hips of the horses. I sat down and watched the haystacks turn rosy in the slanting sunlight.

This was the road over which Antonia and I came on that night when we got off the train at Black Hawk and were bedded down in the straw, wondering children, being taken we knew not whither. I had only to close my eyes to hear the rumbling of the wagons in the dark, and to be again overcome by that obliterating strangeness. The feelings of that night were so near that I could reach out and touch them with my hand. I had the sense of coming home to myself, and of having found out what a little circle man's experience is. For Antonia and for me, this had been the road of Destiny; had taken us to those early accidents of fortune which predetermined for us all that we can ever be. Now I understood that the same road was to bring us together again. Whatever we had missed, we possessed together the precious, the incommunicable past.

About the Authors in This Book

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THE PURPOSE of these notes is to place our authors in space and time, to individualize them, by showing that they were educated in different ways, occupied themselves in a great variety of service other than writing, and to suggest that there are other books to find and read besides this one. These men and women are colorfully different from one another, and no two can be felt about the same way. For one the facts of education are important, for another political services, and for a third his native place. MacLeish's public life, but not Haldane's family tree, not necessarily Thomas Heggen's untimely death, but certainly John Erskine's music, though his piece in our book is on humor. One feels a surge of affection for Plato's Socrates, a great admiration for all that Jefferson did. One's imagination pictures all those once far separated in time, now in timelessness conversing, Ben Franklin with Sir Francis Bacon and Galileo; Booker T. Washington with Vanzetti and Thomas Paine and Thoreau; while across the floors of heaven Kittredge is asking Shakespeare those questions he had his own answers for.

The student too often finds the authors' names an exasperating additional fact he is required to remember, even an irrelevant fact, and is troubled by the instructor's natural habit of identifying the next day's assignments by authors' names. "For tomorrow we will read," says the instructor, "the Huxley, Russell, and Whitehead." "Who are they? What page are they on?" thinks the student? They are great minds, are or once were men alive on the streets of the world, thinking their different thoughts, having their preferences in pleasure, having wives, children, houses. We have said in the foreword to this book that we believe the study of literature is the study of the human spirit. In order to focus more sharply on the human spirit as manifested in these several scores of human beings, we have provided herewith the sort of information necessary to come to know them, at first a little, then with much wider reading, as the individuals they are.

AIKEN, CONRAD (1889-), was born in Georgia, graduated from Harvard, and traveled, and lived either in England or on Cape Cod; he devotes his life to writing. *Punch: the Immortal Liar, The Jig of Forslin,* and *The Pilgrimage of Festus,* are three of several full-length poetic-psychological probings. His short lyrics evoke and are music. His *Preludes for Memnon* is a kind of autobiography of the imagination, profuse, melodious, seeking a total record of experience. He is a distinguished writer of short stories and novels.

ANDERSON, MAXWELL (1888-). Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and two-time winner of the Dramatic Critics' Circle Award, Pennsylvania-born Maxwell Anderson began his writing career as a newspaper reporter. His first stage triumph was *What Price Glory* (1924), written in collaboration with Laurence Stallings. Since that time, he has written the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Both Your Houses* (1933), *Winterset* and *High Tor,* which won the Critics' Awards in 1935 and 1936, and *Joan of Lorraine,* a Broadway hit in 1946.

ANDERSON, SHERWOOD, was born in Ohio in 1876, and left business to write and is best known for his short stories; he was the author of *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919); *The Triumph of the Egg,* 1921; *Dark Laughter,* 1925; and *Hello Towns,* 1929. He died in 1941.

ANONYMOUS is a prolific and diverse writer whose period covers cave-writings, Anglo-Saxon fragments, songs of the Elizabethan era, and of World War II. He is the most enduring author in all literature, persisting in his work only, without name or dates. The drama and the novel seem not to have interested him much; he is most of all a poet, and as such has given us some of the loveliest of English lyrics. He has also written in Egyptian, Greek, and Latin, and is at present composing a limerick to be circulated tomorrow.

ARNOLD, MATTHEW (1822-1888), was an English poet and critic who undertook to teach his age "harmonious perfection in morals and literature." Following Carlyle and Ruskin, he went beyond a literary culture, and beyond religion, as he tried to open the new science and liberal thought to a wide public. In *Culture and Anarchy,* in 1869, he said, "Culture is the minister of the sweetness and light essential to the perfect character"

AUDEN, WYSTAN HUGH, British-born, came to the United States in the 1930's and is now a naturalized citizen. On both sides of the water he is a brilliant example of "the poet of the times"—versatile, ambitious, prolific; widely-read in economics, psychiatry, and history, with a social conscience on the liberal side. He set the tone for and dominated a school of between-the-wars poets in England and America, his warning satires creating a new language which had many imitators. He is the author of *The Double Man,* 1941, *On This Island,* 1937, and *Another Time,* 1940.

BABCOCK, DONALD C., was born in Minneapolis, Minn., in 1885, and has been a professor of history, and of philosophy, at the University of New Hampshire since 1918. He is the author of *Man and Social Achievement,* 1929, and his rare and lately recognized poetry has appeared in *The New Yorker, The Atlantic Monthly* and *The Saturday Review of Literature.*

BACON, FRANCIS, was born at York House, London, in 1561, and is not Shakespeare. He became Lord Chancellor of England in 1618, and was the author of *Novum Organum, The Advancement of Learning,* and his own essays, some almost cynically practical, some in the best of Elizabethan prose, like his piece on gardens. He confessed to bribery, lost public prestige, and kept on writing his essays.

BARRINGTON, PATRICK, is an English poet of humor approaching genius, introduced by David McCord in *What Cheer,* 1945, with three items from store of hundreds, surely, of which we quote part of one. Someone to look for.

BEARD, CHARLES A. (1874-1948), first with his *Economic Interpretation of the Constitution,* 1913, interpreted American history in terms of a struggle among economic classes. His *Rise of American Civilization,* in collaboration with his wife, Mary A. Beard, which shows the Civil War as a second American Revolution, a war between the planting and the capitalistic classes, was the most provocative of his works. His later books dealt mainly with foreign policy and national planning.

BECKER, CARL (1873-1947), was an important contemporary American historian, and taught at Cornell. He was the author of *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers,* 1932, "Everyman His Own Historian," and *Progress and Power,* among many other works. Warm, urbane, and witty, he was master of a distinguished prose style.

BEDE, ELBERT, is a journalist and writer with a strong affection for the far west. He is a Knight Templar, Thirty-third degree, and is editor of the *Oregon Mason*

BENCHLEY, ROBERT (1889-1945), was president of the Lampoon at Harvard, and dramatic critic for the old *Life,* and *The New Yorker.* His classic "Treasurer's Report" got him into the movies, where he played himself straight, to the delight of all. Some of his books are *My Ten Years in a Quandary and How It Grew,* 1936, and *Benchley Beside Himself,* 1943.

BENNETT, ARNOLD (1867-1931), had a high school education in England, was a law clerk, journalist, then suddenly a prolific writer. He said he wrote some eighty books, but really only four, of the latter, his novel, *The Old Wives Tale,* is a modern classic. He owed much to French writers; he had remarkable grasp of the details of life, and great energy.

BENTON, THOMAS HART (1889-), studied in art schools in the U.S. and France, and traveled in this country, writing *An Artist in America* in 1937. He painted for the movies, and has murals in the Whitney Museum, the New School for Social Research, and in public buildings in Indiana and Missouri.

