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Symposium

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Mary Baldwin College

Symposium

Rinehart & Co., Inc., New York

Second Printing, September 1954

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 54-7240

Preface

Symposium is an anthology of readings for first-year college English students. It is a symposium on the world they live in, for here many of the facets of American life are examined through essays representing different opinions. Thus the book contributes to knowledge and toward orientation to the contemporary environment. But the means by which these ends are achieved are also important: by weighing differences in attitudes and views, the student learns better ways of thinking; in fact, as every teacher knows, a class in freshman English is a symposium in its intellectual atmosphere of give-and-take, development of ideas, expression of opinion, and sifting of evidence, for it is out of these things that clear thinking and writing are most likely to emerge.

These readings, then, center around the college student and the everyday issues which confront him, for they have about them a sense of immediacy, of the concrete, rather than of the theoretical and abstract. They are essays which will appeal to a wide variety of students and instructors. Many of them are likely to cause warm and even heated classroom arguments which may continue long after the bell rings. But this is as it should be, for when a freshman—or anyone else, for that matter—feels strongly, he inclines to write more forcefully than when he is apathetic. Thus the controversies arising out of *Symposium* should yield interesting and emphatic student essays. It is our suggestion that the writing of the class might profitably be based upon ideas growing out of the issues presented in this book and the discussions based upon them, since it is by stimulation of ideas that sound freshman writing is produced.

The work of the authors represented is typical of the best in popular writing today. Though their work appears here primarily for ideas, it will also serve well for models of writing. The personal essay is particularly well represented in its best modern development. In general we have avoided the purely technical sort of exposition, as well as the "factpiece" and "thinkpiece" of the current periodicals, because we hold that the materials of the freshman course should be "literary" in the full sense of the word.

We hope that what we have included—with the occasional illustrations—has produced a friendly, companionable, and stimulating book which students, despite the onus of academic requirement, will enjoy and value.

The arrangement of the essays, as the Table of Contents will indicate, begins with what is closest ("The Immediate World"), moves on to groups and institutions that are ever present ("Expanding Experience"), touches upon four of the great issues of our times, and finally considers "The American Scene" in an attempt to define the special quality of life in America. It is meant to be an unpretentious pattern and to deal with the everyday, but in choosing that which is immediate we have always sought for its presentation in terms that under skillful teaching may invoke a good deal of the ultimate. Needless to say, we do not try to include all the issues. But we do present a number of carefully selected essays in an order that we hope will win responses and show how the life all round us demands treatment in writing.

In addition to the essays, which make up the larger part of this book, we have also included a brief selection of fiction, which may be presented as a distinct unit of study or with many of the issues raised by the essays. The stories were selected because we believe that they are stories of high quality that will interest students. They are not offered as the six greatest short stories in world literature (though some people might make a brief for several of them!), nor do they represent the development of the short story, nor do they primarily correlate with the issues presented in the nonfiction (though, of course, some of them do). They are just good stories, we think. Since a chronological arrangement would not be meaningful with a small group of modern stories, we have ordered them alphabetically.

At the end of each essay we have placed study aids in the form of questions which may be helpful in developing skill in reading and interpretation. While the division is not intended as absolute, it will be apparent that the first set of questions is concerned with meaning and structure and that the second set suggests larger frames of reference. Then, since it is hoped the readings will lead to writing, we have provided some suggestions for themes. These aids are offered, not as arbitrary plans of study, but as a guide for those who find them useful. They are a beginning both for the individual reader (who may well have anticipated most of the questions, as well as others, when he finishes a selection) and for the class. With the stories we have not supplied questions and theme topics because we felt that since the book is not primarily concerned with belles-lettres, each teacher would want to make his own approach to fiction with each particular class.

To many friends and colleagues (among them William P. Albrecht, Ernest W. Baughman, Jane Kluckhohn, E. W. Tedlock, Marion Woodward, Catherine Mims, Andrew Mahler, Fletcher Collins, Jr., and Thomas A.

Bledsoe), as well as to librarians, students, and former students, we are indebted for suggestions and favors. Our greatest single debt is to William M. Gibson, professor of English at New York University. Mr. Gibson began to edit *Symposium* with us, but he had to withdraw because of other duties. We would not want to try estimating the pleasure and benefit for us of his association with the work.

G. A.
L. G. L.

January, 1954

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1

The Immediate World

1
Self and Family

This is a world we all share, for it is the first that anyone knows intimately. Each of us is first aware of his own circle—his parents, grandparents, and friends.

TAKE THE MARINES OUT OF NICARAGUA*

by Ruth McKenney

Ruth McKenney (1911–), humorist, was born in Mishawaka, Indiana, and attended Ohio State University. Her best-known book is *My Sister Eileen* (1938), based on a series of sketches which appeared in *The New Yorker.*

June, known in conservative circles as the month of sweet girl graduates, roses, prattling brides, honeysuckle, and related frippery, is officially celebrated on the private McKenney calendar as the season of taking the Marines out of Nicaragua and ending the evils of the Jazz Age.

I was graduated from Shaw High School, East Cleveland, in June, 1928, and I wore the honored mantle of Senior Class Orator. I came by the title honestly, if somewhat morosely. It was the natural fruit of my high school career, three years on the debating team. Flannigans and the East Cleveland, Ohio, *Courier* made much of my appointment: "Youngest Stude Cops Class Honor; Sweet Girl Grad, 15, Chosen to Orate!" The picture showed me in pigtails and a large hair ribbon. I felt it was the last straw. Here I was, holding my breath, hoping somebody—anybody—would ask me to the Senior Prom; and the *Courier* printed a picture of me taken months and months ago, before I ran away from home and put up my hair. If only Roy Hornshell had not moved away to Fort Wayne, Indiana! My life had certainly fallen on the sere and yellow leaf, all right.

The Flannigans and I buckled down to the Class Oration. I knew it was a hollow triumph, but it was all I had.

"Practice with an audience," my public-speaking teacher told me. "Watch their faces! Measure their response!"

Uncle Pat put up quite a fight. "Once, I don't mind," he said along about May 20th. "Even twice I can take it! But if I hear about taking the Marines out of Nicaragua again . . ."

"Pat!" my aunts argued. "When a man's own niece is chosen Class Orator! Shame!"

* From *All about Eileen,* by Ruth McKenney (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1952). Copyright, 1952, by Ruth McKenney. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

Uncle Pat went down fighting, but he went down all right. The ladies of the Flannigan clan, when aroused to a battling pitch, swept all before them. Uncle Joe did not even protest. He just sat in Grandma's parlor Sunday afternoons, his hands folded over his stomach, his eyes glazed, listening. Sometimes he got up to get a drink of water just as I came to the great climax of the Jazz Age oration, but he used to sit the Nicaraguan speech all the way through. Pressed for an opinion, he said he thought the Marines speech had more gumption to it. The Flannigan ladies preferred my attack on Loose Morals.

I could not quite make up my mind, at first. I had the choice of subject for my Class Oration. The Nicaraguan effort was left over from my last debate; it was a stirring speech, I felt, ending up with several judicious quotations from the Declaration of Independence and the rhetorical question: "What is plumbing, when freedom is at stake?" Supporters of keeping the Marines in Nicaragua were always harping on the plumbing question.

The Jazz Age oration, on the other hand, struck right to the heart of current problems, 1928. With appropriate gestures and lilting voice, I denounced jazz, petting, short skirts, lipstick, shingled hair, joyriding, and other signs of the times. "Rome," I cried along toward the middle of the speech, "was like this—*just before the fall!*" Grandma nodded with satisfaction when I came to this nugget. I touched delicately on the companionate marriage menace as I neared my crescendo—and the big climax in the Jazz Age oration came as I raised an imaginary flask to my lips, took a step forward toward the audience (step marked in chalk on the carpet, for practice), and said, looking Uncle Joe, a notorious beer drinker, right in the eye, "Law is the foundation of freedom! Break one law and you break them all! Observe the Eighteenth Amendment! Obey it and preserve the Republic!" Grandma, a member of the W.C.T.U. for twenty years, applauded furiously; in the end I decided upon the Jazz Age oration for graduation as a sort of tribute to her.

The Flannigan clan occupied two entire rows for graduation. Even such far-flung relatives as Great-aunt Mary Maloney, a courtesy great-aunt by marriage to a third cousin, turned up for the big occasion. The Flannigan family did not boast a Class Orator every year. Cousin Mike, wretched mass of freckles and bad manners, sat flanked by his mother and Aunt Kate, who were taking no chances. My sister Eileen was back with her freshman class, full of giggles and sporting her first pair of high heels.

Backstage I cast a weather eye about for the Class Poet, the Class Prophet, and Class President. I did not hold out much hope of seeing Mr. John German, the Class President. The dashing Mr. German, captain of the football team, captain of the basketball team, and private property of Mary Tenor, the class beauty, was never one to turn up early at things like

graduation. I had rather hoped that Mr. German and I would rub elbows at the dress rehearsal held last week; but Mr. German did not come to the dress rehearsal—just the Class Poet and the Class Prophet showed up. He was not in the mob milling around in the stage wings either. Mostly girls had come early, anyway, to compare graduation dresses and graduation wrist watches. There was not much to compare on the dress question. Specifications had been rigid: tailored white silk, no shorter than the middle of the kneecap, with long sleeves and no ruffles. Marybelle Jones, the class hussy, turned up in a model just barely connecting with the tops of her rolled stockings, but then Marybelle always went too far. It was even rumored that Marybelle intended to dash home after the diplomas had been handed out and make a quick change into a backless evening gown for the Senior Prom that followed. Nobody put much stock in this idle gossip. Even Marybelle would not dare come to the Prom showing her backbone!

Miss Archer, the principal, gathered up the Class Poet and the Class Prophet and myself. We were supposed to wait in her office along with Johnny German for our big moment—we were the official climax to the program, coming just after the Reverend Doctor Thornton's address on "Success—Spiritual or Materialistic?" and just before the diplomas. Miss Archer thought we would get nervous sitting on the stage and listening to Reverend Thornton.

Johnny German was pretty late. The Class Prophet and I sat on Miss Archer's desk swinging our patent-leather pumps and discussing the gentleman our fellow classmates had elected President. The Class Prophet was nearly as young as I and she wore glasses. At least I did not wear glasses. That was something.

Still the Class Prophet and I had a lot in common. We agreed on Johnny German.

"I heard his speech was terrible," the Class Prophet remarked with rich scorn. "He's so dumb the teacher had to write it out for him, and then he couldn't memorize it."

I nodded virtuously. "He's pretty fast too. I heard he hung around poolrooms."

The Class Prophet tsk-tsked, her eyes gleaming behind her glasses. "I don't know what Mary Tenor can see in him. I don't think he's so good-looking!"

At this point the door to the principal's office slammed open and Mr. J. German, Class President, captain of the football team, the Don Juan (in a nice way, of course) of East Cleveland, Ohio, burst into view.

"Hey, you!" he said wildly, in our general direction. "You got a date for the Prom?"

"Me?" the Class Prophet and I cried in anxious unison.

Mr. German regarded the Class Prophet and myself. The glasses lost. "You," he said pointing clearly. "You wanta go to the Prom with me?"

My pride glimmered a moment in my reeling mind (a last-minute Prom bid is beneath contempt). "Yes," I managed to gulp.

"Humph," said the Class Prophet with cold disdain.

Mr. German slumped into Miss Archer's swivel chair. "I'll show her," he declared loudly. "She can't throw me over at the last minute for some college guy. She'll be sorry!"

The Class Prophet sniffed.

Mr. German rose and put his arm around me, in clear view of the Class Poet and within striking distance of the Class Prophet. "We'll show her, won't we, honey?" he inquired with what I felt was a leer.

The Class Prophet turned pale with shock. Mr. German's arm felt very heavy, both on my shoulders and on my conscience, but I managed a brave smile. I felt that Mr. German would bring up the petting question next, and I hoped I had the strength to resist. I rather thought not, on the whole.

But Mr. German's mind was temporarily on more mundane matters. He strode nervously to the door and back again. "Just when I gotta make a speech, and she does this to me! That's consideration! That's great stuff, that is!"

"I know your speech will be O.K.," I muttered, feeling the blush crawl up to my ears.

"Yeah?" Mr. German regarded me with new interest. "Say, you're a peach, kiddo!" He wiped his face with a large white handkerchief. "Just the same, I'm plenty nervous." He reached a casual hand to his back trousers pocket, removed a shiny pocket flask, unscrewed the cap, tilted his head, and swallowed.

The Class Poet, the Class Prophet, and I watched this operation. "Rome!" I said to myself.

"Anybody else?" Mr. German inquired. The Class Poet, the Class Prophet, and I shook our heads. Mr. German put the flask back just in time. Miss Archer appeared at the door, beckoning with a nervous hand. The Poet and the Prophet made a rush for the exit, white around the gills. Mr. German and I brought up the rear, as befits a Senior Prom couple.

"Say," Mr. German murmured in my ear, "I guess I shocked those two old back numbers."

I laughed hollowly.

"I bet they never even saw a flask before!" Mr. German's scorn was rich, lofty.

I had a fleeting impression of the Flannigans out beyond the footlights. Mary Tenor with her nose in the air, to my right, rows of classmates in white flannel pants and a glassy look in their eyes, and then the Superintendent of Schools, a portly, bumbling old party, calling out my name. "And

Miss Ruth McKenney has the honor of presenting the Class Oration. The subject is: The Evils of the Jazz Age."

I felt the world rocking as I got to my feet. "Good luck," Mr. German hissed as I walked to the speakers' stand. It was the last straw.

"Ladies and gentlemen," I began, "the Eyes of the World Are upon Nicaragua!"

Miss Archer, the Reverend Doctor Thornton, and Grandma Flannigan looked upset, but the rest of the audience took the slight change in program philosophically. I caught Miss Archer's frantic signals, but I went right ahead with the horrors of war in Central America. Three years on a debating team is a long, long time. The captain of the Shaw High football team would never know that until the moment he asked me to the Prom, I was just a dumb back number.

And he never did, either. At exactly 11:56 P.M. graduation night, Mr. German, while dancing with me to the strains of "Valencia," leaned close to my ear and remarked, "Say, where have you been all my life?"

"Aw," I replied with beating heart, "that's what you say to all the girls!"

Mr. German beamed upon me with honest admiration. "Check and double check! You sure got a snappy line!"

It was a better diploma than the embossed one I got from Shaw High School. Ah, June! Month of taking the Marines out of Nicaragua!

READING

How much a part of the essay are the title and first paragraph?

Discuss the paragraph that introduces the Class President (the one beginning "Backstage I cast . . .") as an anticipation of the action and tone.

To what extent is the slang dated? Do you think slang in the 1950's has improved upon slang in the 1920's?

Explain the statement, "Three years on a debating team is a long, long time."

What is Miss McKenney's point of view, and how does she develop it?

INTERPRETATION

Though this sketch describes a Jazz Age commencement, in what ways are commencements still the same? What are Class Presidents and Prophets like these days?

What light does this essay throw on an adolescent's shift from a family standard to a community standard? Along with the fun is there seriousness? Should good comedy have this combination? Does this essay have it?

How typical is the desire for conformity to the group? Perhaps this is the right time to read an essay later in this book—"The Younger Generation" by the editors of *Time*.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Portrait of a Classmate
Senior Prom
High School Slang in College
On His Own
Growing Up

BETWEEN THE DARK AND THE DAYLIGHT*

by John Mason Brown

John Mason Brown (1900–), author, lecturer, and drama critic, is a Kentuckian. He has taught at the Bread Loaf School of English and at Harvard. He contributes to the magazines and writes books about the theater. Among them may be mentioned *The Art of Playgoing* (1936) and *Two on the Aisle* (1938).

In theory it is a charming picture. Every father who has ever read a book, and hopes his children will read one too, has been haunted by it.

The day's work done. Curtains drawn over the darkening windows. Time halted for the happiest of hiatuses. The world shut out. The family close as a unit. The fire roaring. The lamps lighted. The children, fresh from their tubs, their suppers finished, their homework done; the children stretched out on the floor in their dressing gowns, their eyes dancing with wonder. Their mother on the sofa, sewing. Well, if not that, listening contentedly. And father (it would be he), hogging the center of the stage —father at his most *pater familias;* father carrying the torch for culture and continuity; father sitting in the big armchair by the fire, his glasses on, a book spread open in his hands, reading out loud to the entire attentive family.

This is the dream. Every father's dream. But the reality? That's quite a different matter. At least it is in my household. For once, I speak as an authority.

"What about it?" I said to my sons in the late afternoon a few weeks back. By some odd coincidence neither of them happened to be out at a birthday party. It seemed, therefore, like a perfect time for the experiment. You see, it was still cold enough for a fire. Moreover, it was Friday. That meant the older boy had no lessons to do.

"What about our reading a book together?" I suggested, flooded with one of those happy inspirations which intermittently inundate parents. "Let's go in the living room and *you* can light a fire." (This "you" was to the younger boy. It was a low, cheap bribe. It was, however, cheating in a good cause.)

As here recorded in the sweet quiet of print, such an invitation may sound placid enough. But to have that many words heard in my sons' rooms in the late afternoon requires more than conversational stamina. I am afraid bellowing is needed.

My two sons have rooms of their own. Which is all right with them, and me. But each of these adjoining rooms has a radio in it, which they find "neat" and I don't.

* From *Morning Faces,* by John Mason Brown (New York: Whittlesey House, 1949). Copyright, 1949, by John Mason Brown. Reprinted by permission of McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

They have only recently discovered these radios. They used to get their indoor exercise in other ways than spinning the dials. It humiliates me to remember that once upon a time I, seeing these machines untouched, tried in vain to persuade the boys to listen to them. It's difficult for me to believe, but for months these radios were silent. Now their tubes burn like eternal lights. My boys huddle around them, unwilling and unable to leave them. My hope is, of course, that this is only a phase. My wife and I keep saying to ourselves overexposure to the radio is bound to cure them. If it doesn't, nothing will cure us.

As addicts of the airways, my sons are complete individualists. Their taste in programs is seldom the same. All they share in common is their fondness for noise. Although neither of them is deaf, they both seem to think they are.

They are convinced apparently that a radio cannot be heard unless it is turned on full blast. Strangely enough, each boy is deaf only to the caterwauling of the other's machine. They think nothing of playing Sky King against Superman, Jack Armstrong against Captain Midnight, or opposing Tom Mix to Tennessee Jed. And all of this within fifteen feet of one another. The more thunderous the cacophony, the more abundant their delight.

Trying to speak above these discharging machines is like trying to make oneself heard during a demonstration at a national convention. Yet, hard as it is to hear yourself speak, it is harder still to get the boys' attention when spoken to.

Accordingly, in each of their rooms I had to repeat my suggestion, "What about going into the living room and reading a book together?"

"Why?" asked my younger son, welcoming me with a scowl and with one hand on the dial.

"No," said the older one, adding a "thanks" drowned out by gunshot or a falling airplane, I couldn't tell which.

"But we haven't read together for a long while," I bellowed.

"Sh-h-h, Daddy, p-l-e-a-s-e—it's Superman!"

I ought to have known better. The past two months should have taught me that I was an intruder as unwanted as an atheist at High Mass. Every afternoon for weeks the older boy, on his return from school at about five-ten, had made an Olympic dash from the front door to his own room. Every afternoon, with scarcely a word for anyone and without pausing to remove his coat and cap, he had shut himself in, more securely than a condemned man in solitary, to discover what fresh misadventures were overtaking Superman.

Though hoarse, I was persistent. Apologetic, too, much to my surprise, as I pushed my way through a mountain of comics on the floor. "Sorry," I said, "but please come—as a favor."

"Sure, when it's over."

Then I retreated to the younger boy's room.

"Sh-h-h, don't you know you're intawupting Sky King?" he managed to make me hear over an explosion.

"Oh, I didn't really. But don't forget *you* can light the fire."

"O.K., Dad, when it's over."

This gave me some twelve minutes in which to choose a book. Selecting a book that is right for both a boy of six and one of ten; that can survive the ordeal of being read out loud; yes, and that is endurable to the parents no less than to their young is not as easy as it sounds. I turned to my wife for aid. She blanched a little, less at the problem of choosing the book than at the prospect of being read aloud to.

Fairly soon after our marriage I discovered that my wife hates being read to. A book for her is a lonely delight, not a joint pleasure. It isn't that she is eager to do the reading aloud herself. She dislikes that as violently as she objects to hearing another person read. It's simply that she is one of those people—and their name is Kilroy—who feels the printed word should be encountered in print.

Even after dinner, when we are alone and it is an adult book that I am eager to share, her capacity for listening usually stops with the first paragraph. Her gift for pretending to listen comes to a no less abrupt end with the second. Thereafter, if she is not fortunate enough to have been called by a friend to the telephone, a look of despair steals across her face. No victim of claustrophobia could suffer more.

When it comes to reading out loud to the children, my wife's attitude is different. She wants them to be read to; she reads to them herself; but she is just as happy, if not happier, when I do the reading.

"Thank God," said I, "we don't have to read *Peter Rabbit.*"

There does come a time, and very rapidly, when the most loving parent cannot nestle down with any pretense of pleasure to narratives which start, "Once upon a time there was a pussycat called Ribby, who invited a little dog called Duchess to tea." Or, "Once upon a time there was an old cat, called Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit, who was an anxious parent. She used to lose her kittens continually, and whenever they were lost they were always in mischief!"

"Thank God, too," I continued, "we don't have to read that book about a church mouse. I think I'd commit harakiri if I had to repeat once again that little gem—you know the one I mean. The one the children used to love to have me read because they knew I hated it so—the one that runs:

Snap, whack, bang,
Goes the snap-rat bang,

Goes snap bang,
Goes whack bang,
Fuss, fuss, fuss!

"I don't really think I could face *Little Black Sambo* and those one-hundred-and-sixty-nine pancakes. Or the Babar books, much as I used to like them. Even *Uncle Remus* gets me down after the fifth consecutive run-through. No, let's try . . ."

At this moment the older boy came in, trailed by his younger brother. Both of them looked as if they had just taken their places in a tumbrel headed for the guillotine.

"O.K., Dad," they said with resignation.

So we moved into the living room and set the stage. The younger boy started the fire with his older brother's aid. My wife took her place on the sofa. The lamps were lighted; the curtains drawn. The boys stretched out on the floor, and I sat in the big chair.

I knew better than to reach for *Hiawatha* or *Evangeline.* I had tried them in the past, finding myself in each case in complete sympathy with the revolutions which had broken out by page two.

Somehow I found I was not in an *Ivanhoe* mood. I haven't been for more than thirty years. So I excused myself from Gurth and Wamba by deciding that the book which they slowly start was too old both for a six-year-old and for me.

I knew that *Danny Deever* was reliable. It had always proven so in the past. It had brevity to endear it. What is more, a hanging is a dish the young take to without persuasion. I must admit I had been tempted by Lars Porsena of Clusium and his nine gods. But Horatius and his bridge-work required vocal energy, and I had little voice or energy left. I would like to have read *Alice, The Hunting of the Snark, Stuart Little,* or *The White Deer.* These, however, were old favorites with the boys.

Treasure Island seemed the perfect solution. It had everything—thrills, pirates, a youthful hero, villains, adventure, buried gold, ships, and a siege. It was literature; a classic. If anything could, it would win them away from the comics and the radio and all those supermen flying around in space, wearing long red underwear and transported by magic capes.

After a brief introduction, less eloquent than the prologue to *Henry V* but on the same general idea, I began, "Chapter One. The Old Sea Dog at the 'Admiral Benbow.' "

"What kind of a dog is a sea dog?" This, needless to say, came from the six-year-old. Time out for a quick explanation.

"Who is Admiral Benbow?" Another explanation.

"Come on, now, let's get going. It'll all explain itself. Just listen."

I cleared my throat, as people will when beginning a new chapter.

"Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen," I commenced, "having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island. . . ."

Everything seemed to be going beautifully. They liked the brown old seaman, with his tarry pigtail, his scarred hands, and a saber cut across one cheek. They were delighted—as who would not be?—with his "Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!" They were excited about his warnings against "a seafaring man with one leg." Their growing suspense made me very happy. The dream had become an actuality.

Just then the telephone rang. It was for my wife. She was gone in a flash.

"What's 'Dry Tortugas'?" asked the older boy.

"Uh, uh—well, uh—" I did not and do not have the foggiest idea. "Oh, it's just one of those things they have on the Spanish Main." That seemed vague enough. Anyway, it worked.

"What's the Spanish Main?" demanded the younger boy.

Again an expository pause, and fortunately one which this time could be filled in.

Then I went on, becoming so interested myself that I did not look up until enraged cries of "Stop it!" "Hey, you!" "He took my cap pistol!" "You bum!" compelled me to do so.

"Stop it, boys!" I thundered in my most piratical tones. "I don't care who did what. Give me that pistol. Now you come over here." The younger boy stretched out beside my chair.

With a pistol in my lap without a cutlass, I returned to *Treasure Island.*

Everything except me was blessedly quiet for some time. From the corner of my eye I could not help noticing that the younger boy had bellied his way behind my chair. So long as he was silent, I did not object. "This is it," I said to myself as I read on. "This is it!"

I was nearer the truth than I realized. Suddenly, a spitball caught me right in the back of the neck. What is more, it stung. It was not meant for me. That I happily, even proudly, admit. Its target, however, was beside the point.

"Go to your room," I ordered the little boy, though the punishment hurt me far more than it did him. "That's very rude of you." He left at once, without protest, with an unknown docility.

"Now let us go on," I said to the older boy. "*You* like it, don't you?"

"Yes, it's neat. But, say, Daddy, can't I go too?"

"You? Why?"

"Well, uh—uh—couldn't I—uh—uh—read it to myself?"

"Couldn't you what?"

"Read it to myself? It takes so long this way, Daddy."

"Certainly," I replied, I am afraid with a considerable show of hurt feelings.

"You see," he added, sensing that I needed consolation, "there's something I've just got to finish in my room before The Lone Ranger comes on. You don't mind, do you?"

"Not at all; not—at—all, if that's your choice."

He was kind enough not to run to his room. And kind enough to turn at the door to say, "Thanks, Dad. Thanks a million."

I looked at the drawn curtains. I looked at the lighted lamps. I looked at the roaring fire. I looked at the empty room. Then I picked up *Treasure Island*. It remains an excellent book to read to oneself.

But I was glad when dinner was announced. I was lonely.

READING

How does Brown make the transition to his main story from his ideal picture of a father reading aloud?

From the list of books that the author decides not to read, identify as many titles and allusions as you can.

What part in the narrative is given the author's wife?

INTERPRETATION

Do you think that the Brown children react typically to the reading proposal?

In what other ways has radio (and TV) affected family life in America?

Was the author really interested in the literary education of his children, or was he interested in something else?

How well does the last sentence summarize the sense of the essay?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

After Dinner with My Parents

Reading Aloud at My House

Getting Along with My Younger Brother

"The Lone Ranger" and *Treasure Island*

The Barrier between Generations

PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM: MAN WITH A ROSE*

by James Thurber

James Thurber (1894–), contemporary humorist, is a cartoonist, essayist, and dramatist. Born in Columbus, Ohio, he studied at Ohio State University. After working on several newspapers, he joined the staff of *The New Yorker,* where he was for a time managing editor. He is now a free-lance writer but still remains a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker.* He has written *My Life and Hard Times, Let Your Mind Alone, The Male Animal* (with Elliott Nugent), *Fables for Our Times, My World—and Welcome to It!, The Thurber Carnival,* and others.

When my grandfather was out of town on a business trip, he always introduced himself to strangers as William M. Fisher, of Columbus, Ohio, a full, resounding identification of which he was incurably fond. He took it for granted that the people he met in the Middle West would have heard of him and his commission house, founded in 1870 and incorporated in 1901 as the William M. Fisher & Sons Co., and he expected everybody to share his pride in the capital of his native state. He liked to let people know who he was, and he presented himself with a flourish, often to the embarrassment of his shy wife. He never went into a hotel or a restaurant without sending for the manager or the maître d'hôtel and announcing for all to hear, "I am William M. Fisher, of Columbus, Ohio." He was at once taken for a connoisseur of food, or a citizen of importance, or a gentleman of large affairs.

William M. Fisher, of Columbus, Ohio, was a man of average height and build, living in a period and a region marked by a dull uniformity of masculine attire, but he managed a visibility all his own, since he had a compelling urge to stand out among men. He had had all his teeth capped with gold when he was still a young man, and their gleam was not only set off by a black beard but vividly accented by a red rose, whose stem he clamped between his teeth like a cigar. In the summertime, he got a fresh rose every morning from his wife's garden. Out of season, he would drop in at a florist's shop for his bright and special ornament. People who knew him would stop him on the street and mention his color scheme of rose and gold and black. Strangers who passed him would turn and look back. He loved it. Several times, he was photographed with the rose in his mouth. He had a passion for having his picture taken, and during his lifetime—he died in 1918, at the age of seventy-eight—he became known to scores of studios around the country. He often visited a photographer on his way to a business conference, setting out early enough to have time for multiple poses. Once, he was taken full length, wearing his derby and

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overcoat and carrying a satchel. An enlargement of this likeness, heavily framed and protected by glass, hung prominently in his living room, and everybody entering the room for the first time was drawn to it. In the lower left-hand corner behind the glass, there was a telegram that read, "Urgent. Do not go to Catawba tonight. Details follow." He explained to people who asked about it—and everybody did—that he had been about to leave his hotel in Port Clinton, Ohio, where he had gone one summer in the eighteen-eighties to buy peaches, when the telegram arrived from his store. If it had come ten minutes later, he said, he would have been aboard a small excursion steamer sailing for Catawba Island that sank with the loss of everyone aboard. Any other man, learning of the disaster and of his close escape, would have gone to a bar for a stiff drink. My grandfather hunted up the nearest photographer.

Until twenty years after Gettysburg, Town Street had not ventured past Parsons Avenue, an eastern boundary of polite, middle-class living marked by a tall oak left standing in the middle of the street. Here Town Street suddenly took a jog to the right, as if to avoid the old tree, and proceeded east under the fancy name of Bryden Road. My grandfather owned the first three lots on the right and built his house there, across from the grounds of what is now the Columbus School for Girls. Behind the iron hitching post and the granite carriage block at the curb, the Fisher lawn, constantly trimmed and sprinkled in the dry weather, rose steeply, the better to set off the long, two-story brick house with its high-ceilinged attic, from one of whose windows Old Glory bloomed on Decoration Day, the Fourth of July, and the birthdays of Washington, Lincoln, and Grant. The house was darkened by four porches—front, back, kitchen, and living-room—and by an ancient oak tree that dropped leaves on the roof in autumn. When you closed the front door behind you in the midsummer weather, shutting out the clip-clop of carriage horses on the asphalt street and the lazy splash of the fountain sprinkler repeating its sparkling patterns in some shady corner of the lawn, you were in a wide hallway ten degrees cooler than the world outside. Just inside, against one wall, stood an incredible piece of furniture, a monstrous oak bench whose high back supported an ornate mirror and whose seat could be lifted, revealing a gloomy chest jammed with gloves, overshoes, skates, ball bats, games, and whatnot. Wrought-iron pegs for hats and coats protruded from the back, and at either end stood a tall china umbrella stand, flowering with umbrellas and canes. Above it all hung an elaborately framed steel engraving of six hunting dogs with strong muzzles, long ears, and melancholy eyes, who were to remain permanently in my memory for fond, if perhaps imprecise, reference later on, when I began to draw.

The parlor was the brightest room in the fourteen-room house, and it

was lighted on festive occasions by a rococo crystal chandelier that threw gleams on family portraits and on the enormous framed presence of the late James Grover, Methodist minister and first city librarian of Columbus, who was shown sitting in a great chair holding a Bible in his lap. It would have taken two men to lift the almost life-size gilt-framed photograph of the handsome white-haired scholar, who knew not only his Scripture but his Shakespeare. His name, in full, was passed on to me when I was born, and I often thank our Heavenly Father that it was the Reverend James Grover, and not another friend of the family, the Reverend Noah Good, to whom the Fishers were so deeply devoted.

At the landing of the front stairs hung a copy of Rosa Bonheur's "The Horse Fair," hard to make out unless the gas mantle on the wall was lit. The upstairs hallway began here and zigzagged to the sewing room at the rear, in and out of shadow and light. There were seven bedrooms, some of them with closets as large as bathrooms, and the place seemed to us grandchildren designed for games of hide-and-seek. The vast, hot, and littered attic smelled of age and wonders, the many-roomed cellar was clean and cold and filled with barrels and boxes. In the ironing room, at the rear of the first floor, there was a trapdoor that led to storage space beneath, as if some jolly carpenter had put it there for the sake of the grandchildren who assembled on Saturdays and Sundays and invented games suitable for a house that was full of ramble and surprise.

Grandma Fisher, known as Aunt Kate to a regiment of relatives, was the mother of eight, two of whom died in infancy, and the grandmother of twelve, and she took the big house in her quick, easy stride. She was a slight, swift woman, nimble as a juggler, who would not be hampered by the slow tempo of her time. Instead of handing things to you, she tossed them from a short distance, and was always frightening us by leaping from the carriage block into the family surrey before the colored driver, Charlie Potts, had brought the fat mare Maud to a full stop. She was invariably up and dressed by six o'clock, and even in her seventies she could put in an active eighteen-hour day, marketing, tending her flower garden, filling the surrey with baskets of food for sick relatives and friends and even strangers, and managing somehow to read a dozen monthly magazines, of which her favorites were *Ainslee's, Pearson's,* and *Everybody's.* Her grandchildren remember her with great affection, for she was forever getting us out of minor difficulties, secretly, promptly, and without matriarchal lectures.

The coming of old age annoyed her, like the coming of flies in summer, and she was determined not to let it slow her down. Her women relatives had to take turns watching her when she was down with a cold or fever, or confined to bed as the result of falling from a stepladder in her pantry and breaking a rib. If they didn't look sharp, she would be up and out in her garden, potting a fuchsia to be sent to some invalid, or cutting

peonies—she called them "pinies"—for the big dining-room table; or writing checks for people who needed money; or filling with fruits and vegetables one of the ten or twelve market baskets she kept in the pantry. Young women who, as the years went on, married her grandsons, or even distant cousins, were always given, in addition to a conventional wedding present, some old cherished possession of hers: a piece of jewelry, a set of china, or anything else they might have seen and admired in her house. If some old, familiar object could not be found, a search was never made until Grandma Fisher had been asked if she had given it away. She usually had.

The House of Fisher, at 695 Bryden Road, continually teeming with relatives, could not have gone on without her, and the vast family reunions, held every few years at Sugar Grove or Crystal Springs and attended by hundreds of persons, depended on her strength of spirit and her sense of organization. We used to gather at the Fisher house in a body, forty and fifty years ago, and start out for the reunions, the picnics, the days at the State Fair, and the Fourth of July celebrations held by the family and its far-flung connections at Lancaster. Grandpa would supply the fireworks, paying as much as a thousand dollars for enough to fill a freight car. But it was his wife who supervised the goings on and ordered the arrangement of the banquet tables, which extended for fifty yards outdoors under the elms and were laden with fried chicken, salads, homemade breads, and as many as forty layer cakes.

William M. Fisher had seven grandsons and five granddaughters, and all of us, in our youth, were deeply impressed by this startling head of the family. He told us that he had driven a four-horse McCormick reaper when he was eighteen months old, that he could lick, as a boy, any of his older brothers, and often had, and that he could lift a bushel of potatoes with the little finger of his left hand. These feats, as we grew up, seemed of something less than herculean stature, and we began to inquire into their historicity. His younger brother Jake allowed that Bill was only a fair-to-middling fighter, whose boast was bigger than his fist. Uncle Jake laughed off the incident of the four-horse reaper. It seemed that Bill's father had held him in his lap one day and let him grip one of the reins. It turned out, however, that my grandfather actually could lift a bushel of potatoes with the little finger of his left hand. The finger had become bent as the result of an accident and, according to Uncle Jake, was as "strong as an angle iron."

Grandpa Fisher, known to his wife as Will, to his brothers and intimates as Bill, to dozens of nieces, nephews, and cousins as Uncle Will, and to Mrs. Margery Albright, our old family nurse, simply as Fisher, was one of thirteen children, of whom six died in infancy or childhood. He was born on a large farm south of Columbus. Its size has been variously magnified by his descendants, but it probably contained at least two thousand acres.

As he grew up, he was a frequent witness of his father's locally celebrated feats of strength. Old Jake Fisher could probably have lifted a barrel of potatoes, and is famous in the annals of the family for having once picked up a horse. His son Bill envied his father's prowess all his life and could not be dissuaded from his conviction that he could equal the great man's achievements. He thought of himself as a fighter up to the year he died and was usually unable to argue with a man without letting go a right swing. "I ran into Jones on the street today," he would say, "and I told him what I thought of him." When he was asked how the affair turned out, he would say, "I made a pass at him," or, "I threatened to tap him." As far as we knew, he never actually hit a man, but he was forever swinging his rather short and far from swift right arm.

Some member of the family must still have, possibly in an attic somewhere, another full-length photograph of my grandfather, which shows him in his most militant attitude. Twenty-one, round-faced, and on the plump side, he is seen gripping a rifle and staring belligerently ahead. This picture was taken at the beginning of the Civil War, and it was a source of wonder to us as children that he was not in a uniform. He wore for the picture a black bearskin cap and what appeared to be a homespun suit of clothes. He used to tell us that he was a Squirrel Hunter during the war, and this puzzled us mightily until we were old enough to know that Squirrel Hunters were Home Guards.

My grandfather's lifelong idol was Ulysses S. Grant and he named his second son Grant in honor of the General. (His first son was, of course, named William, after his father, in the immemorial American tradition.) Not even Theodore Roosevelt in his Rough Rider days, although Grandpa was devoted to him and affectionately called him Old Taddy, could light up the Fisher eyes or the Fisher teeth like the eighteenth President of the United States. There was a chromo of Grant on horseback, done in aggressive blues and browns, above the mantel in his study, and he must have read the "Memoirs of U. S. Grant" a hundred times. To him, everything about his hero, from his dress to his military strategy, was above reproach or criticism, and the General's fervent admirer could even justify his tactics at Cold Harbor and his blundering administrations as President. According to Grandpa, Grant's best friends betrayed him in every possible way, from stealing the White House silver to forging his name to official documents. William M. Fisher began to smoke cigars in his early twenties, in emulation of the great smoker, and he was fond of defending the General's whiskey-drinking. He knew all the jokes, anecdotes, and legends about it and told them over and over. He always kept a bottle of rye in his house, but he had to hide it when his pious women relatives came for a visit. Once he stuck it in a clothes hamper, where Cousin Nettie found it. "What is the meaning

of this, Uncle Will?" she demanded. "It's rubbing alcohol," he told her, "for my bowels."

William M. Fisher's intestines were his chief worry. Americans have ever been a bowel-fearful people and even the duel-fighting President Jackson once inquired of an English colonel who called at the White House what purgative he used. My grandfather would ask strangers the same question, hoping to hear of something new. He must have tried every laxative known to the pharmacopoeia of his time, but I doubt whether he ever took the corrosive hickory-root physic that old Jake Fisher had concocted for himself. When Grandpa was in his sixties, he heard of a woman who boxed and sold refined beach sand that was supposed to "assist the integrity of the intestinal track," and he managed, God knows how, to get down a teaspoonful of the stuff three times a day for several months.

In his forties, he had suffered a serious and painful infection of one hand, and he was afraid he was going to die of blood poisoning. He promised God that if he was spared, he would be constant in his religious devotions and staunch in his financial support of the First Methodist Episcopal Church. He got well and kept his promise, never missing a Sunday-morning service unless he was ill or out of town. He usually had the pastor to Sunday-noon dinner, and every day began in his home with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer by all those present at the breakfast table, which seated ten and could be leafed out, and often was, to make room for half a dozen more. Grandpa always began his breakfast by tucking his napkin into his collar and pouring half a pint of cream over two Shredded Wheat biscuits. He would finish this in silence and then look slowly around the table until his eye fell on the youngest boy. "How many sheep are you goin' to kill today?" he would ask with a golden grin. No matter what the child replied, Grandpa would announce proudly to the grownups, "The boy knows."

Grandpa's attitude toward men of the cloth was compounded of a mixture of respect and impatience. He believed that the best of them held the keys to the Kingdom by virtue of a purity beyond the reach of ordinary mortals, but he held that their knowledge of the ways of the world was unnecessarily childish, and, like the late Clarence Day, Sr., he was annoyed by their bland innocence in dealing with business and financial affairs. He was inclined to josh them at Sunday-noon dinner, and to attempt to instruct them in political and economic matters. Now and then he would risk the telling of a mildly vulgar smoking-car story, but he would be instantly interrupted by one of the women present. The worst suspicion he could have of a reverend was that the man might be, in his secret heart, a Democrat or a Socialist. He himself was an inflexible straight-ticket Republican, living in

a strong Republican neighborhood, and he hoped that his pastors, who came and went, answering calls, were properly Republican, but he never sought to draw them out or to back them into an ideological corner. Political discussion, he felt, was not for the House of God, and he became briefly famous in Columbus one Sunday in October more than forty years ago, and got into the newspapers, when he felt called upon to announce his conviction on this point in open church. The minister, in his prayer, had begun to ask the favor and indulgence of the Lord God Almighty in the case of the holy and righteous Republican cause that year. When he reached the candidate for County Coroner on the G.O.P. ticket, and implored Providence to aid and abet his campaign, my grandfather rose in his pew and, to the dismay of his female relatives, began to shout. He roared that he had come to a place of worship for the purpose of worship and that he did not intend to tolerate a political harangue in his church. Such a thing had never happened before, and there was a vast buzzing and confusion as Grandpa stomped up the aisle and out of the church. In the week that followed, he got nearly a hundred letters, mainly complimentary, and at least twenty boxes of cigars from male admirers. The next Sunday, he was quietly back in his pew, and in time the incident was forgotten, a little to his regret, for he liked to talk about it and to have it brought up. He never asked that particular minister to his table again.

If there was one thing William M. Fisher enjoyed as much as being photographed, it was reading articles about himself, especially the incandescent kind that appeared, along with a paid advertisement, in those heavy and gaudy books with such titles as "Prominent Men of Columbus, Ohio," "Centennial Souvenir of the Buckeye State," and "Pioneers of Commerce and Industry in the Middle West." There was a ponderous outpouring of these volumes between 1900 and 1910, when Grandpa was in his sixties and could tell his biographers that he was a director of two banks, a vice-president of the Board of Trade, a Mason, and an Odd Fellow. One of these sketches, published in 1901, contained this creamy statement: "He remained under the parental roof until twenty-seven years of age, but not wishing to devote his entire life to agricultural pursuits he determined to enter the field of commerce and embarked in the grocery business as a clerk." He used to remind us that U. S. Grant had also worked in a grocery as a young man. But William M. Fisher did not last long in this lowly position, and returned to the country to take over a farm his father had given him. This brief phase in his career, as described by the "Centennial Souvenir" boys, was "dedicated to the shipping of grain and stock over the Hocking Valley Railroad." This didn't suit his ambition, either, and he sold his farm and opened a grocery store in partnership with a man named John Wagonseller. This dim gentleman soon dropped out of the picture, and in 1870,

when my grandfather was thirty years old, he was able to open up his own fruit-and-produce house and to put a sign above its door reading, "The William M. Fisher Company." When he was forty-two, he bought and moved into a larger building, and The William M. Fisher & Sons Co., after nearly seventy years, still does business on this site. Its founder would be pleased to know that the present head of the company is not only the son and grandson of men named William M. Fisher but the father of a William M. Fisher, now with the store, and the grandfather of another William M. Fisher, aged eighteen months.

All of us grandchildren were enchanted by the store when we were young. You walked into a dark, cool place smelling richly of fruits and vegetables. In one room were enormous wooden bins filled with a million nuts, and kegs of grapes from Spain. Two or three black cats prowled softly about looking for mice, and occasionally we saw the darting figure of a ferret that had been installed in the store to fight off rats. In another and colder room, lighted by flaring gas jets in the years of my earliest memories, bunches of bananas hung from the ceiling, most of them green, a few turning yellow. We were always breathless and a little scared in this room, because we knew that big, hairy tarantulas were occasionally found among the bananas, which came from Honduras and Guatemala. The men in charge of the banana storeroom captured a tarantula alive now and then, and it was put on display in the front room of the store on a table, under an upturned glass tumbler. Scorpions were sometimes found in the bananas, too, and, less frequently, a baby boa constrictor. The William M. Fisher & Sons Co. has three ripening and refrigeration rooms now, with cork-insulated walls and all the other modern equipment of the trade. My cousin Clifford Fisher, who has been president of the firm for many years, tells me that tarantulas, scorpions, and young boa constrictors are still discovered once in a while in the banana rooms. The cats and the ferret lost their jobs years ago.

The store is about a mile from the big house my grandfather built on Bryden Road, and in good weather he always walked to work, with the red rose in his mouth. The trip sometimes took him more than an hour, for he was always meeting people he knew, or stopping to talk to people he didn't know. One of his neighbors for many years was the late Harry M. Daugherty, who made a President of the United States out of Warren G. Harding. He and Grandpa never hit it off very well, and it may have been because Grandpa, in spite of a famous aptitude for remembering figures—in the early days of the store, he kept his accounts in his head—rarely got anybody's name right and always addressed Mr. Daugherty as "Dorothy."

When Grandpa reached the store, he would ask after the families of his employees and order a basket of fruit to be sent out if one of their wives was sick or a baby had been born. Then he would inspect newly ar-

rived shipments of Catawba grapes, Port Clinton peaches, or apples from York State. He was an authority on apples and could identify nearly a thousand varieties. He liked to take his grandsons around the place, pointing out Yellow Transparents, Duchesses, Early Harvests, Wealthies, Grimes Goldens, Jonathans, Stayman Winesaps, and McIntosh Reds, and, later in the season, Baldwins, Rome Beauties, York Imperials, old-fashioned Winesaps, and Ben Davises. It didn't take him long to make the rounds forty years ago, but today the store is three times as large, and its buyers range much farther than he ever did. Produce is now shipped from all the Central American countries, most of the islands of the West Indies, and nearly every state of the Union. Trucks roll up to the store from as far away as Florida and Texas, but in the increase of the business a neatness has been added that would astonish my grandfather. Onions and cabbages, which used to arrive loosely piled in freight cars, are now carefully packaged or put up in sacks. Nuts are no longer shovelled into great bins but arrive tidily packed in cellophane-covered boxes. The days of barrelled potatoes and apples are gone, and the only container that my grandfather would recognize today is the bushel basket. In his early days, Grandpa did a lot of risky speculative buying of perishable goods in carload lots, often losing heavily. He is still remembered at the store for his daring large-scale purchases of grapefruit in the years when it was only a novelty, and so sour that it had to be cut in half, lavishly sugared, and kept in family refrigerators overnight. His confidence in the coming popularity of grapefruit was not shared by his associates, but he was right, as he almost always was.

When Grandpa got to his office, he would put his hat on his desk—he usually wore a black derby—and keep it there all day, although there was a hatrack against a wall. It was a device of his to get away from bores or talkative friends. As the door opened, he would automatically reach for his derby, and if it was somebody he didn't want to see, he would rise and say, "I'm sorry, but I was just about to leave." He would then walk to the street with his visitor, find out which way the man was going, and set off in the opposite direction, walking around the block and entering the store by the back door.

In the late eighteen-nineties, William M. Fisher made perhaps his only major business blunder, and it was a magnificent one. He became interested in stories of gold in Georgia and, with several friends, incorporated the Dahlonega Gold Mining Company, of which he was named president. Grandpa set about the capitalization of his corporation and the promotion of its stock with his usual vigor, and persuaded a number of his friends and relatives to buy shares. He put fifty thousand dollars of his own money into the venture, and the people he had approached personally bought stock to the amount of fifty thousand. The Eldorado of the commission merchant

went the way of many another such enterprise of fifty years ago. My mother still has certificates, dated November 18, 1899, revealing her to have been the proud and hopeful owner of five thousand shares of Dahlonega, a gift from her father. I don't know how many other persons held such pretty and worthless pieces of paper attesting to their golden dream, but I have known since I was a boy that Grandpa Fisher, in spite of his own severe losses, reimbursed in full the friends and relatives he had urged to invest. It is said that he couldn't sleep until the last of his friends had been repaid. He was under no legal commitment to make good the money they dropped, but it seems that he had orally guaranteed each of them the security of his investment, and "word of honor" was, as an intimate of his once described it, "a jewel of Bill Fisher's character." He liked to make gentlemen's agreements, to shake hands on a deal, and to trust and be trusted in an amiable fashion that alarmed his attorneys. When he died, a clump of letters from the Dahlonega investors he had paid back was found in his safe-deposit vault. One of them was from an old registered nurse who had sunk a thousand dollars in the Georgia bonanza. William M. Fisher's own fortune was at a low ebb after the debacle, and the dreaded words "receiver's hands" were whispered about his house, but the store didn't go into bankruptcy. There is a legend that in those dark days he would chew right up the stem of a rose and start in on the petals.

The faith that he had in Georgia gold and grapefruit was not aroused by the gasoline engine, and he kept his horse and surrey years after his friends had turned to the automobile. The first car he bought, reluctantly, was an electric runabout. Electricity, he figured, was a natural and dependable force, whereas the gas engine was a contraption of man. He never got used to driving the electric, and approached the machine as if it were an unbroken colt. He would sit tensely erect, tightly gripping the guiding bar, and drive down the center of the street, occasionally talking to the thing as if it were alive, or shouting "Get out of the way!" at other drivers. The figure of William M. Fisher in his electric, coaxing, clucking, and shouting, became a familiar one on the East Side of Columbus. He never learned to back "her," but once when I was fifteen, he paid me a dollar to drive her out in the country and show him how. He waited till we were far from town before he changed seats with me, and then, as soon as he had taken over the steering bar, he began to scold the machine as if it were an angry horse whose ears were flat against its head. He started to back her slowly, saying "Eep, eep!" when she veered to one side and "Awp, awp!" when she shied in the other direction. Suddenly—I will never know why—he put on full speed, still in reverse, shouting "Whoa! Whoa!" at the top of his voice, as we crossed a ditch and banged into a barbed-wire fence. It took a garage man an hour to get us loose and on the road again. Grandpa paid him and said, in his bluffest manner, "Drop in at the store and I'll give you a water-

melon." He was forever trying to cover up embarrassing situations by offering people watermelons.

Several years later Grandpa bought a Lozier. He never tried to drive it himself, but he liked to have his grandsons take him out in the country, so that he could "scorch." He would shout "Get her up to forty-five!" and when that speed was attained, he would sit forward, his eyes shining and his beard blowing, and bellow "Go it!"

Grandma Fisher died in 1925, at the age of eighty, having outlived her husband by seven years. Her passing marked the close of a way of family life in the Middle West. The big reunions were no longer held, or the picnics, or the Fourth of July celebrations, or the family gatherings at the State Fair that used to begin at eight in the morning and last until it grew dark. Her beloved *Pearson's Magazine* died the same year she did, *Ainslee's* had only a few months left, and *Everybody's* was on its way out. After Grandma's death, the great, dark house, which her intense vitality had lighted, seemed suddenly gaunt and cold. It was closed up and the things she hadn't given away were divided among her children and her grandchildren. I got the engraving of the hunting dogs and the enormous photograph of the Reverend James Grover. The dogs hang above the widest fireplace in my house in the country, but I gave the picture of Mr. Grover to the Columbus Public Library, where I think the likeness of the city's first librarian properly belongs. I hope it looks benignly down from the wall of some serene and sunny room.

READING

What are the subjects of the first nine paragraphs? How do they contribute to each other in introducing the essay?

Note such a phrase as "a house that was full of ramble and surprise." Point out other phrases that strike you. Can these be matched in the essays of McKenney and Brown?

Explain what Thurber means when he writes about the steel engraving of the hunting dogs.

In what ways is "the major business blunder" of Grandfather Fisher "magnificent"?

INTERPRETATION

Of what peculiarities in your own family does Thurber's narrative remind you? What similarities do you see?

If your family does not appear as interesting as Thurber's, is the difference mostly due to the people themselves or to your observations of them?

Bearing in mind the fact that Thurber's sketch deals with an American family of a generation ago, what changes would you say have taken place in American family life since then? What elements remain the same?

Compare Grandfather Fisher's relation to his family with the relation of John

Mason Brown's. Compare Thurber's attitude toward his subject with the attitude of Ruth McKenney.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Family Reunion
My Grandfather
Sunday Dinner at Our House
The Old Soldier
Individualism Then and Now

ONCE MORE TO THE LAKE*

by E. B. White

E. B. White (1899–) contributes to *The New Yorker* and other magazines. He is author of *One Man's Meat, The Wild Flag, Here Is New York,* and other books.

One summer, along about 1904, my father rented a camp on a lake in Maine and took us all there for the month of August. We all got ringworm from some kittens and had to rub Pond's Extract on our arms and legs night and morning, and my father rolled over in a canoe with all his clothes on; but outside of that the vacation was a success and from then on none of us ever thought there was any place in the world like that lake in Maine. We returned summer after summer—always on August first for one month. I have since become a salt-water man, but sometimes in summer there are days when the restlessness of the tides and the fearful cold of the sea water and the incessant wind which blows across the afternoon and into the evening make me wish for the placidity of a lake in the woods. A few weeks ago this feeling got so strong I bought myself a couple of bass hooks and a spinner and returned to the lake where we used to go, for a week's fishing and to revisit old haunts.

I took along my son, who had never had any fresh water up his nose and who had seen lily pads only from train windows. On the journey over to the lake I began to wonder what it would be like. I wondered how time would have marred this unique, this holy spot—the coves and streams, the hills that the sun set behind, the camps and the paths behind the camps. I was sure that the tarred road would have found it out and I wondered in what other ways it would be desolated. It is strange how much you can remember about places like that once you allow your mind to return into the grooves which lead back. You remember one thing, and that suddenly reminds you of another thing. I guess I remembered clearest of all the early

* From *One Man's Meat,* by E. B. White (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941). Copyright, 1941, by E. B. White. Reprinted by permission of the publishers and the author.

morning, when the lake was cool and motionless, remembered how the bedroom smelled of the lumber it was made of and of the wet woods whose scent entered through the screen. The partitions in the camp were thin and did not extend clear to the top of the rooms, and as I was always the first up I would dress softly so as not to wake the others and sneak out into the sweet outdoors and start out in the canoe, keeping close along the shore in the long shadows of the pines. I remembered being very careful never to rub my paddle against the thwart for fear of disturbing the stillness of the cathedral.

The lake had never been what you would call a wild lake. There were cottages sprinkled around the shores, and it was in farming country although the shores of the lake were quite heavily wooded. Some of the cottages were owned by nearby farmers, and you would live at the shore and eat your meals at the farmhouse. That's what our family did. But although it wasn't wild, it was a fairly large and undisturbed lake and there were places in it which, to a child at least, seemed infinitely remote and primeval.

I was right about the tar: it led to within half a mile of the shore. But when I got back there, with my boy, and we settled into a camp near a farmhouse and into the kind of summertime I had known, I could tell that it was going to be pretty much the same as it had been before—I knew it, lying in bed the first morning, smelling the bedroom, and hearing the boy sneak quietly out and go off along the shore in a boat. I began to sustain the illusion that he was I, and therefore, by simple transposition, that I was my father. This sensation persisted, kept cropping up all the time we were there. It was not an entirely new feeling, but in this setting it grew much stronger. I seemed to be living a dual existence. I would be in the middle of some simple act, I would be picking up a bait box or laying down a table fork, or I would be saying something and suddenly it would be not I but my father who was saying the words or making the gesture. It gave me a creepy sensation.

We went fishing the first morning. I felt the same damp moss covering the worms in the bait can, and saw the dragonfly alight on the tip of my rod as it hovered a few inches from the surface of the water. It was the arrival of this fly that convinced me beyond any doubt that everything was as it always had been, that the years were a mirage and there had been no years. The small waves were the same, chucking the rowboat under the chin as we fished at anchor, and the boat was the same boat, the same color green and the ribs broken in the same places, and under the floorboards the same fresh-water leavings and debris—the dead helgramite, the wisps of moss, the rusty discarded fish-hook, the dried blood from yesterday's catch. We stared silently at the tips of our rods, at the dragonflies that came and went. I lowered the tip of mine into the water, tentatively, pensively dislodging the fly, which darted two feet away, poised, darted two feet back,

and came to rest again a little farther up the rod. There had been no years between the ducking of this dragonfly and the other one—the one that was part of memory. I looked at the boy, who was silently watching his fly, and it was my hands that held his rod, my eyes watching. I felt dizzy and didn't know which rod I was at the end of.

We caught two bass, hauling them in briskly as though they were mackerel, pulling them over the side of the boat in a businesslike manner without any landing net, and stunning them with a blow on the back of the head. When we got back for a swim before lunch, the lake was exactly where we had left it, the same number of inches from the dock, and there was only the merest suggestion of a breeze. This seemed an utterly enchanted sea, this lake you could leave to its own devices for a few hours and come back to, and find that it had not stirred, this constant and trustworthy body of water. In the shallows, the dark, water-soaked sticks and twigs, smooth and old, were undulating in clusters on the bottom against the clean ribbed sand, and the track of the mussel was plain. A school of minnows swam by, each minnow with its small individual shadow, doubling the attendance, so clear and sharp in the sunlight. Some of the other campers were in swimming, along the shore, one of them with a cake of soap, and the water felt thin and clear and unsubstantial. Over the years there had been this person with the cake of soap, this cultist, and here he was. There had been no years.

Up to the farmhouse to dinner through the teeming, dusty field, the road under our sneakers was only a two-track road. The middle track was missing, the one with the marks of the hooves and the splotches of dried, flaky manure. There had always been three tracks to choose from in choosing which track to walk in; now the choice was narrowed down to two. For a moment I missed terribly the middle alternative. But the way led past the tennis court, and something about the way it lay there in the sun reassured me; the tape had loosened along the backline, the alleys were green with plantains and other weeds, and the net (installed in June and removed in September) sagged in the dry noon, and the whole place steamed with midday heat and hunger and emptiness. There was a choice of pie for desert, and one was blueberry and one was apple, and the waitresses were the same country girls, there having been no passage of time, only the illusion of it as in a dropped curtain—the waitresses were still fifteen; their hair had been washed, that was the only difference—they had been to the movies and seen the pretty girls with the clean hair.

Summertime, oh summertime, pattern of life indelible, the fade-proof lake, the woods unshatterable, the pasture with the sweetfern and the juniper forever and ever, summer without end; this was the background, and the life along the shore was the design, the cottagers with their innocent and tranquil design, their tiny docks with the flagpole and the

American flag floating against the white clouds in the blue sky, the little paths over the roots of the trees leading from camp to camp and the paths leading back to the outhouses and the can of lime for sprinkling, and at the souvenir counters at the store the miniature birch-bark canoes and the post cards that showed things looking a little better than they looked. This was the American family at play, escaping the city heat, wondering whether the newcomers in the camp at the head of the cove were "common" or "nice," wondering whether it was true that the people who drove up for Sunday dinner at the farmhouse were turned away because there wasn't enough chicken.

It seemed to me, as I kept remembering all this, that those times and those summers had been infinitely precious and worth saving. There had been jollity and peace and goodness. The arriving (at the beginning of August) had been so big a business in itself, at the railway station the farm wagon drawn up, the first smell of the pine-laden air, the first glimpse of the smiling farmer, and the great importance of the trunks and your father's enormous authority in such matters, and the feel of the wagon under you for the long ten-mile haul, and at the top of the last long hill catching the first view of the lake after eleven months of not seeing this cherished body of water. The shouts and cries of the other campers when they saw you, and the trunks to be unpacked, to give up their rich burden. (Arriving was less exciting nowadays, when you sneaked up in your car and parked it under a tree near the camp and took out the bags and in five minutes it was all over, no fuss, no loud wonderful fuss about trunks.)

Peace and goodness and jollity. The only thing that was wrong now, really, was the sound of the place, an unfamiliar nervous sound of the outboard motors. This was the note that jarred, the one thing that would sometimes break the illusion and set the years moving. In those other summertimes all motors were inboard; and when they were at a little distance, the noise they made was a sedative, an ingredient of summer sleep. They were one-cylinder and two-cylinder engines, and some were make-and-break and some were jump-spark, but they all made a sleepy sound across the lake. The one-lungers throbbed and fluttered, and the twin-cylinder ones purred and purred, and that was a quiet sound too. But now the campers all had outboards. In the daytime, in the hot mornings, these motors made a petulant, irritable sound; at night, in the still evening when the afterglow lit the water, they whined about one's ears like mosquitoes. My boy loved our rented outboard, and his great desire was to achieve singlehanded mastery over it, and authority, and he soon learned the trick of choking it a little (but not too much), and the adjustment of the needle valve. Watching him I would remember the things you could do with the old one-cylinder engine with the heavy flywheel, how you could have it eating out of your hand if you got really close to it spiritually. Motor boats in those days didn't

have clutches, and you would make a landing by shutting off the motor at the proper time and coasting in with a dead rudder. But there was a way of reversing them, if you learned the trick, by cutting the switch and putting it on again exactly on the final dying revolution of the flywheel, so that it would kick back against compression and begin reversing. Approaching a dock in a strong following breeze it was difficult to slow up sufficiently by the ordinary coasting method, and if a boy felt he had complete mastery over his motor, he was tempted to keep it running beyond its time and then reverse it a few feet from the dock. It took a cool nerve, because if you threw the switch a twentieth of a second too soon you would catch the flywheel when it still had speed enough to go up past center, and the boat would leap ahead, charging bull-fashion at the dock.

We had a good week at the camp. The bass were biting well and the sun shone endlessly, day after day. We would be tired at night and lie down in the accumulated heat of the little bedrooms after the long hot day and the breeze would stir almost imperceptibly outside and the smell of the swamp drift in through the rusty screens. Sleep would come easily and in the morning the red squirrel would be on the roof, tapping out his gay routine. I kept remembering everything, lying in the bed in the mornings—the small steamboat that had a long rounded stern like the lip of a Ubangi, and how quietly she ran on the moonlight sails, when the older boys played their mandolins and the girls sang and we ate doughnuts dipped in sugar, and how sweet the music was on the water in the shining night, and what it had felt like to think about girls then. After breakfast we would go up to the store and the things were in the same place—the minnows in a bottle, the plugs and spinners disarranged and pawed over by the youngsters from the boys' camp, the fig newtons and the Beeman's gum. Outside, the road was tarred and cars stood in front of the store. Inside, all was just as it had always been, except there was more Coca Cola and not so much Moxie and root beer and birch beer and sarsaparilla. We would walk out with a bottle of pop apiece and sometimes the pop would backfire up our noses and hurt. We explored the streams, quietly, where the turtles slid off the sunny logs and dug their way into the soft bottom; and we lay on the town wharf and fed worms to the tame bass. Everywhere we went I had trouble making out which was I, the one walking at my side, the one walking in my pants.

One afternoon while we were there at that lake a thunderstorm came up. It was like the revival of an old melodrama that I had seen long ago with childish awe. The second-act climax of the drama of the electrical disturbance over a lake in America had not changed in any important respect. This was the big scene, still the big scene. The whole thing was so familiar, the first feeling of oppression and heat and a general air around camp of not wanting to go very far away. In midafternoon (it was all

the same) a curious darkening of the sky, and a lull in everything that had made life tick; and then the way the boats suddenly swung the other way at their moorings with the coming of a breeze out of the new quarter, and the premonitory rumble. Then the kettle drum, then the snare, then the bass drum and cymbals, then crackling light against the dark, and the gods grinning and licking their chops in the hills. Afterward the calm, the rain steadily rustling in the calm lake, the return of light and hope and spirits, and the campers running out in joy and relief to go swimming in the rain, their bright cries perpetuating the deathless joke about how they were getting simply drenched, and the children screaming with delight at the new sensation of bathing in the rain, and the joke about getting drenched linking the generations in a strong indestructible chain. And the comedian who waded in carrying an umbrella.

When the others went swimming my son said he was going in too. He pulled his dripping trunks from the line where they had hung all through the shower, and wrung them out. Languidly, and with no thought of going in, I watched him, his hard little body, skinny and bare, saw him wince slightly as he pulled up around his vitals the small, soggy, icy garment. As he buckled the swollen belt suddenly my groin felt the chill of death.

READING

What were the author's most vivid memories of vacations at the lake? What main changes does he note?

How do these contribute to the illusion of changelessness that he felt? Would he have felt more—or less—that time had stood still, if his son had not been with him?

How do the shifts in point of view contribute to this effect of changelessness? Point out several specific examples.

INTERPRETATION

What outings and vacations of your family does the essay bring to mind? Do they have an underlying impression such as the author's memory has?

Might the materials of this essay be presented from the boy's point of view rather than the father's? Could the same central idea then be used?

How does the final sentence modify and expand what has come before?

Does the essay convey a sense of pleasurable understanding? Summarize the ways in which the author developed it.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Family Outing
Our Worst Vacation
A Trip with Father
Three Go Fishing
Memories

2
Nature

The exciting world of nature lies around us, too, in childhood, as we make our acquaintance with the mysterious wonders of insects, snakes, trees, fish, and animals.

THE ANCIENT ENMITY*

by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (1896–1953) began writing fiction in 1931 and in 1939 received the Pulitzer prize for *The Yearling*. She owned and managed a Florida orange grove "Cross Creek," the name also of her volume of reminiscences published in 1942.

"And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heels."

Genesis 3:14–15

Fear of the serpent is inherent in most animals. A placid mare has bolted under me like any wild filly at sight of a coiled moccasin by the road. I have seen my cat jump with arched back like a witch's cat, at the unexpected movement of a garter snake. All hunters have seen their bird dogs tumble backward to avoid a snake. If avoidance is impossible, the dog comes to an unforgettable point, obviously not on birds, a point that is one long tense quiver of distress.

I believe that, contrary to Biblical implications, fear of snakes is not inherent in human beings, but is planted at an age so early that memory draws no line for its beginnings. Fear is the most easily taught of all lessons, and the fight against terror, real or imagined, is perhaps the history of man's mind. The average man or woman says, and believes it, "I have an instinctive horror of snakes." Yet babies and small children, who might be instinctively terrified at sight of a large animal such as a cow or dog, show no fear of snakes, but reach out their hands to them, and have even been known to handle venomous snakes without harm.

I came to Cross Creek with such a phobia against snakes that a picture of one in the dictionary gave me what Martha calls "the all-overs." I had the common misconception that in Florida they were omnipresent.

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I thought, "If anything defeats me, sends me back to urban civilization, it will be the snakes." They were not ubiquitous as I had expected, but I saw one often enough to keep my anxiety alive. A black snake actually ran at me, and a chicken snake thrust his face into mine from a pantry shelf. These were harmless, I knew, but none the less revolting. I took my first faltering steps of progress through sheer shame. In a section where the country women possess great physical fearlessness, I felt feeble-minded to find myself screaming at the sight of a king snake that asked nothing more than a chance to destroy the rats that infested the old barn. I forced myself to stand still when I saw a snake in the weeds of the neglected house yard, at least long enough to determine its non-venomous nature. The only poisonous reptiles in Florida, I knew, were the rattlesnake and the cotton-mouth moccasin, which I had already seen with horror, and the coral snake, which I did not know.

My determination to use common sense might have been my undoing. One late winter day in my first year I discovered under the palm tree by the gate a small pile of Amaryllis bulbs. The yard was desperate for flowers and greenery and I began separating the bulbs to set out for spring blooming. I dug with my fingers under the pile and brought out in my hand not a snake, surely, but a ten-inch long piece of Chinese lacquer. The slim inert reptile was an exquisite series of shining bands of yellow and black and vermilion, with a tiny black nose. I thought, "Here is a snake, in my hands, and it is as beautiful as a necklace. This is the moment in which to forget all non-sense." I let it slide back and forth through my fingers. Its texture was like satin. I played with it a long time, then killed it reluctantly with a stick, not for fear or hate, but because I decided to cure the skin for an ornament on the handle of a riding crop. I salted the hide and tacked it to a sunny wall. I showed it proudly to my friend Ed Hopkins, who was teaching me the Florida flora and fauna.

He said, "God takes care of fools and children."

The snake was the deadly coral snake. Its venom is of the cobra type, killing within a few minutes by a paralyzing of the nerves. The old terror was back again, and it seemed to me that I should never now be able to pass beyond it. I had no fear of death as death, but the medium was another matter, and one is certainly entitled to one's prejudices in so personal a matter. I found that I had still the blind, unthinking, "instinctive" horror of coming on a poisonous serpent. Nothing could warm the frozen column that replaced my spine at the thought of finding myself face to face with a Florida diamond-back rattler. In a varied life I had discarded one physical fear after another, finding them harmless when confronted. I said, "I am only afraid of the intangibles." Yet even such intangibles as poverty and loneliness might be, simply, accepted, and so disarmed. I discovered that for me rattlesnakes represented the last outpost of physical fear.

I discovered this when Ross Allen, a young Florida herpetologist, invited me to join him on a hunt in the upper Everglades—for rattlesnakes. At the moment I was passing through one of those periods of emotional distress that all of us experience, when some personal catastrophe has tumbled our house of cards about our ears. My small world had crumbled. I should have said offhand that there was nothing left to frighten me. Instantly I realized that I was numb all over at the thought of going out of my way to encounter rattlesnakes.

I am something of a fatalist, in that I believe in a fatalism that stems from one's own adjustment, or lack of it, to circumstance. The Chinese call this "luck character," and it is the same thing. This rather out of the way invitation had been laid on my doorstep like an unwanted foundling. There was no better time to see the thing through; to go down in defeat and hysteria before my fear; or, by facing it, to rip away the veil of panic that stood, perhaps, between me and the facts. I got out of bed, where my mental agony was causing physical symptoms, and packed my bag.

Ross and I drove to Arcadia in his coupé on a warm January day.

I said, "How will you bring back the rattlesnakes?"

"In the back of my car."

My courage was not adequate to inquire whether they were thrown in loose and might be expected to appear between our feet. Actually, a large portable box of heavy close-meshed wire made a safe cage. Ross wanted me to write an article about his work and on our way to the unhappy hunting grounds I took notes on a mass of data that he had accumulated in years of herpetological research. The scientific and dispassionate detachment of the material and the man made a desirable approach to rattlesnake territory. As I had discovered with the insects and varmints, it is difficult to be afraid of anything about which enough is known, and Ross' facts were fresh from the laboratory.

The hunting ground was Big Prairie, south of Arcadia and west of the northern tip of Lake Okeechobee. Big Prairie is a desolate cattle country, half marsh, half pasture, with islands of palm trees and cypress and oaks. At that time of year the cattlemen and Indians were burning the country, on the theory that the young fresh wire grass that springs up from the roots after a fire is the best cattle forage. Ross planned to hunt his rattlers in the forefront of the fires. They lived in winter, he said, in gopher holes, coming out in the midday warmth to forage, and would move ahead of the flames and be easily taken. We joined forces with a big Cracker named Will, his snake-hunting companion of the territory, and set out in early morning, after a long rough drive over deep-rutted roads into the open wilds.

I hope never in my life to be so frightened as I was in those first few hours. I kept on Ross' footsteps, I moved when he moved, sometimes jolting

into him when I thought he might leave me behind. He does not use the forked stick of conventional snake hunting, but a steel prong, shaped like an L, at the end of a long stout stick. He hunted casually, calling my attention to the varying vegetation, to hawks overhead, to a pair of the rare whooping cranes that flapped over us. In mid-morning he stopped short, dropped his stick, and brought up a five-foot rattlesnake draped limply over the steel L. It seemed to me that I should drop in my tracks.

"They're not active at this season," he said quietly. "A snake takes on the temperature of its surroundings. They can't stand too much heat for that reason, and when the weather is cool, as now, they're sluggish."

The sun was bright overhead, the sky a translucent blue, and it seemed to me that it was warm enough for any snake to do as it willed. The sweat poured down my back. Ross dropped the rattler in a crocus sack and Will carried it. By noon, he had caught four. I felt faint and ill. We stopped by a pond and went swimming. The region was flat, the horizon limitless, and as I came out of the cool blue water I expected to find myself surrounded by a ring of rattlers. There were only Ross and Will, opening the lunch basket. I could not eat. Ross never touches liquor and it seemed to me that I would give my hope of salvation for a dram of whiskey. Will went back and drove his truck closer, for Ross expected the hunting to be better in the afternoon. The hunting was much better. When we went back to the truck to deposit two more rattlers in the wire cage, there was a rattlesnake lying under the truck.

Ross said, "Whenever I leave my car or truck with snakes already in it, other rattlers always appear. I don't know whether this is because they scent or sense the presence of other snakes, or whether in this arid area they come to the car for shade in the heat of the day."

The problem was scientific, but I had no interest.

That night Ross and Will and I camped out in the vast spaces of the Everglades prairies. We got water from an abandoned well and cooked supper under buttonwood bushes by a flowing stream. The camp fire blazed cheerfully under the stars and a new moon lifted in the sky. Will told tall tales of the cattlemen and the Indians and we were at peace.

Ross said, "We couldn't have a better night for catching water snakes."

After the rattlers, water snakes seemed innocuous enough. We worked along the edge of the stream and here Ross did not use his L-shaped steel. He reached under rocks and along the edge of the water and brought out harmless reptiles with his hands. I had said nothing to him of my fears, but he understood them. He brought a small dark snake from under a willow root.

"Wouldn't you like to hold it?" he asked. "People think snakes are cold

and clammy, but they aren't. Take it in your hands. You'll see that it is warm."

Again, because I was ashamed, I took the snake in my hands. It was not cold, it was not clammy, and it lay trustingly in my hands, a thing that lived and breathed and had mortality like the rest of us. I felt an upsurgence of spirit.

The next day was magnificent. The air was crystal, the sky was aquamarine, and the far horizon of palms and oaks lay against the sky. I felt a new boldness and followed Ross bravely. He was making the rounds of the gopher holes. The rattlers came out in the mid-morning warmth and were never far away. He could tell by their trails whether one had come out or was still in the hole. Sometimes the two men dug the snake out. At times it was down so long and winding a tunnel that the digging was hopeless. Then they blocked the entrance and went on to other holes. In an hour or so they made the original rounds, unblocking the holes. The rattler in every case came out hurriedly, as though anything were preferable to being shut in. All the time Ross talked to me, telling me the scientific facts he had discovered about the habits of the rattlers.

"They pay no attention to a man standing perfectly still," he said, and proved it by letting Will unblock a hole while he stood at the entrance as the snake came out. It was exciting to watch the snake crawl slowly beside and past the man's legs. When it was at a safe distance he walked within its range of vision, which he had proved to be no higher than a man's knee, and the snake whirled and drew back in an attitude of fighting defense. The rattler strikes only for paralyzing and killing its food, and for defense.

"It is a slow and heavy snake," Ross said. "It lies in wait on a small game trail and strikes the rat or rabbit passing by. It waits a few minutes, then follows along the trail, coming to the small animal, now dead or dying. It noses it from all sides, making sure that it is its own kill, and that it is dead and ready for swallowing."

A rattler will lie quietly without revealing himself if a man passes by and it thinks it is not seen. It slips away without fighting if given the chance. Only Ross' sharp eyes sometimes picked out the gray and yellow diamond pattern, camouflaged among the grasses. In the cool of the morning, chilled by the January air, the snakes showed no fight. They could be looped up limply over the steel L and dropped in a sack or up into the wire cage on the back of Will's truck. As the sun mounted in the sky and warmed the moist Everglades earth, the snakes were warmed too, and Ross warned that it was time to go more cautiously. Yet having learned that it was we who were the aggressors; that immobility meant complete safety; that the snakes, for all their lightning flash in striking, were inaccurate in their aim, with limited vision; having watched again and again the liquid grace of

movement, the beauty of pattern, suddenly I understood that I was drinking in freely the magnificent sweep of the horizon, with no fear of what might be at the moment under my feet. I went off hunting by myself, and though I found no snakes, I should have known what to do.

The sun was dropping low in the west. Masses of white cloud hung above the flat marshy plain and seemed to be tangled in the tops of distant palms and cypresses. The sky turned orange, then saffron. I walked leisurely back toward the truck. In the distance I could see Ross and Will making their way in too. The season was more advanced than at the Creek, two hundred miles to the north, and I noticed that spring flowers were blooming among the lumpy hummocks. I leaned over to pick a white violet. There was a rattlesnake under the violet.

If this had happened the week before, if it had happened the day before, I think I should have lain down and died on top of the rattlesnake, with no need of being struck and poisoned. The snake did not coil, but lifted its head and whirred its rattles lightly. I stepped back slowly and put the violet in a buttonhole. I reached forward and laid the steel L across the snake's neck, just back of the blunt head. I called to Ross:

"I've got one."

He strolled toward me.

"Well, pick it up," he said.

I released it and slipped the L under the middle of the thick body.

"Go put it in the box."

He went ahead of me and lifted the top of the wire cage. I made the truck with the rattler, but when I reached up the six feet to drop it in the cage, it slipped off the stick and dropped on Ross' feet. It made no effort to strike.

"Pick it up again," he said. "If you'll pin it down lightly and reach just back of its head with your hand, as you've seen me do, you can drop it in more easily."

I pinned it and leaned over.

"I'm awfully sorry," I said, "but you're pushing me a little too fast."

He grinned. I lifted it on the stick and again as I had it at head height, it slipped off, down Ross' boots and on top of his feet. He stood as still as a stump. I dropped the snake on his feet for the third time. It seemed to me that the most patient of rattlers might in time resent being hauled up and down, and for all the man's quiet certainty that in standing motionless there was no danger, would strike at whatever was nearest, and that would be Ross.

I said, "I'm just not man enough to keep this up any longer," and he laughed and reached down with his smooth quickness and lifted the snake back of the head and dropped it in the cage. It slid in among its mates and settled in a corner. The hunt was over and we drove back over the uneven

trail to Will's village and left him and went on to Arcadia and home. Our catch for the two days was thirty-two rattlers.

I said to Ross, "I believe that tomorrow I could have picked up that snake."

Back at the Creek, I felt a new lightness. I had done battle with a great fear, and the victory was mine.

It would be impossible for me ever to feel affection for a snake. One may be ever so interested and tolerant, but prefer work dogs to lap dogs, dogs to cats, cats to horses, and almost any living thing at all, to snakes. But with the conquering of the horror, it has been possible to watch the comings and goings of various reptiles with conjectures as to their habits and to consider them as personalities.

A king snake lived for several years in a hole beside the front gate. When the first strong sun of spring, in February or early March, struck into the ground, he appeared, a majestic fellow, fresh shed, in yellow and black. His favorite place was coiled on top of the first post to the right of the gate. This was probably a good vantage point over the passing of rats and mice, frogs and smaller snakes. He seemed to enjoy being within sight of human activity and lifted his slim bright-eyed head with interest when any one went in or out of the gate. He was very ornamental and when he did not appear on his post I felt a certain anxiety about him. I had sweet peas planted on the fence one year and often worked and weeded among them as he watched me a few feet away. Sometimes he slid gracefully into his hole, leaving a careless half-foot of tail hanging out, as though hostage to his friendly confidence. He was itchy one season at shedding time and nothing pleased him more than to have fingers stroke his back. He lay quietly, rippling his muscles as one does under the touch of a masseur. He had some sort of rapprochement with my cat, for I often saw Jib pat the exposed tail playfully but gently. The king snake withdrew it without hurry and Jib followed with an unmolesting claw-sheathed paw. Perhaps they divided their extra rats.

Jib's relations with black snakes did not seem so friendly. The one who lived under the kitchen came out one morning with a broken tail, telltale slashes at its tip. The innocuous black snake is both brave and impudent. I walked close to a slim ebony beauty with his smooth narrow head high above the grass. My purpose was only to admire at close range but he resented my attention. He made a running attack at me. Quite naturally, I jumped out of his way. It reminded me of the utterly ignominious evening when a skunk chased me down the road for several hundred yards. Discretion in both cases seemed the better part of valor. The black snake turned and ran at me again. He switched himself arrogantly as long as I stood near. When I went away, he retired in the opposite direction, probably well pleased with himself as a ferocious and awe-inspiring fellow. The fast-

est living thing I have ever seen was a black snake crossing a bed of hot ashes with a mouse in his mouth. We use the expression here, "Fast as a black snake," and I can amend it to, "fast as a black snake with his belly burning."

I have been obliged to wage unceasing war on the chicken or oak snakes. If I left them to themselves, we should never raise a biddy or a young Mallard duck. The snakes ignore nests of new-laid eggs through the winter. When nesting time comes and the peanut hay in the loft of the barn is full of the game hens setting, and the Mallards begin to set under the Turk's-cap bushes and along the fence row, the chicken snakes appear from nowhere. Usually they wait for their feast until the night the hatching begins and swallow the wet chicks and ducklings as they pip their shells and emerge, for an instant, into the unfriendly world. It is heart-breaking to leave one of the Mallard mothers hovering her new brood contentedly one night, and in the morning to find her childless, fluttering and crying in her distress, the trail of a chicken snake leading away from the nest. Little Will and I watch with constant vigilance at these times and at the first squawk of a hen, the first almost human cry of a female Mallard, one or the other of us dashes to the nest. I once shot a very large chicken snake who came to a nest in one corner of the duck pen while the mother was out getting a bit of green for herself. He had a duck egg in his mouth and rolled his yellow eyes at me as he distended his jaws to swallow it. I did not want to shoot and destroy the other eggs and poked him with the gun barrel to force him to a place more convenient for my purposes. He merely wrapped his tail around the mesh of the wire pen, for purchase, gulped down his egg and opened his jaws over another. This was too insulting and I gave him one shot in the tail. He withdrew then, the egg still in his mouth. It was halfway down before I managed to destroy him.

I have never actually seen a rattlesnake on my land, though the east hammock is a crossing place for them. I see them sometimes on the road at the edge of my place, always moving too rapidly for me to get hold of a hoe or a shotgun. One was killed at the corner where my house grove joins that of Old Boss, and the hoe-hands in summer, or Snow and Little Will on the tractor, come across half a dozen or so in the grove in season. I admire the great beauty of the diamond-back rattler and feel that as snakes go, he is very much of a gentleman.

The cottonmouth moccasins make free of the house yard and I have killed several large ones a few feet from the house. My friend Ross feels that I fail him in not taking them alive for him. I have a guilty moment, thinking of the wasted venom that he would milk from them for scientific and medical purposes, but I am forced to prefer the death of a poisonous snake in my yard to not knowing at what moment it will strike the dog, the cat, one of the Creek children coming for milk, or appear under my own

feet in the darkness. I have no particular fear of the cottonmouth, for he is sluggish and easily killed, but he is revolting in appearance. He is darkly nondescript in color, he is fat and greasy. He slithers. When I look at him I think of Martha's shuddering summing up of the reasons for her dislike of all snakes, "Ain't got no footses an' kin slide so!"

I think the motion of all snakes, if watched and studied long enough, would move any lover of rhythm. I can undersand why a cobra sways to music. The way of the serpent is the way of music. I have sat on the veranda watching the movement of a green tree snake rippling in and out among the orange boughs; watching a black snake flow like water in a dream among the leaves of a poinsettia, or lie like a Japanese brush stroke along a spider-lily leaf, and felt that I watched the poetry of motion. Ruth St. Denis caught this serpentine grace in some of her Oriental dances. I should like to have seen her use, as the Hopi Indians use the rattlesnake, the coral snake, in all its jewelled enamel—properly de-fanged, of course, as a scientist has recently discovered the Hopi rattlers to be.

I shall always feel an interest in snakes, after my exposure to Ross' wisdom and knowledge, but it will never extend to making one welcome in the house. I was obliged to deal unconventionally a few nights ago with a small cottonmouth in the guest bathroom. The screen door leading on one side to the porch had been left ajar and he had wandered in, attracted perhaps by the light burning there. If the light had not been on, I should have stepped on him in the dark on my way to my own quarters, for he was directly in my path. He was small and young but he was belligerent and quite as venomous as though he had been six feet long. My first thought was of my .22 rifle or my shotgun on the back porch, but I knew that if I left the visitor he would slip away, and I could think of many places where he might reappear that would be less convenient than his present one. Too, it seemed absurd to fill the bathroom floor full of holes. The Negroes would be sound asleep in the tenant house and could not hear me call. It seemed to me also that I should feel very foolish having Little Will come from his bed, hoe in hand, to face so small a creature. I looked around the room behind me. On the chest of drawers were two books. One was the Sears Roebuck catalogue, a hefty volume. I heaved it at the moccasin. It hurt him enough so that he went into convulsive coils instead of slipping under the bathtub and I knew I could approach closer. The other book was a copy of one of my own writings, *The Yearling.* I took it and finished off the moccasin. I told Little Will next morning of the encounter, and the method by which I had dispatched the intruder. He chuckled.

"It sho' do come in handy to write books," he said.

READING

What does the author do in the first six paragraphs? Are these paragraphs effective as an introduction?

What is the author's emotional attitude at the beginning and end of the experience? What change takes place?

Is the last incident of the snake hunt enough to justify the sentence, "I had done battle with a great fear, and the victory was mine"?

INTERPRETATION

How does the above sentence take us beyond the immediate subject matter? Are there other statements that make a similar suggestion?

Compare this account of fear with others that you remember? What is the use of the latter part of the story?

Is fear compatible with a love of nature? Is it perhaps—or something like it—necessary for a love of nature?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Small Snake and a Small Boy
The Defenseless Animal
A Squirrel in the Garden
The Traditional Fear of Snakes

HOW SOME OTHERS LIVE THERE*

by Joseph Wood Krutch

Joseph Wood Krutch (1893–), for many years a teacher at Columbia University, is principally known for his dramatic criticism. But he has also occupied himself with morals (as in *The Modern Temper,* 1929), men (as in *Samuel Johnson,* 1944), and nature (as in *The Twelve Seasons,* 1949). *The Desert Year,* in which the present essay appears, is based upon his recent residence in Arizona.

Today, like yesterday, like the day before, and like the day before that, has been sunny and almost cloudless. The sun has gone down, not, as it sometimes does, riotously and in flame, but leaving behind it in the western sky only a glow which made the clear air seem self-luminous, like the electrically excited gas in a tube. The stars have come out, not one by one, but as though switched on in groups—the largest first and then, group by group, those of lesser magnitude. The wind that has sprung up each night is not cool, but is softly caressing nonetheless and one would have it no different.

No wonder, I said to myself, that certain ancient creatures, no longer fit to live in most other climates, can retire here and never be compelled to know that life elsewhere is hard. Yet for all that, one must not think only of warmth when one thinks of this land. One must think also of that other tremendous fact, dryness; and one must remember that if warmth enables certain old-fashioned creatures to meet here the competition of more efficient organisms as they could not, for example, in New England, drought

* From *The Desert Year,* by Joseph Wood Krutch (New York: William Sloane Associates, 1952), pp. 53–66. Copyright, 1951, 1952, by Joseph Wood Krutch. Reprinted by arrangement with William Sloane Associates, Inc., New York, N. Y.

prevents the fauna as well as, more obviously, the flora, from suggesting what one thinks of as the tropical.

This world, for all its caressing warmth, does not teem. It can be brilliantly colorful but it is never, as a New England summer often is, lush. And like New England at every season except summer, it has its own special kind of austerity, one which has, again like New England, its origin in a climatic severity. Long-continued cold in the one case, long-continued drought in the other, teaches the inhabitants of both regions an art of endurance which gives to each region what many find a part of its charm; and a New Englander might reasonably be expected, for that very reason, to learn more easily to love this land than those native to climates in every way softer could be expected to love it. "Damn braces; bless relaxes" said Blake, and drought and cold are the "damns" which brace, respectively, the Southwest and New England.

In respect to this particular deprivation, the difference between the way in which man and the way in which all other creatures have faced it, is typical. Animals and plants manage to survive on a quantity of water which would soon bring death by thirst to those of any other climate; man, on the other hand, digs wells, channels streams, and in one way or another manages so to modify external nature rather than himself that he uses approximately the same amount of water here as anywhere else.

Six or seven hundred years ago it was just the same. The Indians could not reduce their consumption; in their own cruder ways, they did what the dude rancher around Tucson does—get water rather than do without it. That is no doubt the best way, but when man does fail he fails utterly, as the story of the abandoned cliff dwellings tells so plainly and as, in one of the most recently excavated of them, it is told most plainly of all. Deep wells, up whose vertical sides run steps cut in the earth, still remain. Evidently, as the water became scarcer and scarcer during the great twenty-year drought which afflicted the whole region, the wells were dug deeper and deeper; and one must imagine an unending procession of women climbing up from the depths with pots upon their heads to be emptied onto the rows of corn and squash without which neither women nor men could survive. Finally the heroic enterprise failed. Perhaps, as there is some reason for believing, the victims found refuge with other tribes in less parched regions; perhaps they all perished at last. But in either case they abandoned their homeland to the humbler creatures who had learned, as the Indians had not, the great art of how-to-do-without.

It is an art both the desert plants and the desert animals have learned to practice, but it is the plants' appearance that has been most obviously modified by it. Most of the birds show no outward signs that they live in a land of little rain, and the quail who sit thirty feet up in the saguaro, pecking moisture from its fruit, look, on the ground, as sleek as their cousins who

drink when they like. Your rabbits, chipmunks, and other smaller rodents come in pale desert colors which seem to suggest the dryness of their surroundings, but that is more a matter of protective coloration than the actual result of short rations of water. Almost every plant, on the other hand, has modified itself in some visible way and announces to the most casual beholder that moisture is precious.

One does not need to be much of a botanist to notice that, except for the cactus, most of the plants are merely desert versions of those familiar in other regions. The desert poppy, the desert hackberry, the desert mallow, and the desert verbena are only a few examples of plants whose blossoms announce clearly the groups to which they belong. It is also equally easy to see what they have done to themselves in order to survive happily under unusual conditions, and to observe that the devices found useful by one species are repeated in another.

Perhaps there is no better example of the fact that various of nature's children, like various races of men, have arrived independently at the same solutions of the same problems. Just as the bee, the bat, and the bird each discovered for himself the principles of flight, so the same methods of water conservation have been arrived at by wholly different plant families, each of which has evolved independently of the others. Some anthropologists have argued that the existence in widely separated human tribes of such things as the swastika, the throwing stick, and the bow and arrow prove that the cultures had a common origin. But if animal families can independently invent wings, if plant families independently arrive at succulence and thorns, why should it seem improbable that the phenomenon of convergence could also manifest itself in connection with human ingenuity? Certainly the lines along which the plants have worked are few and they are directed toward three simple ends: to get water, to conserve it, or to get along most of the time without any. Moreover, the few practical devices for achieving any of these ends are repeated over and over again.

To get water, one may of course send roots deep; this, as might be expected, certain trees do, though the method is the more remarkable in certain plants, notably the yucca, whose above-surface size is modest. Up the slopes of the gleaming gypsum dunes in White Sands, New Mexico, one may see the yuccas lifting their oddly lush masses of lily blossoms above the burning, bone-dry powder in which it does not seem possible that anything could live and in which, as a matter of fact, precious few other things can. The secret is a root which may, I am told, go forty feet down to the soil below the gypsum.

But how on earth, one may well ask, can a seedling live long enough in a pure, only slightly soluble chemical to grow a forty-foot root? The answer to that is another secret. Like the snow drifts which they resemble, these gypsum dunes shift slowly. In the vales between, the soil is sometimes

only a short way down. In some such valley a seedling starts, and then, as the sand drifts over it, the yucca lifts its head higher and higher to keep the air-breathing leaves above the surface. Sometimes, no doubt, it loses the battle and is buried hopelessly in the hot, dry powder. Sometimes, on the other hand, it wins; and then one may see it, triumphantly crowning a mountain of gypsum from which not even the most resourceful plant could draw sustenance.

Sometimes, on the other hand, it is hardly worth while for a plant to go down because there is little water even at forty feet. Hence, the kind of plant which grows in any given desert region depends in considerable part on whether there is water beneath the surface. Ten or fifteen miles north of where I am settled, the yuccas grow everywhere in the loose, rocky soil of a mountainside where there is little earth but where the loose gravel allows water to soak in. Here, on the flat, packed sand, they do not. The saguaro flourishes because its method is not to go deep but to seize quickly and to store up what falls in rare, brief, sudden downpours that run off quickly without penetrating far below the surface. These monster cacti, sometimes as high as fifty feet, sometimes weighing as much as two tons, and sometimes living as long as two hundred years, have no real taproots at all. Just below the surface of the soil, a flat, disklike network spreads for yards around them; when a rain comes they quickly take up the water from a wide area, swelling visibly and sometimes absorbing as much as a ton of water from one rain. After that they may go a year, if necessary, without taking in water again.

But for the dependence upon this method they do pay one penalty. In the high winds which in summer not infrequently sweep across the desert, as across the sea, they sway visibly, like great trees in the wind; and sometimes, because they are so shallowly rooted, they topple over to lie prostrate for years as whitening skeletons, as hard gaunt ribs from which the flesh has long since rotted away. The common, corpulent barrel cactus of this region, four or five feet high and two or three in girth, evidently roots itself even less securely, for one frequently sees it either completely overturned or leaning crazily—in which latter case it may still bear, as one does at this very minute, its gaudy circlet of waxy, orange-red flowers.

All the methods of keeping water, once one has got it, are variations of the same one, namely, a method of preserving a high ratio of mass to surface. That means thick, succulent leaves (if any); stems which store up moisture, and which also often serve the purpose of leaves—since leaves are too lavish in their evaporation to be afforded by some desert plants. The cactus, of course, is the plant which seems most typical of these devices. Its thick, watery stem bears no leaves at all and, being green all over because of the chlorophyll distributed over its whole surface, the

stem can everywhere manufacture the body-building materials which it is the function of the leaves to produce in a normal plant. But in most of the desert plants which do have leaves and which remain green during the dryest seasons, the leaves are at least thick and hence resist evaporation; in the case of the omnipresent creosote bush, they are also coated with a resin which defies evaporation.

Moreover the cactus is not the only plant which has learned its special trick. It is practiced notably by the paloverde, and is indeed responsible for a part of the charm of that tree. Yet the paloverde is not related to the cactus and must have learned independently that in a land where sunshine for photosynthesis is abundant but moisture is too scarce to be wasted by leaves the clever thing to do is to put chlorophyll into the bark where it may not use sunlight so efficiently—and who cares where there is so much of it—but does save water. In the less arid parts of the year the paloverde, remembering no doubt some ancient habit, puts out small leaves. But when moisture begins to fail, it drops them promptly, exposing merely its network of green twigs to the light. The bean family to which it belongs is totally different from that of the cacti, and no one could possibly mistake one for the other. But they have worked out the same useful methods.

As for the plants which neither send roots deep nor practice conservation so conspicuously, they choose to riot briefly and then lie low, either as seeds waiting for their short weeks of life or, sometimes, as dry roots or shriveled stems hoping for a rainy day. For the most part they are small, like the herbaceous plants of a garden, and they burst suddenly into a riot of blossom. It is they which are chiefly responsible for the desert's sensational spring (which I have never seen), and it must be strangely like that of the arctic, where the shortness of the warm season produces the same result as the shortness of the wet one. In both regions the plants rush from bud to seed with astonishing rapidity. Of the prudence, the foresight, and the thrift of the paloverde or the cactus these desert prodigals seem to know little and care less. *"Carpe diem"* and "We're a long time dead" are their guiding principles. But, like their human analogues, they are responsible for a good deal of the color and gaiety of their world.

Thorns, prickles, and spines are everywhere and, not infrequently, even on the stems or leaves of the short-lived herbs. They represent another device which must have been independently invented many times, and they are no doubt responsible for the fact that, to some, the desert seems an unfriendly place. But the thorns are, after all, defensive devices, necessary, I suppose, because where growth is slow and uncertain the loss of a branch or even a leaf is far more serious than in regions where it can be rapidly replaced.

What Samuel Butler called the "rights of the vegetables" are little respected in New England. The casual walker plucks a flower here, breaks a

branch there, and treads down the struggling shrub in his path. In the desert, one walks circumspectly and one thinks twice before seizing even a branch which does not at first sight look spiny. One knows that the rights of the vegetables are being looked after by the only parties likely, in the long run, to look out for anyone's rights—the parties most directly concerned. On the other hand, the little animals who share the desert with these prickly growths have managed very well to adapt themselves. Here and there one sees the armored paddle of a prickly pear half gnawed away by the wood rat who has made his nest among its roots. Many different birds feast off the pulp or seeds of the cactus fruits which a man cannot pluck without disaster to his fingers. In the cholla, fiercest of the cacti, both the cactus wren and the thrasher build their nests.

As for the animals, some of them drink when they get a chance; and I have caught sight of the commonest of the little lizards darting his tongue two or three times into the water of a small ditch dug to irrigate a cultivated shrub. Nevertheless, many of the rodents seldom drink, since they depend largely upon the moisture in the plants they eat. Others never drink at all; and there are a few which never even eat any food not bone-dry. Theirs is the ultimate ingenuity; and one needs to be a chemist to understand how they do it, for without ever taking in any moisture at all they nevertheless give some out and their veins continue to run blood, not sand.

The key to the riddle is the fact that water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen and that these elements, otherwise combined into carbohydrates, exist in the starch of even the dryest seeds the never-drinking rodent eats. In the laboratory of his digestive system he breaks these carbohydrates down, and by recombining two of the elements he makes for himself the water he must have. For that feat he deserves, I think, to be called the desert dweller par excellence and to rank, as an example of just how far nature will sometimes go, just a little above the boogum tree (*Idria colunaris*) which is certainly the oddest specimen of desert flora, as he is the oddest of the fauna.

Unlike the rodent which never drinks but is never thirsty, the boogum tree is not really native to the American part of the Sonoran Desert. One finds it wild only in Lower California; nevertheless, it will grow here if planted. If I had not seen it with my own eyes, I should not believe it, for it is far more improbable looking as a tree than the giraffe is as an animal. Whether it was christened by some admirer of Lewis Carroll or whether some accident of convergence is responsible for the fact that even the gravest botanical treatises call it by a name which occurs elsewhere only in *The Hunting of the Snark,* I do not know. In any event, the name is gloriously appropriate because the boogum tree looks far more like something out of *Alice* or the *Snark* than like any real tree.

What one sees when one undertakes to contemplate it is an inverted, green-barked cone, six or eight feet high and with the proportions of a carrot. The general effect is rather like a large taproot that has for some reason grown up into the air instead of down into the earth. From this cone scattered twigs a few inches long project foolishly in all directions. At some seasons a few futile leaves dangle from these twigs, though they were bare when I saw them. Only another Lewis Carroll word will do to describe it; like the Burrogroves in *Alice,* it is "mimsey"—which, as Humpty-Dumpty explained, means both flimsy and miserable.

So inelegant a solution of a problem is seldom achieved or at least seldom persisted in by Nature, who may not be infallible but who has buried most of her mistakes in geologic time, where this one ought to have been forgotten along with some of the equally inadvisable animals who had their regrettable day. The essayist Charles D. Stewart once analyzed the orthodox tree "as an invention," but he did not mention this one which, so far from being a credit to the inventor, looks like one of those unbelievable triumphs of no ingenuity exhibited by the patent office in hopes of raising a smile. To see three of these vegetable monstrosities together—and three together I have seen, one like a chunky carrot, the other two foolishly elongated—is to suspect that some of nature's journeymen had made trees and not made them well, they imitated an organism so abominably. If the time ever comes when the desert no longer seems to me at all strange, I know how I shall remind myself that it is. I shall imagine a mouse-that-never-drinks resting in the conical shade of a boogum tree.

READING

What is achieved by using New England as a point of reference? Where does the first mention appear and how is it further developed?

In the fourth paragraph how does Krutch make a transition to the differences between men and animals or plants? Later how does he make transitions to the differences between animals and plants and between different root systems?

What are the main elements of the description of the boogum tree?

INTERPRETATION

What does Krutch do in this essay besides furnishing information? What attitudes of personality and thought, if any, emerge?

Does the essay gain from the use of words designating values, such as "heroic," "triumphantly," "prudence"? How does this use bear on Krutch's humanization of nature? Do you think he is right in humanizing it as much as he does?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

One Corner of the Garden
The Grasshopper
A Southwesterner in New England
Man and Nature

SEINE HAUL*

by Rachel L. Carson

Rachel L. Carson (1907–), a graduate of the Pennsylvania College for Women, has been with the Fish and Wildlife Service since 1936. Her second book, *The Sea Around Us,* appeared in 1951.

That night the sea burned with unusual phosphorescence. Many fish were near the surface, feeding. The chill of November quickened their movements, and as their schools rolled through the water they disturbed the millions of luminous plankton animals, causing them to glow with a fierce luster. So the darkness of the moonless night was broken in many places by flickering patches of light that came and went, flared to brilliance, and died away.

Wandering with half a hundred other yearlings, Scomber saw before him, in darkness pinpricked with silver light, a diffuse glare made by an enormous school of large mackerel, feeding on shrimps, who were pursuing copepods. Thousands of mackerel were drifting slowly with the tide. The whole area covered by the mackerel gleamed mistily, for at every movement of the fish they collided with the myriads of light-producing animals that filled the water.

The yearlings drew closer to the large fish and soon mingled with them. This was a larger school than Scomber had ever known before. All about him were fish—layer upon layer in the water above—layer upon layer below; fish to right and left—fish before him and behind him.

Ordinarily the "tacks," or eight-to-ten-inch mackerel of the year, would have schooled separately, the division of small fish from large being accomplished by the slower swimming speed of the younger fish. But now that even the larger mackerel—the heavy fish six or eight years old—were moving no faster than the great, sprawling cloud of plankton on which they were preying, the tacks easily kept pace with them, and large and small mackerel schooled together.

The movements of the many fish in the water, the sight of the large mackerel darting, wheeling, turning in darkness, their bodies gleaming with a borrowed light, filled the yearlings with tension and excitement. But so engrossed were the mackerel in feeding that none of them, large or small, was at first aware of the passage through the sea overhead of a luminous streak, like the wake of a giant fish swimming at the surface.

The birds resting on the sea heard the night silence broken by a dull throbbing; some of them that slept more deeply than the others got up from the water only just in time to avoid being struck by the cruising vessel. But

* From *Under the Sea-Wind,* by Rachel L. Carson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 193–207. Copyright, 1941, by Rachel L. Carson. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press, Inc.

neither the startled cry of a fulmar nor the sharp flap of a shearwater's wing could send a message of warning to the fish below.

"Mackerel!" called the lookout at the masthead.

The throb of the engine died away to a scarcely audible heartbeat of sound. A dozen men leaned over the rail of the mackerel seiner, peering into darkness. The seiner carried no light. To do so might frighten the fish. Everywhere was blackness—a thick and velvet blackness in which sky was indistinguishable from water.

But wait! Was there a flicker of light—a pale ghost of flame playing over the water there off the port bow? If there had been such a light it faded away into darkness again and the sea lay in black anonymity—a blank negation of life. But there it came again, and, like a nascent flame in a breeze, or a match cupped in the hands, it kindled to a brilliant glow; it spread into the surrounding darkness; it moved, a gleaming, amorphous cloud, through the water.

"Mackerel," echoed the captain after he had watched the light for several minutes. "Listen!"

At first there was no sound but the soft slap of water against the boat. A sea bird, flying out of darkness into darkness, struck the mast, fell to the deck with a frightened cry, and fluttered off.

Silence again.

Then came a faint but unmistakable patter like a squall of rain on the sea—the sound of mackerel, the sound of a big school of mackerel feeding at the surface.

The captain gave the order to attempt a set. He himself ascended to the masthead to direct the operations. The crew fell into their places: ten into the seine boat attached to a boom on the starboard side of the vessel; two into the dory that was towed behind the seine boat. The throb of the engine swelled. The vessel began to move in a wide circle, swinging around the glowing patch of sea. That was to quiet the fish; to round them up in a smaller circle. Three times the seiner circled the school. The second circle was smaller than the first and the third was smaller than the second. The glow in the water was brighter now and the patch of light more concentrated.

After the third circling of the school, the fisherman in the stern of the boat passed to the fisherman in the dory one end of the 1200-foot net that lay piled in the bottom of the seine boat. The seine was dry, having caught no fish that night. The dory cast off and the men at the oars backed water. Again the vessel began to move, towing the seine boat. Now, as the space between the seine boat and dory lengthened, the net slid steadily over the side of the larger boat. A line buoyed by cork floats stretched across the water between them. From the cork line the net hung down in

a vertical curtain of webbing a hundred feet deep, held down in the water by leads in the lower border. The line marked out by corks grew from an arc to a semicircle; from a semicircle it swung to the full circle to round up the mackerel in a space four hundred feet across.

The mackerel were nervous and uneasy. Those on the outside of the school were aware of a heavy movement, as of some large sea creature in the water near them. They felt the wash of its passage through the sea—the heavy wake of displaced water. Some of them saw above them a moving, silver shape, long and oval. Beside it moved two smaller forms one before the other. The shapes might have been those of a she-whale with two calves following at her side. Fearing the strange monsters, the mackerel feeding at the edge of the school turned in toward the center. So, all around the great body of feeding fish, mackerel were wheeling about and plunging in through the school where they could not see the great, luminous shapes and where the wake of the passage of monstrous bodies was lost in the lesser vibrations of thousands of swimming mackerel.

As once more the sea monsters began to circle their prey, only one of the small forms followed the large shape. The other drifted overhead, splashing in the water as with long fins or flippers. Now as the seine boat traced its lesser streak of flame in the water beside the wider gleaming path of the vessel, the netting spilled into the water in its wake. The netting kindled a confused glitter of showering sparks as it slid into the water and hung like a thin, swaying curtain that glimmered palely, for the plankton animals were already gathering on it. The fish were afraid of the netting wall. As the arc enclosed by the twine swung wide and then little by little closed in a great circle, the mackerel at first drew even more compactly together, each part of the school shrinking away from the netting.

Somewhere near the center of the school, Scomber was confusedly aware of the increasing press of fish about him and of the blinding glare of their bodies, clothed in sea light. For him the net did not exist, for he had not seen its plankton-spangled meshes nor brushed its twine with snout or flanks. Uneasiness filled the water and passed with electric swiftness from fish to fish. All about the circle they began to bunt against the net and to veer off and dash back through the school, spreading panic.

One of the fishermen in the seine boat had been only two years at sea. Not long enough to forget, if he ever would, the wonder, the unslakable curiosity he had brought to his job—curiosity about what lay under the surface. He sometimes thought about fish as he looked at them on deck or being iced down in the hold. What had the eyes of the mackerel seen? Things he'd never see; places he'd never go. He seldom put it into words, but it seemed to him incongruous that a creature that had made a go of

life in the sea, that had run the gauntlet of all the relentless enemies that he knew roved through that dimness his eyes could not penetrate, should at last come to death on the deck of a mackerel seiner, slimy with fish gurry and slippery with scales. But after all, he was a fisherman and seldom had time to think such thoughts.

Tonight, as he fed the seine into the water and watched the scintillating light as it sank, he thought of the thousands of fish that were milling about down there. He could not see them; even those in the upper water looked only like streaks of light curveting in darkness—fireworks lost in a black, inverted sky, he thought a little dizzily. His mind's eye saw the mackerel running up to the net, bunting it with their snouts, backing off. They would be big mackerel, he thought, for the fiery streaks in the water gave a hint of their size. By the way the phosphorescent light, like a mass of molten metal, was becoming concentrated in the water, he knew that the bumping into the net and the backing off in alarm must be going on all around the circle, for now the ends of the net were closed. The seine boat had overlapped the dory and the two ends of netting had been brought together.

He helped lift the big leaden weight, fit the three-hundred-pound tom over the pursing lines, and start it sliding down the rope to close the open circle in the bottom of the net. The men were beginning to haul in the long purse lines. He thought of the mackerel down there, entrapped only by their own inability to see the way of escape through the bottom of the net. He thought of the tom sliding down, down, into the sea; of the big brass rings that hung from the lead line coming closer together as the purse line was drawn through them; of the dwindling circle at the bottom. But the way of escape must still be open.

The fish were nervous, he could tell. The streaks in the upper water were like hundreds of darting comets. The glow of the whole mass alternately dulled and kindled again to flame. It made him think of the light from steel furnaces in the sky. He seemed to see far down below the surface where the tom was shoving the rings along ahead of it, and the straining ropes were taking up the slack, and the fish were milling in the water—the fish that still had a way of escape. He could imagine that the big mackerel were getting wild. It was too large a school to have set about; but a skipper always hated to split a school. That was almost sure to send them off into deep water. Surely the big fellows would sound yet—would dive down through that shrinking circle straight toward the bottom of the sea, carrying the whole school with them.

He turned away from the water and with his hand felt the pile of wet rope in the bottom of the seine boat, trying to feel—for he could not see—the amount of rope piled up there and trying to guess how much was still to come in before the seine would be pursed.

A shout from the man at his elbow. He turned back to the water. The light within the circle of net was fading, flickering, dying away to an ashy afterglow, to darkness. The fish had sounded.

He leaned over the gunwales, peering down into dark water, watching the glow fade, seeing in imagination what he could not see in fact—the race and rush and downward whirl of thousands of mackerel. He suddenly wished he could be down there, a hundred feet down, on the lead line of the net. What a splendid sight to see those fish streaking by at top speed in a blaze of meteoric flashes! It was only later, when they had finished the long, wet task of repiling the 1200-foot length of seine in the boat, their hour's heavy work wasted, that he realized what it meant that the mackerel had sounded.

After their mad rush through the bottom of the seine, the mackerel scattered widely in the sea, and only when the night was nearly spent did any of the fish that had known the terror of the circling net feed quietly again in schools.