BEVINGTON, HELEN, teaches English at Duke University, has contributed to Franklin P. Adams' famous column, "The Conning Tower," and to *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic Monthly.* Her delightful book of verse, *Dr. Johnson's Waterfall,* is unique: it touches and lights both the literary and the academic scene with grace and humor, and some salt for taste.

BINNS, ARCHIE (1899-), finds the setting for *The Land Is Bright,* which follows the Oregon Trail in the 1850's, and *Mighty Mountain,* a novel of the Washington pioneers, in the Northwest of the time of the pioneer penetration. He did his apprentice writing as a Washington correspondent for the Scripps-Howard newspapers.

BISHOP, MORRIS (1883-) is a professor of Romance languages at Cornell, and author of a life of Ronsard. He is also one of the two or three best writers of light verse today, and a well-known contributor to *The New Yorker.*

BLAKE, WILLIAM (1757-1827), first published poetry in 1783, and in 1789 engraved and published his *Songs of Innocence* His later prose and poetry grew darker and increasingly mystical, concerned with the moral code, and an eternal world in which he believed. His engravings for the *Divine Comedy* and *Paradise Lost* are famous.

BLOOM, EDWARD A. and LILLIAN D., are husband and wife, and teach English at Brown University and Rhode Island State College, respectively. Their interest in Willa Cather's art and thought has led them to prepare a second article, about her attitude toward materialism, which is to appear in the *Toronto Quarterly*

BOURNE, RANDOLPH (1886-1918), was born in New Jersey, graduated from Columbia in 1912, and published *Youth and Life* the next year. He died at thirty-two, the last essay in his first book, "The Philosophy of Handicap," comes out of his own physical deformity – he was a hunchback with a cruelly stunted body. But his mind was brilliant, rich, and busy. He contributed to magazines, and wrote *Education and Living,* 1917, and *Untimely Papers,* 1920, the latter edited by James Oppenheim.

BRIDGES, ROBERT, thinks the devoted critic Albert Guerard, Jr., is one of the most impressive as well as one of the most serious poets of the last hundred years; this view transcends the anthologists' memorial of the poet with such lyrics as "A Passer-By" and "On a Dead Child." To most readers of poetry he is known for his studies in Miltonic prosody, his long poem, *The Testament of Beauty,* and his editorship of the poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins. Bridges was born in England in 1844, was made Poet Laureate in 1913, and died in 1920.

BROWN, ROLLO WALTER (1880-), came from the Ohio mine country to be a college professor, novelist, and essayist. He was educated at Ohio Northern U. and at Harvard, where he taught, but left teaching in 1924 to write. His summers at the MacDowell Colony brought about two of his distinguished biographical pieces, on his friends Mrs. MacDowell and the poet Edwin Arlington Robinson. Widely known as a lecturer to college audiences, he lives in Cambridge, Mass.

BROWNING, ROBERT (1812-1889), was the dramatic psychologist of 19th-century English poetry, extraordinarily fluent, extraordinarily varied in his verse forms, vigorous, learned, affirmative, and too often too obscure. A social-intellectual phenomenon of our parents' time was the Browning Club, which flourished in every community, and met to root out the beauties from the obscurities of the master's bulk of writing. But if he was obscure, he could be perfectly lyrical, too, and he had fine gifts for the brief dramatic poem.

BRUSH, KATHARINE, was educated at the Centenary Collegiate Institute, in New Jersey, worked for a Boston newspaper, and has written a number of novels – the most popular was *Young Man of Manhattan* – and short stories for *Cosmopolitan, American,* and other magazines.

BURNS, ROBERT (1759-1796), sang in Scots his own turbulent life, his many loves, his love of his own country and its language. Readers of poetry know as classics his "Cotter's Saturday Night," "To a Mouse," as collectors know the Kilmarnock edition, 1786, of his early poems. But all those who sing together, whether or not they know the name of Burns, know the songs like "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton." This is the poet's immortality.

CALKINS, ERNEST ELMO (1868-), introduced methods into advertising which have become standard. He is a writer and lecturer on art, printing, recreation, town planning, and advertising, for distinguished service in the latter field receiving the Bok Medal in 1925.

CANBY, HENRY SEIDEL (1878-), born in Wilmington, Del., is a Quaker with the tastes of an Epicurean, he says. He studied and taught at Yale, helped Wilbur Cross found the *Yale Review* in 1911, joined the *Literary Review* of the New York *Evening Post* in 1920, and in 1924 converted it and its staff into *The Saturday Review of Literature.* His writing has been critical and editorial, except for his autobiography.

CANFIELD, DOROTHY (1879-). Beginning with *Gunhild,* 1907, Mrs. Dorothy Canfield Fisher has written novels and short fiction, all with distinction. *The Brimming Cup* (1921), portraying a woman torn between her love for her husband and family and her love for another man, and *The Deepening Storm* (1930), tracing the growth of a woman's character from her Western youth to her maturity in

France, are two of the best. Born in Kansas, Mrs. Fisher, who received her education in Paris, now resides in Vermont.

CARROLL, LEWIS (1832-1898), was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, a lecturer in mathematics at Oxford. His famous *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* 1865, and *Through the Looking-Glass,* 1872, still appeal as much to grown-ups as to children, and have appeared in countless editions since the original illustrated by Tenniel. Few children, and perhaps few adults, read his *Euclid and His Modern Rivals,* 1879, which he sent to Queen Victoria when she asked to see more of his writing, having read Alice.

CASE, JOSEPHINE YOUNG, is the author of a novel, *Written in Sand,* and of a book of poems, *Freedom's Farm,* 1946. She is the daughter of Owen Young, and wife of Everett Case, president of Colgate.

CATHER, WILLA (1876-1947), at eight went from her ancestral Virginia to a Nebraska ranch; the next ten years outdoors deeply colored her later writing. She graduated from the University of Nebraska, was a journalist in New York for six years, and in 1911 began seriously to write. Between 1912 and 1940 she wrote twelve novels; she published five books of short stories, two of essays, and one of verse.

CAXTON, WILLIAM (1422?-1491), stepped into history at fifty-one by becoming the first printer in England, using wooden type for hand-set pages, so that he could produce books in greater quantities than the copiers by hand. But he had been acting governor of the English merchants in the Low Countries, had negotiated commercial treaties with the Dukes of Burgundy, and made translations of French romances that influenced 15th-century English prose style. He learned printing at Cologne, and himself printed some eighty books, 1477-91, at Westminster in England. Caxton's is a name powerful in meaning to all English literature, if only because in 1475 he printed Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.*

CHASE, STUART (1888-), writer-economist, was educated at M. I. T. and Harvard, and a member of TVA and the National Resources Commission. Some of his books are *Men and Machines,* 1929; *This We Fought,* 1946.

CHAUCER, GEOFFREY (1340-1400), is represented in this book by a few lines from the great *Canterbury Tales,* a monument of English literature, lusty, various, faithful – a pageant of life. "I have had my life as in my time," he wrote, and more poets than John Masefield have learned that immediate delight from him. The spelling of Chaucer's age is the slightest of barriers to our day's appreciation: the poet's humor and humanity surpass it. One envies all who have yet to read Chaucer.

CIARDI, JOHN, was born in Boston in 1915, educated at Tufts College and the University of Michigan, has taught English at the University of Kansas City and is now a Briggs-Copeland Assistant Professor at Harvard. He was a B-29 gunner in the Pacific, and has written some of the best poetry of that war. His first book, *Homeward to America,* 1939, won a Hopwood Award; from *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse,* he has had the Blumenthal, Tietjens, and Levinson prizes. His later books are *Other Skies,* 1947, and *Live Another Day,* 1949.

CLARK, WALTER VAN TILBURG (1909-), was born in Maine and went to school in New York. Twentieth-Century Fox made a movie of his fine western, *The Ox-Bow Incident,* 1940. He writes for the *New Yorker,* the *Atlantic Monthly,* the *Saturday Evening Post,* etc.

COFFIN, ROBERT P. TRISTRAM (1892-), Pierce professor of English at Bowdoin College, his alma mater, since 1934, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1936: *Strange Holiness.* Those who know or think of him as poet only will miss his mastery of the 17th century in England and many volumes like *Kennebec* and *Captain Abby and Captain John.*

CLOUGH, ARTHUR HUGH, born in Liverpool in 1819, was remembered in poetry by Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis" after his death in 1861. He is remembered by most readers for his "Say not the struggle not availeth," one of several poems of spiritual agitation common to sensitive and intelligent men of his time, though he wrote more and longer poems.

COMMAGER, HENRY STEELE (1902-), Professor of history at Columbia University and commentator on current America and the world, is author of *The Story of the Second World War,* 1945. He is a member of the War Department's committee on the history of the war. In World War II he was an instructor in England for the Office of War Information and wrote articles, booklets, and broadcasts for that agency.

CRAVEN, AVERY O. (1886-), is a North Carolinian, and professor of American history at the University of Chicago. He has taught at the University of Sidney, Australia; reviewed books for the New York *Times* and *Herald-*

Tribune; and written (1942) *The Coming of the Civil War.*

CROSS, WILBUR L. (1862-1948), for many years professor of English at Yale, and Dean of the Graduate School, served as Governor of Connecticut from 1931 to 1939. Author, editor of the *Yale Review,* and contributor to leading magazines, his writing gave American literature classic documents in the proclamations he issued as Governor.

CUNNINGHAM, ALLAN (1784-1842), was at first a stone-mason, then secretary to a sculptor, and wrote imitations of and additions to Scottish and English balladry, of which "Hame, Hame, Hame," was one of the most popular.

DANA, RICHARD HENRY, was born in Cambridge, Mass., in 1815, and shipped out in 1834 as an ordinary seaman on a voyage to the Pacific, for his health. His experience is told in *Two Years Before the Mast,* 1840, an American classic. He was an eminent jurist and politician, and died in 1882, all the long latter part of his life being less important to history and literature than two years of his youth.

DENNEY, REUEL (1913-), published *The Connecticut River and Other Poems* in 1939 in the Yale Series of Younger Poets, which is one of the honors available in poetry to Americans under thirty. This honor Denney richly deserved. He was born in New York City, graduated from Dartmouth, and is a city planner.

DEVOTO, BERNARD (1897-), was born in Ogden, Utah, educated at Harvard, and has been a member of several college faculties, editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature,* and a staff member of the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. He is author of *The Crooked Mile,* 1924, *We Accept with Pleasure,* 1934, and *Year of Decision,* 1943. He occupies "The Editor's Easy Chair" in *Harper's Magazine.*

DONNE, JOHN, who wrote some of the most thundering and magnificent sermons in English prose, and some of the most ironic, erotic, the most direct and yet the most formal love poems in our literature, spent his life from 1573-1631 passionately in love, and deeply in love with death, two post-Elizabethan themes productive of great poetry and prose. Donne was the Dean of St. Paul's, yet had rebelled as a young man against literary and other convention. He burned in both lives with new exultation, a mixture of carnal and spiritual that speaks vividly to our time. He is known as the founder of the metaphysical school of poetry, because of the far-fetched striking imagery with which he resolved the opposites of his own fiery, morbid, and energetic nature.

DOS PASSOS, JOHN, was born in Chicago in 1896. His novel *Three Soldiers,* 1921, is one of the best, and most terrifying, of World War I; nor will any who read it forget *Manhattan Transfer,* 1925, written in the same original technique of the large, then the small, focus he used for the trilogy. *U. S. A.* His scenes and sequences create an atmosphere of stress, realism, and hustle unlike any others in 20th-century novels, and are rich reading experience.

DRAYTON, MICHAEL (1563-1631), is most widely known in our time for one sonnet, "Since there's no help," but is studied in the graduate schools for his great topographical poem, *Polyolbion,* and his *Nimphidia,* 1627. He was a pleasant songster, an historical versifier, and something of a satirist. He was prolific, and a man of his times.

EBERHART, RICHARD (1904-), was born in Minnesota, has studied at Dartmouth and Cambridge University, taught at St. Marks School, and travelled in the far east and some of the seven seas. He was Lieut. Commander, USNR, in the war, and now lives in Cambridge, Mass. His newest book of poems is *Burr Oaks,* 1947, and his *Brotherhood of Men,* 1949, is one of the most memorable of the longer poems of the war; Eberhart's shorter poems of war, "The Fury of Aerial Bombardment," and "Dam Neck, Virginia" are two of a good many that will be read for their sensitivity and compassion.

EINSTEIN, ALBERT (1879-), came to the United States in 1933, after a European education and a teaching career in Munich, Geneva, Oxford, and other great centers of learning; he was naturalized in 1940. In 1922 he had received the Nobel Prize. He first published his *Meaning of Relativity* in 1923 (the 1950 edition includes the new gravitational field theory). Since the early 30's he has been at Princeton, in the Institute for Advanced Study. He is one of the great scientific minds of all time.

ELIOT, THOMAS STEARNS (1888-), was born in Missouri, educated at Harvard, the Sorbonne, and Oxford, and in 1927 became a British subject. *The Waste Land,* 1922, and *Four Quartets,* 1944, are his important works in poetry; with *Ash Wednesday,* 1930, and the play, *Murder in the Cathedral,* 1935, as well as many of his essays, we see his own salvation worked out,

though for years *The Waste Land* was mistaken for a bible of the post-world-war-one generation. Eliot has returned to the U.S. for long lecture visits in the last twenty years In 1948 he received the Nobel Prize.

EMERSON, RALPH WALDO, critic of his America, and believer in God in every man, was born in Boston, Mass., in 1803, and died in 1882. He said that the spirit of God radiates throughout Nature, and that man must go to Nature to find harmony with God's law. "Self-Reliance" and "The American Scholar" are his best-known essays. The old New England town of Concord is famous because he lived in it.

ERSKINE, JOHN (1879-), got his degrees and taught at Columbia, was president of the Juillard School of Music, in New York, and a concert pianist. He has written *The Elizabethan Lyrics, The Delight of Great Books,* as well as *The Private Life of Helen of Troy,* 1925, and other popular novels in the same vein.

FAULKNER, WILLIAM (1897-). The novels and stories of William Faulkner deal with the lives of decadent, neurotic, and even insane people in the South. His works have aroused more controversy than those of almost any other contemporary, yet few critics would not agree that he imposes upon them a vivid reality. His novels include *Sanctuary, The Sound and the Fury,* and *Intruder in the Dust*

FLESCH, RUDOLPH (1911-), wrote *Marks of Readable Style,* 1943, for his Ph.D. at Columbia, and in 1946 rewrote it as *The Art of Plain Talk,* a plea for directness in writing, also, *The Art of Readable Writing* (1949).