Before dawn, most of the seiners that had fished these waters during the night had vanished in darkness toward the west. One remained, having had bad luck all night, for out of six sets of the seine her crew had lost the fish five times by sounding. The solitary vessel was the only moving thing on the sea that morning when the east turned gray and the black water came ashimmer with silver light. Her crew was hoping for one more set—waiting for the mackerel whom the night's fishing had sent into deep water to show themselves at the surface at daybreak.

Moment by moment the light grew in the east. It picked out the tall mast and the deckhouse of the seiner; it spilled over the gunwales of the following seine boat and lost itself in the pile of netting, black with sea water. It shone on the mounds of the low wave hills and left their valleys in darkness.

Two kittiwakes came flying out of the dimness and perched on the mast, waiting for fish to be caught and sorted.

A quarter of a mile to the southwest, a dark, irregular patch appeared on the water—schooling mackerel, moving slowly into the east.

Quickly the seiner's course was changed to cross in front of the drifting school. With swift maneuvering of the boats, the net was dropped around it. Working with furious haste, the crew sent the tom plunging down the purse line, hauled in the ropes, closed the bottom of the net. Little by little, the men took in the slack of the seine, working the fish into the bunt or central part of the net where the twine was heaviest. Now the vessel came alongside the seine boat and received and made fast the mass of slack netting.

In the water beside the boat lay the bag of the seine, buoyed by corks

fastened to the cork line in groups of three or four. In the net were several thousand pounds of mackerel. Most of the fish were large, but among them were a hundred or more tacks or yearlings that had summered in a New England harbor and were only recently of the open sea. One of them was Scomber.

The bailing net, like a ladle of twine on a long wooden handle, was brought into position over the seine, dipped down into the churning mass of fish, raised by pulleys, and emptied out on deck. Several score of lithe and muscular mackerel flapped on the floor boards and sent a rainbow mist of fine scales into the air.

Something was wrong about the fish in the net. Something was wrong about the way they boiled up from below, almost leaping to meet the bailing net. Fish pursed in a seine usually tried to drive the net down, to sink it by sounding. But these fish were terrorized by something in the water—something they feared more than the great boat monster in the water alongside.

There was a heavy disturbance in the water outside the seine. A small triangular fin and the long lobe of a tail cut the surface. Suddenly there were dozens of fins all about the net. A four-foot fish, slim and gray, with a mouth set well back under the tip of his snout, lunged across the cork line and drove his body among the mackerel, slashing and biting.

Now all the dogfish of the pack tore at the seine in ravenous fury, eager to seize the mackerel inside. Their razor-sharp teeth ripped the stout twine as if it had been gauze, and great holes appeared in the net. There was a moment of indescribable confusion, in which the space circumscribed by the cork line became a seething vortex of life—a maelstrom of leaping fish, of biting teeth, of flashing green and silver.

Then, almost as suddenly as it had whirled up, the vortex subsided. In a swift draining away of the turmoil and confusion, the mackerel poured through the holes in the seine, fleet as darting shadows, and lost themselves in the sea.

Among the mackerel who escaped both the seine and the raiding dogfish was the yearling Scomber. By evening of the same day, following older fish and directed by overmastering instinct, he had migrated many miles to seaward of the waters frequented by gill netters and seiners. He was traveling far below the surface, the pale waters of the summer sea forgotten, and was swimming down through deepening green along sea roads new and strange to him. Always he moved south and west. He was going to a place he himself had never known—the deep, quiet waters along the edge of the continental shelf, off the Capes of Virginia.

There, in time, the winter sea received him.

READING

What detail does the author use in describing the seine haul? To what extent does she intermingle interpretations of the behavior of the fish?

How do such words as "tension," "excitement," "nervous," and "uneasy" strike you in regard to fish? What are some other words Rachel L. Carson uses? About what general quality do many of them center?

What are the main points of view used by the author? How many shifts are there?

INTERPRETATION

What purpose does the author have in shifting points of view?

As far as these selections show, compare the tone and purpose of Krutch and Rachel L. Carson in treating nature.

How would you differentiate the essays of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Rachel L. Carson? What conclusions do you draw about attitudes toward nature? about writing on nature?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Brook Trout
Hunters and Hunted
The Cruelty of the Sea
Nature—A Lesson for Humanitarians

EVERYONE A NATURALIST*

by Alan Devoe

Alan Devoe (1909–), author and naturalist, lives at Phudd Hill, Hillsdale, New York. Author of *Lives Around Us* (1942), *Speaking of Animals* (1947), and other books, he has written the column "Down to Earth" for the *American Mercury* since 1937.

There is a great deal of good counsel offered these days in books and magazines to the effect that all of us should cultivate some interest outside our regular business or occupation: some interest in which we can become absorbed in our spare hours and which can take us, so to speak, outside ourselves. Going to an occasional sports event, listening to the radio or watching a television screen, reading a little now and then . . . things like this, after all, are thin and inadequate ways of trying to fill up and round out our lives and give them a sustaining quality and a continuousness of interest. We need to cultivate some special interest in which we can satisfyingly use our minds, and to which we can devote ourselves with a real and continuing enthusiasm, and to which we can turn for complete vacation from the routine of business or housework or whatever in which we are all too easily imprisoned.

* From the *American Mercury*, LXVIII (January, 1949), 99–102. Copyright, 1949, by The American Mercury, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

The good counsellors who make this recommendation are of course quite right. A married man and woman, who take no greater excursions outside themselves than an occasional turning-on of the radio or an occasional watching together of a movie, are both likely to feel frustrated and confined, and to express these obscurely entertained feelings by an everlasting wrangle. It is notorious that the business or professional man, who has confined his whole interest to his business or profession, is likely not to survive his retirement for very long. Ennui, expressing itself *via* heart or kidneys or arteries, drops him in his tracks. The physical organism has no reason to go on continuing. It is equally notable that men devoted to hobbies and similar interests have a way of continuing into great old age, still lively and alert and inquisitive as chipmunks.

All very well, then; we should have an outside interest that can absorb us and keep us refreshed. But what?

A great many interests, from collecting Japanese prints to cultivating exotic flower-gardens, have the drawback of being expensive. A great many other interests have the drawback that they require their devotee to be in certain special kinds of places or to keep available certain special times or seasons. There are interests that can be indulged only when the strength of the legs is good or money is plentiful, or eyesight is keen, or under the terms of some similarly strict requirement. The man who devotes himself to any of these interests may find himself, by an act of circumstance, suddenly as deprived and forlorn as the dedicated businessman who has been obliged to retire.

There ought to be an interest free of these hazards. Happily, there is. It lies open to everyone to be a naturalist.

A drudging housewife who is seldom able to leave the kitchen can be a naturalist. A paralyzed man who cannot stir from his bedroom or his wheelchair can be a naturalist. A man of ninety can be one; a boy can be one; there are no conditions that can interfere more than trivially with the lives of naturalists.

II

To be a naturalist means simply to give awakened and alert attention to the world around us. It means simply that, instead of seeing birds casually and apathetically, we stare at them attentively and awarely, finding out what their names are, what their songs are, where and how they nest, and what all the intimacies of their lives are like. Being a naturalist means finding out which wildflowers are which, instead of thinking only in the vague general term, "vegetation." It means cocking a sharp eye at the stars, or listening with an acute ear to the sounds of the night, or smelling with a new keenness of discernment, and a new understanding, the earth-smells that drift in at the open window. Being a naturalist means simply being

alive to nature, instead of being, as we mostly are, half-alive or largely dead.

It is not necessary to have scientific training in order to be a naturalist. There are, of course, naturalists who are highly trained technical scientists; and it is of course the case that every naturalist, even the most amateur or most late-coming to the field, must acquire a certain science-mindedness. But advanced training in the technicalities of science is not necessary for being a naturalist, and a good one.

What famous naturalists off-hand come most readily to mind? Well, there was John Burroughs. When that fine old naturalist died, he took to the grave with him a nature-lore truly prodigious; but he was a self-taught man, with no scientific degree to his name. Ernest Thompson Seton was an animal-observer of extraordinary attainments, who discovered innumerable nature-facts not known before his time; but of scientific training he had none. Henry Thoreau and John Muir were not scientists. They were naturalists. They were good ones. It was likewise so with Mabel Osgood Wright, that admirable bird-observer, and with John James Audubon, the observer and painter, and with the woodcraft-master, Dan Beard.

If we think of the English naturalists, the same kinds of people come to mind: Richard Jefferies, sound and accurate and delightful, but no scientist . . . the incomparable W. H. Hudson, beloved by many scientists but not originally schooled to belong to their company . . . the contemporary Henry Williamson who, untrained as a formal scientist, nevertheless wrote in *Salar the Salmon* what is perhaps the most informative and profoundly insighted book about fish-life that has been published.

It lies open to everyone to be a naturalist. It lies open to everyone not only to have the experience of richer aliveness, which inevitably goes with awakening to discovery of the common miracles of earth, but even to have the experience of discovering brand-new facts under the sun . . . facts previously unknown even to the most expert scientists. The other day I had a letter from a woman in Maine. A farm housewife, she must spend a great deal of her time in the farmhouse kitchen, with nothing to look at but the small dooryard view that can be seen from the kitchen window. Ten or fifteen years ago, she became interested in the robins that nested every year in an apple tree. She began to watch them with a new attentiveness, and she has been watching them with that attentiveness ever since. She has observed every peculiarity of their nest-building each year, and has figured out a theory of the reasons for the variations; she has listened keenly to all the robins' songs and cries and call-notes, and has detected certain patterns in their "language"; she has observed the birds' every behavior, and has written up her notes in her spare time. She is a fine naturalist. Not only has her life been enormously more interesting and expanded, because of her interest, but the manuscript of her accumulated

notes—which I forwarded at her request to scientific colleagues—has been pronounced by the ornithological scientists to abound in new discoveries of the liveliest significance.

That sort of thing is not at all uncommon. Naturalists, even the most amateur, make discoveries every day in the week. Not huge and dramatic discoveries, it may be, but the finding of all sorts of odd little facts that fill out the chinks and gaps in formal scientific information. The hundred-odd acres of former farmland that are my own living laboratory have produced dozens of such, over the years of my watching and listening. It is highly unlikely that I shall ever discover a new species of bird, or, squinting up at the country sky on one of these glittering January nights, see a star that none of my astronomer friends has ever noticed. But after fifteen years of watching phoebes, I did see one pull up a worm, robin-fashion, which phoebes are not supposed to do, and the observation has made its way into the scientific phoebe-records. The phenomenon of a robin building nine nests side by side, in nine successive days, and laying three eggs in the first one, two eggs in the second, and one in each of the remaining seven, is not sufficiently arresting to make the front page of the newspapers; but it has been exciting enough to agitate appropriate scientific circles, and it was an exciting thing for me to see. Those of us who are home-acre naturalists, train-window naturalists, housewife or garden-variety naturalists, may find no new stars or discover no new species of animals. But all of us can make discoveries. All of us can be pioneers. As Fabre rightly remarked, by no means everything about even the commonest ant is known to human knowledge. Any small patch of the planet to which we give attention with alert eyes and ears and nostrils may at any moment disclose to us unsuspected secrets.

III

It has become a tired platitude to say that the best things in life are free. But in its platitudinous way the thing is surely everlastingly true. The world of nature *is* free for our enjoyment, from the glory of a sunrise to the quaintness of a cricket. It is all here, around us, for the taking. There is no charge. Not only free, nature has the priceless advantage of being everywhere. A man may be sick in bed; nature comes in at his window, in bird-songs, in flower-scents, in insect-voices, in a thousand kinds of presentation. A deaf man may be a naturalist. One of our best ones cannot hear a sound. A blind man may be a naturalist. Clarence Hawkes, writer of a dozen nature-books, drew his nature-knowledge from what he could hear and smell and touch. He could not see the earth he loved.

We can all of us, in this way or that, be naturalists. We can all take excursions outside ourselves, vacations from our cramping little worlds of four walls and every-dayness. We can make the horizon grow, and our

aliveness quicken; we can discover significances in a snow-crystal and astonishing events occurring under a common leaf. To be a naturalist is not to "escape" from the world. It is to re-find it. It is not to run away in fantasy to a far country. It is to come home. It is to return, that is, to the estate of fresh astonishment over the wonder of the nature of things, and of kindled curiosity about it, and of delight to be alive in it and not dead.

Everyone can be a naturalist. It carries its incalculable rewards.

READING

How does Devoe lead up to his definition of a naturalist at the beginning of Part II? How does he expand upon it in that section?

Of the naturalists he names, how many do you know? How much will additional information from a standard reference increase the meaning of his comments? Can you find the term "nature faker" in a desk dictionary, an unabridged dictionary, or a historical dictionary such as *The Dictionary of American English?*

What advantages of being a naturalist are explained in the third section? How do they compare with those presented at the beginning of the essay?

INTERPRETATION

Does the author stack the cards against hobbies not his own? If so, is his strategy harmless?

Are reading, sports events, and television all "thin and inadequate" to the same degree? Do you believe that to observe a blackbird is more rewarding than to observe a Buick?

How would you rank the advantages of being a naturalist? Would you give them the same order given by Devoe?

In Devoe's sense of the term is Krutch a naturalist? Rawlings? Carson? Give reasons.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Week End with a Sparrow
An Animal Courtship
Naturalist and Scientist
A Day with Thoreau
What Is a Nature Faker?

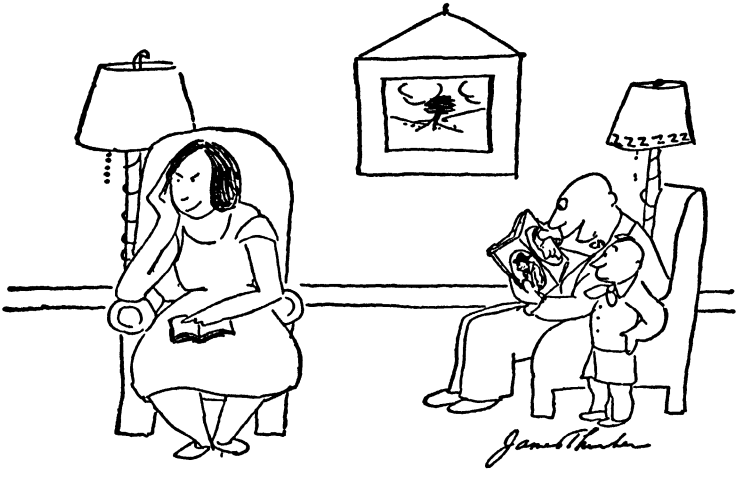
3
Men and Women

Then, growing older, as we reach toward maturity, we become aware of the existence of the two sexes, an awareness that opens up a whole new world of compelling and alluring problems—the relationships of men and women.

MEN AND WOMEN

by James Thurber

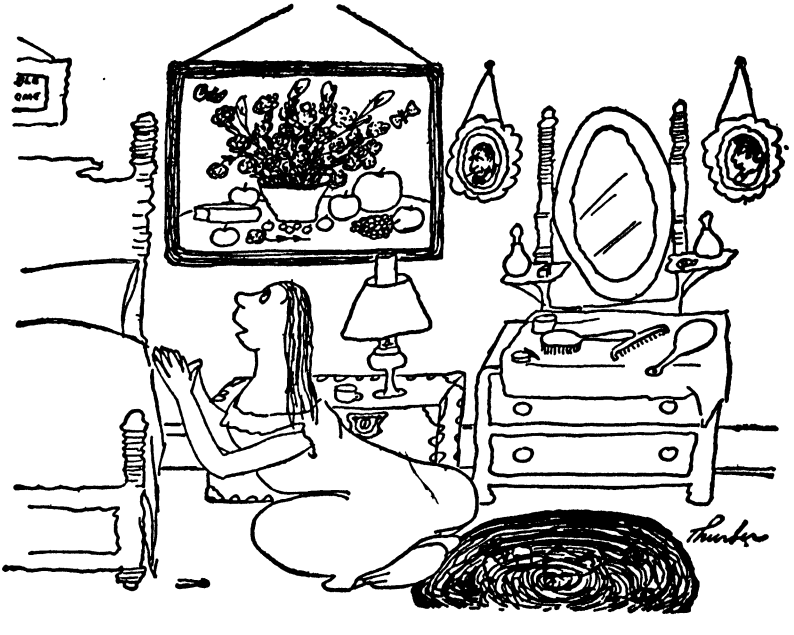
James Thurber (1894–), contemporary humorist, is a cartoonist, essayist, and dramatist. Born in Columbus, Ohio, he studied at Ohio State University. After working on several newspapers, he joined the staff of *The New Yorker,* where he was for a time managing editor. He is now a free-lance writer but still remains a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker.* He has written *My Life and Hard Times, Let Your Mind Alone, The Male Animal* (with Elliott Nugent), *Fables for Our Times, My World—and Welcome to It!, The Thurber Carnival,* and others.



"And This Is Tom Weatherby, an Old Beau of Your Mother's. He Never Got to First Base."

From the *New Yorker,* March 14, 1936. Copyright, 1936, by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

"That's My First Wife Up There, and This Is the *Present* Mrs. Harris"



". . . And Keep Me a Normal, Healthy, American Girl"

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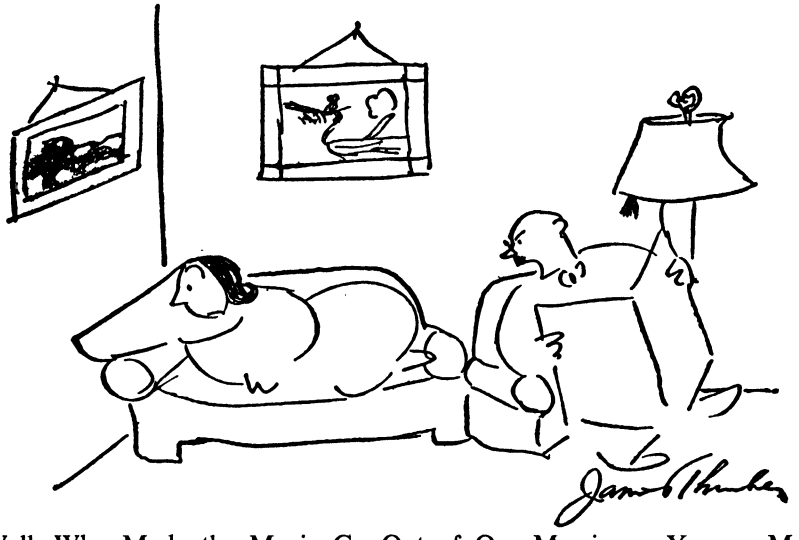
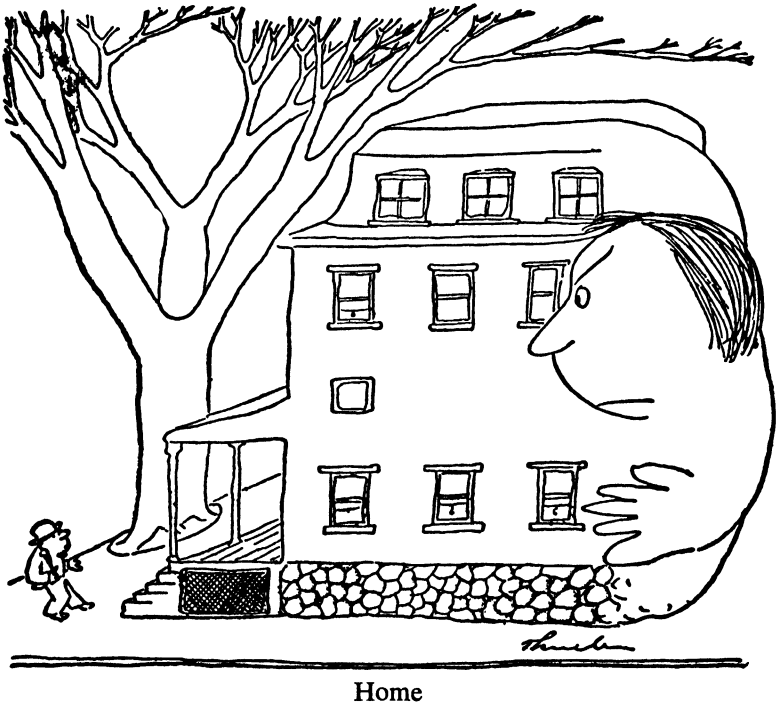


"Well, Who Made the Magic Go Out of Our Marriage—You or Me?"



Home

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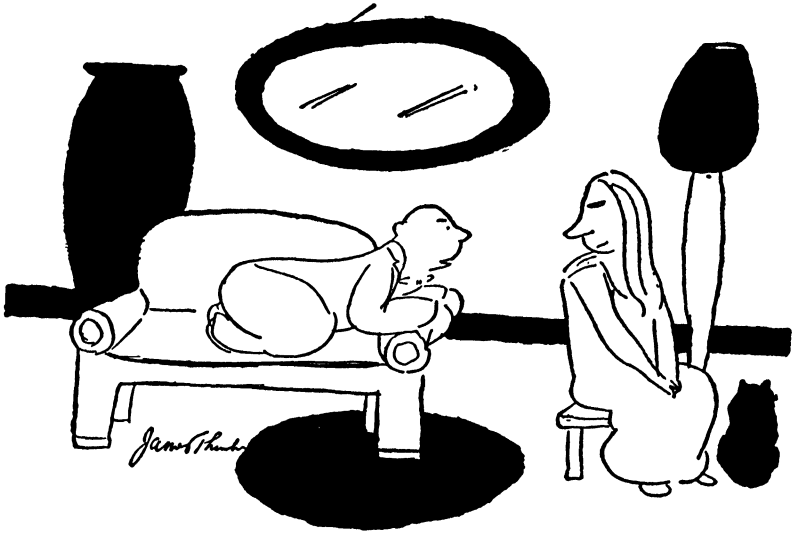
"Well, I'm Disenchanted, Too. We're *All* Disenchanted"



"What Do You Want to Be Inscrutable *For,* Marcia?"

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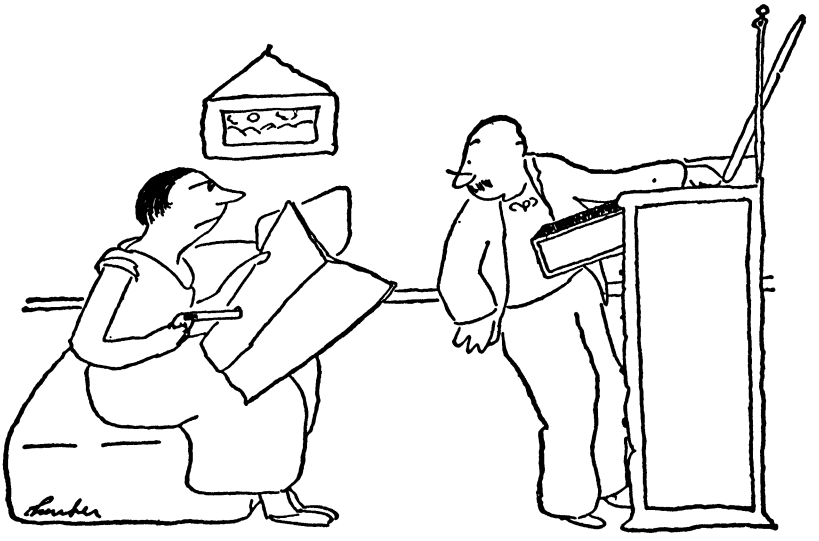
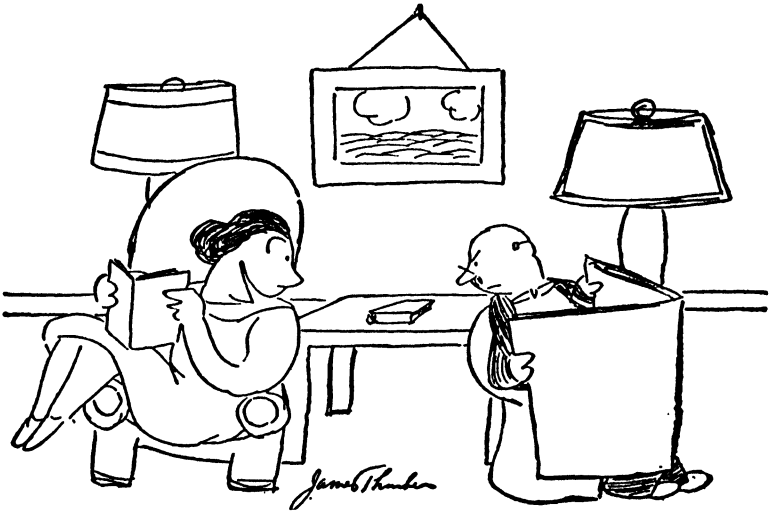


"Have You Seen My Pistol, Honey-Bun?"



"It's Our *Own* Story *Exactly!* He Bold as a Hawk, She Soft as the Dawn"

From the *New Yorker:* top, December 2, 1933; bottom, February 25, 1939. Copyright, 1933, 1939, by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

INTERPRETATION

What is Thurber satirizing here? What sort of women does he depict? what sort of men? What are their most striking qualities? Are these qualities notable in American women and men?

How fair is his treatment? What is the basic truth underlying these cartoons?

Do similar attitudes appear in "Photograph Album: Man with a Rose"? Which sex, if either, does Thurber favor? How significant is this pictorial commentary?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Americanism of Thurber
Today's Matriarchy
Thurber's View of Marriage
"They Lived Happily . . ."

THE NATURAL SUPERIORITY OF WOMEN*

by Ashley Montagu

Ashley Montagu (1905–), anthropologist, is a native of England. He took his Ph.D. at Columbia and teaches at Rutgers, where he is chairman of the department of anthropology. Among his books are *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: the Fallacy of Race* (1942) and *On Being Human* (1950).

Oh, no! I can hear it said, *not* superior. Equal, partners, complementary, different, but *not* superior. I can even foresee that men will mostly smile, while women, alarmed, will rise to the defense of men—women always have, and always will. I hope that what I shall have to say in this article will make them even more willing to do so, for men need their help more than they as yet, mostly, consciously realize.

Women superior to men? This is a new idea. There have been people who have cogently, but apparently not convincingly, argued that women were as good as men, but I do not recall anyone who has publicly provided the evidence or even argued that women were better than or superior to men. How, indeed, could one argue such a case in the face of all the evidence to the contrary? Is it not a fact that by far the largest number of geniuses, great painters, poets, philosophers, scientists, etc., etc., have been men, and that women have made, by comparison, a very poor showing? Clearly the superiority is with men? Where are the Leonardos, the Michelangelos, the Shakespeares, the Donnes, the Galileos, the Whiteheads, the Kants, the Bachs, *et al.*, of the feminine sex? In fields in which women have excelled, in poetry and the novel, how many poets and novelists of the really first rank have there been? Haven't well-bred young women been educated for centuries in music? And how many among them have been great composers or instrumentalists? Composers—none of the first

* From the *Saturday Review*, XXXV, No. 9 (March 1, 1952), 8 *et seq.* Copyright, 1952, 1953, by Ashley Montagu. Reprinted by permission.

rank. Instrumentalists—well, in the recent period there have been such accomplished artists as Myra Hess and Wanda Landowska. Possibly there is a clue here to the answer to the question asked. May it not be that women are just about to emerge from the period of subjection during which they were the "niggers" of the masculine world?

The Royal Society of London has at last opened its doors and admitted women to the highest honor which it is in the power of the English scientific world to bestow—the Fellowship of the Royal Society. I well remember that when I was a youth—less than a quarter of a century ago—it was considered inconceivable that any woman would ever have brains enough to attain great distinction in science. Mme. Curie was an exception. But the half dozen women Fellows of the Royal Society in England are not. Nor is Lisa Meitner. And Mme. Curie no longer remains the only woman to share in the Nobel Prize award for science. There is Marie Curie's daughter, Irene Joliot-Curie, and there is Gerty Cory (1947) for physiology and medicine. Nobel prizes in literature have gone to Selma Lagerlof, Grazia Deledda, Sigrid Undset, Pearl Buck, and Gabriela Mistral. As an artist Mary Cassatt (1845–1926) was every bit as good as her great French friends Degas and Manet considered her to be, but it has taken the rest of the world another fifty years grudgingly to admit it. Among contemporaries Georgia O'Keeffe can hold her own with the best.

It is not, however, going to be any part of this article to show that women are about to emerge as superior scientists, musicians, painters, or the like. I believe that in these fields they may emerge as equally good, and possibly not in as large numbers as men, largely because the motivations and aspirations of most women will continue to be directed elsewhere. But what must be pointed out is that women are, in fact, just beginning to emerge from the period of subjection when they were treated in a manner not unlike that which is still meted out to the Negro in the Western world. The women of the nineteenth century were the "niggers" of the male-dominated world. All the traits that are mythically attributed to the Negro at the present time were for many generations saddled upon women. Women had smaller brains than men and less intelligence, they were more emotional and unstable, in a crisis you could always rely upon them to swoon or become otherwise helpless, they were weak and sickly creatures, they had little judgment and less sense, could not be relied upon to handle money, and as for the world outside, there they could be employed only at the most menial and routine tasks.

The biggest dent in this series of myths was made by World War I, when women were for the first time called upon to replace men in occupations which were formerly the exclusive preserve of men. They became bus drivers, conductors, factory workers, farm workers, laborers, supervisors,

executive officers, and a great many other things at which many had believed they could never work. At first it was said that they didn't do as well as men, then it was grudgingly admitted that they weren't so bad, and by the time the war was over many employers were reluctant to exchange their women employees for men! But the truth was out—women could do as well as men in most of the fields which had been considered forever closed to them because of their alleged natural incapacities, and in many fields, particularly where delicate precision work was involved, they had proved themselves superior to men. From 1918 to 1939 the period for women was one essentially of consolidation of gains, so that by the time that World War II broke out there was no hesitation on the part of anyone in calling upon women to serve in the civilian roles of men and in many cases also in the armed services.

But women have a long way to go before they reach full emancipation—emancipation from the myths from which they themselves suffer. It is, of course, untrue that women have smaller brains than men. The fact is that in proportion to body weight they have larger brains than men; but this fact is in itself of no importance because within the limits of normal variation of brain size and weight there exists no relation between these factors and intelligence. Women have been conditioned to believe that they are inferior to men, and they have assumed that what everyone believes is a fact of nature; and as men occupy the superior positions in almost all societies, this superiority is taken to be a natural one. "Woman's place is in the home" and man's place is in the counting house and on the board of directors. "Women should not meddle in men's affairs." And yet the world does move. Some women have become Members of Parliament and even attained Cabinet rank. In the United States they have even gotten as far as the Senate. They have participated in peace conferences, but it is still inconceivable to most persons that there should ever be a woman Prime Minister or President. And yet that day, too, will come. *Eppure si muove!*[1]

Woman has successfully passed through the abolition period, the abolition of her thraldom to man; she has now to pass successfully through the period of emancipation, the freeing of herself from the myth of inferiority, and the realization of her potentialities to the fullest.

And now for the evidence which proves the superiority of woman to man. But first, one word in explanation of the use of the word "superiority." The word is used in its common sense as being of better quality than, or of higher nature or character. Let us begin at the very beginning. What about the structure of the sexes? Does one show any superiority over the other? The answer is a resounding "Yes!" And I should like this "Yes"

[1] Nevertheless it moves!

to resound all over the world, for no one has made anything of this key fact which lies at the base of all the differences between the sexes and the superiority of the female to the male. I refer to the chromosomal structure of the sexes. The chromosomes, those small cellular bodies which contain the hereditary particles, the genes, which so substantially influence one's development and fate as an organism, provide us with our basic facts.

In the sex cells there are twenty-four chromosomes, but only one of these is a sex chromosome. There are two kinds of sex chromosomes, X and Y. Half the sperm cells carry X and half carry Y chromosomes. All the female ova are made up of X-chromosomes. When an X-bearing sperm fertilizes an ovum the offspring is always female. When a Y-bearing chromosome fertilizes an ovum the offspring is always male. And this is what makes the difference between the sexes. So what? Well, the sad fact is that the Y-chromosome is but an iota, the merest bit, of a remnant of an X-chromosome; it is a crippled X-chromosome. The X-chromosomes are fully developed structures; the Y-chromosome is the merest comma. It is as if in the evolution of sex a particle one day broke away from an X-chromosome, and thereafter in relation to X-chromosomes could produce only an incomplete female—the creature we now call the male! It is to this original chromosomal deficiency that all the various troubles to which the male falls heir can be traced.

In the first place the chromosomal deficiency of the male determines his incapacity to have babies. This has always been a sore point with men, though consciously they would be the last to admit it, although in some primitive societies, as among the Australian aborigines, it is the male who conceives a child by dreaming it, and then telling his wife. In this way a child is eventually born to them, the wife being merely the incubator who hatches the egg placed there through the grace of her husband.

The fact that men cannot have babies and suckle them nor remain in association with their children as closely as the wife has an enormous effect upon their subsequent psychological development. Omitting altogether from consideration the psychologic influences exercised by the differences in the hormonal secretions of the sexes, one can safely say that the mother-child relationship confers enormous benefits upon the mother which are not nearly so substantively operative in the necessary absence of such a relationship between father and child. The maternalizing influences of being a mother in addition to the fact of being a woman has from the very beginning of the human species—about a million years ago—made the female the more humane of the sexes. The love of a mother for her child is the basic patent and the model for *all* human relationships. Indeed, to the extent to which men approximate in their relationships with their fellow men to the love of the mother for her child, to that extent do they move more closely to the attainment of perfect human relations. The mother-

child relationship is a dependent-interdependent one. The interstimulation between mother and child is something which the father misses, and to that extent suffers from the want of. In short, the female in the mother-child relationship has the advantage of having to be more considerate, more self-sacrificing, more cooperative, and more altruistic than usually falls to the lot of the male.

The female thus acquires, in addition to whatever natural biological advantages she starts with, a competence in social understanding which is usually denied the male. This, I take it, is one of the reasons why women are usually so much more able to perceive the nuances and pick up the subliminal signs in human behavior which almost invariably pass men by. It was, I believe, George Jean Nathan who called woman's intuition merely man's transparency. With all due deference to Mr. Nathan and sympathy for his lot as a mere male, I would suggest that man's opacity would be nearer the mark. It is because women have had to be so unselfish and forbearing and self-sacrificing and maternal that they possess a deeper understanding than men of what it is to be human. What is so frequently termed feminine indecision, the inability of women to make up their minds, is in fact an inverse reflection of the trigger-thinking of men. Every salesgirl prefers the male customer because women take time to think about what they are buying, and the male usually hasn't the sense enough to do so. Women don't think in terms of "Yes" or "No." Life isn't as simple as all that—except to males. Men tend to think in terms of the all-or-none principle, in terms of black and white. Women are more ready to make adjustments, to consider the alternative possibilities, and see the other colors and gradations in the range between black and white.

By comparison with the deep involvement of women in living, men appear to be only superficially so. Compare the love of a male for a female with the love of the female for the male. It is the difference between a rivulet and a great deep ocean. Women love the human race; men are, on the whole, hostile to it. Men act as if they haven't been adequately loved, as if they had been frustrated and rendered hostile, and becoming aggressive they say that aggressiveness is natural and women are inferior in this respect because they tend to be gentle and unaggressive! But it is precisely in this capacity to love and unaggressiveness that the superiority of women to men is demonstrated, for whether it be natural to be loving and cooperative or not, so far as the human species is concerned, its evolutionary destiny, its very survival is more closely tied to this capacity for love and cooperation than with any other. So that unless men learn from women how to be more loving and cooperative they will go on making the kind of mess of the world which they have so effectively achieved thus far.

And this is, of course, where women can realize their power for good

in the world, and make their greatest gains. *It is the function of women to teach men how to be human.* Women must not permit themselves to be deviated from this function by those who tell them that their place is in the home in subservient relation to man. It is, indeed, in the home that the foundations of the kind of world in which we live are laid, and in this sense it will always remain true that the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world. And it is in this sense that women must assume the job of making men who will know how to make a world fit for human beings to live in. The greatest single step forward in this direction will be made when women consciously assume this task—the task of teaching their children to be like themselves, loving and cooperative.

As for geniuses, I think that almost everyone will agree that there have been more geniuses for being human among women than there have among men. This, after all, is the true genius of women, and it is because we have not valued the qualities for being human anywhere nearly as highly as we have valued those for accomplishment in the arts and sciences that we have out-of-focusedly almost forgotten them. Surely, the most valuable quality in any human being is his capacity for being loving and cooperative. We have been placing our emphases on the wrong values —it is time we recognized what every man and every woman at the very least subconsciously knows—the value of being loving, and the value of those who can teach this better than anyone else.

Physically and psychically women are by far the superiors of men. The old chestnut about women being more emotional than men has been forever destroyed by the facts of two great wars. Women under blockade, heavy bombardment, concentration camp confinement, and similar rigors withstand them vastly more successfully than men. The psychiatric casualties of civilian populations under such conditions are mostly masculine, and there are more men in our mental hospitals than there are women. The steady hand at the helm is the hand that has had the practice at rocking the cradle. Because of their greater size and weight men are physically more powerful than women—which is not the same thing as saying that they are stronger. A man of the same size and weight as a woman of comparable background and occupational status would probably not be any more powerful than a woman. As far as constitutional strength is concerned women are stronger than men. Many diseases from which men suffer can be shown to be largely influenced by their relation to the male Y-chromosome. From fertilization on more males die than females. Deaths from almost all causes are more frequent in males at all ages. Though women are more frequently ill than men, they recover from illness more easily and more frequently than men.

Women, in short, are fundamentally more resistant than men. With the exception of the organ systems subserving the functions of reproduc-

tion women suffer much less frequently than men from the serious disorders which affect mankind. With the exception of India women everywhere live longer than men. For example, the expectation of life of the female child of white parentage in the United States at the present time is over seventy-one years, whereas for the male it is only sixty-five and a half years. Women are both biologically stronger and emotionally better shock absorbers than men. The myth of masculine superiority once played such havoc with the facts that in the nineteenth century it was frequently denied by psychiatrists that the superior male could ever suffer from hysteria. Today it is fairly well known that males suffer from hysteria and hysteriform conditions with a preponderance over the female of seven to one! Epilepsy is much more frequent in males, and stuttering has an incidence of eight males to one female.

At least four disorders are now definitely known to be due to genes carried in the Y-chromosomes, and hence are disorders which can appear only in males. These are barklike skin (ichthyosis hystrix gravior), dense hairy growth on the ears (hypertrichosis), nonpainful hard lesions of the hands and feet (keratoma dissipatum), and a form of webbing of the toes. It is, however, probable that the disadvantages accruing to the male are not so much due to what is in the Y-chromosome as to what is wanting in it. This is well shown in such serious disorders as hemophilia or bleeder's disease. Hemophilia is inherited as a single sex-linked recessive gene. The gene, or hereditary particle, determining hemophilia is linked to the X-chromosome. When, then, an X-chromosome which carries the hemophilia gene is transmitted to a female it is highly improbable that it will encounter another X-chromosome carrying such a gene; hence, while not impossible, hemophilia has never been described in a female. Females are the most usual transmitters of the hemophilia gene, but it is only the males who are affected, and they are affected because they don't have any properties in their Y-chromosome capable of suppressing the action of the hemophilia gene. The mechanism of and the explanation for (red-green) color blindness is the same. About 8 per cent of all white males are color blind, but only half of one per cent of females are so affected.

Need one go on? Here, in fact, we have the explanation of the greater constitutional strength of the female as compared with the male. This may not be, and probably is not, the complete explanation of the physical inferiorities of the male as compared with the female, but it is certainly physiologically the most demonstrable and least questionable one. To the unbiased student of the facts there can no longer remain any doubt of the constitutional superiority of the female. I hope that I have removed any remaining doubts about her psychological superiority where psychological superiority most counts, namely, in a human being's capacity for loving other human beings.

I think we have overemphasized the value of intellectual qualities and grossly underemphasized the value of the qualities of humanity which women possess to such a high degree. I hope I shall not be taken for an anti-intellectual when I say that intellect without humanity is not good enough, and that what the world is suffering from at the present time is not so much an overabundance of intellect as an insufficiency of humanity. Consider men like Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler. These are the extreme cases. What these men lacked was the capacity to love. What they possessed in so eminent a degree was the capacity to hate. It is not for nothing that the Bolsheviks attempted to abolish the family and masculinize women, while the Nazis made informers of children against their parents and put the state so much before the family that it became a behemoth which has well-nigh destroyed everyone who was victimized by it.

What the world stands so much in need of at the present time, and what it will continue to need if it is to endure and increase in happiness, is more of the maternal spirit and less of the masculine. We need more persons who will love and less who will hate, and we need to understand how we can produce them; for if we don't try to understand how we may do so we shall continue to flounder in the morass of misunderstanding which frustrated love creates. For frustrated love, the frustration of the tendencies to love with which the infant is born, constitutes hostility. Hatred is love frustrated. This is what too many men suffer from and an insufficient number of women recognize, or at least too many women behave as if they didn't recognize it. What most women have learned to recognize is that the much-bruited superiority of the male isn't all that it's cracked up to be. The male doesn't seem to be as wise and as steady as they were taught to believe. But there appears to be a conspiracy of silence on this subject. Perhaps women feel that men ought to be maintained in the illusion of their superiority because it might not be good for them or the world to learn the truth. In this sense this article, perhaps, should have been entitled "What Every Woman Knows." But I'm not sure that every woman knows it. What I am sure of is that many women don't appear to know it, and that there are even many women who are horrified at the thought that anyone can entertain the idea that women are anything but inferior to men. This sort of childishness does no one any good. The world is in a mess. Men, without any assistance from women, have created it, and they have created it not because they have been failed by women, but because men have never really given women a chance to serve them as they are best equipped to do—by teaching men how to love their fellow men.

Women must cease supporting men for the wrong reasons in the wrong sort of way, and thus cease causing men to marry them for the wrong reasons, too. "That's what a man wants in a wife, mostly," says Mrs. Poyser (in *Adam Bede*), "he wants to make sure o' one fool as

'ull tell him he's wise." Well, it's time that men learned the truth, and perhaps they are likely to take it more gracefully from another male than from their unacknowledged betters. It is equally important that women learn the truth, too, for it is to them that the most imporant part, the more fundamental part, of the task of remaking the world will fall, for the world will be remade only by remaking, or rather helping, human beings to realize themselves more fully in terms of what their mothers have to give them. Without adequate mothers life becomes inadequate, nasty, and unsatisfactory, and Mother Earth becomes a battlefield on which fathers slay their young and are themselves slain.

Men have had a long run for their money in running the affairs of the world. It is time that women realized that men will continue to run the world for some time yet, and that they can best assist them to run it more humanely by teaching them, when young, what humanity means. Men will thus not feel that they are being demoted, but rather that their potentialities for good are so much more increased, and what is more important, instead of feeling hostile toward women they will for the first time learn to appreciate them at their proper worth. There is an old Spanish proverb which has it that a good wife is the workmanship of a good husband. Maybe. But of one thing we can be certain: a good husband is the workmanship of a good mother. The best of all ways in which men can help themselves is to help women realize themselves. This way both sexes will come for the first time fully into their own, and the world of mankind may then look forward to a happier history than it has thus far enjoyed.

READING

Why, after writing his first two paragraphs, does Montagu largely discount them?

What are the major pieces of evidence that Montagu offers in support of his thesis? Strictly speaking, is it *evidence* that he offers?

What standard of value is used by Montagu? To what extent is it a common assumption, an assumption of the author, or an assumption that needs arguing? Is it a "black or white" standard?

INTERPRETATION

What do you think of Montagu's subjection theory by which he explains the dearth of female geniuses throughout history? What do you think of his motivation theory?

How well does Montagu support his contention that women are capable of greater love than men? What, in your opinion, are the chances that women will "save" the world?

Compare the attitudes of Thurber and Montagu toward women.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Why Men Die Sooner
Why Women Aren't Geniuses
A Personal Observation
A Defense of Male Superiority
The Durability of Women

WHAT IS WRONG WITH AMERICAN WOMEN?*

by Dorothy Thompson

Dorothy Thompson (1894–), columnist, commentator, and lecturer, was married to Sinclair Lewis. She lived for many years in Europe, where she was foreign correspondent for a number of American newspapers.

My first reaction to the question posed by my own mind: "What is wrong with American women?" was a rather irritated mental answer: *"Nothing's* wrong with them!"

I had only recently finished reading Ashley Montagu's provocative book, *The Natural Superiority of Women.* Largely based on his observations of American women, Mr. Montagu seems to have disposed of the "woman question" once and for all. If there's anything amiss with either sex, it is, according to Mr. Montagu, with woman's lesser half.

Man, he asserts, is larger, more muscular, and has a larger brain. But woman is healthier, longer-lived, less susceptible to shock, and has a heavier brain in proportion to body weight than man. Men go crazy oftener than women, and oftener commit suicide. If men are more creative in the arts, it is only out of overcompensation for their natural inferiority to women, who are creative in themselves, and of life.

Women are more sensitive than men and far closer to humanity—in fact, "the genius of women is the genius of humanity." Girls are brighter than boys in all subjects except those that depend on numerical reasoning and spatial aptitudes, and in "information" subjects. Woman has been, and still is, subjected by male egotism and by persistent myths and superstitions regarding her inferiority, but if the world is ever to be saved, woman will have to do it.

Mr. Montagu thus reaches the conclusion of Benjamin Kidd, the British social-philosopher of a generation ago, that only mamma and the triumph of the "feminine principle"—of nurture and conservation—can redeem humanity from destructive man. Considering the fact that by and large this is and has been a "man's world," putting human salvation in mamma's lap might be considered a male neurosis and slightly impertinent. The late Robert Briffault held a similar opinion regarding the role of women, as the real founders of civilization.

Shakespeare cast a woman, Portia (disguised as a man), to incorporate the highest concept of justice—its temperance with mercy. George Bernard Shaw never doubted that woman was the more naturally intelligent sex, and the dominant one, sweetly bending unsuspecting man to the purposes of creative evolution, of which she is the selected instrument.

* From "What Is Wrong with American Women?" by Dorothy Thompson, the *Ladies' Home Journal,* LXX, No. 8 (August, 1953), 11 *et seq.* Copyright, 1953, by Dorothy Thompson. Reprinted by permission of the author.

No effort has been spared by biologists, sociologists, psychologists, historians, novelists, dramatists and poets to describe, dissect, analyze and interpret "woman" to herself and the other half of humanity. The latest attempt can be read in the monumental masterpiece of Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*. Mlle. de Beauvoir, a woman herself, by no means so idealizes "woman" as do the gentlemen I have mentioned. She attributes to her few, if any, mental or spiritual superiorities. She recognizes, however, the real handicaps of woman's subjection and those that have been imposed upon her by cultural forces.

In a generation of reading and listening to all the talk about woman I have often thought to myself, "There ain't no such creature." I have even considered writing a book entitled *Are Men People?* Every generalization or abstraction reduces the individual to one of a certain number of types. But individuals happily fall out of all the categories.

Women are slightly more than half of the human race; but, confining ourselves to Western civilization, the 100 per cent woman or 100 per cent man is, I think, a figment of imagination. Many of the personality characteristics attributed to women are to be found in men, and vice versa.

One fact, however, can be noted from even the most superficial observation of American life. Recognition that in this country women dominate men, at least in the home, is revealed in comic strips (usually drawn by men), soap operas, the reportage of popular magazines, and responses to the thousands of questionnaires with which social studies attempt to establish statistically what is going on here. The most constant theme of American humor is the docile husband, absolutely at the mercy of his wife and/or daughters who always know what is better for him than he does himself.

Whatever father may be in his office, club or fraternal organization, in his home he plays second fiddle. If father is the sole breadwinner, mother spends the family income. Father is, in effect, put on an allowance. American homes are made to the tastes of women rather than of men. The bedroom shared by a couple is distinctly a woman's room. One can imagine it occupied by a woman alone, but seldom by a man alone. Father's "den" is seldom father's, but, for whatever purpose originally designed, becomes, in fact, another family living or game room. Children, if they exist, dominate the household and mother dominates the children.

The social and cultural life of the family is largely decided by the wife, who often accepts or rejects invitations without consulting her husband, and selects the lectures, plays or movies he should see or hear.

European women are astonished by American men, who are "the world's best husbands." The susceptibility of American men to European women, whenever large numbers of them are stationed abroad as the result of a war, has often been presented as the other side of the coin. Marriages

between American men and European women last better than marriages between American women and European men, who find American women incurably "bossy." American women are inclined to be hostile to their European sisters who "aren't sincere with men and get everything by the indirect way." (In this remark, be it said, there is an element of envy—scornful, yes, envy nevertheless.)

That there is something profoundly unsatisfactory in the relations between men and women in America is proved by the incidence of divorce, the highest in the Western world, and the case histories in the files of psychiatrists. Economics, of course, play a considerable role in this, as well as cultural patterns. More American women are economically independent than any other, and these do not have to endure an incompatible marriage in order to keep a roof over their heads. On the other hand, American husbands walk out on their wives oftener than European men do, despite the fact that American law and courts are highly favorable to women, and likely to award them alimony whether they need it or not. Love and marriage are highly romanticized in America. A contract in advance of marriage which settles the property contributions and claims of each partner is frowned upon as "mercenary" and "commercial."

Although there are no indications whatever that Americans are more monogamous than other humans, a deeper sense of guilt attends occasional infidelities here than elsewhere. This guilt feeling brings about the breakup of families on grounds that would be rejected by more emotionally mature peoples. A husband and father of a family "falls in love" with another woman some years after marriage.

An intelligent European woman would, like any other woman, suffer from such a situation, should she discover it. But she would be most unlikely to force a showdown; that, in the moment of her husband's new passion, could only end in a breakup of their marriage. She would rather incline to close her eyes to it, and treat it as a temporary aberration that would not, if wisely handled, lead a father to desert his home and children.

Above all, the "other woman," if she had any decent instincts, would not feel herself justified in demanding that her lover desert wife, home and children to marry her. The American woman's notion that every illicit love affair must be made legitimate at no matter what cost to others, and the American man's notion that he must marry and "make an honest woman" of every lady whose charms attract him, is a perverted remnant of an otherwise unhonored puritanism, which seeks to absolve while compounding guilt by a series of marriage licenses.

Every marriage will go on the rocks if, above and beyond sexual interest, there does not exist mutual respect, tenderness, appreciation, tastes, the pleasure of doing things together, ease with each other. Every good marriage is a kind of erotic friendship. But we are just lying to ourselves if

we foster the illusion that in the course of a marriage husband or wife or both will not in all likelihood be powerfully attracted to another mate. The test of a marriage comes precisely when this happens. If the marriage was a mistake in the first place, if there has been no deep compatibility, the couple will, in every probability, break up at this point. But if this is not the case, and the offended partner does not behave hysterically, the odds are in favor that husband (or wife) would eventually come home if he (or she) could assume that the incident would be quietly buried.

I know of several marriages that have survived such crises through the deep love and self-control of the offended partner.

But this is not the usual American response to such crises. The usual American response subverts real values. Married love must be struggled for at times. It is much more than "sex," which is one of the more common commodities. Inability to make the differentiation deepens the unhappiness of both American men and women.

In this age of woman's emancipation, American women, the most emancipated, fail, perhaps more than others, to face certain facts about their femininity. One fact is that woman is that half of the human race more restricted in personal liberty. Unless children are to be incubated in test tubes and reared in state institutions, against which every feminine instinct revolts, women will never have as much freedom, or the same kind of freedom, as men. One cannot get around the fact that a child is begotten by its father in a few seconds, but must be carried by its mother for nine months; that its mother is thereafter its natural source of nourishment for some months more, and its intimate guardian and protector for at least several years. A woman with children is "tied down."

Of course nearly every human being is tied down one way or another. Men by their jobs, ambitions and the needs of their families. Freedom is never absolute, but relative. Freedom of choice involves living with one's choice. But men have greater freedom of choice, in fact and emotionally. They can choose a career and, given a fair break, stick to it, uninterrupted by pregnancies, childbirth and child caring, the "other job" that women, however gifted and independent they may be, cannot avoid without sacrificing an essential part of themselves.

A woman with a career can revolt against this division of herself as a separate individual person and as a race-bound mother.

She often does, sometimes consciously and radically solving the dilemma by rejecting motherhood, and thereby rejecting real marriage. The price is high. No man has to give up being a complete male in order to be a full-time concentrated artist, engineer, executive or worker. But the woman who is talented and intellectually equipped for a demanding art or profession is, if she be fully feminine, torn between two functions. The feminist movement never really faced up to this fact. Neither do all the bills of

rights, which pretend to guarantee women equal freedoms, as though facts of nature could be overcome by fiat.

If a professional woman is successful enough, she may solve her dilemma by employing another woman to care for her child or children. But where is she to find a woman for a lesser wage than her own, who can or will give her child and her household the care and attention she would give them herself? In America today she can hardly find such a person. The woman in the office is therefore perpetually of divided mind. Her thoughts keep fleeing home to her children. She may suppress them successfully to concentrate on her work, but she cannot successfully repress the emotions involved. They produce a perpetual feeling of guilt and inadequacy. Every crisis in her child's development is, she feels, her fault: she has been robbing it of something—namely, herself—and she must make it up to the child, which she usually does by overindulging it.

Or, though she may sincerely love her child, she tends unconsciously to resent the source of her guilt feeling and often to resent its father, unconsciously envious of his greater freedom, and expressing the resentment in chilling aggressiveness. Men, since they are not women, rarely understand or sympathize with the frustrations of which they are also the victims.

Women who are possessed of no exceptional talents, but have earned their own livings and accounted to no one else, often find it psychologically very hard to live as "dependents." This is especially so since "occupation housewife" ranks in their own minds below the secretary or filing clerk. Apart from that, the desire to earn and control one's own money is very deep in women who have ever known economic independence. Either they hate to spend their husbands' income on themselves, indulging in a false luxury of self-sacrifice, or they spend it extravagantly, taking a revenge of which they are entirely unconscious. More marriages, I am told, break up over the question of money than over infidelity.

There is another consideration that worries women who possess salable skills which rust with disuse. The woman who long suspends her earning capacities finds it hard to get back into the "market." What happens if her husband dies—or leaves her? Or if a long illness interrupts *his* salary? Such considerations, in a highly competitive society, lead her to hold on to a job when she knows that her family life suffers from her doing so. She finds herself cheating her family, out of a desire to protect it.

Neither businesses nor schools are run to suit the hours of the working mother. Women teachers can adjust their hours to those of their school-age children and are usually happy and successful teachers. Women writers and artists have been happy wives and mothers because they can work under their own roofs. The same is true of women physicians, with offices in their own homes. Women, I have found, can stand more distraction than men,

interrupting their work to cook a meal or pick up the baby, and going back to it quite calmly.

But even washing, ironing and dressmaking have gone into laundries and factories, and the poor widowed mother can rarely support her children even with such work, while keeping them at her side.

I have wondered why a great deal of office work, such as typing and correspondence, could not be satisfactorily done by capable women picking up and returning the work to the office, but performing it at home. Or why businesses employing scores or hundreds of women do not establish nurseries to which working mothers can bring their small children. And, above all, why women with all their political and economic power cannot force from society more consideration of their own special problems.

Everyone would be happier if they did, not least of all men, upon whom the frustrations of women inevitably rebound. The unsolved problem of the married woman who is also a working mother in a world based on division of labor is a social and economic gain to only one class of our society—the psychiatrists.

That psychiatrists flourish in America from the pockets of women patients, as they do nowhere else, shows that whether or not there's anything wrong with American women, their environment is not yet adjusted to their needs.

READING

Is Dorothy Thompson's summary of the Montagu book a fair one? (His article is a fairly comprehensive statement of the book.)

What use is made of the references to Benjamin Kidd, Robert Briffault, and Simone de Beauvoir? What have you been able to find out about these people?

What is Dorothy Thompson's main criticism of Montagu? To what extent is she in agreement?

What is Dorothy Thompson's special approach to the problem?

INTERPRETATION

Distinguish between the approaches of Dorothy Thompson and Montagu? Which one seems to you the more fruitful?

Even as Dorothy Thompson accuses Montagu of having a "male neurosis," would you accuse Dorothy Thompson of having a "female neurosis"?

Do you think that the women in Thurber's cartoons are American or European? Why? What about his men?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Case History
A GI Marries a Foreign Girl
The Frustrations of Men
The Dominance of Women
True Emancipation for Women

THE GIRL OF MY SAKS FIFTH AVENUE DREAMS*

by Robert Lowry

Robert Lowry (1919–), American novelist, is author of *Casualty, Find Me in Fire, the Wolf That Fed Us,* and *The Cage.*

Between them they handled the myth of the American dream girl like two seconds kneading and wiping and whispering to a zombie boxer. It was only chance that they lived in the same apartment—a sprawling, run-down place chopped up into half a dozen rooms on the upper West Side of Manhattan. One of them was really the other's landlady. That is, Marian, the model, rented out a room in her apartment to Rita, the copywriter—in their efforts at projecting a mechanical goddess that had never been young and could never grow old—they were just about equal. Not that they were the level-headed, sure-handed girls they thought they were. Like all people devoted to telling lies, they were as much their own victims as the twenty million young ladies across the land who worshiped and mimicked them.

The tall blond one with the long legs and the expectant, childlike face was the model. Which meant that in March you would see her swinging a golf club on page 85 of *Mademoiselle* ("Franklin Simon, New York; Rich's, Atlanta; Burdine's, Miami; Carson's, Chicago; Scruggs Vandervoort-Barney, St. Louis"), while a month or two later you would find yourself staring at her clean-shaven armpit, which she knew how to expose in the most maddeningly delicate and offhand manner, in a deodorant ad on page 102 of *The Ladies' Home Journal.* In any case, the same dazed expression. Like her name, her personality was absent from all these coated-stock public appearances of hers. She was never happy; she wasn't really there at all. If at first glance she seemed capable of varying her mood by appearing snobbishly sophisticated in an evening gown ("Bonwit Teller; I. Magnin; Himelhock's") and cozily sun-warmed in a bathing suit ("Peck & Peck; Carson Pirie Scott"), a closer examination would reveal that the clothes created this illusion, while the girl remained as cold and dead as a piece of snow sculpture.

The other one, the copywriter for a fashion magazine, was not pretty —she had a putty nose and bee-stung lips—but her eyes were big and she was slender enough to manage a tense, "fashionable" look. Her living came from prose instead of pose ("This fall . . . tease him . . . and treat yourself . . . with a Bunnyboo Blouse [Lord & Taylor]"); but even so, to see her coming toward you from two blocks away, down Fifth Avenue, you might not be aware that you weren't looking at someone

* From the *American Mercury,* LXXII (April, 1951), 387–392. Copyright, 1951, by the American Mercury, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

as genuinely pretty as Marian. This mistake was part of the game of the industry they both worked for: to persuade all women to look like one and the same glassy-eyed manikin.

Our two friends told two versions of the same fairy story, and to a whole country full of girls in and out of Manhattan, Rita and Marian were fire-breathing, diamond-studded successes. If the American woman's vision of herself—a vision created in Manhattan and documented in Hollywood—was worth having, Model Marian and Writer Rita should have been in clover. It looked like clover, but they found out it was only wire and paper, and under that pancake make-up their faces took on a starved, desperate look.

Both worked in an atmosphere where they secretly saw themselves gradually fading, day by day and year by year, while the illusion they tried to live remained static into eternity. Both had the best out of life, but both had been born, female and uninhibited, for something better than this frustrated "best."

Marian's father owned a grocery store in Mobile, Alabama. At seventeen she had married an airline pilot; at twenty she had divorced him. ("He was always complaining about how his knee hurt but I told him just what the doctors did: it was all in his mind. That's really what we had most of our arguments over—whether there was something wrong with his silly knee or not.") At twenty-one she had come to New York, gotten some bookings as a model, and six months later had her first abortion, paid for without complaint by a young attorney who never asked her for another date. After the abortion she began to think of herself as tough, a real Manhattanite who could not be fooled by man or machine. For any expenditure of time, she wanted something tangible in return. Before the cameras she got a tangible twenty-five dollars an hour. In the evenings and on week ends she traded in real goods: dinners, presents, shows, nightclubs, taxicab rides.

But she had her scale of comparative values. She knew, for instance, that a poor dinner bought by a bright, interesting man was worth approximately as much as a good dinner bought by a gross, boring man. She also knew that the proper procedure was to find a bright, interesting (or at least presentable) man who could afford to buy a good dinner, and then to fall in love with him. This she did, on one occasion after another, but presentable New York men refused to play the game her way. In her book they were supposed to spend a mint of dough courting her, then there was to be that expensive week end at Lake Placid when passion overcame the two of them and they made love, then the proposal, the Caribbean honeymoon, and the East Side garden apartment.

They wanted the passionate moment sooner than the schedule allowed, and after two eligible thirty-year-old males (one of them was a radio

writer and the other did something for a textile firm: they were really very eligible) faded out of the picture without bothering to scale the high-priced wall of courtship behind which she posed, she lowered her standards a little.

At twenty-five she was more willing to put herself out than she had been at twenty-two. She even served the quarry a dinner in her apartment now and then (on which evenings Rita was given notice not to come barging in), and while the man of the moment had to bring the Scotch and maybe a few bucks' worth of flowers to boot, he was still getting her time at bargain rates, the way she figured it. If he seemed really sincere and really devoted and really available for marriage (ultimately if not at the precise moment) she might even serve him more than just the dinner. But her morality had stern, unbreakable rules: sex had to happen as an accident. She thought she was being shrewd in giving no more than this accidental tangling; she thought that to satisfy a man more completely would be to leave him nothing to hope for in return for his ring.

The result of all this was more a hectic nightmare than a glamor girl's paradise. Marian knew that everything she wanted depended on her looks, but on more nights than she liked to admit, washing down a couple of sleeping tablets was the only way she could avoid looking haggard the morning after. Her work was not as easy as it sounded. After a day of assuming an endless series of poses in an endless parade of costumes, she went home edgy, dead-tired, yearning for a thousand years of rest. But the part she played as a date was only a continuation of the part she played before the cameras, and even more taxing, because now while she posed she also had to think of things to say—the bright, right things that a glamor girl *would* say.

She began to have moments of blankness when nothing that was said to her registered, when the man sitting across from her was somebody else's date, not hers, when even the food she ate had no taste and even the words she mouthed had no meaning. It was at such moments, when she seemed to die completely, that people around her could say with most assurance: There's the real thing, folks!—*an American glamor girl.*

At such moments she became the ideal that an industry had sponsored, that an army of art directors and photographers and copywriters had perfected, that a whole nation of young women believed in and copied. At such moments she could not scream or weep or find relief in the frigid love-making she restricted herself to, and in the end she took the standard cure: she went to a psychoanalyst and tried to buy her identity back at a price slightly higher per hour than her own. If identity was not a purchasable item, at least her analyst made her see that under the clothes and the pose and the make-up she was really a very interesting snarl of guilts and frus-

trations. She found the idea that she had such things extremely flattering, and a good subject for conversation, too.

She took out some of her frustrations on Rita, her tenant, and more of them on photographers' assistants, tradespeople, cab drivers, and her mother, who called her up every month or so and came to see her once a year. "I pity the poor boob who finally picks up her option," Rita often thought, smarting from the way Marian raised hell about the condition of the bathroom ("I can't get in this goddam place with all your wet underwear hanging around") or the kitchen ("Darling, would it be too much to ask you to put the milk away after you've drunk half of it?").

But Rita could survive her snarling stable-mate because she kept so busy. Busy buying clothes to make her look more like Marian, whom she loathed; busy phoning her friends (who were, like most friends in New York, connected in some way with her work); busy chasing around to parties (there was always somebody who had just had a book published at the parties Rita went to: she considered herself a full-fledged member of the market-wise, cellophane-wrapped, *New Yorker*-reading Manhattan intelligentsia). Because as a child she had experienced some of the inconveniences of poverty in a home where her father was either drunk or out of work, she was even more admittedly hard-boiled about the importance of cash than Marian, and she went after jobs and men and friends with a cold desperation that sometimes got her what she wanted but never satisfied her.

Among the props of Rita's trade—borrowed merchandise, ten-o'clock sittings, blue-lined character-count copy paper, cold-blooded female fashion editors who could outdrink the magazine's clients—she worked just as hard as Marian and with an even more acute feeling of the hollowness of her life and the hollowness of her creation. Before she rented the room in Marian's apartment, she had lived for several months with a man who had finally decided to go back to his wife after all. In a way, the active generalship she displayed in bed had the same effect on her man as had Marian's determination to make sex seem like an accident: she scared the manhood right out of him. Rita could sneer at Marian for not knowing the name of the latest Italian movie or the truth about a certain playwright's private life, but she really believed in her own copy—in Marian, that is. She believed in this subhuman shell with the unnatural lift to its chin and the empty sky in its eye, draped in yards of expensive new cloth and suggesting price-tags and name-labels in every movement. Her frantic poses and dramatic self-assertions, her nervous shuttling between beds and cocktail parties, were all born of her secret knowledge that, lacking physical beauty, she could never measure up to the ideal Marian stood for. But then, neither could Marian.

Neither can her ghostly legion of doubles, desperately pretending on all the Fifth Avenues of a thousand towns across America. The haunted face of the model, hovering above Manhattan's skyscrapers, and that of the movie queen, floating over the deserts of Hollywood, gaze at each other across three thousand miles in a look of eternal narcissistic love. Caught in the spell are twenty million girls who have their own and their men's lives to lead, and who can find no satisfactory way to appear on the one hand as plushly-packaged window displays, preserved under glass like museum idols, and on the other as creatures ready for mating who can wash a dish, give a birth or make a love. The savage reaction is a nihilistic rejection: teen-age sex clubs; lesbian haircuts and mannish careers; or a cool resolve (like Marian's) to make men pay dear for the privilege of kneeling before a goddess who can never be herself.

If ever the glamor begins to crack on this manikin, a little happiness may seep in. But a machine-age culture works around the clock to keep its false ideal in shape. "Accent your personality," Rita writes. "Like this?" asks Marian, and draws in her chest, thrusts out her chin, and fades to nothing behind her eyes. What Rita really means is accent the product, get in the swim, become the standardized, mass-market female ("John Wanamaker, New York; Joseph Horne, Pittsburgh; D. H. Holmes, New Orleans") and see your head doctor first thing in the morning.

READING

Describe in detail Lowry's technique in the second paragraph. How fully does it anticipate his technique throughout the article?

Compare the treatment of Marian and Rita, considering such matters as length, metaphor, and detail.

Compare the functions of the first paragraph and the last two paragraphs. Of what use is the repetition? How much expansion occurs?

INTERPRETATION

Is Lowry fair in presenting Marian and Rita as representative career girls? How fair is he to New York men?

Discuss the irony of the situation in which Rita tries to make herself into a copy of Marian, whom she loathes. Is a larger irony implicit?

In your opinion is the author also "a full-fledged member of the market-wise, cellophane-wrapped, *New Yorker*-reading Manhattan intelligentsia"?

Someone remarked of this essay to the editors, "It's glib, wise-acre, and unfair, but it plays at a basic truth." Do you agree?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Career Girl
The College Girl
Three Recent Advertisements
Ladies' Home Journal vs. *True, The Man's Magazine*
Footnote to Montagu

MOONLIGHT AND POISON IVY*

by David L. Cohn

David L. Cohn (1896–), is a Mississippi writer, educated at the University of Virginia and Yale, whose books have dealt with the racial problem, industry, and love and marriage. Among them are *God Shakes Creation, The Good Old Days,* and *Love in America.*

There is little doubt that our attitudes toward marriage, stemming as they must from our attitudes toward life and living, are crippling, if not fatal, to the central relationship in men's lives. If we tell the young that life is easy, when it is hard; that it is kind, when it is replete with cruel ironies; that all is to be had for the asking, when every blessing must be paid for singly or doubly; that it is a succession of high moments, when most of it is pedestrian; that it is "romantic," in the sense of affording high adventure, when its glory lies in man's struggle against forces he cannot even comprehend; that bigness is greatness and success is achievement—if we teach all these things, then not only is youth corroded, corrupted, and misled, while its well-springs are poisoned at the source, but the revulsion when it comes is, and must be, shattering.

Yet this is what we do tell the young; what they are told every day by many magazines, the movies, the radio, and national advertisers. It is, apparently, what we believe, or affect to believe. It is also false, it does not square with human experience, and it is disastrous to marriage.

More and more, American marriage is coming to be a detour to divorce. The divorce rate alone does not fully illuminate the whole shabby matrimonial scene since it reflects only those cases of discord that are made public, but it is an index to private failure become national failure on a huge scale.

Of what significance are miracles of production, our hard work and ingenious gadgets, our cluttered catalogue of things sensible and nonsensical that make up our so-called high standard of living, if millions of men and women take little or no joy in each other; if the house vanishes, the family breaks up, the home is transient? For what does the ordinary man strive if not for a wife, a home, children, permanence of tenure and affection under one roof? And if these prove to be but an illusion, if the husband becomes an alimony payer, the father a stranger to his children, the seeker for permanency a wanderer, is not ours a matrimonial anarchy?

Why should such anarchy prevail? There is no easy answer to this question. Investigators attribute it to sexual maladjustments, money troubles, friction with in-laws, poor housing, the increasing financial independ-

* From the *Atlantic Monthly,* CLXXXIII, No. 1 (January, 1949), 36–38. Copyright, 1949, by The Atlantic Monthly Company, Boston, 16, Mass. Reprinted by permission.

ence of women. These play their part, but some of its causes lie in our national character and attitudes. Marriage and divorce are what they are, to a large degree, because we are what we have become.

American marriage is dangerously weakened at its inception because of our preference for moonlight and poison ivy—the lies elders tell the young about marriage, and the hourly elaboration of these lies, cunningly persuasive, by many magazines, the radio, the movies, national advertisers. It is rarely portrayed for what it is: a difficult and demanding exercise in human relationships; a partnership, not without austerity, in which losses as well as profits are shared; an undertaking dynastic as well as individual. More commonly—vulgarly and infantilely—marriage is portrayed as a gumdrop heaven: soft, gooey, chewy, and oh, so sweet.

It is, of course, a heaven of huge dimensions—not for us a one-room, walk-up Nirvana—so that the couple attaining it must move about in a Cadillac with a sliding top, and are showered with completely furnished cottages, tickets for trips to Bermuda, whole wardrobes by Christian Dior, television sets, memberships in a country club, and two foam rubber clouds; all delicately scented with Elizabeth Arden's Blue Grass perfume. The country that invented the airplane and the drive-in movie, where you neck while you look, is certainly not going to cling to yesterday's antiquated model of marriage.

We are not content, therefore, to marry for reasons that have always moved most people elsewhere. It is not enough that marriage is desirable as a division of labor; that a man wants a woman to run his house and the woman wants a house to run. We scorn the fact that monogamic marriage was born of race experience, the trial-and-error method of centuries having demonstrated that, for most of us, it is the best way for a man and woman to live together and to transmit property through inheritance. We find it repulsive that marriage is no "It must be fate" relationship dreamed up by a bored faun who missed his train at Indianapolis.

Nor are we content, even, that marriage should proceed from love as other men have known it, for this would be to recognize the emotion for what it, in part, is: bitter-sweet, subtly demanding, frequently tempestuous, and capable of vanishing for no apparent reason. It is intolerable to us who dread the tenuous as primitive men dread the evil eye, that love's life might hang upon threads so gossamer as the cadence of a voice, the clasp of hands, the looks of eyes, the word said, the word unsaid. We find it unbearable that love demands constant replenishing and care; as much care indeed as one gives to one's car. But we do not, for these reasons, reject romantic love in marriage. Allegedly we marry for no other reason. We have created our own moonlight and poison ivy image of love and marriage: a handsome couple, forever fair and young, perpetually embracing on the moon-misty shores of a Cytherea that the map reveals to be Deaf Smith County, Texas.

So, too, we say "Love is blind." We mean thereby that the lover sees no imperfections or incompatibilities in the beloved, and love's blindness, therefore, will ensure forever love and marriage. Since this is palpably false, and is indeed anti-romantic, lending to the one or the other a wooden perfection suitable for a department store dummy but not for flesh and blood, whose living wonder is its mixture of elements, it follows that when, some morning at the breakfast table, the shuttered eye sees once more, all is disillusion.

Other peoples, wiser perhaps than we, if less "romantic," give another interpretation to the same phrase. Love is blind, they say, because the lover consciously closes his eyes to the beloved's failings, content that the good outweighs the bad. These are not our optics, however, since in love we prefer the straight line irresolute, the rounded curve wavy. It is, moreover, a mature point of view that we find shocking because we invariably associate love with immaturity. Hence Hollywood grandmothers are condemned to go on playing ingénue roles, and Hollywood lovers, with arteries of '98, are forever Princeton '41.

We do not want to look at life steadily and whole, seeing that it is noble and ignoble, generous and mean, beautiful and ugly, cleanly and filthy, melancholy and joyous; compounded of pain as well as happiness; its gold inextricably mingled with baser metals. Not for us the concept that symmetry derives from asymmetry; or that, in the words of William Blake, "There is a strange disproportion in beauty."

Powerful agencies disseminate our deadly notion of marriage as a tinsel heaven on earth, often to the muted music of woodwinds blown by those quaint people known as parents. For every dealer in reality who languishes for lack of trade, there are a thousand dealers in illusion beseiged by anxious customers. Yet they did not invent the moonlight and poison ivy concept of love and marriage. They merely exploit what is in our minds.

II

High among our illusions affecting love, marriage, and much else—a natural child of moonlight and poison ivy—is the installment plan mentality. It dictates that you do not have to do anything, or become anything, if you can wangle the small down payment on what you want; the rest "just a few cents a day."

Do you want to marry a rich, handsome young man with (as the magazines put it) "lean flanks" and "strong teeth," the better to eat you, mah chile? It's easy. Simply use Princess Mafou's Face Powder. At your next dinner party three men, dead ringers for Winthrop Rockefeller, will trample one another in the rush to marry you.

Suppose you have no face. Do not be discouraged. Hands will do the

trick as well; or eyelashes, fingernails, hair. There was the girl who could not bring her man to gaff until she discovered Beautress (pronounced Bowtress). "My date with Bill that night," runs the ad, "found me confident in the new-found glamour of my sparkling Beautress lovely hair . . . His cheek touched its new alluring softness while we danced . . . My heart stood still when he murmured: 'Dream Girl, that gorgeous hair rates a bridal veil.' "

They were married in a rented submarine, spent their honeymoon at the Stork Club, occasionally left their Martinis to pick up a peck of emeralds at Cartier's, and because of the housing shortage are now roughing it in a twenty-room hut at Palm Springs. They are deliriously happy and will always be in a state of delirium. For when Bill occasionally looks grumpy, his Dream Girl orders a "festive walnut cake," chockful of genuine Shasta Brand Walnuts. "Imagine getting kissed for your cake!" says the ad.

This being the case, why should any woman burden herself with such old-fashioned backbreaking loads as brains, charm, literacy, efficiency, or resemblance to the human race? She can get her man with a shampoo and keep him with walnuts. Go to your favorite drugstore tomorrow, buy yourself a bottle of the American Dream in the new economy size, shake well before using, and live luxuriously ever afterward.

If you can read the ads, it is not unlikely that you can read a book, although the strain will be greater. There are dozens of books telling you how to handle every question of love and marriage in this happy world rapidly becoming free of dandruff. It is as simple as finding the recipe for lemon pie in Fannie Farmer. Why, then, be concerned with understanding and patience? Why listen to the shy counsel of the shy heart when the ready-made answer to your perplexities is at hand just as the biscuit mix is on your pantry shelf, leaving little to do except heat and serve?

Whence our feverish search for the easy way; our obsession with the opiate dream? Is it that we have no faith except in the infallibility of machinery and so stand incredulous and shaken when the airplane falls? Has ours become a culture from the periphery of the eyelids outward, lacking inner content? Are we, despite our physical energy, an intellectually lazy people, satisfied to take shadow for substance, package for contents, and black or white for truth because we are too lethargic to search out the nuances where truth, ever elusive, lies? Has some malign enchantment unfitted us to face life as it is, so that its essence escapes us and we face eventual destruction from within or from without. Is the high point of our civilization reached when a radio announcer screams to a nation enthralled, "That's right, Mrs. Deffenbaugh!" while $20,000 worth of things, including a houseboat and a wall can-opener, drop into the lap of the lucky winner?

Better marriage relations in this country await an extensive revalua-

tion of our attitude towards life and living. If our values are shabby and our attitudes adolescent, how can American marriage, made in our image, be anything but a monumental failure?

READING

Compare the style of Lowry and Cohn. If you know the *Atlantic* and the *American Mercury,* compare in general the style of the two magazines.

Explain what the author means by this statement: "For every dealer in reality who languishes for lack of trade, there are a thousand dealers in illusion besieged by anxious customers."

How does the last paragraph explain the structure of the essay?

INTERPRETATION

What is the harm in romanticizing marriage in slick-magazine fiction and Hollywood? If anyone is so stupid as to believe it, wouldn't his marriage be blighted by stupidity anyway?

Is magazine advertising as untrue to real life as the spoofing account of it that Cohn gives in Part 2? In comparison with Lowry, what does Cohn emphasize in advertising?

What correlation does Cohn make between the romantic idea of marriage and American materialism? To what extent is he justified?

From the five selections (by Thurber, Montagu, Thompson, Lowry, and Cohn) what conclusions can you draw? In your opinion, which makes the soundest appraisal? Do they together leave out important elements?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Courtship of My Grandparents
Marriage in a Recent *Good Housekeeping* Story
Love in a Poem and in an Advertisement
The Perdurable Illusion
"For Better, for Worse"

2

Expanding Experience

4
Schools

Since the laws require school attendance, schools are also a part of our common experience. But what are our American schools really like? How do they look to foreign eyes? What faults do our own educators find in them? What stories do students across the land tell about their life in scores of colleges? What sort of college, for there are many kinds, constitutes the most desirable higher education? And what do the alumni themselves think their college experience was really worth?

STUDENT AND TEACHER*

by Jacques Barzun

Jacques Barzun (1907–), a native of France, came to the United States in 1919. Since 1927 he has taught at Columbia University, an experience that has been drawn upon for his book *Teacher in America.* Among his other books are *Of Human Freedom* (1939) and *Berlioz and the Romantic Century* (1950).

Let me say bluntly, as I do not hesitate to do when my students broach the subject, that friendship between an instructor and a student is impossible. This does not mean that the two should remain strangers; there can exist cordial, easy relations, tinged perhaps with a certain kind of affection; but friendship, not. For friendship has strict prerequisites, among them, freedom of choice and equality of status. Neither of these can exist in the teacher-student relation. The absence of equality may horrify the sentimental but it is a fact nevertheless. Consider only a few of the things a teacher must do—he must judge work done, decide passing or failing, order tasks, reprove mistakes, discipline conduct, and *deal impartially with all similar cases.* These, I submit, are not the acts of a friend, even if—as equality would demand—the student were allowed reciprocal privileges.

I shall go further and say that it is not good for a teacher to associate steadily with students. Real reciprocity is here again out of the question; differences of age, temperament, purpose and background, are so many hidden reefs over which even conversation founders. This does not mean that it is not delightful once in a while to accept a dinner invitation from a group of students who are friends among themselves, or to join "the

* From *Teacher in America,* by Jacques Barzun (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1945), pp. 222–226. Copyright, 1944, 1945, by Jacques Barzun. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown and Company and the Atlantic Monthly Press.

gang" in a sandwich and glass of beer after a seminar. And the talk over the beer need not be in the least stiff or scholastic. Simple manners go farthest, provided they are genuine, and they best protect the very delicate adjustment between student and teacher on which the latter's efficacy depends.

Even in the most promising of instances, which are few and far between, students are interesting only as students—I would say "as cases," were it not that medical usage has led the laity to attach to the word a false notion of detachment and pure science. This is not so: the "case" is defined as the state of the patient. Hence it is an absorbing, ever-changing human problem and not merely a mechanical puzzle. Depending on circumstance, the problem takes in more or less of the patient's social background, more or less of his unique personality, and this excludes only what does not bear on improving him. The same is true in teaching—and the comparison, by the way, explains why it is equally bad to teach and to doctor in the bosom of the family. Too many irrelevant feelings and incompatible relations enter in. To be sure, some persons are less aware of these crisscrossings than others, else one would not see so many love affairs developing between men teachers and their women students, but in spite of the success and frequency of these involvements, I cannot look upon them as belonging to the ideal relation of teacher and taught. Not to mention that it is bad for love-making to combine it with a desire to improve and be improved.

For improvement in some form is surely the goal of associating young minds with trained ones in what the Navy Department calls "regular contact hours." Self-improvement is certainly the motive for the student's hunting down of his instructor. The boy wants to draw the older man out on subjects that necessarily beset youth at college—politics, sex, career, family. Or he wants a sympathetic listener for his own peculiar story; he wants good advice from someone other than a parent or a friend. The family physician sometimes serves, but more rarely than before the days of busy specialization; and the father confessor is available to only a few. So the teacher hears it all—the quarrels with contemporaries, the disappointments and injustices in campus affairs, the girls that charm but leave insatiate, and most persistently, the vision of the good life clearly seen but lying inaccessible on a pathless height.

There is no use pretending that all this does not go straight to one's heart. If ever another's life palpitates visibly before one's eyes, it is at this time, when the consciousness of what living means has just dawned and no thick shell has yet grown over it to protect or suppress it. The spectacle is in itself so touching, its details often so moving that sentimentalists and cynics among adults take advantage of it to indulge their vices of mind. The sentimentalist eggs on the flow of feeling to wallow in it helplessly; the

cynic—equally upset—dismisses the manifestation as "a stage" and the trouble as "adolescent."

Meanwhile, the "stage" is a reality and adolescence remains one of the four seasons of life. It is the season of storms and its shipwrecks are genuine calamities. Unless the causes are foreseen and dealt with, both firmly and tenderly, the disasters are wept over in vain, too late. It is at college, among boys who are barely young men, that the first winnowing by the unseen hand occurs. It is at this time that they feel ignorance and the desire to know, despair and the desire to act—all with a vividness and an urgency unbelievably powerful and explosive. It is just because these forces are as yet raw and unchanneled that young men can be taught; and for the same reason, that with bad luck or bad handling the same forces destroy from within: boys take to drink, commit suicide and murder, plot wild schemes to recoup money or other losses, burn inwardly with shame, injustice, or contempt, stare dishonor in the face, or feverishly nurse mad, hopeless, and sometimes meaningless ambitions.

Not unnaturally, the teacher who has these glimpses of the demonic in the confidences that are brought to him may be unnerved. Often he is the youngest man on the staff. He inspires trust by the recentness of his student days and the fact that he has crossed the bar and been stamped with the professional seal of guarantee. Yet inexperienced himself, how is he to deal with so many chaotic revelations? What advice can he give, with what assurance, and how far can he engage his responsibility? Perhaps he should have thought of that before becoming a teacher. As every mariner must expect that his first voyage as captain will be signalized by a typhoon, so with a teacher *in loco parentis*.[1] That is the normal risk. Besides, he can apply to older friends, though taking care to maintain professional secrecy; and he can regain poise by reminding himself of certain truths. In the first place, he cannot act for another, or even feel. He can only think, and convey calm and comfort. What any boy needs most to be told is that he is not alone in his distress; that cases similar to his are known to history, and that the victims have lived to tell the tale. You would suppose that college men would help one another by just this kind of talk. But they do not. Boys may live and play together and yet remain like a handful of small shot in a bowl—hard, round, impenetrable—and, if shot could feel, lonely. Since in real trouble the family is "no use," the teacher is the only man who can be counted on to reassert that we are members one of another; and since this belief depends on a subtle sympathy which cannot be commanded, it is best to let college men freely follow their affinities and take as advisers men they trust.

[1] In the place of a parent.

READING

How does Barzun develop his "blunt" statement about the impossibility of friendship between students and teachers? How does he define "friendship"?

From what point of view does Barzun write? Does it limit the value of what he says to those of the same point of view?

What is the tone? Is it adapted to the point of view? In spite of Barzun's denial of friendship, are there suggestions of sympathy and even tenderness?

INTERPRETATION

Do you think that Barzun dismisses too easily the student-teacher marriage and the young instructor's popularity in arguing his case?

How do your educational experiences and observations match Barzun's?

To what extent do you agree with Barzun's assumptions about the purpose of education?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Best Teacher I Ever Knew
What I Learned about Teaching as a Camp Counselor
Would I Like Barzun as a Teacher?
The Teacher—My Natural Enemy
Learning and Teaching

AN ENGLISHMAN ON AMERICAN SCHOOLS*

by Denis W. Brogan

Denis W. Brogan (1900–), professor of political science at Cambridge University, has interpreted America to the English—and to the Americans—in a succession of books since *The American Political System* (1933). His essay on our schools appeared in *The American Character* (1944).

The word "school" in America covers every type of educational institution. Being "at school" may mean being at a kindergarten or at Harvard. School, too, has kept much of its Greek meaning. It is a system of organization and training for leisure as well as work. And it has become more and more adjusted to its environment, undertaking to do more than it can (which is very American) and doing much more than it seems to do (which is also very American).

The social and political role of American education cannot be understood if it is thought of as being primarily a means of formal instruction. If it is so thought of, it will be overrated and underrated. It will be overrated because the figures of two million college students, of seven million high school students, will dazzle the visitor used to seeing opportunities for higher education doled out (except in Soviet Russia) on a combined class-and-

* From *The American Character,* by Denis W. Brogan (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944), pp. 135–146. Copyright, 1944, by D. W. Brogan. Reproduced by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

intellectual basis. It will be underrated if, at any stage below the highest (that is, below the great universities), the academic standards are compared with those of a good English, French, or pre-Hitler German school. If these millions of boys and girls are to be judged by their academic accomplishments, they will be judged harshly. But they are not to be so judged, for their schools are doing far more than instruct them: they are letting them instruct each other in how to live in America.

Of those millions, a large section will be the children of immigrants to whom English is still largely a foreign tongue. Of these millions, a very large portion will be the children of migrants from different parts of the United States. Others will be the children of rural-bred parents, forced to adjust themselves to the new urban world. They have to learn a common language, common habits, common tolerances, a common political and national faith. And they do. It is this aim and this success that justifies the lavish buildings of the local high school; not merely the classrooms and the laboratories, but the gymnasium, the field-house where basketball can be played in comfort in the depth of the bitter winter, the swimming pools in which the summer heat can be endured.

It is true that the teachers are relatively badly paid and have an inferior social as well as economic standing, insecure tenure and politics making their condition worse. More money spent on men might get better results than more money spent on buildings. But it is easier to get the materials for buildings than the materials for teachers. As long as American society remains individualistic, competitive, confident that the answers to the present are in the future, not in the past, it is going to take more than money to seduce the right men and women in adequate numbers away from the life of action. And, a point too seldom remembered, the necessity for providing teachers for the two million college students hampers recruiting for high schools. In many cases, the colleges are doing what is really high school work and it matters comparatively little where the good teachers are, as long as they are teaching.

The political function of the schools is to teach Americanism, meaning not merely political and patriotic dogma, but the habits necessary to American life. This justifies the most extravagant items in the curriculum. Since the ability to play bridge is one of the marks of Americanism in a suburb, it is reasonable that there should be bridge clubs in schools. The main political achievement of the high schools and grammar schools is to bring together the young of all classes and all origins, to provide, artificially, the common background that in an old, rural society is provided by tradition, by the necessary collaboration of village life. The elementary schools—the "grade" schools—do this, too, but as far as an American town is broken up into racial blocs, the Ethan Allen Public School may have mainly Polish pupils, the Zachary Chandler mainly

Welsh. Only in the Warren G. Harding High School is a big enough common pool formed in which Americans can be made.

Some of that Americanization is, of course, done deliberately and formally. Mr. Carlton Hayes pointed out long ago that the ritual of flag worship and oath-taking in an American school is a religious observance. Little boys and girls, in a school from which religion in the old sense is barred, solemnly rising each morning and reciting together the "American's Creed" are performing a religious exercise as truly as if they began the day with "I believe in God the Father Almighty" or asserted that "There is no God but God."

And that these daily rituals are religious has been at last affirmed by the Supreme Court in a series of cases in which the children of a fanatical sect, Jehovah's Witnesses, had been excluded from schools for refusing to give to the flag honors that, so their parents had taught them, were due to God alone. In 1940, all the Court except Chief Justice Stone held that flag worship was among the things that were Caesar's. Since that year, however, they have decided by a majority that the religious rights of the children were being infringed. What is significant in the cases is not the Court's reversal of itself but the reality of the issue presented to it. For to the Court, and to the overwhelming majority of the American people, the objections of the Witnesses were as unintelligible as the objections of the Christians to making a formal sacrifice to the Divine Emperor were to Trajan and Pliny. The school board of Minersville, Pennsylvania, was faced with a real problem when it was asked to admit that children refusing to take part in the most sacred rite of the day should be allowed to associate with the believing children of the formally unestablished national church of the United States. So, too, was the State of Oregon when it found Catholic and Lutheran children refusing to go to the schools it provided. But in both cases the Supreme Court held, finally, that compulsory Americanism was not Americanism at all, that coerced belief was not what the American people needed to stay united. This was not Germany or Russia but the country of Jefferson and Justice Holmes.

The flag worship of the American school and the American nation was brought home to the British public in an episode that, if funny, was also very revealing. For the London makers of ladies' underwear who adorned their garments with American flags were innocent of any insulting or even frivolous intention. At the same time, a revue chorus in London was attired in Union Jack handkerchiefs and nothing else—to the public indifference. But the flag, in America, is more than a mere symbol among many others. It is the regimental color of a regiment in which all Americans are enrolled. Its thirteen stripes and forty-eight stars are symbols far better understood than the complicated heraldry of crosses of Saint George, Saint Andrew, and Saint Patrick imposed on each other

in a way that only experts understand. It was Lincoln's task to see that the number of stars in the flag was not diminished by eleven during his term of office. It was the discovery that the flag still flew over Fort McHenry, despite the British fleet, that moved Francis Scott Key to write:

Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming;
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?

What he wrote in 1814, tens of millions of Americans have since sung or tried to sing. And when Barbara Frietchie in Whittier's poem told-off Stonewall Jackson with:

"Shoot if you must this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag," she said,

she was speaking for all Americans for whom the Stars and Stripes was still their country's flag as it had been, till recently, that of General Jackson.

Thus Americanization by ritual is an important and necessary part of the function of the American school. And because it is best carried out in schools, it matters little that the high school curriculum has been so widened that it no longer means a great deal that this boy or that girl has graduated from it—if we are looking for proof of academic achievement. But graduation from high school is reasonable proof that a great deal has been learned about American ways of life, that lessons in practical politics, in organization, in social ease have been learned that could not have been learned in factory or office.

And if the high school seems to devote too much time and money to social life, penalizing the poor boy or girl more than a theoretically less democratic educational system might do, it is thus early impressing an awkward truth on the boy or girl who is both mediocre and poor. It also penalizes the really able boy or girl who is not kept in good enough intellectual training. And if the main business of the school is, in fact, the Americanization of the children of newcomers, the parents of "old American stock" have a good reason (to add to less good ones) for not sending their children to learn what they know already, at the cost of diminishing their chance of learning what they do not know. If English is native to your children and to their home, it is not merely undemocratic to object to having their progress held up and their accent debased by the tone of a high school largely immigrant in composition.

For the task of an American school in many regions is to teach the American language, to enable it to compete with Spanish, with French, with Yiddish, with Polish, with German, with Swedish. Another task is to give, through the language and the literature of the language, a common

vocabulary and a common fund of allusion, fable, and sentiment. With a fluid population this has not been easy. And the countless teachers who have labored, pedantically, formally, with complete and erroneous conviction that there were correct standards, have been heroes as important in the mass as was William McGuffey whose *Eclectic Readers* sold over one hundred and twenty million copies and helped to make the Union. The teachers were heroes because, although English won against all its rivals, it was itself going through important changes, in vocabulary, in grammar, in sound, becoming the new tongue we are beginning to call American. The teachers who stuck by the rules, who worshipped at the New England shrines in Concord, were bound to lose, but their struggle was not pure waste. For the common tongue, hammered out by millions of immigrants, by millions of migrants, would have been poor in vocabulary and structure but for the people Mr. Mencken calls the dominies and who call themselves schoolmen. The creation of general literacy and a common written and spoken tongue, intelligible everywhere except possibly in the deep South, is an achievement as remarkable as the creation of Mandarin Chinese or Low Latin or Hellenistic Greek, and this tongue is certain to be the new *lingua franca* of the world.

The making of American has been mixed-up in English minds with the making of American slang. Slang, as we should know, is one of the great sources of language. French is improved Latin slang. And slang has contributed a good deal to American. It is a generation since Mr. Dooley said that when his countrymen had finished with the English language it would look as if it had been run over by a musical comedy. Since then it has been run over by *Hellzapoppin.* But it is possible, indeed very easy, to overestimate the role of slang. It is more and more the creation of professional artists, "makers." The Hollywood prose masters provide a current and often short-lived jargon; the boys and girls, men and women, who wish to be on the beam or in the groove, may murmur with admiration, "I wish I had said that." And Whistler's classical answer to Wilde is certainly appropriate: "You will, Oscar—you will!" But not for long. Some slang will enter the language; some words will lose their meanings or acquire new ones; syntax will be loosened up. But formal speech as taught in schools will still be very important. The high school English teacher, for all her pedantry, is as much a maker of the American language as Messrs. Runyon and O'Hara. Two streams of language may run roughly parallel, but in time they will merge; they will provide America with many interesting variations, do for American what its dual Germanic and Latin character does for English. That time has not yet come, but it is on the way. And the future character of this truly national tongue is foreshadowed in the drawing by Mr. Peter Arno in which an indignant citizen tells another: "I consider your conduct unethical and lousy."

Most American parents do not want, or are not able, to send their children to anything but public high schools, and the life in such a school is a training in life for America. It may be and often is a training in life *against* Europe. For Europe is the background from which many of the children are reacting and from which they must be delivered if they are to be Americanized. For nearly all immigrants, America is promotion, and this promotion is more clearly felt by their children. The old people may hanker after the old country, but the children—whatever sentimental feelings for their ancestral homes they may have, especially when provoked—are, above all else, anxious to be Americans.

Necessarily something is lost here. The least-common-denominator Americanism of the schools is not a complete substitute for a native culture. What the first-generation American children learn to despise may include elements in their moral diet that are not replaced. A new American whose pride in that promotion involves mere contempt for the habits, what Americans call the "folkways" or "mores," of his parents is not necessarily a good American. So attempts are made to instill pride in the ancestral cultures of the European lands from which the immigrants come. The University of Pittsburgh, located in one of the main melting pots of America, has a set of rooms illustrating the culture of various European countries. In the case of the Greeks, the room may instill adequate pride; in the case of the Scots (if any such need is felt) a shrine of Robert Burns may serve. But, for many of the peasant immigrants, the old country is backward though beloved, while for their children it is merely backward.

Americanization comes not from preservation of Slovak or Italian peasant culture, but from speedy assimilation to "American" culture. And that assimilation may take the form of distinction in anything that the American world obviously values. In the narrow sense of culture, there may even be a temptation to go for those courses that have no immigrant stigma on them. Thus I have been told by an eminent Scandinavian-American that it is difficult to get good students of Scandinavian literature and language at the University of Minnesota, although most of the students have fairly recent Scandinavian connections. They will study French but not Swedish, for "French is not a servant's language." Latin, emblem of functionless "culture," plays something of the same role; it is a symbol of liberation.

Study is not the only way up to Americanization, to acceptation. Sport is another—and one that does the job more dramatically for the newcomers gifted with what it takes to excel in competitive contests, with what is needed to win personal and community and institutional glory.

When Fanny Ellsler, the ballet dancer, came to Boston, her performance was solemnly inspected from the highest motives by Emerson and Margaret Fuller. "The dance began; both sat serenely silent; at last Emer-

son spoke. 'Margaret,' he said, 'this is poetry.' 'No, Waldo,' replied Margaret; 'it is not poetry, it is religion.' " And the great football games of today are religious ceremonies in this sense. It is significant that the graduating classes in Muncie High School a generation ago took such mottoes as "Deo duce" [1] and today take mottoes stressing the "Bearcat Spirit," the "Bearcats" being the school basketball team. But a Greek would know where he was at a basketball game uniting boys and girls, parents and civic leaders, in a common passion for competitive achievement. It may be hard on the academic work of the school. It may even slightly annoy a schoolboy, who like Mr. Burton Rascoe combines excellence in gymnastic and music (as the Greeks put it), to find that his views on literature are less interesting to the other sex than his prowess at football. But sport, school sport, college sport, does unite the parents, the children, and the community. And sport is rigorously democratic. The sons of Czechs and Poles can score there, can break through the barriers that stand in the way of the children of "bohunks" and "polacks." And although Harvard may secretly rejoice when it can put a winning team on to Soldiers' Field whose names suggest the *Mayflower,* it would rather put on a team that can beat Yale, even though it is not a "Yankee" team, than go down to defeat with the descendants of generations of Brahmins. And in the Middle West, sport is a real means of promotion. The Ohio high school that produced the great Negro runner, Jesse Owens, was prouder of him than if he had made Phi Beta Kappa at Ohio State; and Hitler would have made a less serious mistake if he had snubbed a great American scholar whose race he didn't like than he did by sulking at the Olympic Games when the Herrenvolk were beaten by a Negro. It is a frontier tradition; Lincoln's great strength gave him a prestige that helped him as a lawyer and politician. The great athlete performing for the glory of the school, college, state or nation, is a less egoistic figure than the great scholar pursuing his own studies with an undemocratic concentration. And the Negroes, whose greatest hero is Joe Louis, not Paul Robeson, are not substantially wrong so far. In American society as it is, a Negro heavy-weight champion, like a Negro tap-dancer, is a better adjusted figure than a great Negro artist—or America is a less maladjusted society for them. Of course, this will not and should not last. The Irish were rising when their great hero became Governor Al Smith, rather than a successor of John L. Sullivan, the "Boston strong boy." But to get assent to a Negro's *right* to be heavy-weight champion is something—as those will agree who remember the frenzied search round 1910 for a "white hope" to save the heavy-weight championship from the indignity of being held by Jack Johnson. Great Indian athletes like Jim Thorpe, great Negro football heroes like Paul Robeson in his earlier days, the polyglot teams put on the field by the great Norwegian coach

[1] "With God as leader."

Knute Rockne for the "Irish" of Notre Dame—these become "All American" figures in a wider and deeper sense than that in which the Yale of Walter Camp understood the term.

The cheer leaders, the new "jongleurs de Notre Dame," the "majorettes," shapely young women more or less involved with musical instruments, the massed cheering sections of the students, the massed yelling sections of the alumni—these are the equivalent of the crowds at the great Hellenic festivals in which barbarians were not allowed to compete. The Rose Bowl, the Cotton Bowl, the other intersectional games—these are instruments of national unity, and the provision of such instruments is no mean duty of colleges and universities. It is a religious exercise of a kind a Greek would have understood, however remote it may be from the university as understood by Abelard or Saint Thomas Aquinas or John Harvard.

The university, as these men understood it, exists all the same and exists to play a great national part, for the level of academic learning in America is perhaps the only branch of American life where the promise of rapid progress upward has been consistently kept. It is not as easy to define the nature of that progress as it is to affirm its existence.

Things have changed a great deal since the ideal of American college education was "Mark Hopkins at one end of a log and a student at the other." Then the college existed to provide a common background for lawyers and doctors and divines; it was small and select, not select in a social or financial sense, but select in that only those who accepted the old intellectual order of things were catered for. It was a decisive moment when President Eliot of Harvard (which had long ceased to concentrate on providing for a "learned ministry") introduced the elective system. The college abandoned any idea of imposing a hierarchy of subjects. The student could select what he wanted from the menu provided; *à la carte* had succeeded *table d'hôte*. But in newer, less secure, less rich institutions than Harvard, the change went farther than that, for not only was the student free to choose from what was offered—he was entitled to complain if the college did not offer what he wanted to learn, or even what he wanted to learn in the sense that it was all he could hope to learn. As more and more students came to college with varying school preparation, as life grew more complex and the techniques of life and business more impressive in their results, the unity of college life disappeared. Boys and girls were no longer taken in hand by a successor of Mark Hopkins and given a few general ethical and philosophical ideas suitable to a world still pretty much agreed on fundamentals. They were visitors to an institution that seemed to have more in common with the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco than with the Williams College of a century ago; and from the glass-walled bar, "The Top of the Mark," they could see the modern

world, the bridges and skyscrapers of San Francisco, and across the Bay the lights of Berkeley where the University of California provides for all tastes from addicts of the Greek theater to the most modern biological and physical techniques.

In this necessary adaptation of the old university ideal to the modern American world, much was lost, or not provided; there was not as yet a common standard of reference for educated men; a mass of information was stored and techniques were imparted in institutes physically associated for historical reasons. But of course, the universities and colleges like the high schools, served other than merely academic ends. *Our Town* illustrates high school mating which would have taken place anyway. *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* shows a suitor taking cookery so as to be close to his beloved during her high school career, but he was bound to be close to her anyway. But the college movie, play (*The Poor Nut*) and novel rightly illustrates the more important phenomenon of exogamous marriage, of the bringing together boys and girls who otherwise would not meet at all.

And the very success of the school system in Americanizing the American young may result in the killing of natural curiosity. For example, the cult of the Constitution leads to the exclusive identification of a political concept like "liberty" with the American constitutional system. This being so, a Latin-American "republic" with a paper constitution like the American is regarded as "free" while Canada is not. For Canada is part of an "empire" with a monarch at the head of it. Some two-thirds of the American people, accordingly, think that Canada pays taxes to Britain; even in the states bordering on the Dominion, about half the Americans think this! In the same way, the word "republic" has an almost magical significance for the Americans. Plutarch, as Mr. Wells once suggested, had a good deal to do with this; but, whatever the origins of the belief, it is now part of the American credo that only citizens of a republic can be free. And no matter what romantic interest Americans may display in the human side of monarchy, it should never be forgotten that, politically, they regard it as a childish institution. Mark Twain, a very pro-English American, refused for that very reason to write one of his amusing, critical travel books about England. But he did write two books about England, all the same: *The Prince and the Pauper* and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. How deeply anti-monarchical, anti-clerical, anti-traditional, those books are!

And in *Huckleberry Finn,* the traditional American view of royalty as expensive foolishness is admirably set forth in Huck's remark to Nigger Jim: "Sometimes I wish we could hear of a country that's out of kings."

A great many Americans still think like Huck Finn. And it must be remembered that for Americans the great event of their own and of world his-

tory was the destruction of the royal power of George III and the establishment of a Constitution guaranteeing to each State "a republican form of government." It is in that light that the modern world is seen by nearly all Americans.

READING

How does Brogan's point of view as an Englishman influence his approach to the subject? Point out specific instances.

With what facts and opinions does Brogan expand his belief that "the political function of the schools is to teach Americanism"?

How does Brogan connect big-time football and antimonarchism with the main subject of his essay?

INTERPRETATION

Using the materials presented by Brogan, draw up an indictment of public school education. Does it neglect intellectual needs? Does it cater to a group?

Is Americanization less necessary today than ten years ago when the essay was written? Is it more necessary?

What instances other than those given by Brogan can you cite as examples of religious rites in secular life?

To what extent does this essay give you new insights into your experience as a high school student? If you are planning to be a teacher, how does the essay affect your understanding of this career? Is it pertinent to Barzun's attitudes?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The McGuffey Reader
My Parents' Education and Mine
A Day in High School
Private School Education
Progressive Education and the American Way

AIMLESSNESS IN EDUCATION*

by Arthur E. Bestor, Jr.

Arthur E. Bestor, Jr. (1908–) teaches history at the University of Illinois. He has published widely on utopian communities in America.

"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free," said Jefferson, ". . . it expects what never was and never will be." Americans have taken this dictum to heart. No belief is more firmly held in the United States than belief in education. But belief is not enough. We must understand education as well as believe in it. The thing that counts, after all, is not the number of schoolrooms we have, but what goes on in them. And if we really believe that education is vital to our safety, then we need to know exactly what kind of schooling constitutes genuine education, and what kind is merely a gaudy show.

* From the *Scientific Monthly*, LXXV (August, 1952), 109–113. Copyright, 1952, by The American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Education, first of all, is the opposite of ignorance. Jefferson makes this clear. The phrases he uses elsewhere as synonyms of education indicate the positive meaning he attaches to the concept. The kind of schooling that is vital to a democratic society is the kind that results in the "spread of information" and the "diffusion of knowledge"; the kind that regards "science . . . (as) more important in a republican than in any other government"; the kind that recognizes that "the general mind must be strengthened by education"; the kind that aims to make the people "enlightened" and to "inform their discretion." These are the ends that the schools must serve if a free people are to remain free. These, be it noted, are intellectual ends. Genuine education, in short, is intellectual training.

The nation depends upon its schools and colleges to furnish this intellectual training to its citizenry as a whole. Society has no other institution upon which it can rely in the matter. If schools and colleges do not emphasize rigorous intellectual training, there will be none. This is not true of the other services that educational institutions may incidentally render. It is well for the schools to pay attention to public health, for example, but if they are unable to do so, the health of our citizens will not go uncared for. The medical profession and the existing welfare agencies remain unimpaired. But if the schools neglect their central purpose of intellectual training, the loss to society is an irreparable one.

The loss is catastrophic whether or not the students concerned go on into college; in point of fact, the situation is more dangerously irreparable if they do not. College preparation, in other words, is not the matter at issue. A command of written English, mathematics, science, history, and the other disciplines in which we find high school graduates so often deficient, is vital for many things besides advanced study. Throughout history these intellectual disciplines have been rightly considered fundamental to education for practical life and for citizenship. Every vocation has grown more complicated in the modern world. The artisan of an earlier century might make his way in the world even though he were illiterate and all but unlearned in elementary arithmetic. Today even the simplest trades require more than this. The responsibilities of citizenship, too, are more complex than ever before. Intelligent citizenship does not mean merely a simple faith in American democracy. It calls for a thorough knowledge of political principles and institutions, of history, and of economics. It demands a clear understanding of the various sciences, for the intelligent citizen must help decide public policy on such complex matters as atomic energy. Above all, intelligent citizenship requires an ability to read, to understand, and to test the logic of arguments far more complicated than any that have hitherto been addressed to the public at large.

The economic and political life of a democratic state depends upon how successful its educational system keeps pace with the increasingly

heavy intellectual demands of modern life. Our civilization requires of every man and woman a variety of complex skills which rest upon the power to read, write, and calculate, and upon sound knowledge of science, history, economics, and other fundamental disciplines.

The concept of education that I have just stated is *not* guiding the American public schools today. It is a concept which professors of education have repudiated, and which they caricature at every opportunity. According to a recent article by a professor of education, the scientists and scholars on university faculties

> . . . visualize the mind as a sort of cold storage warehouse, which is empty at birth. The process of learning consists in hanging on the walls of the warehouse chunks of fact and information. . . . The chunks hang there in the same condition in which they were first stored until some day the student needs one or more of them; then he can go into the warehouse, unhook the right chunk, and use it for some mature purpose which he could not have conceived in the immature condition of his mind when he first acquired the material. . . . The conception that new learnings become part of the learner through their digestion and assimilation into other previously acquired material is quite foreign to this idea of learning.[1]

I assume that incompetents can be found who perform thus. I doubt if anyone can be found who believes thus, and I am certain that I have never met anyone who would defend, nor read a single sentence that seriously propounded, such a doctrine.

The caricature in itself is unimportant. What is important is the fact that American educators are deliberately and consciously cutting the public schools loose from the disciplines of science and scholarship, because they think that what they are repudiating is the theory described in this quotation. Unfortunately, what they are casting away is something utterly different from this. The liberal disciplines are not chunks of frozen fact. They are not facts at all. They are the powerful tools and engines by which a man discovers and handles facts. Without the scientific and scholarly disciplines he is helpless in the presence of facts. With them he can command facts and make them serve his varied purposes. With them he can even transcend facts and deal as a rational man with the great questions of purpose and meaning.

Consider how the disciplines of science and learning came into being. The world is first known to us—and was to mankind—as a great tangle of confused perceptions. Before man can deal with it at all, he must differentiate one experience from another and he must discover relationships among them: similarity and diversity, cause and effect, and the like. Gradually he discovers that one kind of relationship can best be investigated in one

[1] REEDER, E. H. The Quarrel between Professors of Academic Subjects and Professors of Education: Analysis. *Am. Assoc. Univ. Professors Bull.* 37, 514 (Autumn 1951).

way (by controlled experiment, it may be), and another in another way (by the critical study of written records or of fossil remains, perhaps). Thus the separate disciplines were born, not out of arbitrary invention but out of evolving experience. Trial and error, prolonged over centuries, has resulted in the perfecting of these tools of investigation. The methods can be systematized and taught, hence the intellectual power that mankind has accumulated throughout its entire history can be passed on to successive generations. Thereby each generation is enabled to master the new environment and the new conditions of life that surround it. This ability to solve new problems by using the accumulated intellectual power of the race is mankind's most precious possession. To transmit this power of disciplined thinking is the primary and inescapable responsibility of an educational system.

That present-day professional educators are seeking to evade this primary responsibility is the grave charge which members of the learned professions are making. The evidence is to be found in the educators' own widely publicized statements of educational aim. One carefully analyzed example is better than a score of quotations at random. Let us therefore look carefully at the curricular revision that is going on in the high schools of Illinois, remembering that similar movements are afoot in practically every one of the forty-eight states.

The Illinois Secondary School Curriculum Program is sponsored by the state superintendent of public instruction and has as its director the associate dean of the College of Education of the University of Illinois. Over the past five years it has conducted a series of studies, one of which—a so-called Follow-Up Study—will concern us here. This study makes use of a group of widely circulated questionnaires, all based upon a central document entitled *Problems of High School Youth,* prepared by a professor of education. Fifty-five problems are listed,[2] and the questions are essentially rephrasing of these items. The answers, it is said, will "afford a measure, at the level of informed opinion, of the performance of the school." And these, in turn, "will be helpful in 'engineering' an improved, broadly based consensus regarding what the local high school should be doing for its students."