FLYNN, EDWARD J. (1891-), obtained his law degree from Fordham University in 1909 at the age of eighteen, and was for 18 years Democratic boss of the Bronx. In 1940, on the insistence of President Roosevelt, he became chairman of the Democratic National Committee, a post he held during the campaigns for Roosevelt's third and fourth terms

FORBES, ESTHER (1894-), lives in Worcester, Mass., has been an editor and the author of historical novels and studies, winning the Pulitzer Prize for history in 1942 for *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In,* the Newberry Medal in 1944 for *America's Paul Revere,* and wide popularity for *Johnny Tremaine.*

FRANKLIN, BENJAMIN (1706-1790), famous and beloved and ingenious Philadelphian, world-citizen, printer, inventor, was born in Boston and became one of the great personalities of the 18th century, the first American to be well-known in Europe, where he represented the new Republic. American children know his kite experiment, historians know how much he contributed to the Declaration of Independence.

FREEMAN, MARY WILKINS (1852-1930), was a small, humorous, frank, and whimsical, hard-working and independent New England woman one would like to have known, and somehow has known. She published some three hundred stories in magazines, and a score of novels, she wrote to sell, but her freedom from influence won her praise and honors.

FROST, ROBERT, born in San Francisco of a long line of New England forebears, published *A Boy's Will* in England in 1913 when he was almost forty. His poetry since then has made him the most widely read, and taught, of living poets, and has won him the Pulitzer Prize four times, the gold medal of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and innumerable degrees and other honors. He has long been associated with colleges, because he reads often to college audiences, and because he has been poet in residence at Amherst, Harvard, and Dartmouth. His *Complete Poems, 1949,* contains his life-work.

FROUDE, JAMES ANTHONY (1818-1894), was an English historian, and disciple and literary executor of Thomas Carlyle, being educated at Oxford, and in his later years a traveler to South Africa and Australia, a stormy sceptic, severely criticised, yet widely honored and fully published. Some of his books are *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada,* 1870; *The English in the West Indies,* 1888, and *The Council of Trent,* 1896.

GALILEI, GALILEO (1564-1642), said, in 1633, "eppur si muove," — *but it moves* — a famous and defiant phrase in the history of truth-seeking. He had discovered in Pisa, where he was born, facts that led him to advance the Copernican theory that the earth revolves around the sun, which the Inquisition compelled him to repudiate. "But it moves," he muttered, despite torture. His principal works were *Della Nuove Scienza,* and *Ai Due Massimi Sistemi.*

GOLDBERG, MAXWELL, was born in Malden, Mass., in 1907, educated at the Boston Latin School, the University of Massachusetts, and Yale — his dissertation on Carlyle being for the degree of Ph.D. in 1933. He is now professor of English at the University of Massachusetts,

and president of the New England College English Association. He has published in *Common Ground, PMLA, Modern Language Quarterly, The London Times Literary Supplement,* and other journals.

GRAVES, ROBERT (1895-), wrote quaintly original country lyrics, then realistic poems of World War I, and in recent years intellectualized, pungent, poetry of subtle rhythms and ironic tone. He is the author of *I, Claudius* and other fictionalized stories of Roman life.

GREENOUGH, JAMES BRADSTREET (1833-1901), born in Portland, Me., and educated at Boston Latin School and Harvard, was a philologist, and for some time a lawyer and a Latin teacher. *Analysis of the Latin Subjective,* 1870, is a classic.

HALDANE, J. B. S. (1892-), is a professor of genetics at the University of London, and well-known for his magazine articles on all aspects of science, for the general reader. His *Possible Worlds, Science and Ethics,* and other books, are gatherings of his essays and his lectures.

HAWTHORNE, NATHANIEL (1804-1864), portrayed his own Puritan ancestor in his introduction to *The Scarlet Letter,* set in Salem, Mass., where he was born. He went to Bowdoin College, in Maine; was a customs official, and consul to Liverpool. Perhaps his best-known novel is *The House of the Seven Gables,* 1851.

HAYAKAWA, S. I. (1906-), is a Canadian-born and educated semanticist, editor in 1943 of *Etc.,* and author of *Language in Action,* 1941, revised in 1949, an influential textbook and popular (Book-of-the-Month-Club) work on language and how it works. He was Asst. Prof. of English at the Illinois Inst. of Technology when he wrote it.

HEGGEN, THOMAS (1919-1949), served four years in the Navy and came out with the rank of Lieutenant, was on the editorial staff of *The Readers Digest* in 1945, and wrote *Mr. Roberts,* a series of incidents in the wartime life of a young officer on an extremely non-combative ship in the South Pacific; just as this story was having movie and stage success, the author died by accident.

HERBERT, GEORGE (1593-1633), wrote religious poems noted for ingenious imagery and sincerity, which were sometimes extravagant. *The Temple,* 1633, contains the bulk of his life's work.

HERRICK, ROBERT (1591-1674), wrote his sacred poems and his love-lyrics mostly in Devonshire, where he was a country pastor; *Hesperides* was published in 1648. His songs to Julia, his imitations of Catullus and Horace, his celebrations of country festivals and food, sing to the ear as do few other lines in English poetry. He admired Ben Jonson; several of his poems were set to music by Lawes and other composers of his time.

HERSEY, JOHN (1914-) was born of American parents, in China, went to Hotchkiss School, and had his A.B. degree from Yale in 1936. *Time* depended on him for reports from the Orient in the late thirties, as did *Life,* his background was right for his documentary *Hiroshima.* He has also written *Men on Bataan,* 1942; *A Bell for Adano,* 1944, and *The Wall,* 1950.

HODGSON, RALPH (1872-), is an English poet who has been a newspaperman and lecturer at the Imperial University in Japan. Born in Yorkshire, and called one of the Georgian poets, he now lives in Ohio.

HOLMES, JOHN (1904-), is a professor of English at Tufts College, the author of *Address to the Living, Map of My Country, The Poet's Work,* and a contributor to *Poetry, The Atlantic Monthly, The New Yorker,* and other magazines. Teacher, editor, reviewer, he was born in New England, and has lived there all his life. For his first book of poems Robert Frost wrote the only book-jacket commendation he ever offered. "You Are Not Forgotten" is an essay on the art and spirit of letter-writing, based on actual old letters; Mr. Holmes keeps that art alive, in this essay and in daily practice.

HOPKINS, GERARD MANLEY (1844-1889), was a convert to Roman Catholicism as a student at Oxford, became a Jesuit priest, and wrote a small body of poetry, unpublished in his lifetime. In 1918 his friend Robert Bridges edited the poems; they thus became a powerful influence on 20th century poets, the power lying in the poet's extraordinary coinages, rhythms, and intensity. In recent years his letters, notebooks, and early poems have been printed, and a number of critical biographies, those by Ruggles, Pick, and Gardner being the best.

HOUSMAN, A. E. (1859-1936), had two distinguished reputations, one as a leading classical scholar – he edited Manilius, Juvenal, and other Latin poets – and one as a lyric poet in English, with his books *The Shropshire Lad,* 1896; *Last Poems,* 1922; and the posthumous *More Poems,* 1936. He is also to be remembered

for his essay, *The Name and Nature of Poetry.*

HOWARD, JOSEPH KINSEY (1906-), is a westerner, reminiscent and appreciative of the past of his country, and a journalist. He is editor of the *Great Falls Leader,* of Montana, and a contributor to well-known magazines.