The first thing that strikes one on reading the list is the grotesque disproportion between the different problems presented. Trivia are elaborated beyond all reason, and substantial matters are lumped together in a very small number of separate items, thus reducing them to relative insignificance in the whole. Among the fifty-five points are these: "the problem of im-

[2] ILLINOIS SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM PROGRAM. Bull. No. 11, *How to Conduct the Follow-Up Study,* 30 (Aug. 1950). The printed text lists only 55 problems, but all the accompanying statements speak of "56 real-life problems" (*ibid.,* 11). The unexpressed 56th problem—insoluble, perhaps—is doubtless that of summing up correctly the following figures: 6+10+5+3+12+7+4+8.

proving one's personal appearance," "the problem of selecting a 'family dentist' and acquiring the habit of visiting him systematically," "the problem of developing one or more 'making things,' 'making it go,' or 'tinkering' hobbies," and "the problem of developing and maintaining wholesome boy-girl relationships." Not a whit more weight or emphasis is placed upon the following, each of which constitutes but a single point among the fifty-five: "the problem of acquiring the ability to study and help solve economic, social, and political problems," and "the problem of making one's self a well-informed and sensitive 'citizen of the world.' "

Needless to say, the scholarly and scientific disciplines have no place among these "real-life problems." Arithmetic has sometimes been considered of practical importance, but, although "athletic games," "camping," "collecting art objects, etc.," and "doing parlor stunts" are mentioned by name, each in a separate item of the list of fifty-five, not one of the branches of mathematics is even hinted at. The word "science" occurs nowhere in the list, nor any term synonymous with it or descriptive of its various branches. That history and foreign languages are absent, even by remotest implication, goes without saying. The final item on the list is "the problem of securing adequate preparation for successful college work. . . ." One can imagine that this will prove the most difficult problem of all.

The intermingling of the trivial and the important in these lists and questionnaires is not an accident but a symptom. It is not enough to say that "neither the order in which needs are given nor the amount of space devoted to each need is indicative of the relative significance of the different needs." The arrangement of items in a list like this, and the attention devoted to each, do have a meaning—a very profound meaning. The order and emphasis of a man's writing are just as truly a part of what he says to his reader as any of his particular assertions. And what the list of *Problems of High School Youth* says to the reader is that order, balance, discrimination, and a sense of values are matters of no consequence whatever to the pedagogues who are remaking the curricula of our public schools.

Men who cannot compile a simple list without revealing their mental limitations do not inspire confidence that they will know how to accomplish even the saner of their objectives. Take, for example, "the problem of acquiring the ability to study and help solve economic, social, and political problems." The question for the educator is not *whether* the school should do anything in the matter, but *how*. The traditional curriculum offered a clear-cut answer: through careful and systematic study of history, political science, philosophy, economics, sociology, and the other relevant disciplines. The aim was to cultivate sound judgment based upon critical thinking and thorough knowledge. To the new pedagogical medicine man, however, all this is sheer pedantry, just as bacteriology is so much learned nonsense to the happy faith healer.

Political, economic, and social problems that have taxed the intelligence of the best-educated men from antiquity to the present are to be solved, so the educator blithely assures us, through a "common learnings course" in the high school, wherein "materials from science, literature, history, mathematics, industrial education, homemaking, business education, art, music, and all other areas of the curriculum would be included." And from the *Problems of High School Youth* we are acquainted with the exquisite sense of order and proportion that a professional educator brings to the task of organizing a set of problems rationally and effectively. We must not detain him to ask for proof that his short cut to wisdom will actually produce it. After all, he has fifty-four other problems to wrestle with, and he must hasten on to the next—"the problem of acquiring the ability to select and enjoy good motion pictures," perhaps, or "the problem of acquiring the social skills of dancing, playing party games, doing parlor stunts, etc."

If men and women prefer the latter things to intellectual training, the educator will argue, should they not have them? The question is really irrelevant, for the questionnaires do not provide, and cannot provide, one iota of evidence that the public is making any such choice. The most damning part of the whole study is that the questionnaires it uses are patently dishonest. They purport to ask parents, citizens, teachers, and pupils what they "think is the job of the secondary school." But the persons questioned are not permitted to give the slightest indication that they believe the job of the secondary school is to give intellectual training. In the entire battery of questionnaires there is not a single blank that one can check in order to express the view that the public schools should offer sound training in mathematics, in natural science, in grammar and composition, in foreign languages, or in history. The citizen may respond in the negative to every question implying the substitution of frivolous aims, but he cannot indicate in any manner whatever the kind of positive program he would favor. The questionnaires are so rigged that the results are predetermined from the beginning. However overwhelming the public sentiment in favor of disciplined intellectual training may be, the professor of education who constructed the questionnaires has taken care that this sentiment shall not appear anywhere in the answers.

The Follow-Up Study is not an attempt to ascertain public opinion; it is obviously designed to manufacture the appearance of public support for curricular changes that the professional educators have determined upon in advance. This purpose comes out stark and clear in the official statements explaining the questionnaires: "Given the American tradition of the local lay-control of public education, it is both necessary and desirable that a community (patrons, pupils, teachers) consensus be engineered in understanding support of the necessary changes before they are made." I find

difficulty in following some of the involved syntax of this sentence, but I have no difficulty whatever in grasping the significance of a "consensus" that is to be "engineered." We approach here the real meaning of what educators euphemistically describe as "democracy in education." It is the democracy of the "engineered" consensus.

The lighthearted prospectus of these curriculum engineers contains this exhortation: "There are many ways of getting under way in a program of curriculum revision. The important thing is that we need to pry ourselves loose from the present situation. Maybe one lever will do the prying loose; perhaps, it may require several. . . . Pick your lever(s) and let's get started." (The metaphor is apt. The kind of lever that one uses for prying things loose is sold in hardware stores under the name of wrecking-bar.)

Pry loose from what? The answer is implicit in the entire program. The secondary school curriculum must be pried loose from the established disciplines of science and scholarship. The public school must be pried loose from its relationship to institutions of higher learning. College entrance requirements are a thorn in the side of the public school directorate, for they give some support, feeble though it may be, to intellectual training in the secondary schools. The Illinois Curriculum Program is ready to deal with this menace to "real-life" education. It recommends "that the colleges adopt admission policies which do not specify the courses the students are to take in high school." College entrance requirements in the basic intellectual disciplines of "English, foreign language, mathematics, science, and social studies" are "particularly limiting for smaller schools." These, alas, cannot afford to offer both the fundamental courses that scientists, scholars, and citizens believe in, and also the gilded fripperies after which the new pedagogues hanker. The lever for prying the schools loose from all intellectual requirements has at last been found. It is the new guiding principle that the Curriculum Program advances: "Since the high school carries the responsibility for educating all youth, it, and not the college or university, has the responsibility of specifying the content of the high school curriculum."

Uncontrolled discretion will at last be vested in up-to-date school administrators like the author of the following remarks, which were addressed to the National Association of Secondary-School Principals and published in its official proceedings:

> Through the years we've built a sort of halo around reading, writing, and arithmetic. We've said they were for everybody . . . rich and poor, brilliant and not-so-mentally endowed, ones who liked them and those who failed to go for them. Teacher has said that these were something "everyone should learn." The principal has remarked, "All educated people know how to write, spell, and read." When some child declared a dislike for a sacred subject, he was warned that, if he failed to master it, he would grow up to be a so-and-so.

The Three R's for All Children, and All Children for the Three R's! That was it.

We've made some progress in getting rid of that slogan. But every now and then some mother with a Phi Beta Kappa award or some employer who has hired a girl who can't spell stirs up a fuss about the schools . . . and ground is lost. . . .

When we come to the realization that not every child has to read, figure, write and spell . . . that many of them either cannot or will not master these chores . . . then we shall be on the road to improving the junior high curriculum.

Between this day and that a lot of selling must take place. But it's coming. We shall some day accept the thought that it is just as illogical to assume that every boy must be able to read as it is that each one must be able to perform on a violin, that it is no more reasonable to require that each girl shall spell well than it is that each one shall bake a good cherry pie. . . .

When adults finally realize that fact, everyone will be happier . . . and schools will be nicer places in which to live. . . .

If and when we are able to convince a few folks that mastery of reading, writing, and arithmetic is not the one road leading to happy, successful living, the next step is to cut down the amount of time and attention devoted to these areas in general junior high-school courses. . . .

One junior high in the East has, after long and careful study, accepted the fact that some twenty per cent of their students will not be up to standard in reading . . . and they are doing other things for these boys and girls. That's straight thinking. Contrast that with the junior high which says, "Every student must know the multiplication tables before graduation."

Such a requirement attaches more importance to those tables than I'm willing to accord them.[3]

There are even more pernicious strongholds of intellectualism than the junior high schools. But the professional educators, undaunted, are preparing to reduce them. Colleges and universities still resist, but blueprints have at least been made of future institutions of higher learning after the educators shall have purged them. There has been at least one dress rehearsal in Michigan, described in a volume entitled *A College Curriculum Based on Functional Needs of Students.* Here is an enthusiastic report of the work in college mathematics:

Originally there was no time set aside for instruction in mathematics except a small amount for remedial work on the simple, everyday uses of addition, subtraction, division, multiplication, and other fundamental operations. With the development of other fields of instruction certain abilities became necessary: ability to interpret and make graphs, profiles, charts, and tables; ability to interpret test scores; understanding of certain statistical terms; ability to use the other skills necessary to the general

[3] LAUCHNER, A. H. How Can the Junior High School Curriculum Be Improved? *Bull. Natl. Assoc. Secondary-School Principals,* 35 (177), 299 (Mar. 1951). In reprinting this passage I have made and indicated a few omissions at the end of paragraphs. The three dots that occasionally occur in the middle of sentences, however, are not marks of ellipsis but are the author's substitutes for traditional punctuation. Mr. Lauchner, at the time of reading this paper, was principal of the Thornburn Junior High School in Urbana, seat of the University of Illinois. Although his remarks were fully reported in the local newspapers, and have subsequently been cited several times, no member of the faculty of the College of Education of the university has publicly expressed an adverse opinion of them.

curriculum. . . . This has led to the setting-aside of two hours each week throughout the Freshman year when the student can go to the mathematics laboratory to work, under the supervision of an instructor, on his own inadequacies in the field.[4]

This program was doubtless adequate to accomplish the ends of higher education as these educators conceived them, for in their comprehensive list of the "functional needs" that a college education should serve appears the following high objective: "Ability to read long numbers and to 'round them off.' "

Professional educators are fond of talking about the complexity of modern problems. They speak oracularly of "education for the atomic age." And *this* is how they propose to train citizens to cope with the vast technical questions that are posed by science, by an intricate industrial system, and by international anarchy. After nine full years of formal schooling a student need not be expected to read his native language or to know the multiplication table. And in college he is doing well if he can "read long numbers and . . . 'round them off.' "

READING

Why does Bestor begin by quoting from Jefferson? What use does he make of the quotation?

What are the two main pieces of evidence in the essay? Would the essay be more effective if more pieces of evidence were cited? (In *The Scientific Monthly*, which published the full essay, the reader will find citations for each quotation—omitted in this reprinting.)

How would you describe Bestor's tone? Is his anger at the professors of education necessarily a sign of prejudice?

INTERPRETATION

How well has your high school education served you so far in your college work? Was it the same as the Illinois group proposes? If not, did it have tendencies in that direction?

What is Bestor's argument in behalf of intellectual training for all classes? What would Brogan say of it?

To judge by his essay, how would Brogan regard the general situation described by Bestor? Are there any grounds of agreement between them? What is your own conclusion?

Recently there has been a national movement in high schools to teach students how to fill out income tax reports. What would Bestor say of this? What would Brogan?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

My High School Courses in English
What Colleges Ask For
Criticism of a Recent Essay on Education
A School's Responsibility

[4] HEATON, K. L., and KOOPMAN, G. R. *A College Curriculum Based on Functional Needs of Students.* Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press, 64 (1936). This volume reports an actual experiment involving the Central State Teachers College at Mount Pleasant, Mich.

THE FOLKLORE OF COLLEGES*

by Richard M. Dorson

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When she comes tripping by, stone lions will bark. A Revolutionary War cannon will fire out. Two facing statues will solemnly dismount from their pedestals, walk to the center of the courtyard, and clasp hands in congratulation. A series of boulders, delicately balanced atop each other by nature's art, will suddenly collapse. When she gazes their way, the Flattop Mountains will turn purple with rage.

On college campuses throughout the country these various signs will greet her achievement. For she will be the first virgin to graduate from the University. One report states that the teetering rocks on the University of Alabama campus did once topple to the earth, when an undefiled soul passed by. It belonged to a young man.

The variations are legion, but the theme is national, for undergraduates from Florida to Oregon inherit the same general traditions, adjusted of course to local deans and professors and coaches. We usually associate folklore with cowboys and lumberjacks, but college students also tell stories and sing songs that they learn purely by word of mouth.

Consider for instance the gags about the absent-minded or eccentric professor. Every college and university in the land possesses some odd faculty member whose behavior makes legends. At Exeter I remember hearing tales about an extremely cross-eyed Latin master, whom we called "Squint" among ourselves. Enraged in class one time, Squint glared at a squirming student and roared, "Look out, I've got my eye on you!" "Which eye?" the student asked innocently. In another irate mood Squint commanded, "You in the back row, stand up," transfixing a malefactor with his wrathful gaze. Thereupon six students stood up. I always accepted these stories as gospel until recently, when I began to investigate the ways of college folklore.

At Harvard a number of anecdotes cluster around the historian, Albert Bushnell Hart, who kept pottering about the library after his retirement. Folklore says that from force of habit he took careful notes on all the books he handled each afternoon, and then tore up all the notes before going home. A curious librarian noticed him browsing in the fine-arts section for several days, and examined the books Hart had been using. Around every nude figure he found a penciled circle—proof of Hart's ever-

* From the *American Mercury*, LXVIII (June, 1949), 671–677. Copyright, 1949, by The American Mercury, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

youthful outlook. Resurrected to present a paper at the installation of a high school principal, Hart (still according to the folklore) dutifully read the speech his secretary had typed for him, including the two carbon copies she had forgotten to remove.

Everyone knows that professors live in another world, and campus yarns prove the point. A University of Texas professor of ichthyology, walking across the campus with a colleague, was greeted cordially by a student, whom he answered impersonally. "How come you don't know the name of that friendly student?" asked the colleague. "I have made it a point," replied the ichthyologist, "never to learn the names of my students. Whenever I remember a student I forget a fish."

College folklore cherishes the tale of Professor Brown's visit to Professor Smith. The evening wore on, the guest showed no signs of leaving, and finally Brown said, "Harry, I'm awfully sorry but its 2 A.M. and I must ask you to go. I have an 8 o'clock class in the morning." "Bill," said Harry, "you're in my house."

They also tell for true the story of the University of Illinois professor who invited a number of his associates to dinner. When the first guest showed up in a tuxedo, the host's wife motioned him upstairs to do a quick change into formal dress. The other guests arrived, but the host did not reappear. At length the frantic hostess excused herself and slipped up to his room. The professor snored in bed. Taking off his clothes to change, he had unconsciously put on his pajamas and gone to sleep.

II

The classic absent-minded-professor story concerns the pundit who drove his car to a destination, took a train back, and bawled out his wife for not meeting him at the station with the auto. A variation on this theme recently appeared in the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin,* which reported that Professor William J. Cunningham, holder of the chair in transportation at the Business School, had dropped his wife at a mail box and then continued on his journey. Some time later he noticed her absence and informed the police. But I have heard the same story told on a mathematics professor at the University of Michigan, whose wife went to the rest room when he stopped for gas, and came out to find him gone. Worse yet, she had newly arrived in this country and could speak no English.

Professors are important, campuswise, chiefly because they give grades. How they arrive at their decisions, folklore alone knows. The old story, of course, is that the prof throws the bluebooks down the stairs, and gives As to those which land at the foot, Fs to those at the head. Or he throws them at the ceiling, and whichever stick receive an A. A Harvard tale has chemistry professor J. P. Cooke distributing his papers to his family; he gave the Es himself, his son-in-law the Ds, and so on up to the

baby, who, being the slowest, marked the As. From 'way back I recall the tale of the professor who customarily placed his papers in two heaps, representing the good and the bad students. When he came across an error by a good student he disregarded it, saying, "He knows better than that." When he saw a correct answer by a poor student he marked it wrong, saying, "He couldn't have meant that."

Examinations, the source of grades, provide more folktales. Around Harvard they still talk about Robert Benchley's feat in handling a question in American diplomatic history on rights to the Newfoundland fisheries. Benchley knew nothing about the matter, so he wrote, "This question has long been discussed from the American and British points of view, but has anyone ever considered the viewpoint of the fish?" He proceeded to give it, and was awarded, appropriately enough, a C. The chairman of the University of Minnesota's history department told me of a coed who showed up at the final exam with a few cocktails under her belt. She thought the questions looked a little strange, but went at them with a will. Some weeks later she received a grade of B for a course in American political science, in which she was not enrolled, and a statement of incomplete for the course in American literature in which she belonged.

A colleague of mine claims this is gospel. He caught a student cheating on an examination, and duly reported him to the dean. Ordinarily this meant expulsion, but the student had a relative on the governing board, and was let off with a reprimand. Some years later his professor entered a bank to cash a check, and saw this youth in the front office, scrutinizing the books. He held the post of state bank examiner.

III

There is a sheaf of stories about the dumb star athlete. His coach instructs him to sit next to the class grind for the crucial exam. Forty-nine questions the two answer identically. On the fiftieth the brilliant student writes, "I don't know the answer to this," so the athlete puts down, "I don't know the answer either." Then they tell of the football star who received such encomiums in the press that the dean asked the coach, "Won't all this praise go to his head?" "No," said the coach, "he can't read."

As the prof is lowly and comical, so the coach is lofty and admired. Which college president was it whose salary was raised to make it equal that of the football coach? Anyway, tales constantly spring up of coaches' magic. For instance, Adolph Rupp, the wizard basketball coach at the University of Kentucky, lays his luck to the fact that the door to his office is exactly six feet high. If an ambitious freshman enters without stooping, Rupp doesn't even bother to stand up and shake his hand. Bernie Bierman of the University of Minnesota uses a similar technique in culling football

talent. On a scouting trip he drives through a farm area until he comes to a young fellow plowing. He asks him, "Where is the University?" and if the young man points the direction with his hand, Bierman drives on. If, however, he lifts his plow to show the direction, Bierman stops to explain how attractive attendance at the University could be. This plow-lifting stunt, incidentally, is told on several European folk heroes.

Deans, too, grow into legends, and the Dean of Women leads all the rest. Her advice to new coeds echoes across the country. Never wear patent leather shoes on a date; they reflect. Never wear a red dress; it inflames. Don't eat olives; they're passion pills. Always carry along a telephone book (or a newspaper, or a copy of the *Saturday Evening Post*) in case your date asks you to sit on his lap. The bright street lamps erected in front of the dorms are known as Dean X's birth-control lights. A coed must turn the picture of her boy-friend to the wall before undressing at night.

In spite of these warnings, coeds do manage to have some fun. Just becoming a coed involves certain traditional procedures that the Lady Dean would be horrified to learn about. A mild one is that at Michigan State College, where a girl becomes a coed when kissed in the shadow of Beaumont Tower at the stroke of midnight. At Purdue the requirements are more demanding. Girl kisses boy under the arch of the clock tower at Havoline Hall, on the first stroke of the chimes at midnight. Then both race across campus to John Purdue's grave and commence more serious business before the last chimes strike.

Believed tales, or legends, can be found in college folklore. A macabre one that turns up in various forms is known as the Fatal Fraternity Initiation. The pledge is tied to a chair, blindfolded, and told that his arm is to be cut open. The back of the blade is pressed against his skin, while a wet towel is hung over a chair and drips into a bucket, to simulate the bleeding. The actives tell the pledge they will return later. When they come back, the boy is dead.

Sometimes the pledge is led blindfolded to the edge of a supposed cliff, and dropped two feet to die of shock. Or he is to be singed with a hot poker, which is pressed against raw meat at the same time that a piece of ice is held on the pledge's skin. He smells the burning meat, thinks it is his own flesh, and crumples up dead. In a sorority initiation, the pledge was blindfolded and told to shake the hand of a dead man. The actives thrust a pickled hand they had swiped from the laboratory into her hand, then ran out of the room and locked the door. In the morning they found their sister with snow white hair, nibbling on the pickled hand.

Campus cries form still another aspect of collegiate tradition. At Harvard "Rinehart" rallies the mob for action, and thus memorializes a lonesome alumnus. Poor Rinehart, lacking friends, would go beneath his

window and call out his own name, to make the neighbors think him popular. Some say that he actually was popular. At the University of California the cry is "Pedro," and the explanations are myriad. Pedro is the ghost of a student who dropped dead from the shock of getting all As, and now assists cramming undergrads when they call him in their distress. Or he is the ghost of an Indian whose tepee was razed to build the library, and who still hangs angrily about. Or again he is the date of a girl who found herself locked out of the dorm and called after him in despair. Anyway, "Pedro" voices the soul yearnings of Berkeley bookworms on soft spring nights.

IV

Anyone who would penetrate the minds of American collegians must know their songs. The undergraduate inherits a spirited grab-bag of folksong from upperclassmen, and sings them lustily at dorm bull sessions, beer busts, fraternity and sorority parties, or any other convivial occasion. The tunes are standard Tin Pan Alley stuff latched on to parodies and originals. The texts rise up spontaneously and spread mysteriously. Some classics seem to be familiar to college students everywhere; last fall, coming back from Europe on a ship carrying fourteen hundred assorted students, I saw casual groups form on deck and join into lyric after lyric without benefit of songbooks or prompters. Most of the songs wouldn't look well in print anyway.

The *leitmotif* in college balladry is love, but not Tin Pan Alley or Hollywood brands of love. Dimpled, cherubic coeds sing the praises of an earthy, physical passion, of an insatiable sex mania. One group of their songs twines around Wicked Women and their lures; Flamin' Mamie, "a love scorcher and a human torture"; Mimi the College Widow, who taught the boys anatomy; Gumdrop Sal, the friendly Eskimo Queen, whose husband stayed out all night, in a land where the nights are six months long. But the chief beguiler, head and fins above the rest, is Minnie the Mermaid:

Many's the night I spent with Minnie the Mermaid,
Down at the bottom of the sea.
She forgot her morals, down among the corals,
Gee but she was good to me.
Many's the night when the pale moon was shining,
Down on her bungalow.
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
Two twin beds and only one of them mussed.

Oh it's easy to see she's not my mother,
'Cause my mother's forty-nine.
And it's easy to see she's not my sister,

'Cause I'd never give my sister such a helluva good time.
And it's easy to see she's not my sweetie,
'Cause my sweetie's too refined.
She's just a cute little kid who never knew what she did,
She's just a personal friend of mine.

In reverse plot stands the well known fate of "The Lady in Red," begging a night's shelter under the bar. The moral to over-ambitious coeds: beware the ways of college men, "and how they come—and go."

The drinking songs assist men of mettle to drain their cups, stimulating them with sagas of mighty drunks, or providing due pauses for gulping purposes. Thus the popular Chug-A-Lug Song requires the rapid downing of a mugfull of beer upon the completion of each verse, while the celebrated Whiffenpoof Song hymns a stately salute to the tavern hall.

There are various apostrophes to beer, gin, rum and whisky, and an epic ballad about an Irish wake:

The night that Paddy Murphy died
I never shall forget,
The whole damn town got stinkin' drunk,
And some ain't sober yet.
The only thing they did that night
That filled my heart with fear,
They took the ice right off the corpse
And put it in the beer.

Chorus

That's how they showed their respect for Paddy Murphy,
That's how they showed their honor and their pride,
Ho-ho-ho, that's how they showed their respect for Paddy Murphy,
On the night that Paddy died.

When they finished with the beer they started on the corpse.
They took him from his coffin and put him on the porch,
And then they went next door and stole a neighbor's pig
And brought it back to Paddy's house and tied it on his leg.

A college story about Paddy Murphy says that he came to the States from County Cork, spent his life cheating on, and beating up, his wife, and died of acute alcoholism. His relatives assembled for a handsome wake. They duly passed the body and kissed the forehead, when cousin Maureen felt a movement and screamed to Mrs. Murphy, "He's hot, he's hot!" "Hot or cold, he goes out in the morning," said the grieving widow.

At Northwestern University the alcoholic exploits of Paddy Murphy receive each fall appropriate funeral rites, sponsored by the local Sigma

Alpha Epsilon chapter. A procession three blocks long files from the chapter house to the outskirts of Evanston, the marchers festooned in green and tearfully draining beer bottles as they follow the corpse, itself composed of dead beer bottles, with a red lamp bulb for a nose. Upon reaching the grave, which has been dug by pledges, the mourners light candles and break into the Paddy Murphy song. An active attired in priestly robes renders the service, paying tribute to Paddy's inspiring and heroic drunks. En route to the grave the Sigma Chis attempt to purloin the corpse, and so seriously do the SAEs defend their honor that in 1945 one circled the procession in a plane to warn his fellow-actives of the enemy's approach.

The group loyalties of college folk get expressed in odes of sentiment and corny humor to fraternities and sororities, and to the alma mater. Serious songs of love and devotion are used to serenade the newly pinned coed, or to entertain a visiting sorority. They crawl with romantic clichés. But the undergrad has no scruples about parodying himself, and will compose such a slurring "Ode by a Sigma Chi" as this:

The girl of my dreams has bobbed her hair
And dyed it a fiery red.
She drinks, she smokes, and she tells dirty jokes,
She hasn't a brain in her head.
The girl of my dreams is a cigarette fiend,
She drinks more booze than I.
But the girl of my dreams is not what she seems,
She's the sweetheart of six other guys.

One must add to the stories and songs such other folk matter as the slang of the campus, and the festivals and customs that perforate college life. The enterprising folklorist doesn't need to journey into the back hills to scoop up tradition. He can set up his recording machine in the smoke-shop or the college grill.

READING

What is the order of grouping the examples of folklore that Dorson gives? Is it the best order for his purpose?

How is the folklore of college songs and ceremonies related to the subject matters given in the earlier part of the essay?

What special concept of the folklorist is expressed in this essay? How is it unified with the material?

INTERPRETATION

What is the relation of folklore to historical events as suggested by these pages? Can you distinguish between two kinds of folklore in relation to history? Does college folklore differ essentially from backwoods folklore?

What seems to be Dorson's attitude to the importance of this material? What is yours?

What examples of college folklore can you add to those of Dorson? Are there additional subject matters that he has not covered?

Does folklore, regarded as the unconscious expression of desires and standards, throw any light on the essays of Barzun and Brogan?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Folklore of a Group I Know
A Folk Tale I Have Heard
Folklore of Examinations on My Campus
College in Folklore and Actuality

UNIVERSITY DAYS*

by James Thurber

James Thurber (1894–), contemporary humorist, is a cartoonist, essayist, and dramatist. Born in Columbus, Ohio, he studied at Ohio State University. After working on several newspapers, he joined the staff of *The New Yorker*, where he was for a time managing editor. He is now a free-lance writer but still remains a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker*. He has written *My Life and Hard Times, Let Your Mind Alone, The Male Animal* (with Elliott Nugent), *Fables for Our Times, My World—and Welcome to It!, The Thurber Carnival*, and others.

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 he 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 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

* From *My Life and Hard Times*, by James Thurber (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1933). Reprinted by permission of the author. Copyright, 1933, by James Thurber. Originally published in the *New Yorker* under the title "College Days."

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 *did*n'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 ques-

tion. "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, too-tooooooot!" 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. "*Chuffa* chuffa, *chuffa* 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, because he had 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 inter-urban railway conductor, now that it had become faded and too tight made me look like Bert Williams in his bell-boy 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 to-

ward 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.

READING

How do the first and last of the five main incidents have special qualities that entitle them to those places?

Is there a change of treatment from incident to incident in addition to the change of subject matter?

What is the tone of Thurber's essay—humorous, satirical, nostalgic, resentful, or a combination of several of these qualities, or of others not named? Are his people characters or caricatures?

Point out some sentences which make a direct criticism of college life. How do they affect the tone?

INTERPRETATION

What would you say is Thurber's main criticism of university life? Is it the same as your own?

In your opinion how fair is Thurber's treatment of athletes, professors, army officers, and other aspects of college?

Show how Thurber's essay may function as a commentary on those of Brogan and Dorson.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Eager Student
The College Journalist
A College Class
Military Courses in College

WHAT COLLEGE GRADUATES THINK ABOUT COLLEGE*

by Ernest Havemann and Patricia Salter West

Ernest Havemann, a former editor of *Time* now with *Life,* prepared the final manuscript of *They Went to College.* Patricia Salter West, who received a Ph.D. from Columbia, is a member of the Columbia University Bureau of Applied Social Research, which analyzed the data gathered by *Time.*

In the business world, one good measure of a firm's success is its number of satisfied customers. In the world of education, the same measure must have at least a certain amount of validity. If the great majority of all gradutes are glad they went, we have to chalk up a mark in favor of the colleges. On the other hand if the majority of graduates consider the whole thing a

* From *They Went to College: The College Graduate in America Today,* by Ernest Havemann and Patricia Salter West (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1952), pp. 126–137. Copyright, 1952, by Time, Inc. Reproduced by permission of Time, Inc., and Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

waste of time, money, and effort, we should be moved to some serious doubts.

This does not mean that the testimonials or complaints of former students can be taken as the final verdict on the value of higher education as practiced in the United States. A testimonial might mean only that the graduate was taught in college to be smug about his own learning and accomplishments, not that he was really well educated or taught any real accomplishments. A complaint might mean only that the graduate is a chronic misfit and misanthrope who dislikes everything he has seen of the world and of himself. But even considering these objections, it seems profitable to examine what college graduates think of their college experience. A person undecided whether to go to Kennebunkport, Maine, for his vacation could probably best make up his mind by finding as many people as possible who had been there and asking them what they thought of the place. A high school student debating whether to go to college, or parents undecided whether or not to send the children, could certainly do worse than seek the advice of as many people as possible who have themselves been to college.

It turns out that our graduates, if they had it all to do over again, would go back to the campus almost to the man. Out of every 100 graduates, 98 say they would return, with the men and women voting alike to within a fraction of a percentage point. Indeed the great majority, or 84%, would go right back to the same college where they got their degrees. A few, 14%, would go back to college but to a different campus. Only two out of a hundred would stay away from college and take some different type of training.

In fact the graduates have remarkably few regrets of any kind about their college careers. One might suppose, for example, that many graduates would prefer in retrospect to take a different type of course. After all a college student has to make the decision on his "major" field of study while still quite young; often there is a certain amount of whim or accident about the courses taken, and tastes and interests change as the years go by. Yet even here three out of four students say they are satisfied, and only one out of four wishes that he had taken a different course of study. The proportion varies considerably depending on the type of major studied, as shown in Chart 1. But even the pharmacists, who are at the bottom of the list, still cast a heavy majority in favor of the field they chose.

The only significant doubt that the graduates seem to express is on the matter of generalized education versus specific. Educators have been debating this question on a high policy level for many years, of course; and the sentiment of the graduates indicates that it is often a matter of great personal and practical as well as theoretical concern. Only 44% feel that they made a wise choice on this matter—that is, that they were correct

On second thought—the grass is sometimes greener

The field they majored in	Percent who wish they had done otherwise	The field they most frequently mention as a better choice
PRE-MEDICAL	9%	A DIFFERENT PROFESSION
PRE-LAW	14	MEDICINE
HOME ECONOMICS	14	THE HUMANITIES
PRE-DENTAL	18	A DIFFERENT PROFESSION
ENGINEERING	19	A DIFFERENT BRANCH OF ENGINEERING
FINE ARTS, MUSIC	22	THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION	24	THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCIENCES, MATHEMATICS	24	A DIFFERENT BRANCH OF SCIENCE
AVERAGE FOR ALL GRADUATES	25	
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY	27	MEDICINE
EDUCATION	28	BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
SOCIAL SCIENCES	30	BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	30	ENGINEERING
HISTORY, LITERATURE, LANGUAGES, ETC.	33	MEDICINE
PHARMACY	33	MEDICINE

in choosing a curriculum that was mostly general, or mostly specific training for an occupation, or a 50–50 mixture of the two as the case may have been. Of the remaining 56%, it so happens that 35% wish they had taken more specific training, while 21% wish they had received a more generalized education. In the next chapter we shall go into detail on this conflict, and on the relative success or failure of the students who have generalized and the students who have specialized. In the meantime we can simply make the observation that of all the possible sources of regret which we have examined, this one seems to produce the most actual dissatisfaction. Perhaps the advantages of both types of education are so great that the students—as well as the educators who set the policies of the colleges—have a hard time making a decision. The pattern of our statistics —35 out of 100 wishing they had specialized more, 21 out of 100 wishing they had followed a more generalized curriculum—looks in some ways like a matter of the greener grass on the other side of the fence. Perhaps its ultimate meaning is that the colleges have not yet found the happy medium between the two types of education.

Despite the problem of general and specific education, if we add up all the answers of the graduates on matters relating to doing it over again, we get an impressive picture of satisfied customers. Just about a third of the graduates—33%—would do exactly as before: they would choose the same college, follow the same major course of study, and take whatever ratio they did of specialized and general training. Another 37% would change only one of these three factors. Only 22% regret two of their three decisions; a mere 8% regret all three. And perhaps the greatest testimonial of all is the fact that even of this somewhat disgruntled 8%—who feel that they went to the wrong college, took the wrong course, and chose unwisely between generalization and specialization, in other words practically went down on three straight strikes—most would go back to college if they had another chance. Although everything else went wrong, they at least feel that they were wise to matriculate.

Apparently this overwhelming vote of confidence does not have a purely materialistic origin. For on another group of questions, as can be seen in Chart 2, the graduates were not nearly so unanimously convinced that their college education had proved of great value in their occupations. True, the statistics in Chart 2 do constitute their own type of endorsement of college. A majority of graduates—not only the men and women with jobs, but even the coeds turned housewife—credited college with being of substantial value as training for what they were doing. Only a tiny fraction felt that college was no help at all in this regard. But taken as a whole, Chart 2 is not so favorable to the colleges as the figures we have just been examining. Of all the graduates, just seven out of ten feel that college "helped a lot," to use the words of the questionnaire, in their present oc-

cupations. The others believed only that college "helped some," or not at all. Now of course phrases like "helped a lot" and "helped some" are highly subjective and can be interpreted in almost any fashion one chooses; this is an area in which really accurate measurements are impossible. But it does seem noteworthy that any large percentage of graduates, after voting so fervently in favor of college careers, should be at all begrudging in the amount of practical occupational help they attribute to college.

Opinions on the occupational benefits of college

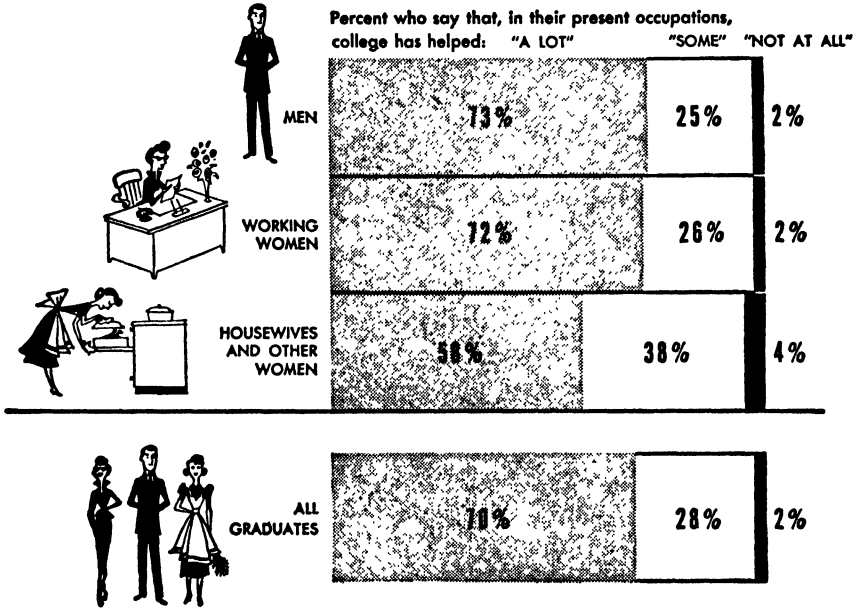


Chart 3 casts some additional light on this point. When the graduates are divided into groups by the courses they majored in, and then are examined as to whether they feel college has helped them "a lot" or just "some" or not at all in their occupations, some very sharp differences appear. In the professions of medicine and dentistry, practically all the graduates credit college with helping "a lot." But from these fields down the percentages drop rather quickly, until at the very bottom only a bare majority of the social science students, or 54%, feel that their training helped "a lot." Yet we have seen how thoroughly the graduates approve of college

in general; evidently their approval does not depend entirely on the occupational boost they feel it has given them.

This supposition gains further credence from the graduates' letters. To be sure, many of the letter writers are critical of college; and we shall consider their complaints, both general and specific, in Part Seven of the book. But the majority of letters are highly favorable, and it is quite remarkable how few of them mention the cash value of a diploma as a reason for going to college. Take this excerpt from the letter of a successful Virginia attorney:

> I am thoroughly convinced that college training has made it possible for me to enjoy life to a much greater extent than would have been true if I had not gone to college. There is no doubt in my mind that I am a better citizen for this reason. As a lawyer, I come into contact with all classes and kinds of people, and I am reasonably certain that college trained people are more aware of their responsibilities to their fellow citizens and, with rare exceptions, provide local leadership in worthwhile activities.
>
> Whatever the weaknesses in the American educational system are, and I presume there are many, I do not have any doubts at all as to the value of a college education.

Of course one might argue that this graduate's financial success is actually an important factor, implied if not expressed, in his high regard for college. And it is quite true that the younger graduates, who have not had time to get used to success, do seem somewhat more preoccupied with it. There is this letter, for example, from a rising young automotive engineer in Detroit:

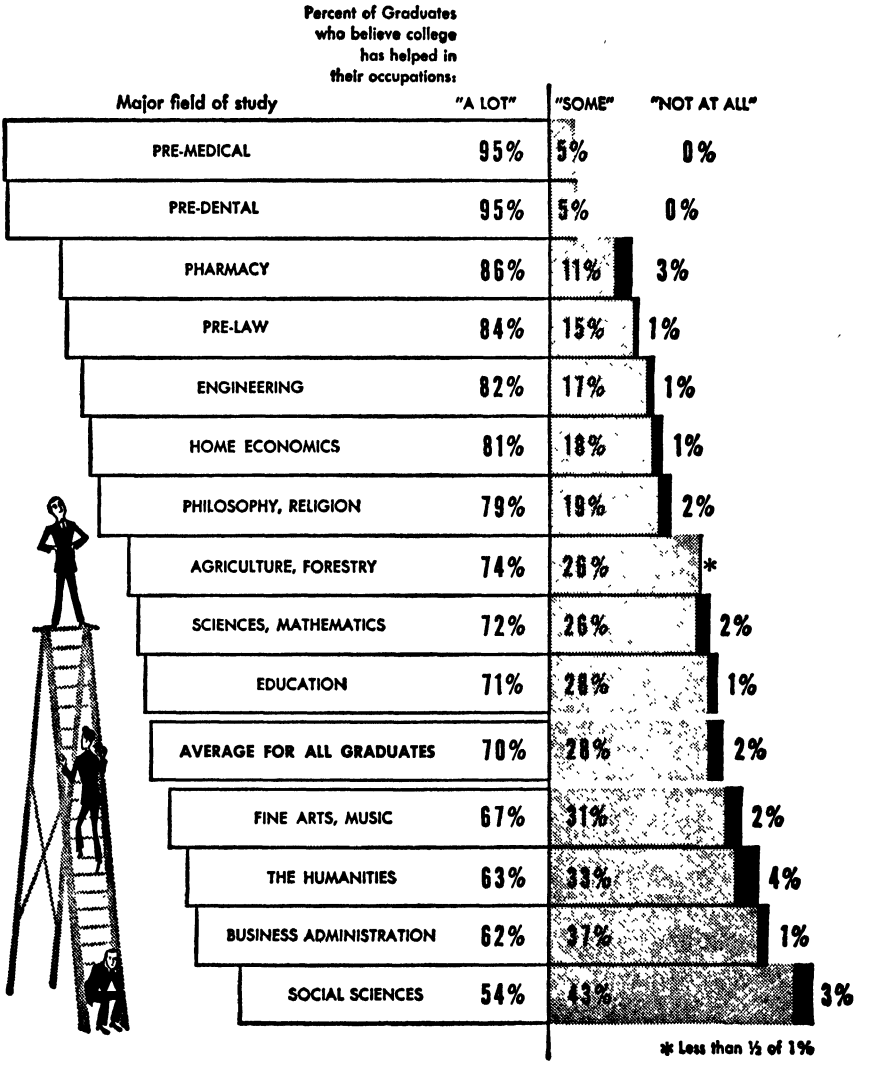
> What I would have been without my college education I cannot even conjecture. I feel it to have been the key which opened up life for me, without which I believe I would have had, to put it bluntly, "a much tougher row to hoe."

But then what is one to make of the following letter, from a successful Pennsylvania attorney who goes out of his way to stress the non-financial benefits of college?

> One of the great pleasures and advantages of college in my own life was that it gave me leisure to pursue my own private interests. At the time these were bound up largely with literature and history. Both of these subjects, or rather the reading that I did independently or in connection with courses, have markedly increased my enjoyment of life and have fortunately helped me in my career. . . .
>
> The chief benefit that I received, I believe, was the result of a period of comparative irresponsibility set in a studious atmosphere. It has always seemed to me that the mental stimulation which is possible in college is much more important than the actual courses which are studied.

There are also a number of letters from men who did not gain very much financial success from college, but nevertheless give it their hearty endorsement. This letter from a graduate in Massachusetts is a case in point:

The more specialized the training, the more college helps in an occupation



Because of unavoidable circumstances I was unable to follow the career for which I trained. However, my college training has helped me to enjoy life and be a good citizen by giving me a philosophical outlook on life, an appreciation of spiritual values, and a guiding line to keep me from going out of bounds in this game of life.

And so is this one from a North Carolina newspaperman:

My college training has helped me in my enjoyment of life. . . . I suppose it has helped in my career, although I believe I could have done as well (with probably more work) without it. I did get a feeling of community responsibility that I believe would have been missing without a college background. I believe a college background does (or should) make one realize that he has more of an obligation of citizenship because one has had more opportunities.

My college education is not a disappointment—definitely. I am the sort of person who can enjoy knowledge for knowledge's sake and not feel cheated because some Joe without knowledge can make more money than I do.

Or this from a St. Louisan:

It has enabled me to obtain employment of a type which is more interesting and enjoyable than would otherwise have been probable. . . .

Financially, I may be earning somewhat more now. However, in eleven years I have not yet "made up" for the time and money invested in the college training. Prospects for progress may be better.

College training has given me a much broader understanding of this world (and universe) and of the basic principles which govern it. Consequently, I believe I am better able to recognize true values in many phases of life on personal, local, and world levels, and therefore am able to be a better citizen.

So much for the letters from men. We move on now to the career women, who, as we have seen, very seldom gain any spectacular financial returns from their education. Yet the career women write even more enthusiastically than the men. This letter is from a woman, now holding an administrative post in a Pennsylvania high school, who got her college degree the hard way—working on it piecemeal and finally obtaining it 18 years after her high school diploma:

College training has enabled me to work and live with those who are mentally active and inquisitive. It has helped me in my career for without this training I would have been unable to qualify for the various positions I have held. The courses taken in college opened entirely new avenues of thoughts and cultural development. The associations formed have materially added to my happiness. I cannot conceive that a college education could be a disappointment to anyone. If the individual believes himself to be disappointed it may be not because of the college or the courses taken but that the cause may be found within himself. He may not be college material, have chosen the wrong professional field, or be emotionally undeveloped.

Along similar lines is another letter from a schoolteacher, this time in New York:

Without college training, I expect that I should be something of a misanthrope or a perpetually disgruntled person, always seeking knowledge but never being quite

satisfied or secure about what I gathered. It has made a tremendous impression on my life—one that I am grateful for. I don't mean to sound smug, for I don't feel that because I have been to college I am automatically a better person than my neighbor. All I know is that the academic life suits my nature, and I am glad that I was able to recognize my needs and fulfill them. That is what I believe makes me a better citizen and one who is willing to take responsibility in my community.

College showed me the way to develop my special talents more quickly and completely than a mere high school education would have. College, however, never can make a person what he isn't. It can help the individual to broaden his potentialities, but it can't implant seed on barren ground and expect to reap a full harvest solely because the seed was sown.

The following is from a woman who also trained to be a teacher, and now holds a government job in the field of education:

As to the enrichment and enjoyment of life, my college training has given me priceless treasure. I was born and reared in a small village. My parents had more education than the average parents of their day. My father was a high school superintendent, and at one time taught preparatory classes in a small college. Nevertheless, opportunities were limited by the period and the locale.

It was at college that I began to appreciate beautiful art and music. In my mind there stands out my first notice of the statue of Winged Victory that stood in the wide hall of our Administration Building. I began to wonder and to ask questions. We had the best musicians and lecturers of our day—"Star Courses," they were called. I chose all my electives in English literature. I studied Shakespeare and loved him. I still do. Each year we saw the Coburn and Ben Greet Open Air Players on our beautiful campus, and in the spring we prepared and presented an Elizabethan pageant. . . . Those years are green in my memory.

And we have this from a woman who has wound up working for the Red Cross in a Massachusetts hospital:

A book perhaps could be written on what extent college training has helped in one's enjoyment of life, in a career and in making one a good citizen. The mere learning of new subject matter is of course of tremendous value to one in later life; the large fields of human thought—philosophy, religion, science, few are the persons who would in any way be acquainted with these subjects without college study. In addition to learning, as such, the development that comes to one from living away from home, making oneself stand for something and be somebody without the help of family reputation, developing self-assurance, poise, and a mature point of view all contribute to a person's later effectiveness whether in marriage or a career.

The next is from a young woman in Connecticut:

I know that Mount Holyoke had a broadening influence on me and many of my friends. Silly prejudices passed on to us by parents and less enlightened teaching, against races, religions, class and so on, were gradually erased as we lived with all types of people, and grew to understand and like them. The attitude of the faculty and staff also helped to make us realize that some of our ideas were pretty old-fashioned!

And this from a career woman in Seattle:

I think college is a privilege that no one should forgo if he or she has the mentality for it. Maybe what a person learns is not so important, but the contacts,

the sociability, the extracurricular activities are. Where else can people meet on such an equal footing and with so many common interests as in college—certainly not in the humdrum office. . . .

Or this even more succinct tribute from a Michigan librarian:

My education has been a great enjoyment to me and I am grateful it has provided me with a pleasant way of life though not a particularly lucrative one.

And these two which come from career women in Florida and in Missouri:

College taught me how to enjoy living with other people outside of my faith and appreciate their religion and views on life and politics. I learned independence and self-assurance.

In my own family of seven children, five had A. B. degrees. . . . I feel that the degreed members are much more tolerant, one-world minded and self-directed.

Perhaps the most objective letters of all are from the married women graduates, who are making no materialistic use whatever of their diplomas, and therefore are completely free from any suspicion of financial bias. Indeed the supreme test of a college education—insofar as its spiritual values are concerned—would seem to lie with these women, whose daily routine of housekeeping and child-rearing is much the same in all physical aspects as for non-college housewives.

To see how well the college education meets this test, we can begin with one of the most extreme cases imaginable. The following is a letter from a Virginia woman who spent all the long college years required for a medical education, earned her M.D.—and then chose to become a housewife instead of practicing medicine. One might suppose that she would regret all those years of study, from which she has extracted no economic or practical gain of any kind, but instead she writes:

My college training has given me a sense of accomplishment, a broadening of viewpoint, a feeling of being able to evaluate situations that arise and material that may come to my attention.

I don't know how college could have helped me more.

And for some other typical comments we can take brief excerpts from the letters, in order, of college wives in Connecticut, Michigan, Connecticut again, and South Carolina:

The sense of responsibility I gained because of being privileged to go to college has made me feel I had to make whatever contribution I could to the life of my community. This was heightened, perhaps, by the fact that my grandparents were immigrants and that I was the first member of my family to attend college.

It seems to me that most of the experiences I was ready for, I had. My days were full of interesting new experiences, some good—some not so good, but all valuable in helping me develop better judgment, know more about the world and myself. The

people I met, both students and faculty, were grand to know tho' of course not all were grand people.

College gives you a broader outlook on life. A smattering of this and that makes one realize how much a person doesn't know—gives one an open mind.

At least I can be contented when by myself, and this is a skill.

The letters speak for themselves—and often, although they were not intended as literary compositions, with a great eloquence. There are all kinds of reasons, not necessarily connected with money, that our graduates are almost unanimously glad they went.

READING

What are the statistics for indicating that college produces satisfied customers? What are those showing an area of dissatisfaction? Select one of the charts and show in detail how the authors handle its material in their essay?

What evidence have the authors to conclude that college values depend on things other than an "occupational boost"?

What do the personal letters contribute to the statistics?

INTERPRETATION

Do you regard the statistics, granting their proper collection, as sound? Would you qualify the conclusions of the authors? Does a detailed study of the charts suggest any new conclusions?

How have those in your own curriculum responded? How may this chapter furnish guidance in your own problems? What do you regard as the most significant piece of information that you obtained from this chapter?

What conclusions appear to substantiate Brogan? what ones Bestor? In your considered opinion, what should a college education do?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Disgruntled Alumnus
The Contented Alumnus
Mother Went to College
Vocational Courses
Should I Be Here?

5
Religion

Everybody comes in contact with some sort of religion and responds to it in some way. What do Jews believe? What is Christianity all about? What is the position of non-supernaturalists? Do we often hide our sins behind a religious mask?

WHAT THE JEWS BELIEVE*

by Philip S. Bernstein

Philip S. Bernstein (1901–) has been rabbi of the Temple B'rith Kodesh, a Reform synagogue in Rochester, New York, since 1926. Director of the Jewish chaplain program during World War II, he was elected president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1950.

The Jew has no single organized church. He has no priests. The concept of salvation by faith is alien to his mind. Yet he has deep religious convictions which run like golden threads through all Jewish history. For him Judaism is a way of life, here and now. He does not serve his God for the sake of reward, for the fruit of the good life *is* the good life. Thus his answers about the nature of his religious beliefs are profoundly different from the answers made by Christians.

Judaism around the world is marked by diversity of practice and latitude of faith. But for all the degrees of divergence on detail, a great common denominator of faith unites most American Jews. This unique agreement is not imposed from the top down upon the congregations because the Jew acknowledges no supreme ecclesiastical authority, but rather it wells up from the depth of the Jewish heart, nourished in the long history of an ancient people.

In the days of ancient Israel the priesthood at Jerusalem laid down the law for all Jews. Then, in 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, demolished Solomon's Temple and carried the Jews into exile in Babylon. With their Temple and their priesthood gone, the Jews in the strange new communities where they found themselves formed voluntary assemblages for common worship and study of the law. These congregations were called synagogues, quite free and independent of one another. This institution proved so valuable that it has been continued to this day as the method of Jewish worship. It also provided the basic pattern for the churches which,

* From *What the Jews Believe,* by Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, Inc., 1951). Copyright, 1951, by Philip S. Bernstein. Reprinted by permission of author and publishers. This selection was first printed in *Life,* XXIX (September 11, 1950), 161–179.

after Paul, the Christians set up and developed along more unified lines. Among the Jews, however, the synagogue has survived in its pristine form. Any 10 adult male Jews today can establish a congregation.

The congregation's rabbi is a teacher, not a priest. Without any vested ecclesiastical authority, he is not even necessary to the functioning of the synagogue. Any male Jew with sufficient knowledge of the prayers and the laws can conduct a religious service, officiate at marriages and bury the dead. During the war, although more than half the rabbis of the country volunteered to be chaplains and 311 actually served in uniform, they could not begin to cover the multitudinous units in which Jews were found. Consequently, on many of the battlefronts of Europe and on remote Pacific Islands, Jewish officers and enlisted personnel officiated at religious exercises.

In the central fortress of Jewish spirituality, the Torah is the repository for the Law of Judaism. Torah embraces a triple meaning. Primarily it is the Sacred Scrolls found in every synagogue. These are contained in an ornamental ark which, whenever possible, is built into the wall of the structure so that when the congregation faces it they look toward Jerusalem's Holy Temple. This is an abiding reminder of the biblical Ark of the Covenant in which the Tablets of the Law were carried. The Torah scrolls are written by hand on parchment, fastidiously and often beautifully done by one who is usually a descendant of generations of scribes. In 1908 when the synagogue of which this writer is now minister burned down, an Irish policeman dashed to the ark and seized the Torah. He handed it to the rabbi who was rushing up to the building. "Here," he said, "I saved your crucifix." Well, the Jews have no crucifix, but the policeman had the right idea: the scrolls are the most sacred symbols of Judaism.

Torah has a second meaning: the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. These books are the acknowledged foundation of Judaism, containing the principles of the faith, the Ten Commandments, the golden rule, the laws of holiness. The Pentateuch is at once the biography of the greatest Jew of all time—Moses—and the history of the formation of the Jewish nation and the development of its faith. It runs the whole gamut of Jewish spiritual experience from the sublime poetry of the creation narrative to the minutiae of the dietary laws. So precious is the Pentateuch to the Jews that they divide it into fixed weekly portions and read them on every Sabbath and holy day in the year. When the sacred round is completed, there is the gay festival of Simchas Torah ("rejoicing in the law") at which the last verses of Deuteronomy are followed by the first verses of Genesis, symbolizing the eternal cycle of the law.

Finally, Torah means teaching, learning, doctrine. If a Jew says, "Let us study Torah," he might be referring to the Pentateuch or to the

Prophets or to the Talmud or any of the sacred writings. He is certainly referring to the first obligation of the Jew to study God's ways and requirements as revealed in Holy Writ.

For a Jew the educational process begins at the age of 5. According to tradition, a drop of honey is placed on the first page the child is to learn to read; he kisses it, thus beginning an association of pleasantness which is expected to last through life. When most of the world was illiterate, every Jewish boy could read and by 13 was advanced in the study of a complex literature. Thus arose the love of learning, the keenness of intellect to be found among so many Jews.

For all his love of learning for its own sake, the religious Jew finds much more in the Torah than burdensome legalism. It is an unending source of inspiration and practical help to him. He begins and ends the day with prayers. He thanks God before and after every meal, even when he washes his hands. All his waking day the traditional Jew wears a ritual scarf beneath his outer garments as a reminder of God's nearness and love. There are prescribed prayers for birth, circumcision, marriage, illness, death. Even the appearance of a rainbow evokes an ancient psalm of praise. In effect, law means the sanctification of life.

Jews never regarded the codification of law as a strait jacket. One basic device keeps it fluid: the oral law which supplemented the written law and was subject to emendation, interpretation, adaptation. For example the ancient Torah says, "An eye for an eye." In itself this was an advance over the laws of the surrounding tribes which usually prescribed death for the taking of an eye. Nevertheless the sages were not content to let this law stand. They said that the intent of the law was to compel the offender to pay in damages the accepted equivalent for the loss of an eye. Thus the written law was not repudiated but became the basis of a sensible adaptation to the realities of human society. As another example, the Torah proclaimed, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Jews observed this commandment with the greatest seriousness, but in the oral law the rabbis evolved a whole series of necessary exceptions. They said the Sabbath could be violated to bring help to the sick or to defend oneself against attack. They formulated it into a principle, stating long before Jesus was born that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

The central prayer of Judaism is the Shema: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One." This is the heart of every Jewish service. More, it is recited by the Jew when he believes death is approaching. Together with "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," it is to be found in printed form in the Mezuzah, the little tubed case placed on the doorposts of the homes of observant Jews, a constant reminder of God's presence and a sign of the Jewishness of the inhabitants.

The Shema and its concomitant prayers, including "Thou shalt love

thy neighbor as thyself," originated in antiquity. Originally this affirmation of God's unity was a protest against idolatry: the entire history of the Hebrews in Palestine is marked by the struggles between the prophets who spoke for the one God and the back-sliding people who preferred visible idols to the invisible Jehovah. Following Paul, the Shema took on a new significance. Although Jews are able, if they wish, to understand Jesus, the Jew of Nazareth, they have never been able to understand or accept the idea of the Trinity. Thus from the beginning of the Christian era to this day, the Shema has been the rallying point of Jewish loyalty confronting the persecution or the blandishments of a daughter religion.

For the modern American Jew two meanings have emerged which, while not new, are current in their emphasis. The first, suggested by the writings of Albert Einstein, is, in effect, the scientific confirmation of the unity of God which binds the atom to the stars in universal law. The advances in human knowledge, always welcomed by the Jew, seem to vindicate his basic belief in the oneness of the universe.

From God to man, from His Fatherhood to our brotherhood—this is the second meaning of the Shema to modern Jews. The concept of human oneness has always been an integral element in the Jewish religious outlook. Frequently this has been misunderstood because of the Jews' insistence on remaining a distinctive group. The Jew has never believed that brotherhood means regimentation, the elimination of differences or the stifling of minorities. Loving your neighbor as yourself, he believes, requires respect for differences. One of the great rabbis who lived more than two thousand years ago said that the most important statement in the Bible was not the Ten Commandments nor the golden rule but "This is the book of the generations of man." To the Jews themselves the Scriptures were not the heritage of a single people but of all humanity.

The prayer which after the Shema has the deepest hold on all Jews is the Kaddish. In actual practice it is the prayer honoring the dead, recited for a year after the death of a loved one and on the anniversaries thereafter. Its solemn phrases exalt the name of God and pray for the coming of His Kingdom. "Exalted and hallowed be the name of God throughout the world. . . . May His Kingdom come, His will be done." There is no doubt that Jesus spoke this ancient prayer in the synagogue and that it became the basis for the Lord's Prayer.

Though honoring the dead, the Kaddish does not make specific the Jewish attitude toward immortality. For the Jews have never agreed on what happens after death. Most Jews of recent centuries have recited the Credo of Maimonides, the 12th Century physician-philosopher who affirmed the physical resurrection of the dead. But the hearts of many stricken Jews have also echoed the lament of Job: "As the cloud is con-

sumed and vanisheth away so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more." Modern Jews have tended increasingly less to believe in physical resurrection. This probably accounts for the increasing trend toward cremation which is found among non-Orthodox Jews. Among American Jews the Kaddish is returning more to its original meaning, our acknowledgment of God's rule and readiness to leave our ultimate fate in His hands.

"The catechism of the Jew is his calendar," said Samson Raphael Hirsch, 19th Century German rabbi. One can learn more about the mainsprings of the Jew's spirituality from the cycle of year-round observances than from any formal statement of faith. In these are revealed his habits of thought and feeling, his historic memories and patterns of religious conduct.

In the annual cycle of religious observances followed by American Jews, the new year begins in the early fall—this year on Sept. 12. According to traditional biblical chronology, this week begins the 5,711th year since creation. The advent of the New Year is greeted in a spirit far removed from the festivities of Jan. 1. It ushers in a 10-day period of penitence, culminating in the fast of Yom Kippur and dedicated to spiritual stock-taking. What is man? What is our life? What will be our fate? Some Jews have believed literally, others metaphorically, that on the new year the books of life are spread open before the Great Judge. In this period of judgment it is determined "who shall live and who shall die, who shall be at rest and who shall wander, who shall be tranquil and who shall be harassed, who shall become poor and who shall wax rich, who shall be brought low and who shall be exalted."

This holy-day period is pervaded with a solemn appraisal of the facts of our frail human existence. No attempt is made to gloss over the evils of life. God's ways may be inscrutable, but ultimately they are accepted as just. Therefore the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Judaism offers no easy way to God. No son has been sent down to lead us to Him. No mediator intercedes for us. In the final accounting there is a purely personal relationship between the individual and his God. This is an awesome responsibility. Need we wonder, then, that this penitential period is known as the Days of Awe? Even the blowing of the Shofar, the ram's horn, which from biblical times has announced the New Year, penetrates into the heart of the modern Jew and causes it to tremble.

The climax is reached on Yom Kippur. Like all Jewish holidays it begins at sundown, for Jews follow the biblical pattern of creation: "There was evening and there was morning, one day." The service opens with the Kol Nidre chant. This is the most stirring, the most haunting melody in the entire religious experience of Jews. The words are a plea for the absolution of vows made under duress the preceding year—a plea that was

poignantly meaningful at the time of forced conversions of Jews to Christianity during the Middle Ages.

After the evening service some Jews remain in the synagogue all night and stay on until the services conclude at sundown the next day. Most American Jews, however, go back to their homes after the evening prayers and return the next morning to remain for the entire day. Fulfilling an ancient injunction, they fast for 24 hours—an act of self-discipline reminding them of their human frailty and of their dependence on God.

The spiritual concern of Yom Kippur is with our human sinfulness—but what is sin? To answer this question we must go back to Judaism's balanced interpretations of the nature of man. On the one hand there are no perfect saints in the Jewish tradition. Even Moses, the greatest Jew of all time, was denied admittance to the promised land because he disobeyed God. But Judaism, on the other hand, does not regard man as inherently sinful or depraved. Our instinctive drives are considered good because God gave them to us. There is no asceticism in Judaism, no retreat to monasteries. Celibacy is not required of the rabbis. The rabbis of the Talmud maintain that much good has come from our so-called "evil desires." They say that our sex drive has produced love, marriage, the family, the perpetuation of the race. Without the acquisitive instinct, they claim, homes would not be built, fields would not be tilled.

In its Hebrew origin the most commonly used word for sin means "missing the mark"—the repudiation of God's commandments. There are, it must be added, various formulations of God's requirements. While the Torah lists 613 commands, Micah reduced them to three: "To do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly before God." How do we walk in God's way? The answer is given in the climactic moment of the Yom Kippur morning service, when the rabbi stands before the ark and, about to remove the scrolls, prays in words proclaimed of old to Moses: "God, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and ever true." Such are God's ways, and such must be ours. Atonement must include not only rapprochement with God but also expiation toward our fellow men.

On Yom Kippur, God forgives our sins against Him but not the wrongs we have done our fellow men. Only the penance of restitution can clear the way for God's grace. The rabbis go beyond this and say, "Whoever has a sin to confess and is ashamed to do so, let him go and do a good deed and he will find forgiveness." *Gemilas Chasodim*—acts of loving-kindness—are associated not only with Yom Kippur but with almost every major Jewish holiday. Before Passover, Jews contribute to *Maos Chittim*, the fund to provide for the holiday needs of poor families. In the Passover ritual the head of the household lifts the unleavened bread and recites,

"This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in need come and celebrate with us." Significantly the Hebrew word for charity is *tzedokah,* which literally means righteousness. Charitableness is not optional; it is an absolute precept of Judaism. Jews may differ widely about the methods or the beneficiaries of specific philanthropies. The late Rabbi Wise once said that you cannot get two Jews to agree about anything except what a third Jew should give to charity. But all Jews are in substantial agreement about their obligations to charitableness.

Jews, like other religionists, have been troubled by the paradox of man's sinfulness. Why, if we were created by a good and omnipotent God, do we have and use the capacity to do evil? Judaism has no general theological explanation of "sin" such as Christianity offers in the doctrine of man's fall. In the Jewish religion sinning is simply a wrong which the individual may or may not commit, depending upon his character and free choice. As the rabbis say, everything is in the hands of God but the fear of God. To free men and women, then, the Yom Kippur service brings this great challenge: "Behold, I set before thee this day life and good, death and evil . . . therefore choose life that ye may live."

In the atonement process there is a profound mystical element. God meets us half way. First, we must acknowledge our waywardness. He who recognizes his sin has already begun to loosen its hold on him. Then, where possible, there must be expiation, restitution. Now the Jew is ready for penitent prayers. Many of them are in the plural form, "*We* have sinned, *we* have done perversely." Thus it is recognized how deeply we are involved in one another's weaknesses and failures. Then, worn with fasting and humble in penitence, the worshiper may be ready for God's forgiveness. But God's forgiveness does not come easily. He searches the innermost recesses of the heart; no secrets are hidden from Him. His probings make His task of forgiveness even more difficult. So on Yom Kippur, say the rabbis, even God Himself must pray:

May my mercy conquer my wrath
So that I may treat my children with love.

Jews leave Yom Kippur with a great sense of exaltation. This is tempered by a sense of relief, for no one can live continuously on that high and exacting level. Again the sense of balance asserts itself. After a lapse of only four days the Festival of Tabernacles begins. This is a happy fall holiday of thanksgiving. Historically it is associated with the journey through the wilderness when the Israelites dwelt in booths. Observant families build a booth, a *succah,* in their yards or porches and even on the roofs of apartment houses. It is colorfully decorated with fruits, vegeta-

bles, flowers and branches. Although used for outdoor dining and for prayers, tradition requires an opening in the roof so that the stars may be a visible reminder of God's constant presence and care.

With winter come two holidays which dramatize a distinctive feature of Jewish experience. Chanukah and Purim tell with colorful ceremony of attempts to destroy the Jewish people and of the defeat of the persecutors. This recurring emphasis on oppression and its overthrow represents a people's choice of what it wishes to remember. In this sense, as Thomas Mann has said, character is fate. The inner nature of the people leads it to select from its past that which is necessary for survival and for the perpetuation of its specific values. Thus memory shapes its destiny. So Jews have chosen to remember that always their faith and God's justice have prevailed against oppressors—from the age of the pyramids of ancient Egypt to the gutted Reichschancellery in Berlin.

Chanukah, which comes in December, is historical and deeply spiritual, commemorating the Jewish people's successful struggle against the persecution of Antiochus IV, less than two centuries before the birth of Jesus. Antiochus desecrated the Jews' sacred Temple, in the year 168 B.C., by the erection of Greek idols, before which he ordered the Jews to bow down. Old Mattathias, the priest, aroused his people. Shouting "Whosoever is zealous of the Law, let him follow me," he and his son, Judah the Maccabee, led the outnumbered and ill-equipped Jews to victory—and to the rededication (Chanukah) of their Temple. They found a cruse of oil which, according to the account in the First Book of Maccabees, lasted eight days. Ever since, the Jews have lit candles in their homes for eight days, one the first night, two the second, etc.

Purim, which usually falls in March, is a folk tale almost devoid of religious meaning. In ancient Persia a vizier named Haman sought to exterminate the Jews for being "different." His wicked designs were thwarted by Queen Esther and her uncle, Mordecai. He who plotted to kill the Jews was himself hanged. The Jews have since then celebrated their deliverance on the winter's days chosen by the casting of lots (Purim). The celebration is very gay, loud with noisemakers and children masquerading. In Europe it was the custom for the rabbi to drink so much wine that, as the book was read, he could no longer distinguish between Haman and Mordecai. Then Purim was a success.

Perhaps even more than Chanukah and Purim, Passover is a festival of freedom, celebrating the liberation of the ancient Hebrews from Egyptian bondage. This first great mass emancipation in recorded history has always inspired not only the reverent memory of Jews but the imagination of all free mankind. On the American Liberty Bell are words not of Washington but of Moses: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land to all the in-

habitants thereof." It may be safely said that after this first great liberation men were never content again to be in chains.

Each Jew is taught to feel as if he personally had been liberated from Egypt. This feeling is imparted chiefly through the Seder, the loveliest and most moving of all Jewish ceremonies. For this home observance of the first two evenings of Passover, the families gather from near and far. The atmosphere is festive. The service includes ancient gay songs and games for the children. At a dramatic moment during it, the door of the house is thrown open for the return of Elijah, the prophet, to bring news of the coming of the Messiah.

The profoundest meaning of Passover is something which sets Judaism apart from all other religions, for it marks the birth of a nation. Out of a mass of slaves Moses fashioned a nation and gave them a faith. From that day, Jews have never ceased to be a people. They have not been a sect or denomination. Common memories, problems, hopes, common faith have made and kept them a people. Historically this had been taken for granted. In recent years some Reform Jews have questioned it, but events have returned most of them to the historic tradition.

Nationhood was the natural state of the ancient Hebrews in their own land. But what held them together as a people through the 19 centuries from the time Titus drove them out until their return to Israel in 1948? Certainly their faith was the principal binding force. By the time of the dispersion their faith was surrounded by a whole rubric of laws and customs which set them apart—and was afflicted with a persecution only strengthening their sense of solidarity. Beyond this was the sense of mission: Jews believed they were the chosen people.

This doctrine has lent itself to much misunderstanding. It has been compared with the German Nazi or the Russian Communist sense of mission. But it has nothing to do with conquest, power, glory. Its classic definition was that of the prophet Isaiah, a "suffering servant." When the Jews were chosen, they received not a crown but a yoke. "You alone have I known; therefore will I punish you for your iniquities." Their burden was the acceptance of exacting responsibility, their goal the realization of God's justice—first in their own nation and then in the life of all humanity. A people that is so chosen (or, as some Jewish modernists believe, so chose) to be witnesses of the living God must live with a sense of special mission that sets them apart. They discourage intermarriage; by belief and custom they remain a distinctive group. This exacts a price, often a terrible one, for many men do not understand those who seem determinedly different. What they do not understand, they fear; what they fear, they hate. Out of this fear and hate have ever come persecution and pogroms—ever making service and suffering one for the Jews.

There is some difference between the Jewish and the Christian con-

cepts of the suffering servant. According to the Jews, the prophet Isaiah was depicting the twofold role of the Jewish people: testimony and martyrdom. According to the Christian tradition, the prophet was announcing the coming of Christ. Jews see no reasons for crediting the prophet with the anticipation of an event which, in their opinion, did not occur, namely, the Messiahship of Jesus.

Why did the Jews reject Jesus? The answer is that they have never done so. We do not know from any contemporary Jewish sources what the Jews thought about the young carpenter from Galilee who died on a hill overlooking Jerusalem. There is not a single reference to him in any existing Jewish document of that period. Was this a conspiracy of silence? Possibly, but probably not. Those were very turbulent times. The Jews, under the heel of Rome, were seething with discontent. Zealots rose all over the land. To break the spirit of rebellion, Emperor Tiberius sent his most ruthless procurator, Pontius Pilate, to enforce order and obedience on the Jews. The records show that he put thousands of Jews to death for actual or potential rebellion. The names of most of them are unknown. It is quite likely that the crucifixion (which was the common Roman practice) of a young zealot from Galilee was lost in the whole troubled sea of unrecorded suffering.

Only later when Paul fashioned a new religion around Jesus, the Christ, did Jews take cognizance of him. Then they rejected not Jesus, the Jewish teacher, but Christ, the Messiah. There were, for them, definite criteria for the advent of the Messiah. He was to usher in the Messianic Kingdom of justice, truth and peace—but after Jesus wars, oppression, corruption continued as before. The Jews were also especially repelled by the claim that Jesus had fulfilled the law, which thenceforth could be disregarded. Paul found this necessary in order to make the new and still Jewish religion palatable to the Romans. How could they be expected to undertake the burden of Jewish laws, 613 of them in the Torah alone? It was announced that the advent of Christ had canceled the law. This made the acceptance of the new faith utterly impossible for the Jews, to whom the Torah was the foundation of all faith.

Finally, Jews have rejected Christianity because of the concepts with which the Church fathers buttressed and embellished the new faith as they spread it through the pagan Roman world. Completely alien to Jewish thought were such ideas as Immaculate Conception, virgin birth, the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, vicarious atonement, the "fall." The religion *of* Jesus was understandable to them; it was Jewish. The religion *about* Jesus was beyond their recognition.

Over the centuries the Jewish attitude toward Jesus has been conditioned by another factor: Christian persecution. The stubborn intransigence

of the Jews in their faith has always seemed to many Christians a challenge crying for some kind of retaliation or at least retort. But, as anti-Semitism in recent times has become less religious than political, Jews in turn have felt more able to accept Jesus' role in their own history. Jesus' basic teachings have been found to be Jewish. His stature is that of the Hebrew prophet, fearless fighter for righteousness. As with Isaiah and Amos before him, he did not merely echo his people's convictions. Passing through the alchemy of his sensitive soul, the ancient beliefs found a new emphasis; they received the immortal impress of his luminous, loving personality.

None of this, however, reflects any readiness of Jews to accept Jesus as Christ—for, by history and conviction, the Jews have their own concepts revolving around the Messianic idea. Here one must distinguish between traditional and modernist Jews. The Orthodox still believe in the coming of a personal Messiah and pray each day for his advent. A large segment of the liberal Jewish community has discarded the notion of a single Messianic personality who is to save mankind. In its place they affirm their faith in a Messianic Era to be achieved by the cooperative work of good men of all nations, races and religions. With few exceptions religious Jews today believe in the restoration of Israel and the ultimate redemption of mankind. To most liberal Jews the solution of the historic Jewish problem through the founding of the commonwealth of Israel is a step toward the fulfillment of the democratic and Messianic aspirations of prophetic Judaism. This return to Zion is essentially religious in its motivation, for it is charged with a profound mystic conviction that thus will the Jews again make a contribution to mankind. Nearly 4,000 years ago a tribe emerged from the desert and attached itself to the soil of Palestine. This union of land and people received a divine blessing. From it came Moses and Jesus, Judaism and Christianity, the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. Is it too much to hope that the return of this courageous people to that sacred soil may again yield new insights, new healing and hope, to the troubled children of men?

The Jews are, in the prophet's arresting phrase, "Prisoners of Hope." The Jewish outlook is deeply and abidingly optimistic, progressive, forward-looking. A people that has endured so much knows that it can survive more. Hope wells from faith in a good God whose ways may sometimes be obscure but whose justice and goodness are ultimately triumphant. It inspires Jews constantly to strive for a better world, to be in the thick of movements for social reform. Even the nonreligious Jewish radical, who may ignore his Jewishness, is the product of its Messianic fervor.

Until the modern world emancipated the Jew from the ghetto, the Torah was the established basis of his life. He lived in a world of his own where the law could be observed without complications. Once he emerged into modern society, however, the whole foundation of his life was shaken,

and the observances of his beliefs seemed in ever sharper conflict with the world about him. Some Jews accordingly became indifferent to the demands of their faith, and this process was abetted by the steady secularization of life in America. Some have outspokenly repudiated it; others sought to disappear as Jews, simply to melt into the general environment. Still others, a small number, chose to go to Palestine, where one can live, they believe, a completely uncomplicated life as a Jew. But the great majority of the American Jews continue to be loyal to Judaism in principle, see no reason for surrendering their distinctive beliefs and observances, and plan to live their lives out in this land which they love and where their roots are deep. What about them?

They give a threefold answer—Orthodox, Reform and Conservative. Orthodox Jewry still maintains in principle the absolute authority of the revealed Torah. Adaptation there may be, but the basic law is unchangeable and inviolable. Nevertheless Orthodox Jews face the same problems in the modern world as do the others. For them a new but old answer is proposed, the convoking of a Sanhedrin. In the days of the Second Temple a supreme court was set up, consisting of 71 priests and scholars who adjudicated cases on the basis of the Torah. The high priest was the president and became in consequence the chief authority in the Jewish nation. This body was empowered to adapt the law to changing conditions. Later, with the dispersion of the Jews, the Sanhedrin ceased to function. Then Napoleon with his bold imagination convoked a new Sanhedrin with the intent of adjusting Jews to their emancipation in Europe. It was short-lived and unsuccessful because the Jews were not free to make their own decisions. And now Rabbi Judah Maimon, Israel's Minister for Religious Affairs, has issued a moving appeal to Israel's leading rabbis to discuss the possibility of reestablishing the Sanhedrin. It is too early to know whether such a Sanhedrin will be convoked to unfreeze Jewish law, but its possibilities are interesting. Will it permit Orthodox Jews to ride in automobiles on the Sabbath, now forbidden? Will it permit them to turn on electric lights on the Sabbath, now forbidden? For the Orthodox, in any event, the authority of revealed law has remained and will remain the foundation of Judaism.

Reform Jews follow an entirely different line. They maintain that Judaism is the sum of the evolving religious experience of the Jewish people. It is and always has been subject to change. By their views, for example, the observance of ancient dietary laws is optional. The Reformers permit men and women to sit together in the synagogues; men may shave their faces; the New Year is observed for one day, not two.

The net result of these changes has been a watering-down of Reform Judaism. Responsible leadership has awakened to the fact that a heritage so diluted cannot sustain loyalty or be effectively passed on to a new generation. Accordingly Reform has begun to move back toward the center. Dis-

carded traditions have been re-established; religious warmth, color, discipline have been partly restored.

Conservative Judaism is a midway house. Arriving later on the American scene, it sought to avoid the extremes of the Reformers, reconciling tradition to American conditions without compromising its integrity. Of late the difference in observance between many Conservative and Reform Jews has narrowed very much, and there have been proposals advanced for merging the two groups. Such would certainly seem to be the trend in the Reconstructionist movement, which is a radical wing within Conservative Judaism but secures some support from traditional Reformers and modern Orthodox as well. Though each synagogue of each branch of American Jewry is autonomous, there are some associations of congregations in this country whose purpose is the promotion of denominational programs. The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America numbers 500 members, though many Orthodox synagogues have no national affiliation. With the Union of American Hebrew Congregations are affiliated 408 Reform congregations. The United Synagogue of America includes 400 Conservative congregations. But these associations are always optional and voluntary and have no power at all to command. Throughout America the Jewish congregations are served by approximately 2,000 rabbis of whom half are Orthodox, some 600 Reform and the remaining 400 in the Conservative rabbinate.

All the modern debate concerning Jewish law and its application is related to the final holiday, Shavuos, the Feast of Weeks. Observed in the late spring, it was originally a festival celebrating the gathering in of the first harvest. In the course of time, like most Jewish holidays, it came to be associated with an historic event—in this case the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. The poetic imagination of the Jew has embroidered this scene with haunting beauty and with universal meaning.

For Reform Jews, Shavuos has become the logical occasion for confirming Jewish youth in the faith of their forefathers when, after 8 to 10 years of study, they are deemed worthy of standing before the sacred ark and being accepted into the company of adult Jews. With the traditional Bar Mitzvah ceremony the boy is henceforth to be held responsible for living a Jewish life.

At this ceremony of confirmation the whole great heritage of Judaism is summoned to mind, with a poignant sense of immediacy evoked by the Jews' ever keen sense of history and memory of suffering. It is, for both the old and the young generations, a moment at once of sorrowful reflection and sober dedication.

For my son Stephen and myself, this moment and ceremony came Jan. 25, 1947 in Frankfurt, Germany. It was a singularly provocative place for

such a ceremony—the ruins of one of the most battered cities of Germany, but a city whose centuries, long before the Nazis, were enriched by the traditions of a great Jewish community, bright with names like Rothschild, Speyer and Ehrlich. Here, in the charge which I delivered to my son, I summed up the spirit which animates my beliefs:

"We are surrounded by memories today, by tragic memories of a greatness that was and is no more, and of a people who are no longer among the living. But, that is of the past. The very fact that we are gathered here to worship this morning is a source of hope for the future. Our eyes confirm the rightness of the prophetic words which Stephen just read to us:

> *For the sword hath devoured round about thee.*
> *Why is the strong one overthrown?*
> *He stood not because the Lord did thrust him down.*

"The oppressor may triumph for a moment, but his house is built on sand. It cannot withstand the irresistible moral laws of history. And Israel survives.

"The Lord says: 'Fear not, for I am with thee.' That is a magnificent promise and an imperishable source of hope. It makes me proud I am a Jew. Despite the misfortunes of my people, I would not exchange that heritage for anything in the world.

"It is this heritage which we formally transmit to you today, Stephen. When I place my hands upon your head in benediction, I will be the humble instrument through which will flow the stream of history and memories of the great and the good in Israel, the ideals and the aspirations of our people, the strength and the lift of our faith. It is something which places upon you a solemn responsibility to be worthy of its precepts, to be loyal to its ideals, and to express them in a life of service.

" 'So be the Lord with you as I will let you go.' "

READING

Describe the structure of the essay, with special attention to the central location of the feast days and the relating of what precedes and follows. What justification for emphasizing the feast days does Bernstein give?

In addition to the passage following the description of Passover, at what other points does Bernstein compare Judaism with Christianity? When are the comparisons expressed? When are they implied?

What effect has the autobiographical passage at the end ("For my son Stephen and myself . . . .")? How has it been anticipated?

INTERPRETATION

What are the cardinal doctrines and attitudes of Judaism that Bernstein gives? If you are acquainted with Judaism, do you agree or would you wish to modify?

A common phrase in religious and cultural writing is "the Judaic-Christian tradition." Using Bernstein's article as a basis, discuss the continuity and separateness of

that tradition, i.e. its existence as one tradition and as an amalgamation of two traditions.

How many of the doctrines and attitudes of Judaism are commonly held by Americans who have no connection with a synagogue or church? Comment on the significance of such a situation.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Jewish Festival
The Rabbi of My Synagogue
Orthodox and Conservative Judaism
Ritual and Religion

THE PERSONALITY THAT CHRISTMAS CELEBRATES*

by Harry Emerson Fosdick

Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878–) is now pastor emeritus of the Riverside Church in New York City, at which he preached for many years. One of his earliest books was *The Manhood of the Master* (1913), and one of his most recent, *The Man from Nazareth* (1949).

A few years ago a German boy under the influence of the Nazi Youth Movement summed up for his shocked parents his idea of the trend in world affairs: "Adolf Hitler has become so big, and Jesus Christ has become so small." History records many Hitlers who thus for a time have captured the center of the stage—first they grew so big and then they shrank so small, and when, after one decade or many, the transient episode was over, Christ was still there. The personality that Christmas celebrates has proved to be a very formidable fact.

Where, then, did this "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild" idea of him come from? Why have we sentimentalized him as we have? One who splits history into B.C. and A.D., who, outlasting the rise and fall of many philosophies and empires, still expands his fascination and maintains his impact on the world, must have been a momentous person.

The sentimentalizing of Jesus is a comparatively modern affair, along with some other novel ideas about him. It was late in the 18th Century, for example, before anyone suggested that Jesus might have been not an historic character but a myth. To be sure few, if any, truly competent scholars have ever taken that idea seriously. From the beginning Jesus and the movement he started had bitter enemies who, could they have shown up nascent Christianity as a myth about a person who never existed, would have leaped at the chance. The Jewish Talmud, however, takes Jesus' existence for granted. Josephus, the Jewish historian born in Jerusalem about 37 A.D., in one passage whose authenticity there is no reason to doubt refers

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to "James, the brother of Jesus who was called the Christ." Tacitus, the Roman historian, in an entirely matter-of-fact way, writes of "Christ, whom the Procurator Pontius Pilate, under the rule of Tiberius, had handed over to the torture." Few historic characters have such a convincing confluence of witness borne to their reality as the Christian movement in general and the New Testament in particular furnish concerning Jesus.

The attempt to dissolve the Man of Nazareth into a myth has failed, but the sentimentalizing of Jesus into a gentle, lovable idealist has gained wide currency. That, too, is modern. The sentimental portraits of Jesus one commonly sees stand in sharp contrast with the ideas of him held by fathers of the early Church, such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen. They held that Jesus was physically unprepossessing, Origen even saying that he was small and ill-favored in outward appearance. The chances are they had no worth-while evidence to go upon, but at any rate they were not sentimentalizing him.

By the time Ernest Renan, however, wrote his *Life of Jesus* in 1863, the romantic poetizing of Jesus was in full swing. "His lovely character," wrote Renan, "and doubtless one of those transporting countenances which sometimes appear in the Jewish race, created around him a circle of fascination. . . . Tenderness of heart was in him transformed into infinite sweetness, vague poetry, universal charm." If Jesus was anything like that, one wonders why they crucified him. He stirred some men to loyalty so intense that they willingly died for him and others to hatred so fierce they would not rest until they killed him. Some called him a blasphemer, some a sorcerer in league with the devil, some "beside himself" and "mad," but apparently they never thought of him in terms of "infinite sweetness, vague poetry, universal charm." The money-changers driven from the Temple courts, the hypocrites castigated by his stinging condemnation faced another kind of man than that. Granted that legends grew up around him, as they always do around momentous personalities, even the legends that cling to a man reveal by their quality the kind of character that supports them. Jesus walked on stormy waves, they said; bade tempests to be still; and when he turned on soldiers sent to arrest him and said, "I am he," they "went backward and fell to the ground." Even if such stories are legends, they are not the kind of legend that grows up around "infinite sweetness, vague poetry, universal charm."

The importance of this matter is contemporary. The world today confronts a conflict between powerful, antagonistic traditions. Hitler did not extemporize the dreadful complex of ideas he held; they came from a long heritage incarnate in the most cruel and cynical characters of history. Another heritage in our Western world, however, stems from the Hebrew prophets and from the best of the ancient Greeks, and the early Church saw in Christ the consummation of these two, the fulfillment of the prophets

and, as well, the completion of the best insights of Greek thought. Christ stood for an idea of God that put meaning and purpose into history, for a world of moral law where what transgressors sow they reap and where no lie can last forever, for the dignity of the individual soul, for the fraternity of the human family and for the revolutionary consequence that the only real greatness lies in usefulness to the good of all. Such ideas are the intellectual and spiritual roots of whatever democracy and liberty we have. It was no "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild" alone who thus summed up and confronted the world with the most radical philosophy of personal and social life it ever faced.

There is a natural reluctance on mankind's part to acknowledge the transcendence of a personality like his. We instinctively wish to shorten his stride to our pacing, to domesticate him in our homely ways of life and thought. His immediate contemporaries, even when they did not understand him, could not escape him; he was a personality one could love and die for, or hate and kill, but something had to be done with him. We, however, by selective attention, can tame and soften our concept of him until he becomes merely kindly and comfortable.

Many, therefore, think of him almost exclusively in ways that make him little more than one of history's lovely souls. He was born in a manger, grew up in a carpenter's home. He talked about flowers and sunsets, about shepherding and husbandry, about the price of sparrows in the market place and the patching of garments in a family. He was a poet, the world's master of parables, a lover of children, a friend of the forgotten and despised. All this he certainly was, but it was not because of this alone that Pilate nailed a placard on his cross, calling him a "king." In the high Alps one finds beauty, from glorious sunrises and sunsets to unsurpassable masses of forget-me-nots; yet, after all, the fact remains that this loveliness belongs to towering Alpine heights, all but unscalable by man. It is this disturbing, transcendent greatness in Christ that the Christian Church needs to recover now.

The names he applied to himself are revealing: bridegroom, physician, incendiary, stone. With the first two we are at home. He was a radiant spirit whose life with his disciples, he said, was like that of a wedding party; and he was a physician whose chief concern was with the spiritually sick and their cure. That much makes him comfortable. But he called himself an incendiary, too: "I came to cast fire upon the earth"—no mild program, his, but a conflagration to consume the evil that opposed him. And, as well, he called himself and his truth a stone: "He that falleth on this stone shall be broken to pieces: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust." The everlasting solidity and veracity of his teaching he was sure about, as some Copernicus might be sure that the sun moves and that minds denying that truth would crack up on it in the end.

This Christmastime two major traditions confront our contemporary world, with heaven or hell on earth hanging in the balance of our choice—Christ or Antichrist. Christ's basic ideas about life's meaning, the laws that govern it, the necessities that confront it, the character that alone can save it, are peremptory; every other road which, choosing Antichrist, we try to follow, leads straight to an abysmal chasm of catastrophe. Until the Church recovers this kind of conviction about Christ and his truth, the stone on which men and nations can break themselves to pieces, it is only fooling with what he really means.

The sentimentalizing of Jesus has come, in part, from stress upon the pathetic aspects of his life and death. He was a sufferer and his Cross has deeply touched the imagination and emotion of mankind. In the Gospels, however, the idea of Jesus as a personality to be pitied for his woes is totally absent.

He faced the Cross not because he sadly failed in his appeal to the Jewish people but because he succeeded: "The mass of the people listened with delight to him." His ministry was embarrassed not by lack of response but by the popular acclaim that greeted him. "Many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them"; "He spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him"; "The multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread"; "Many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trod one upon another"—such is the record. Jesus retreated to the hills to escape the crowd, and when Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee, disturbed by the reports his gestapo brought him concerning the public clamor Jesus was arousing, sought to destroy him as he had destroyed John the Baptist, the Master left Jewish territory for the coast of Tyre and Sidon, and there, we read, "He went into a house and wished no one to know of it." From the beginning of his ministry Jesus' popularity upset the authorities and embarrassed himself.

Moreover, the crowd stayed by him to the very end. The idea that the Jewish people crucified Jesus is a travesty on the truth. Crowds welcomed him with hosannas when he entered Jerusalem at the beginning of his last week. When the Sadducean clique—the Quislings and Lavals of that day, the collaborationists with Rome—plotted to seize him, "they were afraid of the people"; and at last they arrested him at night, catching him in the Garden of Gethsemane where the people could not intervene. Even when he went to the Cross, "He was followed by a large multitude of the people and also of women who beat their breasts and lamented him," and after the dreadful deed was done on Calvary, "when all the crowds who had collected for the sight saw what had happened, they turned away beating their breasts." As for the claque that cried, "Crucify him!" in Pilate's court, they

were another crowd—the hirelings of the high priests, the hangers-on of Judea's collaborationist Vichy government.

The Jewish people did not crucify Jesus. They were stirred by him and responded to him. It was the small circle of the ruling class who teamed up with Pilate and nailed him to the Cross.

Our sentimental emphasis, therefore, upon the pathos of Jesus' rejected mission and cruel death quite misrepresents the actual record. Upon those who intimately knew him he left the impression of radiance and joy, of a life inwardly triumphant—"I have overcome the world"—in the face of suffering and danger utterly unsubdued. Even when men denounced and persecuted them, he said to his disciples, they were to "rejoice and exult in it." This accent of a victorious personality comes out most amazingly in the records of the Crucifixion. One might have expected emotion to enter into the telling of the tragedy—pity for the sufferer, anger at the guilty, sympathy with the bereaved. As a matter of fact, in all the stories of the Crucifixion there is not one note of such emotion. Those narratives are among the most factual, objective and impersonal in all literature. It is as though, even in his last agony, the writers saw nothing pathetic about Jesus. It is as though they foresaw what actually happened. "This Man of Nazareth, hated, crucified, dishonored," as Walter Russell Bowie says, "has outlived all the mighty things that mocked him."

The sentimental conception of Jesus as a tender hearted but rather impractical idealist has arisen, in large measure, from certain aspects of his teaching, such as resist not evil, be not anxious, turn the other cheek, love your enemies. When any personality presents two aspects, one stern and formidable, the other gentle and compassionate, mankind can be trusted to seize on the second and forget the first, and that certainly has happened in the popular portraiture of Jesus. Of no character in history is it more important to remember that what he said must not be ripped from its context in the life of the one who said it.

Jesus said, "Resist not evil," but he himself did resist evil to the death. A text like that, torn from its grammatical context and from its larger matrix in the speaker's life, can be made an injunction to soft compliance in the face of iniquity, but to suppose that Jesus meant that is to fly in the face of all the facts which his career makes evident. "Of the teachers of the past, whose sayings have been preserved," said Sir John Seeley, author of *Ecce Homo,* "Mohammed would be regarded by most as the type of unrelenting severity, and yet we may read the Koran from beginning to end, without finding words expressive of more vehement condemnation than those attributed to Christ." Of course he resisted evil—*but not with evil!* The temptation to become monstrous when one fights a monster is terrific, and Jesus felt that the more keenly because he was himself engaged in such uncom-

promising resistance to evil. When Booker Washington, contending manfully against gross wrong, said, "I will not let any man reduce my soul to the level of hatred," he went to the pith of Jesus' meaning as Jesus' life interprets it.

This basic principle, that what is said must be understood in terms of the life of the one who said it is critically important in the case of Jesus because he was not primarily a teacher at all. He was a reformer with a world vision, calling Judaism back to its great prophetic heritage and trying to prepare Israel to be the herald and usher of God's kingdom. As for his teaching, that was occasional, incidental, addressed now to this group or that individual. He was not a systematic theologian or an academic religious philosopher. He was starting a movement, gathering followers, sending out emissaries, and at last he was crucified, not primarily because he had taught something but because he did something—challenged the prestige and perquisites of the priestly clique by cleansing the Temple. Jesus' teaching, if it is to be truly interpreted, must always be set in the context of his life and what he did made the criterion of judgment in understanding anything he said.

His admonition, "Be not anxious," was no escapist injunction from a wishful thinker but autobiography from a life in which anxiety was a central temptation. He had plenty to be anxious about. Early in his ministry the Cross loomed, and from then until he sweat blood in Gethsemane anxiety was his familiar foe. When one thinks of the many people who have said, "Don't worry!" to an unimpressed world that soon forgot them, one sees that Jesus' words about anxiety gained their first impact and their permanence in mankind's memory because, like a pile driver, his confident and masterful life fell on them and drove them home. When words like "Be not anxious" are spoken, it makes all the difference in the world what kind of person says them.

Only in the light of this principle can Jesus' teaching about loving our enemies be understood. To picture such injunctions as springing from softhearted idealism is completely to misapprehend them; they sprang from Jesus' militant attack on moralistic legalism. He faced in his contemporaries an ethic of rules and regulations which, as Dr. Abrahams, a Jewish scholar, says, "did not merely effect the great concerns of life, but fussed over the small." Against this meticulous legalism of moral and ritual prescriptions and prohibitions Jesus launched his vigorous attack. The trouble with such rules and regulations is that they can be kept, much to the proud self-satisfaction of those who keep them, as in the case of the rich young ruler who said, "I have observed all these commands from my youth." Such an idea of the good life as self-satisfied observance of rules was to Jesus intolerable. "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees"—that was the keynote of the Master's ethic.

So against the externalism of rules and regulations he pleaded for a life inwardly right that does not murder because it does not hate and does not commit adultery because it does not lust; and against the negativeness of prohibitory laws he pleaded for a positive life of active enthusiasm for a cause, a life carried out of itself by something greater than itself to which it gives itself. No man can perfectly live up to such an ethic; it presents not rules but principles; it is a flying goal never to be reached, like truth in the intellectual realm, revealing from every height ascended still greater heights to climb. But to call that ethic soft, to regard it as sentimental and romantic, is absurd. It is the most demanding idea of the good life mankind ever faced, a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night in humanity's moral progress, and its influence has been tremendous.

Nowhere does this contrast between a conventional morality of rules and regulations and Jesus' idea of the good life stand out more sharply than in ordinary, day-by-day human relationships. There we, too, like his contemporaries, have a common garden variety of ethic, resting on reciprocity. If we can count on decency from others we ought to be decent to them; we should extend goodwill to those from whom we have received or can expect it—so runs our ordinary morality. Far past *that* went Jesus' thinking. Be decent, he said, whether others are decent or not. Exercise goodwill whether they do or not. Never let your rightness depend upon another's conduct. Do not become Nazis because you confront them, your standards of conduct at the mercy of others' ill behavior. Keep your own criteria of character intact and independent. Love even when hated, bless even when cursed.

Such a concept of the good life is no legalistic rule that a man, resolutely blowing upon his hands, can neatly observe, but to call it infinite sweetness or vague poetry is completely to miss its meaning. That ethic of Jesus was expressly meant for this tough, cruel world, where good will and fair play from others are often not to be counted on and where, if because of that we justify our own ill will and inhumanity, there is no hope. For then mankind will go on, evil always met by evil, hatred met by hatred, violence arousing violence, injustice calling out injustice. From that vicious cycle the only escape lies in those who break through it and refuse to surrender their own criteria of conduct to the standards of their enemies.

Even those who try to laugh off this very realistic ethic of Jesus have been profoundly influenced by it. They cannot altogether escape it now; it has changed the climate in which we live. Successful vengeance, for example, was once generally accepted as a virtue, and Xenophon could say, in warm praise of Cyrus the Younger, that no one had ever done more good to his friends or more harm to his enemies. Now, however, even our popular admiration turns to another kind of character, Abraham Lincoln, for example, in whom, even in wartime, magnanimity triumphed: "I shall do

nothing in malice; what I deal with is too vast for malicious dealing." Here, too, the personality that Christmas celebrates has turned out to be not simply lovely but everlastingly right.

Once more, in this year of global catastrophe, the Christmas stories will re-create the charm and loveliness of the Christ Child's coming. He would be a needlessly grim, ungracious soul who would begrudge the world the cheer of its "Merry Christmas." It should not be forgotten, however, that before men were through with that Babe born in a manger they found themselves facing a personality whose interpretation strained their profoundest categories of explanation. The Jews had no higher concept of personal greatness than "Messiah," and he was called that. The Hellenists had no loftier category than "Logos," the Word of the Eternal, God himself going forth into his world, and Jesus was called that. And while the minds of men have thus wrestled with the endeavor to interpret that mysterious *plus* in him, his personality itself, however it be interpreted, has realistically proved to be as obdurate as granite in its endurance, outlasting the rise and fall alike of philosophies and empires.

Even Pilate, who crucified him, nailed an announcement on his Cross, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews," and when the priests protested, stood his ground: "What I have written, I have written." Pilate's tribute to Christ's royal stature may well have been satirical, but there was prophecy in it whose truth he never could have guessed: an atomic age, nearly 2,000 years afterward, possessing suicidal power without whose ethical control civilization will perish and with millions of people seeing afresh that it is Christ or chaos now.

A strange sovereign, to be sure, Christ is, saying, "The so-called rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men overbear them: not so with you. Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant." That concept of greatness marks one of the most revolutionary turning points in human thought. No political arrangement nor any ecclesiastical organization's dominance and control can establish such kingship; it spreads slowly from mind to mind and from life to life, but it spreads, and in one realm after another man's better thinking begins at least a little to feel its power. Nothing is really great unless it is useful; any personality's stature depends on how much he serves his fellows—that idea is started now and nothing can stop it.

Indeed, not a Christian but an agnostic, Thomas Huxley, describing the very essence and genius of science, wrote, "Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing." Thus science itself, with its sovereign control of cosmic power, is a running commentary on Jesus' beatitude: "Blessed are the humble! they will inherit the earth." Nobody else in the long run has the slightest chance

of inheriting it, certainly not the proud and arrogant, they dig the pit into which they ultimately fall. Humility before the truth, obedience to the eternal laws, usefulness to the lowliest and the least—by such criteria every political government and economic system man builds will stand or tumble.

A formidable personality indeed Christmas celebrates, and never in history more than now, at the beginning of the new atomic age, was the old Christmas hymn urgent and importunate:

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King!

READING

How do the first two paragraphs serve to state the main idea? What is the function of the next four paragraphs?

In the central part of the essay how does Fosdick go about supporting his main idea? How does he relate Jesus' "radical philosophy" and "realistic ethic" to it?

How does Fosdick's use of a seasonal occasion and a particular political situation contribute to his purpose? Are there drawbacks in his use of them?

What is Fosdick's attitude toward the divinity of Jesus? Is it proper to base your judgment on what he does not say, as well as on what he says?

INTERPRETATION

From the whole essay, what generalizations can be made about Fosdick's concept of Jesus? Do they accord with your own? If they differ, do they suggest modification?

Is the ethic that Fosdick proposes an exclusively Christian ethic? Explain, with reference to Bernstein's essay and to the later essay of Russell.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

An Incident in Jesus' Life
Sermons and a Dash of Slang
A Religious Poem
The Basis of Conduct
Reform Judaism and Liberal Christianity

TWO BIOGRAPHIES OF JESUS*

by Theodore O. Wedel

Theodore O. Wedel (1892–) is warden of the College of Preachers, Washington, D. C., and canon of the Washington Cathedral. He has written *The Coming Great Church* (1945) and other books. *The Christianity of Main Street* is based on lectures delivered at the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, Texas.

I

No clearer contrast can be found between the two Christianities—classical and humanist—than what has happened to the biography of Jesus. Two variant biographies confront each other. Let us place them side by side.

The first is the one familiar to us in popular Christian thought. Jesus, in this biography, is the religious Master of mankind, and his life a hero-story. Even when surrounded, in loyalty to an inherited vocabulary, with the aura of divinity, Jesus remains a figure on the human plane. The appeal of his heroic life, though pitched in a more lofty key, is not unlike that of other martyr biographies. If a homely analogy is not too shocking, the story of Jesus is a "log cabin to White House" story. Nor is it surprising that a biography like that of Abraham Lincoln can, with no ultimate irreverence, be used as at least a distant parallel. Born in a stable, his home a carpenter's cottage, yet rising through love of his fellow men to heretofore unrealized heights of sacrifice, and dying for men on a cross, Jesus shines unique in human annals. His appeal in his lifetime, and since, is that of supreme example. He beckons to imitation and discipleship. To be a Christian means simply to be a follower of this incomparable Master. He is the gateway even to the distant mystery of God. And his ideal of ethics—the brotherhood of man—remains the simple summary of the Christian gospel.

It may come as a shock to be told that this is not the biography of Jesus of the Bible as originally written and as understood by all Christians until about a hundred years ago. It may seem to be the authentic story as this can be extracted from the gospel narratives. But all honest and competent contemporary scholars of the New Testament, even those not accepting the Christian faith, now agree that it is a modern reconstruction. It is not the biography of Jesus of the writers of the gospels. It is not the biography of Jesus as understood and preached by his followers after his death. The biography of Jesus as a hero-story was, of course, not repudiated as such. How can a Christian refuse to admire Jesus any more than can any other man of sensitive moral conscience? But the fact remains that a confusion

* From *The Christianity of Main Street,* by Theodore O. Wedel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), pp. 65–83. Copyright, 1950, by Theodore O. Wedel. Reproduced by permission of The Macmillan Company.

has crept into the interpretation of the gospel story—a confusion in the *dramatis personae.*

A bold analogy may illustrate the contrast. If the biography of Jesus of humanist Christianity can be compared to a "log cabin to White House" story, the biography of Jesus of classical Christian faith can be pictured as, in a very real sense, its exact opposite. The biography of Jesus of the New Testament is a "White House to log cabin" story. All depends upon the identification of the chief actor. Is the "hero" a man or is he God? Classical Christianity identifies him as God. The biographical drama is then a kind of hero-story in reverse.

Bold analogy can be pursued further. White House to log cabin? When have we ever met a story as preposterous as that? Perhaps "royal palace to slum" can better serve? This too, would strike us as very strange. Yet something like this is the biography of Jesus of Christian faith.

Let us suppose, by way of a parable, that a great king of England, in days when kingship meant high rule and power, had disappeared from his royal palace for three years. He had not abdicated, but was evidently living somewhere in his kingdom incognito, unrecognized. And then, by way of a climactic scene of discovery, news spread through the kingdom that the king had been living his hidden three years as a serf and a slave (the very word is used in the Greek New Testament—see Philippians 2:7) in the slums of London, a servant of the meanest and lowliest of his people. Recognized once more as king, he re-ascends his royal throne.

What would be the effect of such an event? There would be those who would label the story impossible. Kings do not act like this! The proud lords and ladies of the realm would not welcome it and might do all in their power to reduce the story to the level of a fable or a pious legend. The contrast between such an act of self-denial and their own life of aristocratic privilege would be too grievous a burden. Belief would be set over against unbelief. But for the people in the slums who had witnessed the event, the story would be incomparable good news. They would shout it from the housetops and spread word of it from mouth to mouth. Groups of believers would appear, banded together to preserve in memory this wondrous story and to give praise and thanks for such a king. A new relationship between king and people, a "covenant" unheard of before, would result. Palace doors now open to the humblest citizen as well as to dukes and earls, the king's friends from the slums even receiving precedence! A new dignity devolving upon serf and slave! Could a slum citizen ever forget that the ruler of the realm once considered *him* worthy of companionship in his humblest of homes and once served *him?* If his king now asked for service in return, and for conduct befitting intimate friendship with royalty and a guest-chamber in the king's palace, would not his

heart and will respond? A voluntary morality based on gratitude would replace the older enforced morality of royal law.

My parable, like most parables and analogies, is sadly incomplete and even faulty. The drama of the gospel story of the New Testament is far larger in scope than our mediæval tale. Greater accuracy would require two kingly characters in place of one, a father and a son, a royal prince, furthermore, whose sacrifice of privilege involves a death upon a gibbet or a cross. One objective, however, may have been won—the illustration of the basic contrast between two rival views of the biography of Jesus. Is the gospel story a drama of a human ascent or one of a divine descent? Is the hero man or God?

Complexities admittedly surround a too simple identification of Jesus with God. Jesus in the New Testament drama is plainly as fully human as he is divine. Certain it is, however, that the Christian faith of Bible and creed and historic Christianity depends upon identifying the chief actor in the drama as a divine as well as a human being. He must be accepted as both truly "king" and truly "slave." His acts are to be received as the acts of deity, his words as equal in authority with those of the God of the Old Testament. As in the parable of the king's descent from palace to slum there would be no point to the story unless the king were really king (or a son acting fully in his name), so the Christian epic stands or falls with acceptance or non-acceptance of a corresponding identification. Apply scepticism to the identification and the whole drama is in ruins.

No reader of the New Testament account of the early church can fail to see that, whatever may have been the complexities of explaining or symbolizing the relationship between Jesus and the One God of the Old Testament, the biography of Jesus was received as a story of that very God descending from heaven for the love of men. Here is no mere martyr or human hero-story. Here is an action involving a "coming down."

II

In training the imagination to see the faith of classical Christianity from within, nothing is more important than emphasis upon the fact that a dramatic plot as a whole is involved. The history of Christian theology is filled with wrestlings over the problem of *how* Jesus could be both deity and man—deity before his descent, deity incognito during his earthly ministry, and deity fully recognized after his death on the cross. The symbol of God as a Trinity (God in three Persons, yet One God) became, when the event of Pentecost had also entered the story, the traditional formula for Christian belief. It is, of course, absurd and even offensive as mathematics or metaphysics. But it *tells the story.*

It may seem strange to think of the doctrine of the Trinity as drama.

Yet that is what it is. The early Christians were not technical theologians. They were as practical-minded as are fishermen and tax-gatherers. They had a story to tell—something which had happened in their own experience. They shared with the Jews a belief in the One God of the Old Testament. Yet they became convinced that in the person of Jesus they had beheld a manifestation of their ancestral God in human form—"in the flesh." Nor was this the end of their experience. When, as Christian groups, they met with one another, even after Jesus had finally departed, they became further convinced that he was still present in their fellowships. They recalled one of his strange promises: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). He was evidently not present as in the days of his earthly visit. Yet he was not absent either. The story of Pentecost describes the experience. He, Jesus, or a personal representative of himself, was present in their fellowship as a Spirit—a Holy Spirit. Every Christian fellowship began to define itself as a "fellowship of the Holy Spirit." These early Christians were now confronted with the problem of how to tell the story of their amazing experience of Jesus as risen Lord and of his continued presence.

The early Christians were not in doubt as to the facts or the events. These were too vivid ever to be forgotten. But the logic of human words broke under the weight of such thrusts of the divine into human history. These were, plainly, facts of revelation, not of scientific discovery. God was somehow still One God. Yet they had experienced Him in three different ways. He was the Father-God of Moses and the prophets. He was also the God who had appeared "in the flesh" in the person of Jesus. He was, thirdly, the God who made Himself known as a presence in the fellowship of believers. Some kind of trinitarian language alone was adequate to tell this overwhelming story. The doctrine of the Trinity is shorthand drama.

Among the symbols which from the first proved most helpful in conveying the mystery of Christian experience is that describing the relationship between a father and a son. For here human analogies come to our aid. The God of the Old Testament and the Jesus of the New can evidently not be brought into a unity by a simple mathematical equal sign. Yet the whole Christian drama depends upon accepting the *act* of the one person as at the same time the *act* of the other. The New Testament is full of proclamations that Christ's sacrifice upon the cross was a manifestation of God's very own love for men, and not a mere marvel of human heroism. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," so reads one of many summaries of this basic good news (II Corinthians 5:19). Now it is a fact of even human experience that a father and a son can be so intimately bound together in a unity of purpose that the action of the son is fully representative of the action of the father. In time of war we fre-

quently speak of a father "giving" a son for his country. The sacrifice made by the son on the battlefield is at the same time a sacrifice made by the father.

To express this unity between Father and Son in the Christian drama, later Christian thought wrestled with many verbal experiments. One classic formula came to be that Father and Son are one in "nature" or "substance," yet distinguishable as "persons." Such a formula of faith, however, though it may become necessary for purposes of defending Christianity against enemies, is not faith itself. Millions of Christians have lived and died without having passed an examination in "formulae." The latter have never been, when not misused, anything more than defensive walls built around the utterly simple Christian story.

"What difference can it make," so multitudes of modern Christians have asked, "whether Jesus was divine or human? Why must we be burdened with this baggage of technical theology?" The reply of Christian faith must be uncompromising on this central issue. Clearly, if the drama upon which Christian faith is founded is merely a human hero-story, its resultant merely an ethical gospel, then the abstract problem of who Jesus was can, indeed, be handed over to philosophical classrooms. Then it does not make much difference whether we call Jesus divine or human. But then, too, the whole Christian story disappears from history, and the Christian faith of the centuries with it. To allude once more to the parable of the "great king"—if the king of the story should have turned out to have been not the king at all, but merely a citizen-hero, the event might have caused a ripple of wonder and constituted an ethical example, but there would have been no change in the relations between a king and his people. The slums would have remained unredeemed slums and the royal palace a forbidden castle.

Christian faith did not begin with solving the problem of *how* Jesus could be both fully human and yet a divine "Son." Later generations took up that task. If the meaning of the word theology is limited to the intricate wrestling with the *how* of the story, then theology is not a necessity for the unlettered believer. But theology in terms of the awesome drama of "the Word made flesh" is a requisite for Christian faith. As, in the parable, no new relationship between slum and palace could have resulted except for those who acknowledged the identity between "slave" and "king," so the faith of Christians depends upon the acceptance of an analogus identity, as though they were one actor in a drama, between Jesus and God. The Cross symbolizes not merely human brotherly love, but God's love. The earliest Christian creed—and in some sense still the only essential Christian creed—is the little phrase, "Jesus is Lord." The very name Jesus Christ—the word Christ connoting divine status—is this same confession in miniature.