HUMPHRIES, ROLFE, a native of Philadelphia, was graduated from Amherst College in 1914, winner of a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1938, and is the author of *Summer Landscape, Out of the Jewel,* and *The Wind of Time.*

HUXLEY, THOMAS HENRY (1825-1895), biologist and essayist was educated at the University of London, and later was president of the Royal Society, in 1883. He has had distinguished descendants, in Julian and Aldous Huxley, and was the author of *Anatomy of Vertebrate Animals, Man's Place in Nature,* and *Evolution and Ethics* For all the thousands who heard him lecture on a piece of chalk, many more thousands of American freshmen have read Huxley.

IBSEN, HENRIK (1828-1906), a master craftsman in the theatre, published *Peer Gynt* in 1861, but is now better known for his later plays, *A Doll's House* (1879), *The Wild Duck* (1884), *Hedda Gabler* (1890), and *The Master Builder* (1892), and others, which seriously discussed the social problems of his day.

INGE, WILLIAM RALPH (1860-), was born in Yorkshire, England, came after many honors and university posts to be Dean of St. Paul's, 1911-1934, and because of his outlook on modern life, expressed in many articles and books, has been called "the gloomy Dean."

JACKSON, SHIRLEY, a short-story writer born in 1920, won extraordinary recognition with *The Lottery,* which when it appeared in the *New Yorker* is said to have brought more comment from readers than anything ever published in that weekly. A critic says "she writes not with a pen but with a broomstick."

JAMES, HENRY, younger brother of the Harvard philosopher, William, lived in England and during World War I became a British citizen; he was born in New York, in 1843. His first novels connected European civilization with America; the novels of his middle period dealt with Europe; the international scene filled his later work. His own critical prefaces, and his short stories, are of high value in modern English literature. He died in 1916.

JAMES, MARQUIS (1891-), was born in Springfield, Mo., and has twice had the Pulitzer prize for biography. He served in World War I, and for nine years, 1923-32, on the staff of the *American Legion Monthly.* In 1923 he published a history of the American Legion.

JARRELL, RANDALL, a young Southern poet, has written some memorable war poems. He is the author of *Blood for a Stranger,* 1942, and Little *Friend, Little Friend,* 1945.

JEFFERS, ROBINSON (1887-), brings a terrible power, almost affirmative in its energy, to such themes as the contemplation of death (often desirable, always to be resisted, he says), war, the crucified god, culture cycles, and the rocks and hawks of his California coast. His poems yearn toward death, the cancellation of imperfect human life; but in one of his rare public lectures he said that when poetry dreams too much of death, it is longing for a resurrection. Jeffers is not so much morbid as not full of brotherly love. *Roan Stallion, Tamar and Other Poems,* 1926, established him; other books are *Dear Judas;* 1929, *Selected Poems,* 1937; *Medea,* 1946, and *The Double Axe,* 1948.

JEFFERSON, THOMAS (1743-1826), of Virginia, served his country even more than as author of the Declaration of Independence, and its third President. Religious freedom, the decimal system of coinage, a ministry to France, and the support of the Lewis and Clark expedition leading to the Louisiana Purchase, were some of the interests and efforts of this great American. He helped plan the nation's capital, and founded the University of Virginia. He believed an educated people could govern themselves in a democratic-republican system better than in any other. After 1809 he lived in his great house, Monticello, an image of his own gracious, inventive genius for life, and now a national shrine.

JOHNSON, JOSEPHINE W. (1910-), won the Pulitzer prize in 1934, and the O. Henry Memorial Award in 1935. A poet, novelist, and short story writer, she is the author of *Now in November, Year's End,* and *Wildwood,* among other books.

JOHNSON, WALTER, is Assistant Professor in American History at the University of Chicago, though he received his A.B. degree only in 1937. In 1943 he was awarded the university's prize of $1,000 for excellence in undergraduate teaching, and was Director of ASTP teaching in American History during the war. He has published two books on William Allen White.

JONES, HOWARD MUMFORD, literary critic, scholar in the history of American literature, and

professor of English at Harvard, delivered *The Attractions of Stupidity* as a Commencement address at Tufts College in 1944.

JONSON, BEN (1572?-1637), freshened with his vitality in play and poetry the age in which he lived; he was a humanist, who had small liking for the arts of France and Italy, and much for that of Greece and Rome. He imitated the epigrams in the Greek Anthology, and liked the form and the moralizing of the Latin poets. He makes himself remembered as Shakespeare's friend and critical admirer, and somehow his robustness of mind and body comes down to us in his poetry, with the warmth young writers of his day felt for him, who called themselves proudly "sealed of the Tribe of Ben."

KEATS, JOHN (1795-1821), meant to be a surgeon, but lived and died a poet, his tragically short life – he died of consumption – produced an extraordinary body of great lyric and romantic poetry. His sonnet on Chapman's *Homer* appeared in 1816. He wrote the famous odes only a few years later. He had known the poet Shelley, who wrote *Adonais* in his memory; and he had loved Fanny Brawne, deeply and hopelessly. In addition to his poetry, his letters are of high value.

KITTREDGE, GEORGE LYMAN (1860-1941), was educated at Harvard and became a scholar of Shakespeare and Chaucer and a professor at Harvard. His English 2, "Six Shakespearean Plays," was one of the famous courses. He wrote *Chaucer and His Poetry* (1915), *Shakespeare* (1916), *Witchcraft in Old and New England* (1929), and edited some of the better known books on Shakespearean drama.

KRUTCH, JOSEPH WOOD (1893-), was educated at the University of Tennessee and Columbia, and has been professor of drama and literature there since 1934. He has written *The Modern Temper*, 1929, and *The American Drama Since 1918*, 1939.

LARRABEE, HAROLD A. (1894-), a philosopher, educated at Columbia and Harvard, has written *What Philosophy Is* (1928), *Rhymes About College* (1936), *Reliable Knowledge* (1945). He is book editor of *The Journal of Philosophy*.

LEWIS, C. S., Irish-born author of the religio-psychological discourses, *The Screwtape Letters*, is a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and two years older than the century. His earlier *Allegory of Love* won the Hawthornden Prize in 1936.

LEWIS, GILBERT N. (1875-), was born at Weymouth, Mass., took degrees at Harvard and Leipzig, and has taught widely in the U.S. His work on pure isotopes and thermodynamic theory has won him innumerable honors.

MACLEISH, ARCHIBALD, who was born in Illinois in 1892, and tells his life-story elsewhere in this book, is extraordinary in our time for two reasons: he has for writing and speaking poetry an unusually sensitive ear, and he is our chief example of a man of letters in public life. He has been, as well as a Pulitzer prize poet and influence on younger writers, the Librarian of Congress, and Under Secretary of State. He declares an important position to all poets of our time, the shift from private to public speech. He has also experimented in radio, ballet, and verse-drama; few living poets know their world as well, or feel it as sensitively.

MARVELL, ANDREW (1621-1678), was tutor to Cromwell's ward, and assistant in John Milton's Latin secretaryship to the council; when Charles II was restored, Marvell pamphleteered violently against him. As a poet he is remembered for *The Garden*, *The Bermudas*, and *To His Coy Mistress*. Most of his poetry did not appear till 1681.