The word dogma, like the word theology, causes much offense. It, too, is usually interpreted in terms of the rationalizations of later centuries. Basic Christian dogma, however, is once more nothing except the Christian story and the identification of its chief actor as God. Let any reader open his New Testament anywhere from the Acts of the Apostles on—the account of the faith of the early church—and he will meet the Christian story on almost every page. It will not be the Jesus-biography as a hero-story, though as such this is, of course, not repudiated. But Christianity began after the clue to the drama had been revealed, the identity of its chief actor as God-man. Hence it is the meaning of the drama as a whole—the "plot," as it were—which is first of all proclaimed.

Peter, addressing a Jewish audience which was already familiar with the life story of Jesus, and particularly his crucifixion, imparts the news of that story's meaning: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour" (Acts 5:30, 31). In other words, we now know who he was and who he is. He is more than a human martyr hero. Or read the "plot" in more developed form in the epistles of St. Paul. The first epistle in the New Testament, the Epistle to the Romans, begins with a summary of the great news of the Christian story, "concerning his [God's] Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was descended from David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:3, 4).

Or, again, note the magnificent God-biography of Jesus in a famous passage in St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians: "Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant [slave], being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:6-11).

III

A reader of these New Testament pages will, no doubt, be struck with the frequent and almost monotonous allusions to the Resurrection event in the story. The reason becomes plain when the story is seen as a drama about God. The climax of the story of the "great king" would, of course, have been the "recognition scene," when a slave was discovered to be not "slave" but "king." So with the Christian story. A revelation scene is here, too, the climactic event. The Resurrection stories in the New Testament may well resist all final attempts at rational explanation. If the drama has

God for chief actor, it might be expected to transcend ordinary experience. The central fact is, however, indubitable. The followers of Jesus were Jews, drilled for centuries in a monotheistic faith. They had lived as disciples of Jesus for years. They knew him as Master and friend and, of course, as fully a man and human. Jesus dies. Yet within the space of days these Jewish disciples address the crucified Master as Lord and Christ, as Son of God, as One occupying a throne at the side of monotheistic deity, final judgment and rule over heaven and earth in his hands! Deity incognito had become deity recognized. Something hidden had received revelation. The crucial event was the Resurrection from the dead. This was "revelation" indeed.

Most of the great dramas and epics famous in world literature have as their climax a revelation or recognition scene. Aristotle once suggested that such a scene was almost a requisite for a good play. The popularity of the detective story in our time finds one explanation in the fact that the identity of the chief actor in the story, hidden from view through much of the action, is at last disclosed. The *Odyssey* of Homer, to cite a more classic example, illustrates the storyteller's art in matchless form. Odysseus returns home in beggar's guise—a king incognito. He is "despised and rejected of men," an outcast in his own palace. At last, in a climactic scene, when Odysseus alone can stretch the royal bow and win an archery contest, the "beggar" is revealed as "king." The Christian epic has its climax also in a recognition scene—the Resurrection. Without the clue to the drama, without this identification of Jesus as the Christ and as Lord, the story would resemble the *Odyssey* with the recognition scene left out.

The biography of Jesus of the New Testament, if seen from within Christian faith, centers upon the Resurrection. And here the recognition scene is not fiction but fact. Before, all is hidden. After the Resurrection, the plot is clear. The gospel narratives, especially that of St. Mark, go out of their way to emphasize dramatic suspense. Jesus is unrecognized by even his closest companions. Only here and there do intimations of his true identity appear, in his acts of healing and in Peter's confession that Jesus is the Messiah foretold in Hebrew prophecy. But no one fully understands. Any reader of the gospels must note the startling effect of the Good Friday story. A crucified Messiah, let alone a crucified Son of an Almighty God, defied all belief. The drama proceeds inexorably to its revelatory climax. But when the climax arrives, it becomes the clue to all that has gone before. Without this, no evangelist might have bothered to tell the story at all. We might have heard of an obscure Jesus in some history book, like that of Josephus, but there would have been no New Testament gospels. Change the plot by omitting the revelation of Jesus as God-man and you may still have a biography of Jesus. But you will not have the biography of Jesus of the New Testament. You will not have the Christ of Christian faith.

IV

It is in some ways unfortunate that our New Testament opens with the gospels. They are not the first of the books of the New Testament in the order of writing. Nor was the story of Jesus' earthly ministry the primary message preached by the earliest apostles and missionaries. The Resurrection event, which had revealed that Jesus was the Christ and Son of God, overshadowed in importance all that had gone before. The clue to the drama had to be imparted before the earlier acts could be understood. Only in the light of the identification of the actors could the story receive its rightful significance. When the gospels were finally written down, at least one whole generation had lived under the shattering impact of the good news that the Jesus whom men had crucified was now Lord of the universe, sitting "at the right hand of God." Those who wrote the gospels as we have them and those who first read those matchless pages believed in the Lordship of Christ and in his living presence in their midst before they wrote and before they read. The past found its true meaning only in the light of the present.

A reader of the New Testament record needs to keep the adverbs "then" and "now" clearly distinct. Jesus had once been a baby in a mother's arms, but he is not that now. He had once been properly addressed as Master or Rabbi, or spoken of rightly as the carpenter of Nazareth, but he is not that now. He is *now* reigning in heaven. Hence a relationship with him such as the disciples had enjoyed in days when they called him Master, is no longer possible. He has *now* a "new" name, that of Lord, "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:21). It is a striking fact that in the epistles of the New Testament, which record life in the early church, Jesus is no longer called Master. He has become Jesus *Christ*. The new name makes all the difference.

Were a Christian of the first century to return to earth and were he to encounter modern representatives of the humanist version of the Christian faith, he would surely utter words of amazement. "What have you done to our glorious gospel? You call yourselves Christians. You honor the name of Jesus and declare yourselves his followers and even disciples. The very word 'discipleship' has become for you a synonym for the whole of Christian faith and Christian life. Nor would we wish to belittle in any way such submission of conscience to the matchless example of the Jesus of the gospel story. He was for us, too, example and pattern for walking in the way. But something has gone strangely wrong if you pause there. You appear to have a Christianity with the Resurrection left out—a pre-Resurrection Christianity, which, we can assure you, is not really Christianity at all. It is still Judaism, and a very strange Judaism at that."

Thus the first Christian century might address the twentieth. The contemporaries of Jesus during his days on earth also saw in him a matchless perfection. But as such he became for them a problem and finally an offence. He taught unattainable moral demands, and he taught them not as sentimental ideals, but as the inexorable laws of God Himself. He taught them to Jews, who were fully aware that God expected His demands to be fulfilled. The God of the Old Testament was a righteous God or not God at all. In coming into the presence of Jesus they seemed to be in the presence of a new Moses at Mount Sinai. Here was one speaking with authority—the authority of a messenger from God Himself. And, as one of the last prophets of the Old Testament had foretold: "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire" (Malachi 3:2). Indeed, the majority among Jesus' contemporaries could not abide him. They nailed him to a cross.

And even his immediate followers, his disciples, forsook him at the end. Disciples turned into traitors. They had lived with the Master for months and years, enjoying an intimacy which later generations can never, never duplicate, and yet this was the result! Should this not be a warning to those who wish to duplicate the experience of discipleship before the Resurrection? The disciples were Jews—perplexed and troubled Jews—until the great climactic events after the crucifixion turned them into Christians. Disciples then became apostles, witnesses, martyrs.

Jesus as example and pattern is part of the portrait which the early church cherished of the Christ. He even became for them Judge of the living and the dead! This revealed Lordship of Christ brought great changes. The relationship which once had been that of disciples to a Master was transformed to one of sinners to a Judge and a Savior. When we modern Christians all too easily use the word "discipleship," we ought to take this "then" and "now" carefully into account. We cannot turn the clock back and reproduce the days of Peter, James, and John walking with a Rabbi on the shores of Lake Gennesaret. Do we really wish to do so?

The band of disciples, after the Resurrection, were never weary of telling the story of their blindness and of their shame in the days of Jesus' earthly pilgrimage. Peter had even denied him thrice. Nor had they understood his teaching except by way of glimpses here and there. His moral demands had, truly, seemed impossible. To forgive, not merely seven times, but seventy times seven? As already indicated, they were Jews. They lived by the laws of Deuteronomy. The teachings of Jesus, however, confronted them with demands which no one could fulfill. The Sermon on the Mount must have shocked them. Here were demands which stopped up even the smallest loopholes in the laws of Moses. No one could now pass God's examination, not even the most meticulous pharisee. No one could now be sufficiently righteous to deserve God's presence. The most perfect pharisee,

confronted by Jesus, had to deny him, or kill him, or else descend to the level of the publican and say: "God be merciful to me a sinner."

But those apostolic witnesses could confess the story of their puzzlement and shame in the light of the Resurrection faith. For now Jesus stood revealed as Son of God. Jesus, the awesome prophet, was now also Savior. Had he not died on a cross? Christ as Law, as St. Paul so clearly understood, might kill all self-righteous pride and reveal all men to be sinners. But that same Christ, crucified and risen, was Law turned into love and forgiveness. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," says St. Paul (Romans 5:8) Had Jesus been a mere prophet and preacher, his demands might have been sad news, the news of man's failure ever to become worthy of a relationship with God. Jesus then might have deserved crucifixion for having destroyed the last possibility of man's moral progress. What is the use of trying to fulfill the moral law if no one can win a reward? The demands of Jesus removed God even farther from man's fallen world than ever Moses or the prophets had done. But if Jesus is not mere prophet or rabbi, if he is Son of God, then all is changed. Then the good news of his sacrifice on the cross reverses the sad news of his demands. God had not withheld His love until men had become worthy of it. The king of kings had visited earth's slums and "had dwelt among us." He, the incarnation of holiness, had dined with publicans and sinners. He had, like a slave, washed his sinful disciples' feet.

This paradox of Christ as both law and love lies at the heart of the Christian story and of the Christian gospel. The chasm between heaven and earth has been bridged, not by man's climb to moral perfection, but by heaven coming down to earth. Sinful man could now come into relationship with the holy God by repentance and faith instead of by performance. The good news of this gospel is that God loves us in spite of our unworthiness.

V

The drama of a divine descent did not end with the crucifixion. The Resurrection brought Jesus back upon the scene. Once more he entered history. He founded a new fellowship, the church, one no longer made up of puzzled and timid disciples, but of heroic heralds of the good news. That fellowship continued. It multiplied and spread. The Jesus of the Resurrection scenes departed to "sit at the right hand of God." But Christ as Holy Spirit remained as a divine presence in their midst. A new life opened to those who became members of the fellowship—a life of repentance and forgiveness. The impossible became possible. The early Christians spoke of their new life as "in Christ," and of its fruit in their lives as Christ in them. The Sermon on the Mount, once seemingly the climax of unfulfilled divine demands, became the pattern for their common life in the Body of Christ. Here was

discipleship, indeed, but in a new form. This discipleship, they knew, was not the product of their own doing. A miracle of power had come to them through the presence of Christ in the fellowship.

We modern Christians are clearly right in taking the Jesus of the pre-Resurrection acts of the drama very seriously. Perhaps some earlier generations of Christians neglected the figure of the earthly Jesus in their joy over the Resurrection faith. But we should know what we are doing. A sentimentalized "life of Christ" is a poor substitute for the gospel of the Cross and the Resurrection. It will, as a matter of fact, not remain sentimental very long. The pre-Resurrection Jesus will once more become an offence. Without faith in the resurrected and living Christ, we may merely repeat the drama played out in the days of his first coming. We, too, will nail him to a cross.

The prophecy is not fanciful. It is being played out before our very eyes. If we try to return merely to the days of Herod and of Pilate and try to meet Jesus again in the flesh, ignoring the Resurrection from the dead, we, too, like his contemporaries, will not be able to endure him. At first, with the faith of the Christian centuries still in our hearts, his presence may not at once shock and disturb. We may still be able to listen to his humbling words and walk the road of repentance. We may still carry within us the silent conviction that we are sinners and hold self-righteousness in check. But if we reduce his stature from that of "Very God" to that of mere hero of humanity, we shall begin his crucifixion. God will have been dethroned in our universe and religious man will have taken His place. We may still for a time sentimentalize Jesus, turn his awesome demands into human ideals, and rest content in the conviction that we are followers along his road to God. But we, and not he, will have become the authors of our salvation. Pride will before long replace humility in our hearts. Self-righteousness will blot out visions of God and will break our bonds of fellowship with other publicans and sinners.

After a time the figure of the Christ will fade for us into the distant backdrops of history—Jesus admired as genius is admired, but left undisturbed. We shall not want him any longer as a living contemporary, with his seeing eye and his disturbings of conscience. Our failures in the moral life will remove him from sight even farther, since he cannot cross the centuries to save. His sublime teachings and his example of perfection may even lead to despair, or at least to cynicism and revolt. We shall have nailed him again to a cross. Indifference can crucify a God as well as piercings of hands and feet.

READING

What is the significance of the "two biographies" of Jesus? With what analogies does Wedel develop each? What reference is made to them in later parts of the essay?

How does Wedel regard formulas of faith and dogma? What connection has his method with the title and the first section?

Does Wedel shift his attitude toward a hero-story interpretation? If so, is this a strategy or an inconsistency?

What connection does Wedel make between an ethical response to Jesus and the two biographies?

INTERPRETATION

To what extent are Fosdick's and Wedel's attitudes toward Jesus similar? What is their difference? Why would Wedel regard Fosdick as having much in common with Bernstein?

If you are acquainted with a particular church, what is its belief? Is its official belief the same as its unofficial belief?

What is the significance of treating Christianity as "story theology"? In part does Bernstein treat Judaism in this fashion? If you know modern literary criticism dealing with myth and archetypes, comment upon the pertinence.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

What I Believe
Wedel and Fosdick
The Art of the Sermon
Christianity for Today

A FREE MAN'S WORSHIP*

by Bertrand Russell

Bertrand Russell (1872–), philosopher and mathematician, was educated at Cambridge. He has taught mathematics and philosophy at Cambridge, Harvard, the University of Chicago, and the University of California at Los Angeles. He is coauthor with Alfred North Whitehead of *Principia Mathematica.* Some of his other books are *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy, Philosophical Essays, Marriage and Morals,* and *New Hope for Our World.* His views on marriage and pacificism have at times involved him in controversies. Though he is an English nobleman, he refuses to use his title.

To Dr. Faustus in his study Mephistopheles told the history of the Creation, saying:

"The endless praises of the choirs of angels had begun to grow wearisome; for, after all, did he not deserve their praise? Had he not given them endless joy? Would it not be more amusing to obtain undeserved praise, to be worshipped by beings whom he tortured? He smiled inwardly, and resolved that the great drama should be performed.

"For countless ages the hot nebula whirled aimlessly through space. At length it began to take shape, the central mass threw off planets, the planets

* From *Mysticism and Logic,* by Bertrand Russell (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1929), pp. 46–57. Copyright, 1929, by W. W. Norton and Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

cooled, boiling seas and burning mountains heaved and tossed, from black masses of cloud hot sheets of rain deluged the barely solid crust. And now the first germ of life grew in the depths of the ocean, and developed rapidly in the fructifying warmth into vast forest trees, huge ferns springing from the damp mould, sea monsters breeding, fighting, devouring, and passing away. And from the monsters, as the play unfolded itself, Man was born, with the power of thought, the knowledge of good and evil, and the cruel thirst for worship. And Man saw that all is passing in this mad, monstrous world, that all is struggling to snatch, at any cost, a few brief moments of life before Death's inexorable decree. And Man said: 'There is a hidden purpose, could we but fathom it, and the purpose is good; for we must reverence something, and in the visible world there is nothing worthy of reverence.' And Man stood aside from the struggle, resolving that God intended harmony to come out of chaos by human efforts. And when he followed the instincts which God had transmitted to him from his ancestry of beasts of prey, he called it Sin, and asked God to forgive him. But he doubted whether he could be justly forgiven, until he invented a divine Plan by which God's wrath was to have been appeased. And seeing the present was bad, he made it yet worse, that thereby the future might be better. And he gave God thanks for the strength that enabled him to forgo even the joys that were possible. And God smiled; and when he saw that Man had become perfect in renunciation and worship, he sent another sun through the sky, which crashed into Man's sun; and all returned again to nebula.

" 'Yes,' he murmured, 'it was a good play; I will have it performed again.' "

Such, in outline, but even more purposeless, more void of meaning is the world which Science presents for our belief. Amid such a world, if anywhere, our ideals henceforward must find a home. 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 life 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.

How, in such an alien and inhuman world, can so powerless a creature as Man preserve his aspirations untarnished? A strange mystery it is that

Nature, omnipotent but blind, in the revolutions of her secular hurryings through the abysses of space, has brought forth at last a child, subject still to her power, but gifted with sight, with knowledge of good and evil, with the capacity of judging all the works of his unthinking Mother. In spite of Death, the mark and seal of the parental control, Man is yet free, during his brief years, to examine, to criticise, to know, and in imagination to create. To him alone, in the world with which he is acquainted, this freedom belongs; and in this lies his superiority to the resistless forces that control his outward life.

The savage, like ourselves, feels the oppression of his impotence before the powers of Nature; but having in himself nothing that he respects more than Power, he is willing to prostrate himself before his gods, without inquiring whether they are worthy of his worship. Pathetic and very terrible is the long history of cruelty and torture, of degradation and human sacrifices endured in the hope of placating the jealous gods: surely, the trembling believer thinks, when what is most precious has been freely given, their lust for blood must be appeased, and more will not be required. The religion of Moloch—as such creeds may be generically called—is in essence the cringing submission of the slave, who dare not, even in his heart, allow the thought that his master deserves no adulation. Since the independence of ideals is not yet acknowledged, Power may be freely worshipped, and receive an unlimited respect, despite its wanton infliction of pain.

But gradually, as morality grows bolder, the claim of the ideal world begins to be felt; and worship, if it is not to cease, must be given to gods of another kind than those created by the savage. Some, though they feel the demands of the ideal, will still consciously reject them, still urging that naked Power is worthy of worship. Such is the attitude inculcated in God's answer to Job out of the whirlwind: the divine power and knowledge are paraded, but of the divine goodness there is no hint. Such also is the attitude of those who, in our own day, base their morality upon the struggle for survival, maintaining that the survivors are necessarily the fittest. But others, not content with an answer so repugnant to the moral sense, will adopt the position which we have become accustomed to regard as specially religious, maintaining that, in some hidden manner, the world of fact is really harmonious with the world of ideals. Thus Man creates God, all-powerful and all-good, the mystic unity of what is and what should be.

But the world of fact, after all, is not good; and, in submitting our judgment to it, there is an element of slavishness from which our thoughts must be purged. For in all things it is well to exalt the dignity of Man, by freeing him as far as possible from the tyranny of non-human Power. When we have realised that Power is largely bad, that Man, with his knowledge of good and evil, is but a helpless atom in a world which has no such knowledge, the choice is again presented to us: Shall we worship Force, or shall

we worship Goodness? Shall our God exist and be evil, or shall he be recognised as the creation of our own conscience?

The answer to this question is very momentous, and affects profoundly our whole morality. The worship of Force, to which Carlyle and Nietzsche and the creed of Militarism have accustomed us, is the result of failure to maintain our own ideals against a hostile universe: it is itself a prostrate submission to evil, a sacrifice of our best to Moloch. If strength indeed is to be respected, let us respect rather the strength of those who refuse that false "recognition of facts" which fails to recognise that facts are often bad. Let us admit that, in the world we know, there are many things that would be better otherwise, and that the ideals to which we do and must adhere are not realised in the realm of matter. Let us preserve our respect for truth, for beauty, for the ideal of perfection which life does not permit us to attain, though none of these things meet with the approval of the unconscious universe. If Power is bad, as it seems to be, let us reject it from our hearts. In this lies Man's true freedom: in determination to worship only the God created by our own love of the good, to respect only the heaven which inspires the insight of our best moments. In action, in desire, we must submit perpetually to the tyranny of outside forces; but in thought, in aspiration, we are free, free from our fellow-men, free from the petty planet on which our bodies impotently crawl, free even, while we live, from the tyranny of death. Let us learn, then, that energy of faith which enables us to live constantly in the vision of the good; and let us descend in action, into the world of fact, with that vision always before us.

When first the opposition of fact and ideal grows fully visible, a spirit of fiery revolt, of fierce hatred of the gods, seems necessary to the assertion of freedom. To defy with Promethean constancy a hostile universe, to keep its evil always in view, always actively hated, to refuse no pain that the malice of Power can invent, appears to be the duty of all who will not bow before the inevitable. But indignation is still a bondage, for it compels our thoughts to be occupied with an evil world; and in the fierceness of desire from which rebellion springs there is a kind of self-assertion which it is necessary for the wise to overcome. Indignation is a submission of our thoughts, but not of our desires; the Stoic freedom in which wisdom consists is found in the submission of our desires, but not of our thoughts. From the submission of our desires springs the virtue of resignation; from the freedom of our thoughts springs the whole world of art and philosophy, and the vision of beauty by which, at last, we half reconquer the reluctant world. But the vision of beauty is possible only to unfettered contemplation, to thoughts not weighted by the load of eager wishes; and thus Freedom comes only to those who no longer ask of life that it shall yield them any of those personal goods that are subject to the mutations of Time.

Although the necessity of renunciation is evidence of the existence of

evil, yet Christianity, in preaching it, has shown a wisdom exceeding that of the Promethean philosophy of rebellion. It must be admitted that, of the things we desire, some, though they prove impossible, are yet real goods; others, however, as ardently longed for, do not form part of a fully purified ideal. The belief that what must be renounced is bad, though sometimes false, is far less often false than untamed passion supposes; and the creed of religion, by providing a reason for proving that it is never false, has been the means of purifying our hopes by the discovery of many austere truths.

But there is in resignation a further good element: even real goods, when they are unattainable, ought not to be fretfully desired. To every man comes, sooner or later, the great renunciation. For the young, there is nothing unattainable; a good thing desired with the whole force of a passionate will, and yet impossible, is to them not credible. Yet, by death, by illness, by poverty, or by the voice of duty, we must learn, each one of us, that the world was not made for us, and that, however beautiful may be the things we crave, Fate may nevertheless forbid them. It is the part of courage, when misfortune comes, to bear without repining the ruin of our hopes, to turn away our thoughts from vain regrets. This degree of submission to Power is not only just and right; it is the very gate of wisdom.

But passive renunciation is not the whole of wisdom; for not by renunciation alone can we build a temple for the worship of our own ideals. Haunting foreshadowings of the temple appear in the realm of imagination, in music, in architecture, in the untroubled kingdom of reason, and in the golden sunset magic of lyrics, where beauty shines and glows, remote from the touch of sorrow, remote from the fear of change, remote from the failures and disenchantments of the world of fact. In the contemplation of these things the vision of heaven will shape itself in our hearts, giving at once a touchstone to judge the world about us, and an inspiration by which to fashion to our needs whatever is not incapable of serving as a stone in the sacred temple.

Except for those rare spirits that are born without sin, there is a cavern of darkness to be traversed before that temple can be entered. The gate of the cavern is despair, and its floor is paved with the gravestones of abandoned hopes. There Self must die; there the eagerness, the greed of untamed desire must be slain, for only so can the soul be freed from the empire of Fate. But out of the cavern the Gate of Renunciation leads again to the daylight of wisdom, by whose radiance a new insight, a new joy, a new tenderness, shine forth to gladden the pilgrim's heart.

When, without the bitterness of impotent rebellion, we have learnt both to resign ourselves to the outward rule of Fate and to recognise that the nonhuman world is unworthy of our worship, it becomes possible at last so to transform and refashion the unconscious universe, so to transmute it in the crucible of the imagination, that a new image of shining gold replaces

the old idol of clay. In all the multiform facts of the world—in the visual shapes of trees and mountains and clouds, in the events of the life of Man, even in the very omnipotence of Death—the insight of creative idealism can find the reflection of a beauty which its own thoughts first made. In this way mind asserts its subtle mastery over the thoughtless forces of Nature. The more evil the material with which it deals, the more thwarting to untrained desire, the greater is its achievement in inducing the reluctant rock to yield up its hidden treasures, the prouder its victory in compelling the opposing forces to swell the pageant of its triumph. Of all the arts, Tragedy is the proudest, the most triumphant; for it builds its shining citadel in the very centre of the enemy's country, on the very summit of his highest mountain; from its impregnable watch-towers, his camps and arsenals, his columns and forts, are all revealed; within its walls the free life continues, while the legions of Death and Pain and Despair, and all the servile captains of tyrant Fate, afford the burghers of that dauntless city new spectacles of beauty. Happy those sacred ramparts, thrice happy the dwellers on that all-seeing eminence. Honour to those brave warriors who, through countless ages of warfare, have preserved for us the priceless heritage of liberty, and have kept undefiled by sacrilegious invaders the home of the unsubdued.

But the beauty of Tragedy does but make visible a quality which, in more or less obvious shapes, is present always and everywhere in life. In the spectacle of Death, in the endurance of intolerable pain, and in the irrevocableness of a vanished past, there is a sacredness, an overpowering awe, a feeling of the vastness, the depth, the inexhaustible mystery of existence, in which, as by some strange marriage of pain, the sufferer is bound to the world by bonds of sorrow. In these moments of insight, we lose all eagerness of temporary desire, all struggling and striving for petty ends, all care for the little trivial things, that, to a superficial view, make up the common life of day by day; we see, surrounding the narrow raft illumined by the flickering light of human comradeship, the dark ocean on whose rolling waves we toss for a brief hour; from the great night without, a chill blast breaks in upon our refuge; all the loneliness of humanity amid hostile forces is concentrated upon the individual soul, which must struggle alone, with what of courage it can command, against the whole weight of a universe that cares nothing for its hopes and fears. Victory, in this struggle with the powers of darkness, is the true baptism into the glorious company of heroes, the true initiation into the overmastering beauty of human existence. From that awful encounter of the soul with the outer world, renunciation, wisdom, and charity are born; and with their birth a new life begins. To take into the inmost shrine of the soul the irresistible forces whose puppets we seem to be—Death and change, the irrevocableness of the past, and the powerlessness of Man before the blind hurry of the universe from vanity to vanity—to feel these things and know them is to conquer them.

This is the reason why the Past has such magical power. The beauty of its motionless and silent pictures is like the enchanted purity of late autumn, when the leaves, though one breath would make them fall, still glow against the sky in golden glory. The Past does not change or strive; like Duncan, after life's fitful fever it sleeps well; what was eager and grasping, what was petty and transitory, has faded away, the things that were beautiful and eternal shine out of it like stars in the night. Its beauty, to a soul not worthy of it, is unendurable; but to a soul which has conquered Fate it is the key of religion.

The life of Man, viewed outwardly, is but a small thing in comparison with the forces of Nature. The slave is doomed to worship Time and Fate and Death, because they are greater than anything he finds in himself, and because all his thoughts are of things which they devour. But, great as they are, to think of them greatly, to feel their passionless splendour, is greater still. And such thought makes us free men; we no longer bow before the inevitable in Oriental subjection, but we absorb it, and make it a part of ourselves. To abandon the struggle for private happiness, to expel all eagerness of temporary desire, to burn with passion for eternal things—this is emancipation, and this is the free man's worship. And this liberation is effected by a contemplation of Fate; for Fate itself is subdued by the mind which leaves nothing to be purged by the purifying fire of Time.

United with his fellow-men by the strongest of all ties, the tie of a common doom, the free man finds that a new vision is with him always, shedding over every daily task the light of love. The life of Man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, towards a goal that few can hope to reach, and where none may tarry long. One by one, as they march, our comrades vanish from our sight, seized by the silent orders of omnipotent Death. Very brief is the time in which we can help them, in which their happiness or misery is decided. Be it ours to shed sunshine on their path, to lighten their sorrows by the balm of sympathy, to give them the pure joy of a never-tiring affection, to strengthen failing courage, to instil faith in hours of despair. Let us not weigh in grudging scales their merits and demerits, but let us think only of their need —of the sorrows, the difficulties, perhaps the blindnesses, that make the misery of their lives; let us remember that they are fellow-sufferers in the same darkness, actors in the same tragedy with ourselves. And so, when their day is over, when their good and their evil have become eternal by the immortality of the past, be it ours to feel that, where they suffered, where they failed, no deed of ours was the cause; but wherever a spark of the divine fire kindled in their hearts, we were ready with encouragement, with sympathy, with brave words in which high courage glowed.

Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction,

omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for Man, condemned to-day to lose his dearest, to-morrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious Power.

READING

What major concepts appear in the history of creation as told by Mephistopheles? How successfully does it serve as an introduction to the essay?

In man's religious history, what main stages does Russell trace?

What does Russell mean by "renunciation"? What further qualities does he develop as present in "a free man's worship"?

INTERPRETATION

To what extent would Bernstein, Fosdick, or Wedel agree with Russell? At what point would they differ?

How would Russell regard the essays of these authors? With which essay do you think that he would be in closest accord? How might he respond to the "Letter from the Recording Angel," below?

Are Russell's underlying values of right and wrong different from those of Christianity and Judaism? If they are, does that result from theological assumptions? If they are not, what difference do the theological assumptions make?

From Russell's assumptions what other creeds could be developed?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Friend's Creed and Life

An Imaginary Conversation: Russell and Wedel

A Faith for Today

Morality and Religion

LETTER FROM THE RECORDING ANGEL

by Mark Twain

Mark Twain (1835–1910), American humorist, author of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, wrote his "Letter from the Recording Angel" in the 1880's. The identity of Andrew Langdon as uncle of Mark Twain's wife explains the delay in publication until 1946.

OFFICE OF THE RECORDING ANGEL
Department of Petitions, Jan. 20

Andrew Langdon
Coal Dealer
Buffalo, New York

I have the honor, as per command, to inform you that your recent act of benevolence and self-sacrifice has been recorded upon a page of the Book called *Golden Deeds of Men*: a distinction, I am permitted to remark, which is not merely extraordinary, it is unique.

As regards your prayers, for the week ending the 19th, I have the honor to report as follows:

1. For weather to advance hard coal 15 cents a ton. Granted.
2. For influx of laborers to reduce wages 10 per cent. Granted.
3. For a break in rival soft-coal prices. Granted.
4. For a visitation upon the man, or upon the family of the man, who has set up a competing retail coal-yard in Rochester. Granted, as follows: diphtheria, 2, 1 fatal; scarlet fever, 1, to result in deafness and imbecility. NOTE. This prayer should have been directed against this subordinate's principals, The N. Y. Central R. R. Co.
5. For deportation to Sheol of annoying swarms of persons who apply daily for work, or for favors of one sort or another. Taken under advisement for later decision and compromise, this petition appearing to conflict with another one of same date, which will be cited further along.
6. For application of some form of violent death to neighbor who threw brick at family cat, whilst the same was serenading. Reserved for consideration and compromise because of conflict with a prayer of even date to be cited further along.
7. To "damn the missionary cause." Reserved also—as above.
8. To increase December profits of $22,230 to $45,000 for January, and perpetuate a proportionate monthly increase thereafter—"which will satisfy you." The prayer granted; the added remark accepted with reservations.
9. For cyclone, to destroy the works and fill up the mine of the North

* From *Report from Paradise*, by Mark Twain (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), pp. 87–94. Copyright, 1946, 1952, by The Mark Twain Company.

Pennsylvania Co. NOTE: Cyclones are not kept in stock in the winter season. A reliable article of fire-damp can be furnished upon application.

Especial note is made of the above list, they being of particular moment. The 298 remaining supplications classifiable under the head of Special Providences, Schedule A, for the week ending 19th, are granted in a body, except that 3 of the 32 cases requiring immediate death have been modified to incurable disease.

This completes the week's invoice of petitions known to this office under the technical designation of Secret Supplications of the Heart, and which for a reason which may suggest itself, always receive our first and especial attention.

The remainder of the week's invoice falls under the head of what we term Public Prayers, in which classification we place prayers uttered in Prayer Meeting, Sunday School, Class Meeting, Family Worship, etc. These kinds of prayers have value according to classification of Christian uttering them. By rule of this office, Christians are divided into two grand classes, to wit: 1, Professing Christians; 2, Professional Christians. These, in turn, are minutely subdivided and classified by size, species, and family; and finally, standing is determined by carats, the minimum being 1, the maximum 1,000.

As per balance-sheet for quarter ending Dec. 31, 1847, you stood classified as follows:

Grand Classification, Professing Christian.
Size, one-fourth of maximum.
Species, Human-Spiritual.
Family, A of the Elect, Division 16.
Standing, 322 carats fine.

As per balance-sheet for quarter just ended—that is to say, forty years later—you stand classified as follows:

Grand Classification, Professional Christian.
Size, six one-hundredths of maximum.
Species, Human-Animal.
Family, W of the Elect, Division 1547.
Standing, 3 carats fine.

I have the honor to call your attention to the fact that you seem to have deteriorated.

To resume report upon your Public Prayers—with the side remark that in order to encourage Christians of your grade and of approximate grades, it is the custom of this office to grant many things to them which would not be granted to Christians of a higher grade—partly because they would not be asked for:

Prayer for weather mercifully tempered to the needs of the poor and the naked. Denied. This was a Prayer-Meeting Prayer. It conflicts with Item

1 of this report, which was a Secret Supplication of the Heart. By a rigid rule of this office, certain sorts of Public Prayers of Professional Christians are forbidden to take precedence of Secret Supplications of the Heart.

Prayer for better times and plentier food "for the hard-handed son of toil whose patient and exhausting labors make comfortable the homes, and pleasant the ways, of the more fortunate, and entitle him to our vigilant and effective protection from the wrongs and injustices which grasping avarice would do him, and to the tenderest offices of our grateful hearts." Prayer-Meeting Prayer. Refused. Conflicts with Secret Supplication of the Heart No. 2.

Prayer "that such as in any way obstruct our preferences may be generously blessed, both themselves and their families, we here calling our hearts to witness that in their worldly prosperity we are spiritually blessed, and our joys made perfect." Prayer-Meeting Prayer. Refused. Conflicts with Secret Supplications of the Heart Nos. 3 and 4.

"Oh, let none fall heir to the pains of perdition through words or acts of ours." Family Worship. Received fifteen minutes in advance of Secret Supplication of the Heart No. 5, with which it distinctly conflicts. It is suggested that one or the other of these prayers be withdrawn, or both of them modified.

"Be mercifully inclined toward all who would do us offense in our persons or our property." Includes man who threw brick at cat. Family Prayer. Received some minutes in advance of No. 6, Secret Supplications of the Heart. Modification suggested, to reconcile discrepancy.

"Grant that the noble missionary cause, the most precious labor entrusted to the hands of men, may spread and prosper without let or limit in all heathen lands that do as yet reproach us with their spiritual darkness." Uninvited prayer shoved in at meeting of American Board. Received nearly half a day in advance of No. 7, Secret Supplications of the Heart. This office takes no stock in missionaries, and is not connected in any way with the American Board. We should like to grant one of these prayers but cannot grant both. It is suggested that the American Board one be withdrawn.

This office desires for the twentieth time to call urgent attention to your remark appended to No. 8. It is a chestnut.

Of the 464 specifications contained in your Public Prayers for the week, and not previously noted in this report, we grant 2, and deny the rest. To wit: Granted, (1), "that the clouds may continue to perform their office; (2), and the sun his." It was the divine purpose anyhow; it will gratify you to know that you have not disturbed it. Of the 462 details refused, 61 were uttered in Sunday School. In this connection I must once more remind you that we grant no Sunday School Prayers of Professional Christians of the classification technically known in this office as the John

Wanamaker grade. We merely enter them as "words," and they count to his credit according to number uttered within certain limits of time; 3,000 per quarter-minute required, or no score; 4,200 in a possible 5,000 is quite common Sunday School score among experts, and counts the same as two hymns and a bouquet furnished by young ladies in the assassin's cell, execution-morning. Your remaining 401 details count for wind only. We bunch them and use them for head-winds in retarding the ships of improper people, but it takes so many of them to make an impression that we cannot allow anything for their use.

I desire to add a word of my own to this report. When certain sorts of people do a sizable good deed, we credit them up a thousand-fold more for it than we would in the case of a better man—on account of the strain. You stand far away above your classification-record here, because of certain self-sacrifices of yours which greatly exceed what could have been expected of you. Years ago, when you were worth only $100,000, and sent $2 to your impoverished cousin the widow when she appealed to you for help, there were many in heaven who were not able to believe it, and many more who believed that the money was counterfeit. Your character went up many degrees when it was shown that these suspicions were unfounded. A year or two later, when you sent the poor girl $4 in answer to another appeal, everybody believed it, and you were the talk here for days together. Two years later you sent $6, upon supplication, when the widow's youngest child died, and that act made perfect your good fame. Everybody in heaven said, "Have you heard about Andrew?"—for you are now affectionately called Andrew here. Your increasing donation, every two or three years, has kept your name on all lips, and warm in all hearts. All heaven watches you Sundays, as you drive to church in your handsome carriage; and when your hand retires from the contribution plate, the glad shout is heard even to the ruddy walls of remote Sheol, "Another nickel from Andrew!"

But the climax came a few days ago, when the widow wrote and said she could get a school in a far village to teach if she had $50 to get herself and her two surviving children over the long journey; and you counted up last month's clear profit from your three coal mines—$22,230—and added to it the certain profit for the current month—$45,000 and a possible fifty—and then got down your pen and your check-book and mailed her *fifteen whole dollars!* Ah, Heaven bless and keep you forever and ever, generous heart! There was not a dry eye in the realms of bliss; and amidst the hand-shakings, and embracings, and praisings, the decree was thundered forth from the shining mount, that this deed should out-honor all the historic self-sacrifices of men and angels, and be recorded by itself upon a page of its own, for that the strain of it upon you had been heavier and bitterer than the strain it costs ten thousand martyrs to yield up their lives at the fiery stake; and all said, "What is the giving up of life, to a noble soul,

or to ten thousand noble souls, compared with the giving up of fifteen dollars out of the greedy grip of the meanest white man that ever lived on the face of the earth?"

And it was a true word. And Abraham, weeping, shook out the contents of his bosom and pasted the eloquent label there, "RESERVED"; and Peter, weeping, said, "He shall be received with a torchlight procession when he comes"; and then all heaven boomed, and was glad you were going there. And so was hell.

[Signed]
THE RECORDING ANGEL [Seal]

By command.

READING

In what three main parts is the essay divided? Does each part mark a progression toward a climax?

What point has the allusion to missionaries? the mention of John Wanamaker? What details in the essay would be unusable or unlikely if it were written today?

How would you characterize the language of the letter? Does it enhance the satire? Is it consistent?

INTERPRETATION

In what ways is the essay relevant to those of Bernstein, Fosdick, Wedel, and Russell?

Even though Mark Twain assumes a particular religious background, does he assume a particular religious belief on the part of his reader?

How well does satire serve a moral purpose here?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Neighbor's Faith and Works
The Hypocrite—Yesterday and Today
A Letter from Satan's Deputy
The Letter as a Literary Device
Religion in National Life

6
Business and Labor

Though the late President Calvin Coolidge had little reputation as a philosopher, he once remarked, more profoundly than he knew, that "the business of America is business." One way or another, most of us enter business, either as employees or as private enterprisers. And even if we don't participate directly in business, we are all deeply affected by the business environment in which we live. It is not amiss, then, that we ask ourselves some basic questions: How has mass production affected the American economy? Has it contributed to the evolution of democratic capitalism? How does one find and keep a job? How can one get ahead in the corporate world? What has the labor movement in America accomplished?

MASS PRODUCTION*

by Frederick Lewis Allen

Frederick Lewis Allen (1890–), is editor of *Harper's Magazine* and vice-president of Harper and Brothers, publishers. He is author of *Only Yesterday, Lords of Creation, The Great Pierpont Morgan,* and *The Big Change.*

During the year 1903 a forty-year-old Detroiter named Henry Ford, having left the employ of the little Detroit Automobile Company with the idea of going into the manufacturing business for himself, designed and built a big and powerful racing car. Why did he do this? He had no great interest in speed; his idea was quite different: he wanted to make a small, light, serviceable vehicle. The reason he built a racing car was that he wanted capital, and to attract capital he had to have a reputation, and in those days when automobiles were thought of as expensive playthings in which the rich could tear noisily along the dusty roads, the way to get a reputation was to build a car that could win races.

Having constructed a car of terrifying power, Ford cast about for a racing driver; and since it would require both strength and reckless daring to control his monster at high speeds—strength because it steered with an unwieldy tiller instead of with a wheel—he hired a professional bicycle racer named Barney Oldfield, and spent a week teaching him to drive a car. Said Oldfield as he climbed into the car for his first race at the Grosse Point

* From *The Big Change,* by Frederick Lewis Allen (New York: Harper & Bros., 1952), pp. 109–114. Copyright, 1952, by Frederick Lewis Allen. Reprinted by permission.

track late in 1903, "Well, this chariot may kill me, but they will say afterward that I was going like hell when she took me over the bank."

Oldfield did not go over the bank. He won the race by a wide margin. Ford won his reputation. And it got him enough capital—$28,000 in cash—to start the Ford Motor Company, of which he became vice-president, general manager, designer, master mechanic, and superintendent.

During the next few years Ford produced, successfully, several varieties of cars and his manufacturing business expanded rapidly. In 1908 he put out what he considered the most satisfactory model to date; he called it Model T. And soon afterward he made a decision which astonished his associates. Let him record it in his own words: ". . . In 1909 I announced one morning, without any previous warning, that in the future we were going to build only one model, that the model was going to be Model T, and that the chassis would be exactly the same for all cars, and I remarked: 'Any customer can have a car painted any color that he wants so long as it is black.' "

This decision grew naturally out of Ford's experience and temperament. He was a Michigan farmer's son, a gadget-loving Yankee with utilitarian and democratic instincts, uninfected by higher education. As a boy he had been so fascinated with machinery that he had spent endless hours taking watches to pieces and putting them together, and then constructing watches of his own. At the age of sixteen he had seen a "road engine"—a steam engine that could use its steam power to propel itself in an ungainly way from job to job—and had thereupon been fascinated with dreams of horseless carriages, and also of machines that farmers could use to do their hard work for them. Six years later, in 1885, he had seen an Otto gas engine—a European forerunner of the automobile engines of today—and had gone to work on engine design. By the spring of 1893 he had built his first horseless carriage and tried it out on the road. During the next ten years, while he held money-earning jobs, he was forever experimenting in his spare hours, and gradually his ideas developed.

He wanted to build, not a showy car for the well-to-do, but a practical, effort-saving car for ordinary people like himself. He wanted it to be light; few things offended him as did the widespread notion that weight meant strength. He wanted it to be inexpensive; as he said later in his autobiography, "The public should always be wondering how it is possible to give so much for the money." He felt that many manufacturers were mistaken in fixing their attention upon profits, and that bankers had a bad influence upon manufacturers because they thought about improving profits instead of about improving the product. If the product and the price were right, he thought the profits would take care of themselves. And he believed that if he concentrated on a single model, he could cut the cost of manufacture so sharply that masses of ordinary people would flock to buy it.

As his sales of Model T increased, Ford deliberately dropped the price —and they increased still further. In 1913 he put in his first assembly line, and by the beginning of 1914 he was producing the entire car on the assembly-line principle. Each workman performed a single operation; each element of the car went on a power-driven moving conveyor platform past a series of these workmen, each of whom added or fixed in place some part of it; and these various assembly lines converged upon a main conveyor platform on which the chassis moved to completion.

In principle this method of manufacture was far from new. It depended upon Eli Whitney's great discovery of the principle of interchangeable parts. It owed much to the refinement of that principle by such men as Henry M. Leland, who had shown what close machining could do to make these interchangeable parts fit with absolute precision. Moreover, many a manufacturer had used the assembly-line principle to some extent. Cyrus McCormick, for instance, had done so in his reaper works as far back as the eighteen-fifties; and in particular the packers had used an overhead conveyor to carry slaughtered animals past a series of workers. Ford was indebted, too, to Frederick Winslow Taylor for his studies in "scientific management," the careful planning of manufacturing processes so as to save steps and motions. And Ransom Olds had already put a single type of automobile into quantity production—until his financial backers forced him back into the luxury market. Nevertheless the Ford assembly line, with its subassemblies, was unique as a remorselessly complete application of all these ideas.

When his manufacturing system was complete, in January, 1914, Ford made an announcement which echoed round the world.

At that time the going wage in the automobile industry averaged about $2.40 per nine-hour day. Ford announced that he would pay his men a minimum of $5 per eight-hour day.

The explanation was that he had been paying year-end bonuses to the men, and now, as profits expanded, he thought he should put the profit-sharing on a pay-as-you-go basis. The morale in the plant had been unsatisfactory; he thought this might improve it. And he also felt, however vaguely, that if more Americans got high wages, there would be a market for more industrial products, including of course Ford cars. Because he was afraid that the sudden jump in income might demoralize the spending habits in some families, he made the raise conditional upon their demonstrating that they didn't waste the money—a naïvely paternalistic idea which he later had to modify. But before long he was paying nearly all his workmen the astonishing new wages.

The public reaction to the announcement was terrific. Most businessmen were indignant: Ford was ruining the labor market, he was putting

crazy ideas into workmen's heads, he would embarrass companies which couldn't possibly distribute such largess, he was a crude self-advertizer. There was much scoffing of the sort that a Muncie, Indiana, newspaper indulged in many years later: "Henry Ford thinks that wages ought to be higher and goods cheaper. We agree with him, and let us add that it ought to be cooler in the summer and warmer in winter." People with tenderer minds hailed Ford for his generosity and said that he was showing what a noble conscience could achieve in the hitherto unregenerate precincts of industry. Meanwhile the Ford plant was mobbed by applicants for jobs.

What Ford had actually done—in his manufacturing techniques, his deliberate price cutting, and his deliberate wage raising—was to demonstrate with unprecedented directness one of the great principles of modern industrialism: the dynamic logic of mass production. This is the principle that the more goods you produce, the less it costs to produce them; and that the more people are well off, the more they can buy, thus making this lavish and economical production possible.

Every successful manufacturer had followed this principle up to a point. But few had been able to follow it far; or, if able to, had been able to resist for very long the human temptation to cease expanding their output unduly and then to cash in by charging what the traffic would bear. Very few manufacturers, for that matter, had a single product to sell for which there proved to be an almost inexhaustible market if costs were reduced, or could go on, year after year, turning out this identical product with very little retooling. With these special advantages, Henry Ford—a cranky and self-willed man, in many respects an ignorant and opinionated man, and a merciless competitor, but in his own special way a man of stubborn democratic faith—followed the dynamic logic of mass production all the way, and the results were uncanny.

In 1909-10 his price per car had been $950. It went down to $780, to $690, to $600, to $550, to $490, to $360; then, after an increase due to the shortages and inflation of World War I, went down again until by 1924 the price of a Ford (without self-starter) was only $290. Meanwhile production had expanded by slow degrees from 18,664 cars all the way to 1,250,000 in 1920-21.

Ford followed the principle without compromise until 1927, when two facts caught up with him. One was that Americans wanted not only cheaper cars, but better ones; rival manufacturers had discovered that if you put out a new and improved model each year, the older ones would become obsolescent, and thus you could turn old customers into new ones; and these brighter and livelier new models had succeeded in making the gaunt and tinny Model T obsolescent indeed. The other fact was that the thirst for new and up-to-date vehicles was automatically producing a flourishing market in second- and third- and fourth-hand cars, at dwindling prices, so

that the Model T no longer had a monopoly of the bargain hunters' market.

In the meantime, however, Ford's experiment had had what Paul Hoffman has called "multiplier value." For he had advertised a principle which, though more often honored in the breach than in the observance, has a place of some sort in the thinking of every industrial manager today. The continuing discovery and demonstration of this principle has been one of the most powerful forces in the making of twentieth-century America. For it has had its corollaries: that a nation of men and women secure against exploitation and acute poverty is a nation of delighted buyers of goods, to everybody's profit; that it pays better to produce the same sort of food, clothing, and equipment for people of all income levels, than to produce luxury goods for a few; and that therefore one can make money by lowering class barriers. Thus is Marxism confounded—not by dogma, but by the logic of advanced industrialism itself; or, to put it another way, by capitalism turned to democratic ends.

READING

Describe the subjects of the first three paragraphs and of the fourth. Why is the chronological order not the most effective?

Of what use is the fifth paragraph in the second section of the essay?

Which idea of Ford's does Allen regard as his most important?

INTERPRETATION

As Allen says, the 1924 Ford cost $290. Even if you allow for inflation (the 1953 dollar is worth about 60 per cent of the dollar in 1924), how would you interpret the fact that the 1953 four-door six-cylinder sedan cost $1690?

According to Allen, what is the relationship of mass production and the advancement of democratic society? How did Ford and his followers "confound Marx"? Discuss.

What is Allen's tone in writing of Ford? Compare it with that of John Dos Passos in the next selection. With which do you find yourself more nearly in agreement? Do the dates of the two articles help to explain the difference?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Ford's Contribution to Civilization
A Business I Know
Starting a Business Today
Profits and Services
An Instance of Mass Production
Democratic Capitalism

TIN LIZZIE*

by John Dos Passos

John Dos Passos (1896–) first achieved fame as a novelist when he published *Three Soldiers* (1921). His panoramic trilogy, *U.S.A.* (1936), embodied a number of new techniques in the novel including the "thumbnail biography." His most recent novel is *Chosen Country* (1951).

"Mr. Ford the Automobileer," the featurewriter 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 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 steam-tractor, then he built a horseless carriage with an engine adapted from the Otto gas engine he'd read about in *The World of Science,* then a mechanical buggy with a onecylinder four-cycle 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 electric-light 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,

* Reprinted from *The Big Money,* by John Dos Passos (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1936), pp. 47–57. Copyright, 1936, by John Dos Passos. Reprinted by permission of the author.

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 thirty-nine 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, jogs and fixtures, punches and dies; he had ideas about sales,

that the big money was in economical quantity production, quickturnover, 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 twenty-five 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 properly-married 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 bird-lover,
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. Zelo, 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 Christian-

sand 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 whiteslave 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 seventyfive 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,

Calvin Coolidge;

but in 1922 Henry Ford sold one million three hundred and thirty-two 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, stoolpigeons (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, reachunderadjust-screwdownreachunderadjust 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 Johansson 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, asking 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.

READING

Select one passage of the essay and show specifically how Dos Passos handles his diction and sentences.

What major incidents does Dos Passos introduce that are not found in Allen? Should they appear in Allen?

On many other occasions the same biographical facts are used. Show how, using these same facts, Allen and Dos Passos differ in their interpretations.

INTERPRETATION

Compare the author's general attitude toward Ford with that of Allen. How would you describe Dos Passos'?

Are the faults of Ford more common to an industrialist of any time or to the midwestern middle class in the first third of the century? In which way does Dos Passos present them?

In a new depression, can industry and government deal with the problems more successfully than they did in the 1930's?

Is Dos Passos generally fair to Ford, especially in the treatment of Ford during the depression and in his old age? Have later developments vindicated the greatness of Ford or underlined his inadequacies?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Henry Ford in My Hometown
Two Views of Ford: Allen and Dos Passos
Another Writer on Henry Ford
The Nostalgia of an Industrialist
Changing America

HOW TO BE AN EMPLOYEE*

by Peter F. Drucker

Peter F. Drucker (1909–) is a management consultant and professor of management at the Graduate Business School of New York University. He also serves as consulting editor for the Research Institute of America. He has written *The New Society* (1952) and other books.

Most of you graduating today will be employees all your working life, working for somebody else and for a pay check. And so will most, if not all, of the thousands of other young Americans graduating this year in all the other schools and colleges across the country.

Ours has become a society of employees. A hundred years or so ago only one out of every five Americans at work was employed, i.e., worked for somebody else. Today only one out of five is not employed but working for himself. And where fifty years ago "being employed" meant working as a factory laborer or as a farmhand, the employee of today is increasingly a middle-class person with a substantial formal education, holding a professional or management job requiring intellectual and technical skills. Indeed, two things have characterized American society during these last fifty years: the middle and upper classes have become employees; and middle-class and upper-class employees have been the fastest-growing groups in our working population—growing so fast that the industrial worker, that oldest child of the Industrial Revolution, has been losing in numerical importance despite the expansion of industrial production.

This is one of the most profound social changes any country has ever undergone. It is, however, a perhaps even greater change for the individual young man about to start. Whatever he does, in all likelihood he will do it as an employee; wherever he aims, he will have to try to reach it through being an employee.

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Yet you will find little if anything written on what it is to be an employee. You can find a great deal of very dubious advice on how to get a job or how to get a promotion. You can also find a good deal on work in a chosen field, whether it be metallurgy or salesmanship, the machinist's trade or bookkeeping. Every one of these trades requires different skills, sets different standards, and requires a different preparation. Yet they all have employeeship in common. And increasingly, especially in the large business or in government, employeeship is more important to success than the special professional knowledge or skill. Certainly more people fail because they do not know the requirements of being an employee than because they do not adequately possess the skills of their trade; the higher you climb the ladder, the more you get into administrative or executive work, the greater the emphasis on ability to work within the organization rather than on technical competence or professional knowledge.

Being an employee is thus the one common characteristic of most careers today. The special profession or skill is visible and clearly defined; and a well-laid-out sequence of courses, degrees, and jobs leads into it. But being an employee is the foundation. And it is much more difficult to prepare for it. Yet there is no recorded information on the art of being an employee.

The Basic Skill

The first question we might ask is: what can you learn in college that will help you in being an employee? The schools teach a great many things of value to the future accountant, the future doctor, or the future electrician. Do they also teach anything of value to the future employee? The answer is: "Yes—they teach the one thing that it is perhaps most valuable for the future employee to know. But very few students bother to learn it."

This one basic skill is the ability to organize and express ideas in writing and in speaking.

As an employee you work with and through other people. This means that your success as an employee—and I am talking of much more here than getting promoted—will depend on your ability to communicate with people and to present your own thoughts and ideas to them so they will both understand what you are driving at and be persuaded. The letter, the report or memorandum, the ten-minute spoken "presentation" to a committee are basic tools of the employee.

If you work as a soda jerker you will, of course, not need much skill in expressing yourself to be effective. If you work on a machine your ability to express yourself will be of little importance. But as soon as you move one step up from the bottom, your effectiveness depends on your ability to reach others through the spoken or the written word. And the

further away your job is from manual work, the larger the organization of which you are an employee, the more important it will be that you know how to convey your thoughts in writing or speaking. In the very large organization, whether it is the government, the large business corporation, or the Army, this ability to express oneself is perhaps the most important of all the skills a man can possess.

Of course, skill in expression is not enough by itself. You must have something to say in the first place. The popular picture of the engineer, for instance, is that of a man who works with a slide rule, T square, and compass. And engineering students reflect this picture in their attitude toward the written word as something quite irrelevant to their jobs. But the effectiveness of the engineer—and with it his usefulness—depends as much on his ability to make other people understand his work as it does on the quality of the work itself.

Expressing one's thoughts is one skill that the school can really teach, especially to people born without natural writing or speaking talent. Many other skills can be learned later—in this country there are literally thousands of places that offer training to adult people at work. But the foundations for skill in expression have to be laid early: an interest in and an ear for language; experience in organizing ideas and data, in brushing aside the irrelevant, in wedding outward form and inner content into one structure; and above all, the habit of verbal expression. If you do not lay these foundations during your school years, you may never have an opportunity again.

If you were to ask me what strictly vocational courses there are in the typical college curriculum, my answer—now that the good old habit of the "theme a day" has virtually disappeared—would be: the writing of poetry and the writing of short stories. Not that I expect many of you to become poets or short-story writers—far from it. But these two courses offer the easiest way to obtain some skill in expression. They force one to be economical with language. They force one to organize thought. They demand of one that he give meaning to every word. They train the ear for language, its meaning, its precision, its overtones—and its pitfalls. Above all they force one to write.

I know very well that the typical employer does not understand this as yet, and that he may look with suspicion on a young college graduate who has majored, let us say, in short-story writing. But the same employer will complain—and with good reason—that the young men whom he hires when they get out of college do not know how to write a simple report, do not know how to tell a simple story, and are in fact virtually illiterate. And he will conclude—rightly—that the young men are not really effective, and certainly not employees who are likely to go very far.

The next question to ask is: what kind of employee should you be? Pay

no attention to what other people tell you. This is one question only you can answer. It involves a choice in four areas—a choice you alone can make, and one you cannot easily duck. But to make the choice you must first have tested yourself in the world of jobs for some time.

Here are the four decisions—first in brief outline, then in more detail:

1. Do you belong in a job calling primarily for faithfulness in the performance of routine work and promising security? Or do you belong in a job that offers a challenge to imagination and ingenuity—with the attendant penalty for failure?

2. Do you belong in a large organization or in a small organization? Do you work better through channels or through direct contracts? Do you enjoy more being a small cog in a big and powerful machine or a big wheel in a small machine?

3. Should you start at the bottom and try to work your way up, or should you try to start near the top? On the lowest rung of the promotional ladder, with its solid and safe footing but also with a very long climb ahead? Or on the aerial trapeze of "a management trainee," or some other staff position close to management?

4. Finally, are you going to be more effective and happy as a specialist or as a "generalist," that is, in an administrative job?

Let me spell out what each of these four decisions involves:

1: *Is "Security" for You?*

The decision between secure routine work and insecure work challenging the imagination and ingenuity is the one decision most people find easiest to make. You know very soon what kind of person you are. Do you find real satisfaction in the precision, order, and system of a clearly laid-out job? Do you prefer the security not only of knowing what your work is today and what it is going to be tomorrow, but also security in your job, in your relationship to the people above, below, and next to you, and economic security? Or are you one of those people who tend to grow impatient with anything that looks like a "routine" job? These people are usually able to live in a confused situation in which their relations to the people around them are neither clear nor stable. And they tend to pay less attention to economic security, find it not too upsetting to change jobs, etc.

There is, of course, no such black-and-white distinction between people. The man who can do only painstaking detail work and has no imagination is not much good for anything. Neither is the self-styled "genius" who has nothing but grandiose ideas and no capacity for rigorous application to detail. But in practically everybody I have ever met there is a decided leaning one way or the other.

The difference is one of basic personality. It is not too much affected by a man's experiences; he is likely to be born with the one or the other. The need for economic security is often as not an outgrowth of a need for psychological security rather than a phenomenon of its own. But precisely because the difference is one of basic temperament, the analysis of what kind of temperament you possess is so vital. A man might be happy in work for which he has little *aptitude;* he might be quite successful in it. But he can be neither happy nor successful in a job for which he is *temperamentally* unfitted.

You hear a great many complaints today about the excessive security-consciousness of our young people. My complaint is the opposite: in the large organizations especially there are not enough job opportunities for those young people who need challenge and risk. Jobs in which there is greater emphasis on conscientious performance of well-organized duties rather than on imagination—especially for the beginner—are to be found, for instance, in the inside jobs in banking or insurance, which normally offer great job security but not rapid promotion or large pay. The same is true of most government work, of the railroad industry, particularly in the clerical and engineering branches, and of most public utilities. The bookkeeping and accounting areas, especially in the larger companies, are generally of this type too—though a successful comptroller is an accountant with great management and business imagination.

At the other extreme are such areas as buying, selling, and advertising, in which the emphasis is on adaptability, on imagination, and on a desire to do new and different things. In those areas, by and large, there is little security, either personal or economic. The rewards, however, are high and come more rapidly. Major premium on imagination—though of a different kind and coupled with dogged persistence on details—prevails in most research and engineering work. Jobs in production, as supervisor or executive, also demand much adaptability and imagination.

Contrary to popular belief, very small business requires, above all, close attention to daily routine. Running a neighborhood drugstore or a small grocery, or being a toy jobber, is largely attention to details. But in very small business there is also room for quite a few people of the other personality type—the innovator or imaginer. If successful, a man of this type soon ceases to be in a very small business. For the real innovator there is, still, no more promising opportunity in this country than that of building a large out of a very small business.

2: *Big Company or Small?*

Almost as important is the decision between working for a large and for a small organization. The difference is perhaps not so great as that be-

tween the secure, routine job and the insecure, imaginative job; but the wrong decision can be equally serious.

There are two basic differences between the large and the small enterprise. In the small enterprise you operate primarily through personal contacts. In the large enterprise you have established "policies," "channels" of organization, and fairly rigid procedures. In the small enterprise you have, moreover, immediate effectiveness in a very small area. You can see the effect of your work and of your decisions right away, once you are a little bit above the ground floor. In the large enterprise even the man at the top is only a cog in a big machine. To be sure, his actions effect a much greater area than the actions and decisions of the man in the small organization, but his effectiveness is remote, indirect, and elusive. In a small and even in a middle-sized business you are normally exposed to all kinds of experiences, and expected to do a great many things without too much help or guidance. In the large organization you are normally taught one thing thoroughly. In the small one the danger is of becoming a jack-of-all-trades and master of none. In the large one it is of becoming the man who knows more and more about less and less.

There is one other important thing to consider: do you derive a deep sense of satisfaction from being a member of a well-known organization—General Motors, the Bell Telephone System, the government? Or is it more important to you to be a well-known and important figure within your own small pond? There is a basic difference between the satisfaction that comes from being a member of a large, powerful, and generally known organization, and the one that comes from being a member of a family; between impersonal grandeur and personal—often much too personal—intimacy; between life in a small cubicle on the top floor of a skyscraper and life in a crossroads gas station.

3: *Start at the Bottom, or . . . ?*

You may well think it absurd to say that anyone has a choice between beginning at the bottom and beginning near the top. And indeed I do not mean that you have any choice between beginner's jobs and, let us say, a vice presidency at General Electric. But you do have a choice between a position at the bottom of the hierarchy and a staff position that is outside the hierarchy but in view of the top. It is an important choice.

In every organization, even the smallest, there are positions that, while subordinate, modestly paid, and usually filled with young and beginning employees, nonetheless are not at the bottom. There are positions as assistant to one of the bosses; there are positions as private secretary; there are liaison positions for various departments; and there are positions in staff capacities, in industrial engineering, in cost accounting, in personnel, etc. Every one of these gives a view of the whole rather than of only one small

area. Every one of them normally brings the holder into the deliberations and discussions of the people at the top, if only as a silent audience or perhaps only as an errand boy. Every one of these positions is a position "near the top," however humble and badly paid it may be.

On the other hand the great majority of beginner's jobs are at the bottom, where you begin in a department or in a line of work in the lowest-paid and simplest function, and where you are expected to work your way up as you acquire more skill and more judgment.

Different people belong in these two kinds of jobs. In the first place, the job "near the top" is insecure. You are exposed to public view. Your position is ambiguous; by yourself you are a nobody—but you reflect the boss's status; in a relatively short time you may even speak for the boss. You may have real power and influence. In today's business and government organization the hand that writes the memo rules the committee; and the young staff man usually writes the memos, or at least the first draft. But for that very reason everybody is jealous of you. You are a youngster who has been admitted to the company of his betters, and is therefore expected to show unusual ability and above all unusual discretion and judgment. Good performance in such a position is often the key to rapid advancement. But to fall down may mean the end of all hopes of ever getting anywhere within the organization.

At the bottom, on the other hand, there are very few opportunities for making serious mistakes. You are amply protected by the whole apparatus of authority. The job itself is normally simple, requiring little judgment, discretion, or initiative. Even excellent performance in such a job is unlikely to speed promotion. But one also has to fall down in a rather spectacular fashion for it to be noticed by anyone but one's immediate superior.

4: *Specialist or "Generalist"?*

There are a great many careers in which the increasing emphasis is on specialization. You find these careers in engineering and in accounting, in production, in statistical work, and in teaching. But there is an increasing demand for people who are able to take in a great area at a glance, people who perhaps do not know too much about any one field—though one should always have one area of real competence. There is, in other words, a demand for people who are capable of seeing the forest rather than the trees, of making over-all judgments. And these "generalists" are particularly needed for administrative positions where it is their job to see that other people do the work, where they have to plan for other people, to organize other people's work, to initiate it and appraise it.

The specialist understands one field; his concern is with technique, tools, media. He is a "trained" man; and his educational background is properly technical or professional. The generalist—and especially the ad-

ministrator—deals with people; his concern is with leadership, with planning, with direction giving, and with coordination. He is an "educated" man; and the humanities are his strongest foundation. Very rarely is a specialist capable of being an administrator. And very rarely is a good generalist also a good specialist in a particular field. Any organization needs both kinds of people, though different organizations need them in different ratios. It is your job to find out, during your apprenticeship, into which of those two job categories you fit, and to plan your career accordingly.

Your first job may turn out to be the right job for you—but this is pure accident. Certainly you should not change jobs constantly or people will become suspicious—rightly—of your ability to hold any job. At the same time you must not look upon the first job as the final job; it is primarily a training job, an opportunity to analyze yourself and your fitness for being an employee.

The Importance of Being Fired

In fact there is a great deal to be said for being fired from the first job. One reason is that it is rarely an advantage to have started as an office boy in the organization; far too many people will still consider you a "green kid" after you have been there for twenty-five years. But the major reason is that getting fired from the first job is the least painful and the least damaging way to learn how to take a setback. And whom the Lord loveth he teacheth early how to take a setback.

Nobody has ever lived, I daresay, who has not gone through a period when everything seemed to have collapsed and when years of work and life seemed to have gone up in smoke. No one can be spared this experience; but one can be prepared for it. The man who has been through earlier setbacks has learned that the world has not come to an end because he lost his job—not even in a depression. He has learned that he will somehow survive. He has learned, above all, that the way to behave in such a setback is not to collapse himself. But the man who comes up against it for the first time when he is forty-five is quite likely to collapse for good. For the things that people are apt to do when they receive the first nasty blow may destroy a mature man with a family, whereas a youth of twenty-five bounces right back.

Obviously you cannot contrive to get yourself fired. But you can always quit. And it is perhaps even more important to have quit once than to have been fired once. The man who walks out on his own volition acquires an inner independence that he will never quite lose.

When to Quit

To know when to quit is therefore one of the most important things—particularly for the beginner. For on the whole young people have a tend-

ency to hang on to the first job long beyond the time when they should have quit for their own good.

One should quit when self-analysis shows that the job is the wrong job —that, say, it does not give the security and routine one requires, that it is a small-company rather than a big-organization job, that it is at the bottom rather than near the top, a specialist's rather than a generalist's job, etc. One should quit if the job demands behavior one considers morally indefensible, or if the whole atmosphere of the place is morally corrupting—if, for instance, only yes men and flatterers are tolerated.

One should also quit if the job does not offer the training one needs either in a specialty or in administration and the view of the whole. The beginner not only has a right to expect training from his first five or ten years in a job; he has an obligation to get as much training as possible. A job in which young people are not given real training—though, of course, the training need not be a formal "training program"—does not measure up to what they have a right and a duty to expect.

But the most common reason why one should quit is the absence of promotional opportunities in the organization. That is a compelling reason.

I do not believe that chance of promotion is the essence of a job. In fact there is no surer way to kill a job and one's own usefulness in it than to consider it as but one rung in the promotional ladder rather than as a job in itself that deserves serious effort and will return satisfaction, a sense of accomplishment, and pride. And one can be an important and respected member of an organization without ever having received a promotion; there are such people in practically every office. But the organization itself must offer fair promotional opportunities. Otherwise it stagnates, becomes corrupted, and in turn corrupts. The absence of promotional opportunities is demoralizing. And the sooner one gets out of a demoralizing situation, the better. There are three situations to watch out for:

The entire group may be so young that for years there will be no vacancies. That was a fairly common situation in business a few years back, as a result of the depression. Middle and lower management ranks in many companies were solidly filled with men in their forties and early fifties—men who were far too young to be retired but who had grown too old, during the bleak days of the Thirties, to be promotable themselves. As a result the people under them were bottled up; for it is a rare organization that will promote a young man around his older superior. If you find yourself caught in such a situation, get out fast. If you wait it will defeat you.

Another situation without promotional opportunities is one in which the group ahead of you is uniformly old—so old that it will have to be replaced long before you will be considered ready to move up. Stay away from organizations that have a uniform age structure throughout their ex-

ecutive group—old or young. The only organizaton that offers fair promotional opportunities is one in which there is a balance of ages.

Who Gets Promoted?

And finally there is the situation in which all promotions go to members of a particular group—to which you do not belong. Some chemical companies, for instance, require a master's degree in chemistry for just about any job above sweeper. Some companies promote only engineering graduates, some government agencies only people who majored in economics, some railroads only male stenographers, some British insurance companies only members of the actuaries' association. Or all the good jobs may be reserved for members of the family. There may be adequate promotional opportunities in such an organization—but not for you.

On the whole there are proportionately more opportunities in the big organization than in the small one. But there is very real danger of getting lost in the big organization—whereas you are always visible in the small one. A young man should therefore stay in a large organization only if it has a definite promotional program which ensures that he will be considered and looked at. This may take several forms: it may be a formal appraisal and development program; it may be automatic promotion by seniority as in the prewar Army; it may be an organization structure that actually makes out of the one big enterprise a number of small organizations in which everybody is again clearly visible (the technical term for this is "decentralization").

But techniques do not concern us here. What matters is that there should be both adequate opportunities and fair assurance that you will be eligible and considered for promotion. Let me repeat: to be promoted is not essential, either to happiness or to usefulness. To be considered for promotion is.

Your Life off the Job

I have only one more thing to say: to be an employee it is not enough that the job be right and that you be right for the job. It is also necessary that you have a meaningful life outside the job.

I am talking of having a genuine interest in something in which you, on your own, can be, if not a master, at least an amateur expert. This something may be botany, or the history of your country, or chamber music, cabinetmaking, Christmastree growing, or a thousand other things. But it is important in this "employee society" of ours to have a genuine interest outside of the job and to be serious about it.

I am not, as you might suspect, thinking of something that will keep

you alive and interested during your retirement. I am speaking of keeping yourself alive, interested, and happy during your working life, and of a permanent source of self-respect and standing in the community outside and beyond your job. You will need such an interest when you hit the forties, that period in which most of us come to realize that we will never reach the goals we have set ourselves when younger—whether these are goals of achievement or of worldly success. You will need it because you should have one area in which you yourself impose standards of performance on your own work. Finally, you need it because you will find recognition and acceptance by other people working in the field, whether professional or amateur, as individuals rather than as members of an organization and as employees.

This is heretical philosophy these days when so many companies believe that the best employee is the man who lives, drinks, eats, and sleeps job and company. In actual experience those people who have no life outside their jobs are not the really successful people, not even from the viewpoint of the company. I have seen far too many of them shoot up like a rocket, because they had no interests except the job; but they also come down like the rocket's burned-out stick. The man who will make the greatest contribution to his company is the mature person—and you cannot have maturity if you have no life or interest outside the job. Our large companies are beginning to understand this. That so many of them encourage people to have "outside interests" or to develop "hobbies" as a preparation for retirement is the first sign of a change toward a more intelligent attitude. But quite apart from the self-interest of the employer, your own interest as an employee demands that you develop a major outside interest. It will make you happier, it will make you more effective, it will give you resistance against the setbacks and the blows that are the lot of everyone; and it will make you a more effective, a more successful, and a more mature employee.

You have no doubt realized that I have not really talked about how to be an employee. I have talked about what to know before becoming an employee—which is something quite different. Perhaps "how to be an employee" can be learned only by being one. But one thing can be said. Being an employee means working with people; it means living and working in a society. Intelligence, in the last analysis, is therefore not the most important quality. What is decisive is character and integrity. If you work on your own, intelligence and ability may be sufficient. If you work with people you are going to fail unless you also have basic integrity. And integrity—character—is the one thing most, if not all, employers consider first.

There are many skills you might learn to be an employee, many abilities that are required. But fundamentally the one quality demanded of you will not be skill, knowledge, or talent, but character.

READING

How useful as an introduction are the first five paragraphs? Would it be better to omit them, shorten them, or place them elsewhere?

Discuss the section on basic skills and the final two paragraphs on integrity in their relation with the rest of the essay.

What kind of detail is used in the section "Who Gets Promoted"? What other kinds of detail might be used?

INTERPRETATION

How would you characterize the tone of Drucker's advice—practical, idealistic, shrewd, opportunistic, wise, flighty? Explain.

Can schools teach communication skills? Compare Mencken's remarks in his essay "On Style." How well justified do you consider Drucker's emphasis on writing? Is he right in limiting it to nonmanual jobs and excluding the soda jerker—or the repairman, the truck driver?

How good is the advice to a would-be employee? How closely does it accord with the philosophy of American capitalism expressed by Allen?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

My Most Recent Job
The Job I'd Like to Get
I'd Rather Be My Own Boss
An Employee's Wife
The Best Preparation for a Job

PHILIP MURRAY*

by Adlai E. Stevenson

Adlai E. Stevenson (1900–) was Governor of Illinois, 1948–1952, and Democratic candidate for the Presidency in 1952. An alumnus of Princeton, he took his law degree at Northwestern.

It is hard on occasions such as this to distinguish between the lasting darkness of loss and the passing darkness of its shadow.

Our lives take their meaning from their interlacing with other lives, and when one life is ended those into which it was woven are also carried into darkness. Neither you nor I, but only the hand of time, slow-moving, yet sure and steady, can lift that blanket of blackness. . . .

Phil Murray was more than the president of the CIO, more than a leader and spokesman for organized labor. Those of you who worked with him knew him first and foremost as a trade unionist, a man of sagacity at the bargaining table, a militant leader in your times of stress, and a shrewd conciliator who could bring home the bacon.

Those of you, among the thousands who called him "friend," knew

* Memorial address on Philip Murray delivered at the CIO convention, Atlantic City, December 3, 1952. Reprinted by permission of the author.

him as a beloved companion, a thoughtful adviser, a generous man with a boundless sense of humor and kindness. As time softens the first sadness of his death, I think we can better see Phil Murray in perspective, and describe him properly in terms that would have embarrassed this unassuming man in his lifetime.

In the truest sense of the words that we often abuse, Phil Murray's life was a success story. The world is better off because he lived in it. Without that fact as a basic ingredient, you cannot give validity to a success story. Too often, in judging what man is a success, we think in terms of the market place, and measure him a success who has moved into the big house on top of the hill. Too often we count him a success because he moved into the big house. But the test is rather "how and why." And Phil Murray's success in life cannot be measured in a probate court.

The inspiration in Mr. Murray's life, the lesson for the world, lies in the fact that a boy humbly born in another country could come to America, his knuckles blackened with the coal dust of the Scottish pits, hew out an illustrious career for himself in service to his fellow man, and die a man of simple tastes and modest means, but leave a legacy of material goods in the homes of millions of workers in these United States—not only material goods measured in wages, in pension benefits, and other gains for the workers he led, but the goods of the spirit. Millions of workers have a personal dignity their fathers never knew because Phil Murray and others like him helped these workers to stand on their own feet.

My acquaintance with Mr. Murray was not intimate and my contacts were few. Perhaps that qualifies me all the better to comment on what to me was his most conspicuous quality. Humbly born, after a stormy life of democratic leadership and great achievement he humbly died. Yet it has been too often true that the very humbleness, even the disadvantages, of a man's beginnings have led him to abuse authority subsequently attained. Rank and power expose humility to the rust of pride, and we know those who, in telling of their having "come up the hard way," acknowledge in the telling that they have lost the lesson of their experience.

Phil Murray's humility was deeper rooted. It did not change with the seasons of experience or the years of growth. He knew that in our system of things the conferring of authority on particular individuals is largely accidental, that its compliment is slight, and that the man who exercises it is no different from his fellow men or from what he was himself before he assumed the role of leadership.

It was often remarked, and to some it seemed strange, that the president of the CIO was moved easily to laughter and not infrequently to tears. Perhaps his greatness found its sustenance there, or at least its reflection—for it is emotions that link us closest with each other. So much of democratic leadership is just the understanding of the people's needs and hopes, the

looking to them rather than to one's own ideas for guidance and for strength, the maintaining of a oneness between leadership and following.

No democratic organization can afford the risk of leadership which lacks humility. It is that element which gives men—which gave Philip Murray—the ability to lead a people who distrust the power to command.

His was not an easy career. The path of the man who chose a career in organized labor in Murray's youth was not strewn with NLRB orders directing an employer to bargain. Too often the life of the labor organizer was more akin to the career of an underground leader, in terms of frustration, even terror.

What motivated and sustained him in the long struggle? What was the guiding purpose that drove him on with a disregard for self that resulted finally in death? I suspect it was to bring dignity and meaning into lives which had lost these qualities. It was plainer to those in the coal mines of Pennsylvania in 1902 in his boyhood than it was to a good many people in America what a price we had paid, in human values, for the fruits of the industrial revolution. The coal dust and the sweat and smoke of factories had settled not only on men's faces and in women's kitchens but on their lives. Work had become, for millions, something much less—much meaner —than it had been when men were carving homes and farms out of forests and working as craftsmen in small shops. In too many minds the men and women beside the assembly lines became indistinguishable from the machines.

I know no purpose more sustaining than that of helping people live fuller lives. It gave to Philip Murray the guidance, probably the inspiration, which left for him hard questions of the immediate course to follow but none as to the direction. He must have had that vision of true horizons which gives assurance against beckoning mirages in the often lonely deserts of decision.

This, then, is our heritage from Philip Murray. It is no lesser for not being written in the words of great books or in the masonry of proud structures—for it is written rather in the lives of men and women and built into the meaning of democracy. It is the example of what leadership means in a system that finds its strength in its insistence that leaders be only servants.

To realize this heritage is to deny all but the personal elements of loss, of ending, in what has happened. There are those who are ready to accept, to carry on—and even to build upon—the example which has been left, the tradition which has been established.

Behind the grief of great loss there is the stimulus to assume the increased responsibility to go on. The whole lesson of history is its essential continuity. It is the fullest memorializing of those who have departed that those who remain feel no despair—for otherwise the task was not fully done.

The beliefs that Phil Murray brought into his career as a labor leader, belief in the right to organize and bargain collectively, belief in the family life of America, and belief that a strong trade union movement is of the essence of democracy, are today, thanks to men like him, the indisputable premises of daily life for most of us.

But the simplest rights, accepted as a matter of fact by younger workers today, were bitterly contested in the growth of the labor movement. We would honor him well not to take too much for granted those rights he devoted a restless life to securing, but to remember vividly that they were won the hard way. You, his constituents, have inherited a precious trust, which can be executed faithfully only by imitating his own devotion to God, his fellow man, and his country. I cannot presume to say that I know what Mr. Murray's view of the future was. But I do know that his life and work spanned a dramatic evolution in the status of labor and in our thinking about labor in this country. From the unspeakable conditions of 50 or 60 years ago he lived to see organized labor grow to its present vast power and influence in our economy and our society. And I suppose that this transition is as important a single fact as any in the past half century.

While there are inequities and injustices in our laws that still demand remedy, labor's long battle for status and recognition has been largely won. Violence and ruthlessness by employers and unions alike are obsolete. If it isn't, the doctrine that the end justifies the means should be a thing of the past in labor relations.

Labor has been afflicted with Communist infiltration and with hoodlums and racketeers. The battle for clean unions you have fought and will fight as long as necessary. But the bigger job of the future is the proper exercise of organized labor's vast responsibility, not just to the working man but to the country. Some of the attitudes, habits of thought and methods of the past are no longer relevant. How soon will the modern idea that big labor is here to stay, that your constituency is no longer just the union member but the nation, pervade the ranks of labor leadership?

What I would like to say about all this would take longer than you would care to listen. Call it in a word "public relations," if you please. Whatever it is, however each of you may look at it, consider how far you have come in the lifetime of Philip Murray and where you are going. You have elevated wages and working conditions, accomplished all manner of improvements. You dare not gamble with these advances. Now there is too much to lose.

Perhaps as the defeated candidate, whom you were good enough to support, I can be permitted to say that the election should not be considered a disaster or even a misfortune for labor. What would be a misfortune and perhaps even a disaster would be to think so, and lose sight of labor's larger responsibility to a nation which is also groping its way into a new era.

While it may be no surprise to you that I had certain preferences in the recent election, I like to think of myself as an American first and a political partisan second. And I think of you as Americans first and labor leaders second. Business has learned much, too, in these years of your great growth and has been improving its relations with labor and the public. And your largest task now, as I see it, is the conduct of your relations with industry, always in the larger framework of the national interest on which labor and business and all the rest of us are dependent.

I'll say nothing poetic about the twilight of the era of your great gains. Rather it is for us to make this interval of labor's transition from "far off things, and battles long ago" the dawn of a better era for all of us—for America.

I like to think that Phil Murray was familiar with these words: "A fool who stands fast is a catastrophe; a wise man who stands fast is a statesman."

It is, then, in a spirit of gratitude for what he did with his life and of gratitude for the opportunity that is the handmaiden of the power he helped bestow upon you, that we say to Philip Murray: "Hail and Farewell," and to Death, "be not proud."

READING

What qualities of Murray's character does Stevenson emphasize? In what order?

How does Stevenson move from a consideration of Murray to ideas about the present problems of labor and management?

Discuss Stevenson's diction, considering for instance such phrases as "The lasting darkness of loss," "bring home the bacon," "a success story" (with its qualification), "in terms of frustration, even terror," "a precious trust, which can be executed faithfully."

Why does Stevenson, after remarking "I'll say nothing poetic about the twilight of the era of your great gains," quote from Wordsworth, Catullus, and Donne? What is the effect of the other quotation that is introduced?

INTERPRETATION

Distinguish between the success story of Murray and the more common connotation of success story. Is there a place for Philip Murrays in Peter F. Drucker's advice? What kind of employee would Murray have been?

In your opinion, what are the main problems facing labor today? What is the extent of your agreement with Stevenson on this subject?

What relevance does Stevenson's address have to the essays of Allen and Dos Passos? To which is he closer? Upon which does he seem to throw more light?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Dedicated Man
My Union Membership
The Hero as Labor Leader
The Rights of Employees
Labor in Democratic Capitalism

7
Machines

It is a commonplace to say that ours is a machine age, and Europeans sometimes patronizingly speak of our "gadget civilization." But the truth is that machines are a very important part of our environment. Though we tend to take them for granted, they affect our lives only a little less than do people. In our own time we have witnessed the gradual advancement of machines until now we are beginning to wonder whether the machine designed to lighten man's labors is not in fact encroaching upon his monopoly of humanity. How can we become fully oriented to the remarkable machines around us and the more remarkable ones coming in the future?

HOW TO DRIVE A CAR*

by Lincoln Dryden

Lincoln Dryden (1903–), professor of geology at Bryn Mawr College, received his A.B. and Ph.D. from the Johns Hopkins University.

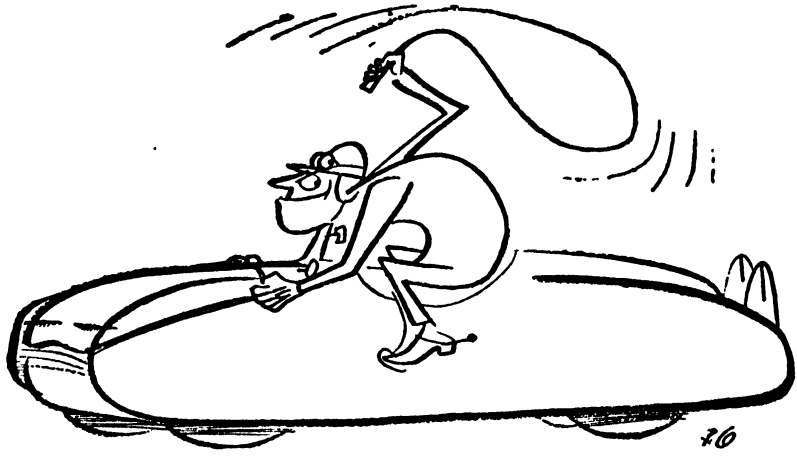
I am interested in driving as a sort of art, a challenge to my wit and abilities. But most of what I read about driving is pretty poor fare. It is nearly all about the mounting accident rate, and what should be done about it. The "what" takes many forms. One writer says that our decaying roads are to blame; another that there is too much drinking-and-driving; and still another that the mechanical design of our cars baffles us.

I do not say that any or all of these ideas are wrong, merely that they are insufficient—purely negative. They tell us, after a fashion, what's wrong, but they never tell us what's right. They don't even consider what is the best way to drive a car. They do tell us not to get drunk before we start. They do advise us not to back from a blind driveway onto a traffic-full superhighway, not to drive so fast that the car gets out of control, not to "over-drive" our headlights at night, and not to snarl and get our blood pressure up. But I have almost never seen anything positive, or anything positive that makes any sense to me. For example, it *is* positive (and the law) in a number of states, that to make a left turn, you have to signal by extending the left arm, pointing to the left with all three joints of the index finger, at a prescribed distance before the turn. But I have never seen it stated that the main reason for doing this is to signal someone behind you;

* From *Harper's Magazine*, CCIV (June, 1952), 82–89. Pictorial Comment by Robert Osborn. Copyright, 1952, by Harper & Brothers. Reprinted by permission.

and if there is no one behind you, do you have to signal to the empty air? Of course, this raises the point of how, and why, and when should you *know* that there is somebody or nobody behind you, and I have never seen anybody consider this. I will have a little more to say about it, but meanwhile let me observe that most newspapers and magazines treat us like children or morons, or both, in their many articles on driving.

You might like to know my qualifications, whether I am a member of the so-and-so safety council, or an officer of an automobile club. I am none of these: I am just the best driver in the country—amateur, summer-and-holiday driver, that is. I can't prove this to you, since you know that *you* are the best driver. You have probably outdriven my three or four hundred thousand miles, and have been driving longer than my twenty-five or so years, and have had not a single accident or arrest, compared with my two tiny scrapes with both. The best thing for me to do is to tell you my way of driving; you be the judge.



When I talk about driving, I do not mean anything really specific, such as knowing how to shift from first to second, or how to turn around in the back yard, or how to get over a stretch of deserted country road. I am talking about the sort of thing you meet if you try to make good time between, say, New York and Boston, or Kansas City and Seattle, running around forty to sixty miles an hour on the open road and pushing through towns and lines of traffic as quickly as common sense will let you. Almost nothing that I say will apply to the snail-like pace in a traffic-jammed city street.

Now that we are on the open road, let's pass quickly over what may be a major reason for our high accident rate. If you have read anything about psychosomatic medicine, you have heard of "accident-prone" drivers. It

seems that some people *want* to have accidents, though they don't know it, that they are the habitual offenders, and that comparatively few of them account for a high proportion of all accidents. Another theory is that bad driving stems from an unhappy childhood. If explanations such as these are valid, perhaps most articles on driving ought to focus on our mental health. But the practical truth is that we consider our neuroses our own business and we will not put up with being probed and tested to see if we are just a little bit odd or just a little bit accident-inclined. So far as the "average" driver is concerned, I think we may as well drop this subject, at least until such a time as we can pay as much attention to ourselves as we lavish on headlights, brakes, and other objects that cannot protest to their congressmen.

Let's consider a few simple truths about getting from here to there in a car.

II

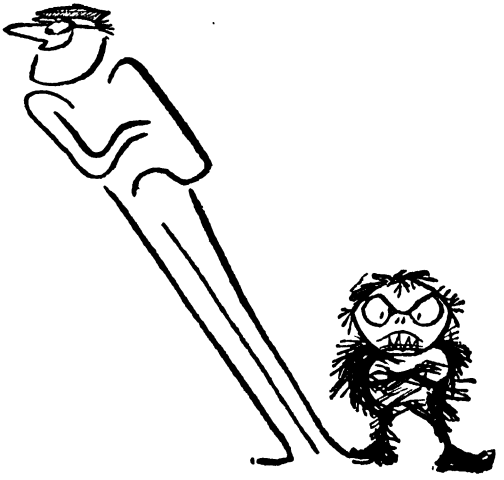
What is the most important single principle for open-road driving? It is this: that you must constantly drive not only your own car, but you must drive the car(s) in front of you and the car(s) behind. Let's take the one(s) behind first.

First, you have got to know, at all times, just what is behind you; that means that you have to look in your mirror perhaps every ten to thirty seconds (depending on the road) to see what's going on there. You may protest that on a straight road, with little or no traffic, there's no use. To this I reply that on a straight road, with little or no traffic, there isn't any use. If there isn't any traffic, I haven't the slightest interest in what you do. You can go along in first at two miles an hour or run so fast that your wheels fly off; that is not the problem. If there is a fairly good chance that a car will come up behind you, you must know if it does.

Let's see how it works. Sometimes I push the speed limit a bit, particularly when I think the limit does not make sense. In a situation of this sort, I keep track of every car in sight behind me. I say to myself: there are three in a bunch, a quarter of a mile back, and they are respectively red, and baby blue, and a convertible, and probably no one of them is a cop. After a bend, and over a hill, I spot them again: there are the three still sticking together, but now they have been joined by a fourth, which I can't, as yet, see clearly. I watch him. All right, suppose he isn't a cop. It is still vital that I know what is behind me, and what changes are taking place, so that I have the knowledge necessary for action, whether I take it or not.

But let's take a more usual case; you look in your mirror two or three times, and you see that a car is coming up behind you and getting fairly close. Obviously that car is making better time than you are. What do you do?

What you do is so important that I think it needs to be established as an extremely important principle: any car traveling faster than you must be allowed to get ahead of you and out of the way just as fast as is safely possible. Sometimes you may see that the driver can't pass you (or if he does he is a suicidal maniac), but let's assume that he can pass you, and that he and you will come through the experience intact. Your first move is this: pull over a little closer to the right side of the road to show that you are aware of his presence behind you and to give him as much room for passing as you can. (I would say that in a 10,000-mile trip last summer, not more than five or ten cars blew to pass me; they could see that I knew they were going to pass by the fact that I moved over to the right a foot or so more than my normal driving position on the road.) Suppose that the driver doesn't pass you right away. There are two chief reasons for this: (a) the road or the traffic conditions don't allow him to do so; or (b) he is what I should like to call a "follow-traveler."



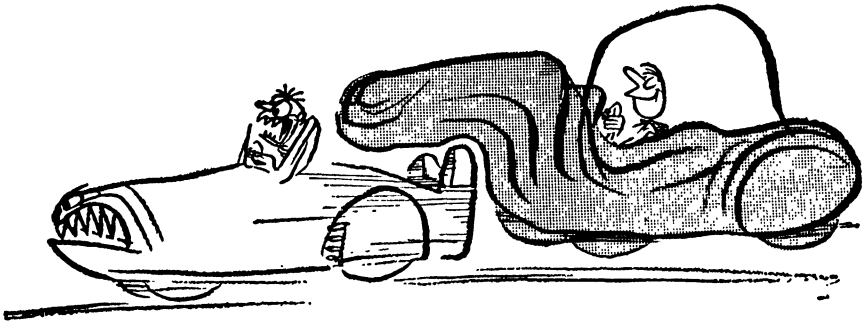
Saving this second reason for a moment, what can you do to help in the first situation? Here is what you don't do: you don't say to yourself, "There's a poor chap behind who's in a hurry and who can't get by, so the best thing for me to do is to speed up a little so that even if he can't pass he can, perhaps, go as fast as he wants to." If you speed up, that just makes it all the harder for him to pass, and even if conditions ahead improve somewhat, at this new, higher speed, he may be even more seriously stuck behind you. The best thing to do is to slow down (and, if necessary, even pull over onto the shoulder); this may slow him down momentarily, but it's much easier now for him to pass, and if he really wants to he shouldn't be long in doing it. To me, every driver who wants to go faster than I do is a person I

admire (not revile, as some drivers do). I say to myself: well, there's somebody who really wants to get there, and I am going to help him (and, incidentally, get him off my tail, where he is annoying me, and over the hill and away). The general rule is: do whatever is necessary to get him past in the shortest possible time. You won't do it by speeding up.

And now let's take the "follow-traveler." Even as I consider him I begin to feel my blood pressure going up. I mean to give him his due importance.

The most dangerous average driver on the road today is the one you will find behind the wheel of the *second* car in a line.

Think this over. To be second, he must have been going faster than the car (or truck) now leading the line, and his duty was to pass as soon as he could. Perhaps for a few moments, or even for a few minutes, he couldn't pass. But that length of time is seldom long enough for two or five or twenty cars to come up behind him, and be stuck there. Most "second-car" drivers



don't pass, not because they can't, but because they have some completely irrational habit of following. If I have seen it once, I have seen it ten thousand times. I have, a thousand times, been driving along an average road when someone came up behind me, obviously going faster than I was, then slowed down, just behind me, and "decided" to follow. I say "decided," but I don't think he decided anything; I don't think he thought at all. Sometimes I believe he is incapable of thought. He is just a "follow-traveler"; he wants someone else to do his thinking for him.

You know as well as I do the result of this irrational following: much of our traffic on the open road moves not car by car, but in bunches and often in long lines. (I am not talking about weekend traffic jams on inadequate, over-traveled highways where there is no choice but to follow as there is no open space ahead.) A line is a group of drivers who were and are anxious to make better time than the cars in the lead. They may restrain themselves for a while, but you know what happens to them after ten minutes of it, or half

an hour. They get, to put it mildly, impatient. Then at one swoop, they start to pass the six or eight or ten closely spaced cars ahead of them. Theoretically, with everything just right, it is no more difficult to pass a hundred cars in a bunch than to pass one. Practically, since nothing is ever completely right, the difficulty and danger of passing more than one car at a time goes up, I believe, in some sort of geometric ratio. Two cars are surely four times as hard as one, and on the average two-lane highway, six or eight cars with no space between them are, unless you have a long view ahead, an almost impossible obstacle.

Something must be done about the mental attitude that makes some drivers followers. Most of the time they are able to pass, as you can see when the third car and then the fourth car and so on successively whiz by. It's not the slow-poke at the head that's to blame; it's the second-car driver, that despicable character, the congenital follower, whom I regard as the most dangerous man on the road (dead-drunks and blind people, of course, excluded).

I could write a good deal more about the treatment of the car behind, but let me just mention a few other things to take into account. First, remember that you have *complete control* over the car behind. You can keep it from passing (by just moving over to the left, or by otherwise scaring the driver); you can force it to pass, and get rid of it; or you can very easily run it off the road by swerving out at just the right moment. The way you behave is fully as important as the way he behaves, if not more important. Second, some progress is being made in the mechanics of the car itself. Improved rear-vision mirrors are advertised and praised, and many new cars have more window space in the critical direction. Finally, some state authorities are beginning to recognize that you ought to know what is behind you. In one state, not many years ago, directions for passing only warned you to be sure of the road ahead. In their recent rules, you are told that to pass, you must first be sure that no one is about to pass you; this implies and requires an awareness that is positively revolutionary, though good drivers have followed this rule for as long as cars have been able to go faster than fifteen miles an hour. So much for the cars behind you.

III

The essential truth about the car ahead is that you can't control it. If it is coming toward you, and is weaving or keeping in the middle of the road, or passing in an impossible spot, the only thing you can do is to protect yourself. You can slow down and pull out to the right, if necessary into the ditch, or you can (if you're lucky) run up a side road. There is not much point in blowing your horn, as so many people do to show their anger, unless you would burst if you didn't; taking a hand off the wheel in such a tight situation may mean less good control over your own car. One salient

fact about the car coming toward you is that it seldom gives you much time to do anything, and most of what you do is not your choice—it's forced upon you.

The situation with the car you are about to overtake is a little different (I trust that you haven't even considered the possibility of following him). First, you must choose your own time and place for passing. If your man ahead is helpful, there won't be any trouble. But if you can't see ahead, don't let him make up your mind for you, even if he is a co-operative truck driver, who waves that all is clear. Second, as you approach him, you have time enough to get some idea of how he is driving—whether he obviously sees you and pulls over slightly to the right, whether he is going fairly fast or is just poking along, or whether he is unaware of you and is in the middle of the road. You can't control him except by getting up close and trying to blow him off the road with your horn, a disagreeable process that I find necessary only a few times a year.

The main thing that you can do is to size up the probabilities ahead. If he is driving very slowly, he is particularly dangerous, for then he is able to turn or stop suddenly. (If he is going fifty miles an hour and makes a sudden left turn he is going to turn over; not many people do that, what with the high price of automobiles.) Another thing is to see if there are any places into which he could possibly make a left turn—a side road or driveway. You can always watch his front wheels (as you come up alongside), for you can see his wheels turn before the car as a whole moves any appreciable amount. And as you come up abreast, if he makes any not-too-sudden swerve or turn, you can often brake fast enough so that he doesn't run you off the road. The chances are that when you brake, he will not, and that he will pass ahead of you. (If he is determined to cause an accident, and is clever about it, there is nothing you can do.)

My ideal way of getting rid of a car I want to pass is to keep my speed, watch the road ahead, but at the same time watch the driver and how he is driving, and get past him quickly. How neatly this works depends, of course, on the kind of road you are traveling, and the amount of oncoming traffic. I think I am a good driver because I almost never get hung up in average traffic. Time after time, I have come over a hill, or around a curve, and my passengers, looking ahead at a line of cars and trucks, have groaned, and more or less said, "Well, that settles it," or they have said, "It's only ten miles to——, so why push." In the majority of cases I can get by without any shrieks or deep-breathing or grabbing of the upholstery, and without taking several layers off my tires; usually it requires only a minute or two. I think that apart from any skill that I may have, one very important thing is my attitude; I never dream of just resigning myself to driving at the tail end of, or in, a bunch of cars, whereas most of that bunch are just following each other without a thought in their heads.

There are two other familiar types that you cannot control. One is the admirable fellow who sticks firmly to the inner lane on a fourlane highway and won't move over. Do you pass him on the right? I do, but I don't like it, or him. I try to be prepared for the worst, for if he swerves over to the right and runs into me, I am not only unhappy but (in a number of states) legally in the wrong. And then there's that really despicable person who, with plenty of room on the shoulder, stops or parks with a piece of his car on the road. I saw a rather hideous five-car smashup, on a bright Sunday morning in Oregon, as a result of a ten-inch carelessness in parking. The gentleman in question stared at the piled-up cars with what I was sure was complete astonishment and innocence.

IV

So much for my major points; I think that they are all essential to good driving. But there are a number of minor (but sometimes critical) items that I would like to mention briefly.

How do you know when it is safe to pass a car parked near the edge of the road, apparently ready to pull out? I have had passengers start to push on the floor-boards when I went sailing by, until they, too, noticed that there was no driver in the car, or that one or more of the doors were open.

What about turn signals? Sure, if they are needed. But, as many lawmakers now recognize, it's a great deal more important to put your car in the proper position to turn, than, for example, to get in the right lane and then signal that you are going left. If there is nobody behind you, there is not the slightest reason for signaling. Have you ever noticed, when walking, how many drivers coming up to a left turn signal frantically although there is no one but you, on the sidewalk, to pay any attention to them? Those drivers don't know what's behind them, and I believe that it is not just the law that makes them signal so carefully. I think it's ignorance.

How about yielding the right of way, and being polite? My rule: don't ever do either. The road is no drawing room. Rules have been formulated so that one car in a certain position, or on a certain road, has precedence over another. Don't ever give up your right, for although you and another driver may carry on in a pleasant Alphonse-and-Gaston manner, a third car coming along may well ram into one of you, or be in a serious accident trying to get around you. But don't take this advice to mean that you lose all common sense; if a large truck comes out of a side road, taking your right-of-way, your resentment should be tempered with wisdom. I have never yet tangled with anything much larger than I was; something my own size usually gives me the right of way, when it belongs to me.

What's the best thing to do about the appalling headlight problem in night driving? I almost never drive any distance at night. If you can't avoid it, I have only one suggestion to offer: when the oncoming car is some dis-

tance away, use his headlights to size up the part of the road that you will come to in a moment, while blinded. The best thing to do is to stay at home and go to bed.

Aren't there different rules and driving habits in different states? Indeed there are. I would like to cite a few that may be familiar or unfamiliar to you. For one: in New York City (particularly) the pedestrian is something you hunt down and try to exterminate; only the really agile ones survive. (Of course, there are several million agile ones.) But in the Northwest, especially in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, when a pedestrian starts across a walkway all traffic immediately comes to a (sometimes grinding) stop. An Easterner, I came closer to more rear-end collisions there than in all the rest of my driving career, and I thought, perhaps unjustly, that there was a high percentage of bent bumpers out that way. As for California or Texas (once more, particularly): people really drive out there, whatever the speed limit (if any) may be. If you drive along at only fifty or fifty-five everybody whizzes by you, but the beauty of it is that they don't slow down, or blow their horns—they just shoot by and disappear. I thought it was wonderful. On the other hand, have you ever driven in New England? I have read recently that New England has the lowest rate of fatalities in the country, and I know why. No one drives fast enough to hurt himself or anybody else, and it's pretty clear why this is so: the driving is so poor that to crawl is the only way to survive. For example, when I was last there a few years ago, the four-lane Boston-Worcester turnpike was exactly like any fairly good two-lane road. Everybody stayed either in the middle or in the left lane because cars were constantly darting out of the side roads without the least sign of stopping or slowing down. In Pennsylvania drivers really stop for "stop" signs; in New Jersey the signs merely seem to encourage them to disregard the through traffic entirely.

Are there any "worst" and "best" categories of drivers other than the species I have already mentioned? The worst group, without any competition, are the private chauffeurs. Maybe it is because the comparatively few surviving ones are getting along in years. Another group in the same category are the taxi-drivers. They may be fine at denting fenders and blowing horns in the cities, but put them on the open road and their hard veneer peels right off, leaving them in a really pitiable state. In the "best" group we have, of course, the truck and bus drivers. I did not mean to deal with these professionals; they are in a different class, but I will say that I make an extra effort never to have a truck or bus held up behind me.

How often should you use your horn? My first impulse is to say never, and I almost stick to it. If it is your intention to annoy or confuse other drivers, don't hesitate. Certainly, there are occasions for tooting—heedless

children playing in the road, someone driving in the middle of the road who doesn't know you are behind—but most horn blowing takes the place of looking and thinking.

How long should you drive without stopping, and should you stop often for coffee? If you are on a tough schedule of day-long driving, change from your usual three-meals-a-day routine to six or more bites or snacks, one every couple of hours or so. I have nothing at all against coffee, or Coca-Cola, but you will find yourself stronger if you take some sort of food at short intervals. The stretch and relaxation that go with it play their part.

What about car insurance? This is a big question, and I want to say something about just one aspect. Why can't we have some sort of reward for not getting into accidents? True, I now get 10 per cent off my premium each year for not having caused my company any headaches during the previous twelve months. But that means that I go on paying 90 per cent of the usual policy, year after year. I have driven some twenty-five years without costing the insurance companies a cent, and I think that my record is worthy of more than routine attention. Why not increase the premiums for accident-prone drivers and give a real saving to the others?

Finally, what about the woman driver—is she better or worse than the male? No matter what I say, I am about to antagonize half of the human race, so let me approach the matter obliquely. I have just read a newspaper article which sets out to prove that women drivers are better than men, in that (among other things) their accident rate is lower, and the fatality rate still lower when they do have accidents. I don't think that this compares

them fairly. For example: suppose that we were to contrast the accident and fatality rates for farmers, and for all other male drivers. Needless to say, I haven't done this, but I will bet on the outcome—the farmers' rate in both categories is lower than the other-male average. Whether my guessed sta-

tistics are true or false, would such a comparison prove that farmers are better (or worse) drivers than males in general? To me, it would prove that in the kind of driving they do, they are better (or worse). In my experience, most women do not do the same kind of open-road driving as men; they do not on the average drive so fast, they do not push so hard in tight spots, and they don't make as good time. All right, if you insist, they are safer drivers, but if the only criterion of driving ability is safety, then the best drivers are the ones who never take the car out of the garage. Their accident rate is zero. Just one little cutting remark: did you ever see a woman driver who knew where the right side of her car was? (Thunderous objection: car makers, designing for men, make it impossible for smaller women to see where it is. Reply: we are talking about driving present-day cars, not what cars might be.)

My conclusions may well be gloomy, but there are bright spots here and there in driving. There are a lot of poor drivers on the road, just as there are a lot of poorly educated people in the country. Such a condition seems to perpetuate itself; if we could all start out anew as well-educated, or as good drivers, perhaps we would never fall back to our present low level. But in general education we are making a terrific struggle to improve our lot; in driving I know of almost nothing that is being done, unless it be the new high-school training some of our younger drivers are getting. I don't know the content of this training, but I think that open-road driving would be a little difficult to fit into the high-school curriculum. I know, of course, that there are driving schools and instructors, but their only object is to get you a license, so that for some time you can add to the menaces on the road.

But what's bright about the situation? Two major things occur to me. One is that driving is better than it was. I don't know how it has come about, unless we have just been keeping company with our four-wheeled gadgets for a longer time. On my trip last summer I remember having seen only a few examples of egregiously crazy driving. Ten or fifteen years ago, a trip across the country always brought me into contact (well, maybe not quite contact) with characters who would make me shudder for months afterward.

The other bright spot is that in driving, more than in most of our other activities, we are giving natural selection a better opportunity to weed out the unfit. In our work, in eating or drinking, or in playing canasta, a mistake seldom means that we are eliminated for more than a brief interval. Bad judgment in driving is different. But don't take these remarks too seriously; I know that this is an insufficient and perhaps ineffectual way to improve our driving habits—that is, by killing off the worst offenders. But I at least like to hope that the best drivers come through safe and sound.

READING

What does Dryden accomplish in the first and second subdivisions of the first part? How do these prepare the reader for his essay?

By what two subject matters does Dryden differentiate the second and third parts of his essay?

How does he manage transitions between the miscellaneous observations of the fourth part?

Show specifically how in one sequence he combines practical advice and a general philosophy of driving?

INTERPRETATION

Does Dryden omit elements of driving that you regard as important? Does he underrate safety?

How much did you learn from the driving course that was probably given in your high school? Compare the approach of Dryden with that of your teacher.

Can there be an *art* of driving? Are there similarities between the arts of driving or cooking and those of writing or painting?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Head-On Collision
How to Sail a Boat
The Bicyclist
A Course in Driving
The Arts of Daily Life

ATOMIC ENGINES*

by Ralph E. Lapp

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So many fables have been told about the miraculous feats which atomic power will perform in driving ships, planes, and rockets that one may easily be led to the conclusion that Buck Rogers and his interplanetary space ships are but a stone's throw away. Even without journeying into space the rumors about atomic energy have persuaded many that it will not be long before gasoline filling stations will be obsolete; all one will have to do is to flip a uranium pellet in the gas tank and drive around the world.

A pellet of pure U-235 the size of a small marble has enough energy in it to drive a modern automobile 100,000 miles or four times around the earth. But no scientists have yet discovered any way of getting any power from just one ounce of uranium. A single ounce of silvery-white U-235

* From *The New Force*, by Ralph Eugene Lapp (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), pp. 160–187. Copyright, 1953, by Ralph Eugene Lapp. Reprinted by permission.

has locked up in it the heat of 30,000 gallons of gasoline but the motor for generating atomic power, unlike a gasoline engine which can run with only a cupful of gasoline in the tank, requires a full charge of uranium before it will operate at all. An atomic engine has the peculiarity that it will not start unless its "gas tank" is full to the brim. Furthermore, the atomic engine must have a full supply of its uranium fuel or it will not continue to operate once started.

In the internal combustion engine, such as a gasoline-powered automobile, power is produced by the expansion of hot gases in the piston chamber. These hot gases produced by the ignition of a gasoline-air mixture push against the piston forcing it down and thus turning the drive shaft of the engine. This power is then transmitted to the rear wheels of the car by means of gears. Comparing this power conversion with the atomic engine we note that the power produced is also heat but it cannot be used as in an internal combustion engine. The heat must be removed from the core of the nuclear reactor by means of some coolant which circulates through it; this liquid is heated and may then be passed through what is called a heat exchanger. In the latter steam can be produced and this can be used to drive a turbine which in turn may generate electricity. From this brief description it should be evident that much of atomic power engineering is conventional in scope and pertains to heat exchangers, pumps, turbines, and generators. The core of the nuclear reactor serves as an intense source of heat and this heat once produced must be handled in much the same way as in a coal-fired boiler.

Atomic engines, however, have some important differences as compared with conventional engines. In the first place, the matter of controlling the nuclear reactor and changing its power is not achieved as in a gasoline engine by opening up the carburetor and feeding more gas into the engine. Instead, the heat generated in the reactor core is controlled by moving control rods in and out of the structure. The rods are specially coated so that elements in them act as a wet blanket for the chain reaction, that is, they absorb neutrons in the reactor and determine the rate at which the chain reaction proceeds. Withdrawing a control rod from the reactor increases the power for there is less of the rod inside the pile and consequently few neutrons are robbed from the chain reaction. Pushing the control rod back into the machine serves to decrease the power and when all the way in the control rod completely stops the chain reaction.

Controls for atomic engines have to be made foolproof so that there is no chance for the chain reaction to "run away" and lead to a disaster. The design must be such that there are safety precautions built into the reactor which will prevent the machine from getting out of control. Were the chain reaction to get out of hand the power in the machine would increase quickly, much faster than heat could be taken from the machine, and the

materials inside the reactor would melt and the whole engine would be ruined. No atomic bomb explosion would result but the contents of the reactor core might be melted and spewed out, thus constituting a severe radioactive hazard. Proper design of reactors and installation of adequate controls should make atomic power plants as reliable as any modern steam power plant and there should be no trouble about locating them in metropolitan areas.