MATHER, KIRTLEY (1888-), went to Denison University, in Ohio, took his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, and has been a professor of geology at Harvard since 1927. His administrative, editorial, and public duties have been numerous, energetically carried out, and liberal in attitude. In 1946 he became chairman of the Civil Liberties Union. He is a member of the Royal Geographic Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

MAUPASSANT, GUY DE (1850-1893), was a Frenchman, a disciple of Flaubert, and a great short-story writer. His finest single stories are *Two Friends*, *Boule de Suif*, and *The Diamond Necklace*. His most admirable and satisfying literary qualities are clearness and simplicity in style, and an absolute fidelity in setting down what his remarkable observation gave him as story material.

MCCORD, DAVID (1897-), an Oregonian by early experience, a New Yorker by birth, is well-known as the compiler of *What Cheer*, or in its other being, *The Pocket Book of Humorous Verse*. McCord is himself a leading practitioner and addict, a regular contributor to *The New Yorker*, where no doubt he is read by thousands of Harvard alumni who also know him as their

Fund Secretary. David McCord values, writes, and has edited the familiar essay, his latest book, *About Boston*, 1949, exemplifying his illustrative gift in word and line.

MELVILLE, HERMAN (1819-1891), born in New York, shipped as a sailor in 1837 under a harsh captain, and deserted in the South Pacific; *Typee*, 1846, tells of the place and people. His other best-known novels are *Pierre*, 1852; and *Moby Dick*, 1851. Melville has had a curious posthumous literary career, with *Moby Dick* widely read, studied in college courses, illustrated by Rockwell Kent, becoming a classic by sheer weight of impact on the contemporary public; and his lesser works made the matter for specialized studies in psychology. Neither approach can harm him, and *Moby Dick* is read as the great symbol and sea-tale it will always be.

MILNE, LORUS J. (1910-), was born in Toronto, took his B.A. degree there with a gold medal, 1933, and came to Harvard. He has taught in Texas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and now at the University of New Hampshire. A prolific writer of technical articles, he and his wife, MARGERY J. MILNE, have come to believe in popularization of their biological knowledge, earth- and water-wise.

MILTON, JOHN, was twenty-four when he wrote *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, in 1632, after his graduation from Cambridge University. Some twenty-five years later he began the composition of *Paradise Lost*. He was a Puritan, militant in prose and verse, a pamphleteer for causes such as liberty of the press, and divorce. The restoration of the king and the downfall of Cromwell brought financial and political disaster to Milton, who had also marital troubles, and was now blind. He died in 1674.

MOORE, MARIANNE (1887-), is a poet of formal, exact, and secretly delighted observations made of reindeer and other animals, of the nature of poetry itself, of places of the mind and the living world no one else has searched with her bright eye and perfect word. She has been editor of the *Dial*, and a librarian in New York. T. S. Eliot, in his preface to her *Selected Poems*, in 1935, said that her poems "form part of the small body of durable poetry written in our time."

MUMFORD, LEWIS (1895-), architectural and social critic, has lectured widely in American colleges and had a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1932. He has written *Herman Melville*, 1929; *The Culture of Cities*, 1938; and *The South in Architecture*, 1941. He is also known to *New Yorker* readers for his occasional articles criticising current New York City architecture and city planning.

NEWTON, SIR ISAAC (1642-1727), a mathematician and astronomer, had his degrees from Trinity College, Cambridge, and formulated the laws of gravitation and motion. He wrote *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*.

O'NEILL, EUGENE (1888-), was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1920, 1922, and 1928 and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1936. He was author of the plays *The Emperor Jones* (1921), *Anna Christie* (1922), *The Hairy Ape* (1922), *Strange Interlude* (1927), *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931), *Ah, Wilderness!* (1932), *The Iceman Cometh* (1939).

OWEN, WILFRED (1893-1918), was one of the best poets England gave and lost to World War I, with his small book still respected and germinal, and for his poems like *Strange Meeting* and *Apologia Pro Poemata Meo*, one of the finest spirits writing about war in our time. His friend Siegfried Sassoon, another of the best war poets, rescued and had published Owen's *Poems*, 1920. He was a poet of technical skill in the making, of nobility and integrity, and the war was his subject-matter incidentally, though memorably.

PAINE, THOMAS (1737-1809), an English-born Quaker, spent his life in America and France as a political writer. His *Common Sense* had great effect in bringing about the Declaration of Independence, and a series called *The American Crisis* supported American morale during the Revolution.

PARKMAN, FRANCIS (1823-1893). *The Oregon Trail*, which reports the author's journey along that route in 1846, was first published in serial form in 1847 and established Parkman's position as an historian. The works which followed dealt with the contest of two rival civilizations — Indian and Western European — for the control of the American continent.

PEPYS, SAMUEL kept a diary in a secret shorthand for some ten years, beginning in 1659; its existence was discovered and deciphered in 1825 by the Rev. J. Smith, and later edited by Lord Braybrooke, and by H. B. Wheatley, the latter restoring certain passages Braybrooke had thought improper or too personal. We see through Pepys' tireless curiosity the actual Restoration, the life of the London theaters, streets,

coffee-houses, and the King's court. In this decade Pepys rose in the Royal Navy, and was later to become Commissioner. As his insatiable appetite for the life around him seized on songs, clothes, pretty girls, and food, so it found the Great Fire of London a memorable event. It is the best and almost the only eye-witness account.

PHILLIPS, WENDELL (1811-1884), a Boston-born graduate of Harvard Law School, became associated in 1837 with William Lloyd Garrison, the famed anti-slavery editor. This resulted in Phillips' rise among the country's abolitionists. An orator of talent, he turned in the years following the Civil War to penal reforms, prohibition, woman's suffrage, regulation of corporations, and organization of labor.

PLATO, c. 428 B.C.-c. 348 B.C., was the student of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. These Greek philosophers built a foundation for much of our thinking, Plato's dialogues being his greatest contribution, and a major part of world literature.

POOLE, ERNEST (1880-1949), was born in Chicago, and graduated from Princeton in 1902. He was a playwright, novelist, and foreign correspondent. Son of a wealthy family, he found material for *The Harbor,* one of his best-known novels, by living on the New York waterfront. He wrote twenty-three novels.

PRICE, LUCIEN (1883-), was graduated from Harvard in 1907, and was an editorial writer for the *Boston Globe,* 1914-47 – the literary, arts, and music essays on Sundays being unmistakably his. Music was his first and last love, writing somewhere next, style always. A number of essays on musicians, notably Sibelius, appeared in magazines, and in pamphlet form.

RANSOM, JOHN CROWE (1888-), was born in Tennessee, has his degree from Vanderbilt and Oxford, has taught at Vanderbilt and Kenyon, is editor of *The Kenyon Review,* and a quiet powerful influence on contemporary literary criticism, as practised by Southern intellectuals. As poet, Ransom shows grace, irony, a kind of quiet mockery, and an ear too subtle for most. His books are *Two Gentlemen in Bonds, Chills and Fever,* and *Selected Poems,* 1945.

ROBINSON, JAMES HARVEY (1863-1936). A member of the faculty of Columbia University from 1892 through 1917, Robinson then resigned to organize the New School for Social Research, where he hoped to apply the principles of "New History," placing greater emphasis upon the importance of thought in world changes and minimizing the effects of politics and state rivalries. His historical writings include *An Introduction to the History of Western Europe* (1924-29) and, with Charles A. Beard, *The Development of Western Europe* (1929).

ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN DELANO (1882-1945), was born at Hyde Park, New York, where he is buried, educated at Harvard, and began his career in 1913 as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. He was twice governor of New York, and four times President of the United States, from 1932 to his sudden death in 1945. His ideas, which link democratic theory with limited economic planning, are found in his addresses and several books. Great leader, history-maker, and phrase-maker, he was known to a war-time generation as F.D.R.

RUKEYSER, MURIEL, was twenty-one in 1935 when *Theory of Flight* appeared, a first book by an already widely-published poet. "Sand-Quarry With Moving Figures" comes from "Poems Out of Childhood" in that book; her later work is politically left-wing, and shows a mind urban, modern, energetic, experienced. Read *U. S. 1, A Turning Wind,* and *Beast in View.*

RUSSELL, BERTRAND (1872-), was born in England, the son of Viscount Amberley, and is the author of *Principia Mathematica,* 1910, and *An Inquiry Into Meaning and Truth,* 1941, with an extraordinarily various activity in politics, education, and writing in the years between. He wrote his *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy,* 1919, while in prison for his pacifist views. Russell is wiry, quizzical, and furrowed, apparently in looks as in mind, one of the troublesome, irregular, wise men of the world.

SAROYAN, WILLIAM, was born in California in 1908, and lives in San Francisco. He served as a private in World War II, and has been elected to the Nat'l Institute of Arts and Letters. His short story, "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze," won him his first fame, and his play, *The Time of Your Life,* was awarded the Drama Critics' Circle Award.

SCHRAMM, WILBUR (1907-), was born in Ohio, has been a newspaper man, and a National Research Fellow, 1932-35, winning the O. Henry fiction prize, 1942. He was director of the University of Iowa's School of Journalism and is now directing communications research at the University of Illinois.

SCOTT, WINFIELD TOWNLEY, is the book editor of the *Providence* (R.I.) *Journal*, who manages to produce the best weekly newspaper book page in New England, and be one of its best younger poets. Born in Haverhill, Mass., 1910, he was graduated from Brown University in 1931; Brown, Tufts, and Harvard have honored him as Phi Beta Kappa poet. *Wind the Clock*, 1941; *To Marry Strangers*, 1945, and *Mr. Whittier and Other Poems*, 1948, are the important body of his work.

SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM, playwright and poet, was probably not much known or admired in the late 16th century. Three and a half centuries later, we use his words and see his plays wherever English is read and spoken. His sonnets are still the best poems on love, friendship, and age. His plays still set forth the human heart, with magic beyond, and his Elizabethan cadences are still the most stirring in the English language. He was born in Stratford-on-Avon in 1564, and died there in 1616; we know little enough about his life. But because of him, we know the spirit of man.

SHAW, IRWIN (1913-), is a New Yorker, educated at Brooklyn College, who writes powerful short stories for *The New Yorker*, among many other magazines, and is a playwright. His war novel *The Young Lions* (1949) won high praise.

SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE (1792-1822), was born in Sussex, England, sent down from Oxford for publishing, in 1811, *The Necessity of Atheism*, and after a stormy literary, marital, and political life was accidentally drowned, at thirty, in Italy. His *Prometheus Unbound*, and his finest lyrics, were written in Italy in the last years of his short and crowded life.

SMITH, LILLIAN (1897-), is a Southerner and a fighter for clarification of today's Negro problem. Beside *Strange Fruit* she has written *Julia, Give Us Tears* and *Killers of the Dream* (1949).

SMITTER, WESSEL HYATT, was graduated from the University of Michigan in 1922, ran a tree-moving business in Los Angeles, and has written *F.O.B. Detroit*, 1938, *Another Morning*, 1941, and magazine stories.

SPENDER, STEPHEN (1909-), left Oxford in 1931 without taking a degree, has travelled and interested himself extensively in British and European politics, lectured and taught in the United States. His books of poems are *Poems*, 1934, *Trial of a Judge*, 1938; *Vienna*, 1934; and *Poems of Dedication*, 1947, among others. Of the Auden and Lewis group in England, he is the lyricist, though far from the least political.

STEELE, WILBUR DANIEL (1886-), is a North Carolinian, a prolific and expert writer of short stories and winner of prizes for them, contributor to *Harper's Magazine*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Pictorial Review*, etc., and author, among other books, of *Tower of Sand*, 1929. He lives in Lyme, Conn.

STEVENS, WALLACE, published his first book, *Harmonium*, in 1923, and has ever since been the leading impressionist, aestheticist, and absolutist in American poetry. Pure poetry, "beyond good and evil, beyond hope and despair, beyond thought of any kind," is his achieved goal. and he uses such titles as "The Emperor of Ice Cream," *Man With the Blue Guitar*, 1937, and "Peter Quince at the Clavier," the latter, in this book, being one of the few in which human figures and a story emerge.

STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS (1850-1894), was born in Edinburgh and died in Samoa. Young Americans know him for his *Child's Garden of Verses*, and *Treasure Island*, read early, and for essays like "Virginibus Puerisque" and "Aes Triplex" in college English books. His mature poetry gives us much more than the self-composed epitaph here set forth, and his prose has added to enduring English literature "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and *The Master of Ballantrae*

STEWART, GEORGE R., was born in Sewickley, Pa., in 1895. In 1942 he was a resident Fellow in Creative Writing at Princeton. The Commonwealth Club of California gave him its Silver Medal in 1936, and its Gold Medal in 1938. His successful novel, *Storm*, 1941, from which we have extracted the chapter-prefaces, was preceded by *Ordeal By Hunger*, 1936, and *Bret Harte*, 1931, whose stories and poems he had edited in 1928. Since *Storm* he has written other novels of contemporary interest on a high level.

STILL, JAMES (1906-), lives in Big Log, Wolfpen Creek, Bath, Ky., and was born in Alabama. Poet and story-writer, he has won awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Nat'l Institute of Arts and Letters, and contributed to *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Yale Review*, etc.

SWINBURNE, ALGERNON (1837-1909), first found fame with "Atalanta in Calydon" and has been read since then for his richly melodious verse. "Tristam of Lyonesse," 1882, is thought to be his most perfect work, though "The Garden of Proserpine" is best known. He had wit enough to parody his own lush alliterations, and enough critical sense to write valuably on Blake, the Brontës, and Dickens.

TACITUS, CORNELIUS (c. 55-120), was the son-in-law of Julius Agricola; an eminent Roman lawyer; and an eye-witness of the reign of terror in the last years of the Emperor Domitian. His biographies and histories preserve his world, and his own name has become a word for brevity, or closeness of literary style.

TENNYSON, ALFRED LORD (1809-1892), drew on Malory's *Morte d' Arthur* for his greatest work, *Idylls of the King,* which occupied a quarter-century of his literary life. He adapted the older, rougher conventions and epic deeds to the refinement and noble moral values of Victorian society, and was praised and honored for it, after somewhat less success with more rebellious and contemporary themes. *In Memoriam,* his lament for the early death of his friend, Arthur Hallam, is one of the most beautiful elegies of the language. *Ulysses* is adapted, too, from old legend for reading in Victorian England.

THOREAU, HENRY DAVID, refused his Harvard diploma with the remark, "Let every sheep keep its own skin." A militant individualist, born in Concord, Mass., in 1817, he lived alone on the shores of Walden Pond, made a small-boat journey down the Concord and Merrimack rivers, and a walking tour on Cape Cod, and from these and his journals got several books, forever classics of trancendentalism, acute observation, and shrewd English prose.

THOULESS, ROBERT H. (1894-), has written *The Control of the Mind,* and *An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion* as well as *How to Think Straight,* the book from which our two selections were taken. He is a British psychologist.