Probably the biggest problem which nuclear engineers face in designing atomic engines is the radioactive hazard. Once a nuclear reactor is assembled and started up its core becomes intensely radioactive due to the accumulation of split atoms within the uranium fuel. These fissioned atoms or fission products are very radioactive and some of them persist in emitting penetrating radiation for months and even years. This means that once a nuclear reactor goes into operation and some component within the core fails you can't shut down the plant and send in repair men to replace the defective part. As far as possible all machinery within the core of the machine must be made to function without failure or in the event of trouble means must be provided to replace the part without the human hand touching it. The latter calls for great ingenuity and for what amounts to Rube Goldberg gadgetry.

If you visit the coal-fired steam plant which supplies your electricity you can see the heart of the plant right before your eyes and see coal fed into the flames. If, someday, you are allowed to visit an Atomic Energy Commission site and see a nuclear reactor you will note a very big difference between the two kinds of power plants. The heart of the atomic power plant always has to be kept covered up with a thick shield to protect personnel from the penetrating rays emitted by the materials within the reactor core. Very often this shield consists of seven feet of solid concrete, and it envelops the reactor on all sides. Not only does the heart of the nuclear power plant have to be so shielded but anything which passes through the core, such as the coolant, has to be similarly protected. This means that the circulating pumps and the heat exchanger must also be shielded. It is this massive shield which makes an atomic engine for an automobile out of the question for it would probably run the weight of the atomic motor up to forty tons.

On your visit to your city's steam plant you would notice that the ashes from the burned coal have to be removed and you might wonder if there are any atomic ashes in the case of an atomic engine. The ashes from the fission of uranium are the two atoms into which the single uranium atom splits. We have already noted that they are a great nuisance because of their great radioactivity which persists for a long time so that even if the power plant is shut down the radioactivity lingers. In fact, these radioactive ashes also produce some heat and make it impossible to completely shut down a power

plant very quickly. Like coal ash, the atomic ash must be periodically removed for it constitutes a kind of poison for the chain reaction. Some of the split atoms have a tremendous appetite for neutrons and if left in the reactor very long they would reduce the power output of the machine. To remove atomic ashes from a reactor is much more difficult and costly than shaking some grates and carting off a bucket of clinkers. The split atoms stay right in the fuel rod with the original uranium so that the whole fuel rod must be discharged from the reactor and new ones inserted.

The discharged fuel from an atomic power plant cannot be thrown away because it contains a large proportion of valuable fissionable material. It would be ideal if the fuel could be kept cooking in the reactor until all of the U-235 or plutonium were used up but long before this happens the rod deteriorates under the ceaseless bombardment of nuclear particles inside the reactor. Therefore, the discharged fuel has to be chemically processed to remove the objectionable atomic ashes or poisons and to produce pure fissionable material for use in the reactor. Such chemical processing is time-consuming and costly for it involves intensely radioactive material which must be handled with the utmost caution.

There is a vexing problem present to health authorities in dealing with the atomic ashes and waste radioactive chemical solutions from an atomic power plant and its chemical processing plant. These cannot be dumped into a river or buried in the earth. Were the radioactive wastes emptied into a river they would prove a source of danger to fish and to any human beings who drew their water from the river. Burying the wastes in the earth, even at an isolated spot, runs the risk that they might contaminate the ground water. It must be remembered that for every pound of uranium fissioned there will be almost a pound of fission products produced and if atomic power comes into widespread use the amount of radioactivity will be prodigious. The first step in solving the problem is to concentrate the radioactive solutions so that one has to deal with a small amount of material. Then this can be encased in leakproof containers which can either be buried at sea or buried in a suitable remote area designated as an official radioactive burial ground.

The foregoing should suffice to indicate some of the aspects of producing atomic power in a nuclear engine and to point out the unique problems associated with the latter. We are by now equipped with sufficient technical facts about atomic engines to proceed to discuss the propulsion unit which the Atomic Energy Commission and the Navy Department are collaborating on and which promises to be the world's first mobile A-power plant.

In tracing back through the records I find that the first clearcut recognition of the possibility of using A-power in submarines is contained in a

report to President Roosevelt. Dated November 1, 1939, this report states: "If the chain reaction could be controlled so as to proceed gradually, it might conceivably be used as a continuous source of power in submarines thus avoiding the use of large batteries for underwater power." Although this is the first published record I could find, I know from my work with the Navy that the Naval Research Laboratory had become interested in nuclear power in the spring of 1939 and had undertaken preliminary experiments in the field. Thereafter the Navy was almost completely frozen out of the atomic project so that there was nothing done and no interest was manifest in atomic propulsion until the end of the war.

One might have expected that after V-J Day the Navy would have moved into the atomic power field for it is probably the world's largest consumer of premium fuels. Furthermore, it has constantly searched for new methods of propelling undersea craft, looking for fuels which would not consume precious oxygen. Moreover, the Navy is mindful of the need to do away with the dead weight of fuel storage which is such a limiting factor in marine design. And, of course, it is always on the lookout for new engines to drive ships through the seas at a faster clip. Despite all of these facts, the Navy in 1945 and for at least three years to follow seemed blind to the potentialities of atomic power.

There was one man in the Navy who did see the use for A-power. This was a slightly built but hard-bitten officer named Captain Hyman G. Rickover. Not only did he see his final objective clearly but he proceeded resolutely toward getting A-power for submarines, possessed of all the zeal and energy of a religious convert. I remember first running across Captain Rickover just after the end of the war when he visited our Chicago laboratory. At that time I had not come into contact with many naval officers but I realized immediately that Rickover was something of a phenomenon. He did not hesitate to speak his mind or to criticize anything—the latter characteristic was scarcely one which later endeared him to the Atomic Energy Commission.

Captain Rickover realized that the postwar era found the Navy in a very confused state of mind and that there was no interest in atomic propulsion. So very adroitly he did not immediately attempt to sell the big brass on this new venture; rather he gathered around himself a group of young lieutenants and proceeded to make them sweat it out at Oak Ridge, learning all the wrinkles in this new technology. There were two things which he knew were needed to pry open the door for the Navy, one was technical knowledge about atomic energy and the other was personal acquaintance with atomic scientists. It is not fair to say that Rickover and his cohorts infiltrated into the atomic energy project for this implies both stealth and a kid-gloves approach; it is more appropriate to say that the Navy secured a beachhead in the atomic field.

During the establishment of the beachhead the Atomic Energy Commission took over control of all atomic work. The perilously small naval task force clung to its position, anticipating trouble but none developed. With his landing force secure, Captain Rickover launched the second phase of his campaign. He badgered the Navy to enlist the support of the big guns in Washington, these being the admirals on Constitution Avenue. Before the naval position could be enlarged he realized that strong demands had to be made upon the AEC. In other words the Navy had to apply the pressure to the new agency in order to speed up work on naval reactors. About this time I had moved from Chicago to Washington and was working in the Pentagon as scientific adviser to the War Department and in the course of time I met Captain Rickover frequently.

One meeting I shall never forget. I dropped by Rickover's office across the street from the AEC headquarters. Greeting me with a wry smile the Captain shoved a manila folder across his desk at me. I glanced at the title on the cover "Quarterly Progress Report on Atomic Propulsion" and flipped it open. Inside there was a single blank piece of paper. "We didn't do a damned thing," he said and added some choice comments about the way in which the project was going. The latter didn't surprise me but I was intrigued with the zero-word report which Rickover had prepared for his superior, Vice-Admiral Mills, then chief of the Bureau of Ships. This was but one of the ways in which he persuaded Admiral Mills to do something about getting an atomic submarine for the Navy.

There was another meeting that is equally vivid to me. This one was a much larger and more formal affair—the annual meeting of the Symposium on Undersea Warfare, held in the auditorium of the Interior Department. There were hundreds of officers and civilians present and on the stage were Admiral Mills and an AEC commissioner, Admiral Strauss, who was presiding. Reading a prepared speech, Admiral Mills fired broadside after broadside at the Atomic Energy Commission for its failure to develop atomic power, especially for the Navy. At one point in his speech the towering Admiral turned to Admiral Strauss and interpolated: "Mind you, the Navy isn't griping but we *do* want atomic power." Admiral Strauss must have wandered back to his AEC office in a daze for he had had no advance warning of the attack.

The Navy had used its big guns for the first time and before the reverberations had ceased it was clear that the second phase of Rickover's campaign was accomplished. Any kid gloves which the Captain may have possessed were put aside in favor of a bare-knuckles approach to nuclear propulsion. Even those who held no love for Captain Rickover, and these included many officers, had to admit that he had secured his beachhead and had also succeeded in swinging top strategy around to support a major offensive.

Up to the spring of 1948 Captain Rickover had been practically the only driving force for nuclear propulsion. What he had accomplished in three years of dogged persistence he had done almost singlehanded. After Admiral Mills' slam-bang speech the situation changed. The Committee on Undersea Warfare gave support to the atomic propulsion program and the Joint Chiefs of Staff officially endorsed the military objective in developing the new type submarine. Real pressure was now brought to bear upon the AEC. Lacking a real program of its own and being unable to cope with the pressure, the atomic agency formulated a reactor program.

These facts as I have stated them constitute to the best of my knowledge the real history of how the reactor program in the United States was shaped and how the Navy made its entry into the A-power field. Somewhere within the AEC headquarters there is probably an official history of these same developments and they probably disagree sharply with my account. Too often official histories are tidy and logical accounts of events which are neither logical nor complimentary. The facts as I have presented them are those of an eyewitness not an historian.

The events which followed the establishment of a Reactor Development Division within the AEC are largely a matter of public record. The Atomic Energy Commission announced early in 1949 that it would undertake construction of two nuclear reactors for producing power. At the time one of these reactors was aimed specifically at propelling a submarine and it was called STR for Submarine, Thermal Reactor. The other was designated as a different type of nuclear machine to be built by the General Electric Company to demonstrate the production of power *and* breeding in one machine. A year later, however, the reactor program underwent a shake-up and as Dr. L. R. Hafstad described this: "The planned power-breeder reactor at the Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory has been considered a casualty to the civilian cause in this readjustment." The director of the reactor program went on to say: "If military needs are such that they can help to carry the staggering financial burden of development cost, I, for one, cannot look upon these needs as a threat to the atomic power program." The power-breeder was the only one directed solely to civilian power requirements and with the readjusted AEC program it became another naval reactor known by the code letters SIR, standing for Submarine, Intermediate Reactor.

Both the STR and SIR atomic engines were to be constructed as land-based prototypes of the reactors which would thereafter be installed in submarine hulls. The Westinghouse Corporation was selected to co-operate with the Argonne National Laboratory in making the STR reactor. The Reactor Testing Station at Arco, Idaho, was designated as the site for the construction of this prototype machine. Responsibility for designing and building the SIR atomic engine was assigned to the Knolls Atomic Power

Laboratory of the General Electric Company. Located near Schenectady, New York, the laboratory was also to serve as the site for the construction of the SIR prototype. Thus in the 1949–50 period the AEC and the Navy teamed up with two major American industrial organizations to design and construct two prototypes of an atomic engine for propelling a submarine.

It is expected that the STR engine will be the first to go into a hull so we shall focus attention upon it. Perhaps the reader has been puzzled by the "T" in STR; it stands for "Thermal" which means that the reactor is one in which the neutrons which cause fission are slowed down to what physicists call thermal speed. In general, there are three distinct kinds of reactors. The first is called a *fast* reactor and is so designed that the neutrons which cause fission in the machine are not slowed down once emitted in the fission process. Although we did not specify it at the time the EBR or breeder reactor is of the fast type. A second type of reactor works with neutrons which are partially slowed down and this is called an intermediate reactor. The SIR reactor is an example of this type. When the neutrons have been slowed down as much as possible they are of thermal speed and as we have just pointed out the STR reactor is of such a design. For each of these three types of reactors the design of the internal parts or the core of the machine has to be quite different.

All compact power reactors will use enriched nuclear fuel for if natural uranium were used the reactor core would have to be very large. By using uranium which has, say, 30 or 50 per cent U-235, the central part of the reactor can be made quite compact. If of cylindrical shape the diameter of the core can be from five to ten feet. The essential elements of this heart of the reactor are first a containing vessel to hold the core components; second, the fuel rods of enriched uranium; third, a suitable material such as graphite to slow down the neutrons; fourth, a coolant to remove heat from the core; and finally, control rods to operate the machine. The latter are really the only moving parts in the reactor core; they slide in and out of the core through special passages through the thick shield which envelops the core. Fission in the uranium rods is maintained at a predetermined level in the chain reaction and the fission energy converts directly to heat.

Given a powerful heat source, the conversion of this energy to useful power is an old story to industry and to the Navy. A coolant is pumped through the reactor core and carries the heat away to a heat exchanger, this also being blanketed in a thick shield to protect operating personnel from the radiation given off by the coolant. Then the heat exchanger transfers the heat to a closed cycle steam turbine which in turn is coupled to the drive shafts of the propellers.

President Truman laid the keel of the hull for the first nuclear-powered submarine on June 14, 1952. The General Dynamics Corporation of Groton, Connecticut, formerly known as the Electric Boat Company,

is constructing the submarine which is to be the first of the SSN (submarine, nuclear) type. When it is christened it will bear the illustrious name the U.S.S. *Nautilus*. Originating in Greek mythology the name was used by Jules Verne for his fictional submarine in his novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*. It was also the name selected by Robert Fulton for his experimental undersea craft, by Sir Hubert Wilkins for his arctic submarine, and by the Navy for a sub which accounted for almost 100,000 tons of Japanese shipping during World War II.

Navy men feel optimistic that the U.S.S. *Nautilus* will slide off the Groton ways in 1954 but some of the atomic experts are more conservative.[1] Before the actual atomic engine for the submarine is constructed the prototype engine at the Arco test station must be put through its paces. To bridge the gap between the prototype and the actual engine the Navy has laid down requirements that the dry land model be mocked up within a section of a dummy submarine hull. At the same time it has provided an elaborate wooden dummy model of the mock-up engine to the Groton shipyards. Thus the planners hope that time can be saved in fitting the propulsion unit into the hull of the U.S.S. *Nautilus*. It is estimated that before the first atomic submarine hits the water over $60 million will have been spent on its development.

The financial bottleneck on atomic propulsion was broken shortly after the outbreak of the Korean War. A $2 billion naval construction bill was passed by the Congress and funds were included for the first atomic submarine. So far as the military services were concerned Korea took the lid off the appropriations pot. This fact undoubtedly tied in with the decision to build a second nuclear propulsion unit, that is, the SIR design.

The General Electric intermediate reactor is of more novel design than the one being built by Westinghouse and its designers feel that it will have advantages over the latter. For one thing, it is felt that the type of reactor will permit a more efficient heat transfer system. The Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory has done considerable experimenting with the use of liquid metal alloys as coolants and the combination of a smaller reactor plus a better coolant is thought to possess features of value to submarine propulsion. Atomic engines complete with their thick overcoat of shielding are by no means small engines. In fact, it required some squeezing and cutting corners on design to make the STR reactor small enough to fit in the submarine hull. Even so the U.S.S. *Nautilus* is not a sleek craft but is rather on the chubby side.

At the Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory the prototype of the SIR reactor will be built in a special housing in order to minimize any danger of radioactive contamination to the surrounding area should the unit function improperly. A huge 225-foot diameter steel sphere set on a concrete base

[1] The *Nautilus* was launched in January, 1954.—*The editors.*

is the structure within which the reactor will operate. After the prototype model (which may cost as much as $40 million) has been subjected to rigorous testing an engineering model will be constructed for incorporation in a second atomic submarine, the *Sea Wolf*. The hull for the latter is also being built by the General Dynamics Corporation at Groton, Connecticut. It has been announced that the atomic submarine will be of the 2,500-ton class, and it is estimated that the nuclear power plant will deliver roughly 10,000 horsepower to the propeller shafts.

Ever since 1625 when it is reported that Cornelius Drebbel, a Dutch scientist, tested a crude submarine in the Thames River, men have been looking for a true submersible. By this we mean a submarine which would have unlimited range and would not have to come up for air. Atomic propulsion fills the bill in both respects since fission does not require oxygen and since a single charge of fuel can propel a sub tens of thousands of miles. In addition atomic power promises to supply what submarines prize most highly—sustained high underwater speed. During World War II the battery-driven undersea craft could proceed at emergency speed to avoid enemy destroyers for about one and a half hours. Emergency speed was often far too slow to really get away from the enemy. Often sub skippers played possum and kept their craft motionless on the bottom to avoid detection rather than using this limited power reserve. With atomic propulsion cruising speeds of twenty-five knots should be attainable and with the speed indicator at flank (a notch above the rated "full speed") thirty knots may be reached.

Provided that the crew could endure prolonged submersion an atomic sub should be able to leave an Atlantic port, proceed to, say, Murmansk, and return without surfacing once. The advantage in staying submerged is great for this avoids radar detection. Of course, the sub would have to have its own air supply bottled up for the trip but the Navy does not seem worried about this problem. Within the submarine service officers are reluctant to make predictions about the atomic submarine. They want to have two of them, to match one against the other, to shake them down in trial runs and see just what they can do before going overboard for the new craft.

There appear to be two major uses for the faster, longer-range, atomic submarine. Members of the "silent service" within the Navy Department feel that the new submarine will be a better killer sub to track down and kill enemy submarines. The latter are the chief naval threat to the United States at the present time and for some time to come since Russia has no formidable surface fleet. Its undersea fleet, however, is formidable for it has been augmented by the latest type of German U-boats. Soviet submarines equipped to fire guided missiles at coastal cities might be a major threat to the United States, especially, if the missiles carry atomic warheads. Many officers feel that the best weapon against the threat of a submarine is an-

other killer sub; they feel that the nuclear-powered craft will make the best killer submarine. From an offensive standpoint the Navy feels that an atomic submarine could be used to strike at critical enemy shore positions, especially at enemy submarine pens. To strike at the latter an ideal weapon would be a guided torpedo armed with an atomic warhead. Experience in the last war showed that it was virtually impossible to bomb the Nazi sub pens from above because of the mammoth concrete reinforcements used to protect them. An atomic torpedo slammed home at the submarine base could effectively put the pen out of operation. The Navy also envisages the submarine as a launching platform for guided missiles and it has already demonstrated that it is possible to launch such missiles from the deck of a sub. It may even be possible to launch an "aerial torpedo" while the submarine is below the surface.

Use of the homing underwater torpedo, armed with an A-bomb, against submarines does not seem to be indicated. If one has a good homing torpedo that is guided to the submarine then one has no need for an atomic warhead since ordinary T.N.T. warheads are quite sufficient to kill the craft. On this basis the Navy's requirement for an atomic torpedo would seem to be limited to a relatively small number of offensive applications.

Even before the first atomic propulsion engine for the U.S.S. *Nautilus* had been completed the Navy announced that it was planning to use an atomic power plant in the third of its supercarriers. Two aircraft carriers of the Forrestal class have been approved by the Congress despite bitter Air Force opposition. These ships are to be mammoth floating air bases costing about $200 million each and weighing about 60,000 tons. Normally the 1,000-foot-long supercarriers will carry about 400,000 barrels of oil as their fuel supply and this is a sizable fraction of the total weight of the ship. The battleship *Missouri,* for example displaces 45,000 tons and carries a full fuel load of 8,800 tons of oil to power its multiple boilers the output of which is a maximum of 212,000 shaft horsepower. Although the third of the supercarriers was still not authorized the Navy went ahead with plans to install in it an atomic propulsion system. Experimental work on the huge reactor for the carrier is to be carried out at the Westinghouse Corporation's Bettis plant near Pittsburgh. No details have been made available about this power plant but it must be much more powerful, exceeding that of the U.S.S. *Missouri* and much more than the submarine power plant. The keel of the third supercarrier is not scheduled to be laid until about 1955.

When the supercarrier's atomic power plant is completed it will be similar in design to a reactor for central station power generation. No plans for any reactors of the latter type have yet been announced by the Atomic Energy Commission nor is one expected very soon but there is no technical reason why such a power reactor could not be built and operated

by 1955. In connection with a high-power reactor it should be pointed out that in the long run such reactors will probably be of the breeder type since it appears unjustified, except for very high priority uses, to burn up uranium irrecoverably without attempting to generate new fissionable material in the process.

The Navy was not the only one of the military services to become involved in atomic propulsion. Shortly after the end of the war the Air Force, too, invaded the atomic energy field and it established its N.E.P.A. project—Nuclear Energy, Propulsion, Aircraft. As usual, Air Force publicists began flying atomic aircraft even before it was determined whether or not such a project were technically feasible. No wonder that the layman picking up a newspaper and reading that an atomic airplane would be flying in a year or two, became confused about nuclear-powered flight when at the same time competent scientists scoffed at these claims.

Two incidents stand out in my mind in connection with the N.E.P.A project. The first took place early in 1947 when the project held an information meeting at Oak Ridge. I had been invited as a representative from the War Department General Staff and I was curious to see what was going on in the project. Weird rumors about the work had circulated in the Pentagon. However, nothing quite prepared me for the shock of seeing how the Air Force was approaching the problem of nuclear propulsion. There was not one competent nuclear physicist on the project although the engineers in charge trotted out big-name scientists as endorsing the project. After the meeting I returned to the Pentagon and reported that not only was money being poured down a rathole but that the Air Force was making a ludicrous approach to the problem.

The second incident was even more distressing. At the time I was working in the Research and Development Board, a high-level military agency which was supposed to watch over all research and development and advise the Secretary of Defense on the progress of weapon development. The committee to which I was attached was called upon to consider the N.E.P.A. project and despite Air Force objection it voted that "The N.E.P.A. project as it is presently constituted should be terminated promptly." This was probably the strongest language ever used by an R.D.B. committee but when it was filed with the policy board of the agency it was drastically altered. I know that the Air Force intervened and had the committee verdict changed. This, I found, was not atypical of the newly created arm of the services. Rather than admitting a mistake it preferred to bulldoze ahead and compound its errors. In this case the fundamental error had been the placing of an Air Force contract with the Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation, even before the scientific basis for nuclear propulsion was established.

The direct R.D.B. committee order to kill the N.E.P.A. project was not

meant to kill nuclear propulsion. It was meant to put things in order so that a firm base might be laid for building up a project which might proceed toward the goal of atomic propulsion in an orderly and reasonable fashion. It should be emphasized that early in 1948 when the action was taken no thorough study had been made as to whether nuclear propulsion was feasible for aircraft. All of the technical problems which were inherently complex and hard to solve for stationary atomic power plants became much more difficult for reactors which had to generate higher power and occupy less volume. Making a reactor to propel an aircraft was not a job which the Air Force could solve by simply handing a contract to one of its aircraft manufacturers. Fundamental problems in materials, heat exchange, reactor control, and many other fields had to be licked before one could think of drawing up engineering blueprints.

All the ruckus about killing the N.E.P.A. project, although it did not cause the Fairchild contract to be canceled then, did focus attention on the problem and as a result the Atomic Energy Commission gave serious consideration to it. A special study group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology spent a whole summer evaluating the problem and thereafter filed an analysis called the Lexington Report. While the report straddled the fence on aircraft propulsion it presented some constructive reforms to be inaugurated in the work under way and urged better coordination of the interested agencies in the Military Establishment, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, and the Atomic Energy Commission. In essence the Lexington Report warned that atomic propulsion for aircraft would be a long and difficult goal, that much research needed to be accomplished, and that this work had better be supervised by the AEC.

In November of 1950 the AEC took over the work of the N.E.P.A. project and six months later the Air Force canceled its contract with the Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation. Nice things were said officially when the latter action took place as both the manufacturer and the Air Force tried to save face but privately scientists heaved a sigh of relief. Most of the development work on aircraft reactors was thereupon assigned to the General Electric Company's Lockland, Ohio plant.

All during the first four years of the N.E.P.A project the Atomic Energy Commission had remarkably little to say about the possibility of making a nuclear power plant for an airplane. One can hunt through the myriad press releases, speeches, and reports but there is only oblique or vague reference made to the problem. Its one positive statement came with announcement of the termination of the Fairchild contract and, ironically, this action was generally misinterpreted by the press. Partly due to the vagueness of the AEC and partly due to an Air Force attempt to cover up, the press came out with stories which indicated that a new phase in the

aircraft reactor program had begun and that work was being accelerated. Such was not the case. What was involved was a reorientation of the aircraft propulsion program setting the sights on a longer time scale for the whole project.

No responsible AEC official has yet committed himself on the time scale for completing the first practicable aircraft reactor. Before any nuclear power plant would be used to drive an aircraft, a test-stand prototype has to be built to operate on the ground. Even then it may be necessary to go through a series of evolutions on test-stand models before a working reactor is perfected. Facilities for testing the prototype reactor are being constructed at the Reactor Testing Station in Idaho.

Once it was established that nuclear-powered flight was theoretically possible the Air Force renewed its demands to speed up work on the project by launching parallel drives to build aircraft to fit in with the atomic motors. The Air Force contracted with the Vultee Aircraft Corporation of Ft. Worth to build the air frame for the first atomic bomber. An additional contract was placed with the Pratt & Whitney Division of the United Aircraft Corporation for work on the atomic motor. Parallel development of the air frame was necessary because of the long lead time that occurs between the drawing board and the production line. In the case of the B-36 bomber this interval amounted to eight years. The fact that the airframe design contract was awarded so recently serves as some indicator of the time when the first A-powered plane will be ready to fly.

From what we have said about nuclear reactors for submarine propulsion it should be clear that the aircraft reactor will be a fairly sizable structure. It is doubtful if the shielding for the latter reactor can be cut to less than forty tons. The weight of the reactor core would be considerably less than the shield. In contrast with the over fifty tons of fuel carried by a strategic bomber like the B-36 an atomic bomber would carry an almost negligible weight of enriched uranium. Moreover, this "weightless" fuel would not have to be replenished, as a single charge of nuclear fuel would last for several round-trip missions. One of the biggest problems in making the atomic propulsion engine is that of getting power equal to more than 25,000 horsepower out of a single small reactor. For a small-size reactor the weight of the outer shield will be reduced but unfortunately the temperature inside the reactor must be much greater and this makes the design of the reactor core and its construction much more difficult.

Just when we will have nuclear-powered flight will be decided in the laboratory. If the work is prosecuted vigorously and nature is charitable the first atomic plane may be ready to take to the air within ten years. However, problems yet to be solved may delay the work by several years. I feel that it is only fair that the reader appreciate that there are still "doubting Thomases" among the scientific fraternity as to the pay-off of

atomic propulsion for aircraft. One eminent scientist told me that he did not expect to see atomic planes flying in his lifetime.

Going one step further from the atomic airplane to the atomic rocket is a giant stride. There are no atomic rockets on the AEC drawing boards today. There is even considerable doubt that atomic energy will be the ultimate source of power for long-range rockets. Chemical propellants have been highly developed and while they release less energy per pound than uranium they do not require a heavy and complex engine for their use. It is foolish to say that atomic engines for rockets are an impossibility but clearly such rockets do not fall within the time span of the next ten years.

The Navy and the Air Force are the principal champions of atomic engines for propulsion and one might wonder if the Army would not find some use for atomic power. I have not found any informed Army officers who seriously propose developing atomic engines for propelling any Army vehicles such as heavy tanks. Nor does the Army seem to regard atomic energy as of much use to it except as an explosive. I once proposed that the Army would do well to develop transportable A-power stations for generating heat and power at isolated bases where other fuels are hard to obtain. Nothing ever came of the suggestion but I still feel that small A-power plants would find ready use at arctic bases.

READING

Show how Lapp uses the internal combustion engine in the first four paragraphs to explain the atomic engine. What other comparison does he use almost immediately following this one?

After the introductory pages, what main subjects does Lapp consider? With one or more of them, trace his means of development.

How much of Lapp's material is factual and narrative? How much is opinion? How well does he blend these elements?

INTERPRETATION

With use of your answers to preceding questions, comment on the success of Lapp's essay as an explanation for the layman of highly technical material.

Do you regard Lapp as being unduly critical of the Atomic Energy Commission and of the armed forces? Do you regard their inadequacies as indicating unusual stupidities or normal responses to new situations?

What changes, if any, will widespread use of atomic power make in daily living? Do essays in the section on business provide possible clues to some of the problems and opportunities?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Installing a Thermostat
How to Run a Sewing Machine
Servomechanisms
Industrial Frontiers

CROSSING THE LAST FRONTIER*

by Wernher von Braun

Wernher von Braun (1912–) is technical director of the Army Ordnance Guided Missiles Development Group. Born in Germany and serving in the government rocket program there, he was brought to this country by the U. S. government in 1945, and took out his first citizenship papers in 1950.

1

Within the next 10 or 15 years, the earth will have a new companion in the skies, a man-made satellite that could be either the greatest force for peace ever devised, or one of the most terrible weapons of war—depending on who makes and controls it. Inhabited by humans, and visible from the ground as a fast-moving star, it will sweep around the earth at an incredible rate of speed in that dark void beyond the atmosphere which is known as "space."

In the opinion of many top experts, this artificial moon—which will be carried into space, piece by piece, by rocket ships—will travel along a celestial route 1,075 miles above the earth, completing a trip around the globe every two hours. Nature will provide the motive power; a neat balance between its speed and the earth's gravitational pull will keep it on course (just as the moon is fixed in its orbit by the same two factors). The speed at which the 250-foot-wide, "wheel"-shaped satellite will move will be an almost unbelievable 4.4 miles per second, or 15,840 miles per hour—20 times the speed of sound. However, this terrific velocity will not be apparent to its occupants. To them, the space station will appear to be a perfectly steady platform.

From this platform, a trip to the moon itself will be just a step, as scientists reckon distance in space.

The choice of the so-called "two-hour" orbit—in preference to a faster one, closer to the earth, or a slower one like the 29-day orbit of the moon—has one major advantage: although far enough up to avoid the hazards of the earth's atmosphere, it is close enough to afford a superb observation post.

Technicians in this space station—using specially designed, powerful telescopes attached to large optical screens, radarscopes and cameras—will keep under constant inspection every ocean, continent, country and city. Even small towns will be clearly visible through optical instruments that will give the watchers in space the same vantage point enjoyed by a man in an observation plane only 5,000 feet off the ground.

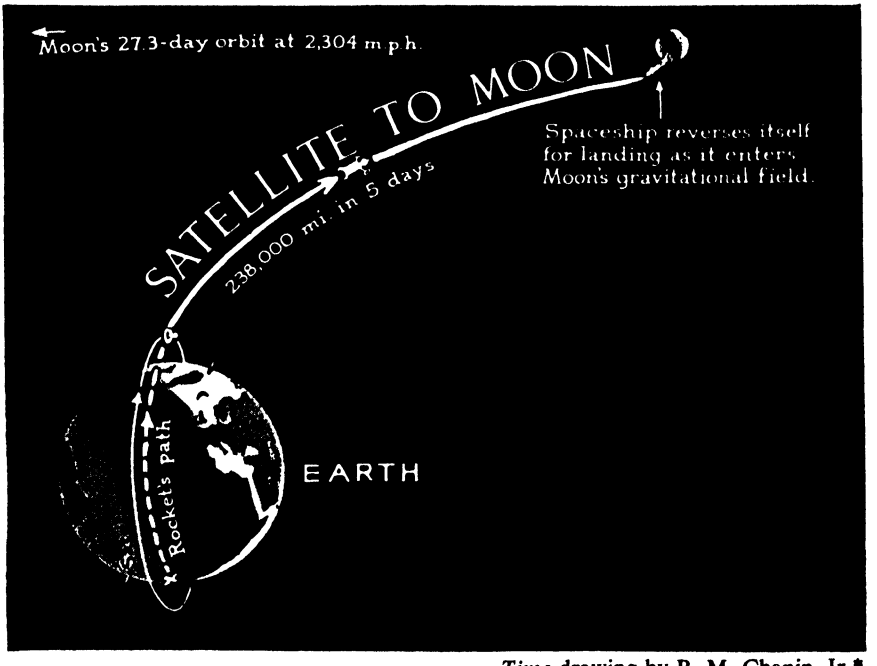
Nothing will go unobserved. Within each two-hour period, as the

* From *Collier's*, CXXIX (March 22, 1952), 25–29, 72, 74. Copyright, 1952, by the Crowell-Collier Publishing Company.

earth revolves inside the satellite's orbit, one twelfth of the globe's territory will pass into the view of the space station's occupants; within each 24-hour period, the entire surface of the earth will have been visible.

Over North America, for example, the space station might pass over the East Coast at, say 10:00 A.M., and, after having completed a full revolution around the earth, would—because the earth itself has turned meanwhile—pass over the West Coast two hours later. In the course of that one revolution it would have been north as far as Nome, Alaska, and south almost to Little America on the Antarctic Continent. At 10:00 A.M. the next day, it would appear once again over the East Coast.

Despite the vast territory thus covered, selected spots on the earth could receive pinpoint examination. For example, troop maneuvers, planes being readied on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier, or bombers forming into groups over an airfield will be clearly discernible. Because of the telescopic eyes and cameras of the space station, it will be almost impossible for any nation to hide warlike preparations for any length of time.



Time drawing by R. M. Chapin, Jr.*

2

These things we know from high-altitude photographs and astronomical studies: to the naked eye, the earth, more than 1,000 miles below,

* From *Time*, Dec. 8, 1952. Copyright, 1952, by Time, Inc. Courtesy of *Time Magazine*.

will appear as a gigantic, glowing globe. It will be an awe-inspiring sight. On the earth's "day" side, the space station's crew will see glaring white patches of overcast reflecting the light of the sun. The continents will stand out in shades of gray and brown bordering the brilliant blue of the seas. North America will look like a great patchwork of brown, gray and green reaching all the way to the snow-covered Rockies. And one polar cap—whichever happens to be enjoying summer at the time—will show as a blinding white, too brilliant to look at with the naked eye.

On the earth's "night" side, the world's cities will be clearly visible as twinkling points of light. Surrounded by the hazy aura of its atmosphere —that great ocean of air in which we live—the earth will be framed by the absolute black of space.

Development of the space station is as inevitable as the rising of the sun; man has already poked his nose into space and he is not likely to pull it back.

On the 14th of September, 1944, a German V-2 rocket, launched from a small island in the Baltic, soared to a peak altitude of 109 miles. Two years later, on December 17, 1946, another V-2, fired at the Army Ordnance's White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico, reached a height of 114 miles—more than five times the highest altitude ever attained by a meteorological sounding ballon. And on the 24th of February, 1949, a "two-stage rocket" (a small rocket named the "WAC Corporal," fired from the nose of a V-2 acting as carrier or "first stage") soared up to a height of 250 miles—roughly the distance between New York and Washington, but straight up!

These projectiles utilize the same principle of propulsion as the jet airplane. It is based on Isaac Newton's third law of motion, which can be stated this way: for every action there must be a reaction of equal force, but in the opposite direction. A good example is the firing of a bullet from a rifle. When you pull the trigger and the bullet speeds out of the barrel, there is a recoil which slams the rifle butt back against your shoulder. If the rifle were lighter and the explosion of the cartridge more powerful, the gun might go flying over your shoulder for a considerable distance.

This is the way a rocket works. The body of the rocket is like the rifle barrel; the gases ejected from its tail are like the bullet. And the power of a rocket is measured not in horsepower, but in pounds or tons of recoil—called "thrust." Because it depends on the recoil principle, this method of propulsion does not require air.

There is nothing mysterious about making use of this principle as the first step toward making our space station a reality. On the basis of present engineering knowledge, only a determined effort and the money to back it up are required. And if we don't do it, another nation—possibly less peace-minded—will. If we were to begin it immediately, and could keep

going at top speed, the whole program would take about 10 years. The estimated cost would be $4,000,000,000—about twice the cost of developing the atomic bomb, but less than one quarter the price of military materials ordered by the Defense Department during the last half of 1951.

Our first need would be a huge rocket capable of carrying a crew and some 30 or 40 tons of cargo into the "two-hour" orbit. This can be built. To understand how, we again use the modern gun as an example.

A shell swiftly attains a certain speed within the gun barrel, then merely coasts through a curved path toward its target. A long-range rocket also acquires its initial speed during a comparatively short time, then is carried by momentum.

For example, the V-2 rocket in a 200-mile flight is under power for only 65 seconds, during which it travels 20 miles. At the end of this 65-second period of propulsion it reaches a cut-off speed of 3,600 miles per hour; it coasts the remaining 180 miles. Logically, therefore, if we want to step up the range of a rocket, we must increase its speed during the period of powered flight. If we could step up its cut-off speed to 8,280 miles per hour, it would travel 1,000 miles.

To make a shell hit its target, the gun barrel has to be elevated and pointed in the proper direction. If the barrel were pointed straight up into the sky, the shell would climb to a certain altitude and then simply fall back, landing quite close to the gun. Exactly the same thing happens when a rocket is fired vertically. But to make the rocket reach a distant target after its vertical take-off, it must be tilted after it reaches a certain height above the ground. In rockets capable of carrying a crew and cargo, the tilting would be done by swivel-mounted rocket motors, which, by blasting sideways, would cause the rocket to veer.

3

Employing this method, at a cut-off speed of 17,460 miles per hour, a rocket would coast halfway around the globe before striking ground. And by boosting to just a little higher cut-off speed—4.86 miles per second or 17,500 miles per hour—its coasting path, after the power had been cut off, would match the curvature of the earth. The rocket would actually be "falling around the earth," because its speed and the earth's gravitational pull would balance exactly.

It would never fall back to the ground, for it would now be an artificial satellite, circling according to the same laws that govern the moon's path about the earth.

Making it do this would require delicate timing—but when you think of the split-second predictions of the eclipses, you will grant that there can hardly be any branch of natural science more accurate than the one dealing with the motion of heavenly bodies.

Will it be possible to attain this fantastic speed of 17,500 miles per hour necessary to reach our chosen two-hour orbit? This is almost five times as fast as the V-2. Of course, we can replace the V-2's alcohol and liquid oxygen by more powerful propellants, and even, by improving the design, reduce the rocket's dead weight and thereby boost the speed by some 40 or 50 per cent; but we would still have a long way to go.

The WAC Corporal, starting from the nose of a V-2 and climbing to 250 miles, has shown us what we must do if we want to step up drastically the speed of a rocket. The WAC started its own rocket motor the moment the V-2 carrying it had reached its maximum speed. It thereby added its own speed to that already achieved by the first stage. As mentioned earlier, such a piggyback arrangement is called a "two-stage rocket"; and by putting a two-stage rocket on another, still larger, booster, we get a three-stage rocket. A three-stage rocket, then, could treble the speed attainable by one rocket stage alone (which would give it enough speed to become a satellite).

In fact, it could do even better. The three-stage rocket may be considered as a rocket with three sets of motors; after the first set has given its utmost, and has expired, it is jettisoned—and so is the second set, in its turn. The third stage, or nose, of the rocket continues on its way, relieved of all that excess weight.

4

Besides the loss of the first two stages, other factors make the rocket's journey easier the higher it goes. First, the atmosphere is dense, and tends to hinder the passage of the rocket; once past it, the going is faster. Second, the rocket motors operate more efficiently in the rarefied upper layers of the atmosphere. Third, after passing through the densest portion of the atmosphere, the rocket no longer need climb vertically.

Imagine the size of this huge three-stage rocket ship: it stands 265 feet tall, approximately the height of a 24-story office building. Its base measures 65 feet in diameter. And the over-all weight of this monster rocket ship is 14,000,000 pounds, or 7,000 tons—about the same weight as a light destroyer.

Its three huge power plants are driven by a combination of nitric acid and hydrazine, the latter being a liquid compound of nitrogen and hydrogen, somewhat resembling its better-known cousin, ammonia. These propellants are fed into the rocket motors by means of turbopumps.

Fifty-one rocket motors, pushing with a combined thrust of 14,000 tons, power the first stage (tail section). These motors consume a total of 5,250 tons of propellants in the incredibly short time of 84 seconds. Thus, in less than a minute and a half, the rocket loses 75 per cent of its total original weight!

The second stage (middle section), mounted on top of the first, has 34 rocket motors with a total thrust of 1,750 tons, and burns 770 tons of propellants. It operates for only 124 seconds.

The third and final stage (nose section)—carrying the crew, equipment and pay load—has five rocket motors with a combined thrust of 220 tons. This "body" or cabin stage of the rocket ship carries 90 tons of propellants, including ample reserves for the return trip to earth. In addition, it is capable of carrying a cargo or pay load of about 36 tons into our two-hour orbit 1,075 miles above sea level. (Also, in expectation of the return trip, the nose section will have wings something like an airplane's. They will be used only during the descent, after re-entering the earth's atmosphere.)

Years before the actual take-off, smaller rocket ships, called instrument carriers, will have been sent up to the two-hour orbit. They will circle there, sending back information by the same electronic method already in use with current rockets. Based on the data thus obtained, scientists, astronomers, and engineers, along with experts from the armed forces, will plan the complete development of the huge cargo-carrying rocket ship.

The choice of the take-off site poses another problem. Because of the vast amount of auxiliary equipment—such as fuel storage tanks and machine shops, and other items like radio, radar, astronomical and meteorological stations—an extensive area is required. Furthermore, it is essential, for reasons which will be explained later, that the rocket ship fly over the ocean during the early part of the flight. The tiny U.S. possession known as Johnston Island, in the Pacific, or the Air Force Proving Ground at Cocoa, Florida, are presently considered by the experts to be suitable sites.

At the launching area, the heavy rocket ship is assembled on a great platform. Then the platform is wheeled into place over a tunnel-like "jet deflector" which drains off the fiery gases of the first stage's rocket motors. Finally, with a mighty roar which is heard many miles away, the rocket ship slowly takes off—so slowly, in fact, that in the first second it travels less than 15 feet. Gradually, however, it begins to pick up speed, and 20 seconds later it has disappeared into the clouds.

Because of the terrific acceleration which will be experienced one minute later, the crew—located, of course, in the nose—will be lying flat in "contour" chairs at take-off, facing up. Throughout the whole of its flight to the two-hour orbit, the rocket is under the control of an automatic gyropilot. The timing of its flight and the various maneuvers which take place have to be so precise that only a machine can be trusted to do the job.

After a short interval, the automatic pilot tilts the rocket into a shallow path. By 84 seconds after take-off, when the fuels of the first stage (tail section) are nearly exhausted, the rocket ship is climbing at a gentle angle of 20.5 degrees.

When it reaches an altitude of 24.9 miles it will have a speed of 1.46 miles per second, or 5,256 miles per hour. To enable the upper stages to break away from the tail or first stage, the tail's power has to be throttled down to almost zero. The motors of the second stage now begin to operate, and the connection between the now-useless first stage and the rest of the rocket ship is severed. The tail section drops behind, while the two upper stages of the rocket ship forge ahead.

After the separation, a ring-shaped ribbon parachute, made of fine steel wire mesh, is automatically released by the first stage. This chute has a diameter of 217 feet and gradually it slows down the tail section. But under its own momentum, this empty hull continues to climb, reaching a height of 40 miles before slowly descending. It is because the tail section could be irreparably damaged if it struck solid ground (and might be dangerous, besides) that the initial part of the trip must be over the sea. After the first stage lands in the water, it is collected and brought back to the launching site.

The same procedure is repeated 124 seconds later. The second stage (middle section) is dropped into the ocean. The rocket ship by this time has attained an altitude of 40 miles and is 332 miles from the take-off site. It also has reached a tremendous speed—14,364 miles per hour.

Now the third and last stage—the nose section or cabin-equipped space ship proper—proceeds under the power of its own rocket motors. Just 84 seconds after the dropping of the second stage, the rocket ship, now moving at 18,468 miles per hour, reaches a height of 63.3 miles above the earth.

At this point we must recall the comparison between the rocket and the coasting rifle shell to understand what occurs. The moment the rocket reaches a speed of 18,468 miles per hour, at an altitude of 63.3 miles, the motors are cut off, even though the fuel supply is by no means exhausted. The rocket ship continues on an unpowered trajectory until it reaches 1,075 miles above the earth. This is the high point, or "apogee"; in this case it is exactly halfway around the globe from the cut-off place. The rocket ship is now in the two-hour orbit where we intend to build the space station.

5

Just one more maneuver has to be performed, however. In coasting up from 63.3 miles to 1,075 miles, the rocket ship has been slowed by the earth's gravitational pull to 14,770 miles per hour. This is not sufficient to keep the ship in our chosen orbit. If we do not increase the speed, the craft will swing back halfway around the earth to the 63.3-mile altitude. Then it would continue on past the earth until, as it curves around to the other side

of the globe, it would be back at the same apogee, at the 1,075-mile altitude.

The rocket ship would already be a satellite and behave like a second moon in the heavens, swinging on its elliptical path over and over for a long time. One might well ask: Why not be satisfied with this? The reason is that part of this particular orbit is in the atmosphere at only 63.3 miles. And while the air resistance there is very low, in time it would cause the rocket ship to fall back to earth.

Our chosen two-hour orbit is one which, at *all* points, is exactly 1,075 miles above the earth. The last maneuver, which stabilizes the rocket ship in this orbit, is accomplished by turning on the rocket motors for about 15 seconds. The velocity is thus increased by 1,030 miles per hour, bringing the total speed to 15,800 miles per hour. This is the speed necessary for remaining in the orbit permanently. We have reached our goal.

An extraordinary fact about the flight from the earth is this: it has taken only 56 minutes, during which the rocket ship was powered for only five minutes.

From our vantage point, 1,075 miles up, the earth, to the rocket ship's crew, appears to be rotating once every two hours. This apparent fast spin of the globe is the only indication of the tremendous speed at which the rocket ship is moving. The earth, of course, still requires a full 24 hours to complete one revolution on its axis, but the rocket ship is making 12 revolutions around the earth during the time the earth makes one.

We now begin to unload the 36 tons of cargo which we have carried up with us. But how and where shall we unload the material? There is nothing but the blackness of empty space all around us.

We simply dump it out of the ship. For the cargo, too, has become a satellite! So have the crew members. Wearing grotesque-looking pressurized suits and carrying oxygen for breathing, they can now leave the rocket ship and float about unsupported.

Just as a man on the ground is not conscious of the fact that he is moving with the earth around the sun at the rate of 66,600 miles per hour, so the men in the space ship are not aware of the fantastic speed with which they are going around the earth. Unlike men on the ground, however, the men in space do not experience any gravitational pull. If one of them, while working, should drift off into space, it will be far less serious than slipping off a scaffold. Drifting off merely means that the man has acquired a very slight speed in an unforeseen direction.

He can stop himself in the same manner in which any speed is increased or stopped in space—by reaction. He might do this, theoretically, by firing a revolver in the direction of his inadvertent movement. But in actual practice the suit will be equipped with a small rocket motor. He could also

propel himself by squirting some compressed oxygen from a tank on his back. It is highly probable, however, that each crew member will have a safety line securing him to the rocket as he works. The tools he uses will also be secured to him by lines; otherwise they might float away into space.

6

The spacemen—for that is what the crew members now are—will begin sorting the equipment brought up. Floating in strange positions among structural units and machinery, their work will proceed in absolute silence, for there is no air to carry sound. Only when two people are working on the same piece of material, both actually touching it, will one be able to hear the noises made by another, because sound is conducted by most materials. They will, however, be able to converse with built-in "walkie-talkie" radio equipment. The cargo moves easily; there is no weight, and no friction. To push it, our crew member need only turn on his rocket motor (if he shoved a heavy piece of equipment without rocket power, he might fly backward!)

Obviously the pay load of our rocket ship—though equivalent to that of two huge Super Constellations—will not be sufficient to begin construction of the huge, three-decked, 250-foot-wide space station. Many more loads will be required. Other rocket ships, all timed to arrive at the same point in a continuous procession as the work progresses, will carry up the remainer of the prefabricated satellite. This will be an expensive proposition. Each rocket trip will cost more than half a million dollars *for propellants alone*. Thus, weight and shipping space limitations will greatly affect the specifications of a space station.

In at least one design, the station consists of 20 sections made of flexible nylon-and-plastic fabric. Each of these sections is an independent unit which later, after assembly into a closed ring, will provide compartmentation similar to that found in submarines. To save shipping space, these sections will be carried to the orbit in a collapsed condition. After the "wheel" has been put together and sealed, it will then be inflated like an automobile tire to slightly less than normal atmospheric pressure. This pressure will not only provide a breathable atmosphere within the ring but will give the whole structure its necessary rigidity. The atmosphere will, of course, have to be renewed as the men inside exhaust it.

On solid earth, most of our daily activities are conditioned by gravity. We put something on a table and it stays there, because the earth attracts it, pulling it against the table. When we pour a glass of milk, gravity draws it out of the bottle and we catch the falling liquid in a glass. In space, however, everything is weightless. And this includes man.

This odd condition in no way spells danger, at least for a limited period of time. We experience weightlessness for short periods when we

jump from a diving board into a pool. To be sure, there are some medical men who are concerned at the prospect of permanent weightlessness—not because of any known danger, but because of the unknown possibilities. Most experts discount these nameless fears.

However, there can be no doubt that permanent weightlessness might often prove inconvenient. What we require, therefore, is a "synthetic" gravity within the space station. And we can produce centrifugal force—which acts as a substitute for gravity—by making the "wheel" slowly spin about its hub (a part of which can be made stationary).

To the space station proper, we attach a tiny rocket motor which can produce enough power to rotate the satellite. Since there is no resistance which would slow the "wheel" down, the rocket motor does not have to function continuously. It will operate only long enough to give the desired rotation. Then it is shut off.

Now, how fast would we like our station to spin? That depends on how much "synthetic gravity" we want. If our 250-foot ring performed one full revolution every 12.3 seconds, we would get a synthetic gravity equal to that which we normally experience on the ground. This is known as "one gravity" or, abbreviated, "1 g." For a number of reasons, it may be advantageous not to produce one full "g." Consequently, the ring can spin more slowly; for example, it might make one full revolution every 22 seconds, which would result in a "synthetic gravity" of about one third of normal surface gravity.

The centrifugal force created by the slow spin of the space station forces everything out from the hub. No matter where the crew members sit, stand or walk inside, their heads will always point toward the hub. In other words, the inside wall of the "wheel's" outer rim serves as the floor.

7

How about the temperature within the space station? Maybe you, too, have heard the old fairy tale that outer space is extremely cold—absolute zero. It's cold, all right, but not that cold—and not in the satellite. The ironical fact is that the engineering problem in this respect will be to keep the space station comfortably cool, rather than to heat it up. In outer space, the temperature of any structure depends entirely on its absorption and dissipation of the sun's rays. The space station happens to be in the unfortunate position of receiving not only direct heat from the sun but also reflected heat from the earth.

If we paint the space station white, it will then absorb a minimum of solar heat. Being surrounded by a perfect vacuum, it will be, except for its shape, a sort of thermos bottle, which keeps hot what is hot, and cold what is cold.

In addition, we can scatter over the surface of the space station a

number of black patches which, in turn, can be covered by shutters closely resembling white Venetian blinds. When these blinds are open on the sunny side, the black patches will absorb more heat and warm up the station. When the blinds are open on the shaded side, the black patches will radiate more heat into space, thereby cooling the station. Operate all these blinds with little electric motors, hook them to a thermostat, and tie the whole system in with the station's airconditioning plant—and there's your temperature control system.

Inflating the space station with air will, as we have indicated, provide a breathable atmosphere for a limited time only. The crew will consume oxygen at a rate of approximately three pounds per man per day. At intervals, therefore, this life-giving oxygen will have to be replenished by supply ships from earth. At the same time, carbon dioxide and toxic or odorous products must be constantly removed from the air-circulation system. The air must also be dehumidified, inasmuch as through breathing and perspiration each crew member will lose more than three pounds of water per day to the air system (just as men do on earth).

This water can be collected in a dehumidifier, from which it can economically be salvaged, purified and reused.

Both the air-conditioning and water-recovery units need power. So do the radar systems, radio transmitters, astronomical equipment, electronic cookers and other machinery. As a source for this power we have the sun. On the earth, solar power is reliable in only a few places where clouds rarely obscure the sky, but in space there are no clouds, and the sun is the simplest answer to the station's power needs.

Our power plant will consist of a condensing mirror and a boiler. The condensing mirror will be a highly polished sheet metal trough running around the "wheel." The position of the space station can be arranged so that the side to which the mirror is attached will always point toward the sun. The mirror then focuses the sun's rays on a steel pipe which runs the length of the mirrored trough. Liquid mercury is fed under pressure into one end of this pipe and hot mercury vapor is taken out at the other end. This vapor drives a turbogenerator which produces about 500 kilowatts of electricity.

Of course, the mercury vapor has to be used over and over again, so after it has done its work in the turbine it is returned to the "boiler" pipe in the mirror. Before this can be done, the vapor has to be condensed back into liquid mercury by cooling. This is achieved by passing the vapor through pipes located behind the mirror in the shade. These pipes dissipate the heat of the vapor into space.

Thus we have within the space station a complete, synthetic environment capable of sustaining man in space. Of course, man will face hazards

—some of them, like cosmic radiation and possible collision with meteorites, potentially severe. These problems are being studied, however, and they are considered far from insurmountable.

Our "wheel" will not be alone in the two-hour orbit. There will nearly always be one or two rocket ships unloading supplies. They will be parked some distance away, to avoid the possibility of damaging the space station by collision or by the blast from the vehicle's rocket motors. To ferry men and materials from rocket ship to space station, small rocket-powered metal craft of limited range, shaped very much like overgrown watermelons, will be used. These "space taxis" will be pressurized and, after boarding them, passengers can remove their space suits.

On approaching the space station, the tiny shuttle-craft will drive directly into an air lock at the top or bottom of the stationary hub. The space taxi will be built to fit exactly into the air lock, sealing the opening like a plug. The occupants can then enter the space station proper without having been exposed to the airlessness of space at any time since leaving the air lock of the rocket ship.

8

There will also be a space observatory, a small structure some distance away from the main satellite, housing telescopic cameras for taking long-exposure photographs. (The space station itself will carry extremely powerful cameras, but its spin, though slow, will permit only short exposures.) The space observatory will not be manned, for if it were, the movements of an operator would disturb the alignment. Floating outside the structure in space suits, technicians will load a camera with special plates or film, and then withdraw. The camera will be aimed and the shutter snapped by remote radio control from the space station.

Most of the pictures taken of the earth, however, will be by the space station's cameras. The observatory will be used mainly to record the outer reaches of the universe, from the neighboring planets to the distant galaxies of stars. This mapping of the heavens will produce results which no observatory on earth could possibly duplicate. And, while the scientists are probing the secrets of the universe with their cameras, they will also be planning another trip through space—this time to examine the moon.

Suppose we take the power plant out of our rocket ship's last stage and attach it to a lightweight skeleton frame of aluminum girders. Then we suspend some large collapsible fuel containers in this structure and fill them with propellants. Finally, we connect some plumbing and wiring and top the whole structure with a cabin for the crew, completely equipped with air and water regeneration systems, and navigation and guidance equipment.

The result will be an oddly shaped vehicle, not much larger than the rocket ship's third stage, but capable of carrying a crew of several people to a point beyond the rear side of the moon, then back to the space station. This vehicle will bear little resemblance to the moon rockets depicted in science fiction. There is a very simple reason: conventional streamlining is not necessary in space.

The space station, as mentioned previously, has a speed of 15,840 miles per hour. Our round-the-moon ship, to leave the two-hour orbit, has to have a speed of 22,100 miles per hour, to cover the 238,000-mile distance to the moon. This additional speed is acquired by means of a short rocket blast, lasting barely two minutes. This throws the round-the-moon ship into a long arc or ellipse, with its remotest point beyond the moon. The space ship will then coast out this distance, unpowered, like a thrown stone. It will lose speed all along the way, due to the steady action of the earth's gravitational pull—which, though weakening with distance, extends far out into space.

Roughly five days after departure, the space ship will come almost to a standstill. And if we have timed our departure correctly, the moon will now pass some 200 miles below us, with the earth on its far side. On this one trip we can photograph most of the unknown half of the moon, the half which has never been seen from the earth. Furthermore, we now have an excellent opportunity to view the earth from the farthest point yet; at this distance, it appears not unlike a miniature reproduction of itself (from the vicinity of the moon, the earth will look about four times as large as the full moon does to earth-bound man).

It is not necessary to turn on the space ship's motors for the return trip. The moon's gravity is too slight to affect us substantially; like the shell which was fired vertically, we simply "fall back" to the space station's orbit. The long five-day "fall" causes the space ship to regain its initial speed of 22,100 miles per hour. This is 6,340 miles per hour faster than the speed of the space station, but, as we have fallen back tail first, we simply turn on the motors for just two minutes, which reduces our speed to the correct rate which permits us to re-enter the two-hour orbit.

9

Besides its use as a springboard for the exploration of the solar system, and as a watchdog of the peace, the space station will have many other functions. Meteorologists, by observing cloud patterns over large areas of the earth, will be able to predict the resultant weather more easily, more accurately and further into the future. Navigators on the seas and in the air will utilize the space station as a "fix," for it will always be recognizable.

But there will also be another possible use for the space station—and

a most terrifying one. It can be converted into a terribly effective atomic bomb carrier.

Small winged rocket missiles with atomic war heads could be launched from the station in such a manner that they would strike their targets at supersonic speeds. By simultaneous radar tracking of both missile and target, these atomic-headed rockets could be accurately guided to any spot on the earth.

In view of the station's ability to pass over all inhabited regions on earth, such atom-bombing techniques would offer the satellite's builders the most important tactical and strategic advance in military history. Furthermore, its observers probably could spot, in plenty of time, any attempt by an enemy to launch a rocket aimed at colliding with the giant "wheel" and intercept it.

We have discussed how to get from the ground to the two-hour orbit, how to build the space station and how to get a look at the unknown half of the moon by way of a round trip from our station in space. But how do we return to earth?

Unlike the ascent to the orbit, which was controlled by an automatic pilot, the descent is in the hands of an experienced "space pilot."

To leave the two-hour orbit in the third stage, or nose section, of the rocket ship, the pilot slows down the vehicle in the same manner in which the returning round-the-moon ship slowed down. He reduces the speed by 1,070 miles per hour. Unpowered, the rocket ship then swings back toward the earth. After 51 minutes, during which we half circumnavigate the globe, the rocket ship enters the upper layers of the atmosphere. Again, it has fallen tail first; now the pilot turns it so that it enters the atmosphere nose first.

10

About 50 miles above the earth, due to our downward, gravity-powered swing from the space station's orbit, our speed has increased to 18,500 miles per hour. At this altitude there is already considerable air resistance.

With its wings and control surfaces, the rocket closely resembles an airplane. At first, however, the wings do not have to carry the rocket ship. On the contrary, they must prevent it from soaring out of the atmosphere and back into the space station's orbit again.

His eyes glued to the altimeter, the pilot will push his control stick forward and force the ship to stay at an altitude of exactly 50 miles. At this height, the air resistance gradually slows the rocket ship down. Only then can the descent into the denser atmosphere begin; from there on, the wings bear more and more of the ship's weight. After covering a distance of about 10,000 miles in the atmosphere, the rocket's speed will still be as

high as 13,300 miles per hour. After another 3,000 miles, the speed will be down to 5,760 miles per hour. The rocket ship will by now have descended to a height of 29 miles.

The progress of the ship through the upper atmosphere has been so fast that air friction has heated the outer metal skin of body and wings to a temperature of about 1,300 degrees Fahrenheit. The rocket ship has actually turned color, from steel blue to cherry red! This should not cause undue concern, however, inasmuch as we have heat-resistant steels which can easily endure such temperatures. The canopy and windows will be built of double-paned glass with a liquid coolant flowing between the panes. And the crew and cargo spaces will be properly heat-insulated and cooled by means of a refrigerator-type air-conditioning system. Similar problems have already been solved, on a somewhat smaller scale, in present-day supersonic airplanes.

At a point 15 miles above the earth, the rocket ship finally slows down to the speed of sound—roughly 750 miles per hour. From here on, it spirals down to the ground like a normal airplane. It can land on conventional landing gear, on a runway adjacent to the launching site. The touch-down speed will be approximately 65 miles per hour, which is less than that of today's air liners. And if the pilot should miss the runway, a small rocket motor will enable him to circle once more and make a second approach.

After a thorough checkup, the third stage will be ready for another ascent into the orbit. The first and second stages (or tail and middle sections), which were parachuted down to the ocean, have been collected in specially made seagoing dry docks. They were calculated to fall at 189 miles and 906 miles respectively from the launching site. They will be found relatively undamaged, because at a point 150 feet above the water their parachute fall was broken by a set of cordite rockets which were automatically set off by a proximity fuse.

They, too, undergo a thorough inspection with some replacement of parts damaged by the ditching. Then all three stages are put together again in a towerlike hangar, right on the launching platform, and, after refueling and a final check, platform and ship are wheeled out to the launching site—ready for another journey into man's oldest and last frontier: the heavens themselves.

READING

How does von Braun introduce his subject in the first three sections? Show by analysis of each of them just what preparation he provides the reader.

In sections 4 to 10 what is the order of development?

What difficulties does the author allude to in the course of his essay? What is his tone in treating them?

INTERPRETATION

Are there difficulties other than those which von Braun mentions? For purposes of this article should he emphasize more the difficulties he touches upon? Compare his article with "Journey into Space," *Time*, LX (December 8, 1952), 62–73, with the accompanying articles in *Collier's*, or with his own expanded treatment in *Across the Space Frontier* (1952).

Who should control the space station—the United States or a world government? Is the danger of another country securing the space station as great as von Braun hints? What are some of the economic and political problems that would come from the establishment of the space station?

Are the differences between man's relation to space machines and his relation with ships and automobiles those of degree or kind? How does science fiction compare with the essays of Lapp or Dryden?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Jet-Propelled Airplane
Opposition to von Braun
Review of a Science Fiction Book
Technology and Government

WILL MACHINES REPLACE THE HUMAN BRAIN?*

by Serge Fliegers

Serge Fliegers is a contributing editor of *The American Mercury*.

The placid brown waters of the Charles River, rolling through Cambridge, Massachusetts, bathe what is undoubtedly the most intellectual shore line in this country—the few odd miles that stretch between the stately grey halls of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the bright, crenelated houses of Harvard. This winter, the waters of the Charles are being rippled not only by the harsh winds of the north but also by the echoes of a sizzling controversy between two intellectual giants of our times—Professor Howard Aiken of the Harvard Computation Laboratory and Professor Norbert Wiener of the Department of Mathematics at MIT.

This controversy, somewhat muffled by good-natured academic politeness, is nevertheless aptly named the "Battle of the Brains." This is because it involves not only the human, or perhaps slightly superhuman cerebral mechanisms of Aiken and Wiener; it is also because, pitched against each other, are two inhuman monsters of reason and logic: The "Mark IV" of Harvard versus the "Whirlwind" of MIT. These two giant electronic computing machines—known commonly as electronic brains—

* From the *American Mercury*, LXXVI (January, 1953), 53–61. Copyright, 1953, by The American Mercury, Inc.

are competing in a race that has so far produced a new science named "Cybernetics" and the promise of another industrial revolution, a revolution that may affect our civilization more profoundly than the steam engine or the atomic bomb.

This correspondent recently completed a tour of the very front line of this unique battle. First stop was the modernistic, red-brick and glass building behind Harvard's Law School, which serves as headquarters to Professor Aiken, and which is guarded by a sign that says: "Visitors, Keep Out." Unlike the sign, Professor Aiken is the soul of hospitality. Pushing aside a large stack of letters from businessmen who want the computing machine to solve their marketing and production problems, the Professor devoted considerable time explaining binary mathematics, differential equations, and showing us around his "baby." There are two "babies," in fact, both about ten feet high and running the entire length of the medium-sized room. One is Mark III built for the Naval Ordnance Bureau by Professor Aiken and the International Business Machines Corporation. The other, Mark IV, has just been completed and was starting to operate as we began our tour. Both machines look like enormous radio sets with their sides torn off. Their entrails show thousands of flickering electronic tubes, capacitators, resistors, switches and bright red and amber control lights. Mark IV receives instructions and gives answers on magnetic tape and has a control booth that looks like a setting for "Space Cadets." Mark III, more old-fashioned, is operated by a roll of perforated paper tape which looks exactly like the roll of a player piano. While we looked on, the tape was being sucked in by the machine and, at one end, an electric typewriter began clattering. Mark III, it seems, was in the process of writing a book of mathematical equations. It would complete the 300-page book in about three days. A skilled mathematician, working twelve hours a day, seven days a week, would take more than a year to accomplish a similar task.

"So this," we remarked innocently, "is the thinking machine."

Professor Aiken, a tall, distinguished-looking and relaxed gentleman, snapped out of his seeming lethargy. Pounding his right fist against his left palm, he explained emphatically: "This is not an electronic brain or a thinking machine. It is merely a computer—fast, accurate—but nothing more than a slavish automatic device designed to help us solve mathematical and mechanical problems."

This question—can machines think?—lies at the very heart of the "Battle of the Brains" controversy. Before approaching this ticklish point, we listened to Professor Aiken explaining what the machines can do, and what they have done.

"During the war, for example, Mark III flew a bomber from Chicago to Los Angeles. First with all four engines going, then with two and even

three engines conked out, with different loads, at different altitudes. Today, with Mark IV, we can fire a guided missile and trace its path through the atmosphere under varying conditions." All this, naturally, is not meant in the literal sense. What Mark III and Mark IV actually do is to take a differential equation representing the physical properties of the plane or missile to be tested, and then subject this equation to various factors representing speed, altitude, and so forth. In practice, this method has saved our government millions of dollars. Previously, plane designers would take "engineering guesses," then construct expensive experimental models which often crashed, losing lives and money. Today, the machine's calculations have taken much of the guesswork out of engineering guesses.

But the machines can perform even more complicated and direct functions. Mark I, the first machine built by Aiken to help him with calculations for his Ph.D. thesis, is now running a whole shop of calculating machines. "It does not take too much of a stretch of imagination," the Professor explains, "to see a machine shop run by an electronic computer. And then, you are looking in the direction of an automatic factory. And where we have automatic files stored on magnetic tape, we approach the problem of an automatic office."

No secretaries or typists in this office of tomorrow, just a machine that reads letters by means of a photocell scanning device, delves into its automatic files for the information requested, and then automatically types out a reply. There could be, for example, an automatic insurance company, calculating premiums, sending out due notices, and crediting payments, all without the help of a single human employee.

At present, Professor Aiken is considering a project whereby his machines would produce word-by-word translations from Russian into English. "Then, by increasing the sophistication of the machine," the Professor adds placidly, "we could get a more literary translation."

How are these seemingly human tasks performed by steel-and-glass machines which, according to Professor Aiken, cannot **think** and are merely slavish and mechanical instruments? For an answer to this we crossed over to headquarters of the opposite camp at MIT. These headquarters proved to be a small, dusty office at the end of a long, dusty corridor. There we found Professor Norbert Wiener, surrounded by books on philosophy, mathematics, biology, politics, physiology and a few twenty-five-cent mysteries. Professor Wiener is an ebullient, barrel-chested man ("my favorite sport in college was wrestling," he explains) with a handsome Vandyke beard and quick, humorous eyes. There was not enough room in the office for the Professor, his pretty secretary, the books and this interviewer, so we went to an unused classroom.

Interviewing Professor Wiener is not easy. To begin with he is a real,

honest-to-goodness genius. He entered Tufts College at the age of eleven, graduated at fourteen and shortly thereafter took his Ph.D. at Harvard. He speaks six languages fluently including Chinese and ancient Greek, and is apt to break into any one of them in the midst of a discussion of the quantum theory, Einstein's role in the modern world or the harmonics of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Nevertheless, with the use of a blackboard and a short course in binary mathematics, Professor Wiener was able to demonstrate some fundamentals of the electronic computing machine.

To explain the workings of this machine it might be easiest to use the methods recently employed by a young British father whose wife pressed him to tell their children the facts of life. Calling the kids into his study, he asked somewhat embarrassedly: "Do you know about the bees and the flowers?"

"No daddy," they replied blankly. "Well, dash it, do you know how babies are born?" "Certainly," the kids chorused eagerly. "That's wonderful," the relieved father sighed, "it's the same with the bees and the flowers."

In other words, one can understand the working of a mechanical computer by studying the mechanism of the human brain.

Speaking roughly, and oversimplifying unmercifully, one might say that our thinking mechanism is composed of a vast system of nerve-fibres that might schematically look like a network of railroad tracks approaching a central station. Along these fibres, or tracks, run tiny pulses, like trains trying to get into the station. At each juncture of two tracks there is a switching point, called a synapse. When our imaginary train arrives at such a synapse, it can be switched right or left, to the next synapse, and so until this pulse—or train—arrives at its proper destination. The switches are controlled by our memory.

Suppose the simple thought of "I want to eat" originates at the beginning of the network. The eat pulse will go to the first switch, labeled, let's say, "breakfast." But you have already had breakfast, and your memory of that has closed the "breakfast" switch. So the pulse goes on to the next synapse, marked "lunch." You haven't had lunch yet, so the pulse passes through that open switch to the next juncture, which we can call "sandwich." But the "sandwich" switch is closed because you remember that you're on a diet, and must not eat sandwiches, so the pulse goes on to an open switch marked "salad." And that's what you finally have for lunch.

Multiply the speed of such a process several million times, increase the complexity of the system a few more billion times, and you'll have a rough inkling of what goes on in a human brain—and in a "thinking machine."

For the machine works on exactly the same system.

Instead of nerve-fibres it has electric wires or, in the case of the Mark IV, electric-connections painted on with a ballpoint pen to save space. Instead of synapses, the machine has relays and electronic switches called Eccles-Jordan circuits, and nicknamed Flip-Flops by simplicity-loving scientists. These flip-flops are open or shut, according to information stored in the machine at the beginning of each problem. They act as part of the machine's memory, retaining information, wiping it out after it becomes useless by "forgetting" it, and then acquiring new information as the problem progresses. Since these switches have only two positions—either flip or flop—they make only yes or no decisions, relaying a pulse to the next correct switch, or stopping it.

Numbers are stored in these switches by converting decimal figures into binary numbers. The binary system uses only 1 and 0 or, to convert this further into thinking machine lingo, it uses only flip or flop. To store a number, the machine plays a sort of game of twenty questions: Is it 1? No. Is it 2? No. Is it 3? Yes! Letters can be stored this way, too, with the same twenty-question game principle.

In addition to this, various machines have additional "memories" where information can be stored. "Mark IV" uses a huge magnetized drum. "Whirlwind" at MIT, fastest computer at the time of this writing, uses thirty-two electrostatic storage tubes, each of which holds 2048 sixteen-digit binary numbers, and MIT is installing an additional memory drum.

With simulated nerve-fibres, switches that make unerring decisions, and tapes, drums and tubes that store knowledge, why can't these machines think?

We asked Professor Wiener this question. He shrugged his heavy shoulders: "You could unquestionably duplicate, on a lower level, a large number of phenomena which we associate with thought and the working of the human brain. But when it comes to imitating the human brain. . . ."

The professor stopped for a minute to make a quick calculation, then continued: "Look here, we have roughly a million fibres in the brain, each with the ability of making a yes or no decision. Therefore, you've got a storage capacity of 2 to the power of one million. To reproduce so many yes-or-no devices mechanically, you would have to have a machine capacity of about 100,000,000 cu. ft. With so many electronic tubes you would have the temperature of a furnace. . . ."

Approaching the subject from the opposite direction, Dr. W. Ross Ashby, Director of Research at Barnwood House, a British Psychiatric Hospital, has just issued an enormously important study entitled "Design for a Brain." Published here by Wiley, the book uses some Cybernetics to

explain the brain's amazing ability to adapt itself to an unending stream of different situations. During his research, Ashby constructed a "Homeostat," a small machine designed specifically to imitate basic functions of the brain.

This desire to build a machine like a brain has long been imbedded in man's soul. As far back as 1617 John Napier, Laird of Merchiston, invented an "ingeniuous contrivance" called Napier's bones, designed "to help man with his logickal reckoning." French mathematician Blaise Pascal and German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz also worked on the possibility of constructing a mathematical engine. In view of their concept of mathematics as a supreme form of logic it might well be supposed that such an "engine" might have been used to solve more than just problems of addition and subtraction.

The most ambitious project in this line was undertaken by British inventor Charles Babbage who, in 1833, began work on an "analytic engine" which was supposed to carry out complete computations according to specific instructions. Babbage's engine raised an intellectual furor in Victorian London and precipitated a metaphysical argument that foreshadowed closely the present controversy on "thinking machines versus brains." At that time Lady Lovelace wrote caustically: "The analytical engine has no pretension to originate anything. . . ." and today, that is the very argument put forward by the anti-Cybernetics faction.

Babbage was never able to prove whether his machine could originate anything. He died before he could even originate a working model of the machine. And the matter rested there until the early days of World War II, when German planes were taking a murderous toll of Allied shipping. The U. S. Government approached Professor Wiener with a strange request: "We need a mechanism that can point a naval gun at an oncoming plane. It must be able to calculate the speed of the plane, predict its zigzags, take into account wind velocity, and the speed and rolling of the ship. To put it bluntly, the mechanism must do what an expert anti-aircraft gunner does—only better."

Wiener set to work and soon perfected a theory whose full importance has not yet been realized. It is the theory of feedback, or of continuous control mechanism. Wiener used the concept that our muscular actions are not stiff mechanical movements. Instead, they are flexible and constantly controlled. For example, when we extend a hand to grasp a pencil, our arm does not move rigidly like a mechanical piston or a crane. Our action is flexible, taking into account the speed, force and direction of our moving arm, the pull of gravity, the distance of the pencil, and numerous other factors. If our hand shoots out too far, it is pulled back by this feedback mechanism. If it goes too much to the right or the left, its direction is controlled and it is put back on the right path. When the ob-

ject we want to grasp is stationary, there is no great problem. But when the object moves, our feedback mechanism goes into high gear, compensating both for our actions and for the movement and timing of the object we are aiming for. That is how a hunter downs a flying duck, and how an anti-aircraft gunner shoots at an enemy plane. Somehow, Wiener managed to incorporate the concept of feedback into the mechanism of a naval artillery piece, and his work is credited with having saved thousands of Allied lives and hundreds of thousands of shipping tons.

At the same time, Wiener's invention went one large step beyond the technique of existing mechanical computing machines.

If these existing machines already showed frighteningly human qualities, Wiener's concept of feedback started an epidemic of "mechanical brains."

One scientist constructed a machine that could find its way through a maze, another one built a mobile machine with two photoelectric cells on its face, capable of locating a light and going towards it with the sure instinct of a moth approaching a flame. Dr. Claude Shannon, top researcher of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, envisages a computer that can play chess, and he knows of at least one machine in England that does quite well at a game of checkers.

"But," detractors of the "thinking machine" theory argued, "all these machines act only on orders of the scientists handling their controls. They can't act independently."

So a brilliant young mathematician named Anthony Oettinger designed a small computer named Edsac, which he taught to recognize figures independently. He would feed numbers to the machine at random. When Edsac would pick the wrong number, Oettinger would "punish" it by pressing a button marked "punish." When Edsac chose the right number, Oettinger pressed a button marked "reward." Soon little Edsac was blithely picking the right numbers from a long string of jumbled mathematical symbols without help or prompting from its master.

Oettinger explains his work very matter-of-factly: "Edsac picked up habits very fast. It reacted just like an intelligent animal or a child—except that it made no mistakes. So, just to pursue the analogy, I rigged it up to make occasional mistakes. I even gave it a failing memory."

"But," Oettinger adds deprecatingly, "nothing in this stuff is a miracle. Or, if it is, it's definitely a man-made miracle."

Nevertheless, the miraculous possibilities of these electronic gadgets have inflamed the imagination of the world. Professor Wiener, as the originator and apostle of the theory that machines might approach some form of thought, is the central figure of the new cult of "Cybernetics"—a

term derived by Wiener from the Greek word for helmsman, and used earlier, without Wiener's knowledge, by French writer Louis Aragon to describe a system of political control.

Publications on Cybernetics are today being issued in England, France, and Italy. When Wiener once went to Geneva to rest from overwork, his Swiss doctor approached him diffidently: "You are the great Professor Wiener, yes?" Wiener, too tired to speak, only nodded.

The doctor smiled: "Would you be so kind and possibly write us a paper about Cybernetics?"

In Paris, Father Dubarle of the Dominican order, is president of a *Cercle Cybernetique*. We asked Professor Wiener whether there was any conflict, in his mind, between religion and the new theory of Cybernetics. Wiener mused: "When Pythagoras discovered his theorem of the triangle, he sacrificed a hecatomb, lest the gods be displeased. Now, every time a scientist discovers something new, all the oxen tremble."

"But," he continued "what is valid in religion will not suffer from Cybernetics or any other scientific probing. After all, there is still the central mystery of creation."

With a mischievous look, he pulled his beard: "It reminds me of the story of Frederick the Great and his court preacher. Every Sunday, King Frederick would send the preacher a slip of paper containing the subject upon which the King wanted his sermon preached. One Sunday, to amuse himself, Frederick sent up a blank piece of paper. The poor preacher looked at one side: 'There is nothing on this side,' he said sadly. Turning over the paper he added: 'and there is nothing on this side. . . .' Then, facing the King squarely he continued: 'And from nothing, God created this world . . . !'

"And you know," Wiener chuckled, "he was quite right!"

Cybernetics may not solve the mystery of creation, but the work of Professors Wiener, Aiken and many others in the field of electronic computing machinery may well be adding a new problem to our life, the problem of an industrial and a clerical revolution.

Bertrand Russell, prognosticating what the next fifty years may bring, recently wrote: "Most things that are at present done by human beings can be done by robots. Mechanical brains are being rapidly perfected and it is hoped that before long, only experts will be able to distinguish them from live people. If we are to believe Dr. Norbert Wiener we must expect that, within the next fifty years at latest, a fully equipped factory will need only one man to press a button. All the rest will be done by ingenious mechanisms. . . . This will make the work of management much easier and, if the machines can be taught to vote, democracy will at last run smoothly."

It is still a far cry from machines that vote—although Remington

Rand's "Univac" was used on election night by a television network to predict the result. But there is no question that electronic computers will move into industry in the very near future. Remington Rand already has seven "Univac" computers working in the field. One of them is being used by the Bureau of the Census. Others can maintain stock records, control inventory and production schedules, make out payrolls for a 10,000-man plant and handle mortgage loan accounts.

IBM is even further advanced in the industrial field, with more than 200 machines out, performing such tasks as locating skilled personnel for the Department of Defense and helping the FBI track down criminals. IBM's brain, by the way, makes a superior sleuth, with the ability to localize, sort and collate data on criminals at the rate of 650 suspects a minute.

What exactly will the total impact of all these "brains" be on our civilization? According to Professor Wiener, they will relieve man from the drudgery of tiring, mechanical work, just as the steam shovel relieved man from the drudgery of physical effort. According to Professor Aiken, computers will increase production, increase the standard of living and increase employment. "Look at the telephone," he says. "When the automatic exchange came in, everyone said that telephone girls would lose their jobs. Today there are more telephone operators than ever before."

Both men—temporarily abandoning their academic feud—agree that, if rightly handled, electronic "brains" may bring an economy of plenty and a life of increased leisure.

"But," asks Anthony Oettinger, "the question is whether people will use their new-found leisure to go to church or to go to war. . . ."

READING

How sharp is the difference between Aiken and Wiener, as presented by Fliegers? Is the question given in the title fully meaningful?

Show in detail the way in which Fliegers writes up one of his interviews with the two scientists.

In the last three sections, what further exploration does Fliegers make of the subject? In what directions does he expand on what has gone before?

INTERPRETATION

Besides the possibilities in atomic power, space travel, and cybernetics, does technology promise other major changes? In your opinion, will any of these changes alter our lives and values to an extent far beyond that of earlier inventions?

Do you believe that cybernetics will result in a greater change than space travel? Describe some of the problems that it will give rise to?

In what ways have the use of thinking machines affected your life up to now? In what ways may they affect it in the future? Would atomic machines and space travel be possible without them?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

An Interview with a Campus Scientist
Machine-Graded Examinations
A Modern Office Machine
Popularization of Science
Cybernetics and Industry

8

Sports and Entertainment

The almost universal extension of leisure in America, which machines have made possible, has given us time for the enjoyment of sports and entertainment. Of particular interest to college students is the typical college sport, football, which has grown to have a commanding position on many campuses. But running it a close second in many sections of the country is basketball, which arouses an almost hysterical enthusiasm.

There are many kinds of entertainment in America—the Broadway theater, radio, television, rodeo, comics, and many others. But the pre-eminent entertainment of Americans has long been the movies. In recent years the movies have come under heavy attack particularly by the intellectuals. What's wrong with Hollywood? Are our movies immature? Do we get the kind we want? How do they compare with foreign productions? Are "good" movies feasible?

TOO MUCH FOOTBALL*

by Allen Jackson

Allen Jackson (1927–) played guard on the University of Michigan football team for three years. He played in a Rose Bowl game and was graduated in June, 1951.

Football is a complicated game, and the intense competition fostered by the business practices of big-time college football causes this complication to be increased. The result is that the players, if they wish to play the game at all, must spend more time on the gridiron than they bargained for. However, any spectator will tell you there are certain benefits connected with playing college football, such as being part of a school's football tradition, learning fair play, having one's character built, traveling to different parts of the country, and being glorious. All of these compensate the athlete for the loss of school time. But after having played four years at guard for the University of Michigan, which possesses the largest college football stadium in the world, I can see that the supposed benefits of big-time football are either grossly exaggerated or completely imaginary, and it seems to me that most of the enormous amount of time I spent on the gridiron was wasted.

One of the most harmful aspects of the highly organized and regi-

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mented athleticism which is the result of a college sport having become "big time" is that the spontaneity has been taken out of the sport. In professional athletics the individual player expects to devote his whole person to his game because his livelihood depends upon consistent, "professional" performance. But the college athlete is primarily a student, not a professional, and when he is forced into the overorganization and overperfection which the big-time game demands, he can no longer decide for himself whether he should study or play football on a particular day.

Probably few of the freshmen who try out for the team realize how much of their time will eventually be exacted by football. I remember discovering with dismay, as a freshman, that if I were to keep up with the rest of the men who were competing for positions on the varsity I would have to report for spring practice. Practicing football for six weeks during the warm and budding spring did not strike me as being either a glorious or a worth-while occupation, but I needed to do it during both my freshman and sophomore years if I was to get in the line-up. I was engaged in actual practice on the field for about twenty hours a week during the spring semester, and during the fall my working week was boosted to about twenty-eight hours. Of course this includes only the time actually spent on the field, and does not include such things as evening movies of the next week's opponent, study time wasted because of fatigue, extra time demanded by game trips to other schools, and time spent in whirlpools and under heat lamps in the training room.

The four-year total actually spent on the field, counting three extra weeks of Rose Bowl practice, comes to about 1350 hours. Although it was hard for me to realize it at the sophomoric height of my athletic zeal, my reason now tells me that football is only a single, minor, and unacademic part of a college education, and that it should not be more important than other single parts of college—such as, for example, the study of history. At Michigan I took six courses in history, each of them meeting three times a week for fifteen weeks, and each requiring an average of two hours of study for each hour in class. The total number of hours here is 810, about half of the time that I spent on the gridiron.

Of course many of the men on the Michigan team receive excellent grades despite their football playing. Last year the team average was higher than the school average, and the two players with the highest grades were an engineer and a premedical student. But these very men have agreed with me that high grades do not mean satisfactory learning, and that football interferes with learning. Besides demanding that the student forgo concerts, visiting lecturers, and outside reading during the football semester, big-time football also requires students with heavy loads to take part of their courses in summer school, and to skimp and cram their way through the fall semester as best they can.

A significant little adage which circulates in Michigan athletic circles says in effect that there are three aspects of college life at Michigan —intellectual, social, and athletic—but that the student has time for only two. This idea can circulate only where athletics have become, or are thought to have become, as important as the academic work of the University. The student who plays football is expected to sacrifice his studies for the sake of the game, and he is very darkly frowned upon if he misses practice for the sake of his studies. When after one Saturday game I limped off the field with a twisted ankle, I knew that I would be expected to spend a good deal of Sunday in the training room taking treatment for the injury. But since Sunday was the only time that I was able to study for a coming examination, I stayed away from the training room. As a result the ankle stiffened and on the practice field I was made to feel guilty for the rest of the week. The coaches are aware that in theory studies come first, but they are also aware that, in a big-time league, if studies actually come first, second-rate teams are likely to be the result.

One of my teammates, a philosophy student who at the time played fourth string, possessed a scholarship which would have enabled him to study in Europe. However, if he made use of this scholarship he would be unable to return in time to play football the following season. He asked the coaches' advice on this, hoping that they would tell him to go to Europe by all means, and come back and play for them when he was ready. But instead it was hinted that if he stayed he might well get to the "top" the next season, whereas if he took the scholarship it was quite possible that someone else would have his place when he got back. These suggestions were further implemented by numerous long-distance telephone calls from alumni who were amazed that anyone should consider taking a trip to Europe when there was a chance he might make the Michigan team. So he stayed, and the next season played third string.

Another teammate of mine decided during his junior year to use his GI Bill to cultivate a long-standing desire to study the piano. He had already earned a varsity letter as a sophomore center on Michigan's '48 National Championship team, and was looking forward to playing first string in his senior year, inasmuch as the man ahead of him was graduating. But during the following spring semester he became so engrossed in his piano playing that, although he still intended to play football in the autumn, he decided not to turn out for spring practice. Consequently, when he returned for practice in the fall of his senior year he was promptly and without explanation assigned to the fifth string. He was replaced by men who had practiced the previous spring and who because of this were evidently considered better gambles toward a winning combination.

The reasonable and sensible thing to do in such a situation would be to quit football because it was now obvious that he had fallen from favor

and would never make the first team. But it is impossible to be sensible in the midst of people who are afflicted with football. Making what the fanatic football alumnus would call a courageous display of determination, he decided to try to win back his position, a decision which he now thinks foolish and wasteful. The result of his efforts was that by the end of the season he was still nothing more than a third-string center; and with the exception of two non-conference games and the waning, reserve-flooded minutes of the other games, he spent most of his time sitting on the bench.

II

While examining the nature of big-time football it will be necessary for me at times to criticize the position of the coaches. I wish to make the point here that it is not the individual but the position with which I find fault, and that this position must be criticized because it is one of the major means through which big-time football accomplishes its distortion of the sporting spirit.

One of the ideas most thoroughly drummed into the heads of young Michigan football players is that it is a very valuable thing to be associated with Michigan football tradition. These men talk about Michigan's record, the fine men who have played for Michigan, in a manner almost liturgical, and the implication is that such things happen only at Michigan. Although much of this talk is sincere it is nevertheless misguided; it ignores the fact that Michigan tradition means basically that Michigan has always won more games than it has lost, and it means to keep on doing so.

At Michigan to win is of utmost importance; fair play and sportsmanship are fine, but to win is of utmost importance. Judging from the loud noises I have heard from chauvinistic, unathletic alumni from other big football schools, the Michigan people are not unique in proclaiming a "We're the best" athletic philosophy. But thanks to Fielding H. Yost and his point-a-minute teams of 1901 through 1905, the Michigan alumni have a better record to boast of than do the alumni of most other schools.

Yost was one of the first coaches to begin the custom of ensuring a winning record by encouraging large men to come to Michigan primarily to play football—a custom which is still zealously fostered. He was so successful in obtaining skillful players that between 1901 and 1905 his teams won 55 games in a row, and each year averaged 548 points to the opponents' 8 points. Most of the old-time Michigan alums will tell you that Fielding Yost was successful because he was ahead of his time as a coach, and this is certainly true. In pioneering player-recruitment and in consciously or unconsciously promoting a public acceptance of the idea that winning, and winning by a big score, is an end in itself, Yost

acted in strict accordance with some of the most basic elements in modern football.

I do not quarrel with Yost's winning record as such, but I do quarrel with the tendency in modern football to *emphasize* winning as an end in itself, and the tendency toward a "kick him when he's down" attitude which such an emphasis fosters. Such an attitude, it seems to me, was more evident than the good sportsman's attitude when Yost's teams consistently ran up scores like 128 to 0, 88 to 0, and 130 to 0 against little schools without recruiting systems, such as Buffalo, West Virginia, and Ferris Institute. Such records, of course, are possible only when the public gives prestige to those who trample weak competition.

Whether big-time football distorts the values of the football-following public by its win emphasis or whether the public makes possible such emphasis by giving prestige to the teams which trample weak competition is a problem similar to the chicken and egg question. But whatever the cause, the result is that teams which feel the need of strengthening their reputation do so by keeping their reserves on the bench and running up the score on the first weak opponent encountered.

When the 1947 Michigan team went to the Rose Bowl there was a difference of opinion, among football experts, over whether Michigan or Notre Dame had the greatest team in the world. This controversy probably had much to do with the fact that most of the Michigan first team was kept in the Rose Bowl game until the latter part of the fourth quarter, by which time it had run up a score of 49 to 0 on the weaker Southern California team. But even with this large accumulation of points there was almost a full team of Michigan reserve players who did not get into the game or who played for only a few seconds—the reason being, clearly, that if Southern Cal was prevented from scoring, the record would look much more impressive, and it would be obvious to the football experts that Michigan undoubtedly had the greatest team in the world.

III

The prestige which the college football business has succeeded in gaining for schools with winning records often produces an unsavory bigotry which goes beyond ordinary pride among both the players and students from a big football school. At Michigan one of those bigotry-fostering, tradition-conscious pre-game speeches which were impressive to sophomores but tiresome to seniors was to this effect: The men whom we were about to play would be battling *Michigan;* they would as a result be intimidated; and we should take advantage of this fine opportunity to dominate them. As a psychological device this idea was probably useful in giving confidence to sophomore players—but whether it worked or not,

the point is that good sportsmen do not emphasize the use of their grandfathers' reputations to intimidate an opponent.

"When Michigan loses, someone has to pay." I heard the first of many repetitions of this illogical idea in 1949 when Michigan's 25-game winning streak was decisively broken by Army. Since then I have heard it repeated with dogged monotony by the coaches after each Michigan loss, including Michigan's loss to Michigan State last fall. During the practice week following this game I personally counted forty-three repetitions of the slogan. This one slogan symbolizes to me the perversion of the sporting spirit which has been produced by big-time football. The slogan not only implies that Michigan *shouldn't* have lost, but it also suggests that the loss was caused by something wrong somewhere—perhaps something shady on the part of the other team.

The point of view suggested by this slogan becomes positively unchristian in its implication that revenge will be sought at the expense of next week's opponent. This desire for revenge is doubly evil in that it cannot be directed at the people who seem to have inflicted the injury but must be spent upon the first innocent victim who happens along. But the brass-tack meaning of "When Michigan loses, someone has to pay" is simply that since Michigan prestige and Michigan gate receipts depend upon a spectacular winning record, a lost game must be counteracted, if possible, with a larger than usual winning score the following Saturday. And the slogan is successful in arousing these attitudes. Many of the players continue to deify the coaches long after they should have outgrown this, and to them everything said on the field is gospel. Those who do not care for much of what goes on are in the game too deep to get out, and if they wish to stay on the team they must close their minds to reason and allow themselves to be directed.

I do not wish to imply that the players are actually taught unfair tactics at Michigan: this is certainly not true. But the Michigan coaches find it necessary to emphasize winning to a much greater degree than is natural or reasonable, and in a game like football this sort of emphasis is bound to lead to unsportsmanlike conduct. Indeed, the feeling that it is terribly necessary to win is so strong, and the resultant feeling of relief after having won a game is so pronounced, that if any questionable tactics have been used by Michigan men during the game they are merely laughed off.

Virtually all of my teammates on last year's squad were very clean players, but the atmosphere of big football often turned team spirit into mob spirit when the group as a whole accepted actions which to the individual would seem unsportsmanlike. One of the key players on last year's team was noted for his feats in the boxing ring and for his quick temper. When on Monday afternoons the team would watch movies of the preced-

ing Saturday's game, this player would occasionally be seen landing a seemingly accidental left-hook on an opposing player's chin. Of course the movies of any football game are likely to show up actions which appear to be underhanded; but the point here is that such actions—especially by the hotheaded boxer—would invariably strike the coaches as funny, and they would run the play over again in slow motion so that everyone could see and laugh.

The assembled players took their cues from the coaches and also laughed heartily to see such fun. Then, a few plays later on the screen, the coaches would solemnly draw our attention to the fact that the other team was "gang tackling," and that we would have to look for just "this sort of thing" from our next week's opponent because it was *that* kind of team. Michigan's maize and blue players are not encouraged to "gang tackle" of course; they are simply ordered to cover the opposing ball-carrier with "a blanket of blue."

IV

Another bromide which the big-time football votaries like to administer to promising young athletes is that there is something wonderful about being part of the "team spirit" found in big-name teams. Human beings have long since proved themselves social animals, and it seems reasonable that they should enjoy team games. But big football has perverted the team spirit as well as the sporting spirit.

In the first place the competition for individual positions on big teams is altogether too stiff, and this does more to break down than to build up team spirit. The bigness of the game, the publicity and prestige which go along with a first-team position, and the large number of grim and intense young athletes who are drawn to the gridiron by these abnormalities cause a spirit of internecine conflict to be as much in evidence as *esprit de corps.*

Besides this, the increasing specialization demanded by big-time football does nothing toward engendering social cohesion on the team. The compulsion to win generated by the game's big-business aspect demands that the individual players become precise and accurate in their various specialties to a degree unnatural in college athletics. On the Michigan practice field the ends, backs, and linemen all spent much of their time in separate corners of the field, performing their various specialties with monotonous repetition. During the week there are only one or two hour-long scrimmages, on the average, and the rest of the time is devoted to various forms of dummy practice, running of signals, and practicing specialties. All of this is necessary to produce a winning team in a big-time league, but it is not much fun. Any sport which requires a week's practice of specialties for each sixty-minute game has become too

mechanized to allow the spontaneous sort of team spirit which would seem to be the special value of college football.

Everyone has seen football teams gather in the center of the field just before the opening kickoff for a last-minute handshake, and this sight, plus the stock sport page photographs of men on the bench who are "trying just as hard as the men in the game," seems to indicate that team spirit is an actual and worth-while reality in big-time football. I should like to state plainly and emphatically that much of the huddled handshaking and bench emotion is artificial. The players know that in order to win it is necessary to get "worked up" for the game, whether they feel like it or not. Also, the bigness and complexity of modern football produces a decrease in team homogeneity and a corresponding decrease in spontaneity. The players sense that they will be less effective without such homogeneity, and they attempt to regain this feeling on the practice field and in the big game by an artificial emphasis upon such devices as the pre-game handshake and the bench chatter.

My first experience with the automaton spirit which big-time coaches often find it necessary to enforce in order to make their teams efficient winning machines was when, as a freshman, I was used as a human dummy to test the proficiency of the '47 Rose Bowl varsity. Occasionally, when one of my freshman or reserve teammates would be laid out by the businesslike efficiency of the varsity, in such a way that play could not be resumed until the field was cleared, the coaches would promote big-time football's party-line attitude toward such a situation by reciting this slogan: "Well, move the ball or move the body." The varsity players, tickled by such wit, would then move the ball to an uncluttered part of the field and resume play.

When I became a varsity player I began to notice other evidences that big-time football cannot afford to depend upon spontaneous team spirit. At the training table on the Friday night before a game the Michigan players were expected to show that they were in the process of "storing it up" for the next day's contest by eating their meal with a quiet intensity which precluded laughter or any evidence of high spirits. Probably there were a few players who actually felt a sort of judgment-day taciturnity, but for many of the players it was an artificially imposed atmosphere, and bad for the digestion. If, as often happened, some of the lighter hearts would forget for a moment that they were supposed to be grim on Friday evenings, there would be ominous and foreboding looks from the coaches' table—and if the unwholesome gaiety persisted, the coaches would silence it by uttering with gloomy irony, "We hope you'll all be this happy tomorrow night."

Another instance in which the Michigan players had an attitude externally imposed upon them will serve also to exemplify the pernicious

effect which big-time football has had upon the reputations of schools which sponsor big-name teams. A few days before we started on our Rose Bowl journey we were summoned for an orientation lecture, a surprising amount of which was devoted to our table manners and general deportment while in Pasadena. It seemed that many of the teams which had in the past gone to the Rose Bowl had been guilty of ungentlemanly conduct —one team, we were told, had been fond of throwing bread rolls the length of a table in the hotel dining room and flipping squares of butter against the ceiling, where they stuck. But Michigan, we were told, did not do that sort of thing. Although it was good to hear that Michigan did not do that sort of thing, neither I nor my teammates had ever been in the habit of throwing butter at the ceilings of plush hotels, and we wondered why we were being so energetically told to act in a normal manner.

The reason was that the big-time football system has unconsciously superimposed a mercenary stereotype upon the college football player, and people often *expect* a visiting football team to be rowdy; because of this, the coaches were at pains to impress us with lurid examples, of questionable authenticity, of how not to act. In Pasadena we conducted ourselves with a normal amount of gentility—neither better nor worse than the average of the teams which preceded us, a waitress told me. But the Michigan players heard themselves complimented profusely on their conduct.

The point of all this is that when an entire athletic group, like college football players, has such a reputation that players who conduct themselves with ordinary grace are looked upon as above average, there is something wrong with the system. Moreover, schools which sponsor big-name teams, and so associate themselves with this bad reputation, subtly lose prestige in the eyes of the general public. Big-time football has promoted a syllogism something like this: football players are something less than students; therefore, universities which sponsor big football teams, though famous, are something less than universities.

V

In order to exhibit one of big-time football's most unscrupulous practices, I shall have to explain the nature and function of the "red shirts," as they are called at Michigan. The generally used term is "cannon fodder." Because modern football is such a complicated game, the head coaches are able to attend to only the first two or three teams, called "blues" at Michigan. However, it is necessary to have at least two more teams, the red shirts, against whom the blues can scrimmage, or who can hold the dummies for the blues to block. The blues do not play amongst themselves because they are likely to hurt one another and be lost for the big game on Saturday. Also it is necessary for the varsity blues to feel

their power and be able to march up and down the field through the weaker red shirts.

A few of the red shirts know that they will never rise in the varsity hierarchy, and they are still content to come out for practice season after season to be used by the blues. But there are not enough of these men. The rest of the red shirts are players who dream of making at least the third-string varsity one day, but whom the coaches are reasonably sure will never make the grade. Instead of telling these men that their chances of making the varsity are extremely small, the coaches, because they need men on whom their varsity can sharpen its claws, encourage the red shirts to return each year to try again. Of course all this is a matter of subtle suggestion; it is impossible to prove actual misrepresentation of facts, but I have spoken to and played against a number of disenchanted red shirts who for four years held dummies and waited their turn to be mashed by the blues, only because it was hinted that they might make it one day.

To a young boy who is fresh out of high school—where he was a big man because of his football playing—the slightest hint by a big college coach that he might make the varsity is enough to set the home town buzzing and to increase the player's illusion of prestige. When he fails to make the varsity team, it seems one of life's most terrible tragedies.

Two years ago, such a player came to Michigan. As a great high school star and a holder of state records in track he was looked upon by his friends and home-town supporters as a potential All-American, and when the Michigan coaches watched him operate on the freshman team they seemed to agree. The following season—last fall—the player's picture was in every sporting magazine in the country, and since such publicity could occur only with the coaches' sanction, it was assumed that he would do great things. Then the football season began, and game after game the highly publicized player was left sitting on the bench. Although he dressed for all the games, and made all the trips, for some reason unknown to himself or to his teammates he was never allowed to play, except for a few seconds in one game, and by the end of the season it was apparent that he would not make a varsity letter. When Michigan prepared to make its second trip to the Rose Bowl, a trip on which ten more than the usual number of players were taken, so that even some of the red shirts went along, the coaches refused to take him, and in so doing as much as told him that he would never play for Michigan.

To a boy who had been heralded as a second Tom Harmon this was a crushing blow, especially since any reasonable person would assume that the football system, after publicizing the player with such vigor, would feel honor-bound to take him along on the Rose Bowl trip. What happened to this boy represents in concentrated form what happens to

most of the students who play big-time football. They are first deluded into thinking that they are great and that football is great; then they are used by the system and finally discarded with at best nothing to show but a scrapbook full of redundant and inaccurate clippings.

Of course such build-up and subsequent disappointment occurs elsewhere in life, particularly in a professional sport like baseball. But this is all part of the professional scene, and it has no place in college athletics. College football should have all the benefits of a strictly amateur sport; but it is losing these and acquiring the undesirable aspects of a professional sport.

VI

Any accusation that football leaves the player with nothing but a scrapbook full of clippings will move the defenders of the game immediately to demand that some mention be made of the "character building" upon which football seems to have a priority. Aside from the probability that the coaches who direct uncommercialized college sports, such as track, wrestling, and gymnastics, could present good arguments showing these sports to be just as effective builders of character as football, it seems to me that anyone who assumes that athletics are an extraordinary factor in the development of an individual's character is guilty of ignoring the many forces which contribute to such development.

But in the football world there is great emphasis placed upon character development; and if, in the coaches' not infallible judgment, an individual player's character does not seem to be developing in the manner prescribed by the big-time football system, his position on the team will be endangered. Because all big-time football players and coaches have grown up with the idea that it is necessary to give your all for the alma mater, anyone who does not seem willing to do this is looked upon as a coward.

The importance of winning in big-time football makes it absolutely necessary to field the best team possible on important Saturdays, regardless of injuries. When the modern compulsion to win is superimposed upon the old give-your-all idea, the pressure on an injured player to play despite his injury is immense. No matter how many times a player proves himself in battle, the first time he decides that an injury should keep him off the playing field he is given the raised eyebrow and accusing stare by the coaches, trainer, and even some of his teammates. This subtle accusation is caused by the team's collective dread of weakening the winning combination, and it is especially acute if the injury is not obvious and the coming game is expected to be close.

Near the end of my junior year, when I was a first-string, battle-scarred veteran of many games, I received what I considered to be a very

serious knee injury a week before Michigan was to play Ohio State for the conference championship. The knee was badly swollen, and it was impossible for the doctor who looked at it to make a valid diagnosis until the swelling subsided. But, since I could not walk, and since it was necessary for me to spend two days in the hospital, I assumed that I would not be expected to play in the big game.

However, the man who substituted for me lacked both my weight and experience. So I found to my dismay that as soon as I could walk I was expected to "gut it out," as the Michigan training-room slogan would describe it, by reporting to the practice field, having my knee trussed up with tape, and preparing to give my all for Michigan. Although I could feel loose things inside my knee, I was so intimidated by this frightening preoccupation with guts that I hobbled dutifully out onto the practice field.

On the field I found that my obvious inability to play was looked upon with suspicion, and I began to hear remarks that I was allowing the knee to get the better of me. Instead of being ordered back to my hospital bed for a thorough examination, I was merely told that whether I played or not was entirely up to me. At this point it was clear that I was expected to play, and if I did not I would be dubbed a quitter. Like everyone else, I think there are certain things for which it is worth while to give my all, but I decided then that the primitive alma-materism of an obsolete generation of college playboys was not one of them, and I did not play.

About a week later the knee became locked in a rigid position, and it was necessary for me to return to the hospital. It was now possible to see that a piece of cartilage had been torn in such a way that there was little chance of its growing back together, and an operation would be required. The operation did more than fix my knee, because now the coaches knew that I had not been faking and that I could once more be depended upon to give my all for Michigan. But the point had been made: big-time football has no respect for either the individual's word or his body.

VII

A word must be said about the rabid football alumni and the overzealous football fans. I find no fault with anyone who has a normal interest in athletics, but the perverted bigness of football produces people with a perverted interest in sport. Although the number of the most adhesive of these hangers-on to the football scene is not large, their presence is distressing because they are undoubtedly the articulate representatives of a much larger group whose interest in and attitude toward big-time football allow the unhealthy and prolonged hysteria which permeates the college football scene each fall.

Except for a fawning and familiar interest in a few backfield stars, many of the football alumni whom I met had no real interest in the players as individuals; indeed their interest in the stars was usually based only upon athletic reputation and seldom upon character. Many of the football alumni who help destitute athletes through school, from my observation, do this because of a selfish interest in the perpetuation of the school's winning record, with which they have identified themselves, and not because of a personal interest in the welfare of the particular athlete. It is this sort of person who exerts the pressure which fires coaches when the team has not won enough games to satisfy the alumni's collective ego. These are the men who are influential in promoting among young boys a distorted idea of what it really means to play big football; and these are the ones who think that other people's judgments of men are as superficial as their own when they say that football players will have no trouble finding jobs, because everyone is glad to hire a football player.

Concerning the finding of jobs, it would be my guess that largely because of *very* widespread recruiting practices, the term football player has become synonymous with ape, and because of this it is often better for the job applicant to save mention of his gridiron record until after he has become acquainted with a prospective employer. Concerning the meaty subsidization question, I am glad to say that the University does none of it. A few of the players receive help from alumni, but a school with Michigan's prestige and record can usually get all the football material it needs without such aid.

During my four years at Michigan I played in games which took me from New York to California, but I was never given the opportunity to meet or speak to an opposing player. If there is any value in having an intercollegiate schedule, it would seem that such value would come from the opportunity which game trips afford to become acquainted with men from other schools and other parts of the country. But big football has no time for palaver. Indeed, on almost every trip we took, we were cautioned to keep to ourselves—because, and this is another slogan that I unfortunately know by heart, "We are here for only one purpose, and that is to win."

Often during a game I would develop a genuine fondness for some of the players with whom I was exchanging blows, and I would have valued a friendly glass of beer with them after the game. But the visiting team was always whisked off to its train with businesslike alacrity; about the only thing I learned from traveling to other schools was that in every college stadium the grass is more or less green.

Nor did I learn anything from making the Rose Bowl trip—I merely verified my suspicion that of all the farces connected with big-time football, the Rose Bowl is the biggest. The so-called honor and glory of playing

in the Rose Bowl is transient and meaningless, as is any glory and honor which is nothing more than the product of a publicity man's imagination; the three-week extra practice is not justified by the benefits of the game; and the trip to the coast is crowded and regimented. But the visiting team does at least get a trip out of it, and this is more than the host team gets. Of course I had no opportunity to speak to any of the California players, but it is impossible for me to understand how they, as Rose Bowl participants, could think of themselves as anything but extremely unlucky. For them there is no send-off, no cross-country trip, and no guided tours—nothing but three more weeks of drudgery under a southern California sun.

So, after four years of seeing everything there is to see in big-time college football—victories, defeats, publicity, hospitals, championships, and bowls—of being known as a "football player" rather than a human being, of seeing myself and my teammates misrepresented and misquoted by sportswriters who seldom attempted to know the players personally, of playing in a 97,000-seat stadium in which my nonpaying student friends were forced to sit in the end zone, of having my natural desire for physical exercise corrupted and commercialized, of giving up pleasant afternoons in favor of kicking and rolling in the dust and muck of the practice field—I have decided that big-time football is a poor bargain for the boys who play the game.

READING

What is the author's tone in treating his subject? Is it fair and objective? Is it at times too serious and labored?

Choose one of the seven sections and by close analysis show how Jackson develops his argument in that section.

In the last section how does Jackson use the Rose Bowl game as a final, decisive incident? By what earlier allusions has he anticipated his later use of this game?

INTERPRETATION

What is Jackson's interpretation of the "win at any price" tradition of contemporary football? What is your own?

Is the attitude toward football on your own campus the same as what Jackson describes at Michigan? Does the past success of Michigan make a difference? Is the situation better or worse when a college has a losing or indifferent record?

According to Jackson, what is involved in the slogan "When Michigan loses, someone has to pay"? Do you regard it in the same fashion?

Are there values in big-time football that Jackson overlooks? Compare, for example, what Brogan concludes in "An Englishman on American Schools"?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

An Athlete I Know
The Student-Athlete
The College Tennis Team
College without Football
Extracurricular Activities in College

A REAL "GOON" GAME*

by Arthur Daley

Arthur Daley (1904–) is a sports writer on the staff of the New York *Times*. He is author of *Inside Baseball* and coauthor (with John Kieran) of *The Story of the Olympic Games.*

This is the time of the year when I find myself yearning for a visit to the jockey room at Hialeah Park. Instead, I wander about with a hangdog look, shrinking in shame at my midget height. What am I? Man or mouse? Let's face it. I'm mouse, the smallest, most insignificant one you ever saw.

The reason for this groveling self-effacement? The basketball season is here, the only time of the year that I feel like a refugee from the Singer Midgets. Actually, I am 6 feet 2 and I weigh 190 pounds. I can talk to Rocky Marciano, the heavyweight champion of the world, on a man-to-man basis because I'm bigger than he is. I can mix with baseball players, track athletes, swimmers, even football players without feeling as low as a worm. But once I try to talk with George Mikan or Bob Kurland or any of the other altitudinous gentlemen in basketball uniforms, I find myself apologizing for my lack of stature, and developing a crick in my neck from looking up at them from what seems to me no greater height than Jockey Conn McCreary's 4 feet 8.

Yet, I always jumped center on every basketball team I played on in my youth. Why? The answer is simple. Invariably I was always the biggest boy on the squad. Nowadays they obviously grow them bigger. I know of a crack high school basketball player who went shopping around for a college athletic scholarship. No coach would waste time with him. Too small. He's 6 feet 3 and growing. In disgust he accepted a scholastic scholarship and left the game to the really big boys.

What's happened to this sport? It's changed completely. Once upon a time it was a game of speed, skill, deft maneuvering and tight defense. The legendary Original Celtics were virtually invincible. One reason for their dominance was their center, Jo Lapchick, who was considered a freak at 6 feet 5. But their scoring stars, Nat Holman and Johnny Beckman, were under six feet, as were most of the aces of that era.

Now basketball is a dunking contest between goons. The little fellows have almost disappeared and I myself hardly would be deemed big enough to carry the water bucket. The Milwaukee Hawks, a top-flight professional team, *average* a shade under 6 feet 6. Lapchick, who is now coaching the New York Knickerbockers, moans that his team is woefully lacking in height. It averages 6 feet 4.

* From the *New York Times Magazine*, December 21, 1952. Copyright, 1952, by the New York Times. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher.