THURBER, JAMES (1894-), grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and wandered through Ohio State University. Years later E. B. White found in a wastebasket some drawings which established Thurber as a *New Yorker* artist. But he is a writer who sometimes draws pictures, and never liked being known as a cartoonist who tried to write. His admirers like him both ways. His play, *The Male Animal;* his stories ("The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" became a movie with Danny Kaye); his helpless drawings, and his prose style in *My Life and Hard Times* show him as a great comic artist of our times.

TOWLE, CARROLL (1901-), was born in Maine, graduated in 1922 from Bowdoin College, and took his Ph.D. at Yale in 1933. He is a professor of English at the University of New Hampshire, where his students in creative writing have won wide recognition. Since 1938 he has been Director of the Writers Conference held every summer at his University.

UNTERMEYER, LOUIS (1885-), is widely known as editor of *Modern American Poetry,* the popular general and academic anthology of the day. He has been editor of countless collections, and a kind of arbiter for 20th-century poetry. His lively humor has produced many parodies of the poets, a form of criticism delightful to the well-read. He is represented by *Selected Poems and Parodies,* 1935.

VANZETTI, BARTOLEMEO (1888-1927), came to New York from Italy in 1908, was accused of having a part in a payroll robbery in 1920 at Fall River, Mass., and after several years was executed, a death being involved in the robbery. It was believed by most that he was unjustly sentenced, the case was international in its repercussions, and the literature deriving from it is extensive, including his own letters, plays by Maxwell Anderson and Nugent and Thurber, and poems by Millay and many more.

VAUGHAN, HENRY (1622-1695), educated at Oxford, published *Silex Scintillans,* containing the famous and beautiful poem beginning "They are all gone into the world of light," in 1650. Most of his poetry was religious, but he loved Brecknockshire, the English county where he was born, and celebrated that also.

WASHINGTON, BOOKER T. (1858-1915), son of a plantation slave and a white father, worked after the Civil War in the mines to get himself an education, at Hampton, where he first taught. He founded Tuskegee, and traveled and spoke in the Negro cause, an able and honored man, with honorary degrees from Harvard and Dartmouth. He wrote some dozen books and for these his educational work is marked as a great American.

WEBSTER, JOHN (1580-1625), is thought nearest to Shakespeare in his tragic powers, yet the dates

of his birth and death are uncertain, some of his plays may be partly the work of other writers, and some have been lost. This darkness is curiously appropriate to the author of *The Duchess of Malfi*, 1614, and to his comedies. His poetry is fugitive, and pungent.

WEINSTEIN, ALEXANDER, born in Russia in 1893, is a geneticist and historian, educated at Columbia University (Ph.D., 1917) who has held fellowships, research appointments, and professorships at Minnesota, Johns Hopkins, Illinois, Columbia, and C. C N. Y. He is a member of leading scientific societies, and a writer on genetic factors.

WELTY, EUDORA, was born in Mississippi, and received her B.A. from the University of Wisconsin in 1929. Distinguished for short stories in magazines and *A Worn Path* and *The Wide Net*, her fifth novel was *The Golden Apples* (1949)

WEMBRIDGE, ELEANOR ROWLAND (1882-), took three degrees at Radcliffe and taught psychology at Reed College, Oregon. She has been prominent for forty years in social work, and written several books.

WEST, REBECCA (Cicily Isabel Fairfield), was born in Edinburgh in 1892, and after a career as reviewer and political writer, published *The Strange Necessity*, 1928; *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, 1941; and did some of the best war reports from England for *The New Yorker*, out of which came her account of the treason trials of traitors, *The Meaning of Treason*.

WHIPPLE, FRED LAWRENCE (1906-), was born in Iowa and educated at the University of California. An astronomer, he has been at the Harvard Observatory since 1931, a professor since 1945. For the discovery of six comets he was awarded the Donohue Medal.

WHITE, E. B. (1899-), was educated at Cornell and became a reporter in 1921. He was later a free lance writer and contributing editor for *The New Yorker*. He wrote *The Lady is Cold*, poems (1929), *Is Sex Necessary*, with James Thurber (1929), *Every Day is Saturday* (1934), *Quo Vadimus* (1939), *One Man's Meat* (1942). He is perhaps the greatest personal essayist of our time.

WHITE, WILLIAM ALLEN (1868-1944), edited *The Emporia Gazette*, from 1895 to 1944. His paper served a Kansas town of less than 15,000, yet was one of the most famous newspapers in the world – and its editor a figure whose influence in national affairs cannot be gauged by the number of his readers. He contributed to leading magazines and wrote several books, but is chiefly remembered for his editorials. Great among these are the tender piece he wrote about his 17-year old daughter Mary Katherine, on her death in 1921, and his "What's Wrong with Kansas?" which Mark Hanna used to help McKinley become president in 1896.

WHITEHEAD, ALFRED NORTH (1861-), was born in Ramsgate, England, and received his degrees from Trinity College, Cambridge, where he became instructor in mathematics. From 1924-1936 he was professor of philosophy at Harvard. He is the author of *Aims of Education*, 1928, and *Science in the Modern World*, 1925, his best-known work.

WILLIAMS, WILLIAM CARLOS (1883-), is a doctor in Rutherford, N.J., where he was born, and an objectivist poet – that is, a presenter, not an explainer – admired as a master. His fresh, accurate reports, always unrhymed, are bits of actuality He is the author of a volume of essays, *In the American Grain;* his poems have been collected in one volume, and continue to appear in the more determinedly literary magazines.

WITHER, GEORGE (1588-1667), educated at Oxford, was satirist, lover, moralist, and Puritan, reflecting in his poems his thought. Wither is an example of the use of poetry as subjective-historical record. His religious and amatory experiences, as much as his political phases, led him to poetry, to prison, and to the anthologies of our time.

WOOLF, VIRGINIA (1882-1941), English novelist and critic, one of the most sensitive women writers of her time, is the author of *The Common Reader*, 1925, and the *Second Common Reader*, gathered from her front page essays for the *London Times* Literary Supplement. For some, *Orlando*, or *Mrs. Dalloway*, and for some *A Room of One's Own*, is her best.

WOOLLCOTT, ALEXANDER (1887-1943), critic, author, playwright, radio star, actor, lecturer and anthologist, wrote on the theater, books he liked and hated, restaurants, and metropolitan Americana, and so became a favorite with millions. His influence began in 1914 when he became dramatic critic of the *New York Times*. In the early twenties he emerged in his full metropolitan dress as member of that group

of critics and humorists which included George F. Kaufman, F. P. Adams, and Heywood Broun. He observed American life with an eye both tender and penetrating.

WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM (1770-1850), left Cambridge University without distinction, and during a year in France had a daughter by Annette Vallon, and a strong interest in the Revolution, both of which he disowned for the rest of his life. His closest friends and strongest influences were his sister Dorothy and the poet Coleridge. His best remembered works are *The Prelude, Lyrical Ballads,* "Ode on Intimations of Immortality;" and "Lines Written Above Tintern Abbey." He succeeded Southey as Poet Laureate.

WYLIE, ELINOR (1885-1928), was born in New Jersey, lived in Washington, New York, and England, and out of a brilliant, sophisticated mind wrought clever, glittering novels, and strictly made lyrics for the 1920's. Her writing moved from gay to grave to tragic, her best work being her last, *Angels and Earthly Creatures.*