Because the National Basketball Association, the only major professional league, symbolizes the ultimate in the sport, it is highly significant that the scramble for rookie talent each year emphasizes height more than skill. Unless a team has height, it can't control the ball. Unless a team controls the ball, it can't win.

How well have the pros attained their objective? Let's look at their rosters. Of 100 players on them, ninety-three are between 6 and 7 feet tall. Don Otten of Milwaukee is high man on the totem pole at an even 7 feet. Charlie Share of Fort Wayne is 6-11. George Mikan of Minneapolis is 6-10. There are five in the league at 6-9, seven at 6-8, thirteen at 6-7 and dozens at 6-6 and 6-5.

When the American Olympic basketball team uncoiled from the plane at Helsinki last summer, the startled Finns stared pop-eyed in disbelief. Bob Kurland is 6 feet 11 and Clyde Lovellette is 6 feet 10. It's no wonder that the United States won the tournament. As luck would have it, the team the Americans faced in the final for the championship was Soviet Russia, a team we'd beaten but not eliminated in a preliminary round. The Russians won everything else.

So we beat 'em again, thus winning the Olympic championship. The Soviets did remarkably well, considering their handicap. The handicap was their lack of size. Their "big" man was a midget of 6 feet 4.

"We had men as big as yours," commented a disgruntled Russian spokesman afterward, "but we left them back home. We didn't know that basketball could be played this way."

But that's where America has such a jump on the rest of the world. We don't leave our giants at home. More important, we've made basketball players out of them. That, perhaps, is the most startling development in the sport in the past quarter century. The giants are no longer uncoordinated goons whose only recommendation is size; they all have become slick and polished basketball players and thus foiled changes in rules designed to cut them down to size. And they operate so much more effectively than the little men in the modern wide-open scoring game that the sport has leaped to new heights of popularity.

Although no accurate figures are available, no one denies that basketball is the most popular sport of all. The last time anyone attempted to make an estimate, about five years ago, the figure given was 75,000,000 paid admissions per annum. It's undoubtedly higher by now.

So, as far as the spectators are concerned, the giants seem to have given them basketball on a higher, more likable plane—vertically speaking, at least. It is only by glancing at programs that the fans may determine that the hustling midget on the court is a six-footer; the eye can't judge the size

on a court except by comparison. This is especially true in watching a game on television.

Perhaps, then, you think that the big fellows, now more widely distributed among teams, even things out. But there is a difference. The goons have swept into such dominance that small men, who once dominated by their speed, skill and savvy, are shut out unless they are extraordinarily talented. While there still are a few such in circulation like, among the pros, Ralph (Buckshot) O'Brien of Indianapolis and Slater Martin of Minneapolis, 5 feet 10; Red Holzman of Rochester, Al Masino of Milwaukee and Whitey Skoog of Minneapolis, 5 feet 11, and Al Cervi and Bill Gabor of Syracuse, 5 feet 11, they are, especially in college basketball, a vanishing species. Since there are more little men than big men—the average height of the American male is 5 feet 8—it follows that basketball is gaining an unhealthy exclusiveness toward all but tall players.

I hate to keep dragging my long-lost youth into this discussion, but it is illustrative of what's been happening to the sport. In my college days, if a team had height, it was fine. But coaches then put no premium on height alone; they never beat the underbrush searching for it. In fact, they were suspicious of string-bean guys anyway. Most of them were uncoordinated, couldn't run, couldn't shoot well and were more hindrance than help.

The search for goons—the term nowadays is more descriptive than uncomplimentary—began shortly after Ned Irish brought basketball into Madison Square Garden as a major sport in 1934. In one of those early years Stanford University came to town with the colorful "Laughing Boys." They were big, good-looking kids and they put on a wonderful show. Hank Luisetti, a black-haired Apollo, was the greatest player of his day. He was 6 feet 3 and played with the speed, skill, grace and drive of a little fellow. Supplementing him was Art Stoeffen, a 6-feet-6 blond matinee idol.

For the first time big men performed as little men had performed in the long ago. This opened everyone's eyes on the country-wide Christmas vacation tour of the Californians. These big fellows also shot with one hand on the dead run instead of the cautious two-handed set-shooting the players of my day had been taught. Stanford therefore had a profound influence on the sport.

Schoolboys began shooting one-handed and so did kids in the playgrounds. Big fellows found this easier than the old-fashioned methods and they became adept at it. Eventually these kids moved into the colleges and transformed that phase of play before graduating to the bigger professional game.

The goons fit into the changed pattern of the sport. Size mounted until

it became of paramount importance. And then Henry Iba at Oklahoma A. and M. discovered Bob Kurland about a decade ago. Gangling Bob still had several inches to grow when he first reached Madison Square Garden as a freshman, all 6 feet 9 inches of him.

He was pretty awful. But he did show promise. Iba used him sparingly, breaking him into his line-up slowly. By his senior year Kurland was 6 feet 11 and was on everyone's All-American team. He also made the 1948 and 1952 Olympic teams since he never turned professional.

Shortly after Kurland demonstrated how valuable a big man could be, De Paul University of Chicago produced Mikan, who was to grow to 6-10 and be the greatest of them all, not only in college but, even more, in professional ball.

Although various rule changes weren't intended to help the goons, they none the less did precisely that. Every alteration in the code over the past couple of decades contrived to help the offense. A quarter of a century ago defense was of paramount importance. It wouldn't be fair to say that there is no such thing as defense in basketball any more. There is. But it is only a secondary consideration.

That stalwart defensive rock, the standing guard, has vanished with the dodo bird. The so-called running guard, who set up the plays but rarely scored himself, also has vanished. The modern team has five forwards, all scorers. Two of them are officially recognized as forwards, two as guards and one at center. But these are misnomers. They are all forwards.

This, of course, has meant a necessary change in strategy. In the past, when a six-footer was a "big" man, teams stressed possession, short passes, constant maneuvering and shots only at dead range under the basket. If a fellow were so silly as to throw one at the hoop from out near the foul line, the coach would yank him to the bench and snarl:

"Whatcha trying to do—throw away the game?"

Nowadays they shoot from midcourt without compunction. They *make* more baskets than we even attempted.

In my day an average score might be 25 to 23 or something like that. Strong defensive teams might produce a 19–16 count or weak defensive teams might permit a 31–28 total. In the present era one team will pile up more points than two teams did together in the past. Quintets of today average 50 and 60 and maybe even 70 points. Professional averages go far higher, ranging from the seventies to over 100.

A "hot" scorer in my day might go into double figures. Tallying a dozen points was exceptional; I still remember when I once thought I was one of the Seven Wonders of the Age after I personally scored 18. It makes me blush now.

That's strictly kid stuff. Massive George Mikan, 6 feet 10 and 240 pounds, set last season's professional record of 61 points in one game. Pause for a moment and picture that if you will—61 points!

Almost as breathtaking is the feat accomplished by Paul Arizin of the Philadelphia Warriors, a little fellow of 6 feet 4. Over the course of a full season this ex-Villanova star averaged—yes, *averaged*—25.4 points per game. In the light of my own experiences, if nothing else, this seems practically incomprehensible.

Obviously, this isn't the same game an old codger like myself used to play. It's reached such a ridiculous point that some alarmists already have begun to suggest that basketball be broken down into two classifications with six feet in height as the dividing line, one class being for those 6 feet plus and the other for those 6 feet minus. The lesser category would be like 150-pound football. The little fellow is virtually shut out as things stand today.

There was a concerted movement after the 1936 Olympics—it was led by the Japanese for obvious reasons—to limit the height of dribble artists in international competition. The proposal was defeated. But it returns under various sponsorship after each Olympics which American giants dominate.

The closest the rule-makers ever came to trimming down the goons to size was to pass legislation that hampered the goal-tending activities of the two-legged giraffes who had hit on the extraordinary device of leaping high, huge paws extended, to bat away from the hoop whatever balls were about to drop through for field goals. And the rim of that basket is ten feet off the floor.

Dr. Phog Allen, the stormy Kansas coach, insists that the only solution is to raise the height of the basket from ten feet to twelve. In the most publicized experiment that the 12-foot basket was to have, New Mexico School of Mines played Drury College. The high scorer and dominating figure was Elmore Mergenthaler of New Mexico. His size? It's a good question. Elmore stands 7 feet 1. However, Dr. Allen still contends that he's still on the right track. He argues that the average height of basketball players has moved upward six and a half inches since Dr. James Naismith invented basketball in 1891.

The mania for height is so overwhelming that coaches in the colleges rate a schoolboy candidate first on his size and then on his skill. Adolph Rupp, the cynical Kentucky coach, has a specially built doorway to his office. On the top jamb of the doorway is a sign. It reads: "6 feet 1½ inches."

Before Rupp was deflated slightly as a result of the basketball scan-

dals, he used to boast, "If a boy doesn't have to duck when he comes through that doorway, I don't even shake hands with him."

More than one coach has remarked, "I'll work with a goon for three years in the hope that I'll be able to get one year of top-flight varsity ball out of him."

There was the darnedest scramble you ever saw for Bill Spivey when he went shopping for a college. Spivey was a seven-footer as a schoolboy. Rupp finally snared him for Kentucky and the kid was just beginning to pay off as a super-star when he became enmeshed in the scandals.

A few years earlier there was another frantic scramble for Max (Shorty) Palmer, whose only recommendation was his size. He stood 7 feet 7. Don't know what happened to him, though. He disappeared before he ever stuck his head over the varsity horizon.

It isn't only as a scorer that the goon has taken charge of the play. His great height and great reach make him a tremendous asset in recapturing rebounds off the backboards. In my day rebounds were not especially important. We attempted only "sure" shots from up close and the percentage of completion probably ran as high as 75 per cent.

We had the center jump after each score to slow down play. We might not take more than twenty shots in a night. In the race horse style of today there is no center jump and the flow of action is so continuous that a team will take a couple of hundred shots in a night. That means lots of rebounds and quintets must have goons with long reaches.

It's a vicious circle, of course. Coaches will seek even bigger men until they resemble the youth who through the Alpine village passed and bore the banner with strange device, "Excelsior!" the translation of which is, ironically, "Higher!"

The little fellow already has lost his franchise as the skillful shooter, the play-maker and the leech-like guard. The big guys blanket his shot-making efforts with long arms that fence off the basket; they ruin his maneuvering by intercepting his passes and shoot from far over his head so that he no longer can guard them.

When Bucky Harris, one-time Yankee manager and now skipper of the Washington Senators, was young, he also was a top-flight professional basketball player. He ranked as one of the very best guards in the business. In those days a guard was not a misnamed forward. He guarded.

Bucky (5 feet 10) had a favorite stratagem. At the start of each game he'd make a quick downcourt break, take a pass and curl in a score. Then he'd return backcourt to the fellow he was guarding and sneer at him: "Okay, pal, I just made my basket. Now try to get yours."

Invariably Bucky would shut out his rival. All guards then took fierce pride in holding scoreless the specific opponents they watched.

Nowadays, though, the flow of action is so swift that a defender attaches himself to the first galloping goon he can reach. It's the defender's hard luck if he's a midget of 6 feet 5 who finds himself guarding a seven-footer.

So you see why this reporter, an ex-center, will be delighted to flee from the Mikans, Kurlands, Ottens and those other goons to the comfort of the jockey room at Hialeah. Not until I begin associating once more with McCreary, Eddie Arcaro, Ted Atkinson and the other short but mighty knights of the saddle will I lose my inferiority complex.

READING

Into what frame of personal reference does Daley place his facts? How effective is it?

What main observations does Daley make on the changes in basketball? In what order does he present them?

How much argument is combined with the description of what has happened in basketball?

INTERPRETATION

In your opinion, has the trend described by Daley been beneficial or harmful? Are similar trends present in other sports?

How feasible would it be to classify basketball players according to a system like that by which a heavyweight boxer fights a heavyweight, and a welterweight, a welterweight? What suggestions can you make?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

An Old-Time Athlete
A Better Game than Basketball
It Still Takes Skill
A Sports Writer

MOVIES: MYTH*

by Gilbert Seldes

Gilbert Seldes (1893–), author and drama critic, was formerly director of television programs of the Columbia Broadcasting System. As Foster Johns, he writes murder mysteries. His most important book is *The Great Audience* (1950) from which the following selection has been taken.

The Audience Vanishes

"There exists today no means of influencing the masses more potent than the cinema." Pius XI: Encyclical Vigilante Cura (1936).

"For us the film is the most important of the arts." Lenin (1920)

"The businessman desires to think of little or nothing (at the movies)." Congressman Clare E. Hoffman (1948)

Except for the makers of baby foods, no industry in the United States has been so indifferent to the steady falling away of its customers as the movies have been. The make-up of the movie audience has been known for a long time; during the past five years statistical research, paid for by the studios, has provided exact figures proving that in one generation the movies have lost two-thirds of their customers and have survived only because a satisfactory birth rate provides new patrons for the seats left empty when people arrive at the years of discretion and stop going to the movies. This information has been received with a nonchalance that ought to make a banker's blood run cold; it has had virtually no effect on the methods of making or distributing pictures, no effect on the quality of the product, which, like baby food, comes in cans. The parallel with strained foods breaks down in one detail: the foods would be worthless if the consumer didn't outgrow them, and the manufacturer virtually guarantees that they will become unnecessary in time and give way to other, more varied nourishment; the makers of movies pretend that what they offer is a balanced ration for adults also. But the reason the customers stop buying the product is the same: in each case the formula no longer satisfies.

At the time Congressman Hoffman spoke, the Supreme Court of the United States was on his side and against the foreign ideologists. The Court has never actually reversed its decision that the movies are entertainment and not a form of persuasion. The issue was brought before the Court in 1916, in a case involving censorship which the Mutual Film Corporation

* From *The Great Audience,* by Gilbert Seldes (New York: The Viking Press, 1950), pp. 9–37, with omissions. Copyright, 1950, by Gilbert Seldes. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

believed to be a violation of the First Amendment. The Court held that as the movies were "spectacles" made for entertainment, they were not entitled to freedom of expression and could not be considered "as part of the press of the country or as organs of public opinion." On the other hand, the Pope and Lenin saw in the movies a form of communication—not an organ of public opinion, perhaps, but a powerful way to *influence* public opinion. The position of the Court has implied that they were wrong.

The question of free expression has not yet been settled, but it probably will be by the time this is read, because the authority of the censors in Atlanta, Georgia, is being challenged by the producers of *Lost Boundaries,* which treats sympathetically the plight of a Negro who has passed as white. The Court has indicated its frame of mind in a sort of aside delivered in an anti-trust suit against the major studios; the essential words are: "We have no doubt that moving pictures, like newspapers and radio, are included in the press, whose freedom is guaranteed by the First Amendment." [1] In the thirty-three years between the two decisions many things have happened to the movies, but the doctrine of "entertainment" (commonly considered as another word for "amusement") has not been overthrown.[2]

In business to create illusion, Hollywood has imposed a compound illusion about itself on the American people: that the production of movies is the prime occupation of the movie companies; that movies are America's fourth or fifth largest industry; and that everybody goes to the movies. None of these things is true: a mere fraction of the money invested in the movie business goes into the making of pictures; the industry ranks nearer the forty-sixth place than the sixth; and nearly everybody stops going to the movies. Nevertheless they are a proper subject for a statesman to think about. If the Pope and Lenin are right, and the movies are a supremely powerful instrument for influencing people, a statesman should decide whether it is good for the country to have the movies continue in the service of a small mass minority prodigiously important because it is composed largely of the adolescent; whether the movies should be encouraged publicly to destroy the audience they create; whether the country can afford a movie industry which hardly ever functions in the service of the majority of its citizens.

It was not as a statesman that Mr. Hoffman spoke; he was, in fact, only introducing and spreading on the *Record* an article on the tribula-

[1] A lower court, however, held to the earlier interpretation in 1950.

[2] The Supreme Court in *The Miracle* case, May, 1952, ruled that the cinema is entitled to the rights of free speech and free press, thus reversing its own 1916 ruling which held that movies are "a business, pure and simple." The 1952 decision also reversed the New York State courts which had previously upheld the censors' ban on Roberto Rossellini's *The Miracle* on the ground that it was "sacrilegious."—*The editors.*

tions of Eric Johnston. But his few remarks are a good example of common illusions about the movies and will bear analysis.

In substance Mr. Hoffman appealed to the movies to mend their ways; as if anticipating the usual reply, he anchored his remarks firmly in the profit motive, holding out a great hope of gain if only the movies would cleave to the good and the true. "The American people like pictures which are clean and wholesome," he said. "They do not care for barroom scenes. They do not care for any of those things which a dissolute, decaying nation sometimes sanctions." He looked for the day when in each city and town there would be a movie house in which only "clean pictures, modest actions, were portrayed; . . . where the rewards went to the decent, the honest. . . ." And he predicted that the attendance at such houses would soon "educate the producers as to what the American picture audience really wanted."

Children and younger people, in Mr. Hoffman's view, might go to the movies for amusement, but adults go "to forget . . . some of their pressing problems, to get away from the sordidness of life." That American life is substantially sordid is, in itself, an un-American idea, and the Congressman softened the impeachment by making it specific: "The housewife wants a little distraction from the high cost of living. The businessman desires to think of little or nothing. He isn't greatly interested in whether someone's wife or someone's husband was successful in the pursuit of some other individual's husband or wife. He would like just a little clean fun on the screen."

And for the knockdown cash-at-the-box-office argument, Mr. Hoffman added: "The real paying audience is made up of older people."

I must leave it to more worldly minds to correct the picture of the adult American as sketched by the gentleman from Michigan; even if it were photographically exact, he could not sell it to Hollywood because the background is out of perspective: the businessman does not go to the movies—the real paying audience is made up of younger people. One fact is established: after they reach the age of twenty or so, people go less and less to the movies. The movies live on children from the ages of ten to nineteen, who go steadily and frequently and almost automatically to the pictures; from the ages of twenty to twenty-five people still go, but less often; after thirty, the audience begins to vanish from the movie houses. Checks made by different researchers at different times and places turn up minor variations in percentages; but it works out that between the ages of thirty and fifty, more than half of the men and women in the United States, steady patrons of the movies in their earlier years, do not bother to see more than one picture a month; after fifty, more than half see virtually no pictures at all.

This is the ultimate, essential, overriding fact about the movies;

around it crystallize all the problems—personal, financial, social, moral, and aesthetic—of the motion-picture industry, from the "frustration" of its writers to the "glamour" of its stars. The detailed statistics were presented to the studios by such organizations as the Audience Research Institute, a special branch of the Gallup organization. Their significance has been made clear by outsiders, myself and others, for several years; but it has had no effect on the studios. The dazzling (and inflated) figure of four billion paid admissions a year dwindles into a probably thirty million separate moviegoers, chiefly young people, many of whom go several times a week; and at the end of the statistical hocuspocus stands the gaunt figure of a mere thirteen to fifteen million individuals who actually see the basic staple commodity of Hollywood, the A feature-picture. (This is three million less than in 1946—a drop of twenty per cent.) The Audience Research Institute estimates that eight of these thirteen million people are under thirty, so that something like two-thirds of the population is contributing only one-third of the A-picture audience.[3]

Face to face with the prime economic fact that the movies kill off their own audiences and live truly on the unearned increment of a steady birth rate, I confess to a sense of shock at the spectacle of an industry, financed by the shrewdest of bankers, contenting itself with a mere third, or at most half, of its potential income. The actual figures have been worked out: if the forty million who have stopped going to the movies would be brought back for only one picture a week, the gain at the box-office would be nearly half a billion dollars a year, after taxes; the share of the studios would be a hundred and fifty million dollars. Moreover, with these strays returned to the fold, American movies would, for the first time in years, be making a profit in the domestic market alone and be able to live without the export trade. In recent years about one out of every ten pictures has been able to do this.

It does not follow that we would have better pictures or that richer studios would be more daring in their experiments. All we can be sure of is that to attract a large audience the movies would be compelled to satisfy many more *kinds* of interest; they would have to become a genu-

[3] The statistics about age levels come from the ARI, which made its surveys originally for a movie studio. The thirteen million estimate of the total number of individuals who see an A picture, the most shocking of all the figures, was given in 1949 by the vice-president of one of the most prosperous movie companies and independently noted by the vice-president of another in 1950. On the falling off of audiences, the figures indicate that the rate of decline is leveling, that the thirteen per cent drop in 1948 was the peak, but there was at least a seven per cent drop in 1949 and another of perhaps ten per cent in 1950. Taken in connection with the other figures, this "improvement" offers cold comfort, and it was, in fact, in 1950 that the movie industry began seriously to wonder how to bring in "the hundred million people physically and financially able to attend theaters" and to look for the cause of "the apparent indifference of too many people toward motion pictures." (The quotations are from two vice-presidents, on the business side, of Twentieth Century-Fox.)

inely democratic, instead of a mass-minority, entertainment; and in a democracy like ours, encouragement of individual interests and satisfaction of many various desires are the surest protection against the constant threat of robotization and the ultimate emergence of the mass man.

It will presently appear that so long as the movies neglect the majority of citizens they must actually contribute to the creation of a robotized society; and that is the primary reason for examining the structure that makes this inevitable. But the fact itself is so incredible that we have to inquire why the financiers of movie production have either failed to notice it or considered it insignificant. No other manufacturer of a mass-consumption commodity—cigarettes, soaps, cereals, motorcars—has deliberately cut himself off from the larger part of his market. Why have the movies done so?

The money paid in at the box-office by adolescents is as good as any; during the past decade the gross revenue of the movie industry rose steadily; dividends in 1947, reflecting the peak year of 1946, were over fifty million dollars, an all-time high. It is hard to quarrel with so lordly an annual profit; and any attempt to alter the quality of the movies, in order to bring in more customers, entails a risk which the management may justifiably refuse to take. The investor, cashing his dividend checks, is too grateful to ask whether he might not have gotten a still bigger check; and unless acute inflation renders his dollars worthless, he is unlikely to quarrel with a constantly rising graph.

Yet it is sheer stultification to approach the finances of the movies in this trusting spirit. The critical eye notes that other lines on the chart have been rising also and makes comparisons. The population of the United States went up by over fifteen million between 1941 and 1950; the take-home pay in that period was doubled; the number of families in the five-thousand-dollars-a-year bracket tripled, and the number in the middle group (earning from sixty to a hundred dollars a week) increased almost as much. At the end of that time the inhabitants of the country, taken as a whole, had nearly twice as much money to spend as they had when the war began, *after allowing for inflation;* but they spent a smaller share of their total income on the movies in 1948 than they had spent at any time in the previous twenty years. The amount was high because the average admission price had gone up by forty per cent; but between the great year of 1946 and 1948 actual attendance dropped from eighty to seventy million. (These are Hollywood figures, seriously questioned in the industry; the totals are considered inflated and the drop is estimated as high as twenty-five per cent.) . . .

Coming of Age in America

As Americans pass through the stages of courtship and begin married life, as they go to work, break from the protection and discipline of their parents, and begin to establish families of their own, the need for the particular satisfactions given by the movies becomes less acute. The image of the hero, the throb of passion, the myth of success, *as conceived by the movies,* are no longer needed; and as time goes on they become unacceptable.

A good part of the defection from the movie houses is explained by this gradual maturing of the audience. Neither the friendly encouragement of the dark theater nor the stimulus of unreal passion on the screen is needed when the ritual of courtship is over; the business of getting on in the world and of setting up a new household absorbs both husband and wife; new friends and new ways of being with old friends are developed; there is less free time—until the baby-sitter became a recognized social figure, evenings were particularly taken. But the movies cannot put forward these social and economic changes as a complete explanation. The attraction of the movies grows progressively weaker; there is no return to the theaters after business is going well and money for tickets is to be had and the children are growing up and the total habit of life is firmly grounded. Neither the happily married nor those who bump their way over disappointments and divorce seek consolation from the movies; those for whom the success story of the movies was prophetic stay away, and so do those whom it deluded. The habit broken in the first years of adult life is never resumed.

The changes one undergoes in the years when a life pattern is being set make the movie myth irrelevant; when we see that the myth is actually false, it becomes intolerable. In their twenties young Americans not only marry and set up housekeeping and begin to have children; they become aware of new duties and responsibilities; they have to borrow money and meet their debts; they pay taxes and mortgage their homes; they meet the pressure of law and social opinion; they plant themselves, not as irrevocably as Europeans, but firmly enough, and the pattern their lives will follow begins to form. Under compulsion they begin to see what life is like, not the ultimate philosophical essence of life, but the day-to-day actuality. The atmosphere of American life, since the 1920's at least, tends to delay this coming of age; the movies and radio, the entire advertising business, conspire to prolong adolescence until we are in danger of becoming a nation of teen-agers; but biologic and economic pressures still keep to their appointed paths, and at a point where they converge the cross-mark is made, signifying that a young man or a young woman has become an individual, responsible, fairly integrated, and prepared to continue life in

a certain direction. This happens to the ignorant and to the well informed; it has little to do with intellectual capacity; it is a consequence not of education but of experience. To see life steadily and see it whole is given to a minute fraction of humanity; but merely suffering and enjoying the small emotions and the domestic trials of an ordinary life have an effect; and those who go through a few years of adult life cannot change themselves back. That is what the movies, which shrink from changing themselves, are asking the audience to do.

The staple commodity of Hollywood is a small group of myths. Unlike the ancient myths, they are not associated with profound religious experience, but, like those myths, they "embody some popular idea concerning natural or historical phenomena." The rest of the definition (in the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary*) is also applicable: "a purely fictitious narrative usually involving supernatural persons, actions, or events," and one of the meanings of "mythical" is "having no foundation in fact." The mature mind does not reject a myth that corresponds to actuality, because in its origin any myth is an imaginative explanation of a mystery; but the myth must be incarnated into a story to become fiction as we know it, an imaginative re-creation of reality. The myths we reject are not interpretations but falsifications, and the popular ideas they embody may once have been relevant but are so no longer. Grown men and women, and cynics among them, cherish the legend of Galatea, to which Bernard Shaw gave flesh and blood and fundamental brainwork in Pygmalion. They insist that the myth must have its own reality; they are as eager as little children to listen to a story, but the story must be true to life either as they know it or as they want it to be; and it must be a story even if it embodies a myth.

Why Hollywood is committed to mythology and can no longer tell a story will presently become clear. For the moment, we can approach the problem of maturity from another direction, observing the movies that are by common consent called mature and inquiring whether they can actually please an adult but not intellectual audience.

Maturity, Foreign and Domestic

The accolade of maturity is usually given to European pictures. Some of these are so alien to our modes of thinking that comparisons are useless; but the British product is close to our own in general method and purpose. I take, for my first example, a straight cops-and-robbers picture, *Odd Man Out,* directed in 1947 by Carol Reed for Filippo del Guidice, and *Naked City,* produced by the late Mark Hellinger for Universal (1948).

In each an act of violence is committed at the beginning; in each the police track down the criminal; in *Odd Man Out* a number of peo-

ple take an interest in the man; some of them hide him, some expose him to his enemies; while in *Naked City* the police are hindered chiefly by accomplices; in each picture the criminal is brought to bay and killed by the police. Having said this much, I have told nothing of the essence of *Odd Man Out* and, at the same time, have said everything worth saying about *Naked City* except that the final chase, along the superstructure of a New York bridge, was excellently photographed and thrilling.

The technical wizards in Hollywood cannot duck the question: By what means did a British variation of our specialty, the escape-and-chase picture, manage to be something like a serious work of art? Why was it profoundly exciting when it stopped being a thriller? Why did its theme seem important, its passions intense, its tragic end so satisfying? The last question is, in a way, the answer to the others. That a cops-and-robbers picture should have a guiding line of thought, that its people should be moved and shaken and reconciled by profound human passions, that the death of the hunted hero-criminal should be tragic—these are the elements our gangster pictures deliberately avoid.

The robbery which launches the story of *Odd Man Out* is undertaken to get funds for a secret political movement vaguely defined as "the Organization." Alien as this is to American experience, it was convincing; the somber fanaticism of the men as they planned the raid gave the Organization actuality and significance, so that a groundwork of sympathy for the robbers was laid, and out of this sympathy rose all the later emotions of the audience. Before we had lived with them five minutes we saw evil deeds flowing out of a noble motive and were committed from that moment to pity for good men who could never be good again because they were involved in murder; we felt hope and anxiety and fear, the dreadful sense of time running out while the force of law, admirable in its action and not without pity itself, closed in; it was not a simple matter of choosing sides, because we had the feeling that both the hunter and the hunted would give their lives to undo the murder, the feeling that life sometimes traps the good into evil ways and we are helpless.

In that mood we see Johnny shot by a mill-guard and returning the fire in a desperate attempt to get away; he cannot hold on to the car and falls; the driver is afraid to go back for him, and his other companions see him staggering into a side street; returning later, they fail to find him. From that point the picture divides into two lines which run parallel, then cross, and finally converge. One is the story of the wounded man trying to get away, dragging himself through mean streets, interrupting children at play, fainting in a shelter and waking to overhear the whispers of lovers, stumbling unseen into a cab in the rainy night and so passing the cordon of police. The other line brings in all the people who want Johnny: the police to arrest him; the jeweled Teresa, smuggler's fence and falsely warm host-

ess to the Organization's boys, who wants to square herself with the police by betraying Johnny; members of his gang who sacrifice themselves to draw off the pursuers; a nondescript little bird fancier who finds him and tries to sell him to a priest; the priest who wants to save his soul; the Samaritans who give him first aid but no more; the failed medical student who patches him up so that he can go to his fate; the artist who wants to paint the look of death in his eyes; the girl who loves him and wants to save him or die with him.

It has something of the effect of a diagram: faith, science, art, society, love—all competing for the body and soul of man. But with one exception, the artist, all the characters are saved from becoming abstractions, each has a life of his own; they are equipped not with superficial little characteristics but with complete and rounded characters; each has lived before the picture started, and the survivors of the tragedy will live on after it is ended. The streets through which they move are alive with junkyards and bookstalls and charwomen eating fish and chips from greasy papers and trams slewing round corners and factory whistles and men talking politics as they drink beer in saloons and women doing a bit of late marketing; they generate a sense of actuality so that the Belfast I have never seen is more real and palpable to me than the familiar ways of New York in the glossy brightness of *Naked City*.

The instant creation of a powerful emotion and the persisting sense of actuality are two of the three major elements in *Odd Man Out;* the third, the most subtle, is the satisfaction of a profound subconscious need: the picture makes you feel that it exists in time.

This is an extraordinarily difficult thing to do in the movies, which are seen in one unbroken sequence, but it is indispensable. Unless we feel that time is passing, we can have no sense of reality. Whenever we go to the movies we must live in two durations at once; first, our own in the theater, knowing while we sit there that at the end of two hours we must catch a train or stop at the delicatessen; and second, the duration of events on the screen, which may be shorter than our own in a Marx Brothers sequence or many times as long in a biography of Pasteur. (In a remarkable tour de force Alfred Hitchcock identified the two durations; all the events in *Rope* take place in a span of eighty minutes, and eighty minutes is precisely the time it takes the spectator to watch them unroll; the sense that time is passing is not, however, missing.) In *Odd Man Out,* skillful cutting between the two parallel actions, picking up the fugitive not where we last saw him but at a further stage on his doomed way, changes in light and in the pitch of the sound that the streets give off, all contribute; but, most of all, the admirable players themselves make us feel that they are living through events, their voices convey to us the passage of the hours, and we have in the end the final sense of reality, because

we have, without knowing it, forgotten our own time, our trains and our errands, and have endured as long as the characters on the screen.

Could Hollywood make such a picture? The answer is that fifteen years ago Hollywood did; in a sense, Hollywood made this same picture, for *Odd Man Out* is a lineal descendant of *The Informer,* and in many ways *The Informer* is the more daring and the more successful. The central character is not a handsome hero played by a popular actor; in place of James Mason's Johnny there is the doltish confused Gyppo played by Victor McLaglen, an actor of known inadequacy upon whom a miracle was worked by the brilliant director, John Ford. Here, too, the minor people are rounded, the streets and barrooms are sound and solid, the alien air (of an Irish city again) is still the air we breathe. Liam Flaherty's book is a finer work than F. L. Green's *Odd Man Out,* and the screen play derived from it by Dudley Nichols is one of the movies' rare instances of creative adaptation. John Ford and Carol Reed have both been influenced by D. W. Griffith, the first man who tried to transmit a dominant emotion through atmosphere on the screen, so the two pictures are technically parallel. *The Informer* also creates the illusion of time passing, and in pace, in pitch of voices, and in lighting, both directors deliberately "underplayed": the murmur of human conversation gives its tone to the pictures, not the projection of dialogue, and dramatic scenes are played for their full value without staccato interruptions of fresh angle-shots. A defect of *The Informer* is that almost all of it is played in semidarkness; the fearful atmosphere of Dublin in the days of The Trouble is impressive, but the picture is hard to see.

The history of *The Informer* is enlightening. Like other distinguished works, it was not a studio enterprise, and an executive of RKO whom I congratulated on the production said, with a rare mixture of grace and candor, "We aren't entitled to credit. John Ford wanted to do it and we let him." As things go, letting a successful director do a picture out of which the studio expects no profit is infrequent, and sometimes the studio is startled by the result. Favorable notices and Academy Awards went to Nichols, Ford, and McLaglen for the best screen play, the best direction, and the best performance by an actor, yet *The Informer* was not, by Academy standards, the best movie of the year, an honor which went to *Mutiny on the Bounty.* (The "Oscars" represent the personal judgment of people in the industry, choosing among pictures proposed by other people in the industry.) *The Informer* continued to be shown profitably for several years and is still revived occasionally.

I have compared one of the best melodramas ever made with a picture considerably above the Hollywood average and have introduced *The Informer,* one of a handful of great pictures, to indicate that the making of movies satisfactory to the adult intelligence is not a national prerogative

of the British. For a second set of examples, I choose an English picture which did not give me exceptional pleasure and compare it with an American picture of far more than usual quality: *Brief Encounter* and *Double Indemnity.*

Here, as in the first instance, the two pictures start with the same opening sequence. A man and a woman meet by chance and are instantly swept away by a frightening passion for each other. In *Brief Encounter* the lovers meet once or twice at a railway station restaurant, they go to see an American movie, they are observed by acquaintances who might gossip, and their one assignation is interrupted in a singularly unconvincing and tasteless sequence (the unexpected return of the owner of the flat and an implausible tirade on morality); they part, the man to make the conventional British journey of thwarted love, the woman to return to her husband and family (and the child obligingly is in bed with a sprained ankle or measles or whatever occupational disease afflicts children whose parents must be reunited). Written by Noel Coward, who co-directed with David Lean, *Brief Encounter* is uninventive and at times inept.

In the picture Raymond Chandler and Billy Wilder made out of James M. Cain's novelette, *Double Indemnity,* at least three deaths by violence occur (lover and mistress kill the husband and, soon after, each other), and there are hints of earlier misdeeds. The technical virtuosity of the production is a pleasure to behold. The nemesis of the lovers is the claims agent of an insurance company, and the way his instincts warn him of a fraud is woven into the story so deftly before he has to act in the central drama that his intervention is expected, giving the spectator a sense of threat—and at the same time providing a grotesquely comic sequence for contrast. The rendezvous in a supermarket is a masterly handling of all the surfaces of a complicated event. And the triumph of the picture is that the writer and producer, forbidden by the Production Code from saying anything significant about the passion between the man and the woman, a passion almost animal in its instant and exclusive focus on copulation, still managed to suggest that it did exist. For an American picture, usually compelled to be false and driven to sly sentimentality in self-defense, this is exceptional; sensuality is implicit when Fred MacMurray's eyes follow Barbara Stanwyck's ankle-bracelet down the stairs as she comes from a sun bath, and it runs through the early scenes of the picture until the moment she visits him at his apartment; there, in spite of a slight disorder in the dress, it becomes clear that we no longer are concerned with human beings but with movie characters. From that point the picture revolves around Edward G. Robinson, who suspects murder but does not know that the murderer works in his own office.

Obviously the two pictures, starting from the same event, were not

trying to do the same thing, and it would be as silly to condemn the American for being a melodrama as to belittle the English one for being too taciturn and undramatic. It is not, however, an isolated thing that an American picture turns toward violence and a British toward a more common mood; violence without meaning, according to Max Lerner, is the outstanding characteristic of our film product, and if it is a distortion of the truth of our daily lives, we must face the fact that the Production Code effectively prevents Hollywood from using the truth; in foolish pictures sentimentality takes its place; in serious ones the substitute is a kind of hectic activity which usually turns violent and thus leads to retribution, giving a legalistic and hypocritical "moral" ending. In *Double Indemnity* the mortally wounded hero, after telling his story to a dictaphone, tries to crawl away and save himself, but he fails. Death is his portion. In *Brief Encounter* the hero and heroine have to live.

And it is possible for them to live because, in spite of the hokum and stale devices of the plot, the principal characters were presented to us with the accent of truth; everything in *Double Indemnity* was made plausible, the surface was brilliant, and you did not have to live in Los Angeles to identify the boxes of soap flakes on the supermarket shelves, the basement garage, the cluttered living room, the daughter going down to a date at the corner. The people were projected larger than life, but they were not filled with the emotions and the significance of life, so that they were really inflated, and when the picture came to an end they collapsed. The highly charged apparition of Miss Stanwyck was correct for the picture; Celia Johnson, who played the woman in *Brief Encounter* (and wore a simple dress throughout) was right as a complete human being. The pitch and the pace of that picture were right for the people in that particular predicament, so that after believing that these events happened to them, we came to believe they might happen to anyone, to ourselves. The scale was life-size. . . .

The pictures I have mentioned here are on the serious side, but any picture in which an intelligent adult can take pleasure should be considered mature, and of these Hollywood has made many. *The Great McGinty* and *Hail the Conquering Hero, Hold Back the Dawn,* which had a rare and authentic feeling of romance, *My Man Godfrey, Mr. Deeds Goes to Town, The Farmer's Daughter, The Jolson Story, Hell's Angels*—these are titles picked among the average A pictures. They were made by writers and directors and players steeped in the Hollywood tradition. They are not cited as examples of great art, but they are far from infantile, and they prove that Hollywood not only can make intelligent pictures but can make a huge profit out of them.

The trifles in this random list indicate that maturity is not "box-office poison." They suggest also that both Hollywood producers and intellectual

critics should revise their ideas. Maturity does not necessarily imply either the tragic sense of life or an excessive sophistication. The mature picture makes no demand on the audience which the average adult is unable, or unwilling, to meet; and it gives such satisfaction that it can accomplish what the basic childish product has failed to do: it can keep the larger part of the audience coming to the movies instead of driving it away.

The more generalized attitude of the intellectuals, their dislike of domestic movies, their enthusiasm for foreign films, might have some effect on Hollywood if the critics thought out their objections and expressed them clearly. The studios make a distinction between intellectuals and the public: the former want tragedy, the latter want to avoid it. Actually, sound critics know that the true tragic spirit is rare, and what they really want is for Hollywood not to distort character and tragic action in order to send the audience home with a smile as well as a tear. American critics in particular should understand that the sense of tragedy does not rise out of an abstraction but corresponds to the human condition of an era and a country. In the past, poets may have felt the pity of struggling against destiny, the sadness of death taking off the young and the beautiful, the bitterness of injustice; but they were also influenced by the poverty and hopelessness of the common man, by the fatal bars of privilege, by slavery and grinding toil and hunger. If the happy ending was only an aspiration to people in the past, a life free from pressing want is an actuality of the present American economy for such numbers of people that our atmosphere is charged with confidence. The background against which tragedy was written in the past does not exist here, and if we do not create great tragedies it may be because they are not necessary for us. The individual who cannot understand tragedy in the arts may become incapable of facing anything serious in his own life; but this does not mean that the popular arts are under any compulsion to be largely tragic in tone. An aesthete and an intellectual of the first order has even been skeptical of the uses of tragedy: "Because Aeschylus and Sophocles were great poets," Santayana writes, "does it follow that life would be cheap if it did not follow their fables? The life of tragic heroes is not good; it is misguided, unnecessary, and absurd." In this respect, the executives of Hollywood seem to adhere to the life of reason more closely than their critics.

READING

How effective is Seldes' use of the baby food analogy? How sound? How is it related to the report of Congressman Hoffman's speech?

What is the connection, as Seldes explains it, between profits and good motion pictures?

With what proportions of summary and comment does Seldes treat his major

examples? Can both those who have seen the movies and those who have not seen them read these passages with enjoyment?

INTERPRETATION

According to Seldes, why are the movie myths intolerable to young adults? Analyze a recent movie, showing how it might interest adolescents but not young adults or vice versa.

If Hollywood can make mature and successful motion pictures, how do you explain the fact that it makes so few of them?

Would you make the same criticism of television that Seldes makes of movies? If so, does this suggest that Seldes is wrong or that the mass entertainment industry is wrong again?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Review of a Movie
Why My Friends Go to Movies
The Quality of Escape
Maturity in Entertainment

MYTHS AND MOVIES*

by Arthur L. Mayer

Arthur L. Mayer (1886–), motion picture executive, operated the Rialto Theater in New York, 1933–1948. Vice-president of the Council of Motion Pictures, he frequently contributes to the magazines. He lives in New York.

While I was serving in Germany as Chief of the Motion Picture Branch of Military Government, we produced a documentary film one episode of which took place in an amusement park. There were two entrances to the park; one marked, "This Way to Heaven," the other, "This Way to a Lecture on Heaven." The first was deserted but hundreds of ardent Germans were pouring through the second.

Many of my American friends seem to me to have a similar second-hand approach to motion pictures. They read books about them, attend lectures about them, disparage them at cocktail parties. The only thing that they do not do is to attend them, or at least attend those "adult films" about which they talk so earnestly. They pay lip service to the cinema but they don't pay admission. Or else, if they do, they must represent a very small minority, much smaller than you would suppose from the amount of noise they make.

Their talk is reminiscent of the answers to questionnaires circulated by public opinion researchers concerning double features. Invariably these indicate an overwhelming sentiment against two pictures for the

* From *Harper's Magazine,* CCII (June, 1951), 71–77. Copyright, 1951, by Harper & Brothers. Reprinted by permission of the author and publisher.

price of one but exhibitors who seek to operate single-feature theaters in competition with double-jeopardy houses quickly discover that this is double talk.

Some years ago I was sufficiently naïve to prevail upon my partners to institute a policy of playing one carefully selected picture on weekends in Somerville, New Jersey. We operate the only theater in that high class residential community but its inhabitants were not to be deprived of their entertainment bargain. On Saturdays and Sundays they drove to the nearby town of Bound Brook, where my friend and canny competitor, Mr. George Skouras, reaped an unearned harvest until we reverted to sanity and a second feature. At the present time, in some of the, theatrically speaking, depressed areas double features have not only been replaced by triple features but actually by quadruplays, or whatever you care to call four pictures.

Another prevalent myth among the intelligentsia is that foreign films are far superior to American. Partially this is merely an expression of snobbishness; partially a tribute to the skillful and unremitting research of men like Joseph Burstyn—modesty forbids my mentioning myself. We used to look at hundreds of French and Italian films in an effort to cull out a few that were worthy of importation. Popularity in their domestic market is no assurance of success in the United States. "The Bicycle Thief," for instance, was a failure in Italy. Theater-goers casually dismissed the plight of the hero which so distressed American audiences. "What a boob," they said. "If his bike was stolen, why didn't he rent another?"

Occasionally, Mr. Burstyn and I would have the Balboa-like thrill of unexpectedly coming upon some superb cinematic treasure but by and large the pictures we looked at were inferior to the American product in story, acting, and technical proficiency. I highly recommend to those who regard Hollywood as a petrified forest of decaying formulas and escapist morasses, a closer acquaintance with the product of Cinecitta and Elstree.

The easy game of taking pot shots at the American penchant for potboilers is also sedulously cultivated in current books for the cultured anent movies and movie making. A myth maker, appropriately named Powdermaker, descends upon the Pacific Coast announcing her intent to investigate the habits of the strange inhabitants of Hollywood, much as she studied the mores of the South Sea Islanders. In the guise of an anthropologist, she collects an anthology of all the ancient and disgruntled gossip which persistently circulates in the film capital as in all other capitals. This she labels "science" and publishes a book which must be far more embarrassing to anthropologists than to picture people, although practi-

cally everyone in the producing end of the industry—directors, writers, actors, alike—is labeled venal or frustrated.

Jack Rosenstein, intriguingly described as "Hedda Hopper's legman," is sufficiently candid to make no pretense at scientific research. He announces that nothing is holy in Hollywood, that movies will never produce another great film star, that producers without exception are fat, lazy, and unimaginative, and that the industry has alienated its public by indulging in pictures with social significance. Exactly the opposite attack is leveled by my distinguished friend Gilbert Seldes, who titles the first chapter of his book *The Great Audience,* "The Audience Vanishes," and who is convinced, profit and loss statements to the contrary, that Hollywood is in sore financial straits because it does not produce enough "mature" pictures to appeal to American audiences.

What puzzles me is that these books are greeted with approval in the press although an intensely interesting and informative account of movie-making procedures, *Case History of a Movie,* written by an expert, Doré Schary, receives comparatively slight attention. Our literary critics seem prepared to applaud anything written about Hollywood as long as it is opprobrious. It is easy to understand that having to read as many books as they do, they should have little time to attend pictures, but with their first-hand awareness of the limited relationship between literary merit and best-seller lists, they should, one would think, accept these easy strictures on the screen scene with a reasonable degree of caution.

Some writers have even gone so far as to prophesy, with obvious relish, that "the cinema theater, as we now know it, is dead as a dodo." Book sales have diminished in the past few years but no one, I think, is under the impression that the publishing business is about to disappear. I am equally confident that the movie theater is an institution, which will, for many years to come, continue to flourish.

II

Actually, motion picture attendance has declined only if we regard the amazing business done by the movies in 1946 and 1947 as normal. That is much like saying that because there were fewer marriage licenses in 1949 than in 1946 there is a declining market for sex. Correctly to ascertain the public demand for any available commodity, movies or marriage, you have to study and chart its course over a period of years. Some utterances of eminent movie magnates may have served to create the impression of impending bankruptcy, but these discouraged gentry remind me of a deceased uncle of mine who at one time in his career was, if Dun and Bradstreet are to be believed, the possessor of $10 million. In the Depression years, however, he came upon hard times and passed on feeling hopelessly disgraced. He was down to his last $3 million.

In 1939 American theaters grossed $673 million, and in 1948, the last year for which we have a report from the U.S. Census Bureau, they took in $1,569 million, an increase of 133 per cent. Gone are the lush picture pickings of the years immediately following the war, but the seven major companies last year made a profit of over $50 million, almost three times as great as what they reported in 1940.

This profit was earned in the face of a substantial decline in actual movie attendance due in part to the inroads of television—if I may use so indelicate a word in a magazine designed for home consumption. It hardly seems surprising that the appearance of an amazing new phenomenon in the field of entertainment should exert a profound effect on competitive forms of warding off boredom such as reading books, making love, or going to the movies. It is premature to estimate, however, what the permanent effects of television on motion-picture attendance will prove to be. Investigations conducted in Washington and Detroit seem to indicate that after a period of six to nine months the interest of all except its juvenile devotees wanes and that papa, mama, and the older children revert to previous patterns of passing time.

As far as the movies are concerned, television, like radio, may eventually prove not an antagonist, but an ally. It has already helped to develop talent for the screen. It is serving increasingly as the ideal medium for advertising coming attractions. It will eventually hugely expand the appeal of motion-picture theaters by enabling them to show prize fights, crime investigations, and baseball games while they are taking place, national spokesmen delivering important addresses, and current shows while they are still on Broadway. It may siphon off some of the less critical movie patronage, which might prove to be a blessing in disguise; but the limitations of a comparatively small screen, of an insatiable demand for more talent and material than can reasonably be anticipated, and of advertising budgets which cannot hope to equal potential box-office receipts, will for a long time shackle television as a competitive medium of entertainment. Visualize "King Solomon's Mines" on a nineteen-inch rather than a nineteen-foot screen, William Wyler turning out a picture a week instead of one a year, or "Born Yesterday" with Brod Crawford, after knocking in Judy Holliday's teeth, delivering a few comments concerning the merits of Colgate's Dental Cream, and you have some vision of the problems confronting television.

III

Most of the industry's highbrow critics, however, are disinterested in the possible inroads of television on movie revenue. When they speak of a "lost audience" they refer to a presumably frustrated group of seekers for "mature films." This is being denied the privilege of seeing the type of pic-

tures they crave by the obstinacy and stupidity of the movie moguls. Many critics at one time or another have leveled all sorts of criticisms at Messrs. Skouras and Schenck, Zanuck and Zukor, but never has it been suggested that they were inferior in business acumen and foresight to writers or scientists. The bulk of the pictures they make are rented on the basis of a percentage of exhibitor receipts and the fluctuations of those receipts affords a daily national barometer of what audiences accept and what they reject. If a large portion of the American public really desires pictures with greater intellectual, social, or artistic content it can get them and get them quickly by acting in the only fashion that any business enterprise, whether it makes pictures, pajamas, or pretzels, can understand. It can make them profitable.

In my experience of over thirty years in the motion-picture industry the American people have had plenty of opportunities to support such pictures and almost invariably have failed to do so. Although I have helped to import many of the finest pictures ever brought into this country, I was able to maintain this activity only because I was simultaneously operating the Rialto Theater, which consistently showed the worst. The profits on the bad pictures enabled me to stand the losses on the good ones. Most of the critics of the industry are optimists because they only write and speak about the demand for superior films. I am a pessimist because I have invested my money in them.

My first movie boss was Mr. Sam Goldfish. He was in business with Archie Selwyn and when they separated Archie claimed that Sam not only lost his money but took half of his name. Under any monicker, however, Goldwyn is a lover of the beautiful and a man of fine perceptions. He has frequently been many years ahead of his time and prepared to shelve his unquestioned commercial sagacity for a gesture to posterity. Back in the prehistoric movie days of which I am speaking he proved his courage and endangered his position as president of Goldwyn Pictures by importing the sensational first modern art feature, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." It was sensationally unsuccessful. I was involved in this disaster and made lifelong enemies among exhibitors by inveigling them into buying this futuristic fantasy without first screening it—the only way in which they could ever have been induced to book it.

In the prewar years Warners distinguished themselves with a series of films dealing with the great political and ideological issues of the day—"Juarez," "The Magic Bullet," "They Won't Forget," and "Watch on the Rhine." These fine productions brought out reams of favorable critical comment but a deplorable paucity of patrons. They were discontinued and Warners today would as soon think of producing a picture on a controversial issue as of presenting American motherhood in an unfavorable light.

As far back as 1934 I wrote a piece in *Liberty* entitled "Why Hollywood Loses Money on Good Pictures," which compared in painful detail the box-office receipts of such intelligent productions as "Berkeley Square" and "The Emperor Jones" with the intake of such moronic abortions as "The Half Naked Truth" and "They Had to Get Married." A short time thereafter I met Cecil B. De Mille and he said: "Mr. Mayer, how can you say good pictures lose money? *My* pictures are invariably profitable." Quick as a flash at this embarrassing moment, I responded, "But yours are the run of De Mille pictures."

A few years later I was instrumental in persuading Adolph Zukor to make a screen version of the delightful imaginative play "Beggar on Horseback." James Cruze converted it into charming picture terms, but not long after its release Mr. Zukor spotted me on the street. He shook his fist playfully under my nose. "If I make any more pictures of the kind that you suggest," he said, "I'll be a beggar without any horse at all."

Only recently Walter Wanger told me that in his memorable career receipts on his pictures have been in approximately inverse ratio to their cinematic merits. The public made the pot boil with potboilers like "Arabian Nights" and "Canyon Passage" but they were cold to masterpieces like "The Long Voyage Home" and "Stagecoach." Equally unprofitable were such unforgettable films as Garson Kanin's "A Man to Remember," Leo Carey's "Make Way for Tomorrow," and William Wellman's "The Ox Bow Incident."

Of course there have been exceptions to my thesis. How many depends upon a definition of what maturity in films consists of, a study in semantics left in the limbo of uncertainty by their proponents. "The Lost Weekend," "The Best Years of Our Lives," "Henry V," if they qualify, were all unquestioned box-office successes although, I suspect, not entirely for reasons related to their intellectual content. Those who contend that there has been marked progress in recent times in the reception of more serious subjects, are, I think, victims of wishful thinking. Two years ago Humphrey Bogart's "The Treasure of Sierra Madre" was received so unkindly that he had to revert to smacking alluring ladies in alluring places to regain his popularity. Doré Schary, upon becoming head of the Metro studio, made a notable effort to raise the studio's maturity batting average with "Intruder in the Dust," which Bosley Crowther of the *New York Times* called "one of the great cinematic dramas of our times." It proved one of the great cinematic flops of all times. Mr. Schary has now gone back to the mines—profitable mines, I mean—such as King Solomon's. His recent tribute to liberalism, "The Magnificent Yankee," is as unworthy of a great judge as it is of a great studio executive.

Stanley Kramer, after leaving the U. S. Army, devoted himself to

making exactly the type of pictures for which the intelligentsia plead. Recently he fashioned with rare skill and courage a film about paraplegic veterans. Archer Winsten of the New York *Post* termed it "superb, popular entertainment." Certainly it was superb. Equally certainly it was not popular. It was entitled "The Men" but apparently neither men nor women, regardless of brow measurements, cared to attend a nonsentimentalized treatment of so grim a subject.

Two years ago Universal was over $4 million in the red. In 1950 its red corpuscles had been reactivated by a profit of almost a million and a half. This was largely due to the "Ma and Pa Kettles," a series ingeniously tailored for what is insultingly known as the family trade. The pictures cost about $500,000 each to make, and although they play almost exclusively in small towns and neighborhood theaters, gross about $2,500,000. It will require three of them, however, this year to make up for the losses that Universal will suffer from its dalliance with the world of fantasy in a fine screen version of "Harvey."

Similarly, Paramount redeemed the heavy loss it suffered with Willie Wyler's exquisite "The Heiress" when it produced "Samson and Delilah," which will gross approximately $11 million, probably the third most successful picture in movie annals. The average film plays to an audience of about thirteen million people but "Samson and Delilah" should triple that figure. It would appear as if what the industry needs is more Victor Matures (not to mention De Milles) rather than more mature pictures.

Another incredible bonanza is "At War with the Army." In the face of a withering barrage from the reviewers, "The Army" wrecked the non-holiday box-office record for opening week of $110,000, and it is wreaking similar havoc across the entire countryside. Frequently, as I observe, and I do so almost daily, the good receipts for what good people call bad pictures, and the bad receipts for what they call good, I am reminded of Henry Mencken's sour dictum, "No one ever went broke underestimating the taste of the American public."

IV

The indomitable Mr. Seldes, however, is not so easily discouraged. He contends the fault is not with the taste of the public, but with the distribution practices of the major companies. They ought, he says, to play the adult pictures in the little theaters, and I imagine the adultery ones in the big theaters. Prejudiced as I am by a financial stake in several small houses, I heartily agree that pictures are frequently booked into inappropriate theaters. The problem, however, of inadequate public support for what it refers to disparagingly as "message pictures" lies far deeper than any distribution practices. I played King Vidor's stirring pre-New Deal saga, "Our Daily Bread," at the little Rialto to unprecedentedly low re-

ceipts. I sought to enlist the support of every social-minded organization in New York City with a picture about child labor called "Boy Slaves." I wanted it to be a great success, not only for the personal profit and satisfaction involved but also to encourage RKO to make more pictures of this nature. I advertised it widely in the liberal press. I spoke about it before ladies' clubs and in YMCA halls. I brought it to the attention of editorial writers and columnists. It lasted just six days!

I freely admit that the Rialto, which specialized in pictures of murder, mayhem, and mystery to such an extent that I became known as the Merchant of Menace, was not the correct theater to play a film of this type. It might have done better in one of the so-called art theaters of which there are approximately 250 located in the larger cities and select suburbs. These used to be referred to as "sure-seaters" because of their sadly limited patronage. They are transformed, however, into sure non-seaters when they play pictures whose appeal is sensual rather than sensuous. At present, for instance, "Bitter Rice," an Italian film, is attracting hold-out audiences in all of the "art" theaters of the United States. It is devoid of cinematic merit, but as Howard Hughes said of "The Outlaw," there are two good reasons why every man should see it.

There were plenty of good reasons why people of taste and artistic appreciation would want to see "The Titan," recently crowned by the National Board of Review as the best foreign film of 1950. This magnificent study of the life and works of Michelangelo played in the same group of small theaters but it has not yet recovered the modest cost involved in its American re-editing.

Similarly, my former firm, Mayer-Burstyn, showed "The Quiet One" in these houses. The movie critics rallied to the support of this lovely little picture with the marvelous reviews which it so fully merited. Our final gross was less than that of many Hollywood shorts!

Actually, the only sensational successes scored by Burstyn and myself in the twenty years in which we were engaged in business—incidentally the longest period that anyone has ever survived the hazards of supplying foreign films to American audiences—were with pictures whose artistic and ideological merits were aided and abetted at the box office by their frank sex content. These we were able to exhibit profitably in big theaters as well as small. "Open City" was generally advertised with a misquotation from *Life* adjusted so as to read: "Sexier than Hollywood ever dared to be," together with a still of two young ladies deeply engrossed in a rapt embrace, and another of a man being flogged, designed to tap the sadist trade. The most publicized scene in "Paisan" showed a young lady disrobing herself with an attentive male visitor reclining by her side on what was obviously not a nuptial couch. In the case of "The Bicycle Thief," which was completely devoid of any erotic embellishments, the exhibitors did

their best with an imaginative sketch of a young lady riding a bicycle. The Motion Picture Association rushed in to reinforce their efforts by denying it a seal unless the little boy with an urge to urinate was eliminated. In spite of this inadvertent first aid to the box office, and in spite of the critics' rave reviews, it did far less business than either "Open City" or "Paisan."

V

Much has been made of the fact that approximately two-thirds of movie attendance comes from people under thirty-five years of age. I cannot see, however, why this should be a source of surprise to anybody. If I go to a football game, or into a store that sells sheet music or to a night club (I never do, but if I did) I am surrounded almost exclusively by young people. If we can generalize about such matters, youth likes to go out; middle age likes to stay home. Youth is eager for entertainment; middle age prefers ease and comfort. I do not agree, however, for one moment that on youth's shoulders alone rests the responsibility for the popularity of some tawdry, trashy pictures any more than they are responsible for the popularity of some tawdry, trashy books and plays.

Surely it is to the young rather than to the old that we must look for the interest in experimental techniques, the readiness to accept innovations and creative ideas, the willingness to greet new faces on which all progress rests. The vast auditorium where Cinema 16 holds its showings of strange *avant-garde* documentaries is composed 99 per cent of people not under thirty-five but under twenty-five. When I attended Cocteau's "Orpheus" I looked around in loneliness for another gray head beside my own. I thought the picture bordered on the ludicrous but that is exactly how my mother felt thirty years ago about "Caligari."

If my own experience is a reliable guide, financially the industry would surely be well advised to continue to aim its primary appeal at youth. Recently I imported a charming compilation of movie clips made at the turn of the century whose major box-office value resided in their appeal to a nostalgic older generation. The nostalgic older generation, however, preferred to remain home by the fire or television side. "Paris 1900" bids fair to lose me $19,000. When, however, I acquire a film like "Seven Days to Noon," which deals realistically with the threat of the atom bomb to men and women of every age, a younger generation which wants to live sweeps the picture to a success.

During the past year, however, Hollywood cannot fairly be accused of catering exclusively to any single age or interest group. It has sought to speak to every segment of the people with diversified products like "All About Eve," "Annie Get Your Gun," "Asphalt Jungle," "Battleground," "Born Yesterday," "Cheaper by the Dozen," "Cyrano de Bergerac,"

"Fourteen Hours," "Glass Menagerie," "Halls of Montezuma," "Harvey," "Intruder in the Dust," "Jackpot," "Mr. 880," "No Way Out," "Of Men and Music," "Panic in the Streets," "Red Badge of Courage," "Sunset Boulevard," "The Brave Bulls," "The Men," and "Twelve O'Clock High." I do not claim that these are pictures which future ages will cherish, nor do I expect anyone, myself included, to be enthusiastic over every one of them. What I do maintain is that in the face of censorship restrictions, pressure groups, police authorities, and now license commissioners, they represent a wider general appeal and a higher average of merit than that supplied by popular fiction magazines, by the radio, or by television, and fully as high as that of current books or drama.

The results with these films and with all the others released last year, from the incredibly successful "Father of the Bride" to the equally incredible debacle of "The Magnificent Yankee," are now being carefully appraised in the offices of every major picture producer. These studies are not confined to Hollywood pictures. English and foreign films are given the same meticulous scrutiny. When we imported "Open City" Rossellini was catapulted overnight into world-wide demand. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer cabled an offer to the Boulting Brothers, producers and directors of "Seven Days to Noon," almost simultaneously with its successful New York premiere. In the field of distribution and exhibition there may have been collusion and conspiracy among the picture companies, but in their production the fiercest competition exists for talent and for popular means of employing it.

The shape of films to come is daily molded in the curve of yesterday's box-office window. You may deprecate that box office as a standard of merit but in the words of an insignificant writer with whom I find myself constantly in amazing agreement, "It is an unfailing barometer of what we want in our heart of hearts . . . frippery or meaning, shadow or substance. The responsibility," if I may continue to quote from Arthur Mayer in the *Theatre Arts Anthology,* "for making the motion picture a mighty instrument of mankind's hope and salvation lies not with producers, distributors, or exhibitors, not even with authors or directors, but with the audience. That audience is you and me and our relatives and our friends. If we support, not with chatter but with cash, not in the drawing room but in the theater auditorium, those films which give a true account of our honest problems and highest aspirations, we can make our motion pictures a symbol and token of all striving humanity—a living voice speaking among the people."

READING

What is the main argument advanced in each of the five sections? Show how at least two of these are developed?

How fully does the humor of the author succeed in winning your interest and sympathy?

Look up a review of Hortense Powdermaker's book—preferably one by an anthropologist. Is it in agreement with Mayer's opinion?

INTERPRETATION

What are the main differences between Seldes and Mayer? To what extent does personal background seem to account for them?

What area of agreement with Seldes do you find? How well does Mayer answer Seldes' charge that "the lost audience" is staying away from movies because most Hollywood productions are immature?

How satisfactorily does Mayer refute the myths of the intellectuals? Is Mayer's defense of Hollywood against the charge that it caters almost exclusively to one age group acceptable?

How many of the movies that Mayer discusses have you seen? Compare your opinions of them with his.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Memorable Movie
A Radio Play
Interview with a Theater Owner
What Price Art?
Seldes vs. Mayer

DOUBLE BOUNTY FROM HOLLYWOOD*

by Hollis Alpert

Hollis Alpert (1916–) has been a member of *The New Yorker* editorial staff since 1950 and regularly contributes the "SR Goes to the Movies" column to the *Saturday Review*. His work has also appeared in *Harper's Bazaar, Mademoiselle,* and *Cosmopolitan.*

It would have been an easy matter to label George Stevens's "A Place in the Sun" (Paramount) Hollywood's most impressive picture this year if, at virtually the same moment, Warner Brothers had not unveiled an equally impressive production by Elia Kazan of "A Streetcar Named Desire." Coming together they are rather an embarrassment of riches, wholly adult fare and some proof, at least, that Hollywood can cast aside, when it wants to, all those restrictive pressures that are supposed to be keeping the American screen from acknowledging the facts of life. The trick, it seems, is for a director to get good enough and important enough to be able to have his own way and to function as producer, too, if that be necessary. George Stevens and Elia Kazan are two of our most talented and successful directors (Stevens began in the old Hal Roach studios and worked his way up from two-reelers to interesting comedies like "The More the

* From the *Saturday Review,* XXXIV, No. 35 (September 1, 1951), 28–31. Copyright, 1951, by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

Merrier"; Kazan started in the Group Theatre as actor and stage manager, became Broadway's most sought-after director, and came to Hollywood to direct pictures like "Boomerang" and "Panic in the Streets"), but neither has ever been quite *this* good before. Nor have they previously used the screen medium for so thorough an exploration of its power to move and stir an audience.

If there is to be an argument about which has done more or better, the nod might go to Stevens, for, in a sense, his was the harder job—to boil down the 840-page bulk of Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" to two hours on film, to keep intact its universal values, to change or remove any which might no longer have relevance. The major change involved was to give the story a contemporary setting. According to my information it was Stevens (although the screenplay was done by Michael Wilson and Harry Brown) who decided that this would be preferable to making it a period piece. Dreiser's novel was published in the mid-Twenties; the actual case on which it was based had occurred twenty years earlier. A big question for Stevens must have been: could the dramatic force of the original situation be kept if couched in present-day terms? The answer lies in the conviction that has been given a fresh treatment, the convincingness with which the actors have played it. The result is in the nature of a victory over material that might very well have appeared dated.

Dreiser's view of his characters was probably sound enough, but he was mainly concerned with revealing a villainous society whose forces were responsible for Clyde Griffith's dilemma. (The movie gives him the name of George Eastman). The Stevens film somewhat softens and humanizes this view, makes Dreiser's clear-cut class demarcations less rigid, and puts as much emphasis upon psychological factors as upon the societal. As we see him here, George Eastman responds to the countless proddings from his environment (the billboards with their pictures of indolent girls in bathing suits, the obscenely yellow Cadillacs, the obvious difference between being a bellhop and a member of a wealthy and prominent family) and he starts pathetically climbing towards his dream of "success." His forlorn upbringing by a street missionary family has made him all the easier prey to the situation he falls into. There is a great loneliness in him, too, and ready to be called out in him is the hidden, psychopathic streak in his nature. Those who remember Clyde in the novel will see how important this character change is. Presented as Dreiser had him he would seem utterly weak and mooning, perhaps not worth the bother of being re-created today. The two girls in George's life have also been made more sympathetic, in the sense that an audience can respond to them more fully. In other respects there is less change to Dreiser's intent.

"An American Tragedy" was made into a movie before, a 1931 Von

Sternberg model that had the novelist himself up in arms against it. The picture distorted the book's meaning, he felt, to the very opposite of his intention, justified society and turned in an indictment of the young man. One wonders if "A Place in the Sun" would have mollified him. Allowing for the elimination of the long section dealing with George Eastman's boyhood, the pattern of the story has been kept relatively close to the book with an ending that is very similar to Dreiser's. A final irony is preserved. The issue is left undecided in the moral sense, even through truth, in the legal sense, would have shown George not guilty and unpunishable.

Montgomery Clift, one of Hollywood's most gifted and engaging young actors, adds considerably to his stature with his portrayal of George Eastman. Moody and complex, one senses the dark hauntings of his youth, the intelligence hampered by the lack of opportunity to use it. Clift, of course, had George Stevens to discuss and probe with him the nature of the character, and this ability of the director to make his actors see what he wanted paid off astonishingly with the female roles. Elizabeth Taylor is a joy to watch as the charmingly spoiled Angela (one had somehow never conceived of the glamorized creature as an actress) who spontaneously, out of girlish and unaffected infatuation, offers George his chance to enter a world of prominence and ease. And as Alice Tripp, the girl from the painfully mundane and restricted background, Shelley Winters (the sexiness hidden, the legs undisplayed) achieves almost a *tour de force* of naturalness. She is drably commonplace, pathetic and appealing at the same time, genuinely frightened and miserable. There are scenes that nakedly reveal all that is going on in her mind: the visit to the doctor who refuses to help her; the boat ride with George—her death but moments away —when she babbles with heart-wrenching enthusiasm of a life together that is everything he fears. Scene after scene distills the meaning of events that Dreiser took long pages to unfold.

The minor parts, too, have a sharp understanding behind them. Raymond Burr does a forceful job as the district attorney who, in a melodramatic way, tightens the circumstantial noose around George. Anne Revere is the intense, fanatical mother; Herbert Heyes the wealthy uncle too involved by his large affairs and family to see George as more than a likable young man deserving of being "given a chance." It is not merit but whim that determines whether he will allow his nephew this chance.

The novel gained its effects largely by its massive accumulation of detail (the writing is for the most part irritating and clumsy); the technique of the movie is vastly different. Here each scene must accomplish its objective with vividness and economy; dialogue is often scrapped in favor of the visual symbol. From moment to moment, in fact, the two distinct kinds of telling, interwoven as they are, can be discerned, as the

symbolic image accompanies the realistic level of the happenings. (The yellow Cadillac carrying Angela speeds by him as George thumbs his way along a highway, a lure and a warning; he pauses for a moment to stare at a small boy standing on a street corner with his hymn-singing parents.) Now and then a line of dialogue does get out of key, very occasionally the symbol grows obtrusive, but in each case never enough to seriously disturb. One has, at the end, the feeling of a screen that has been illumined in a new way by a hand altogether accomplished.

To transfer "A Streetcar Named Desire" from the stage to the screen meant, if it were to be done with honesty, challenging taboos that have kept American movies evasive and often ridiculous when it came to presenting certain aspects of sexual behavior. The play hinges upon its frank portrayal of lust, and its introduction of the homosexual note is crucial in that Blanche Dubois's disturbance stems from the shattering discovery of her young husband's inversion. The movie has been allowed latitude in showing the appetites of its major characters, in so far as they appear relatively normal, but when it comes to the required mention in Blanche's soliloquy of her dead husband's predilections there is a noticeable shyness. The speech is very similar to the lines in the play, but the stark details are missing. However, it does seem to me that it would take a singular obtuseness not to know just what Blanche is referring to when she speaks of the unmanliness of her husband. The taboo has been compromised with rather than obeyed.

Elsewhere there is little compromise to speak of (at least not in the print I saw; there is no knowing what individual state censorship boards will do in the way of deletions) and while the material of this harsh and poetic drama may disturb and chill many who see it, it represents one of Hollywood's rare attempts to give the whole meaning and scope of an author's vision.

Tennessee Williams did his own screenplay and preserved most of the dialogue that was so electrifying when heard on the stage. This at least insured that the movie would be *like* the play. But what audiences will be unprepared for is the nearly overwhelming impact of "A Streetcar Named Desire" in its cinema form. It seems to have gained a dimension, and to have thrown off some of the more artificial aspects that the stage presentation required. The camera and its sound-track are far better equipped, it now becomes clear, to show the travail of Blanche Dubois. And it is more than simply going to New Orleans to film backgrounds: the camera can keep the action continually alive and dynamic. Moreover, editing and cutting have removed everything that might clog and impede.

Elia Kazan had, of course, the experience of staging the play for

Broadway; and, with but one substitution—Vivien Leigh of the London company—he also had the exceptional original cast to work with. Marlon Brando, who immediately became our most talented young actor with his legitimate performance of the Stanley Kowalski role, enlarges it in the film version to seem even more shocking, to have more facets. One now sees in a clearer light the essential vulgarity that doomed Blanche Dubois. Also appearing to far better advantage are Kim Hunter and Karl Malden as, respectively, Kowalski's wife and friend. And of all who played the role of Blanche, Vivien Leigh was undoubtedly the best and most fortunate choice. Already a distinguished actress, she has never seemed so subtly and completely immersed in a characterization.

The audience feels a jar from the picture's first shot, as taxicabs careen with the screech of rubber tires into the New Orleans railway station. There the Desire streetcar is waiting for passengers. When the white, lost face of Blanche Dubois appears out of a swirl of steam from the locomotive, it is as though she has come from another world, that, already, it is courageous of her to face this noisy, raucous one. After a visit to the bowling alley, where she finds her sister, she enters the slum quarters of the Kowalskis in the Vieux Carré, with its faint vestiges of a long-faded elegance. Kazan, within this restricted space, keeps the cameraman restlessly on the move (no other Hollywood director does this to quite the degree), here picking out a drunken grin, there a mask of torture. A lampshade that Blanche has used to soften the harshness is ripped off, a curtain is torn aside, a mirror shatters. If silence comes, like a long-awaited relief, soon from the outside is heard a call or a cacophony. All around, you are made to feel, is the nervous, violent reality. Like a caged beast Kowalski is ready to spring. The soft fragile playing of Miss Leigh registers a long series of tremors, each mounting in intensity, until finally one sees and comprehends her destruction. No mercy is shown her, nor is any given to the audience.

It will be interesting to see how this remarkable picture fares in the cinema houses of the country. For it contains characterizations more full and subtle than any yet shown in a Hollywood movie, and, beyond a few minor points, little has been softened in it. One of the best plays of recent years has, in its re-emergence on the screen, become even more poignant and forceful. Elia Kazan is largely responsible, and along with George Stevens, has given fresh life to the latent power of the motion-picture medium. With styles and techniques that belong to us, "A Place in the Sun" and "Streetcar" stand comparison with any of the most notable films from abroad.

READING

How much summary does Alpert give of each story? Is it enough for those who do not know either the originals or the movies?

Show how the structure of the review operates in regard to 1) the comparison of the two movies, and, 2) the comparison of each movie with its original.

What attention is given to camera techniques? Point out specific passages.

Can you find out how successful these movies were locally or nationally? What evidence is this for Seldes or Mayer?

INTERPRETATION

What general problems arise in turning a novel into a movie? a play into a movie? Do you find that Alpert handles these problems well?

How do these two movies score on the basis of maturity? Would Seldes approve of them? Do You? Do you think they offer what movies ought to offer?

Compare the attention to camera techniques given by Seldes, Mayer, and Alpert. What relation do techniques have to the ideas and actions? Is this relation observed by the three authors?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Maturity of a Current Film
A Novel and a Movie
A Play and a Movie
What Movies Should Do

9
Writers and Readers

Since all of us are exposed in college to some sort of composition course in which we are required to write themes, we share in varying degrees an interest in writing. Furthermore, writing is one of the fundamental skills that educated people must acquire and use. What, then, can be learned of the craft? How did famous writers use their imaginations to produce literature? And what makes a good writer?

ON STYLE*

by H. L. Mencken

H. L. Mencken (1880–), critic, editor, and philologist, was born in Baltimore, where he has spent most of his life. For many years he was on the staff of the Baltimore *Sun* and the Baltimore *Evening Sun*. He edited *The American Mercury* from 1924 to 1933. He is author of the standard treatise on American English, *The American Language* (1918, with later revisions and supplements) as well as of many sprightly works like *Prejudices* (Six Series), *Happy Days, Heathen Days,* and *Newspaper Days.*

With only one or two exceptions, all the books on prose style in English are by writers quite unable to write. The subject, indeed, seems to exercise a special and dreadful fascination over schoolma'ams, bucolic college professors, and other such pseudo-literates. In a thousand texts they set forth their depressing ideas about it, and millions of suffering high-school pupils have to study what they say. Their central aim, of course, is to reduce the whole thing to a series of simple rules—the overmastering passion of their melancholy order, at all times and everywhere. They aspire to teach it as bridge whist, the flag-drill and double-entry bookkeeping are taught. They fail as ignominiously as that Athenian of legend who essayed to train a regiment of grasshoppers in the goose-step.

For the essence of a sound style is that it cannot be reduced to rules —that it is a living and breathing thing, with something of the demoniacal in it—that it fits its proprietor tightly and yet ever so loosely, as his skin fits him. It is, in fact, quite as securely an integral part of him as that skin is. It hardens as his arteries harden. It is gaudy when he is young and gathers decorum when he grows old. On the day after he makes a mash on a new girl it glows and glitters. If he has fed well, it is mellow.

* Originally included in *Prejudices: Fifth Series* and here reprinted from *A Mencken Chrestomathy*, by H. L. Mencken (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1941), pp. 460–462. Copyright, 1949, by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

If he has gastritis it is bitter. In brief, a style is always the outward and visible symbol of a man, and it cannot be anything else. To attempt to teach it is as silly as to set up courses in making love.

The schoolma'am theory to the contrary is based upon a faulty inference from a sound observation. The sound observation is that the great majority of American high-school pupils, when they attempt to put their thoughts upon paper, produce only a mass of confused and puerile nonsense. The faulty inference is to the effect that what ails them is a defective technical equipment—that they can be trained to write clearly as a dog may be trained to walk on its hind legs. This is all wrong. What ails them is not a defective technical equipment but a defective natural equipment. They write badly simply because they cannot think clearly. They cannot think clearly because they lack the brains. Trying to teach them is as hopeless as trying to teach a dog with only one hind leg. Any human being who can speak English understandably has all the materials necessary to write English clearly, and even beautifully. There is nothing mysterious about the written language; it is precisely the same, in essence, as the spoken language. If a man can think in English at all, he can find words enough to express his ideas. The fact is proved abundantly by the excellent writing that often comes from so-called ignorant men. Such writing commonly arouses little enthusiasm among pedagogues. Its transparency excites their professional disdain, and they are offended by its use of homely words and phrases. They prefer something more ornate and complex—something, as they would probably put it, demanding more thought. But the thought they yearn for is the kind, alas, that they secrete themselves—the muddled, highfalutin, vapid thought that one finds in their own textbooks.

I do not denounce them because they write so badly; I merely record the fact in a sad, scientific spirit. Even in such twilight regions of the intellect the style remains the man. What is in the head infallibly oozes out of the nub of the pen. If it is sparkling Burgundy the writing is full of life and charm. If it is mush the writing is mush too. The late Dr. Harding, twenty-ninth President of the Federal Union, was a highly self-conscious stylist. He practised prose composition assiduously, and was regarded by the pedagogues of Marion, Ohio, and vicinity as a very talented fellow. But when he sent a message to Congress it was so muddled in style that even the late Henry Cabot Lodge, a professional literary man, could not understand it. Why? Simply because Dr. Harding's thoughts, on the high and grave subjects he discussed, were so muddled that he couldn't understand them himself. But on matters within his range of customary meditation he was clear and even charming, as all of us are. I once heard him deliver a brief address upon the ideals of the Elks. It was a topic close to his heart, and he had thought about it at length and *con amore.*

The result was an excellent speech—clear, logical, forceful, and with a touch of wild, romantic beauty. His sentences hung together. He employed simple words, and put them together with skill. But when, at a public meeting in Washington, he essayed to deliver an oration on the subject of Dante Alighieri, he quickly became so obscure and absurd that even the Diplomatic Corps began to snicker.

A pedagogue, confronted by Harding in class, would have set him to the business of what is called improving his vocabulary—that is, to the business of making his writing even worse than it was. In point of fact, he had all the vocabulary that he needed, and a great deal more. Any idea that he could formulate clearly he could convey clearly. Any idea that genuinely moved him he could invest with charm. But style cannot go beyond the ideas which lie at the heart of it. If they are clear, it too will be clear. If they are held passionately, it will be eloquent. Trying to teach it to persons who cannot think, especially when the business is attempted by persons who also cannot think, is a great waste of time, and an immoral imposition upon the taxpayers of the nation. It would be far more logical to devote all the energy to teaching, not writing, but logic—and probably just as useless. For I doubt that the art of thinking can be taught at all—at any rate, by school-teachers. It is not acquired, but congenital. Some persons are born with it. Their ideas flow in straight channels; they are capable of lucid reasoning; when they say anything it is instantly understandable; when they write anything it is clear and persuasive. They constitute, I should say, about one-eighth of one per cent of the human race. The rest of God's children are just as incapable of logical thought as they are incapable of jumping over the moon. Trying to teach them is as vain an enterprise as trying to teach a streptococcus the principle of Americanism. The only thing to do with them is to make Ph.D.'s of them, and set them to writing handbooks on style.

READING

What connection appears between the two major attacks—those on teaching writing and thinking? What effect does this sequence have?

Discuss Mencken's diction as displayed in a single paragraph, for example that on Harding.

INTERPRETATION

How seriously should this essay be taken? What is the purpose of Mencken's humor and satire, specifically and in general?

If you use a handbook of style in your course, what is your opinion of it? What would Mencken's be?

To what extent do you agree with Mencken that inability to write is due to lack of brains? Is ability to think really limited by nature to a minute minority, or can it be stimulated and developed in a great many people?

Should a distinction be made between technical and creative writing? Would

you distinguish between classes in these two kinds of writing? How pertinent are the remarks of Peter F. Drucker's "How To Be an Employee" to your discussion?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Review of a Handbook
The Colloquial Style
The Formal Style
Assumptions of Mencken

INSPIRED AND UNINSPIRED WRITERS*

by Burges Johnson

Burges Johnson (1877–) has taught at Vassar, Union, and Bread Loaf, and has served as visiting professor in many universities. A native of Vermont, he was educated at Amherst. Among his many books are *Sonnets from the Pekinese* (1935), *Campus versus Classroom: A Candid Appraisal of the American College* (1946), and *The Lost Art of Profanity* (1948).

As I hark back through fifty years of contact with groping writers in editorial offices as well as in college classrooms, I hear one phrase repeated again and again—"I'm sorry the manuscript isn't ready, but I just didn't get inspired." Youngsters facing a classroom assignment, adults striving to meet an editor's demand apparently believe that inspiration comes from without, and at uncontrollable moments. As though a muse of poetry or drama or painting or music sits upon a pink cloud somewhere in the infinite, reaches down her delicate fingers, and touches the brow of some favored one who then proceeds to take dictation.

I am certain that this notion is a false one, and for a moment I regret I am not a psychologist, fluent in the basic English of that fraternity. For I know too that there is such a force as inspiration, but that it comes from within and not from without, and is to a great extent controllable.

In this opinion I disagree with that oracle among oracles, the London *Times,* which in a recent editorial implies that inspiration is an outer force working upon the poet's inner mind. And I disagree, too, with those pedagogues who cite against me the derivation of the word itself—"a breathing in." But if word derivation be any argument, then one cannot give a supercilious look without eyebrows or engage in trivial conversation except where three roads meet.

I was traveling in a railway coach one day with Vachel Lindsay, at a time when teaching was a new experience for me, and he was prodding me with questions about a "writing" classroom. I told him about that

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frequent excuse of my dilatory young writers, and asked him, by the way, whether he himself had ever been consciously inspired.

He took my question seriously: "Often and often," he replied, "if we can agree upon the meaning of the word." Then he cited this bit of personal experience. His boyhood was spent, he said, in a Midwestern city having a population more than 50 per cent Negro. His small-boy playmates were mostly Negroes, and no child could have had more delightful companions. They were rollicking, imaginative, sympathetic, and loyal in their friendships. But as he grew older he became aware of social pressures which would force him to give up these companions, and he resented the fact. Gropingly he began to philosophize about the contribution these people might make to our society in this melting pot of ours, if they were allowed to melt. He rated high their primitive simplicity, their high spirits, and their spirituality. Then he moved away from Springfield, Illinois, and other speculative fancies filled his mind.

Years afterward, so he told me, he was traveling in a Pullman car, and his mind was idle. Perhaps the rhythm of the car wheels affected him, perhaps the Pullman porter caught his attention; at any rate, he found himself humming a couplet—

> *Then I saw the Congo creeping through the black,*
> *Cutting through the forest with a golden track.*

Without conscious effort he had suddenly composed what was to him a complete and satisfying poem, and it came from inside and not outside of himself. To any other person it would seem trivial and without beauty or meaning. But to him it was a condensation of all that youthful philosophizing, stored away for years in some mental compartment. "Then I saw the Congo"—all the basic savagery of a people civilized more lately than ourselves; "Through the forest with a golden track"—the light of Heaven reflected on black waters.

So then he sat him down and proceeded by sheer drudgery of composition and the techniques of the rhymester to interpret his couplet to others. The result is a poem expanded from two lines to 152, broken up into sections, "Their Basic Savagery," "Their Irrepressible High Spirits," "The Hope of Their Religion." "Big black bucks in a wine barrel room, barrel house kings with feet unstable."

The poet Dante, some years before Vachel, relates this experience in a letter to a friend. For a long time, he says in effect, he wanted to write poetic lines worthy of his lady-love. Again and again he reviewed in his mind her various charms, but never could find a suitable approach, so finally he gave up the task as hopeless. Long afterward he was walking beside a stream, thinking of many things, but not at that moment of his lady, when suddenly he found himself saying, "Ladies who have ex-

perience in love, of my own lady I would sing to you." Evidently some secret compartment of his mind had continued with that task his conscious mind had abandoned, and had found a novel approach which furthered the writing of his poem.

Hamlin Garland once described to me a device he often used in his novel writing. "When the spring runs dry," he said in effect, "when I am weary of composition and empty of ideas, and especially when I come to an impasse in my narrative and do not know which way to turn, then I stop trying. I wait until I am bedded down for the night, with the light out. Then I review what I have already written, until sleep comes. In the morning I find that some unsleeping part of my mind has gone on with the story, and the impasse has ceased to exist."

But the commonest device among experienced writers for establishing continued contact with that hidden storehouse of the mind is to form what amounts to a physical habit. I recall an overnight visit to Joe Lincoln in his Hackensack home when he excused himself right after breakfast: "Mrs. Lincoln will take care of you for a couple of hours," he said. "I go to my typewriter at nine o'clock whether I feel like writing or not, or whether I have anything ready in my head to write. I know when I get there it will come; and I can't afford to break the habit."

Mark Twain arrived at the same result by staying in bed in the morning, propped up for writing, and, much to the sorrow of his good wife, smoking as he wrote. "People don't bother me there and interrupt the flow of ideas. If you build up a habit of writing at a certain time, the ideas get a habit of coming then."

In my young days as an assistant editor of *Everybody's Magazine* I discovered a short story in the ruck of unheralded incoming manuscript which made me straighten up and shout of my discovery to my chief at his desk across the room. It was a tale of childhood in a small village, and its humor and sympathetic understanding, and the narrative itself, were so far above average that it won immediate acceptance. When published it brought in so many favorable comments that the magazine republished it in a small brochure.

Of course, we pestered the author for more stories of the same sort and quality, but though she tried again and again nothing worthwhile resulted. She had no flair for writing. But that story had suddenly flowered, out of long forgotten and neglected seeds in her mind, stored there ever since her own small girlhood in a small village. Some unaccustomed mood or experience had suddenly brought it to the surface. She had "had an inspiration."

Inspiration then, I take it, is the sudden opening of some trap door into a subliminal area of the mind, or whatever the psychologists choose

this year to call it. What opens that door I suspect may be any one of several things—either special pressures from within or demands from without. This I do know, that the experienced artist, the so-called professional, has mastered tricks and devices for getting it open, and so brings his subconscious mind into double harness with the rest of his cranial equipment. All inspired writers from Moses to Millay, all inspired artists, have done no more or no less than that.

I may well bring Moses into this, for it is in connection with those ancient preachers and authors of Holy Writ that the word "inspiration" is most commonly used. Let me condense that romantic and undying legend: the enslaved tribes, downtrodden and crushed into the very slime of ignorance; the slave-mother who casts her babe into the pathway of a princess; its adoption and rearing in the palace, with patrons and teachers who put at its disposal all the wisdom and knowledge of the most civilized nation in that ancient world. Then comes the revolt of the slaves, and the young man throws in his lot with his own people. For forty years he wanders with them, finding them filthy, ignorant, unruly, and steeped in superstition. Through all that time he must have come to feel the task of leadership an utterly hopeless one.

Then, the story tells us, he left them and went up into a high mountain and communed there with Truth itself. When he came down he carried with him a compact body of social rules and regulations which form the basis even today of those codes which make orderly living possible in our human society.

The inspired writing of Moses was a concentration and essence of all that had gone into his young mind in those days of palace teaching forty years before. If to the orthodox I seem to ignore the voice of Deity dictating on that mountain top to a scribe who takes notes with mallet and chisel on tablets of stone, they should realize that the Divine plan is no less evident in the impulsive act of a slave-mother and the whim of a princess.

Mastering the mechanics of any art, gaining craftsmanship by experimenting with its tricks and devices can be a real drudgery, and the more inspired the artist, the more burdensome that business may be. The musician spending half a lifetime in practice at the keyboard; the dancer who spends wearisome hours cracking his heels together in the air; the landscape painter mastering the trick of overlaying a background of white with woodland green, and then gouging vertical lines with his fingernail to make gleaming white birch trunks—each of these may find such labor burdensome.

Once in a hotel bedroom I had endured as long as I could the voice of a singer in an adjacent room doing endless arpeggios in a penetrating tenor. Finally I knocked on the wall, and a voice through the keyhole of

the communicating door said, "I'm awfully sorry. I don't enjoy this any better than you do, in fact I hate it. But I've got to do it." It was thus I made the acquaintance of the famous singer I was to hear later that evening.

The literary artist often resents this drudgery of self-training to a point where the resentment becomes an inhibition. His thoughts flash through his mind with such speed that his poem or his story is dreamed to its conclusion and his creative urge is thus satisfied, while the hand holding the pen or the fingers on the keyboard plod slowly along, far, far behind, in what seems but a wearisome repetition.

The literary artist must create and master his own vocabulary. Like Humpty Dumpty he should be able to say, "When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." Or more accurately, "When I use a word it should convey to my reader just what I want it to convey, neither more nor less." For art is the record of emotional experience, and emotion has no dictionary language of its own. The dance has its vocabulary of bodily motion; painting has form and color; music has tone and tempo, pitch and volume. But the literary art must twist words out of their dictionary meanings, using them "figuratively," and borrow tone and tempo and volume from music.

And after the literary artist has become skilled in the use of certain symbols, he may find that they have lost their values and no longer communicate truthfully, just as the painter could once communicate to us a feeling of peace, security, and contentment by painting a sunlit meadow with cows knee-deep in a pool under the shade of a spreading elm, but now finds that such a picture suggests milk from contented cows. His soul revolts and he seeks new symbols, and paints a magenta cone balanced firmly upon three cerise parallelepipedons under a winged cloud, and labels it "Perfect Peace," and hopes there are those who will get the message.

Just so the poet is betrayed by clichés and worn-out figures of speech and overworked patterns of rhyme and rhythm; so he throws them away and strives through deliberate incoherence to reveal his emotional experience. Yet new painter and new poet both seek the appreciation of their convention-bound fellow men; for they attach titles to their work written in dictionary words, and set their type on rectangular pages and their paintings in rectangular frames instead of elliptical or sinuous ones, and send to galleries or to publishers, and grieve if they are not conventionally published or hung.

All outworn symbols and devices used by the artist, if set aside for a time, perhaps a decade or a century, may regain lost values. "Hiawatha" becomes outmoded, because its rhythm and its tricks of word-repetition become wearisome, and parodies have cheapened it; so it is relegated to

an attic shelf. A half-century hence some grandchild finds it there and wonders why he had never been told of so lovely a thing.

In the fourteenth century a poet found he could interpret his flashes of inspiration in a pattern of rhyme and rhythm as rigid as the marbles of Praxiteles—a limited number of rhyming sounds, five accented syllables to a line and just fourteen lines. Throughout six hundred years the Petrarchan sonnet has for short periods of time lost its power to convey love or hate or reverence or grief—and then some poet rediscovers it as a perfect device for his emotional purpose.

So the literary artist must be forever "practising." That distinguished craftsman Willa Cather was experimenting with new patterns for a novel when she wrote "The Professor's House" and borrowed from symphonic music the idea of introducing a theme sharply contrasting with the preceding one, and then returning to the opening theme. "The Dutch painters do much the same thing," she said, "when they paint a detailed interior scene and in it have a window which reveals a glimpse of an outside garden. I wanted to see whether the form of a novel might not gain by borrowing a device from one of the other arts."

Inspiration is the sudden revealing of some possession of the mind, hidden for a time and fermented or ripened in its hiding place, suddenly upsurging and ready for immediate use. Such an experience is not confined to those folk we call artists, whose stock-in-trade is emotional experience. Several years ago in a scientific journal an article appeared entitled "The Hunch." In it the writer asserted that science recognizes as valid and important these sudden mental regurgitations, so compact, so stenographic, that only the recipient can interpret them to others with the aid of his own awakened memory. An engineer, for instance, who has worried over the bridge which must finally be built, with complications of grade and curve and difficult terrain, finally gives up the problem for a time in favor of more immediate ones. Then suddenly in the middle of the night or in the middle of a dull lecture on some wholly unrelated subject he has a hunch—the bridge problem is solved.

If this is what happens when one "has an inspiration," then the experience should be both commonplace and universal, and inspired writers should be numberless, were it not for the fact that there are many human beings who live without perceiving phenomena and meditating about what they perceive; or who are capable of only dulled perceptions. The unstored mind can never become "inspired."

It is a characteristic of all artist folk that they must share the products of their creative fancy. The sculptor wishes to shape his dream into a marble which will stand where all the world may see it. The painter hopes to have his canvas in a frame, hung where appreciative ones may admire it. He would even like to linger near by to note their reactions. The

dramatist and the poet are eager for the proscenium arch and the printed page. Artistic genius is never wholly content with self-expression as the sole objective. Even the shy maiden who locks up her emotional fancies in a diary and hides it under the handkerchiefs in a bureau drawer does not destroy it; she preserves it for that challenging audience—her unknown future self.

But inspirational flashes come up into the conscious mind so condensed and compact, so stenographic, that only the mind receiving them can interpret them to others; and the born artist who has mastered none of the techniques—who has no skill in the craft of interpretation—may be like the child born deaf; he becomes dumb as well, in both senses of the word, unless he learns to communicate somehow with others. Complete inability to interpret artistic fancies so that others may appreciate them may react upon the very ability to dream. The drabbest little village is sure to have its mute inglorious Miltons, and they must number into the millions throughout this broad land; their hopes and ambition fill the coffers of correspondence courses and writers' workshops and all get-literary-quick entrepreneurs.

One Sunday in a village church the preacher suddenly roused me from a half-doze by saying, "I love a look of agony because I know it's true; men do not sham convulsions or simulate a throe." Jingles always catch my attention, and I found myself annoyed by the faulty rhyme. Later I quoted the couplet laughingly to a friend and he said, "Yes, Emily Dickinson has a compact way of putting things, don't you think?" I cleared my throat uneasily and said, "Yes, hadn't she?" and when I got home I found it among her poems.

Later I happened to attend an amateur performance of Masefield's "Tragedy of Nan" and thought that even the struggles of amateur players could not make it a worse play than it was. Loyalty to Masefield as a poet led me to read it at once in book-form. In his preface he says that any artist at one time or another is challenged by the desire to depict humanity at its lowest level of misery, when the soul is utterly naked. He confessed that he was trying to meet this challenge.

Then I remembered that Emily Dickinson had said in a rhymed couplet just what Masefield had tried to say in many pages of prose—"I love a look of agony because I know it's true." She had jotted the thought down just as it flashed into her mind, as she had many another of her inspirational capsules, without expansion by any of the devices of the poet's craft. All her poetry is of that unexpanded sort, and those who most enjoy it do so because they themselves supply the interpretation she failed to provide, owing either to literary indolence or to lack of interest in crafts-

manship. Numberless Miltons remain mute and inglorious for one or the other of those two reasons.

The intimate confessions of any successful artist-writer would tell of a long ordeal by a process of trial and error leading toward the mastery of his art; and he would still be the last to assert that he had won an ultimate mastery. But if the authentic artist ever revolts against rigorous self-discipline, how much greater must be the protest of those who never experience regurgitations from a subliminal storehouse, but merely yearn to be "an author"!

In long-ago summer days when I was teaching at the Bread Loaf School, a young woman asked whether she might write poetry if she entered my composition class. I told her I should insist upon a certain amount of verse writing. She then asked whether I would demand conventional poetic forms. I explained that I should, for discipline's sake, but that after she had shown some facility she might be as free as she liked. All that I could possibly do for her would be to help her master a few techniques of writing; only God, if He thought best, could make her a poet. She retorted sternly, "No man shall ever dictate to me the way in which my emotions find expression."

So I meekly told her that Robert Frost might be more lenient, and we went together to find him. He was his usual courteous self, and instead of answering her question directly he said, "You know, every time I play tennis I don't try to change the tennis court." When he saw that this parable did not register, he added, "I think I play better tennis because the court is there."

I don't recall what became of the young woman, but I wish I had thought to quote to her James Montgomery Flagg's comment about some verses of his own. "This isn't exactly free verse," he said, "but it's very inexpensive." However, I drew from Frost another treasured bit of wisdom. "I think," he said in effect, "that we all inherit a sensitivity to certain tribal rhythms. The poet who utilizes them gains added power to win response from his reader."

I have said that there must be many artists-at-heart who experience these recurrent inspirational flashes but have none of the craftsmanship which is needed to interpret them effectively to others. But, alas and alack, there are a million more who have mastered the devices and tricks of interpretation, but have nothing to interpret. Their minds may have inner store-rooms, but nothing is stored therein.

There is so vast an increase of literacy in this country that the printed word now has a market value reaching astronomical figures. Several hundred thousand people moved not so much by a desire to share some flashing glimpse of truth or beauty, but rather by a desire to get in

on a good thing, ask how they too can learn to write a story and how to sell it. Immediately several thousand other people offer to tell them a few simple but secret recipes at so much per recipe. In every corner of this busy land there are now workshops, bureaus, advisors, agencies, and schools which promise to do the impossible, and magazine pages are filled with their advertising. Some of them promise to create a successful author in thirty lessons; and alas they do. Now and then their teaching may have this regrettable negative effect: that some artist in embryo, experiencing an authentic resurgence, may ignore the flash because it seems to fit none of the patterns supplied by the get-literary-quick schools of authorship.

Stories written by recipe get to be easier and easier to write with practice, so that the expert craftsman can turn them out by a sort of chain system of quantity production. Things which are easy to write are just as easy to read; they call for no mental effort or reader's reciprocity. One can absorb a story labeled "ten minutes reading time" in as little as four minutes flat, and then start another; until one reads along in a sort of hypnotic state, perhaps thinking about something else while reading. It is astonishing what a lot of nothing one can read today and immediately forget that one has read it.

READING

What do the experiences of Lindsay, Dante, Garland, Mark Twain, and Joseph A. Lincoln indicate about inspiration? In the next three parts of the essay, how is this view modified and expanded?

Identify the names of other writers mentioned by Johnson. Is his selection of writers representative—too generously so perhaps?

How would you describe Johnson's tone and structure? Do they contribute to each other?

INTERPRETATION

What uses has Johnson's article for the student in a composition class? Are there also uses for him as a reader? Explain.

Compare the opinions of Johnson and Mencken on writing and teaching.

How much justice do you find in the observations on current writing? In those you know who are writers or want to be, are these observations borne out?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Course in Writing
Anecdote of a Writer
Mute Inglorious Miltons
From Dante Alighieri to Joseph A. Lincoln
Writing by Recipe

THE MAKING OF LITERATURE*

by Gilbert Highet

Gilbert Highet (1906–) was born in Scotland and took M.A. degrees at Glasgow and Oxford. Since 1950 he has been professor of Latin at Columbia University. He is author of *The Classical Tradition* (1950) and of *People, Places, and Books* (1953), which is based on his series of radio addresses.

It is a pleasure to read good books and to talk about them. But there is another pleasure connected with books, which is less often enjoyed and more difficult to secure. This is the pleasure of learning how the books we love were made. Where on earth—or where in heaven—did Shakespeare get the idea for *A Midsummer-Night's Dream,* blending Greek myths with British fairy lore? How did Eliot conceive *The Waste Land,* and how did he work it out? Is it complete as it stands, or merely a series of fragments, or perhaps a heavily cut edition of the lost original? Why did Tolstoy write *War and Peace* seven times, and make his wife copy it out seven times? What was he doing to it? adding material? rearranging the incidents and descriptions already there? or smoothing and harmonizing the style? It is hard to think of Count Leo Nikolayevich rolling on the rug in an agonized search for the right word, like Flaubert; but he was surely searching for something, and he surely found it. What was it?

It is an enthralling question to ask about any book, any poem, any piece of art—in fact, about any work of the mind. How was it made?

And it is not a trivial or superficial question. It helps us to understand the work itself. I have always admired the George Washington Bridge over the Hudson between Manhattan and New Jersey. It is a noble span. Its rhythm harmonizes with the majestic sweep of the river, and the pillars at its entry stand as proudly as the Palisades. On a bright morning the cars glitter in the sunlight as they rush across it, so that it looks like a straight and rapid stream of light in the air, crossing the more darkly gleaming water far below. If you walk across it, you will feel that it is not a dead mass of stone and metal, but a living thing, quivering and humming like a great ship at sea. A splendid piece of architecture—and yet I confess I have admired it more since I learned that the architects changed their original plan. They meant to make the pylons at each end solid columns of concrete. But when they had put up the mighty steel framework, they looked at it, and decided that the pure metal, with the sky shining through it, was far more noble and beautiful. They were right. And, by knowing that fact about the making of the bridge, I have learned to appreciate it more, as a work of art.

* From *People, Places, and Books,* by Gilbert Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 185–194. Copyright, 1953, by Gilbert Highet. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press, Inc.

In the same way we can very often enjoy a book more if we understand more about the process of its conception and delivery, and about its author's life and work. When we do, we nearly always find our respect for it increased. We see there is more in it than we had divined. We admire the author more, for his singular character, his complex experience, his skillful technique, and even his sheer tenacity. We usually realize that even the simplest poem is the product of much more work than we imagine, passing through the minds of many men before it meets its final author; and that most artists, thinkers, and creators lead a life far more difficult than that of the ordinary man and woman. We pity them, instead of blaming them, for their failures; and we exalt them all the more for their unique successes.

Recently I have been reading three books which deal with this question on different levels.

The first is *The Notebooks of Henry James,* edited by two Harvard professors, the late F. O. Matthiessen and K. B. Murdock. This is a big work of some 400 tall pages. It is a transcript of nine manuscript books in which Henry James kept ideas for plays and novels, lists of odd and interesting names, personal impressions, character sketches, and spiritual affirmations, over a period of thirty-three years from 1878 to 1911. There are also several long scenarios and sketches for novels, which complete the picture of a hard-working, earnest craftsman, devoted to his job.

I must admit that I do not admire Henry James's novels very much. Their style bothers me, as it has bothered many another—not so much because it is involved, but because it seems to me to lack the glitter and brilliance and charm of the society it pictures. When Proust describes an evening party in fashionable society, his sentences curve as gracefully as the hostess's satin train, they are full of jewels (both real and paste), iridescent with aigrettes, and fans, and perfume. But when James does a party, it seems to be full of complicated intrigues and difficult relationships, but lacking the color and gallantry which surrounded them and made them both more difficult and more exciting. And I must say also that he seems to me to have been unlucky in his choice of subject. One of his main themes, for instance, is immensely important—the relation between young America and old Europe; but he usually treats it only in what has proved to be its least important manifestation, the association of rich, purposeless, rootless American travelers with *le high-life* in Europe, and vice versa.

However, that is no doubt a blind spot in me. Every reader has his blind spots. And certainly the reading of James's *Notebooks* has done something to remove this one.

Among other things, they show that he was mainly concerned with *one* world—not the world of thought, nor the world of politics, nor the

world of religion, and scarcely the world of fine art and music, but the world of social and family relationships. He gave up much of his life to that world. Sometimes he felt it was an interference with his work. Here is his entry for 11 November 1882, when he was nearly forty:

> Thanks to 'society,' which, in the shape of various surviving remnants of the season, and a succession of transient Americans, and several country visits, continued to mark me for its own during the greater part of the month of August, I had not even time to finish that last sentence [in his notebooks] written more than three months ago. . . . My record of work for the whole past year is terribly small. . . .

But more often he realized that society was the source of his work. Much of the conversation at those interminable Victorian and Edwardian dinner parties appears to have been high-level gossip, anecdotes about the family troubles of other members of society. James wrote many of these stories down. He used some of them as plots for his books, and others he recorded for future use in his notebooks. For instance, Mrs. Ansthruther-Thompson, sitting next to him at Lady Lindsay's, told him a shocking tale of family jealousy and revenge.

A Scottish laird died. His son became his heir, and inherited the big house full of fine pictures and furniture. The mother survived, and went on living in the house. But the young man married, so that his mother had to move out into a small dower-house elsewhere. She took with her some of the family treasures. The son asked to have them returned. The mother refused. The quarrel grew hot, and finally developed into a lawsuit. And in court the mother—in order to win the case, or at least to beat her son and her enemy—solemnly declared that she had been an adulteress and that the boy was illegitimate.

It is a fine story. James wrote it down as soon as he heard it, and thought over it again and again. At last, four years later, it grew into his novel, *The Spoils of Poynton.* There are many more such stories in the *Notebooks.* It will surprise most of us to learn that James's famous tale of demoniac possession, "The Turn of the Screw," was told to him by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had himself heard it from a rather vague lady. And there is one story which really haunts me. You know Maupassant's "The Necklace," in which a woman borrows a string of pearls, or diamonds, loses them, and impoverishes her husband and herself over many years in order to pay back their value—only to find that they were paste? Well, James took this idea and reversed it. A woman (in his story) who has given up a stage career to marry a clergyman leaves, at her death, a lot of junk jewelry, among which there is one necklace of *real* pearls. Where did she get them? That is the basic plot. James published it, as "Paste," in 1899. But haven't we seen it more recently, and more vividly, revived, as "Mr. Knowall," by Somerset Maugham, in his group

of short filmed stories, *Quartet?* There the woman is not dead, but alive. The pearls are around her neck. Her husband bets that they are false. A jewel expert takes the bet, looks at them, and sees that they are real, worth a small fortune. What does he do? . . . It is a fine story.

You see how, in talking about one author's attitude to his work, we move on naturally to others. I have been reading another book which describes the techniques of creative writing used by twenty or thirty poets, and which reveals a great deal by comparing and contrasting them. This is *Poems in Process,* by Phyllis Bartlett. It is a shorter volume than the James *Notebooks,* but it covers a fair amount of ground. Its purpose is to give "an account of how poets have actually written their verses"—but in fact it confines the account to English and American poets, and does not include all the greatest names. (There is nothing, for instance, on the variations in Shakespeare's text which appear to have come from his own hand and mind.) I should have liked to learn more about French and Italian and German and Spanish poets; and a book—no, two books—could be written on the methods used by the Greek and Latin poets, who were skilled technicians. However, we are grateful for what Miss Bartlett has given us.

She covers the whole process of writing a poem. How is a poem conceived? What are the favorable conditions of conception? Do poets work at regular hours? How do they revise? Do they accept criticisms, or not? All these questions are answered, very variously, with a number of odd and uplifting stories to illustrate them.

For instance, do you know how Walt Whitman composed? I should have expected him to write a free rhapsody, straight off, and then to revise (a little) and to excise (a little). But no. He used to write down scraps of phrases at odd moments, on odd pieces of paper, and tie them together with pieces of string, or drop them into envelopes. Then, when he felt like composing, he would keep a writing tablet on his knee, and play with his cat, and wait for the right opening. "Suddenly he would start to write on the tablet"—and work through the scraps he had already collected, one by one, throwing them down as he finished. They were sketches, and he was now making the finished work.

There is also a valuable story about Browning. His system was "to write down on a slate, in prose, what he wanted to say, and then turn it into verse, striving after the greatest amount of condensation possible; thus, if an exclamation suggested his meaning, he would substitute this for a whole sentence." This may not be true of his lyrics. But surely it is true of his long dramatic pieces; and surely it reminds us of one of the chief facts about poetry, which we often forget—that it is more intense and more meaningful than prose.

But Miss Bartlett's book and James's *Notebooks* demonstrate a

valuable truth—that art is not wholly based on personal experience. Art is also based on vicarious experience. For Henry James, a story heard at a dinner table could set the imagination working. For many a poet, a book written by another man is as exciting as a love affair or a voyage of travel. There has never been a finer demonstration of this than a book published some twenty years ago and still immensely valuable, both as a piece of scholarly detective work and as a feat of beautiful, if occasionally over-elaborate, imaginative writing. This is *The Road to Xanadu* by John Livingston Lowes. A massive work, in 434 pages and 200 more of notes and index, it is so gracefully and smoothly written that it can be read (as few scholarly books can) for pleasure.

In one sentence, it is a study of the books read by Samuel Coleridge which enabled him to write "The Ancient Mariner" and "Kubla Khan." Sounds a little dull, perhaps? Perhaps it would be if "The Ancient Mariner" and "Kubla Khan" were not such wonderful and apparently inexplicable poems, if Coleridge had not had such a brilliant mind, if he had not read such fascinating books, and if Lowes had not had such a sympathetic style. Those of us who do not know it will have hours of delight in reading it; those who do will forgive a short visit to its enchanted pages.

We know, from Coleridge himself, what started him on the second poem. He was reading the seventeenth-century travel book *Purchas His Pilgrimage,* and fell asleep (slightly doped) over the lines

In Xamdu did Cublai Can build a stately palace. . . .

And then, in a three-hour sleep, he composed a poem two or three-hundred lines long. When he woke, he started to write it out. He was interrupted "by a person on business from Porlock," and all the poem, except the opening, was lost. But it begins in almost the exact words of *Purchas:*

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree.

Now, since Coleridge says a book inspired him, we are justified in looking for other books which entered his dream. And Lowes has found them. Into that short poem of 54 lines Coleridge poured the following memories:

—an account of the Old Man of the Mountains, the organizer of the assassins

—several descriptions of the subtropical scenery of the southeastern United States (from Bartram's *Travels through . . . Carolina*)

—Bruce's discovery of the source of the Nile

—Milton's description of an earthly paradise in Abyssinia (also based on *Purchas*)

—a travel-tale about a moon-image of ice in Kashmir

—the Greco-Roman myth of the river Alpheus which flows beneath the sea. (Alph)

—an ode on "The Passions" by Collins
—and who knows what else?

It is truly delightful to watch the skill, learning, and taste with which Lowes traces all these diverse threads, out of the fabric of Coleridge's poem, to so many other human minds, and strange experiences, and romantic explorations, and moving books. Miss Bartlett tells us that the Irish poet Æ objected to such a search because it almost implied "that when the palette is spread with color it accounts for the masterpiece." But in fact it implies no such thing, and Lowes is careful to say so. It does imply that, without a richly spread palette, there could be no masterpiece. But it goes on to say that the masterpiece also needs the painter's carefully practiced technique, and above all the lucky impetus. It stresses the fact that at least three distinct processes are needed for a work of art: *preparation, incubation,* and *artistic definition.*

There are parallels for this in other activities of the mind. Lowes quotes a strangely interesting description of scientific thought by the distinguished mathematician Poincaré, in his *Science and Method:*

(1) a period of conscious work
(2) "inspirations" or "new combinations" produced in the mind by unconscious activity
(3) calculations made from them by the conscious mind, acting with its usual attention and discipline.

He points out that Darwin and Newton did not "work out" their theories. The theory of evolution occurred to Darwin in a flash of vision; the apple which fell from the tree gave Newton a conception of the laws governing the physical universe—in both cases a revelation came after long and almost prayerful preparation. And then followed the long years of careful elaboration—the same toil which Henry James expended so lavishly on his novels, and which Coleridge too often wasted on talk, or plans, or drugs, or casual callers "on business from Porlock."

It is in that movement that the fascination of these studies is to be found. The long preparation, infinitely various; the unseen, unfelt incubation; the rapid vision; the arduous elaboration. There lies the true understanding of art. We fail to appreciate a picture, a poem, a scientific achievement, if we regard it as a single, monolithic entity. We understand it best if we see it as the product of a process. Life is movement and change; and art, being life, is best known when we see it as movement. The poem contains the flow of thought through the dreamer's mind; the bridge is not a contractor's job, but a *being* that lives with the thought and will power which created it, and which are still somehow creating and sustaining it.

P. Bartlett, *Poems in Process* (Oxford, 1951).
J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu* (Houghton Mifflin, 1930).

F. O. Matthiessen and K. B. Murdock (ed.), *The Notebooks of Henry James* (Oxford, 1947).

READING

How well do each of the four opening paragraphs serve to introduce the books that are reviewed?

Precisely what does Highet indicate that he learned from each of the books to enrich his response to the authors?

Compare the amount of detail in the comments on the three books. How is that related to the order in which the comments appear? What other differences do you find related to the order?

INTERPRETATION

What are the main similarities and differences in the approaches of Highet and Johnson? How much difference is made by the occasion of each essay?

Is biographical and compositional background necessary in reading a book or is it merely helpful? Can it also be a hindrance? Consider Highet's examples and also his analogy.

Compare your reading of "Kubla Khan" with and without the knowledge of background given by Highet. On the basis of your experience, discuss the technique of reading a poem.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Poem of Browning
A Short Story of James
How I Wrote a Poem
The Reader's Art

IN PRAISE OF E. B. WHITE, REALIST*

by Clifton Fadiman

Clifton Fadiman (1904–), literary critic, editor, and publisher, was for ten years master of ceremonies of the "Information Please" radio program. He has edited *Reading I've Liked* and is one of the editors of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

It has often been remarked that the superior American writer often becomes famous, wealthy, influential, even more skillful, but rarely mature. Maturity still makes us uneasy. Many of our writers find growing up not merely difficult but socially unrewarding. Those who do insist on developing whether their readers like it or not are freaks.

E. B. White is such a freak.

The statement will embarrass Mr. White, who not only writes as if he were a modest man but actually is one. It may arouse skepticism in others,

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those who admire Mr. White for certain qualities that are as delightful as they are relatively unimportant. Agreed, he has the charm of a dozen Irishmen. He is a master of light verse. His sketches of country living are humorous and poetical. He is fey. He is whimsical. He is funny. He is absurd. Because he is all these things there is some danger that he will be considered a minor writer.

In using the solemn word major I run some risk of alienating people, including the subject of this essay. Nevertheless, E. B. White is a major writer. He is a major writer because his ideas and sentiments are large and basic and because, within the limitations of his chosen style and form, he writes about them perfectly.

In the early years of *The New Yorker* magazine E. B. White contributed excellent light verse and various prose oddments. For about ten years prior to 1938 he wrote or rewrote the first page (Notes and Comment) each week. For several years thereafter he wrote small essays for *Harper's* magazine under the heading One Man's Meat, and is now back on Notes and Comment again. He has published a couple of books of light verse: "Quo Vadimus" (amusing sketches); *Is Sex Necessary?* (with James Thurber), still funny and reasonably wise; *Every Day Is Saturday,* a collection of *The New Yorker* pieces, and *One Man's Meat,* mainly from the pages of *Harper's.* During the approximately twenty years covered by the publication of these frail-appearing volumes he has grown from a paragrapher to a writer, from a light-fingered original humorist to a light-giving original thinker. That *The New Yorker,* which is primarily a magazine of entertainment, should have been his seminary and his graduate school is a tribute to the flexibility and vision of its editor. What hath Ross wrought?

A sentence or so back I spoke of Mr. White as an original thinker. I do not mean that you will find much that is "new" in him. I mean only that his mind naturally works from origins. His most casual remarks, and most of them are quite casual, come out of a sense not only of where man is but of what he started from. They are almost always based, though rarely explicitly, on an original, that is, fundamental, proposition which mankind when it is rational accepts as true. I have been casting about for a good short example of this kind of thinking and believe I will start with this one:

> Clubs, fraternities, nations—these are the beloved barriers in the way of a workable world; these will have to surrender some of their rights and some of their ribs. A "fraternity" is the antithesis of *fraternity.* The first (that is, the order or organization) is predicated on the idea of exclusion; the second (that is, the abstract thing) is based on a feeling of total equality. Anyone who remembers back to his fraternity days at college recalls the enthusiasts in his group, the rabid members, both old and young, who were obsessed with the mystical charm of membership in their particular order. They were usually men who were incapable of genuine brotherhood or at least un-

aware of its implications. Fraternity begins when the exclusion formula is found to be distasteful. The effect of any organization of a social and brotherly nature is to strengthen rather than to diminish the lines which divide people into classes; the effect of states and nations is the same, and eventually these lines will have to be softened; these powers will have to be generalized. It is written on the wall that this is so. I'm not inventing it, I'm just copying it off the wall.

This is original reflection. It goes back to an original abstract idea accepted by mankind when mankind is thinking rationally—the idea of fraternity. It demonstrates that college fraternities represent the opposite of this idea. The plain fact of the matter is that, if all college men could think, the mere attentive reading by them of Mr. White's half-dozen sentences would result in the immediate abolition of all fraternities, which in turn would constitute a radical step away from infantilism.

Mr. White is a useful writer because he is an abstract thinker who does not write abstractly. His base is always a generalization, which is what makes him more than a journalist; but the development is always concrete. Here is an example: In October, 1940, he wrote a semi-joshing, semi-indignant piece on the design of the American motor-car. In the course of it he said, "The ultimate goal of automobile designers is to produce a car into whose driving seat the operator will sink without a trace." After enlarging on that nice (and true) point he went on to state: "The public's passive acceptance of this strange vehicle is disheartening, as is the acceptance by other peoples of the strange modern governments which are destroying them in a dulcet fashion. I think there will some day be an awakening of a rude sort, just as there will some day inevitably be a union of democracies, after many millions have died for the treacherous design of nationalism."

Now the parallel between the design of the motor-car and the "treacherous design of nationalism" is more than a piece of wit. In the first place it is based on a true relationship: in both cases "the operator will sink without a trace." But underlying Mr. White's concrete statements are certain unmentioned abstract ideas: first, that liberty is a good; second, that passive acceptance, as against rational reflection, is an evil.

Philosophy is a calm vision of the whole, journalism an excited perception of the part. Mr. White once wrote that he liked the radio comments of the late Hendrik Willem Van Loon on the day's events "because he has made them seem like a part of a whole, not like an isolated moment in time." This is true, and it is just as true that if radio commentators in general dared to talk about the events of the day as a part of a whole the network officials would in unison shriek, "controversial." We get "forums" instead.

One of the results of having a vision of the whole is that Mr. White is forced to see the part for exactly what it is. If it is part of something big he

sees that. (Remember the comment on college fraternities.) If it is part of something little he sees that. If the part is so small as to be almost nothing he cannot help seeing that too.

In July, 1938, he wrote, "It must have been two years ago that I attended a television demonstration at which it was shown beyond reasonable doubt that a person sitting in one room could observe the nonsense in another." Now this too is more than a witty sentence. Note that Mr. White does not say that it is not pleasant to observe nonsense. On the contrary, he knows, as we all do, that nonsense may be very pleasant, indeed, and interesting and even necessary. But nonsense is small. The implication of the sentence is that television is small. It is small when it relays the contortions of a blues singer twenty feet into another room. It is exactly as small (though vastly more dreadful) when it relays the antics of diplomats ten thousand miles if the antics say no more than does the blues singer. Mr. White has his eye on the ends; the networks have their eye on the means.

Mr. White, even in his very early days, never lost sight of the fact that the mere accumulator, living under whatever system of government, is in bondage. I offer two diverting samples (but all Mr. White's diversions, remember, seek rather than escape the center). 'Way back in *The New Yorker* of May 26, 1928, he printed this small quip:

> A life insurance man told us of a remarkable business migration which took place in Madison Square recently. He said that one division of the Metropolitan Life moved en masse from one building to another, across the connecting bridge. At 2:30 the one hundred clerks ceased work and got up from their desks. At 2:41 the first desk was upended by a porter. At 3:35 the whole works had been transferred to the other building and electricians were installing the telephones. At 3:36 the clerks sat down and took up their duties. "And didn't any of the clerks escape?" we asked. But it was the wrong question.

It was, of course, the right question. It is we who have been giving the wrong answers.

Which leads to another brief entry, of May 13, 1933:

> Mr. Edward A. Filene, the merchant of New England, told the alumni of Columbia University that we all want the same thing. "We all want some arrangement by which more people will be enabled to buy more things." Do we? That is a fair question to ask, because the cumulative goal of "more things" has remained almost unchallenged in all the long palaver of industrial recovery. A little research among the writings of another New Englander, who long ago turned out a passable essay on economy, reveals a more amusing, possibly a more sound, ideal. "The mass of men," he wrote, "lead lives of quiet desperation." And then, you will recall, he told of being present at the auction of a deacon's effects and of noticing, among the innumerable odds and ends representing the accumulation of a lifetime of endeavor, a dried tapeworm.

Thoreau remembered the tapeworm; White remembers the tapeworm; most of the rest of us merely manufacture the tapeworm.

He who remembers the tapeworm is the valuable commentator on our life. When Knute Rockne died, for instance, the nation gave way to an orgasm of grief, and President Hoover sent a eulogistic message. Mr. White (this was in 1931) uttered the one piercing comment on this national event. He said of it that Knute Rockne "was in the big money, and that was why Hoover happened to know about him." He then said the proper and human thing: "We see nothing wrong in the President's expressing grief over the loss of a beloved football coach," but, he went on, "from a diplomatic angle it seems to leave out certain other deceased members of college faculties, men who worked with undergraduates in groups other than groups of eleven. In our unofficial capacity, therefore, we take this opportunity to express the nation's grief in the death of all the other upright members of college faculties who died during the past year. We are sorry we don't know their names."

The point about Mr. White's attitude is that it is the attitude of a realist. His whimsical remarks are not sweet, though they are sweetly put; each one grasps a truth, holds it fast, exhibits it for all to see. His wit is realistic, his humor is realistic and, of course, his fantasy is realistic. It is, for example, the stock market reports that are fantastic, whereas it is Mr. White who is realistic in saying, "if a man wants to buy wheat, let him buy wheat and let the wheat be delivered to his door."

The spur of Mr. White's realism is the fact that he has the eye of a poet, a poet being a man who sees through things. Having the eye of a poet he is aware of the unreality of our taken-for-granted environment. He is aware of the millions of substitutes for things, the millions of substitutes for ideas, the millions of substitutes for emotions, the millions of substitutes for human beings. Out of this awareness the sweet and bitter of his prose continually wells.

Perhaps I can make this clear by a personal reminiscence. About two weeks ago I passed an average American day. In the course of it the following minor things occurred:

1. I received a bill for my quarterly dues—which I gladly paid—from the American Federation of Radio Artists. But I am not a radio "artist," and neither are 99.9 per cent of my colleagues "artists." I am a radio worker, my status being that of employe.

2. I lunched with an amiable publisher, a valued friend, who suggested to me four ideas for books which he said would prove popular. They would have, too; but it never once occurred to him that a book should come out of a writer's mind and heart rather than out of a publisher's inventive powers.

3. I noticed an advertisement for toffee showing two American sol-

diers, candy bar in hand, riding hell-for-leather in a jeep. The caption read: "When the going gets tough, it's Blank's Toffee." The writer of the advertisement and the readers of it were apparently quite unaware that the statement is pure madness.

4. A placard in a hotel lobby attracted my attention. It informed me that a well-known band was returning to entertain the hotel's clientele "by command." It is obvious that nobody had commanded the engagement of the band, and even if anybody had, the band would not play better or worse for that reason.

5. Returning home, I found a well-written letter from the alumni committee of my alma mater, urging me to contribute money. The money was to be used for seven clearly listed purposes. Not one of these purposes had anything to do with the proper education of young men, although my college was founded for that purpose and, so far as I can see, should not be used for any other.

I have drawn up this list of items (selecting these five from a much larger day's bag) to indicate that, for the most part, we live in a world whose connection with reality is of the frailest. The average man, one of whom is speaking to you, functions on a level, observes on a level, entertains himself on a level, noticeably remote from what is real. It is not that we lie to each other; it is that we think we are speaking truth. This is a kind of lunacy.

It is such accepted, conventional, respectable lunacy that Mr. White sees and writes about, as did Swift and every other important satirist that ever lived. White is untouched by it. He sheds it as a duck's back does water. Week after week he reports to us, lightly and seriously, from the Country of the Real, that native land from which we are in semi-exile and for whose simplicities and solidities we feel a troubled, a wistful homesickness. But White is always at Home, and so I have dared to call this seemingly casual writer of light paragraphs and essays by the portentous name of Realist.

READING

In what order does Fadiman develop his ideas about White? What part in the development does the use of examples play?

How does Fadiman use his account of "an average American day" in the context of the essay?

INTERPRETATION

When is fantasy the essence of reality, according to Fadiman? How does the word "realist" applied to White have an uncommon meaning? What is the usual meaning of the word?

What relationship between Fadiman's essay and White's "Once More to the Lake" do you discern?

What, according to Fadiman, makes a major writer? Do you agree?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

In Praise of ———
The Fantasy of a Realist
Idea and Style
The Personal Essay
The American Slant

3

Problems of Our Times

10
Democratic Freedom

Ours is an age of hard, almost insoluble, problems that the race must nevertheless solve or perish from the earth. One of the paramount issues of our time is the one we have called Democratic Freedom. How can we keep America safe from her enemies, and yet maintain our traditional and constitutional freedom of the individual? How is fear of communism itself being used as a tool by communists? What is academic freedom, and why is it so significant? Are any limits to be set upon it? Have we a clear sense of the continuing vitality of the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence?

THE MAKING OF A "COMMUNIST" *

by Bradford Smith

Bradford Smith (1909–), a graduate of Columbia University, lives in Shaftsbury, Vermont. He is the author of *Bradford of Plymouth* (1951) and a biography, *Captain John Smith—His Life & Legend* (1953).

This is a story no American should have to write.

During the war years, when my wife and I used to think about what we would like to have happen to us after the fighting was over, we agreed that we wanted to return to New England and settle down in the country, where we could grow some of our own food, send our son to public school, take part in community activities, and balance the budget with writing instead of with college teaching and writing combined. Although we were lucky enough to be separated for only a year and a half by wartime activity, we most of all wanted the opportunity to do things together—everything from gardening and hiking to reading, music, research work, and helping out at the local PTA, scout troop, or whatever came along. We were tired of moving every few years. I was tired of wartime stress and responsibility. We wanted a place of our own. We wanted roots.

The only remarkable thing about this common dream was that in our case it came true. We found a place in the country that had everything we wanted—privacy with accessibility, a view and a swimming pond, proximity to good libraries and old friends, a satisfactory school, a modest but potentially charming old house. None of the catastrophes conventionally supposed to happen to new country dwellers happened to us. The

* From the *American Scholar*, XXII (Summer, 1953), 337–345. Copyright, 1953, by the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa. Reprinted by permission.

house was sound and in need of no more than ordinary repairs and renewals. A series of interesting writing jobs gave me more than enough to do and as much as we needed to balance the budget.

We'd been told that our neighbors would be slow to warm up to us. A New Englander myself, though not country-born, I felt that I knew how to get along with people whose folkways I had inherited with three hundred years of New England ancestry. My wife, having grown up on a farm, was immune to the frictions and disappointments which often show up when city-born women move to the country and find it different from what they have imagined. Our dream turned into reality with almost frightening success.

The neighbors were friendly; it almost seemed as if they had been waiting for us to arrive. We had made up our minds to spend five or ten years doing what we were asked to do but making no effort to hurry things. Then, we thought, the community might come to accept us, at least as fully as "outsiders" can ever be taken in.

Our modest plan was shattered by irresistible pressure from without. First of all, our son was elected president of his high-school class a few weeks after school had opened. My wife was elected president of the PTA. No such lofty propositions came my way, but I was invited here and there as a speaker, became a scoutmaster, was elected to the town Republican committee, and took on the job of directing a state-wide circuit of forums on public affairs.

We were puzzled but delighted by this sudden acceptance. We found that, far from being stand-offish, our neighbors were more than eager to draw us into the community. We stayed out of the organizations that were purely social, for we had to conserve our time; and it was the creative, constructive activities that attracted our interest.

This capstone of acceptance by the community completed our happiness. We were living where we wanted to and as we wanted to. We had the privacy and independence we wanted; and more, we felt ourselves bound into the community, united in the warm comradeship of people who know each other well and whose loves and labors include not only their personal and family affairs, but the common interests of the whole group. This, to us, is a necessary part of the good life.

Since we found this acceptance so quickly, our shock was all the greater when friends from a distance called to see us one day. They had stopped at a store six or seven miles down the road to ask the way. The store was primarily for tourists, so we didn't know the owner.

"What do you think he said when we asked him if he knew Bradford Smith?" our friends wanted to know. "He said, 'You mean that Communist?' "

Our friends thought it a great joke. We didn't think it very funny, but

we laughed too. Just at this time Westbrook Pegler was discovering that our state was full of Communists—most of them writers and artists, of course—so we attributed the shopkeeper's reaction to this much-publicized hogwash.

But a few days later a friend from a near-by college stopped to ask if we would sign a petition being circulated by the Progressive party. We said no, that we were not in sympathy with the Progressive party and didn't want to be identified with it.

"That's very funny," he said. "When I tried to get my filling station man to sign it just now, he said, 'I wouldn't sign anything that Bradford Smith was in.' "

A few days later, friends from a neighboring town asked us over for cocktails, saying that they wanted us to meet Mr. X. When we got there, we learned that Mr. X would not be present. "He said he was afraid your ideas would be too radical for him," they told us with a laugh.

Radical? Both my wife and I had been reared in ordinary, comfortable middle-class homes. We were property owners and stockholders, our security dependent on the American economic system. I had spent my life promoting the democratic way and had even received a high award for my work from the hands of General Eisenhower. Neither of us had so much as gone in for the campus type of radicalism common among college students. In fact, I had not even taken an interest in party politics before the war, though residence abroad had given me an interest in international matters which had ultimately aroused a political consciousness. As a member of several college faculties, I had had a reputation for political conservatism, and had been made fun of for such things as being opposed to organizing strikes and believing that liberal Republicanism is a practical possibility.

Embarrassed that our hosts had lost a guest because of us, I said something about his peculiar behavior.

"Oh, lots of people around here think you're a Communist," they said, still laughing.

Only we weren't laughing any more. When we got home we tried to figure out how such a rumor had got started, but we couldn't. There wasn't a single fact to go on—not an act or a word written or spoken that could ever have given any sane person the notion that we had even the slightest sympathy with Marxism. As early as 1938 I had pointed out, in print, that communism and fascism led down different roads to the same tyranny.

It was obvious now that we were surrounded by a wide ring of suspicion of which we had been totally unaware, and that we were regarded as a source of contamination. This was not a pleasant feeling, even though we knew that our real friends and our close neighbors were not

taken in. Yet it was evident that a good many people who should have known better were willing to believe the worst.

By prodding some of our closest friends, we gradually learned the rumors being circulated:

I must be a Communist because I had no visible means of support. My means of support were visible enough to anyone who read the *Saturday Evening Post* (scarcely to be compared with the *Daily Worker*), the *Reader's Digest,* the *Herald Tribune,* and, in fact, a number of papers throughout the country which were printing a cartoon treatment of American history for which I wrote the continuity.

I must be a Communist because in several public speeches I had criticized the government for its evacuation of American citizens of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast. This criticism had of course also been made in *Harper's* and other non-Communist magazines.

I must be a Communist because my wife had become president of the PTA, and boring from within is a Communist tactic.

I must be a Communist because I was going around the state (as a forum director) stirring up controversies about such things as socialized medicine and racial equality.

I must be a Communist because I was being investigated by the FBI. The investigation, I learned later, was undertaken because a government agency was about to invite me to take on a confidential job.

But how would such rumors start?

Well, there was a reason. A large group of old-time residents of our town had formed a citizens' committee to clean up abuses or inefficiencies in town government. I was one of many invited to sit in. I had not agreed with some of the drastic methods the group had used to call attention to what it regarded as wrong, but my caution had been overruled. Yet now I, the outsider, had been selected as a convenient means through which to attack the group as a whole. It was better politics to attack me than any of the rest, whose aunts and uncles and cousins represented a large proportion of the town's voters. It was also good politics to arouse hatred against a single individual, since such an emotion is highly negotiable. It's pretty hard to get people to hate anything so abstract as a committee.

So I was the scapegoat. That explanation made us feel a little better. But it didn't make us like the widely circulated falsehoods or, still worse, the apparent readiness with which people who knew us only by reputation were willing to believe and pass on the assertion that I was a Communist. If I had been a self-employed shoemaker instead of a self-employed writer, they would probably not have fallen such ready victims to rumor, though why men who earn a living with their minds are expected to be more vulnerable to intellectual frauds like communism, I have never understood.

The antics of Joe McCarthy in Washington just at this time turned out to be a great boon to the rumormongers. McCarthy attacked the wartime agency in which I had served, and managed to leave the impression that everyone who had worked for it was a Red. The subsequent dragging into the McCarthy investigation of all the country's best experts on the Far East, most of them personal friends, did not help any.

Then, with the reality of a nightmare, came news that in New York publishing circles I was rumored to be a Communist.

For the local situation we had a local explanation, but this was both startling and inexplicable. At last we found one possible clue. Back in 1936 when, as a resident of Japan, I had published my first novel, a friend had written to recommend a New York literary agent if I needed one. I took the recommendation, had dealt with the agent for ten years until a suggestion of his that I rewrite an article along what I regarded as Communist lines had caused me to break the relationship. It had never occurred to me that he was a real Communist (I had never, so far as I knew, met one) until, looking over the proofs of a forthcoming book, I read the assertion that he had been a Party member.

It was also true that just after the outbreak of the war he had placed two articles of mine in *Amerasia*—a publication I had never heard of till then but which subsequently became notorious.

This was the full "proof" of my radicalism. I had witnessed the making of a "Communist" in the most painful way possible, and it was small comfort to realize that what had happened to me was happening to thousands all over America.

What does it do to a man to find himself surrounded by suspicion, to know that though loyal and sensible friends will dismiss such idle rumormongering, the majority will conclude that where there is smoke there must be fire, that therefore he must be, at least partly, what rumor says?

I have no more than average courage. I know that everything I say will be searched for signs of communism. I think twice before making a statement even on a non-political matter. I hesitate to defend the right of labor to organize, or to attack the hateful excesses of American advertising, or to stand up for progressive ideas in education. When I meet a friend on the street or talk with one at the Service Club lunch, I suddenly wonder, "Has he heard it? Does he believe it?" For the first time in my life I am afraid—afraid in my own country. Here, in America, I know what it must be like in Russia.

The worm of fear has gnawed its way deep into us all. Suspicion has become a national psychosis, unmatched in any of the European countries where communism is far more real a threat. Never before has the atmosphere of suspicion been so general. We have had our bad moments, to be sure—the persecution of Germans during the First World War, the evac-

uation of Americans of Japanese descent during the Second. But shameful as our racial and religious persecutions have been, they have at least been limited by their nature, and therefore can be attacked and eventually overcome. Now no one is spared, and as a result no one is in a position to strike back. Fear of communism has become communism's most powerful weapon against democracy.

The result?

When the invitation came from Washington for a job which apparently would have used some of my special knowledge, I said no—no, thank you. Why should I stick my neck out? If on no evidence, no fact, all this has happened to me, what would happen if I went to Washington and McCarthy used this batch of baseless rumors to go to work on me as he has gone to work on my friends?

When I was asked to run for town office I thought, why risk it? The rumormongering has already done its job so well that I can't get elected. In the end, though, I did run. One must make a stand somewhere. The first time I was defeated. The second time I was elected and have since been re-elected. This proof of public confidence is precious. It has helped me to get back to the point where I can once again say what I believe—even though I know it may be misinterpreted. But almost every day something crops up to show that the character smear is still effective despite all the evidence to the contrary. Apparently I must get used to walking under this cloud of suspicion.

Thus the Red scare drives the average citizen underground along with the real Communist. Worst of all is its effect on the salty, everyday informal talk that goes on all over America—across store counters and dinner tables, during factory rest periods, in barber shops and post offices. It is this talk that steers a democracy. Here opinions are formed which later turn into votes. And that talk isn't as free as it once was. I, having been falsely branded, am afraid of the iron. Perhaps I therefore sense the effects more readily. But listen to America talking and you will hear it. The old independence is gone. Fear is in the silences, in the things that are left unsaid and in the hatred of the specter called communism, in the nervous desire to conform, to be thought safe, in the haste to condemn what is labeled radical, socialist, or even liberal. The old spirit of adventure, the willingness to try new paths, is being strangled. It was this brave experimentalism which once made us the hope of the world. The very contempt for authority which sometimes led us to excess was basically a refusal to be confined by any authoritarian credo, a recognition that a society which cannot change is dead. The effect of the investigators and ex-Communists who now accuse loyal Americans of being Reds is to enforce upon us all a form of authoritarianism as rigid and hateful as that of communism itself. The ex-Communist, with the same mental rigidity which made him a

dupe to communism, now demands a rigid conformity to some new, ill-defined authoritarianism which condemns the liberal-minded for failing to be bound by his new discovery of Truth. A sucker for authority, the ex-Communist can never understand that the essence of liberalism is its ability to change, its independence of the fallacy of a perfect system. America's strength is that it has never been a system, but an experiment.

Moreover, in our eagerness to attack communism we have given it excessive advertising, out of all proportion to the small number of Communists among us. How many advertising campaigns have ever been based on hammering home the name of the competitor's product?

In addition to advertising communism, thus inflating its importance, we have raised its market value by associating with it all forms of social security and public ownership—which, after all, include the Post Office as well as TVA. Thus we condemn measures which actually help capitalism by spreading its benefits wide enough to give satisfaction to the majority. We also condemn most of our allies who, because of limited resources, practice varying forms of socialism. If we want to win friends and influence history, we will have to stop confusing communism and socialism, and implying that good friends like Sweden or essential allies like Britain and France are really in communism's camp. We will have to rid ourselves of the logical fallacy that everything is black or white. Human society, like color, is not black and white but a spectrum. And smart politics demands that we identify ourselves with the widest band of the political spectrum consistent with human freedom. What business firm would seek to improve its position by selling off its soundest assets?

But how can we separate the legitimate exposure of undercover, foreign-inspired Communist activity from the un-American persecution of the man who thinks for himself? Can we have vigilance without hysteria? Can we have freedom without letting ourselves be destroyed from within? Here are a few specific things we could do:

1. Teach the basic principles of Marxism in every high school, so that its falsehoods may become rationally clear, not emotionally obscured, and so that our people will be able to tell the difference between what is Communist and what is in the liberal, democratic tradition. How many Americans know, for instance, that communism was tried here three hundred years ago, at Plymouth and Jamestown, and that its failure was the basis for our adherence to the proved system of private enterprise?

2. By movies, radio and every popular medium of information, see to it that the public knows what communism is—not fears it, but knows it—knows the phony intellectual basis on which it rests and the cruelty and disregard of the person to which it leads. To date, our campaign against communism has been emotional when not hysterical. Facts would be safer and more effective.

3. When we hear anyone branded as a Communist, we can refuse to accept rumor and demand proof. There must be tangible evidence of Party membership or a demonstrable act or consistent preachment which is clearly Marxist. Such dangerous logical fallacies as branding a man Red because he has associated with a man who was branded a Red must be exposed.

4. Congressional and other investigating committees must be controlled so that they cannot try innocent citizens in the newspapers and in Star Chamber probes. The old principle that a man is innocent until proved guilty has been inverted by these investigations. Hundreds of loyal, intelligent citizens have been irremediably smeared and their usefulness to the nation has been hampered or destroyed—a clear gain for the Communists. Accusation and trial should be returned to the courts where they belong. To balance Congressional investigation of Red influences, there should be a thorough investigation by Congress of the forces that are attempting to strangle traditional American freedoms and to create a climate of fear and mutual distrust.

Irresponsible Redbaiting is communism's strongest ally in this country, far more effective than the work of real Communists. Only a democracy weakened by fear and suspicion can ever become a prey to communism. Let the FBI clean up the real Reds. And let us attend to the main business of building a stronger, fear-free democracy.

READING

With what three main narrative sequences does Smith progress to the statement "For the first time in my life I am afraid"? How useful are they in reaching this climax?

Describe the middle part of the essay and the four recommendations at the end. How closely are they based on the narrative sequences?

INTERPRETATION

In what other ways could a person respond to the situation described by Smith? Would they be better or worse?

Examine Smith's four-point program. Do you believe it will accomplish what he hopes? Would you add or subtract?

In your opinion, what is the connection between the FBI, congressional investigations, and gossip? Would Smith agree?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Incident on Vacation
The End of a Rumor
A Changed America?
Freedom in the Classroom

WHAT IS ACADEMIC FREEDOM?*

A LETTER FROM AN ALUMNUS

by Joseph Alsop

Joseph Alsop (1910–) has been associated with the New York *Herald Tribune* since graduating from Harvard in 1932. A member of the Board of Overseers, he addressed the letter printed below to one of the six fellows of the Harvard Corporation.

Dear X: With your permission, I should like to give you my thoughts about the investigation of Communism in the universities that is currently being conducted by the House Un-American Activities Committee and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. I do so because I have watched these committees in action for a long time, and because I believe this investigation is in a sense a test case of whether Harvard is still Harvard.

Let me begin by saying that I have been profoundly and actively anti-Communist all my life. Those of us who have always understood the Communist Party and its purposes perhaps do not feel called upon to protest our hatred quite so hysterically as those on whom the truth has dawned more recently. But the feeling is as strong just the same. Nor do I stop at being anti-Communist. I have known only three or four men and women who have emerged from the experience of party membership as *well* people. With these rare exceptions ex-Communists seem to me suspect and repellent, whether they are professionally and loudly repentant or merely mumbling and regretful. I am sure that all the other members of the Harvard governing bodies feel just as I do.

Unfortunately, however, the question that confronts us is not how we feel about Communists and ex-Communists. The question is, rather, how we feel about the three great principles which have run, like threads of gold, through the long, proud Harvard story. These are the necessary rules of association, as it were, of every free intellectual community—of every university that still fulfills the university's function of extending the frontiers of human thought and human knowledge.

These rules are needful for a simple, practical reason. The frontiers of thought and knowledge are rarely pushed outwards without giving acute pain to those who are used to the frontiers where they are. People will always acquire a vested interest in the old boundaries. They will always feel, about any great extension, as our New England Federalists felt about the westward course of American empire. Hence a university cannot do its vital job if what is novel and original and unconventional may be punished as being immoral or pernicious or wickedly unorthodox. From

* From the *Atlantic Monthly*, CXCI (June, 1953), 41–43. Copyright, 1953, by The Atlantic Monthly Company. Reprinted by permission of the author and publisher.

Roger Bacon to Darwin, from Cimabue to Picasso, the grand originators have always been attacked as sinister subverters of the established order. The fear of such attack is a dead hand. And any academic community will degenerate into a mere finishing school for mediocrities unless the members of that community feel free to think new thoughts and say new things.

Among the three principles of academic freedom, the first, then, is simply the freedom to make the personal choices, within the limits of the law.

Harvard's governing bodies may, of course, refuse to appoint a man because they do not like the tendency of his politics or even the cut of his coat. But if he is once appointed, and if he duly fulfills his academic contract, a member of our faculty is not to be penalized for any legal choice he may make, however eccentric or controversial. He may become a nudist or a Zoroastrian, imitate Origen or adopt the Pythagorean rules of diet. If called before a Congressional investigating committee, he may seek the protection of the Fifth Amendment, and refuse to testify on grounds of possible self-incrimination. However much we disapprove, we may not interfere.

I am aware that many people nowadays hold that any man who shelters behind the Fifth Amendment must by inference be criminally guilty. I myself believe that witnesses called before the Congressional investigating committees choose better when they testify fully and frankly, letting the chips fall where they may. But I am also quite certain that seeking the Fifth Amendment's protection is a permissible choice, within the limits of the principle I have laid down above.

In the first place, the procedures of these Congressional investigating committees are an outrage against the spirit of the Constitution, whether or no they remain within the letter of the Congressional power, which I doubt. One of them—that headed by Senator McCarthy—is in effect engaged in the national dissemination of poison pen letters. Another—that headed by Senator Jenner—long cherished and flattered as its chief witness a man I myself have publicly accused as a probable perjurer, whose sworn testimony in the important case of John Carter Vincent has just been scornfully rejected by the present Secretary of State. Still another—that headed by Representative Velde—until lately employed in a key position on its staff a proven forger of evidence, who was only dismissed when caught, *in flagrante delicto,* in a second shameless fabrication.

Before these committees, a man may be charged with "pro-Communism" because he has irritated a neurotic subordinate by editing out a foolish repetition of the phrase "anti-Communist" in a single paragraph of a broadcast. If he seeks to answer the charge, the committee staff blackmails him with threats of rough treatment on the stand. If he still

persists, he is barely allowed to make his halting explanation before he is overwhelmed with menacing irrelevancies—"Come now, was it five minutes before or five minutes after?—You're under oath; was it Friday or Saturday?—Won't you admit that this word 'democratic,' which you say you used, is a prime favorite of the Communists?" And in the end the damning charge of pro-Communism remains on his record, grossly false yet inexpugnable, to return to haunt him whenever he seeks a new job, or moves to a new neighborhood, or makes a new friend.

The foregoing actual case, which I can vouch for in detail, points all too clearly to the central fact. Both in procedure and in aim these committees differ altogether from the old House Un-American Activities Committee when Vice-President Richard Nixon was taking a leading part in its work. The real aim of these committees is not to bring persons guilty of crime before courts of law. It is to make political capital by incriminating their victims before the court of public opinion—to use the headlines to damage reputations beyond subsequent repair. Quite often, what is incriminating before these committees to the extent of ruining men's lives would be rejected with indignation by any court in the country. The process is antilegal in its essence, and even doubtfully constitutional in its outward forms. In considering this process, it is ridiculously unrealistic to be guided by pure legal theory, in the manner of Professor Zechariah Chafee, Jr., and Professor Arthur Sutherland.

For these reasons, then, a Harvard faculty member called before these committees must be permitted to choose not to testify, either as protest against the prevailing procedures, or because he fears his simplest word will be ruthlessly twisted against him, or because he does not wish to play the part of an informer.

This last motive is an especially strong one. In the American academic community, there must be hundreds of unimpeachably loyal Americans who briefly wandered into the Communist Party during the united front nonsense of the thirties or the period of wartime silliness. In all too many of our universities nowadays, the mere revelation of these people's former folly will cost them their posts. As I have said already, I think that in general the better course is full disclosure and let the chips fall where they may. But may not a man balk at ruining the lives of friends now loyal, who shared his own past error?

The witness who gives up the Fifth Amendment's protection, tells his own story fully, yet refuses to inform on his friends, will certainly be cited for contempt of Congress. A jail term is the price of this seemingly more honorable course. Names and more names are what these committees want at this stage, and they will stop at nothing to get them. This is an essential part of their program for terrorizing the academic community.

I am fully conscious that a man who pleads possible self-

incrimination in order to avoid playing informer without going to jail, is in fact taking advantage of a legal technicality. But even other-worldly legal theorists like Professors Sutherland and Chafee must admit that taking advantage of legal technicalities is common practice among respectable citizens. It is common practice, moreover, in the courts of law, where an accused man still enjoys his constitutional privilege of being assumed innocent until proven guilty. Think it over. I put it to you, whatever we may think ourselves, Harvard cannot say to members of the Harvard faculty, "Either you turn informer or you go to jail."

As to the second principle of academic freedom, it is unrestricted freedom of thought.

Freedom of thought perforce includes the freedom to hold unpopular or pernicious political views, and even to belong to plainly pernicious political parties, so long as these parties are legal, as the Communist Party still is. I would not knowingly give a Communist a Harvard appointment, and I would be very suspicious of ex-Communists. But whether we like it or not, we cannot start disciplining a man for his political ideas after we have appointed him. The rule was well laid down by Senator Taft, who said he would not dismiss a professor just because he was a Communist, although he would do so if the man had broken his academic contract by teaching Communism on university time.

If I may, I shall illustrate the wisdom of this rule from my own experience. Immediately after the war, the American Communist Party was a serious threat. Infiltration had gone so far in the labor movement, for instance, that the Wisconsin CIO was actually Communist-controlled. The Wisconsin Communists were even able to swing the labor vote from Senator Robert M. La Follette, Jr., to Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, thus giving Senator McCarthy his majority in the 1946 Republican primary. Senator McCarthy was then complacent, defending his tainted victory with the remark, "Well, Communists vote, don't they?" But at that time, as my writing will show, I was not complacent about the Communist threat, doing all in my power to expose and warn against this infiltration that Senator McCarthy benefited from.

Nowadays, while the menace of the Soviet Union has grown very greatly, the American Communist Party is an impotent wreck. But we are now faced with a new internal threat, from Senator McCarthy and his friends and followers of the neo-Fascist right. In my opinion, these people are also subversives in the literal sense, for they are seeking to subvert our most honored American institutions under the cloak of anti-Communism. If Communists are to be dismissed from Harvard, then it will also be my duty as an overseer to demand the rooting out of all McCarthyites and McCarthy fellow travelers.

It is precisely because any kind of purge opens the gate to all kinds

of purge, that freedom of thought necessarily means the freedom to think bad thoughts as well as good.

It is Harvard's glory—it always has been Harvard's glory—to stand for unrestricted free trade in ideas. I am not impressed by the argument that Harvard should change her ancient ways, in order to give a safe answer to those who ask, "But are you going to let a Communist teach our boys?" Parents may choose from the wide variety of finishing schools for mediocrities if they think their boys are so softheaded as to be led into Communism by an astronomer or theoretical physicist mournfully parroting the dreary intellectual stereotypes of the extreme left. Harvard is not for the softheads, but for those capable of education. And to cut off that free trade in ideas which is a vital element in the highest education is no safeguard of those who come to Harvard to be educated. It is a sin against them.

But, you may ask, what if one of these men called by the Congressional inquisitors has been or is criminally guilty? What if we are not dealing with a mere party front-man, useful as window dressing, but with a conscious member of the Communist conspiracy? I am not such an innocent as to deny there may be such cases. Yet the third great principle of academic freedom is to leave such determinations to the due process of the law, of whose protection no American may be rightfully deprived.

There is no Harvard precedent for any other course. Dr. Webster (as I remember very well, for he was a relative of mine) murdered Professor Parkman and incinerated the body in the Harvard Physics Laboratory furnace. The Harvard President of those days testified as a character witness at Dr. Webster's trial; and the hangman, not the governing bodies, terminated Dr. Webster's appointment. I may be old-fashioned, but I still think homicide is as reprehensible as Communism; and I am contented to leave the discovery of conspirators to the police and the courts.

Nor can I forget, in this connection, the distinguished example set by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in the grave case of Alger Hiss. I need hardly remind you that when Hiss was charged with perjury, and by implication with treason, Secretary Dulles and his colleagues on the Carnegie Institution Board refused to dismiss Hiss from his high post until the wrongdoer had been fairly tried. I honor them for their courage and right thinking. It would be inexpressibly shocking if the governing bodies of Harvard, which in the past have been courageous, right-thinking, and worthy of honor, should now forget their traditions in favor of a cheap and self-defeating expediency.

Let me repeat, in these cases the individuals are nothing and the principles are everything. I dislike the individuals, I deplore their views, and I wish they held no Harvard appointments. But this is irrelevant to the central issue. That issue is simple. Harvard has been asked to be the judas

goat, leading the whole American academic community to the slaughterhouse. Harvard cannot be untrue to her past, cast shame upon her present, and jeopardize her future, by accepting this plausible but sinister invitation.

I am, most sincerely yours,

JOSEPH ALSOP

READING

What are the particular circumstances of this essay? What is the effect of these on the general reader?

What are "the three great principles which have run, like threads of gold, through the long, proud history of Harvard"? In what manner does Alsop introduce each one?

In recounting the motives that may justify the use of the Fifth Amendment, what order does Alsop follow? How does this affect his argument?

INTERPRETATION

What pertinence to Alsop's essay does Smith's have? Does Smith suggest important considerations that he omits? Do they strengthen his main arguments?

"He may become a nudist or a Zoroastrian. . . . ." How serviceable an analogy is this for a communist teacher? Where is its strength and where is its weakness?

If Alsop would not willingly appoint a communist, why would he be willing to defend the appointment after it was made? Is the attitude inconsistent? What part do accepted rules of academic freedom and tenure play in it?

Would you, or would your parents, approve or disapprove of your being taught by a communist? Explain your stand.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Letter to a High School Friend
A Letter Replying to Alsop
McCarthyism as a State of Mind
Ideal and Practical Freedom

THE PRESENT DANGER*

by the Association of American Universities

On March 30, 1953, the following report was unanimously approved by the Association of American Universities. Members of the committee making the report were Whitney Griswold, chairman, Arthur H. Compton, Frank D. Murphy, John E. W. Sterling, and Henry W. Wriston, the presidents respectively of Yale, Washington, Kansas, Stanford, and Brown.

1

A university is the institutional embodiment of an urge for knowledge that is basic in human nature and as old as the human race. It is inherent in every individual. The search that it inspires is an individual affair. Men vary in

* As reprinted in the *Atlantic Monthly*, CXCI (June, 1953), 44–46.

the intensity of their passion for the search for knowledge as well as in their competence to pursue it. History therefore presents us with a series of scholarly pioneers who advanced our knowledge from age to age and increased our ability to discover new knowledge. Great scholars and teachers drew students to them, and in the Middle Ages a few such groups organized themselves into the first universities.

Like its medieval prototype, the modern American university is an association of individual scholars. Their effectiveness, both as scholars and as teachers, requires the capitalizing of their individual passion for knowledge and their individual competence to pursue it and communicate it to others. They are united in loyalty to the ideal of learning, to the moral code, to the country, and to its form of government. They represent diversified fields of knowledge, they express many points of view. Even within the same department of instruction there are not only specialists in various phases of the subject, but men with widely differing interests and outlook.

Free enterprise is as essential to intellectual as to economic progress. A university must therefore be hospitable to an infinite variety of skills and viewpoints, relying upon open competition among them as the surest safeguard of truth. Its whole spirit requires investigation, criticism, and presentation of ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and mutual confidence. This is the real meaning of "academic" freedom. It is essential to the achievement of its ends that the faculty of a university be guaranteed this freedom by its governing board, and that the reasons for the guarantee be understood by the public. To enjoin uniformity of outlook upon a university faculty would put a stop to learning at the source. To censor individual faculty members would put a stop to learning at its outlet.

For these reasons a university does not take an official position of its own either on disputed questions of scholarship or on political questions or on matters of public policy. It refrains from so doing not only in its own but in the public interest, to capitalize the search for knowledge for the benefit of society, to give the individuals pursuing that search the freest possible scope and the greatest possible encouragement in their efforts to preserve the learning of the past and advance learning in the present. The scholar who pursues the search on these terms does so at maximum advantage to society. So does the student. To the scholar lie open new discoveries in the whole field of knowledge, to the student the opportunity of sharing in those discoveries and at the same time developing his powers of rational thought, intelligent judgment, and an understanding use of acquired knowledge. Thus essential qualities of learning are combined with essential qualities of citizenship in a free society.

To fulfill their function the members of university faculties must continue to analyze, test, criticize, and reassess existing institutions and beliefs,

approving when the evidence supports them and disapproving when the weight of evidence is on the other side. Such investigations cannot be confined to the physical world. The acknowledged fact that moral, social, and political progress have not kept pace with mastery of the physical world shows the need for more intensified research, fresh insights, vigorous criticism, and inventiveness. The scholar's mission requires the study and examination of unpopular ideas, of ideas considered abhorrent and even dangerous. For, just as in the case of deadly disease or the military potential of an enemy, it is only by intense study and research that the nature and extent of the danger can be understood and defenses against it perfected.

Timidity must not lead the scholar to stand silent when he ought to speak, particularly in the field of his competence. In matters of conscience and when he has truth to proclaim, the scholar has no obligation to be silent in the face of popular disapproval. Some of the great passages in the history of truth have involved the open challenge of popular prejudice in times of tension such as those in which we live.

What applies to research applies equally to teaching. So long as an instructor's observations are scholarly and germane to his subject, his freedom of expression in his classroom should not be curbed. The university student should be exposed to competing opinions and beliefs in every field, so that he may learn to weigh them and gain maturity of judgment. Honest and skillful exposition of such opinions and beliefs is the duty of every instructor; and it is equally his privilege to express his own critical opinion and the reasons for holding it. In teaching, as in research, he is limited by the requirements of citizenship, of professional competence and good taste. Having met those standards, he is entitled to all the protection the full resources of the university can provide.

Whatever criticism is occasioned by these practices, the universities are committed to them by their very nature. To curb them, in the hope of avoiding criticism, would mean distorting the true process of learning and depriving society of its benefits. It would invite the fate of the German and Italian universities under Fascism and the Russian universities under Communism. It would deny our society one of its most fruitful sources of strength and welfare and represent a sinister change in our ideal of government.

2

We must recognize the fact that honest men hold differing opinions. This fundamental truth underlies the assertion and definition of individual rights and freedom in our Bill of Rights. How does it apply to universities? In the eyes of the law, the university scholar has no more and no less freedom than his fellow citizens outside a university. Nonetheless, because

of the vital importance of the university to civilization, membership in its society of scholars enhances the prestige of persons admitted to its fellowship after probation and upon the basis of achievement in research and teaching. The university supplies a distinctive forum and, in so doing, strengthens the scholar's voice. When his opinions challenge existing orthodox points of view, his freedom may be more in need of defense than that of men in other professions. The guarantee of tenure to professors of mature and proven scholarship is one such defense. As in the case of judges, tenure protects the scholar against undue economic or political pressures and ensures the continuity of the scholarly process.

There is a line at which "freedom" or "privilege" begins to be qualified by legal "duty" and "obligation." The determination of the line is the function of the legislature and the courts. The ultimate interpretation and application of the First and Fourteenth Amendments are the function of the United States Supreme Court; but every public official is bound by his oath of office to respect and preserve the liberties guaranteed therein. These are not to be determined arbitrarily or by public outcry. The line thus drawn can be changed by legislative and judicial action; it has varied in the past because of prevailing anxieties as well as by reason of "clear and present" danger. Its location is subject to, and should receive, criticism both popular and judicial. However much the location of the line may be criticized, it cannot be disregarded with impunity. Any member of a university who crosses the duly established line is not excused by the fact that he believes the line ill-drawn. When the speech, writing, or other actions of a member of a faculty exceed lawful limits, he is subject to the same penalties as other persons. In addition, he may lose his university status.

Historically the word "university" is a guarantee of standards. It implies endorsement not of its members' views but of their capability and integrity. Every scholar has an obligation to maintain this reputation. By ill-advised, though not illegal, public acts or utterances he may do serious harm to his profession, his university, to education, and to the general welfare. He bears a heavy responsibility to weigh the soundness of his opinions and the manner in which they are expressed. His effectiveness, both as scholar and teacher, is not reduced but enhanced if he has the humility and the wisdom to recognize the fallibility of his own judgment. He should remember that he is as much a layman as anyone else in all fields except those in which he has special competence. Others, both within and without the university, are as free to criticize his opinions as he is free to express them; "academic freedom" does not include freedom from criticism.

As in all acts of association, the professor accepts conventions which become morally binding. Above all, he owes his colleagues in the university complete candor and perfect integrity, precluding any kind of

clandestine or conspiratorial activities. He owes equal candor to the public. If he is called upon to answer for his convictions it is his duty as a citizen to speak out. It is even more definitely his duty as a professor. Refusal to do so, on whatever legal grounds, cannot fail to reflect upon a profession that claims for itself the fullest freedom to speak and the maximum protection of that freedom available in our society. In this respect, invocation of the Fifth Amendment places upon a professor a heavy burden of proof of his fitness to hold a teaching position and lays upon his university an obligation to re-examine his qualifications for membership in its society.

In all universities faculties exercise wide authority in internal affairs. The greater their autonomy, the greater their share of responsibility to the public. They must maintain the highest standards and exercise the utmost wisdom in appointments and promotions. They must accept their share of responsibility for the discipline of those who fall short in the discharge of their academic trust.

The universities owe their existence to legislative acts and public charters. A state university exists by constitutional and legislative acts, an endowed university enjoys its independence by franchise from the state and by custom. The state university is supported by public funds. The endowed university is benefited by tax exemptions. Such benefits are conferred upon the universities not as favors but in furtherance of the public interest. They carry with them public obligation of direct concern to the faculties of the universities as well as to the governing boards.

Legislative bodies from time to time may scrutinize these benefits and privileges. It is clearly the duty of universities and their members to coöperate in official inquiries directed to those ends. When the powers of legislative inquiry are abused, the remedy does not lie in noncoöperation or defiance; it is to be sought through the normal channels of informed public opinion.

We have set forth the nature and function of the university. We have outlined its rights and responsibilities and those of its faculties. What are the implications for current anxiety over Russian Communism and the subversive activities connected with it?

We condemn Russian Communism as we condemn every form of totalitarianism. We share the profound concern of the American people at the existence of an international conspiracy whose goal is the destruction of our cherished institutions. The police state would be the death of our universities, as of our government. Three of its principles in particular are abhorrent to us: the fomenting of world-wide revolution as a step to seizing power; the use of falsehood and deceit as normal means of persuasion; thought control—the dictation of doctrines which must be ac-

cepted and taught by all party members. Under these principles, no scholar could adequately disseminate knowledge or pursue investigations in the effort to make further progress toward truth.

Appointment to a university position and retention after appointment require not only professional competence but involve the affirmative obligation of being diligent and loyal in citizenship. Above all, a scholar must have integrity and independence. This renders impossible adherence to such a regime as that of Russia and its satellites. No person who accepts or advocates such principles and methods has any place in a university. Since present membership in the Communist Party requires the acceptance of these principles and methods, such membership extinguishes the right to a university position. Moreover, if an instructor follows communistic practice by becoming a propagandist for one opinion, adopting a "party line," silencing criticism or impairing freedom of thought and expression in his classroom, he forfeits not only all university support but his right to membership in the university.

"Academic freedom" is not a shield for those who break the law. Universities must coöperate fully with law-enforcement officers whose duty requires them to prosecute those charged with offenses. Under a well-established American principle their innocence is to be assumed until they have been convicted, under due process, in a court of proper jurisdiction.

Unless a faculty member violates a law, however, his discipline or discharge is a university responsibility and should not be assumed by political authority. Discipline on the basis of irresponsible accusations or suspicion can never be condoned. It is as damaging to the public welfare as it is to academic integrity. The university is competent to establish a tribunal to determine the facts and fairly judge the nature and degree of any trespass upon academic integrity, as well as to determine the penalty such trespass merits.

As the professor is entitled to no special privileges in law, so also he should be subject to no special discrimination. Universities are bound to deprecate special loyalty tests which are applied to their faculties but to which others are not subjected. Such discrimination does harm to the individual and even greater harm to his university and the whole cause of education by destroying faith in the ideals of university scholarship.

Finally, we assert that freedom of thought and speech is vital to the maintenance of the American system and is essential to the general welfare. Condemnation of Communism and its protagonists is not to be interpreted as readiness to curb social, political, or economic investigation and research. To insist upon complete conformity to current beliefs and practices would do infinite harm to the principle of freedom, which is the greatest, the central, American doctrine. Fidelity to that principle

has made it possible for the universities of America to confer great benefits upon our society and our country. Adherence to that principle is the only guarantee that the nation may continue to enjoy those benefits.

READING

How would you describe the language and tone of this statement? What connection has the authorship and occasion?

What are the main observations made in Part 1? To what extent are those of Part 2 built upon them?

Exactly what does the report say about invoking the Fifth Amendment? about the appointment and retention of communist teachers? Are these views consistent with its general principles?

INTERPRETATION

Compare the views on the invoking of the Fifth Amendment and the retention of communist teachers with those of Alsop. What exception would Alsop probably take?

By many teachers this report has been regarded as too weakly defensive of academic freedom; on the other hand, what it says about loyalty oaths and conformity has been attacked as foolishly idealistic. How do you regard it? Why?

"Honest and skillful exposition of such opinions and beliefs is the duty of every instructor; and it is equally his privilege to express his own critical opinion and the reasons for holding it." Discuss this statement from your own experience. Is the teacher who does not express his opinion unsatisfactory? Is a book—like this one—obligated to take sides on issues?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

What Is Germane? A Classroom Incident
The Apathy of American Students
Communism as a Smear Word
The Loyalty Oath at ———
Responsibilities of Freedom

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE*

by Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) by both his career and his writings strongly influenced American political thought. The founding of the University of Virginia is indicative of our third President's many cultural interests.

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,

* The unanimous declaration of the thirteen United States of America, in Congress, July 4, 1776.

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 inalienable 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 a 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 suffering of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. 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 repository 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 re-

maining, in the meantime, exposed to all the dangers of invasion 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; 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 his 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 constitutions 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 work 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 upon 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 insurrection 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 attention 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.

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.

READING

To what audience or audiences is the Declaration of Independence addressed? How would you describe the tone of its language? Compare the tone with that of the Association of American Universities report.

What are some standard one-volume histories of the United States in which you can find a discussion of the background and significance of the Declaration of Independence? Choose one, and describe the main points that it makes.

What are the three main divisions of this document? In the list of grievances, what arrangement appears?

INTERPRETATION

Why is George III rather than the British Parliament made chiefly responsible for the grievances? What is said to allay fears that the revolution is ill-considered or may result in anarchy? In the phrase, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," what effect results from the substitution of "happiness" for the traditional word "property" (as in the writings of John Locke, for example)? Why do you think Jefferson made the change?

If a similar document were produced by the Virgin Islands or Puerto Rico, by Canada or Jamaica, by Poland or Czechoslovakia, what would be your response? How much would your response result from national allegiance, how much from differing situations?

To what extent is the Declaration applicable to problems raised in this section? To what extent is it applicable to such past problems as slavery, suffrage, public education, or labor laws? Name two or three current problems to which it is relevant.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

An Application for Today
Student Councils and the Declaration
The Art of Revolution
Ideal and Actuality

THE DECLARATION IS FOR TODAY!*

by Henry Steele Commager

Henry Steele Commager (1902–), a graduate of the University of Chicago, has taught history at Columbia since 1939. With S. E. Morison he is the author of *The Growth of the American Republic* (first published in 1931), a book used widely in American history courses.

We celebrate on Wednesday the 175th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. But we must not assume that we are celebrating merely a historical event. It *was* a great historical event. "A greater," wrote John Adams, "never was nor will be decided among men." But it was not the kind of event that is over and done with. It has tremendous meaning for today.

It is not sufficiently appreciated that the Declaration did far more than declare independence. It did more even than display a "decent respect to the opinions of mankind" by setting forth the causes which impelled separation—though that itself was something new in history. What it did was to state the basic philosophy not of independence but of democracy and republicanism.

It is fashionable, now, in certain quarters to argue that the United States is not a democracy, that the Fathers established a Republic, not a

* From the *New York Times Magazine*, July 1, 1951, pp. 5, 29. Copyright, 1951, by the New York Times, Inc. Reproduced by permission of the author and the *New York Times Magazine.*

democracy, and that the Fathers were in fact hostile to democracy and took care to guard against it in State and Federal Constitutions. To support this curious thesis, all the warnings that men uttered, all the institutions and mechanisms that men contrived to guard against unlimited government are conjured up and enlisted in the anti-democratic ranks. And from all this it is sought to draw the conclusion that democracy is somehow vaguely un-American.

Jefferson, who penned the Declaration; the committee of patriots—John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman and R. R. Livingston —who passed on it, the Congress that approved it, Americans generally who rejoiced in it, did not so reason. They feared unlimited government; they feared the tyranny of factions or of majorities; but they never doubted the basic principle of democracy, that men make government.

This is the principle asserted in the Declaration, and it stamps the Declaration as the greatest of all statements of democracy—democracy in either the eighteenth or the twentieth century meaning of the word. Governments, says Jefferson—and only the felicity of the phrasing was new with him—governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed. The crucial word is *derive*. Government comes from below, not above; government comes from men, not from kings or lords or military masters; government looks to the source of all power in the consent of men. This is the very essence of democracy.

More, if government fails of its ends, if it fails to protect men in their rights to life, liberty and happiness, it is the right and duty of men to alter or abolish it. This is strong doctrine, so strong that now we pay it only lip service. Even the suggestion of altering government is looked upon as subversive, while the advocacy of the right of abolishing government is regarded in some quarters as treason.

But Jefferson himself was quite clear about the principle. Not only did he feel that men have a right to change their government whenever that government fails to serve the purposes for which it was established; he went even further and argued that ideally "every constitution and every law naturally expires" with each new generation. "If it be enforced longer," he wrote Madison, "it is an act of force and not of right." The earth, he said, belongs always to the living, not to the dead, and each new generation has the same right to make its own form of government that the original generation of constitution-makers had.

This sounds like revolutionary doctrine, and in a sense it is. But it is revolutionary in a new sense rather than in the old sense. At the time Jefferson wrote there was but one way of revolution—the appeal to arms. The right of revolution, even of violent revolution, was a moral right and must be invoked as long as there was no alternative.

But Jefferson's generation provided an alternative. For violent revolution they substituted legal revolution. For the appeal to arms they substituted the appeal to the will of the people. This is the historical meaning of that greatest of American political inventions, the constitutional convention. The constitutional convention derived its authority directly from people. It addressed itself exclusively to altering, abolishing, or remaking a constitution. It referred its handiwork back to the source of all power—the people. It was revolution legalized. It was the constitutional alternative to revolution by force and violence. In the words of Jefferson's colleague, John Adams, it "realized the theories of the wisest writers."

These principles of what we must call democracy applied only indirectly to the specific purpose of the Declaration, that of justifying independence, but they applied directly to the larger purposes of the Declaration, that of providing a political philosophy adequate to the needs of this new people. And so, too, with what is unquestionably the most famous phrase in the great Declaration—the assertion that "all men are created equal." Certainly this assertion was not essential to the declaration of independence; it was not even essential to the other purposes that commanded the immediate attention of the Congress—the creation of an American union and the alliance with France. It was superfluous, it was even gratuitous. But Jefferson felt—and rightly—that it was essential as a principle of political and social philosophy, essential for the kind of people who were now to assume a separate and equal station among the powers of the earth.

Who can doubt now that he was right? The phrase itself has given endless trouble and inspired endless controversy. What did it mean? How could Jefferson, himself a slave owner, assert that all men are created equal? How could Jefferson's generation, committed as it was to social, economic and even political inequalities, subscribe to such an assertion? How could Americans persist in it when it was so palpably contrary to reality?

From Fisher Ames to William Graham Sumner, from John C. Calhoun to Henry L. Mencken, critics have attacked and derided this assertion of equality. Even those who rejoice in it have been apologetic about it. It meant, so they say, that all men are equal in the sight of God, equal before the last Judgment Seat. Or it meant that all have, equally, immortal souls. Or it meant that all whites (clearly the Negroes did not count) at the time it was written were equal before the law. Or it meant that in a state of nature, in some remote golden day of the past, men had been equal and that these men had come together and compacted for government.

It is doubtless true that Jefferson meant all these things, for they were commonplaces of political and social thought in the eighteenth cen-

tury. But that he meant more is equally clear from his whole career. "Let us set up a standard to which the good and the wise can repair," Washington is supposed to have said of the Constitution, and the admonition applies equally to the assertion of equality in the Declaration.

The significance of this momentous phrase, as of most of the great phrases of history, lies not in its descriptive but in its prophetic, not in its actual but in its ideal, qualities. No one has expressed this better than Lincoln—Lincoln, who had to meet the charge that the phrase could not have been meant for Negro slaves and therefore did not mean what it said. In his Springfield speech of 1857 he spoke on what the signers did mean:

> They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere. . . . Its authors meant it to be . . . a stumbling block to all those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants, and they meant when such should reappear in this fair land and commence their vocation, they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack.

"A standard maxim for a free society!" That is what the Declaration has ever been, and what it will long continue to be. Again and again in our history those who fought for the expansion of freedom, those who fought tyranny over the minds as over the bodies of men, have appealed to it, and rarely in vain. Each generation discovers it anew; with each generation it takes on new vitality and new meaning.

Each generation must not only familiarize itself anew with the philosophy of the great Declaration, it must justify and vindicate that philosophy anew. It must maintain the vitality of the democratic principle—that men make government. It must constantly enlarge the concept of majority rule, and see to it that all who are entitled to participate in the business of making and remaking government actually do participate. It must keep constantly before it the right of men to alter or abolish governments, and keep open and easy of access all those channels for alteration and re-creation that the wisdom of the Fathers provided as alternatives to the use of force.

It must safeguard, therefore, as sacred the rights of speech and press and assembly and petition and association—those rights which enable men to achieve through reason and consent what in the past they tried to achieve through violence. It must take care that the doctrine of equality is substantial as well as rhetorical; that it means equality of opportunity as well as equality of right; that it means equality everywhere in the

nation; that it means equality for Negro and for Jew and for alien as well as for those who claim descent from the Pilgrim Fathers—men who were heretics—or from the Revolutionary Fathers—men who were radicals.

It must not feebly look to the past, and only to the past, supposing that the Fathers exhausted political wisdom, but must take inspiration and courage from the boldness and the wisdom of the Fathers to apply to world problems those principles that were applied first to a people whom Jefferson called "the world's best hope."

READING

How much of the Declaration of Independence do you know by heart? How recently had you read it before the present assignment?

"It is not sufficiently appreciated that the Declaration did far more than declare independence." How does Commager develop this sentence in his essay?

What preparation does Commager make for his final assertions in the last two paragraphs?

INTERPRETATION

What attitudes toward the Declaration does Commager attack directly? what attitudes indirectly? Do you take issue with any of his interpretations?

Give specific instances, as you see them, of the abrogation today of the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.

Though Commager writes about more than "the rights of speech and press and assembly and petition and association," that is an important element in his essay. What changes have taken place in your views as you have read Commager and the several essays that came before his?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

My Political Creed
The Heretic on Campus
The Radical on Campus
Bradford Smith and the Declaration of Independence

11
Race

One of the most effective weapons used against America by the communists in Asia and Africa is our handling of the race question. We ought, therefore, to ask ourselves what the state of race relations in America really is. To give the question immediacy, what about Negroes in fraternities? What is the present-day status of the Negro in America? How far has he come? Where does he want to go? Why is this "the number one question"?

THE COLOR LINE IN FRATERNITIES*

by Alfred S. Romer

Alfred S. Romer (1894–) received his Ph.D. from Harvard after graduating from the Amherst College. Director of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University, he has written three books in his specialty of vertebrate paleontology.

1

During the year just past I have found myself deeply concerned with the affairs of a group of fine youngsters who, acting from high motives, were unexpectedly embroiled in a major social problem. Under vicious attack, for a time they were dismayed and confused; but they came through and, I think, won their final trial.

For me, it all began with a phone call from Amherst in March of '48. I happen to be president of a corporation owning a fraternity house there—a fraternity which was at that time a chapter of a national organization known as Phi Kappa Psi. The rushing season, during which freshmen are pledged to the various houses, was in full swing, and on the phone was a member of the Phi Psi rushing committee. They were thinking, he said, of pledging a Negro boy, one Tom Gibbs. Did I approve? What would the alumni generally think?

Personally, I told him, I would approve, and I felt sure that at least a fair percentage of the alumni would also approve. But I felt equally sure that there would be some who would oppose the action. This was a pretty radical step, even if in line with college policy. Better think it over carefully, and get plenty of advice. They did; although they could not then imagine all that was to follow. Tom Gibbs was pledged to Phi Psi membership, with the general approval of the college community.

* From the *Atlantic Monthly*, CLXXXIII (June, 1949), 27–31. Copyright, 1949, by The Atlantic Monthly Company. Reprinted by permission.

Fraternities are an old-established part of the college scene. The fraternity house gives the boys a home, friends, an adventure in group living and coöperative effort. My own experience is, I think, typical of that of many Amherst men to whom their fraternity was a source of strength. I came to college with a partial scholarship and $50, and not much more support in sight. I was not, obviously, a potential athletic star, nor did I show much evidence of becoming a campus "big shot." But the fraternity took me in, found me jobs, loaned me money, gave me friends to buck me up when the going looked rough. Without its aid I could not have completed college.

In the thirties there was some deterioration in the Amherst fraternity situation, and there were complaints on the part of the faculty against them as being anti-intellectual and centers of a type of life with definitely lowered moral standards. This complaint was to some extent justified. But actually the fault lay, it seems to me, not so much with the fraternities as with the character of the student body as a whole and hence, basically, with the admissions policies of the college. To Amherst, as to most colleges in those days, there was admitted a considerable percentage of "nice boys" who, whatever their family standing, were no students—boys of the raccoon-coat-and-hip-flask variety. The presence of these gentlemen changed the social and moral picture of student life for the worse. Since the fraternities were the major expression of this life, the blame was laid at their door; but the same condition would have developed even if there had been no fraternities.

During the war, the Amherst fraternities were quiescent, and in this lull future college policies were discussed and reported upon by alumni and faculty groups. In both reports the majority vote was against continuation of the fraternities. Final decision lay with the trustees of the college, who had to take into consideration the fact that the fraternities were responsible for lodging half the college body in their houses. The trustees decided to allow the fraternities to continue, but threatened to terminate their existence if reforms were not made and lived up to. Strict rules were laid down for fraternity-house conduct, and a committee of undergraduates and alumni was formed to see that these rules were enforced.

On the matter of membership qualifications the general thesis of the trustees was that any man good enough to be admitted to Amherst College should be good enough to be admitted to one of its component social groups. Here, however, their ideas could not be completely reconciled with the fact that selection of membership is a basic feature of the fraternity, and insistence that a group accept a student not of its own choice would in itself have ended its existence. Here the trustees compromised. They worked toward the democratic goal, however, in various ways. They insisted that the number of members admitted to the fraternities

each year be high enough to include most of the college body, and themselves sponsored a fourteenth house, in which boys not bid to one of the thirteen fraternities would be able to enjoy a somewhat comparable social life.

Racial intolerance was a puzzling problem. The trustees desired that racial barriers be eliminated, having, of course, anti-Semitic bars particularly in mind. Here, however, their only ruling could be merely a negative one—namely, that no fraternity could continue at Amherst if its charter had any limitations on membership based on race or religion.

Under these regulations, fraternities were re-established at Amherst when the war closed. On the whole the experiment appears to be a successful one. Conditions have not been perfect, but there has been a sharp swing back from the "collegiate" days of the thirties to a state in which the college body—and consequently the fraternities—is closer to the older and healthier ideals of earlier decades. There has been a further breakdown of racial barriers. Nearly every house contains Jewish members, voluntarily elected as a matter of course in line with a reasonable college policy.

Into this scene a year ago came, as a freshman, young Thomas Gibbs of Evanston, Illinois. I have only met Tom briefly, but every account of him is the same. A good student, but not a spectacular one. A good cross-country runner, but not a star athlete. A modest, friendly, likeable boy; a naturally popular one, and, as a result, the first member of his class to be elected to the student council. A democratic spirit was abroad in the student body. If Amherst democracy meant anything, if the ideals of the Amherst fraternity system were something more than a string of noble words, here was a lad who belonged.

It was a departure from tradition, nevertheless, and only three of the thirteen houses felt strong enough to consider seriously bidding him. Two, I am told, came within a vote or so of the unanimous action required, but could not quite reach agreement. Phi Psi finally agreed unanimously to pledge him, after considering the situation from every viewpoint. Faculty and administration opinion would, of course, favor them. The student body, they felt, would back them—which it did most heartily. The social picture, house parties? Smith and Mount Holyoke girls when asked saw no objection. Amherst alumni? Fraternity houses are owned by corporations of which the alumni are the majority members, and alumni support is of major importance. Time was too short to take a poll, but Phi Psi hoped that Amherst graduates would approve their action or at least adopt an attitude of tolerant forbearance (which the great majority of them have indeed shown).

There remained one further important matter. What of the national organization of which they were a part? What was the legal status

of the matter? What was the ethical background? They searched the fraternity constitution and by-laws and found that the selection of members was specifically stated to be the business of the local group alone. Nothing gave the national organization any right to interfere.

Character and ability, said the constitution, were the true criteria for membership. The Phi Kappa Psi ritual, like that of every fraternity, was full of encouraging and noble phrases about brotherhood and democracy. And what could be more heartening than this declaration by the man who was then president of the national organization, Winston R. Tate of Kansas City? "Too often fraternities overemphasize conformity to the demands of a tight little social world, create fake standards of excellence, cultivate a snobbish exclusiveness. . . . Phi Kappa Psi strives to avoid these tendencies, both by teaching and example. It insists that personal character is the first concern, both of the organization and of the member. . . . Phi Kappa Psi seeks to assist men to lift their eyes to wider horizons, to become tolerant, to question all things in the light of reason; and finally to develop the moral courage to follow those paths that have been illuminated unto them and without regard to external consequences."

The way seemed clear and open; Tom was pledged. And note the spirit in which it was done. These boys were no set of professional liberals campaigning for social equality. Just a group of very decent youngsters, living up to the principles which animated their college and (they fondly imagined) their fraternity. Here was a boy they liked, whom they wanted to be one of themselves. It was as simple as that.

2

The news of the pledging of Gibbs presently reached national fraternity circles in the Midwest, and the troubles of the Amherst chapter began. Little more than a month later, there arrived a deputation from the national fraternity headed by an ex-president, Harry S. Gorgas, a New York lawyer. Its object was to persuade the chapter to withdraw the pledge to Gibbs. The boys refused. Both morally and in fraternity law, they were on firm ground. The deputation withdrew—pointing out, however, that the Amherst chapter would encounter strong opposition at a national convention of the fraternity to be held in Colorado in early July. The undergraduates, they said, had better poll their alumni to sound out their sentiments on the matter, and state their case by circular letter to the fifty or so other chapters of the fraternity.

Here was trouble, but not, it then seemed, too great difficulties. The alumni were polled—some 500 graduates stretching back over half a century. They overwhelmingly supported the chapter—90 per cent for Gibbs, many enthusiastically. Letters were sent to inform the other chapters, and

in June a delegation of the boys—five undergraduates and two young graduates—set out for Estes Park, Colorado, eager to discuss the matter in brotherly fashion with the executive council of the fraternity and the convention delegates. But at the convention, the matter was treated not as one for discussion but one to be hushed up and summarily disposed of. The Amherst delegates were met with threats and peremptory commands. Most active and vociferous in opposition were alumni groups from the Middle West, particularly Chicago.

The delegates had expected to plead their case with the executive council of the national organization, and, if necessary, plead it on the convention floor. No discussion, no plea was allowed them; when they arrived, they were presented with a *fait accompli.* The council had already voted unanimously that Gibbs could not be initiated, and, should the Amherst representatives show signs of recalcitrance, there was ready for introduction on the convention floor a resolution to revoke their charter and summarily throw the chapter out of the fraternity.

The delegates were staggered by such treatment. This action was quite illegal, as members of the council were willing to admit in private. But whether this action was legal or not, it could be overridden only by a two-thirds vote of the entire convention. Discussion with other delegates soon convinced the Amherst men that such a vote could not be obtained.

The Amherst men were in a most difficult position—one for which they were not at all prepared. They did not feel they had the right to place the chapter's very existence in jeopardy; so, after lengthy discussion with some of the national officers, a "compromise" was agreed upon. Definitely, said the national representatives, Tom could not be initiated, although the chapter might, if it wished, keep him as a sort of permanent pledge and treat him as a "social member" of the local group (whatever that might mean). If—and only if—the delegates agreed to this stipulation would the resolution to cancel the Amherst charter be withdrawn. The delegates pointed out that they could not, of course, say in advance what the decision of the chapter would be; but they agreed to work for this "compromise" and promised that, should the chapter not agree, there would be no attempt to initiate Gibbs without due notice.

Within a day the national officers broke the agreement by the further demand that Gibbs be depledged at once; nevertheless, the delegates faithfully worked for the "compromise" in discussions back at Amherst.

One point of dispute regarding this "compromise" cropped up in later stages of the controversy. This had to do with the word *blackball.* One negative vote is enough to prevent election to a fraternity, and it was later the contention of certain national officers that the Amherst delegates had agreed to blackball Gibbs. But as far as I can discover,

the word was not mentioned in these talks, and the delegates had no idea that such an outrageous promise was implied—a promise which, if made and carried into effect, would, of course, have effectively hamstrung the chapter and prevented any further discussion or action.

The convention was addressed by Mr. Gorgas, who said:

"May I just take a moment of your time to speak to you in two capacities, first as a Phi Psi, and second as a member of the Executive Committee of the National Inter-Fraternity Conference? I am very sure that everyone in this room knows that the eyes of the entire fraternity world have been focused upon our sessions here during the past four days and that the possible decision which might be reached here has been awaited with fear and trepidation by everyone interested in the progress and development, reputation and standing, of the American college fraternity system.

"At this time at Attleboro, Massachusetts [where the fraternity pin industry is centered], Dr. Gilbert Meade, Chairman of the National Inter-Fraternity Conference, is presiding over a meeting of the Committee and a group of about forty of the most active and prominent fraternity men in the country, and it is going to be my privilege at the close of this meeting to send him a telegram which will read as follows:

" 'Controversial matter settled in friendliness and most fraternal manner.' I am very sure that many of those fraternity men in Attleboro will feel incredulous at the ability of Phi Kappa Psi to settle such a delicate and dangerous subject in such a fraternal manner." (Applause.)

The national officers regarded their victory as won, the upstarts from Amherst quietly and effectively crushed. A circular sent out after the convention stated smugly: "Before the convening of the Grand Arch Council, a great many alumni were advised that one of our chapters had pledged a Negro. Thanks to the fearless, diplomatic leadership of President Winston R. Tate and the able assistance of his Executive Council associates, the problem was settled at the G.A.C. without discussion on the floor of the Council."

3

Back at Amherst, the matter was far from settled. When the news spread among the boys as they reassembled at the end of the summer vacation, there was worriment, fear, anger. What was their proper course? They had wanted—and still wanted—Tom as a brother. The clear course of honor was to make him one of them. But that almost surely meant their expulsion from the national fraternity, and what would result? Could they continue to exist if that were done? For one thing, the house in which they lived belonged to the Phi Kappa Psi alumni of the chapter. What would the attitude of their alumni be, if they were expelled? Further,

what were their prospects if they became a local society without the prestige of national affiliation? Lack of national connections, it was feared, might reduce this strong chapter to insignificance.

These worries were very real to the undergraduates, and for two weeks at the beginning of the fall term the discussion continued. All were for Tom; no one favored throwing him over. But, for the time being, the house membership seemed irrevocably split between two courses of action, weighing honor and expediency. Half the group, afraid of expulsion, favored an attempt to work within the framework of the national fraternity for the acceptance of Tom, making him a "social member" meanwhile. The other half insisted that internal reform was hopeless, that "social membership" was a meaningless sham—either you were a member and a brother or you were not—and that the only honorable course was to keep their pledged word, even if expulsion resulted.

Vitally concerned, of course, were the other youngsters from Tom's class who were pledged to the fraternity. Their approval had been asked and given before Tom was pledged. They now got together, the fifteen of them, without Tom, to discuss the matter. All agreed that they still wanted him, and most of them signed a pledge that they would not be initiated unless Tom were too.

Letters were again written to the alumni; the alternatives—equally unpleasant—were placed before them, and they were invited to give their advice. Nearly 100 interested graduates wrote back promptly. With expulsion in view, the opposition had increased to 20 per cent. Two or three letters of this group were rabidly anti-Negro ("Brother Romer, would you want YOUR DAUGHTER TO MARRY A NEGRO?"), but most of the letters in opposition were well-reasoned conservative arguments to the effect that though acceptance of Tom was in theory a fine and democratic action, it was not a wise one in the present state of society.

The big fact was that 80 per cent of those who wrote favored Gibbs. A few suggested that we at least try the "social membership" compromise. A good two thirds of the writers, however, insisted that Tom should be taken in as a full brother; stated that social membership was a sham, and that honor and decency demanded that we stick to our guns, no matter what the outcome. That was what the chapter unanimously decided, for itself, to do.

As a forlorn hope, the Amherst chapter made an attempt to solicit support from other chapters before informing the national officers of its stand. Little support was found. A few replies were favorable, some bitterly opposed. Other chapters, even if somewhat sympathetic, were obviously afraid to express a real opinion. Answers ranged from one received from a Pennsylvania institution, nominally of collegiate rank, whence the brethren replied "In short, you STINK," to the dignified state-

ment of the University of Mississippi men that they felt it the privilege of any chapter to choose its own members—a reply especially distinguished as coming from a group so located geographically.

The hand of the more ardently anti-Negro alumni groups would seem to have lain heavily on the undergraduates. As an example of such alumni feelings I cite a document circulated by the Johnstown (Pa.) alumni of Phi Kappa Psi, when the matter had become public:

> The undersigned members of the Johnstown Alumni Association can find no words equal to the deep indignation and justifiable wrath that they feel towards the inconsiderate, wilful, dishonest, oath-breaking undergraduate members of Massachusetts Alpha. We demand that each and every one of these mischievous imps be disgracefully expelled from the fraternity, that the charter of Massachusetts Alpha Chapter be irretrievably revoked, and that alumni trustees, who may hold title to the Phi Kappa Psi House at Amherst, be requested to bodily eject these ungrateful outcasts. . . .
>
> We reiterate what we said in our petition to the 1948 Grand Arch Council and suggest that the Attorney-General take immediate steps to have the fraternity's Constitution amended so that our chapters are not only traditionally, but constitutionally, forbidden to initiate negroes and restricted to initiate only members of the white race. The amendment should also forbid religions which do not respect the oath of secrecy, adherents of faiths and isms which are known to be antagonistic to the beliefs, customs, and traditions of the great majority of our present undergraduate and alumni members, and adherents of all political doctrines which would destroy our nation's system of democratic government and free enterprise. Furthermore no Chapter must ever hereafter be permitted to suspend the unit rule for admission to membership. All these restrictions should be carried out under penalty of expulsion and charter revocation.
>
> A malignant growth has been found in our fraternity. Prompt surgery may remove the cancer, but whether entirely or not depends on our skill and foresight now. Certainly a deep and ugly scar will remain. Complete recovery at this time is too much to expect. The damage done to our fraternal body is extremely severe, perhaps fatal.

In early November a letter giving the national organization fair warning of the Amherst chapter's intent had been prepared but not yet sent, and replies from other chapters were still being received. Then a wandering reporter for a Boston newspaper discovered the story and broke it prematurely. No further delay was possible; the national officers were informed of the intention of the chapter to initiate Gibbs in the near future unless action were taken against them by the general fraternity.

The reaction of the national officers was not unexpected. The executive council was obviously enraged by the refusal of the chapter to accept humbly the punishment given its delegates at Estes Park, and further inflamed by the high praise given the Amherst group by the newspapers of the country. The chapter was promptly suspended by Howard L. Hamilton, newly elected president (who is Secretary of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Ohio State University), and his action was confirmed by the executive council. Shortly there arrived imposing legal doc-

uments summoning the chapter to trial at a council meeting to be held in Chicago during the Christmas vacation. An extra vicious touch was the demand that the five undergraduates who had attended the July convention be also brought to trial.

Obviously, the proposed "trial" would be in the nature of a kangaroo court, with the expulsion of the chapter, and presumably of the individual members, as a foregone conclusion. A feeling of revulsion against this hocus-pocus at first inclined the chapter, and the boys especially concerned, to resign from the national organization as the simplest way out. This, of course, would play squarely into the hands of the executive council. Further consideration by undergraduates and alumni led to the decision to go through with the forms of a defense and put the onus of expulsion, and the resultant obloquy, directly on the shoulders of the national officers.

A short time before the trial, I received a letter from the father of one of the boys concerned. He told me that he had been visited by a neighbor, Mr. Harry Gorgas, who had expressed regret over the sad situation in which these lads were placed and had suggested that the father write me to ask that I use my influence to get the chapter to withdraw voluntarily; in which case, he indicated, the charges against the individuals might be dropped. This cold-blooded attempt to use the five as hostages was enough to rouse one's adrenalin to a high rate of output.

The kangaroo court was held, as scheduled, in a Chicago hotel during the last days of December. One of the chapter's graduates (a lawyer) and two of the boys concerned presented a defense as a matter of form. The officers of the executive council, in conclave assembled, acted as the prosecution, judges, and jury, and would even, in questions of procedure, resolve themselves gravely into a court of appeals. As scheduled, the Amherst chapter was thrown out of the national fraternity. But on the question of expulsion of the individual boys, the officers compromised by suspending them for a two-year term.

With this pitiful farce of a trial, the name of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity disappeared from the Amherst campus. Reorganized as Phi *Alpha* Psi, the Phi Psi house continues, as before, with the respect and admiration of the college community.

In recent decades, the fraternity politicians active in the affairs of many of the national organizations have tried to strengthen the formerly loose-knit ties between the chapters, and by levying stiff taxes upon the undergraduates they have built up elaborate and powerful national administrations. These not only have tended to interfere actively with the conduct of individual chapters, but have further attempted to interfere with the administration of the colleges themselves.

This attitude is well illustrated in a "Report on the State of the

Fraternity" presented at the Estes Park convention: "Relations with college and university administrations are generally favorable, but in a few instances the old 'Squeeze-play' is on, and vigilance and extreme effort on the part of the alumni and national officers of Phi Kappa Psi and other fraternities will be required to save these chapters. We believe that much can be done to change the anti-fraternity attitude of these college administrations; or, failing in that, to *change the personnel of such administrations.*" (My italics.)

The rituals of Phi Kappa Psi and I imagine of other national fraternities are filled with fine moral and ethical precepts which reflect the sincere beliefs of the founders of these organizations. But when, as in the present instance, it is clear that those in national control of fraternities are in direct opposition to the ideals of the undergraduates and indeed of our democracy, the question is naturally raised—and not on the Amherst campus alone—as to whether these national organizations shall continue.

As for myself, my term as a chapter officer expires in June, and I shall retire to my peaceful occupation as a vertebrate paleontologist. I do so, however, with the warm feeling in my heart that in this torn world there exist educational institutions with high ideals, and young men with principles and the strength to defend them. I salute Amherst College and my brothers in Phi *Alpha* Psi, winners in their battle with reaction and with their own fears.

READING

What main points are made in Romer's brief sketch of the history of fraternities at Amherst? How is the story of Tom Gibbs's pledging connected with this sketch?

In the second part, in what order does Romer handle the various activities arising out of the pledging of Gibbs?

Discuss the last paragraph in relation with the rest of the essay. Is it inconclusive?

What is Romer's tone? Make a close comparison of Romer's diction with that of Henry S. Gorgas and the Johnstown alumni of Phi Kappa Psi.

INTERPRETATION

If Romer concedes the "fact" of independent selection of membership as a basic feature of fraternities, why does he object to the action of the national fraternity? How does Romer show that the case is not simply one of fraternity government? Or does he show that it is not?

What fraternity problems besides the racial one are alluded to in the essay? How are they connected with the racial problem? To what extent may they be regarded as problems extending beyond the college fraternity?

Compare the fraternities of your own campus with those at Amherst. Would your fraternity pledge a Negro? Are other racial barriers present in its choice of pledges?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Fraternity Ideal

Real Estate Restrictions in My Town

Negroes in My Church
Choosing One's Friends

THE U.S. NEGRO, 1953*

by the Editors of Time

"Tell me," asked the British visitor, "do your Negroes play golf?"

The question, put to a U.S. businessman, brought a stammering answer.

Yes, said the businessman, he supposed that U.S. Negroes played golf, but he had never seen one with a club in his hand. Come to think of it, he'd seen a picture of Joe Louis on a golf course, but he had no idea at what club Joe could play.

The incident illustrates how little white Americans generally know about their colored fellow citizens. Negroes, in the phrase of the sociologist, have "high social visibility." But their lives are in effect invisible to most Americans, who rarely bother to look behind the Color Curtain at the Negroes' homes, their places of work or worship, or their spirit. There is, as a matter of fact, some news about Negro golfing.

Atlanta and New Orleans recently opened golf courses for Negroes.

In Seattle, Negroes are now free to play on all public golf courses (but they still may not take part in tournaments played on the same courses).

In Chicago, where they play on public courses without restriction, the number of Negro golfers has gone up from 25, a few years ago, to more than 2,000.

In New York there are no restrictions on public courses, and Negroes do play in tournaments.

These facts and figures, modest in themselves, are symptoms of a major revolution in the life of the U.S. Negro—only half noticed by the rest of the nation. It is a revolution which, although still far from overthrowing segregation, amounts to the biggest, most hopeful change in Negro history since Abraham Lincoln, just 90 years ago, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Says Negro Publisher (*Ebony, Jet*) John H. Johnson: "Every Negro is a Horatio Alger . . . His trek up from slavery is the greatest success story the world has ever known."

Markers of Progress

One of the great facts of U.S. history is that the Negro, no matter how ill used, has remained deeply loyal to the U.S., always hoping for the "Year of Jubilo," stubbornly telling himself

* From *Time*, LXI (May 11, 1953), 55–58. Copyright, 1953, by Time, Inc. Reprinted by courtesy of *Time*.

The very time I thought I was lost
The dungeon shook and the chain fell off . . .
You got a right, I got a right,
We all got a right to the tree of life . . .

The fruit from the tree of life is still rationed, and often bitter. The U.S.'s 15 million Negroes are still denied the right to the pursuit of happiness on equal terms with whites. Negroes still do the meanest jobs and get the lowest pay; they must slowly wrest from their white fellows a table in a restaurant, a desk in a school, a smile, the privilege of praying in a white church or using a white swimming pool. This is true on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line. While the Negro is generally better off, economically and socially, in the North (as is shown by the fact that thousands of Southern Negroes still move north every year) the North has no cause to feel superior. The chains of prejudice can be as heavy in New York's Harlem or on Chicago's South Side as anywhere in the South. Yet North and South, the Year of Jubilo seems a little closer.

In 1942, in a brilliant study of the American Negro, Swedish Economist Gunnar Myrdal reported: "Negroes are in desperate need of jobs and bread, even more so than of justice in the courts and of the vote." This definition of the Negro's needs is today strikingly out of date.

For most Negroes, the problem is no longer jobs, but better jobs; for many, it is no longer bread, but cake. The Negro wage earner today makes four times as much as in 1940 (compared to the white wage earner's 2½ times as much). The Negro's average yearly income is still only a little more than half of the white average, but ten years ago it was about 35%.

The forces that kept the Southern Negro from voting—intimidation and the poll tax—are largely beaten. The South has more than 1,000,000 registered Negro voters (compared to 300,000 in 1938), and there could be half a million more if Southern Negroes were politically less apathic.

The Negro gets justice in the courts, although in some Southern courts he still has to fight for his right (affirmed by the Supreme Court) to be heard by mixed juries. The big issue today is no longer justice in the courts, but justice in daily life, *i.e.,* the fight against segregation.

Negro college enrollment is up 2,500% over 1930.

The life expectancy of the male Negro has gone up from 47 years in 1920 to 59 years. In the same period, the white's life expectancy has risen more slowly, from 56 to 66 years. With improving living standards, the gap between the white man's and the Negro's life span is closing.

Prosperity: Cadillacs and Babbitts

The signs of Negro prosperity are everywhere. On the rooftops of Manhattan's Harlem grows that bare, ugly forest of TV antennae which has become a new symbol of middle-class achievement. On the outskirts of Atlanta are shiny new Negro housing developments (financed by Southern whites), with built-in washing machines. Yet the streets of Harlem are still largely slum streets, and a few blocks from the Atlanta apartments stand the old clapboard huts with outdoor privies. Where should one look for the real direction of the Negro economy?

U.S. business, for one, has its eyes fixed eagerly on the TV antennae and the washing machines. U.S. Negroes today have an annual income of $15 billion a year—almost as much as the national income of Canada, or more than the value of all U.S. export trade. Negro publications, whose advertising columns were until recently dominated by hair-straighteners and skin-bleachers, are now agleam with four-color ads of all the national brands—a dusky glamour girl smiling above a pack of Luckies, Negro men of distinction sipping Calvert, a Negro executive praising Remington typewriters. (Most advertising agencies now have special Negro market consultants who see to it that ads will sell and not offend Negroes.).

The Negro is a good customer. He wants to feel that he can buy the best. Swift & Co. does not advertise its ordinary fowl in Negro publications, but the more expensive Swift's Premium ("The dream chicken that came true"). Several Negro families often pool their savings to buy an expensive car and drive it on alternate days. On Harlem's Lenox Avenue, Cadillacs are so commonplace that nobody turns to look at them any more (a situation which one resourceful driver met by having his Cadillac's top painted a gay plaid).

Some of the Cadillac prosperity is obviously false or forced; many Negroes are driven to spend their earnings in showy ways because they still cannot get the more ordinary things a white man with a similar income would buy, *e.g.*, a decent home or a vacation trip to a good resort. Says a Negro leader in St. Louis (where Negro housing is particularly bad): "A flashy car becomes their living room, the only one they've got." Says a San Francisco Negro: "It is a sort of mobile aspirin tablet."

Despite the flashy cars, the Negro's spending habits have changed radically. He saves much more than he used to. Big insurance companies, which once considered Negro business more trouble than it was worth, now go after it. Loan companies, car dealers, etc. find Negroes excellent credit risks. There are signs that the Negro has begun to develop a large, strong middle class. Some Negro leaders, in fact, believe—and they

do not consider it a bad thing—that the Negro is turning into the nation's new Babbitt.

Though Negro home ownership has gone up dramatically, the most depressing feature of the Negro's existence is still his home. Negroes now own nearly a third of the places they live in, a two-thirds rise over 1940. (White home ownership has risen more slowly in the same period, is now 57%.) But nearly a third of all Negro homes are dilapidated, compared with less than 10% in the nation as a whole. More than 20% of all Negro homes are overcrowded, compared with 5½% in the nation as a whole.

The Great Emancipators

The foundation of the Negro's economic progress is the fact that he has broken in large numbers out of farm and domestic work into industry. During World War II, a million Negroes went into defense industries. By and large, they have stayed in industry ever since. Today, nearly 11% of all U.S. industrial workers are Negroes—twice as many as in 1940. Most Negroes are still held to unskilled jobs. But there has been progress:

Among U.S. skilled workers and foremen, 4% are now Negroes, up from 2½% in 1940.

Among clerical and sales personnel, 3½% are now Negroes, up from 1% in 1940.

Among women professional and technical workers, 7% are Negroes, up from 4½% in 1940.

One big trouble: there simply are not enough qualified Negroes. Example: U.S. industry will hire all the Negro engineers it can get, but few Negro college students go in for science or engineering. They still favor the respectable, relatively secure professions, such as teaching, medicine, the ministry and the law. In business, Negroes are generally in service lines, *e.g.,* undertakers, barbers, cleaners, etc. This is not entirely the result of discrimination. Also to blame: the Negro's lack of confidence, which makes him underestimate his very real opportunities.

Negroes know that they have advanced because these are good times for the country as a whole, and some fear that their gains might melt away in a depression. But most Negro leaders agree that the Negro's progress in the past decade has been too solid ever to be rolled back easily. One measure of that progress is the fact that the Negro's biggest preoccupation is not economics, but social equality.

The biggest single blow against segregation in the U.S. has been struck by the armed forces. The great experiment of "integration" proved once and for all that 1) if decently treated and trained, Negroes can fight

as well as any man; 2) if properly led, white Americans from any part of the country will live, work, fight and die side by side with Negroes.

From the Civil War through World War II, Negro soldiers were kept in segregated units. Despite individual bravery, their morale and performance were generally low. In World War II there were some outstanding Negro units, but of all the Negroes in uniform (about 1,000,000), 90% were kept in rear-area service outfits. During the Battle of the Bulge, when he urgently needed reinforcements. General Eisenhower put Negro service troops through a quick combat training course, attached them in platoon strength to line companies. The experiment worked: the Negro troops, more or less unsegregated for the first time, made a good combat showing. This experience became an argument for postwar integration policy.

The Air Force was the first to abolish separate units for Negroes. The Army followed. By 1951, in the U.S., Europe and the Far East, Negro soldiers were scattered through the regular units. Today the Army has 200,000 Negro enlisted men (11% of total strength) and nearly 4,000 officers. The Air Force has 70,000 enlisted men (7%) and nearly 1,000 officers. The Navy, lagging behind the others in giving equality to the Negro, has 34,000 enlisted men (a little less than 3%, half of them still in the mess steward's branch) and 65 officers.

In Army camps and Air Force bases across the nation, there have been virtually no "incidents" between white and colored soldiers. The only difficulty has occurred at Southern Army camps, where children of colored officers and enlisted men are still sent to segregated colored schools off the post (the President has recently promised to remedy that situation). In Korea the integration policy has worked wonders with the morale of white as well as Negro troops. Negro officers command white troops without any friction. The matter is no longer even discussed. Says Lieut. Colonel Robert W. Wilson of Washington, D. C., a G-1 officer, and a Negro: "I think about the color problem about once a day: when I shave in the morning."

There are other emancipators at work. Among them:

THE MACHINE. It was fashionable, in the '20s and '30s, particularly among pink-eyed young economists, to say that the machine degraded man. Actually, it has proved a great equalizer. It tests a man coldly and without prejudice: he can either run it or he cannot. North and South, thousands of Negroes are experiencing equality for the first time in their lives —the equality of doing exactly the same work as whites on the assembly line.

THE COURTS. For years, liberals have argued that only new, drastic and specific legislation, *i.e.*, FEPC, would do the Negroes any good. Yet

in the past decade, the Negro has made tremendous progress not, in the main, through new legislation, but through a long series of court decisions interpreting the basic law of the land, the Constitution. These rulings, it was usually warned, were "out of step" with popular sentiment and would provoke trouble; yet, accepted virtually without protest, they have quietly accomplished a variety of things, from forcing Southern state universities to accept Negro graduate students to opening up Chicago bowling alleys to interracial teams.

SPORTS AND TV. The sight of Negroes playing major-league baseball, carried all over the nation by TV, has probably done as much for equality as most legal victories. Southern minor-league clubs have begun to hire Negro players. TV has had another effect on the South: it has carried to thousands of people their first sight of colored and white entertainers appearing together. Says one Negro teacher: "Why, stuff like that, coming into white homes, it's going to make the white man think, whether he realizes it or not."

These very American forces, constantly working on North and South alike, have driven racial discrimination and prejudice sharply on the defensive.

The North: Guerrillas on Main Street

What is it like to be a Negro and actively fight segregation in the North? Hascal Othello Humes, 30, is an A.B. from Columbia University, a former infantry lieutenant who saw combat in Italy. With his wife, he lives in a white neighborhood in Seattle. When they first moved in, the Humeses got threatening letters and obscene telephone calls, but they stuck it out. Humes has three jobs: he is studying for an M.A. in psychology at the University of Washington, he is a city policeman in the afternoon, and at night he is a bouncer in a mixed nightclub. His police beat is in a white section, and when some white people objected, his superior suggested that he ask for a transfer, but he quietly replied that he would rather resign from the force. After he goes off duty each evening, he reports for work at the China Pheasant. By closing time (5 A.M.), Humes has usually lifted at least one drunk (white or colored) well above the floor and carried him into the street. Humes says he does not often wonder whether it's all worth it. But when he does, he thinks of his wife and of the new baby she is expecting. If that doesn't help, he prays.

Humes's life illustrates the price the Northern Negro often pays for his state of semi-equality. As a citizen, the Negro in the North, by and large, enjoys full rights: everywhere except in the border states, he is equal in the schools and in most public services. His great fight in the last

decade has been for simple, decent treatment in everyday life. In this fight, he has made marked but uneven progress.

Ten years ago, for example, Northern hotels and restaurants that would openly turn away Negro patrons were in the majority; now they are definitely in the minority. The facile old excuse—"Personally, I don't care, but the customers just wouldn't stand for Negroes to come in here"—has been proved empty again & again. The chief trouble is that the Negro can never be sure: he is in a constant guerrilla war, always half-expecting to be snubbed by this desk clerk or that headwaiter, or fobbed off with a gentleman's agreement type of spiel that all the tables have been reserved, all the rooms taken. Many Negroes prefer not to risk being embarrassed, stay away from predominantly white places. On trips, many prefer to drive all night, rather than take the chance of being turned down by a hotel.

But there are many wedges in the walls of prejudice:

Telephone companies in the North, all white until a few years ago, now employ 5,000 Negroes.

Denver now employs Negro bus drivers (long since a fixture in New York and Chicago).

Detroit banks, in white neighborhoods, employ Negro tellers.

Many Northern department stores hire Negro sales help.

New York breweries now hire Negro production workers.

The Negro's biggest trouble comes when he tries to live in a white neighborhood. The worst race riots in recent U.S. history took place in Detroit (1943) and Chicago (1951), where there had been a huge, wartime influx of Negro workers. Today, both cities live in somewhat uneasy peace. The case of Chicago is fairly typical. "Property owners' leagues," openly dedicated to keeping Negroes out of white neighborhoods, have disappeared or gone underground. Nevertheless, Negroes rarely escape their ghetto—they simply stretch its boundaries. White people retreat before the Negro advance—generally to the suburbs, where Negroes are usually strictly barred. In many Chicago neighborhoods, Negroes and whites live side by side. A mayor's commission has organized the "lighthouse system," under which citizens alert police as soon as trouble signs appear in a neighborhood. Police themselves have been put through a special "human relations" training program.

The South: Minefield among Magnolias

Even if he does not meet outright hostility in the North, the Negro is apt to meet indifference, which can hurt worse. Not many Northerners are interested enough in Negroes to worry about where they ride on a streetcar; but few are interested enough to be really kind to them, either.

The South—still the home of two-thirds of the U.S.'s Negroes—cares far more deeply about its Negro problem.

A South African visitor reports: "I went down there to find the Deep South. But everywhere I went, they said: 'Oh, *this* isn't the *Deep* South. You've got to go farther on to find what you're looking for, Mister.' I never did find the Deep South, where they lynch Negroes and provide source material for William Faulkner and Lillian Smith. It wasn't in Tennessee, it wasn't in Georgia, it wasn't in Mississippi. Now I'm beginning to wonder whether the Deep South really exists any more."

There is a lot of evidence that it does not. The color line is no longer a barbed-wire fence strung between the magnolia trees. It is more like a minefield through which whites and Negroes must carefully pick their way —and the map is obviously out of date. Segregation now seems like something out of *Alice in Wonderland* as rewritten by Herman Talmadge.

In the South, a Negro may ride a Pullman car and eat anywhere in a diner (until a few years ago, he had to eat behind a curtain). But he must buy his tickets at a segregated ticket window. He may sit anywhere in an airplane, but his waiting room at the airport is likely to be Jim Crow. He may ride in elevators, body-to-body with whites, but in buses and streetcars he must still jostle past standing white passengers to the Jim Crow rear. (In some cities, he may sit down in the white area if there are empty seats, and white people will often sit down in the colored area if the white area is crowded.)

Several states give Negro doctors full membership in their medical societies, but Negro doctors are not allowed to practice in most Southern hospitals. (White private ambulances often refuse to pick up critically injured Negroes.) A Negro is welcome to shop in almost any Southern department store, but in most he may not try on a suit until he buys it.

A Negro may give a white panhandler a handout but he may not follow him into a bar with the sign, "Whites only." He may attend the graduate schools of state universities (about 1,000 do), but he may not attend undergraduate colleges—with some exceptions (*e.g.,* University of Louisville, University of Delaware). In such schools Negro and white students get on without friction, and form friendships; but the Negroes, while they eat with whites, may not belong to white fraternities—but they are allowed to attend dances as guests.

In many important industries of the South, *e.g.,* Haspel, Chrysler, International Harvester, Glenn Martin, Firestone Tire & Rubber, Negroes work side by side with whites (only South Carolina still has a law requiring segregation in work areas). Union meetings are nonsegregated, but some locals have raised hell when union headquarters ordered an end to segregated toilet facilities. But in one plant near Atlanta, when the "colored" and "white" signs over the fountains wore out, nobody both-

ered to repaint them, and segregation for drinking stopped. (But if someone had protested formally that it should stop, it would unquestionably have been furiously enforced.)

Struggle in the Soul

Mob violence is rare. The year 1952 was the first without a single reported lynching. Many of the South's "better people," who for years tacitly condoned the Klan, have now abandoned it. It is socially as safe to back anti-mask bills as it was once to take hot broth to an ailing Mammy's cabin.

The principle that Negroes must have "separate but equal" facilities[1] was an empty phrase a decade ago; today, it is rapidly becoming reality. Most Southerners feel that unless they make "separate but equal" a fact, the courts are sure to saddle them with "whole hog" rulings, *i.e.*, complete equality. Many states are hastily building fine new Negro schools and hospitals, although from a purely economic standpoint, "separate but equal" schools are insanely wasteful. Most Southerners no longer sneer at the educated Negro as "biggety"; many want to help the Negro get a better education, better jobs and better housing, and let the rest take care of itself.

However, some Southerners are afraid that this formula may prove too little and too late. Southerners complain that there are too many "whole hog or nothing" Negroes. This is only partly true. No Southern Negro seriously wants or expects complete equality overnight. But all Southern Negroes want it as an ultimate goal—and they want to see faster progress towards that goal. They have become suspicious of "gradualism." They want to know, as one Negro leader puts it: "When does Old Man Gradualism run out?" The Southern Negro's mood may be summed up by the case of the successful Negro attorney in Birmingham who recently built a new home. "Look at it," says a friend. "Look where it is. Over there, on Dynamite Hill. You don't build a $35,000 house in that location—unless you are a Negro and haven't got a better place to build it. Some say he wanted to wait, hoping that maybe better areas would open up. But he wanted to live in that house before he died. So he built it."

Southern customs are still largely based on the assumption that the Negro is an inferior being. But that assumption lacks the pseudo-scientific backing it still had a generation ago. For decades, the South's preoccupation with the Negro was a kind of cushion against reality, a diversion from the facts of poverty and stagnation. Southern "poor whites" had nothing if they could not feel superior to the Negro. During the past ten years, the South has been caught up in a great industrial boom; reality has become a little easier to face.

[1] First stated by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1896.

Although many Southerners today will agree that segregation is wrong in principle, the vast majority still fiercely defends it as right in practice. A mass of state laws and city ordinances enforces it. But Southerners seem to know in their hearts that it is not really defensible, and that the tide of events is against it. The result is a war in the South's own soul which many Northerners, who see the South only as stubborn and narrow-minded, fail to understand. A Southern Negro and former slave understood it. Said Booker T. Washington, the greatest Negro leader in U.S. history: "The outside world does not know . . . the struggle that is constantly going on in the hearts of both the Southern white people and their former slaves . . . While both races are thus struggling, they should have the sympathy, the support, and the forbearance of the rest of the world."

The Spirit: Hopes and Headaches

The Negro has suffered more than any other group of Americans. He has seen the white man at his worst, and he might have turned cynically against the white man's faith and values. But he has not. The Negro does feel bitter about his lot. But it is a bitterness greatly modified by hope, patience and humor.

Negro intellectuals occasionally talk "African nationalism." But the majority of U.S. Negroes feel no more kinship to the Kikuyu of Kenya than to the man in the moon. They want to be, above all, Americans.

The most spectacular illustration of the Negroes' loyalty to the U.S. is the Communists' crashing failure to win recruits among them: by FBI estimates, no more than 1,400 Negroes ever belonged to the Communist Party at one time. Dr. Carlton Goodlett, young San Francisco Negro leader, gives these reasons: "More than anyone else, the Negro believes in the American opportunity to better himself. The Communist he sees as a run-down, underprivileged guy. The Negro just isn't interested in the underdog role. Secondly, he has learned to believe in the right to protest. People like myself, always protesting against injustice, wouldn't last ten seconds in Russia. Also, no single group in this country believes more strongly in God and the hereafter. The Negro doesn't want to catch hell on this side of the River Styx and on the other side too." A Negro lawyer put it this way: "It's bad enough to be black without being Red too."

The Negro is still deeply religious, although American churches have been slow in fighting discrimination before the altar. Says Marie Johnson, wife of Fisk University's President Charles Johnson: "I think we got the best out of Christianity, because we had to have it. No matter how we may scoff, we believe . . . Still, 11 o'clock Sunday morning is the most segregated hour of American life."

There are fewer outstanding Negro leaders on the national scene today than ever before. Negro leaders have found that, as their people's

status improves, the business of leadership gets tougher. Walter White, executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, recalls that back in the days when there were three or four lynchings a year, it was a lot easier to raise funds than now. A great Negro leader, the late James Weldon Johnson, once said that leadership was a form of escape; by this he meant that "Negro spokesmen" might gain a lot of prestige by making speeches and gathering personal followings, but did not really accomplish very much. Today's Negro leader concentrates on getting things done on specific issues. Emancipated to a large extent from the white professional liberals and their pet slogan, "education," he tries, for instance, to get a court ruling on segregation in Pullmans instead of trying to "educate" millions of individual Pullman passengers. Today's Negro leader does not want to be known as a firebrand; the compliment he prizes most is to be called "a good tactician." One symptom of this change is the fact that Booker T. Washington, a superb tactician whom most Negro leaders in the '20s and '30s denounced as an "Uncle Tom," is being rediscovered by Negroes as a great man.

The Negro still cannot forget his color. Negro writers and artists wish that they could be craftsmen first and Negroes second, but they find it virtually impossible. Yet more and more Negroes are impatient with spirituals and the blues (including the literary form of the blues, also known as the novel of protest). Many intelligent Negroes are plainly eager to stop looking at every problem through colored glasses. One interesting symptom: Negroes used to have a kind of secret slang[2] which, as one Negro writer puts it, was "like a tattoo on your wrist"; it has now all but disappeared. Says Negro Photographer Gordon Parks: "There is this pressure to make good for your whole people. If you fail, they give you a black eye. But a while back, I made up my mind, from now on it's just going to be me. If I want to fail, that's my business. You can't walk around with your race piled on your back." He adds thoughtfully, with the persistent doubt that even the most optimistic Negro seems unable to escape: "Anyway, that's what I tell my kids. Maybe I'm just bluffing myself."

Indications are that, as the Negro shares the white man's privileges and opportunities, he also shares his headaches. Says a Negro newspaperman: "When the Negro had less freedom, he could blame the whites for whatever went wrong with him. Now it's harder for him to blame the whites for his failures." Says Negro Novelist Ralph (*Invisible Man*) Ellison: "After a man makes $10,000 or $20,000 a year, the magic fades. He is just another man with his problems." Most Negroes still wish they had that kind of problem, but many will agree with Ellison that "we are all Americans together, all modern men together. And we're all facing the same spiritual crisis."

[2] E.g., *ofay* (any white man), *Mr. Charlie, Miss Anne* (Southern whites).

Perhaps the Negro's most serious problem is that, as he gets more of the fruits of the tree of life, his appetite increases. Explains a Manhattan Negro social worker: "A Negro laborer living in Harlem and rarely peering beyond the boundaries of his ghetto might be reasonably content; but if he gets a good job downtown, mixes with white people on a more or less equal basis, and then in the evening is forced to go home to a miserable house in Harlem, he will be bitterly discontented." Says a Negro philosopher, Dr. Alain Locke of Howard University: "The old slum is no longer the problem. It's the new, respectable slum that worries us. We call it Striver's Row." As Negroes move into Striver's Row, their bitterness at remaining inequalities will mount. At the same time, white resentment of growing Negro ambition may mount too.

The Future: Liability or Opportunity?

Justice has been imagined by mankind in many different shapes. Could it be that her face is black or brown? That, at any rate, is the way she is likely to appear to the majority of the world's people, whose skins are colored. They are the people, in Asia and in Africa, whom the U.S. hopes to lead to democracy. They judge the U.S. very largely on evidence drawn from the "Negro problem." The U.S. has probably won more enemies by stories, true and false, about its treatment of Negroes than by any other propaganda; but many Negroes feel that the U.S. could be winning friends instead. Just how much individual Negroes have done to win friends for the U.S. is almost never realized: they have been effective both in the diplomatic service (which so far employs only a handful—about 60) and in personal contacts at Negro universities like Howard, where young people from Africa and Asia come to learn about the U.S. Says Novelist Richard (*Native Son*) Wright: "The key to Asia is right there in Harlem and on Chicago's South Side."

The Negro problem is basically not economic, or sócial, or psychological. It is moral. Prejudice does more moral harm to those who harbor it than to those who are hit by it. And the most hopeful fact about the Negro's progress in the last decade is that it could not have been possible without some moral progress by white Americans.

Gunnar Myrdal explained the U. S.'s state of mind on the Negro problem more succinctly and movingly than anyone else: "The ordinary American is the opposite of a cynic. He is on the average more of a believer and a defender of the faith in humanity than the rest of the Occidentals . . . He investigates his faults, puts them on record, and shouts them from the housetops . . . America's handling of the Negro problem has been criticized most emphatically by white Americans . . . and the criticism . . . will not stop until America has completely reformed itself . . . Mankind is sick of fear and disbelief . . . If America in actual

practice could show the world [that] the Negro became finally integrated into modern democracy, all mankind would be given faith again . . . and America would have spiritual power many times stronger than all her financial and military resources—the power of the trust and support of all good people on earth. America is free to choose whether the Negro shall remain her liability or become her opportunity."

READING

What is the effect of introducing the article with a section on golf? Show how this section and the next two prepare for that on "The Great Emancipators."

Analyze the structure of the sections on the North and the South, showing the major ways of developing each.

"The Negro problem is basically not economic, or social, or psychological. It is moral." How does the article lead up to this statement in the next to the last paragraph?

Who is Gunnar Myrdal, twice cited in the article, and what is the significance of his report?

INTERPRETATION

In view of the closing statement, is the article's concern too extensively "economic, or social, or psychological" and not sufficiently "moral"?

Do you think that the article is too optimistic? Do your own observations during the past few years confirm or modify those of the article?

To what extent do the observations of this article modify your understanding of Romer's essay and your response to it?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

When I Worked in a Restaurant
My City and the Negro
Experience in a Summer Camp
The Younger Generation and the Negro Problem

BLACK BOY*

by Richard Wright

Richard Wright (1908–) is the author of *Native Son* (1940), *Black Boy* (1945), and *The Outsider* (1953).

One morning I arrived early at work and went into the bank lobby where the Negro porter was mopping. I stood at a counter and picked up the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* and began my free reading of the press. I came finally to the editorial page and saw an article dealing with one H. L. Mencken. I knew by hearsay that he was the editor of the *American Mercury,* but aside from that I knew nothing about him. The article was a

* From *Black Boy,* by Richard Wright (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945), pp. 279–295. Copyright, 1945, by Richard Wright.

furious denunciation of Mencken, concluding with one, hot, short sentence: Mencken is a fool.

I wondered what on earth this Mencken had done to call down upon him the scorn of the South. The only people I had ever heard denounced in the South were Negroes, and this man was not a Negro. Then what ideas did Mencken hold that made a newspaper like the *Commercial Appeal* castigate him publicly? Undoubtedly he must be advocating ideas that the South did not like. Were there, then, people other than Negroes who criticized the South? I knew that during the Civil War the South had hated northern whites, but I had not encountered such hate during my life. Knowing no more of Mencken than I did at that moment, I felt a vague sympathy for him. Had not the South, which had assigned me the role of a non-man, cast at him its hardest words?

Now, how could I find out about this Mencken? There was a huge library near the riverfront, but I knew that Negroes were not allowed to patronize its shelves any more than they were the parks and playgrounds of the city. I had gone into the library several times to get books for the white men on the job. Which of them would now help me to get books? And how could I read them without causing concern to the white men with whom I worked? I had so far been successful in hiding my thoughts and feelings from them, but I knew that I would create hostility if I went about this business of reading in a clumsy way.

I weighed the personalities of the men on the job. There was Don, a Jew; but I distrusted him. His position was not much better than mine and I knew that he was uneasy and insecure; he had always treated me in an offhand, bantering way that barely concealed his contempt. I was afraid to ask him to help me to get books; his frantic desire to demonstrate a racial solidarity with the whites against Negroes might make him betray me.

Then how about the boss? No, he was a Baptist and I had the suspicion that he would not be quite able to comprehend why a black boy would want to read Mencken. There were other white men on the job whose attitudes showed clearly that they were Kluxers or sympathizers, and they were out of the question.

There remained only one man whose attitude did not fit into an anti-Negro category, for I had heard the white men refer to him as a "Pope lover." He was an Irish Catholic and was hated by the white Southerners. I knew that he read books, because I had got him volumes from the library several times. Since he, too, was an object of hatred, I felt that he might refuse me but would hardly betray me. I hesitated, weighing and balancing the imponderable realities.

One morning I paused before the Catholic fellow's desk.

"I want to ask you a favor," I whispered to him.

"What is it?"

"I want to read. I can't get books from the library. I wonder if you'd let me use your card?"

He looked at me suspiciously.

"My card is full most of the time," he said.

"I see," I said and waited, posing my question silently.

"You're not trying to get me into trouble, are you boy?" he asked, staring at me.

"Oh, no, sir."

"What book do you want?"

"A book by H. L. Mencken."

"Which one?"

"I don't know. Has he written more than one?"

"He has written several."

"I didn't know that."

"What makes you want to read Mencken?"

"Oh, I just saw his name in the newspaper," I said.

"It's good of you to want to read," he said. "But you ought to read the right things."

I said nothing. Would he want to supervise my reading?

"Let me think," he said. "I'll figure out something."

I turned from him and he called me back. He stared at me quizzically.

"Richard, don't mention this to the other white men," he said.

"I understand," I said. "I won't say a word."

A few days later he called me to him.

"I've got a card in my wife's name," he said. "Here's mine."

"Thank you, sir."

"Do you think you can manage it?"

"I'll manage fine," I said.

"If they suspect you, you'll get in trouble," he said.

That afternoon I addressed myself to forging a note. Now, what were the names of books written by H. L. Mencken? I did not know any of them. I finally wrote what I thought would be a foolproof note: *Dear Madam: Will you please let this nigger boy*—I used the word "nigger" to make the librarian feel that I could not possibly be the author of the note—*have some books by H. L. Mencken?* I forged the white man's name.

I entered the library as I had always done when on errands for whites, but I felt that I would somehow slip up and betray myself. I doffed my hat, stood a respectful distance from the desk, looked as unbookish as possible, and waited for the white patrons to be taken care of. When the desk was clear of people, I still waited. The white librarian looked at me.

"What do you want, boy?"

As though I did not possess the power of speech, I stepped forward and simply handed her the forged note, not parting my lips.

"What books by Mencken does he want?" she asked.

"I don't know, ma'am," I said, avoiding her eyes.

"Who gave you this card?"

"Mr. Falk," I said.

"Where is he?"

"He's at work, at the M—— Optical Company," I said. "I've been in here for him before."

"I remember," the woman said. "But he never wrote notes like this."

Oh, God, she's suspicious. Perhaps she would not let me have the books? If she had turned her back at that moment, I would have ducked out the door and never gone back. Then I thought of a bold idea.

"You can call him up, ma'am," I said, my heart pounding.

"You're not using these books, are you?" she asked pointedly.

"Oh, no, ma'am. I can't read."

"I don't know what he wants by Mencken," she said under her breath.

I knew now that I had won; she was thinking of other things and the race question had gone out of her mind. She went to the shelves. Once or twice she looked over her shoulder at me, as though she was still doubtful. Finally she came forward with two books in her hand.

"I'm sending him two books," she said. "But tell Mr. Falk to come in next time, or send me the names of the books he wants. I don't know what he wants to read."

I said nothing. She stamped the card and handed me the books. Not daring to glance at them, I went out of the library, fearing that the woman would call me back for further questioning. A block away from the library I opened one of the books and read a title: *A Book of Prefaces.* I was nearing my nineteenth birthday and I did not know how to pronounce the word "preface." I thumbed the pages and saw strange words and strange names. I shook my head, disappointed. I looked at the other book; it was called *Prejudices.* I knew what that word meant; I had heard it all my life. And right off I was on guard against Mencken's books. Why would a man want to call a book *Prejudices*? The word was so stained with all my memories of racial hate that I could not conceive of anybody using it for a title. Perhaps I had made a mistake about Mencken? A man who had prejudices must be wrong.

When I showed the books to Mr. Falk, he looked at me and frowned.

"That librarian might telephone you," I warned him.

"That's all right," he said. "But when you're through reading those books, I want you to tell me what you get out of them."

That night in my rented room, while letting the hot water run over my can of pork and beans in the sink, I opened *A Book of Prefaces* and began to read. I was jarred and shocked by the style, the clear, clean, sweeping sentences. Why did he write like that? And how did one write like that? I pictured the man as a raging demon, slashing with his pen, consumed with hate, denouncing everything American, extolling everything European or German, laughing at the weaknesses of people, mocking God, authority. What was this? I stood up, trying to realize what reality lay behind the meaning of the words. . . . Yes, this man was fighting, fighting with words. He was using words as a weapon, using them as one would use a club. Could words be weapons? No. It frightened me. I read on and what amazed me was not what he said, but how on earth anybody had the courage to say it.

Occasionally I glanced up to reassure myself that I was alone in the room. Who were these men about whom Mencken was talking so passionately? Who was Anatole France? Joseph Conrad? Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson, Dostoevski, George Moore, Gustave Flaubert, Maupassant, Tolstoy, Frank Harris, Mark Twain, Thomas Hardy, Arnold Bennett, Stephen Crane, Zola, Norris, Gorky, Bergson, Ibsen, Balzac, Bernard Shaw, Dumas, Poe, Thomas Mann, O. Henry, Dreiser, H. G. Wells, Gogol, T. S. Eliot, Gide, Beaudelaire, Edgar Lee Masters, Stendhal, Turgenev, Huneker, Nietzsche, and scores of others? Were these men real? Did they exist or had they existed? And how did one pronounce their names?

I ran across many words whose meanings I did not know, and I either looked them up in a dictionary or, before I had a chance to do that, encountered the word in a context that made its meaning clear. But what strange world was this? I concluded the book with the conviction that I had somehow overlooked something terribly important in life. I had once tried to write, had once reveled in feeling, had let my crude imagination roam, but the impulse to dream had been slowly beaten out of me by experience. Now it surged up again and I hungered for books, new ways of looking and seeing. It was not a matter of believing or disbelieving what I read, but of feeling something new, of being affected by something that made the look of the world different.

As dawn broke I ate my pork and beans, feeling dopey, sleepy. I went to work, but the mood of the book would not die; it lingered, coloring everything I saw, heard, did. I now felt that I knew what the white men were feeling. Merely because I had read a book that had spoken of how they lived and thought, I identified myself with that book. I felt vaguely guilty. Would I, filled with bookish notions, act in a manner that would make the whites dislike me?

I forged more notes and my trips to the library became frequent.

Reading grew into a passion. My first serious novel was Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*. It made me see my boss, Mr. Gerald, and identify him as an American type. I would smile when I saw him lugging his golf bags into the office. I had always felt a vast distance separating me from the boss, and now I felt closer to him, though still distant. I felt now that I knew him, that I could feel the very limits of his narrow life. And this had happened because I had read a novel about a mythical man called George F. Babbitt.

The plots and stories in the novels did not interest me so much as the point of view revealed. I gave myself over to each novel without reserve, without trying to criticize it; it was enough for me to see and feel something different. And for me, everything was something different. Reading was like a drug, a dope. The novels created moods in which I lived for days. But I could not conquer my sense of guilt, my feeling that the white men around me knew that I was changing, that I had begun to regard them differently.

Whenever I brought a book to the job, I wrapped it in newspaper—a habit that was to persist for years in other cities and under other circumstances. But some of the white men pried into my packages when I was absent and they questioned me.

"Boy, what are you reading those books for?"

"Oh, I don't know, sir."

"That's deep stuff you're reading, boy."

"I'm just killing time, sir."

"You'll addle your brains if you don't watch out."

I read Dreiser's *Jennie Gerhardt* and *Sister Carrie* and they revived in me a vivid sense of my mother's suffering; I was overwhelmed. I grew silent, wondering about the life around me. It would have been impossible for me to have told anyone what I derived from these novels, for it was nothing less than a sense of life itself. All my life had shaped me for the realism, the naturalism of the modern novel, and I could not read enough of them.

Steeped in new moods and ideas, I bought a ream of paper and tried to write; but nothing would come, or what did come was flat beyond telling. I discovered that more than desire and feeling were necessary to write and I dropped the idea. Yet I still wondered how it was possible to know people sufficiently to write about them? Could I ever learn about life and people? To me, with my vast ignorance, my Jim Crow station in life, it seemed a task impossible of achievement. I now knew what being a Negro meant. I could endure the hunger. I had learned to live with hate. But to feel that there were feelings denied me, that the very breath of life itself was beyond my reach, that more than anything else hurt, wounded me. I had a new hunger.

In buoying me up, reading also cast me down, made me see what was possible, what I had missed. My tension returned, new, terrible, bitter, surging, almost too great to be contained. I no longer *felt* that the world about me was hostile, killing; I *knew* it. A million times I asked myself what I could do to save myself, and there were no answers. I seemed forever condemned, ringed by walls.

I did not discuss my reading with Mr. Falk, who had lent me his library card; it would have meant talking about myself and that would have been too painful. I smiled each day, fighting desperately to maintain my old behavior, to keep my disposition seemingly sunny. But some of the white men discerned that I had begun to brood.

"Wake up there, boy!" Mr. Olin said one day.

"Sir!" I answered for the lack of a better word.

"You act like you've stolen something," he said.

I laughed in the way I knew he expected me to laugh, but I resolved to be more conscious of myself, to watch my every act, to guard and hide the new knowledge that was dawning within me.

If I went north, would it be possible for me to build a new life then? But how could a man build a life upon vague, unformed yearnings? I wanted to write and I did not even know the English language. I bought English grammars and found them dull. I felt that I was getting a better sense of the language from novels than from grammars. I read hard, discarding a writer as soon as I felt that I had grasped his point of view. At night the printed page stood before my eyes in sleep.

Mrs. Moss, my landlady, asked me one Sunday morning:

"Son, what is this you keep on reading?"

"Oh, nothing. Just novels."

"What you get out of 'em?"

"I'm just killing time," I said.

"I hope you know your own mind," she said in a tone which implied that she doubted if I had a mind.

I knew of no Negroes who read the books I liked and wondered if Negroes ever thought of them. I knew that there were Negro doctors, lawyers, newspapermen, but I never saw any of them. When I read a Negro newspaper I never caught the faintest echo of my preoccupation in its pages. I felt trapped and occasionally, for a few days, I would stop reading. But a vague hunger would come over me for books, books that opened up new avenues of feeling and seeing, and again I would forge another note to the white librarian. Again I would read and wonder as only the naïve and unlettered can read and wonder, feeling that I carried a secret, criminal burden about with me each day.

That winter my mother and brother came and we set up housekeeping, buying furniture on the installment plan, being cheated and yet know-

ing no way to avoid it. I began to eat warm food and to my surprise found that regular meals enabled me to read faster. I may have lived through many illnesses and survived them, never suspecting that I was ill. My brother obtained a job and we began to save toward the trip north, plotting our time, setting tentative dates for departure. I told none of the white men on the job that I did not like the life I was living, and because my life was completely conditioned by what they said or did, it would have been tantamount to challenging them.

I could calculate my chances for life in the South as a Negro fairly clearly now.

I could fight the southern whites by organizing with other Negroes, as my grandfather had done. But I knew that I could never win that way; there were many whites and there were but few blacks. They were strong and we were weak. Outright black rebellion could never win. If I fought openly I would die and I did not want to die. News of lynchings were frequent.

I could submit and live the life of a genial slave, but that was impossible. All of my life had shaped me to live by my own feelings and thoughts. I could make up to Bess and marry her and inherit the house. But that, too, would be the life of a slave; if I did that, I would crush to death something within me, and I would hate myself as much as I knew the whites already hated those who had submitted. Neither could I ever willingly present myself to be kicked, as Shorty had done. I would rather have died than do that.

I could drain off my restlessness by fighting with Shorty and Harrison. I had seen many Negroes solve the problem of being black by transferring their hatred of themselves to others with a black skin and fighting them. I would have to be cold to do that, and I was not cold and I could never be.

I could, of course, forget what I had read, thrust the whites out of my mind, forget them; and find release from anxiety and longing in sex and alcohol. But the memory of how my father had conducted himself made that course repugnant. If I did not want others to violate my life, how could I voluntarily violate it myself?

I had no hope whatever of being a professional man. Not only had I been so conditioned that I did not desire it, but the fulfillment of such an ambition was beyond my capabilities. Well-to-do Negroes lived in a world that was almost as alien to me as the world inhabited by whites.

What, then, was there? I held my life in my mind, in my consciousness each day, feeling at times that I would stumble and drop it, spill it forever. My reading had created a vast sense of distance between me and the world in which I lived and tried to make a living, and that sense of distance was increasing each day. My days and nights were one long, quiet

continuously contained dream of terror, tension, and anxiety. I wondered how long I could bear it.

The accidental visit of Aunt Maggie to Memphis formed a practical basis for my planning to go north. Aunt Maggie's husband, the "uncle" who had fled from Arkansas in the dead of night, had deserted her; and now she was casting about for a living. My mother, Aunt Maggie, my brother, and I held long conferences, speculating on the prospects of jobs and the cost of apartments in Chicago. And every time we conferred, we defeated ourselves. It was impossible for all four of us to go at once; we did not have enough money.

Finally sheer wish and hope prevailed over common sense and facts. We discovered that if we waited until we were prepared to go, we would never leave, we would never amass enough money to see us through. We would have to gamble. We finally decided that Aunt Maggie and I would go first, even though it was winter, and prepare a place for my mother and brother. Why wait until next week or next month? If we were going, why not go at once?

Next loomed the problem of leaving my job cleanly, smoothly, without arguments or scenes. How could I present the fact of leaving to my boss? Yes, I would pose as an innocent boy; I would tell him that my aunt was taking me and my paralyzed mother to Chicago. That would create in his mind the impression that I was not asserting my will; it would block any expression of dislike on his part for my act. I knew that southern whites hated the idea of Negroes leaving to live in places where the racial atmosphere was different.

It worked as I had planned. When I broke the news of my leaving two days before I left—I was afraid to tell it sooner for fear that I would create hostility on the part of the whites with whom I worked—the boss leaned back in his swivel chair and gave me the longest and most considerate look he had ever given me.

"Chicago?" he repeated softly.

"Yes, sir."

"Boy, you won't like it up there," he said.

"Well, I have to go where my family is, sir," I said.

The other white office workers paused in their tasks and listened. I grew self-conscious, tense.

"It's cold up there," he said.

"Yes, sir. They say it is," I said, keeping my voice in a neutral tone.

He became conscious that I was watching him and he looked away, laughing uneasily to cover his concern and dislike.

"Now, boy," he said banteringly, "don't you go up there and fall into that lake."

"Oh, no, sir," I said, smiling as though there existed the possibility of my falling accidentally into Lake Michigan.

He was serious again, staring at me. I looked at the floor.

"You think you'll do any better up there?" he asked.

"I don't know, sir."

"You seem to've been getting along all right down here," he said.

"Oh, yes, sir. If it wasn't for my mother's going, I'd stay right here and work," I lied as earnestly as possible.

"Well, why not stay? You can send her money," he suggested.

He had trapped me. I knew that staying now would never do. I could not have controlled my relations with the whites if I had remained after having told them that I wanted to go north.

"Well, I want to be with my mother," I said.

"You want to be with your mother," he repeated idly. "Well, Richard, we enjoyed having you with us."

"And I enjoyed working here," I lied.

There was silence; I stood awkwardly, then moved to the door. There was still silence; white faces were looking strangely at me. I went upstairs, feeling like a criminal. The word soon spread through the factory and the white men looked at me with new eyes. They came to me.

"So you're going north, hunh?"

"Yes, sir. My family's taking me with 'em."

"The North's no good for your people, boy."

"I'll try to get along, sir."

"Don't believe all the stories you hear about the North."

"No, sir. I don't."

"You'll come back here where your friends are."

"Well, sir. I don't know."

"How're you going to act up there?"

"Just like I act down here, sir."

"Would you speak to a white girl up there?"

"Oh, no, sir. I'll act there just like I act here."

"Aw, no, you won't. You'll change. Niggers change when they go north."

I wanted to tell him that I was going north precisely to change, but I did not.

"I'll be the same," I said, trying to indicate that I had no imagination whatever.

As I talked I felt that I was acting out a dream. I did not want to lie, yet I had to lie to conceal what I felt. A white censor was standing over

me and, like dreams forming a curtain for the safety of sleep, so did my lies form a screen of safety for my living moments.

"Boy, I bet you've been reading too many of them damn books."

"Oh, no, sir."

I made my last errand to the post office, put my bag away, washed my hands, and pulled on my cap. I shot a quick glance about the factory; most of the men were working late. One or two looked up. Mr. Falk, to whom I had returned my library card, gave me a quick, secret smile. I walked to the elevator and rode down with Shorty.

"You lucky bastard," he said bitterly.

"Why do you say that?"

"You saved your goddamn money and now you're gone."

"My problems are just starting," I said.

"You'll never have any problems as hard as the ones you had here," he said.

"I hope not," I said. "But life is tricky."

"Sometimes I get so goddamn mad I want to kill everybody," he spat in a rage.

"You can leave," I said.

"I'll never leave this goddamn South," he railed. "I'm always saying I am, but I won't . . . I'm lazy. I like to sleep too goddamn much. I'll die here. Or maybe they'll kill me."

I stepped from the elevator into the street, half expecting someone to call me back and tell me that it was all a dream, that I was not leaving.

This was the culture from which I sprang. This was the terror from which I fled.

READING

Describe the stages of Wright's introduction to Mencken as he relates them.

How many of the names of men "about whom Mencken was talking so passionately" can you identify? What is *Main Street* about? In what novel does George F. Babbitt appear?

What purpose does the section serve in which Wright lists the "chances for life in the South as a Negro"? How is it related to what goes before and after?

Explain how the two closing sentences—especially the words "culture" and "terror"—recapitulate the effect of the essay as a whole.

INTERPRETATION

In spite of differences in educational background, which of Wright's experiences in self-education have a similarity to your own?

If Wright had been a college boy, would he have joined a fraternity if he had been asked? In your opinion, is the present situation as described by the editors of *Time* different enough to make Wright's experience impossible today?

Does the evil that Wright depicts result primarily from segregation? If you know the South, how fair a picture of it do you think Wright gives? Just how common in the South are the attitudes he depicts?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Experience in My Childhood
A White Man's View of Segregation
Freedom in Libraries
Culture and Terror

THE NUMBER ONE QUESTION*

by Norman Cousins

Norman Cousins (1912–) has been editor of *The Saturday Review* since 1942. His *Modern Man Is Obsolete* appeared in 1945.

At a Junior College in Lahore, the university city of Pakistan, I ran into trouble. In the question period following my talk a student of perhaps nineteen or twenty demanded the floor, then leveled a long and accusing finger at me.

"You have come to the wrong place if you expect us to believe your propaganda about America," he said in a tense and angry voice. "We know the truth about America, and we students protest your use of the platform of this college to try to pass off dishonest and untruthful stories about the United States. Since you have already spoken, it is too late to do anything about it. We can, however, enter a protest with the principal of the school for having invited you to speak. And we can demand that a representative or a supporter of the Soviet Union be permitted to come here and talk to us about conditions in that country."

As the student spoke the head of the college, seated at my right, was visibly disturbed. He got up and walked to the front of the platform, interrupted the student, then began to apologize to me publicly for what he described as an "unfortunate outburst."

"I ask that the speaker ignore this demonstration of bad manners," the principal said. "Here in Pakistan we give honor and not insults to our guests. I am sure I speak for the large majority of the students here in admonishing our ill-tempered and ill-mannered member."

It appeared from the general applause at this point that most of the students agreed with the principal. I regretted, however, that he had disciplined the student openly. Actually, the student was not to blame. I had set the stage for his protest by expressing the hope that everyone would feel completely free to take issue with anything I said during my talk. My purpose in coming to Pakistan was to have the fullest possible exchange of views. Accordingly, I assured the principal that I didn't feel that what the student said reflected in any way upon the hospitality of the college, and

* From the *Saturday Review*, XXXIV (July 28, 1951), 20–21, 29. Copyright, 1951, by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

that I was anxious to have the student enlarge on his remarks. What, in particular, did he object to in my talk as being propaganda?

The student seemed reluctant to get to his feet, and I asked the principal to assure him that it was entirely in order for him to continue to speak as openly as he did a moment ago. The principal seemed a little dubious at first about my request, then instructed the student to comply with the wishes of the speaker.

"I am sorry if what I said was regarded as an insult," the student began, "and I am sorry if I seemed angry. But you can understand how disturbing it is to hear things that we believe to be false and how unfair it is not to be able to hear at first hand about the Soviet Union if we are officially assembled to hear about the United States.

"You have asked me what it is in particular I disliked about your talk. Much of what you said about the United States was very general. You tried to give us confidence in America's intentions in the world. Frankly, I believe you to be an apologist for the American people at a time when America is committing great crimes in the world. If you really wanted to be honest with us"—and here his voice took on the same tenseness and harshness it had when he had spoken the first time—"you would have admitted all the ugly things you do to people in America who do not happen to have a fair white skin."

At this point there were staccato shouts of approval and a short burst of applause. This emboldened the student, and he raised his voice.

"In America there are twenty million people who are called citizens but who are not citizens at all. They have been condemned as inferior beings and they are not allowed to participate in what you call your democracy. They do not enjoy the same protection under the laws you give to white people. If a colored person commits a crime, however minor that crime may be, he is apt to be seized by crowds. Your lynchings are the purest form of mob justice in the world.

"If a colored person becomes ill does he have available to him the same hospital and medical facilities as does the white? If he wants to travel somewhere is it not true that he is compelled to sit in a specially designated section, so that he will not contaminate the pure white travelers? Can the colored person sit down at the same school desk, at the same dining table, or register at the same hotel? Why do you insult the intelligence of the world by calling yourself a democracy when twenty million of your people are forced because of the accident of skin coloration to live in slums and eat inferior food and go to inferior schools and work at inferior jobs? Is this what you mean when you say that in a democracy the individual must be given every opportunity to develop himself and to fulfill his highest potential? Those are just words. Stupid, dishonest words, and you do no credit to yourself when you say them."

The principal stood up and once again started to reprimand the student when I asked that he be allowed to complete his statement.

"I am grateful to you for your courtesy," the student said, "but I want you to know how I feel. Everyone of us sitting here feels the same way about your wicked and cruel race prejudice in the United States"—loud applause from the audience—"and every time we read about a lynching or about that very distinguished American, Ralph Bunche, not accepting a high position in the American State Department because he would have to live in Washington, where he would have to stay out of the best hotels and restaurants and accept the status of an inferior person in the very capital of the country he was called upon to serve—when we read about this, we shake our heads, sadly, then we shake our fists, because what you do is not only an insult to a great human being like Mr. Bunche, but a direct insult to all people in the world who do not happen to have white skins like yourself.

"Often we read about members of our Government and their families who have gone to the United States on official business and how they are openly insulted in the streets by ignorant and evil Americans and how they are turned away from hotels or deprived of seats in public transportation carriers or made to feel inferior. The chairman speaks of hospitality. You are entitled to it. But no country in the world offends the others with its lack of hospitality as does America. We are fully aware of the embarrassment felt by our people when they visit your so-called great democracy.

"Well, we will tell you one thing. We are not inferior. There is the entire Moslem world that is involved in this. And there are the peoples of India and China and Indonesia and Japan and South America. One day you are going to discover that you and your stupid prejudices are alone in the world and that the overwhelming majority of the world's peoples have decided that they have put up long enough with your fancy talk of superiority and your fancy airs and your evil discriminations."

The atmosphere in the small auditorium seemed supercharged. Under the whiplash of the student's emotional outburst the audience was being transformed into an angry entity. He had touched off something powerful and harsh in the group, producing a mass countenance of vengeful bitterness. The principal saw it and moved quickly to head it off.

"A question period is for questions," he said strongly. "If you have a question, ask it, but no speeches."

"I intended what I said to be a question," the student said. "Does the speaker deny that race discrimination and prejudice exist in the United States, and if so, how does he reconcile it with his general statements about democracy in America?"

The student sat down and smiled triumphantly in response to the

murmuring approval of his fellows. Though the majority of the students may not have agreed with the tone and temper of his remarks, they seemed to be generally sympathetic to his basic argument. This did not surprise me. By the time I came to Lahore I had spoken perhaps fifty times at various public meetings in the Far East. And each time I had spoken, without exception, the issue of race prejudice in the United States came up. Out of the countless hundreds of questions that were asked me everywhere this was by all odds the one asked most frequently. Indeed, you could almost count on it to lead off any general question period, no matter what the particular subject matter of the talk happened to be. If I spoke about education in the United States or about journalism or about books or about American foreign policy, the first question was apt to be about lynchings or segregation. Nor did the auspices under which I spoke make much difference. Whether it was a gathering of conservative businessmen at a Rotary session in Bombay, or a small meeting of Government officials in New Delhi, or a conference of editors, writers, and publishers in Calcutta, or a teachers' college for women, or a convention of theologians, the question unfailingly came up. Generally, of course, it would be asked with far more tact and moderation than had just been shown by the young Lahore student, but it was just as deep and insistent.

Before leaving the United States I had been warned that this was something I could expect to encounter almost everywhere I went, but not until I had to contend with it day after day was I able to comprehend how strong and basic it is in the thinking of the Eastern people. I had thought from what I had read that our identification with the British in Asia or our own Far Eastern foreign policy would be the chief targets of criticism. These were of concern, certainly, but they were small matters compared to the criticism against us on color grounds. You were conscious of it in almost everything that happened. Day after day the local newspapers would play it up prominently on the front pages. Frequently the news would be distorted or exaggerated, and sometimes news items ostensibly having nothing to do with the problem of the Negro in America would carry some strained reference to it. The question would come up in polite and sometimes not-so-polite conversation. People seemed to have all the details about the exclusion of a colored applicant from a Southern university the day before, or the complete account of what happened when Indian or Pakistan individuals appearing in American public thoroughfares in their own national dress were insulted or accosted as freaks or dangerous foreigners. Not infrequently these critics claimed a great deal more information about the color problem than actually existed. I was astounded at the weird misconceptions of the nature and extent of the color problem in America. It was not unusual to find well-educated persons thinking in

terms of the problem as it existed perhaps fifty years ago, making generalizations about the whole of the United States that were only true regionally.

It should be obvious, of course, that color is the biggest telling point in Communist propaganda against America. The revolution in Asia today takes different forms in different places, compounded generally of the struggle for freedom from outside domination, of the longing for basic justice and opportunity, of the so-far losing fight against disease and enfeeblement. But through it all runs something constant and powerful. It is the quest for self-respect, a revolution of pride. It is the deep determination to end the Age of Indignity. This is a mighty and growing natural force which the Communists are putting to their own use. Forget everything else the Communists are doing or saying about us in their propaganda. Forget for the moment about the charges of atomic diplomacy, war-mongering, aggression, and all the other stereotyped nonsense. All this is easily enough answered. The one argument we have yet to meet effectively is the one that touches Asian peoples where they are most sensitive and where they have a personal sense of involvement. Color.

I should have been very much surprised, for example, if there was no direct connection between the patent pro-Soviet feeling of the Lahore student and his mountainous resentment against America on color grounds. One might suppose that the natural antagonism between Communism and the deeply felt religion of the Moslems would act as a bar to Communist propaganda activity. Yet in Pakistan I found a surprising disposition in some quarters to accept at face value many of the rosy interpretations of life and politics in the Soviet Union, with a corresponding tendency to believe the worst about America. Behind these attitudes was usually the conviction that the Soviet was the champion of equality while the United States was the global headquarters of race prejudice.

What do we say when we are confronted with these attitudes and arguments? In my own case, during the early part of my trip I think I made a serious mistake in attempting an answer. I think I was overly circumspect, overly cautious and diplomatic, overly concerned about stepping on sensitive toes. After a while, however, I realized I would have to be completely direct and blunt, almost to the point of seeming militant. By the time I got to Lahore I was pretty well tuned up for the challenge.

I began in my reply by saying that, certainly, race prejudice exists in the United States and is a serious problem there. Having said that, it was important to make a distinction between the problem as it actually existed and the problem as presented by Soviet propaganda and as generally reported in the press, not excluding the influential *Times* of Pakistan. The condition of the American Negro was bad enough, but it did not even

remotely resemble the deliberate exaggerations and distortions that were concocted for propaganda purposes and that were, unfortunately, so widely accepted.

Yes, race prejudice existed, I said, but did the students suppose that nothing was being done about it? Did they suppose that the overwhelming majority of the American people were not aware of the problem and were doing nothing about it? Did they know anything about the work of such organizations as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People under Walter White, a Negro himself and one of the most respected and influential American citizens? Were they familiar with the reports of the NAACP, which made it clear that greater progress had been made in the past fifteen years than in the previous fifty? Were they aware of inspiring advances which indicated that America was well on its way towards eliminating the evil of segregation? A slow but steady integration was taking place—without widespread violence. Educational opportunities were increasingly in evidence. Many states had prescribed penalties against job discrimination on racial grounds. The hideous denial of the ballot box to colored American citizens was being abolished. In town after town throughout the South Negroes were being elected and appointed to public office. Old taboos against Negroes in professional sports were practically extinct. The nation's finest prize-fighters were Negroes. In baseball the man who was probably the most popular player in the game today was a Negro. In literature, science, philosophy, religion, music, the dance, Negroes were making outstanding contributions and enjoyed the esteem of their fellow-Americans.

Now this progress wasn't fast enough or deep enough—admittedly—and it could never be fast enough to suit many millions of Americans who were aware of the challenge and who had been working for many years to meet it and who would not be content until it was completely solved. But the important thing was that they *were* at work on it, that historic progress was being made. The important thing, too, was that the Government itself was not a party to the crime or the party behind the crime, as happened in Germany with respect to race and religious prejudice under Nazism. Indeed, the executive branch of the American Government had been in the role of prodder to get action by Congress and the States in removing racial barriers.

But the problem of prejudice, I went on, was not a uniquely American problem. It was a human problem. It existed inside people. It was the problem of inferiority and superiority. It was that corrupting and corroding experience that took place inside a person when he arrogated to himself certain privileges which he denied to others on the basis of what he liked to think were nature's own laws. I was deeply disheartened, for example, by the prejudice and discrimination I had seen on the Indian sub-

continent. In the leading hotels of Bombay, owned and operated by Indians, was posted the sign, "South Africans Not Admitted." Among Indians themselves, I frequently found discrimination according to color and caste as severe as any I had observed in the United States. National laws had been passed against the inequities of Untouchability, yet many of the evils persisted. What was worse, many of the Untouchables were willing parties to the social contract of prejudice. In Pakistan, and I hoped that those present would correct me if I was wrong, I had found evidence of religious intolerance and prejudice. This was nothing official, so far as either state or theology was concerned, but it was there just the same. There was an unfortunate attitude of superiority of religion that inevitably made for prejudice. So far as minorities were concerned, there was a distinct prejudice against Sikhs.

I brought this up not by way of admonition, nor even by way of using the glass-house theory to obtain immunity from criticism. I brought this up only by way of indicating that the problem of prejudice knew no national boundaries. To a large extent it was a common problem. Perhaps all peoples working together inside the United Nations might be able to contribute to the self-understanding that would have to go into the making of any basic attack on the problem of prejudice—racial, social, religious, economic, political. Perhaps such a common effort might be more constructive than the destructive and often ill-informed criticism that served only to enlarge misunderstanding and therefore prejudice.

This was my attempt at an answer which would be neither apologetic nor self-righteous. I was gratified by the response of the students, especially when it led to a friendly post-lecture discussion with the student who had asked the question in the first place. He said he was satisfied with the answer but felt that we were at fault for not making our story known all over the world.

There was certainly no argument about that.

READING

What is the advantage of Cousins giving more than half of his essay to the exchange with the student in Lahore?

How does he make a transition from this? To what does he make it? How does he return to the original situation?

In writing about oneself, particularly when one is making the "right" answer, the effect of egotism is hard to avoid. Does Cousins avoid it? If so, how?

INTERPRETATION

How would you distinguish the main idea of this essay from those of Romer and Wright? Where in the *Time* article is there an anticipation of Cousins? What does Cousins add?

Should we regard the abolition of racial prejudice as, first of all, an answer to communist propaganda or as, primarily, a righteous action irrespective of the reputation it will give us? What is Cousins' view of this matter?

If religious and racial prejudice is world-wide, in one form or another, can we abolish or diminish it? In what ways should its common appearance affect our attitude toward it in this country?

What is the impact of this essay on the advocacy of gradualism in the elimination of racial injustices?

Do you regard Cousins' reply to the student as the best one possible? Where does it seem to fall short? Discuss particularly what it has to say about gradualism and prejudice in other countries?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Asiatics in California
Mexicans in Texas
Visit by an Indian Teacher
Freedom and Race

12
Crime

Like a malignant parasite, crime in various manifestations preys upon America. Particularly in recent years we have been deeply concerned with the rising tide of juvenile delinquency, for many of us have been shocked by cases we have personally known. Most puzzling of all is the criminal behavior that comes from the "nice" background, contrasted with what we used to call "criminal environment." What makes people commit crimes? What is the relationship of law enforcement agencies to crime? What can we learn about these problems from an examination of famous crimes?

THE CASE THAT ROCKED NEW JERSEY*

by John Kobler

John Kobler (1910–) has been foreign correspondent (INS), reporter, and editor on *Time* and *Life*. Since the war, he has been a free-lance writer and he has published three books, *Some Like It Gory, The Trial of Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray,* and *Afternoon in the Attic.*

As soon as he finished supper, Frankie Marvin hurried out of the house to commit the crime he had been planning all month. He was prepared and eager to rob and to kill, and he had chosen the moment shrewdly. This was a Friday—February 13, 1948—Boy Scout night. His parents would not expect him home until ten, an hour later than usual. Frankie had no specific victim in mind, although he vaguely hoped that the "poor sucker," as he expressed it, would be a woman. Women, in Frankie's consciousness, were the instruments of his insufficiency and his shame. As he swung along the neat, quiet, suburban street, the collar of his coat whipped up against the cold, he toyed with the weapon in his pocket. It was only an imitation Luger made of aluminum, but it had enough heft to dent a skull, which was the purpose he intended it for. Frankie was twelve years old.

For the troubled adults—the teachers, the parents, the ministers, the police—who, in the weeks to come, were to try so painfully to comprehend the forces which drove Frankie Marvin to this night, no clues appeared on the surface of his community or his home. Here was no slum; the boy was no product of underprivilege. West Orange, New Jersey, is an archetypal,

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American, middle-class commuter's town, proud of its prosperity, its handsome, well-staffed schools, its low crime statistics. Its 25,000 residents are predominantly conservative in their way of living and their politics. "There is nothing about the neighborhood itself," Juvenile Court Judge Harry Lindeman was to observe later, "which could be termed conducive to the delinquency of juveniles."

The Marvins live in one of West Orange's choicest residential neighborhoods, an area of fifty-foot frontages, 1948 cars, electrified kitchens and five-figure mortgages. They own a three-story white frame house standing on a flowered corner plot. As sales manager of a national building corporation, Frankie's father probably earns around $15,000 a year. Mrs. Marvin, a devout Catholic, is an intelligent, conscientious woman who devotes enormous energy to the welfare of her children. There are three besides Frankie, and they have exemplary reputations.

This, then, was the environment out of which Frankie Marvin walked on the evening of the thirteenth in the mood of a vicious criminal. At the end of the street two other boys waited—Billy Carter, eleven, and Ned Amory, twelve. Billy carried a flashlight and a .22 rifle in a canvas case. Ned had a loaded .45 revolver stuck in his belt.

Like Frankie, Billy and Ned are the sons of substantial parents. Their homes, similar in size and comfort, stand within a stone's throw of each other in the same district. Ned is an only child. His father, a former Army officer, is the chief engineer of a public-utilities company.

Of all the youngsters in the neighborhood, none was more warmly regarded than Billy Carter. A towheaded, freckle-faced lad, somewhat babyish in looks, he evoked the word "cute" from almost everybody who met him. At Christmas time Billy would fashion wreaths and peddle them from door to door with a charm few people could resist. In seven years he had never missed a Sunday at the Ridgeview Presbyterian Church. This record was only slightly better than those of Ned, also a Presbyterian, and Frankie, both of whom were faithful church and Sunday-school attendants. One West Orange parent, himself the father of a twelve-year-old, confessed recently, "I used to hold Billy Carter up to my son as a model to emulate. I considered their friendship a fine, wholesome influence in my boy's life. Now, I almost wonder——" What shocked this parent most was the position of the Carter family. The mother had been active in the P.T.A., the father was a school principal.

Study these three boys as they stand on the street corner talking in earnest undertones, and all you see outwardly is the traditional ideal of American boyhood, clear-eyed, clean-limbed, brimming with health and spirit. Frankie Marvin especially is an attractive specimen. He is blond, slender and tall, with the awkward grace of a colt. His most striking feature is his voice. It is deep, though still unchanged by puberty, musical and

tightly controlled. He seldom raises it, yet when he uses it to command his companions, it has the effect on them of a whiplash.

"So Ray wouldn't come," he was saying.

"Naw," Billy replied. "He's a nut."

This referred to a fourth boy, Raymond Anderson, who was to have joined them, but backed out at the last moment. Frankie's plans had included a fifth boy, Pete Schwartz, whose orders were to supply a blackjack. But when Billy and Ned stopped at his home on their way to meet Frankie, they learned that Pete's mother would not let him out that night. So informed by telephone, Frankie had brought the aluminum Luger as a substitute for the blackjack.

There is an irony for sociologists to ponder in Pete Schwartz's connection with the gang. Of the five boys, he is the only one who can be considered to belong to a depressed economic group. His father, a struggling tobacconist of German origin, rents half of a dingy two-family house on the West Orange equivalent of the wrong side of the tracks. The neighbors report that Pete, who is thirteen, is a rough, wayward type, given to scribbling obscenities on walls and insulting girls. Yet, when the final official verdict was returned, he was judged to be one of the least deeply involved in crime and, by implication, the likeliest to be rehabilitated. The irony is compounded by the fact that the indisputable leader of the gang, Frankie Marvin, has the wealthiest family. But as Joseph P. Murphy, chief probation officer of Essex County and one of the country's foremost penologists, says, "Juvenile delinquency is not confined to the poor. Unbelievable offenses are committed by rich boys, and probably three times as many occur as ever reach the courts."

Frankie ordered Billy to remove the rifle from its case, assemble it and hold it at the ready. He then relieved Ned of the .45. It was cocked, but the safety catch was on. He slipped it into his right-hand coat pocket. The trio began moving briskly along Valley Road. The December snows had partly melted, but the streets were icy, and fog blurred the lamplights. Nearing the Lackawanna Railroad at Montrose Avenue, they passed three girls. Frankie, with that searing malevolence he reserved for the opposite sex, spat at them, "You lousy tramps."

Through the windows of the station waiting room they dimly saw a woman sitting alone. Frankie's eyes narrowed. "Stay here," he said. He went in, walked up to the woman and in silky tones asked the time.

"It's almost eight," she told him.

He thanked her politely and rejoined the others.

"Let's hold her up," Ned suggested.

"No, she saw me," said Frankie regretfully. "There's too much light in there."

"Aw, let's do it anyway."

"No, I tell you she'd recognize me."

Back on Montrose Avenue, they paused uncertainly, glancing up and down the fog-veiled neighborhood. In a moment they made out the figure of a man walking away from them a few blocks ahead.

"Come on," said Frankie, "let's get him."

They quickened their pace. Billy, for the first time, showed signs of nervousness. "I ought to be home soon," he muttered.

Ned reassured him, "We only got a couple of blocks to go."

When they came to within ten feet of the man, Frankie handed Billy the imitation Luger. "Go hit him," he whispered. But Billy drew back, shaking his head. At this, Frankie pulled the .45 out of his pocket, took careful aim at the man's back and fired three times.

The man crashed to the sidewalk in a sitting position. He twisted his head around in the boys' direction, then started crawling away from them. The boys bolted, abandoning all thought of rifling the man's pockets. In his haste, Billy dropped his flashlight.

Frankie, however, was not satisfied. As they ran, he called to the others, "I don't think he's dead. We ought to go back and finish him off." But, to his disgust, they kept going.

In Valley Road they separated. Billy went straight home. Frankie and Ned put in an appearance at Gregory School, where the Boy Scouts were meeting, and played a round of batball. They were both home shortly after nine.

Next day the local newspapers reported that Bertram M. Betsch, of South Orange, a middle-aged accountant and the father of two small boys, had been shot three times on his way to a basketball game. Two of the bullets lodged in his abdomen, the third in his left thigh. He managed to drag himself 300 feet to a house on the other side of the avenue. The owner called the police. At Orange Memorial Hospital the bullets were extracted with only slight hope of saving his life. After lingering near death for a week, however, he recovered. Betsch was never able to describe his assailants other than to say that they seemed to be young.

Meanwhile, amid the clamor of an aroused community, the boys reverted to their usual well-ordered lives. Neither then nor at any time thereafter did they display the faintest flicker of fear or remorse, let alone an appreciation of the moral quality of their act.

A psychiatrist who later studied them declared, "There is no real personal concept of sin on the part of these youngsters."

In his home and in the classroom, Billy Carter was never more tractable or sweeter-natured. The moment he missed his flashlight he bought another one exactly like it before his family could ask embarrassing questions.

The day after the shooting—Saturday—Frankie Marvin took in the

matinee at the Windsor Theater. The feature was Bulldog Drummond. On Sunday, as spruce as paint in a stiff white collar and blue serge suit, he accompanied his mother to church. He received communion, having gone to confession the night before. On Sunday afternoon he ran into Pete Schwartz, the boy whose mother had kept him home on Friday night.

"Well," said Pete, "I see you pulled off the job all right."

Frankie hedged at first, then blithely admitted it. "You may as well know," he said, "but don't you ever breathe a word to anybody or you'll get it too."

This was a threat he had made against all his accomplices at one time or another, as well as against a number of schoolmates whom he had unsuccessfully attempted to recruit into the gang. He approached some fifteen of them altogether, but such was the awe he inspired in them that not one betrayed him.

For two weeks detectives from all the Oranges—East, West, South and plain Orange—and from Newark, harried by the community and the press, ran themselves ragged trying to discover who shot Bertram Betsch. They retrieved Billy Carter's flashlight on Montrose Avenue. They tracked down witnesses who had heard the shots. When the break finally came, on February twenty-seventh, it was Ray Anderson, the fourth boy, who brought it about, and the circumstances were dictated by the same psychological elements which had inclined him to delinquency in the first place.

Ray, age twelve, is the smallest and least rugged of the five. At school they called him sissy. In the first grade, six years ago, he suffered a seizure which was diagnosed as a form of epilepsy. His parents consulted a psychiatrist and, although no second attack has occurred, he still requires medical attention. In pedagogic language "he lacks the ability to work independently, his attention span is short, he is socially immature." Anderson, Senior, a successful businessman bursting with self-confidence and vigor, was distressed by these deviations from standard and tended to favor an older son. The father, moreover, is frequently away from home, while the mother's time is considerably occupied by civic and social interests. This is not to say that Mrs. Anderson does not love her frail son in her own way. She does, and the father's indifference toward him is an additional cause of conflict and tension in the home.

From this unhappy atmosphere Ray turned for comfort to a kindly neighbor. Mrs. Miller, a former schoolteacher with no children of her own, understood the boy's plight, and her heart went out to him. On the week ends when his parents were out of town, she frequently took him into her home. Ray was staying with Mrs. Miller on the twenty-seventh, and that evening they set out in her car for a supper at the Old First Presbyterian Church.

They were passing a house on Walker Road when, in a sudden overflow

of affection for this woman who had befriended him, Ray cried, "I want to give you a ring and some bracelets! Stop the car here!" Bewildered and uneasy, Mrs. Miller obeyed. The boy climbed out and scurried around behind the house. Following along, she found him digging in the muddy bank of a brook. Presently he held aloft a small leather jewel case. His expression was woebegone. "Oh," he exclaimed, "there were two of them! They must have taken the other one. It had the things I was saving for you in it."

Mrs. Miller turned pale. "Ray, where do they come from?"

Coolly, without a tremor, he explained to her that for many months he had belonged to a school gang which looted houses all over the Oranges.

Sick with horror, she hustled the boy back to the car. "Why—why did you do it?"

"Gosh," said Ray, "everybody's entitled to two or three robberies. I liked it. All the other fellows were doing it." He looked hurt. "Gee, I didn't think you'd mind."

They proceeded to the church supper, but Mrs. Miller couldn't swallow a mouthful. At one point Ray sidled up to her and remarked, with an air of delighted mystery, "You'd be really surprised if you knew about the other thing."

Mrs. Miller didn't wait for the last course. Taking the boy out to the car, she grabbed him by the shoulders and demanded frantically, "What other thing? What are you trying to say?"

"I mustn't tell," he said.

At home she cajoled, threatened, pleaded with him for hours. Finally, she wrung a promise from him that he would make a clean breast of everything in the morning. He kept his promise. As soon as he woke up, he told her who shot Betsch and how he had helped plan, though did not take part in the crime. The recital was too much for Mrs. Miller. She fainted.

As she revived, she heard Ray talking to Frankie Marvin on the telephone. He was saying, "I told her, but don't worry. She wouldn't snitch."

And, indeed, for a few moments she hesitated, torn between her fondness for the boy and her duty to the rest of the community. But when he airily confided that another armed robbery was planned for that night, she hesitated no longer. She made a telephone call which brought the police around in a hurry. Ray repeated his story to them. Within the hour the four other boys had been arrested in their homes and whisked off to headquarters for interrogation.

The ensuing scene had no parallel in the experience of any of the police officials present. Far from being intimidated by their situation, the boys treated it as a lark. They giggled, bickered over minor details of their exploits like bridge players post-morteming the fine points of a difficult hand, and romped all over the police chief's office, gleefully inspecting the

Bertillon files, the rogues' gallery, the firearms. From time to time Frankie Marvin would weary of the game and in his lordly manner, never raising his voice, would murmur, "Shut up." Instantly, as if struck, the others would subside. Billy wondered if his father would spank him when he got home. When their victim, still in bad shape in the hospital, was mentioned, Frankie suggested lightly, "Maybe we ought to apologize or something."

"Yeah," said Ned, "and send him some flowers."

"Now look, boys," one of the detectives put in, "let's clear up this whole thing today. Have you put on your thinking caps?"

They nodded, grinned and agreed to divulge every detail they could recall. From their joint recital, confused at first and in spots inconsistent, there gradually emerged a catalogue of felonies which a professional criminal would hardly have accumulated until well advanced in his career. It had started the preceding November, after Frankie met Billy and Ray in the sixth grade at Gregory School—Ned and Pete, being older, went to Roosevelt Junior High—and had begun to exert his leadership. Only Frankie and Billy took part in this first crime. After school, they broke into two houses on Walker Road, one right after the other, and carted away rings, watches, fountain pens, costume jewelry and $300 in cash.

From then on, at intervals of about two weeks, working sometimes by twos, sometimes by threes, but never singly, the gang planned and executed six more robberies, including $110 from a teacher's locker in Roosevelt Junior High and some letters from a postman's sack. They stole, all told, around $10,000 worth of articles, hiding them in drainage tunnels, under rocks and in holes dug deep in the ground.

It is perhaps understandable that the police failed to catch them. The expertness with which the robberies were carried out led them to suspect professional adult burglars, not juveniles. The boys had mastered the latest techniques in crime from pulp magazines, radio serials, gangster movies and comic books—their favorite forms of entertainment. It was in a crime magazine that Frankie had read an ad for an imitation Luger.

They were skilled "match burglars." A match burglar avoids using a flashlight, lest the glare be seen from the outside. After casing a likely house, making sure the owner was absent, the boys would slice a screen door on the rear porch or smash a window with a milk bottle. Once inside, they would lower the blinds and guide their steps by matches, never letting them flare for more than a few seconds. Sometimes they used candles. They always scraped any drippings off the floor. On no occasion did they leave fingerprints. One time, when snow covered the ground, to confuse the police further Frankie walked carefully in Ned's footprints, enlarging them as he went. Of the stolen cash the boys never got around to spending more than a dollar. This was for cigarettes and rock salt. The rock salt was

used to melt the snow in case they wanted to get at one of their caches in a hurry.

A detective interrupted their recital to ask, "Suppose an officer had caught you red-handed, would you have shot him?"

"Probably," said Frankie.

Whatever the difficulties of the police in nailing the culprits quickly, there were ordinary citizens who could have turned the trick by a simple exercise of common sense. These were the pawnbrokers and jewelers in the Oranges and Newark to whom the boys took their loot. The pawnbrokers told them that under the law they could not accept pledges from minors. Two of them referred the boys to jewelers who might be willing to make outright purchases. They were not. But apparently it never occurred to either pawnbrokers or jewelers to advise the police that school-age kids were running around with pocketfuls of valuable gems.

The boys had no practical use for large sums of money. They either received allowances from their parents or earned enough at odd jobs—not to mention the cash they had stolen—to keep them in candy, movies and toys. But money was the motive of most big-shot criminals they had read about, and money was what they had to have. Accordingly, when they found that they could not convert the stolen goods to cash, they decided to get more by robbing a man at gun's point.

They began training for the deed on the playground of Gregory School. Billy and Ray took turns pretending to be the "poor sucker"; Frankie wielded the gun. On the afternoon of the thirteenth all five boys gathered in the basement of the Amory home. It contained a small shooting range. Both Amory, the ex-Army officer, and Carter, the school principal, believed that a boy should learn how to handle firearms, and they had instructed their sons in target practice. "Of course," Amory declared, "I never anticipated that my boy would use a gun wrongly."

After firing a round with the .45 that Billy had taken from his father's coat closet, they wrapped it up in an old felt hat and buried it for the time being in a snowdrift. Then they smoked cigarettes, talked over their plans once more and went home for supper.

So ran the boys' statements. Having signed them, they were removed to the Newark Parental Home, there to await hearing and judgment in juvenile court. As they swaggered out of police headquarters, Frankie asked to be shown the FBI files. When a detective obligingly pointed them out, he smiled a charming, boyish smile and said, "I'll be in there someday."

The stories which the newspapers carried the next day hit their readers harder than anything that had happened in New Jersey since the kidnaping of the Lindbergh baby. Typical of parental reaction was the comment of one frightened father: "If these boys, who come of good family, who were

given every advantage, could go that wrong, what about my boy? How much do I really know, after all, about what goes on in his mind?" From such misgivings it was an easy step to the sense of personal guilt.

"Where have we failed?" another parent asked, speaking for the community. "What have we done that we should not have done? What have we not done that we should have?"

Essex County suffered from a collective bad conscience, which manifested itself in a rash of public-welfare agitation, some of it useful, some futile, but all of it directly inspired by the Betsch case. The Newark *News,* always a scrappy, civic-minded paper, whose editors live in the Oranges and send their children to school there, spearheaded a drive to establish a child-guidance clinic for the county, with a full-time psychiatrist from whom parents and teachers could learn to recognize symptomatic behavior and to refer it for treatment in time. The *News* contributed $5000 out of its own treasury, and public and private sources raised almost $100,000 more.

Meanwhile, the heart of the mystery—the great dark Why? of the boys' behavior—overshadowed every other consideration. While they lingered in custody for six weeks, an unusually prolonged period for a juvenile case to pend, psychiatrists dug for the answers. As the answers slowly emerged, they reassured nobody. Many a parent was forced to acknowledge that some of the same conditions which contributed to the delinquency of the five boys existed in his own family circle. And it was cold comfort to be assured that this holds true in numerous privileged homes the country over.

The five case histories proved to be almost classic textbook illustrations in the problems of child education. Each boy felt basically insecure. Each boy felt inferior. And, though schools and other agencies were not blameless, with each boy these disabilities originated in an unsatisfactory parent-child relationship.

Take Frankie Marvin. Like Ray Anderson, he had been emotionally neglected by his father in favor of an older brother. The brother is a crack athlete. This delights the father, a towering, hearty man who in his youth played minor-league baseball. Frankie, on the other hand, grew up under handicaps which curtailed his athletics. Before his seventh year he contracted a sinus infection. The resultant postnasal drip made food distasteful to him. At nine his appendix was removed. Soon afterward he developed six different allergies.

Early in his school career Frankie fell behind in his reading ability. His teachers, mostly women, unaware of his difficulties, tended to chide him in class. Out of his humiliation arose a bitter aversion to women in general and women teachers in particular. Frankie's schooling was

unfortunate in other respects. He was shunted from one school to another, six of them all told, in Pennsylvania, where he was born, in Illinois and in New Jersey. This was partly because his father's business kept the family on the move, partly because when he bogged down in one school his mother would yank him out and try another, alternating between parochial and public shools. This constant mobility intensified his feeling of insecurity.

In 1947, when the Marvins settled down in West Orange and Frankie entered Gregory School, his mother dutifully warned the principal about some of the boy's past troubles. The school psychologist, a Miss Mary Hand, was instructed to make a special study of Frankie. Gregory School is very proud of Miss Hand; few public-school faculties anywhere include a full-time certificated psychologist. She quickly recognized the more obvious symptoms of his insecurity and attributed them to his inability to read as well as other boys of his age. Upon her recommendation, Frankie got individual attention until he began to catch up.

Much deeper than that, Miss Hand did not have the facilities to go. To guide her further, however, she requested Frankie's record from the school he previously attended—the Willard School, in Ridgewood, New Jersey. What she received was a cursory note which omitted two significant facts. Frankie had several times been truant. Once he broke into the school building at night, with a younger boy in tow, and messed up a classroom—an expression of hostility toward his teachers. "Had we known this," says Miss Hand, "we would surely have followed his progress longer than we did." Nor was Mrs. Marvin able to bring herself to reveal that Frankie was prone to filch things from stores. On the two occasions when she found him out she made him return them with an apology and handed him a strong lecture, but fundamentally she regarded the incidents as casual boyhood naughtiness rather than possibly dangerous symptoms.

In November, Miss Hand completed a second report on Frankie, and this time she concluded that he had achieved a satisfactory adjustment. His reading had improved, he was popular among his classmates, he played a fair game of basketball, sang in the glee club, joined a radio club. He himself remarked, "I feel happy for the first time." Yet, all the while, Frankie was stealing without a twinge of conscience. The roots of his problem had not been touched. For all her efforts, the task was beyond Mrs. Marvin, who had to raise her four children pretty much alone. The father's business still kept him away for long stretches at a time, and when he did commute daily, Frankie was often in bed by the time he got home.

In the case of Ned Amory an excess of maternal devotion wrought a good deal of the damage. Mrs. Amory had been an amateur musician in her girlhood, and she was determined that her only child should shine in the arts. She set him to studying the violin, an occupation he thoroughly

disliked. Although his IQ was average, she insisted, to the annoyance of his teachers, that the boy was a prodigy. She smothered him with affection and, in doing so, conveyed to him her own anxieties.

Ned sought escape from this oppressiveness in an inner-fantasy world. At times he walked about, dreamy and vacant-eyed, unaware of his surroundings. His violin teacher noted a curious recurrent antic of his. In the room where he took his lessons, there was an old clock which nobody bothered to wind. Upon arriving, Ned would flick the pendulum with his bow, then watch it in open-mouthed fascination until it came to rest again. Only then was he ready to proceed with the lesson. He was peculiarly receptive to the excitement which Frankie Marvin offered him.

At first blush, Billy Carter poses the toughest enigma of all. His home environment seemed ideal. His parents are cultured people, his brother fond of him and he of his brother. On closer study, however, it appears that his father, though his entire career had been devoted to handling children, had no real feeling or understanding for them. To him, boys were either "good" or "bad," and the bad ones needed prompt, harsh discipline. If Carter experienced warm emotions toward his own children, he was unable to make them felt. A small, quiet, solitary man, he seldom played with them. Here again, the burden devolved largely upon the mother.

On April fourteenth, Frankie, Ned and Billy were led into juvenile court, still unabashed, still sharing a certain gang loyalty. Ray and Pete had already been returned to their homes on probation. After examining the boys, the parents and the witnesses in a closed hearing, Judge Lindeman rendered his decision. He committed Frankie to the state Home for Boys in Jamesburg. He placed Ned and Billy on probation for five years, provided that they be removed from their homes and sent to such institutions as the court recommended.

Judge Lindeman also submitted a report to the Board of Chosen Freeholders, which is the governing body of Essex County. In it he spoke not only to the parents involved but to parents everywhere.

"These boys," said he, "were seeking status which they were unable to attain as individuals. They sought status within the group, approved by the group, in the performance of overt acts which, as individuals, probably none of them would have committed. In each instance of delinquency it was a common act performed by two or more boys. Somehow this status was not created in them by their adjustments at home, in school or through their religious programs.

"I cannot stress too strongly how important status actually is to children. All children, yes, all adults, crave status. It is a prime factor in developing well-balanced, well-integrated personalities. It is at the same time the one factor which is most likely to be overlooked by the average person and by otherwise-well-informed parents. Many children have status within

the home. It is equally important to the child to have real status outside of the home—that is, in the community, in his club, in his recreation and with his associates.

"There is an appalling lack of moral growth at or prior to the arrival of adolescence. Morality is something so complicated that it can take form only in an environment of mutual respect and understanding. The adult must have respect for the child, and the child for the adult. When we have this we have growth of spirit. Upon the growth of the spirit depends all that we hold sacred in our homes, our communities and our national stability."

READING

How does the author distribute the background material and the shooting of Betsch in the first part of the essay?

What means does Kobler use to differentiate the boys as characters?

After the boys are taken into custody, does Kobler keep the reader's interest? If so, how?

Is this article primarily presented as a sensational story, a serious warning, an objective study, or what? Discuss the evidence.

INTERPRETATION

"There is an irony for sociologists . . . ." How well is the tone of irony maintained?

Do you regard the following two judgments as being inconsistent? "There is no real personal concept of sin . . . ." "Each boy felt basically insecure. Each boy felt inferior. . . ."

What makes this case extraordinarily shocking to the average reader? What similarity, if any, did these boys have to the so-called criminal classes?

What crimes have the "nice" boys of your community recently committed? Why do you think criminality is no longer the monopoly of criminals? Or has it never been?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Frankie Marvin, a Character Sketch
An Experiment in Juvenile Delinquency
Hallowe'en as Safety Valve
The Background of Crime

TIMES SQUARE KID*

by Croswell Bowen and St. Clair McKelway

St. Clair McKelway, a regular contributor to *The New Yorker,* has published *Gossip: The Life and Times of Walter Winchell* (1940) as well as his *True Tales from the Annals of Crime and Rascality.*

Croswell Bowen is the author of *Great River of the Mountains: The Hudson* (1941).

The last time I saw a young man whom I shall call Joseph Apperson, I was standing on Forty-second Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues late on a warm December night. We had been sitting in the Automat in that block for a half hour or so, and he had told me, among other things, all about his first stickup. He went on his first stickup, he had said, soon after he left his family's home, in Brooklyn, and moved into one of the cheap hotels in the West Forties. He had then become what he and the New York police call a Times Square kid.

"That first stickup was a couple of years ago," Joseph Apperson had told me. "A Times Square kid a little older than me—a kid about twenty-four or twenty-five, Lousy Louie—gave me some good advice before I went with him on that first stickup. Lousy always said the main thing in a stickup is the gun. He used to tell me, 'Remember that your gun is your best friend. It don't matter what kind of a gun it is—whether it's loaded, whether it works. The main thing is it's got to look fierce. When you walk into a place to stick it up, you got to act tough and you got to act sure of yourself. If you start to freeze up, somebody is liable to jump you.' So, anyway, the first stickup we did was a hosiery shop below Herald Square. It was daytime and there was plenty of crowds on the street. Three of us were in it and we all had guns. Mine was a toy pistol that looked exactly like the real thing, and I had taped it up with adhesive so it looked very fierce. Lousy and the other guy went in first and backed most of the clerks and customers against a side wall. Then I came in, and Lousy told me to handle the other side of the shop. There was a girl on my side, and I had to slap her a few times, because she started screaming. I was scared. But Lousy told me, 'You freeze up on me and I'll shoot you dead.' Some people passing by on the sidewalk started looking in at what was going on. I called to Lousy, and he told me to guard the clerks he had, along with the ones I had. He went to the door and pointed his gun at the crowd like he was spraying them. You should've seen them scatter! The main thing in the getaway,

* From *True Tales from the Annals of Crime and Rascality,* by St. Clair McKelway (New York: Random House, 1950). Originally published in the *New Yorker,* February 18, 1950. Copyright, 1950, by the New Yorker Magazine, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the authors.

Lousy always told me, was not to run—not ever to run. If you ever run, people start running after you, and that attracts too much attention. Well, so Lousy came back into the shop again, after scaring the people away, and he got the money out of the cash register. Then we all walked out and went down the street. Lousy turned around a couple of times and pointed his gun at some people who were watching us leave. We hopped a cab and told the driver to just get going. We dropped the cab after a few blocks and walked to Lousy's hotel. When we counted up the money in his room, there was about two hundred dollars, and we cut it up three ways."

"Was it worth it?" I asked Joseph.

"It wasn't a big score," Joseph said thoughtfully. "But in the rackets you always go on and on, always thinking the next time will be the big score. One time, I talked to an old rackets man. He said, 'You go through life always thinking the next time will be the big score and then you'll get out. But the big score never comes. And the law of averages always catches up with you. If you're going to stay in the rackets, you might as well figure on jail once every two years, on an average. It just seems to work out that way.' This same old guy used to say that by the time you figured out what you pay lawyers and the time you spend in jail, it's not such a good life. It's a bore, really. But what else can I do? I have no special training. I could maybe get a job dishwashing or being a clerk. But I like to live good. I like to get around. I like money and I like to spend it."

Joseph talked fifteen or twenty minutes longer, looked up at the clock in the Automat, and said that he must go—he had a date with some kids. We went out onto Forty-second Street, and there was the smell of the boiling caramel syrup used for making candy-covered popcorn, the smell of smokeless powder from the shooting galleries in the penny arcades, and the smell of frying hot dogs and hamburgers. A juke box in one of the penny arcades was playing "As Time Goes By." Practically every building in that block houses a movie theatre or a penny arcade or a hot-dog-and-hamburger stand. Most of the movie theatres were featuring crime pictures. One of them, I noticed, had a double bill—"Gangs of New York" and "Gangs of Chicago." I had had a long talk with Joseph the day before, and now, outside the Automat, I asked him if we could make another date, to talk some more. He didn't answer for a moment. He stood staring at the people passing by, and I noticed on his face an expression I had seen there before—a dreamy, glassy-eyed look. Then he said, without turning his head, "I don't know what I'm going to be doing for the next week or so."

"What do you think you're going to be doing?" I asked.

"I don't know whether I'll go back into the rackets or not," he said, still not looking at me. "I want to think about it. Anyway, I'm not going to go home and stay in Brooklyn. Maybe I'll get lost for a while. Maybe I'll get off this street for a while. It's a bore, really."

He turned and shook hands with me, said "So long, now," and started off down Forty-second Street toward Eighth Avenue, walking slowly and glancing into the penny arcades and the lobbies of the movie theatres. In a moment, he had disappeared.

The first time I saw Joseph Apperson was on a November day in the Court of Special Sessions, on one of the upper floors of the Criminal Courts Building, on Centre Street. He stood, with his lawyer beside him, before three black-robed justices. I had been told by one of District Attorney Hogan's assistants that Joseph was a typical Times Square kid, that he was twenty-two, and that he was called Happy by some of his friends around Times Square. As Joseph stood before the three justices of the Court of Special Sessions that November morning, he held his head high and his shoulders back. He looked younger than twenty-two, I thought. He had on a dark-brown flannel jacket, navy-blue slacks, an electric-blue rayon sport shirt without a tie, and saddle-leather tan shoes. His eyes were gray and his complexion was quite blond. A long, thin, delicately shaped nose gave his rather sharp face a look of aristocratic dignity. In other surroundings, one would have taken him for the kind of youth usually described as clean-cut. What little expression there was on his face revealed mild anxiety. He stared over and beyond the three judges, and I saw for the first time the dreamy, glassy look in his eyes.

That morning Joseph was required to plead guilty or not guilty to a certain crime he was charged with. The clerk of the court, who sat at a table below the justices' bench, stood up and rapidly asked the ritualistic question.

Joseph's lawyer, a tall, red-haired, intense man, took a quick couple of steps forward and said, "Not guilty."

The justice who sat in the middle asked if November 30th, three days off, would be agreeable for the trial. "Yes, Your Honor," said Joseph's lawyer. Joseph was then taken back to the Tombs, since he could not provide bail of two thousand dollars, and the next case was called.

In the corridor outside the courtroom, I introduced myself to Joseph's lawyer and told him I was interested in the case. He was in a hurry to get upstairs to General Sessions, where he had to appear for another client, and we walked toward the elevators as we talked. "You understand there's nothing unusual about this case," he said. "Happens every day in the week. But there's something unusual about where my fee's coming from. A Puerto Rican elevator operator at the hotel where the kid lives is putting it up—three hundred and fifty smackers. I talked to the kid's old man and he won't do anything—doesn't care if his son is sent away or not. Think of it! A father not helping his kid out in a jam like this! Why, I know families who . . ." His expression became very solemn as he said, "Even animals look after their young!" He pushed the elevator button, then pointed to a short,

stout woman in a skimpy black coat who was walking along the corridor toward us. "There's the kid's mother," he said. "I'll introduce her to you then I'll beat it—but quick."

Mrs. Apperson looked at me with interest, and I felt as if I were being enthusiastically welcomed into a drama in which she was playing a leading role. Her face was large and round and full of sentiment. "I wanted to talk to the judges about my boy," she said to me as we rode down in an elevator, "but they won't listen to mothers!"

I found it unnecessary to ask Mrs. Apperson any questions for some time. "It all happened so fast," she said. "All of a sudden, the phone rang and a very rough voice said, 'Your son Joseph's down in the Tombs. You better get him out.' That was all—then the voice went off. I went down to the Tombs the next morning and took him a clean shirt, underwear, socks. It's terrible to see your own son behind bars. You have to speak through that pigeonhole. I was crying, I guess. He said, 'Mama, keep quiet. Get a lawyer.' We have no money. How could I get a lawyer? They said a lawyer costs three hundred and fifty dollars. My husband, he wouldn't have anything to do with his son. He kept saying, 'How's your darling son?' I took three dollars from the food money and went back to the jail and left it at the window. They let them have money to buy cigarettes and coffee and cake. Joseph didn't say much that time. He stood there like a stranger to me. 'Mama, go away,' he said. 'I got friends who'll take care of me.' Oh, why is he afraid of us? Why doesn't he confide in us?"

We went through the bronze-and-glass revolving doors of the Criminal Courts Building and out into a day that was dark and windy and that threatened rain. Two gray granite walls flank the entrance. We stood close to one wall, which protected us from the wind, and Mrs. Apperson went on talking.

"There is no justice!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands. "Why should that boy . . . But perhaps it's the parents' fault. *They* should be in there before the judges, maybe. Oh, I could go in there and tell those high-and-mighty judges some things—tell them about what it is to bring up sons! Maybe my mistake was having such a large family when we didn't have enough money. My husband has been out of work a great deal. When he worked, he earned forty-five dollars a week. Our walkup, in Brooklyn, costs forty-six dollars a month—two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen, and a bathroom. My children have no privacy, and children need privacy. Crowdedness drives children away from home. And, oh, I got so much housework to do! I don't know what corners Joseph goes to, what companions he has. Evil companions get children into trouble. My husband won't have anything to do with this. He says to me, 'Let him go to jail, let him be punished. It serves him right. He has disgraced us.' Joseph was always like a stranger to us, always afraid of us."

Mrs. Apperson paused, and I asked how many children there were in the family. "Three," she said. "Three in all. A girl, twenty-eight now, and married. Joseph, twenty-two. And the baby—she's twelve. Maybe Joseph's being the middle child was the trouble. Maybe we didn't pay enough attention to him. We put him in a trade school to learn to be a mechanic, but he didn't like it. He wanted to be an artist. When he was young, he used to draw all the time. But he wasn't practical. With a trade, he could earn a living, you know. Then the war! The war came, and in 1945 Joseph wanted to enlist in the Army. He was not even eighteen yet. I went to the principal of his school and asked him should I give permission for Joseph to enlist. He said yes, that Joseph wasn't doing well in school and I should take him out for his own good. I gave in so easily! Then he went away to war. I said to my husband, 'Why did we give our permission? We put our child in the war to get killed. We're murderers!' My husband said I was talking foolishly. Oh, if I hadn't let him be taken out of school! I could kick myself now for what I did. If he's in school, he doesn't have time to learn evil things."

Mrs. Apperson paused again, and I asked how Joseph had got along in the Army. "He said he was in a real battle," she replied, "and the guns made so much noise! He said he wished he was home, because he was scared! He said he had been in Europe and London and Paris and Algiers and all kinds of places. Oh, I don't know! He's just a boy. I can't believe he was in all those places. When he came back, he didn't want to live with his family. He told me he was going to look for a job on Broadway, and he said it was silly for him to live all the way out in Brooklyn when he'd be working around Times Square. He didn't tell us where he was living—just said he'd made some new friends. He didn't get a job as an artist, but he did work for a while selling picture frames in a photography store. He used to come to see us sometimes, but he never told us much about his life on Broadway."

Mrs. Apperson was interrupted by a commotion near the entrance of the building. Two women came running zigzag across the courthouse plaza, holding their hands over their faces and letting out high-pitched cries. They were followed by half a dozen newspaper photographers, who were taking their pictures. (I learned later that they were going to Special Sessions to defend themselves against the charge of "loitering.") Their shrill voices echoed weirdly in the granite canyon where Mrs. Apperson and I were standing, and then ceased as they rushed into the building. "Oh, this awful place!" exclaimed Mrs. Apperson. She said she thought she would go around to the Tombs and see if she could have a talk with Joseph. "A mother ought to be allowed to talk to her son, at least," she said, and shook my hand.

At ten o'clock in the morning, a few days later, I went again to the Court of Special Sessions, this time to attend Joseph's trial. Mrs. Apperson

was having a drink of water at a fountain outside the courtroom. "Such a crazy world!" she said to me, stepping back from the fountain and pointing to the people passing up and down the corridor. "Everybody seems to be doing something wrong!" We went into the courtroom and sat down together. Joseph's lawyer had not asked for a jury trial, and Joseph was therefore being tried by the three black-robed justices who had been on the bench when he pleaded "Not guilty." Joseph made a good witness when the time came for him to take the stand. At first he anwered questions in a very low tone, but after one of the justices asked him to speak up, he told his story in a firm, clear voice and seemed entirely at ease. Late that afternoon, the trial was adjourned to December 6th.

On December 6th, I went once again to the same courtroom in the Criminal Courts Building. The same three black-robed justices were sitting on the bench, and after they had disposed of a couple of other matters, the clerk of the court announced that the date set for decision in the case of Joseph Apperson had been postponed one week. I ran into Mrs. Apperson again in the corridor outside. She was with a chubby youth of about twenty, whose hair was neatly combed and who looked as if he had just been scrubbed. "This is my nephew Ralph, who is my brother's boy and a student at Brooklyn College," she said. "He's such a nice boy, too—never gets into trouble, and is working while he's getting an education!"

Ralph shuffled, grinned, gulped, cleared his throat, and spoke to me earnestly, shaking a finger in my face. "I understand that you are interested in young men who are brought down here to the criminal courts," said Ralph. "Let me tell you right now, sir, that you can't generalize from Joseph's case. Plenty of boys grow up in Brooklyn and don't ever get in trouble. They become doctors and lawyers and get jobs like anyone else. And it's not entirely economic conditions that produce crime. My family are just as poor as Joseph's, and I'm not in trouble."

"What do you think the explanation is in Joseph's case?" I asked him.

"These kids that hang around Forty-second Street are just trying to make an easy dollar," he said. "Joseph could have had a job. His father took him to the fur workers' union, but he wouldn't work for forty dollars a week. No, he wanted to hang around Broadway. And don't think it's just New York kids that hang around Broadway. There's plenty of kids from out of town hanging around there and doing the same things. What Joseph needs is a psychiatrist—psychiatric attention. He's just on the wrong track. Needs to be straightened out."

"See what a nice nephew I got!" Mrs. Apperson said.

I thanked Ralph for his statement, and he graciously mentioned one or two other conclusions that he said I ought to draw from Joseph's case.

"I have learned this," Mrs. Apperson added. "It proves you got to live right and live clean. I know now it's not enough to just give a child enough to eat. You got to care for a child and give it lots of affection. I am already doing that with my baby—my twelve-year-old. I carry her around piggyback. We have such fun! I give her affection. She's so happy! You see, to give love, you got to receive love. That's the trouble with Joseph's father. He was an orphan and he never received love, so he can't give love. He don't know how to love the children. He should have been a big brother to Joseph, and not so hard on him all the time."

Ralph nodded judiciously and said, "Exactly. Exactly."

"I read in the paper that my son was called Happy by his Broadway companions," Mrs. Apperson went on. "I don't believe in happiness. I think life is what we make it. Joseph has good instincts. At least he pulled away from the corners of Brooklyn. My son, he lives in a world I would like to live in—a dream world where everything is fine. I would like to be in that world. I know him so well. I—I am like him. When I was younger . . . But perhaps it is not so good. Look where it got Joseph. All this."

Abruptly, her voice cracked and tears came into her eyes. Ralph looked uncomfortable. Mrs. Apperson said good-bye to me and took Ralph by the arm, and they went off down the corridor.

The fourth time I went to the courtroom in the Criminal Courts Building, a week later, Joseph's lawyer stopped me in the corridor. "We're cooking with gas," he said. "A week ago, one judge voted for conviction, one voted for dismissal, and the third couldn't make up his mind. That's why they postponed this thing. But we're in. I knew it would turn out this way. The third judge just wanted some more time to make up his mind my way. You wait and see. He'll vote for dismissal, and we'll be in."

We went into the courtroom, and Joseph was brought to the prisoner's dock by a guard. The three black-robed justices filed in and took their seats on the bench. The lawyer's prediction turned out to be right. Two of the three judges recommended dismissal. When Joseph heard this, he looked puzzled.

"I guess that means he's acquitted," said one of the two judges, looking down at Joseph's lawyer. Joseph grinned.

"Come on, Junior," said the lawyer. "Let's get out of here."

Mrs. Apperson, who was sitting alone in the front row, followed them into the corridor. Joseph shook hands with his lawyer and said, "I certainly want to thank you for getting me off." Then he saw his mother. He looked at her, laughed nervously, and said, "Oh, hello, Mama."

Mrs. Apperson beamed and wagged her finger at her son. "I'm going to put you in a chicken coop and lock you up with a key!" she said, in a voice that was close to a bellow. She made a motion with one hand as if she were turning a key in a lock. "With a key!" she shouted.

"I'll see you later, Mama," said Joseph, in a barely audible voice. He turned his back on her and started down the corridor.

A short, thin Puerto Rican came up to him and shook hands. His lawyer explained to me that this was the elevator operator who had put up the three hundred and fifty dollars. We said good-bye to Mrs. Apperson and joined them as the Puerto Rican was saying, "Never mind thanking me, Happy. Just don't get in no more trouble. Remember what I said. It don't pay!"

I looked around and saw Mrs. Apperson walking slowly toward the elevators.

Joseph said that there was a certain P. I.—a police informer—he had to do something about.

"Now, Happy," said the Puerto Rican. "Don't start anything like that. You'll just be in trouble all over again."

"We'll see," said Joseph grimly. Then he started to laugh self-consciously and asked the Puerto Rican whether he had saved the write-ups about him in the papers. The man said he had. "I want to see that one that said my name was Happy but that I didn't have anything to be so happy about now," said Joseph, grinning. "I'm going to send the guy that wrote that a letter with just one word in it—'Free!' "

The Puerto Rican smiled, slapped Joseph on the shoulder, and said, "I got to get going. I'll see you, Happy." Then he walked off.

Joseph's lawyer introduced me to his client and explained that I was a reporter interested in his case, and the three of us rode down in an elevator. The lawyer told Joseph that I wanted to talk with him, and suggested Joseph and I have coffee in the diner down the street. He'd join us in a few minutes. As Joseph and I went out into the courthouse plaza, he stopped and took a deep breath, then held his hands out, palms upward, and moved them as if he were weighing the air. "Plenty of air!" he exclaimed. "You know, I'm glad to be on the outside again, but I'm glad I had the experience. Maybe I'm pretty lucky. Or maybe it's just having a smart lawyer speak for you. I always heard so much about it—guys talking about what it was like to be on the inside. Now I know."

"What *was* it like?" I asked him.

"Well," he said as we walked toward the diner, "you never know what freedom is until you been on the inside and then get on the outside again. I was just thinking in there today that the Tombs ought to be called the House of Slams. Everywhere you go in there, a guard unlocks a door, opens it up, and then bangs it shut again. It goes slam! It goes slam behind you and he locks it, and then he opens another door for some other guy and slams it. Always slam, slam, slam! There's a few laughs, though. For instance, there was a guy come in there who said he'd robbed a church box and got caught taking a dollar bill out—the bill was right in his hand. We all

laughed and laughed. We said, 'You was a dope, chum. You should've said you was putting a dollar *in* the box.' That was a laugh.

"The guys in there are O.K. You mind your own business and they mind their own business. You give them a hard time and they give you a hard time. I always heard it was better to say nothing to nobody. So I didn't do much talking except to the guy in the cell on my left. Generally, though, guys don't talk much about what they're in there for—what they done on the outside, I mean. I talked to one guy in there, and he kept telling me I was probably going to get maybe ten, fifteen years. He said they were going to throw the book at me. This guy had me scared. But only for a day or two. After you been in there awhile, you lose all the feeling you got. Everything like that goes right out of you in there. The House of Slams! Slam, slam, slam, slam!"

We went into the diner, sat down at a table, and ordered coffee, and then Joseph beckoned to the waiter to come back, and ordered bacon and eggs as well. "In the Tombs," he said, "if you like beans, you're in the groove. You get beans all the time. For breakfast, you get some kind of corn flakes in powdered milk, with pieces of prunes floating around in it, and other times you just get beans. And all the time you get coffee that would burn a hole in a table. A mahogany table. If you got any dough, though, you can buy outside coffee and outside pie, and candy and cigarettes and newspapers—stuff like that. I always got the *News* in the morning and the *Journal* in the afternoon—swell papers, both of them. For ten cents you can rent a razor, and for two bits you can have the man that comes around and shaves the guys. It's a money-making place, all right. Everybody's hustling all the time. Hustling for dimes and the buck. Of course, they don't let you have any cash. If you got some cash stashed outside at the desk, they mark it down every time you buy something—they kind of keep books on you."

I remarked that it was fortunate his mother had left the three dollars at the desk for him to draw on. He gave me a long, penetrating look, and I felt that he was trying to decide whether to talk to me at length or clam up. At last, he shrugged and smiled.

"My mother should have been an actress—moaning and hollering and dramatizing everything," he said. "Father was kind of O.K., but screwy—but in a good way, you know. He wanted me to play the violin, and I couldn't play the goddam thing, and he would slap my face every time I missed a note."

Four young men sitting at a table at the far end of the diner waved to Joseph, and he walked down to speak to them. When he came back, he said, "Some guys there who come down here on business—couple of them just got out from being on the inside." They looked remarkably like Joseph. They were neatly dressed, and they seemed keen and full of energy.

"They're friends of mine," he said, stirring his coffee. "I got lots of friends. Maybe I got too many friends."

Joseph's lawyer came in and sat down. "I got a case coming up in four minutes," he said, glancing at his wristwatch. "Look, Joseph, I want you to have some nice long talks with this reporter here. He's just interested in finding out how you kids operate around Times Square. When he writes his article, he'll give you another name than your real name—he'll cover you up so nobody'll know it's you he's writing about. You can tell him the truth." Joseph grinned and looked at me, nodding. "Incidentally," said the lawyer, "that's some friend you got, Joseph—that elevator operator. You certainly ought to pay him back for giving me my fee."

"Yes, sir," said Joseph with conviction. "He's a real friend. I don't do anything for him and he does all that for me. You find out who your friends are when you get in trouble. I'll pay him back." He gazed out the front window and the dreamy look came back into his eyes. "I'll pay him back," he said again.

The lawyer looked severely at him, then laughed. "Behave yourself, Junior," he said, rising and giving him a light punch in the arm. "Don't get in any more trouble. But if you do," he added, "you know how to get hold of me."

We sat for a few moments without saying anything. Then the glassy look left Joseph's eyes and he smiled at me. "What the hell were we talking about?" he asked.

"You were telling me about your father and mother."

"Oh, sure," he said. "Funny thing, she always seemed to like her brother's children better than she did any of us. I don't know why, but she liked them—well, *admired* them or something—because they were fat. She always used to say, 'Why can't you get fat, Joseph, like Uncle Henry's children?' We used to laugh about Uncle Henry and his fat kids. All of us in our family were skinny—not because we didn't have enough to eat but just because we were naturally skinny. Like my father. He was a swell guy. He used to hit me, but he was O.K. But my mother! Did you hear her say she was going to put me in a chickencoop and lock me up with a key? There in the courthouse corridor? That's her all over. And she thought we all ought to be fat because she thought being fat would make us look respectable—respectable and prosperous."

I suggested to Joseph that we ride uptown on the Lexington Avenue subway and have a good lunch, and he said that he could use one.

On the way uptown, Joseph said, "I used to work the hole—that's the subway—a few years ago, when I first came down to the Street. That's Forty-second Street. We had some times. When you work the hole, you hang out in the subway and get money off guys who're asleep. I worked with a kid named Johnny. He called himself Broadway Johnny, but he was more

Johnny than Broadway—smart, see, but not sharp. We'd ride the subway, and stop off at stations until we found a guy who was asleep on a station bench. Usually a drunk, of course. One of us would sit on one side of him, and the other on the other side of him. One of us would open a newspaper and spread it out, like we all was reading it, so nobody could see what we were doing. Then the other of us would feel the guy and find out where the poke was. The poke—you know—his pocketbook, his roll. Funny thing, most guys put their poke in their back pants pocket. A right-handed guy puts it in his right back pocket, and a left-handed guy puts it in his left back pocket. Some guys, though, put it in the inside breast pocket of their suit coat.

"I'll never forget one of the first times I was working the hole with Johnny. There was a drunk sitting on a bench on the platform, and we'd just located the poke when a cop—you got to watch out for them in the hole—come up from nowhere at all. He pointed a gun at us and said, 'Get 'em up!' We ran in the direction of where the passengers were going out and lost the cop, but there was such a big crowd we couldn't get through the turnstiles. Then Johnny says 'Follow me,' and we ran to the other end of the platform, away from the cop, and down the stairs the trackwalkers use to come up on the platform. We just about got started up the tracks when we hear a train coming. I was scared and stopped. Johnny catches up with me and says, 'Lay down between the rails.' I said, 'I'm afraid. I'd rather get caught than run over.' Then he hit me in the kisser and says, 'I ain't gonna have you get caught and start singing. I don't want to get sent away.' We lay face down in the trough between the rails and the train went right over us. We crawled out between the wheels of the end car, ran back up the stairs to the platform, and went out through the turnstiles with the passengers who'd got off the train. When we got to the street, we lit right out of the neighborhood."

Joseph and I left the subway at Grand Central and walked through the station. As we passed a bank of baggage lockers, he said, "There's another way to make a buck—those lockers. You hang around the lockers here or in Pennsylvania Station until you see somebody—it's better if it's an old dame—who's just put her suitcase in a locker and is having trouble figuring out how the thing works. You walk up and say to her, 'Having trouble? Maybe I can get the key out for you.' You have a key in the palm of your hand that you just got by putting ten cents in the slot of an empty locker and locking the door, see? You start turning the old dame's key in the lock, and just as you get it locked you drop the key to the empty locker on the floor. Then you pick it up and hand it to the old dame.

"You start talking fast then and ask her is she from out of town, does she expect to stay long, what does she expect to see while she's here? If she happens to look at the key and notices it's not the same number as the

locker she put her suitcase in, then you quickly put your hand in your pocket and take out her key and say, 'Maybe I picked up your key by mistake.' You give her back her key and there's no beef. Generally, she goes off with the wrong key. You wait awhile and get the suitcase. The clothes you pawn, but mainly you hope to find money or a camera or jewels or something."

I told Joseph I wanted to cash a check at my bank, on Fifth Avenue, before we went to lunch.

"What is it you like about the Street?" I asked him.

"The Street!" he said in a theatrical tone that reminded me of his mother. "A thousand new faces every day, and a new sucker every second! You meet people from all over, and they tell you stories. I like people that tell me stories. You know, a lot of kids learned about the Street when they were in the service. They come to the Street and they stay around and they learn how to hustle a buck."

I wanted to hear more about the Street, but I decided to change the subject for the moment. I asked Joseph how he had got along when he was in school.

"I got along all right," he said. "Only, every time they had a school play they'd throw a girl part at me. That stank. When I was a kid, I hung out with tough kids," he added in a rather defensive voice. "But they always wanted me to play a girl in the school plays. That stank."

I asked him what he did with the tough kids.

"Oh," he said, "we used to swipe things at stores, and steal cars and drive them around—things like that. One time, we stole a car and drove up to Harlem, and one of the kids had an old, beat-up pistol, and we fired a couple of shots in the air, stirred up the niggers, and beat it. We just did it for the kicks. Get me straight—I got nothing against niggers. They're good guys. But I wouldn't take one on a job with me. They freeze up on you too easy."

As we waited on a corner for a green light, Joseph nudged me and pointed to a man standing in front of an office building. "That's sluff," he said. "Sluff—that's what we call plain-clothes dicks. I never saw that one before, but I know he's sluff. After a while, you get so you can smell sluff. I hate every damn one of them. They're all thieves."

While I cashed my check, Joseph sat down just inside the entrance of the bank, and I noticed that his eyes swept the place in a studiously casual way. We continued up Fifth Avenue to a Schrafft's, and he said, "You know, that would be something big—really big—taking a bank like that. It would be the big score."

In Schrafft's, Joseph seemed quite at ease. His manner with the waitress was gentle. "I don't agree with a lot of guys about some things," he said after we had ordered. "For instance, a lot of guys, when they make a score,

they go on living the same as they been living. They stay at the same lousy hotel or rooming house, wear the same clothes, eat at the Automat or some one-armed joint. When I have money, I like to spend it. One time, I made a nice, big score—around eight hundred bucks. I moved into a fancy hotel and stayed there for almost a month. I hung around the bar and I got to be known. The bartender introduced me to people a couple of times. I met some high-class people. Sometimes, hanging around a nice bar, you meet an older man and get talking, and he invites you up to his room for a drink when the bar closes. You can hustle a buck that way. You tell him you'll accuse him of being a queer unless he comes across with some dough. They always come across and there's no beef. Some of them really are queers. It burns me up—all the people that have dough and don't spend it. Like those old dames you read about, living in some old house or in a hotel, with thousands of dollars tucked away in their mattress or hidden in an old tin can. What the hell? Why should they have all that dough? They can't do anything with it. They're too old to enjoy it. It burns me up. I operate different from most guys. If I make a score and get a few bucks ahead, why not enjoy it? Move into a better place, eat good, get some new clothes. What's the use of taking all those chances to get money and then not better yourself?

"I can talk tough around tough guys and act nice around nice people. A guy who's a hustle—a guy in the rackets—ought to know how to act around any kind of people. For instance, if he was going to stick up a place like this, he should be able to come in here and not be noticed when he looked it over. You see that peephole up there in the middle of the balcony? There's probably some kind of office in there, and the manager or somebody can look through the peephole and see what's going on down here. A thing like that could be very important in a stickup. If a guy didn't know about that peephole—didn't cover the office—the guy in the office could call the cops and he'd be grabbed before he could get out of the place."

I asked Joseph how he had got along in the Army. He looked uncomfortable. "Oh, fair enough," he said. "I got to see England and France and Africa and places like that. I got in trouble after the war—before I got out of the Army—because I back-talked to a first lieutenant, and he said he'd have me court-martialed unless I took a dishonorable discharge. I let him talk me into it. Now I miss out on all the benefits and stuff. I could have gotten two hundred and fifty bucks just from New York State as a bonus for veterans. I'd like to get that lieutenant sometime, but I don't know where he is. I don't even remember his name.

"When I went back home, I knew I wasn't going to stay in Brooklyn. Everybody there was so narrow. I saw some of the guys I grew up with—some of the old gang—and they were all squares. They were boring. Most squares are very boring. They're so narrow. The kids I used to know over

there thought the world was just our Brooklyn corners. I'd been places and seen things. I could see myself living and dying right there in Brooklyn. I'd heard of people who were born there, raised there, went to school there, got married there, had children there, and died there—right within a couple of blocks of Brooklyn. I wasn't going to let anything like that happen to me. I wasn't going to be just plain Joseph Apperson, another Brooklyn jerk. I wanted to hang out with people who'd been around and seen the world and knew what it was all about."

Joseph chuckled. "You know a good way to get the wrinkles out of your stomach if you're broke?" he said evidently under the impression that he was giving me an example of knowing what it was all about. "I had a pal, and him and I picked up a couple of girls from out of town. They were in one of those shooting galleries on the Street where you look at moving pictures for a penny and get your fortune told on a card. We invited them to dinner and went to a very high-class place in the Fifties. We ordered cocktails and steaks, all the best, and when we were through eating, this pal of mine said, 'Excuse me, ladies,' and after he'd been gone a minute, I said, 'I guess I must be excused, too,' and so we beat it back to our hangout. We used to do it all the time. Never twice at the same restaurant, of course."

"Kind of tough on the girls," I remarked.

"It was *their* headache," Joseph said.

"Another racket is selling phony hoops. You get some imitation-diamond rings and you handle them a lot, so they look used. You hang around the bus stations or Grand Central and you get talking to some square—sometimes a man, sometimes a dame—and you tell a hard-luck story about not having the bus fare or the railroad fare to get home to Elmira. You always say Elmira—I don't know why. So you pull out the phony hoop, and you give the square a phony name and your phony address in Elmira, and you get the square to lend you twenty-five or thirty bucks, with the phony hoop for security. It's a con, and not bad if you can con. Clothes and con make a man. You can learn to con real good if you practice at it. You look innocent and shy sometimes, or you look sincere and frank and open, or you pretend to be tough—and let them see you're not really tough but just *trying* to be tough. Squares lap that stuff up. Clothes you can get from boosters. They're shoplifters. There's certain kids on the Street who don't do nothing but boost all the time. They'll sell you suits and topcoats and haberdashery for a third of the retail price. I believe in dressing good.

"If you get a real bad streak of luck, you can always get some of the phony and pass it. The trouble with counterfeit money is that if you get caught with it on you, the Secret Service guys follow you the rest of your life. I only passed it once, and I didn't get caught. I got about a hundred

dollars' worth of twenties for thirty dollars, and I finally got rid of all of it, but it was hardly worth the trouble. You got to rub it and scorch it to make it look old, and then you got to travel all the hell and gone over town, passing it carefully. Taxi-drivers get stuck with a lot of it—especially fives. It's dark in the cab, and he can't see it very well, so he takes a chance and gives you the change after you take a short ride and tell him to keep a quarter."

Joseph said he'd better be getting over to the Street to see his pals. He thanked me for the lunch, and we made a date to meet the next night at a penny arcade called the Pokerino, which is on Forty-second Street.

The next night I got to the Pokerino a half hour ahead of time to see what it was like. It is a brilliantly lighted arcade that gets its name from a game in which the player attempts to roll fist-sized balls into holes along a ten-foot alley. There are several allèys, and they occupy one entire side of the Pokerino. There are shelves above them, stacked with prizes for high scores: dolls, ash trays, lamps, pots, pans, vases and so on. There is a lunch counter on the other side. Scattered everywhere are penny, nickel, or dime machines for taking your photograph, telling your fortune, and showing movies of girls in lingerie. One machine will calculate your sex rating, a sign says, when you push a lever back as far as you can. I dropped a nickel in a slot below a glass case that enclosed the wax figure of Mme. Esmeralda, and her long hands began to move among some upturned playing cards spread out on a stand in front of her. A piece of cardboard emerged from a slot. It told me that I was born under a lucky planet in a lucky week, that I would soon come into some money, and that red is my favorite color and February my lucky month. I talked with one of the attendants for a while and learned, among other things, that, actually, the Pokerino is not called a penny arcade but a playland.

The rear of the Pokerino opens into a bus terminal on Forty-first Street. East of the Pokerino on Forty-second Street is the Laffmovie, formerly the Eltinge Theatre. West of it is George Bothner's Gymnasium—School of Physical Culture, Wrestling, and Jiu-Jitsu. Upstairs over the Pokerino is the Baer School of Shoe Repairing. I noticed a good many young men talking, playing pokerino, or eating hot dogs and drinking frosted milk shakes. Some of them were dressed sharply, like Joseph.

When Joseph came in, I handed him Mme. Esmeralda's card, and he laughed. He seemed tense. For a while, we watched a group of deaf-mutes who were standing at the window and speaking with their hands to two deaf-mutes out on the sidewalk. "Saw a swell picture last night," Joseph remarked. " 'Lost Boundaries.' It went right through me. I like that stuff. Say, I heard a good one this afternoon. You know why a graveyard is such a popular place? Because everybody's dyin' to get in." I laughed, and told

him I'd like some coffee. "Let's go next door to the Automat," he said. "The coffee's better."

It was there that Joseph told me about his first stickup. I was surprised, but then I got the feeling that he wanted me to think he wasn't an amateur at the rackets—that he was bigger than just a Times Square kid. After he had finished, he seemed to relax completely, and went on to tell me about another stickup that had left a deep impression on him. I never found out exactly how many stickups he had been in, but I gathered that there had been others. The second one he told me about involved a somewhat older Times Square kid named Johnson, whom Joseph admired very much.

"Johnson was terrific," Joseph said. "He always knew what he was doing. After we got to be friends, he and I went looking for a place to stick up one night. We didn't have much luck. Something seemed to be wrong with every joint we cased. Then, about four in the morning, we decided to take a tavern uptown. All the customers were gone and the bartender was closing up. Johnson put me on the door to see that nobody came in. Then he walks up to the bar and says to the bartender, 'You got a wife and kids?' The bartender turned around from his cash register with a funny look on his face and says, 'Yeah, but what do you wanta know for?' Johnson whipped out the gun and said, 'Well, get your hands up and keep 'em up if you ever want to see them again.' Johnson took the money out of the cash register. There wasn't much. As a matter of fact, it was just twenty-nine dollars in bills and the rest in smash—about thirteen dollars. Johnson got mad. He says, 'I know there's money in this joint. You better tell me where it is.' The bartender says that was all there was—the boss had taken the rest home.

"Johnson called me to get a taxi. It seemed like forever before one showed. Nobody came in the bar, thank Christ. Finally, a cab came and I yelled to Johnson. We jumped in the cab and the driver says, 'Where to?' Johnson says, 'Just keep goin'.' The cab went half a block and stopped. I was scared, but Johnson wasn't. He whispered to me not to get excited and not to look back. The taxi had stopped for a red light. Johnson wouldn't take me on any more jobs after that. He said I still didn't have enough experience."

"Do any of these things you do ever bother your conscience, Joseph?" I asked him.

"I sleep nights, if that's what you mean," he said.

"How do you feel about religion, anyway? Do you think people get punished for their sins?"

He looked at me pityingly, and then laughed. "For a minute, I thought you weren't kidding," he said.

"What do you believe in?"

"I believe in facts."

"You mean you're an atheist, or what?"

"That's right," he said thoughtfully. "I'm an atheist. You know, sometimes an atheist can have a tough time in an argument. I been in arguments with guys and they took the side there *is* a God. There's arguments on both sides. I mean some of the arguments that there is a God are almost as good as the arguments that there isn't a God. It's a bore, really."

READING

Compare the author's account of the last time he saw Joseph Apperson with the first time he saw him.

What does the first talk with Mrs. Apperson tell the reader? What is the point of introducing the cousin? What knowledge does Mrs. Apperson seem to have absorbed from the cousin?

How does the conversation between Joseph and the Puerto Rican add to our idea of Joseph's character? How does the conversation that follows between the narrator and Joseph build on it?

What special dictionaries of underworld language does your college library have? Are Joseph's terms entered in any of them?

INTERPRETATION

Compare the materials of this essay with "The Case That Rocked New Jersey." Compare the purpose and tone of the authors.

What similarities and dissimilarities are there in the environments of Frankie Marvin and Joseph Apperson? Why is one commonly supposed to produce more criminals than the other? Is Joseph's case less shocking than Frankie's?

Do Bowen and McKelway present information that you think is pointless? Have they omitted information that you would regard as significant?

How valuable do you think the last part on religion is? What would the several essayists in the sequence on religion be likely to say about it?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Frankie Marvin and Joseph Apperson
The Girl Criminal
The Language of a Times Square Kid
Environment and Crime

MURDER IN MASSACHUSETTS*

by Joseph F. Dinneen

Joseph F. Dinneen (1897–), a columnist on the Boston *Globe*, has been on the staff of that paper since 1922.

Taxi-driver Clement Molway was fingerprinted and photographed by mistake the first time. This is how it happened: A patrolman thought he was trying to steal the wallet of a drunk when Molway was really trying to tuck

* From *Harper's Magazine*, CLXXII (March, 1936), 401–415. Copyright, 1936, by Harper & Brothers. Reprinted by permission of the author.

him comfortably and securely into a corner of his cab. Molway had picked up four passengers on Washington Street, Boston, after the Sunday law had closed taverns and bars at midnight. They wanted another drink, and he brought them to a speakeasy on Essex Street. Invited to join them, he accepted and left the fourth passenger asleep in the cab.

The passengers were noisy and boisterous when they came out. They wanted to go to Everett. The patrolman on the beat stopped to look them over with a speculative eye and when he saw Molway step into the cab, put his hands upon an unconscious passenger, and roll him into position, he decided to interfere. After they were all placed and seated, he stepped upon the running board and directed Molway to drive to police headquarters.

Molway was booked for attempted larceny and followed the routine of all defendants. He was photographed, fingerprinted. His Bertillon measurements were recorded. He became two 3 x 5 pictures, front and side views, in the sliding metal racks of the Bureau of Records, familiarly known as "Rogues' Gallery." Molway did not mind particularly. It was an interesting experience and he felt that his passengers would stand by him. They did. The next morning in the district court they were sober and contrite. There were explanations and apologies and Molway was discharged for lack of prosecution. He had lost his job. In the corridor the passengers made up a small purse for him.

Molway had been out of a job frequently before. He shrugged his shoulders and accepted the situation. He was young, only twenty-two, healthy, with broad shoulders and a strong chin. He had worked for many cab companies in Boston and its suburbs. He had been a lumper on an oil truck and a day laborer for the city. His mother and father lived in Brighton, and when he was out of work Clement lived at home. He felt sure that he would make out all right. Now that it was all over it did not occur to him to inquire about the photograph and fingerprints on file in the Bureau of Records. The question of the "right" of a police department to keep such records of an innocent person did not interest him. He was immediately concerned only with finding a job.

Molway was a casual, average newspaper reader. He liked the funnies and the sporting pages. He scanned headlines and read the printed matter beneath them only as far as his interest lasted, whether for one paragraph or ten. If he had read three months earlier, in August, 1933, that Captain Lodge of the Cambridge Armory had been held up and robbed of the keys to the arsenal he had forgotten it. If he had read a few weeks later that the arsenal had been entered and robbed of guns and ammunition he might have been momentarily surprised and interested, but would have dismissed the news as something too remote to concern him.

II

While Clement Molway alternately considered going on public welfare and found unexpected jobs to meet recurrent emergencies, both Boston police and Boston underworld were baffled by a series of holdups which began at small outlying filling stations, garages, and chain stores and became increasingly bolder. Police were puzzled mostly by the absence of the inevitable stool pigeon, but their bewilderment was mild compared with that of organized crime. Boston, Worcester, and Providence gang leaders respected a tacit agreement never to enter one another's territory. Now it looked as if boundary lines were being ignored. At first gang leaders suspected one another, until they talked it over; and then amazement staggered them. It would be impossible for a gangster from New York or the West to enter New England and operate unknown to local gang leaders. His very arrival would be grape-vine-telegraphed throughout the area. If he came unexpectedly and without forewarning it might indicate a desire to "muscle in." Police headquarters would be advised by anonymous letter or telephone call of his presence and the address where he might be picked up. There had been no new arrivals. The agreement was still respected, and yet a gang was operating. It was unthinkable to the professional mobster that a gang could develop and operate under his very nose without his knowledge and without the approval of organized crime. When one of these holdups occurred, gang leaders heard of it on the radio or read of it in the newspapers; and called one another on long-distance telephone. When the Poli Palace Theater in Worcester was held up and robbed professional gangsters became nervous and feared that soon they would be compelled to defend themselves in crimes that they did not commit.

Tension increased as this series of crimes progressed from holdups to murder. E. W. Clark, a salesman, was shot just after he turned the key in the door of the Iver Johnson Sporting Goods store in Fitchburg on the night of December 11, 1933, because he refused to obey the command of three men in an automobile to return and reopen the store. Three weeks later, on January 2, 1934, three men walked into the lobby of the Paramount Theater in Lynn. They bore arms that might have come from a State Armory: a sawed-off shotgun, a Woodsman's rifle, and an automatic. Employees were preparing the theater for the morning performance. A girl was in the box-office. The projection-machine operator was in his booth. Ushers were in the auditorium. There were eleven persons in the theater at the time. The manager had not yet come from his home. The safe was locked, and he alone knew the combination. The three hold-up men cowed the employees with their guns. One employee was directed to call up the manager and tell him to come down to the theater. She did.

All were then herded into the auditorium. There, C. Fred Sumner, a bill poster, made a run for it, down the aisle toward the stage.

"Oh, a wise guy," said the gunman with the rifle. He aimed and pressed the trigger, and Sumner fell dead.

III

Clement Molway had had several jobs since the night he was photographed and fingerprinted. He was out of work again, broke, when a taxi-driver told him that Louis Berrett was looking for a driver. Louis Berrett was a member of the Independent Taxi Owners Association and owned two ITOA cabs. Membership in the association gave him the right to use recognized stands, the benefit of group insurance, and central offices to receive taxi calls. Molway went to the Independent garage to see him.

"You need a driver?" Molway asked.

Berrett looked him over. "Yeah. Can you drive?"

Molway nodded. "I've had lots of experience."

"Okay," said Berrett and nodded toward his second cab. "Take it and be careful."

"You couldn't stake me to the price of a couple of meals, breakfast and lunch, could you?" Molway asked.

Berrett thought it over. "Sure," he said, and flipped him a half dollar. "I hope you take in that much," he added.

Molway got behind the wheel and drove out of the garage. The contract for employment was as simple as that. Berrett followed, cast an appraising glance at the disappearing cab, and turned off in a different direction.

They met that night at the garage. Molway turned over four dollars and twenty cents, the day's take. Berrett checked the meter, figured Molway's twenty-five per cent, deducted the half dollar, and handed him fifty-five cents.

"Got a place to flop?" Berrett inquired. "We get out early in the morning."

Molway shook his head.

"Come on up to my place," Berrett invited. "I've got a room on Falmouth Street."

Molway agreed and at the end of a week the arrangement had become so satisfactory that they decided to share the room and split the cost. After three weeks they were agreeably intimate. Molway knew that Berrett was not living with his wife and Berrett was familiar with Molway's domestic situation. Molway did not tell Berrett that he had been arrested, that his photograph and fingerprints were on file at headquarters; not because he was ashamed of it, but simply because he did not think of it.

On the morning when the Paramount Theater in Lynn was robbed,

Clement Molway and Louis Berrett left the garage at 7 o'clock as usual. At 8:10 Molway picked up a fare at the corner of Dover and Tremont Streets, roughly twelve miles from the Lynn Paramount Theater. She was a slight woman, elderly, lame, a maid in a men's club. From 7 until 11 Berrett was curbstone-cruising in the downtown area, looking for fares. Business was bad the day after New Year's. Neither took in enough to pay for the gasoline used and the compulsory liability insurance on their cabs. The next day was no better. The ground was covered with deep snow and the temperature hovered at zero.

Berrett turned in his cab earlier than Molway that night and went directly to their room to get warm. They would eat together when Molway arrived. He removed coat and vest, lay on the white enameled iron bed in his shirtsleeves, covered himself with a comforter, smoked a cigarette, and casually turned the pages of a tabloid newspaper. He heard footsteps on the stairs coming up; knew that it could not be Molway, and supposed that it must be other roomers.

The door was flung open suddenly and two burly men walked into the room. The first held a blue steel automatic in his hand. Berrett drew a quick breath, swallowed hard, and dropped his paper. He was sure it was a stick-up. He did not move.

"My watch is in the top drawer," he said, "and I've got four dollars and ninety cents in my pocket. You can take it or I'll get it for you, whatever you say."

The man with the automatic walked over to the bed and looked down at him. "Oh, a wise guy," he said.

Berrett shook his head, "No," he answered. "I know what's good for me."

"Get up," the intruder commanded. His companion was now rifling the bureau drawers.

Berrett got up. "You're coming with me," he was told. "We're going for a ride."

Berrett was desperate. Nobody was going to take him for a ride, drill him, and toss his body off at a lonely roadside. He couldn't figure it out. It must be a new taxi racket. There was nothing to do but fight for it. Berrett grabbed at the automatic. A stinging blow on the point of the jaw sent him sprawling back upon the bed.

"Don't get tough with me," he was warned.

The intruder felt under the pillows, jerked Berrett from the bed, and sat him forcefully in a chair. He ripped spread and bed sheets off, tipped over the mattress. The other dumped the contents of drawers upon the floor and then went to the closet to ransack his clothing.

Berrett rubbed his jaw. "I'm on the level," he protested. "I haven't

got anything hidden around here. All I got is my watch and the four ninety I told you about."

"Listen." The man with the gun came over to him. "Don't pull that stick-up gag on us, Berrett. You know we're a couple of cops and you know what we're looking for. Where's Molway?"

Realization dawned upon Louis Berrett. They were policemen and they wanted Molway. He felt a sinking in the pit of his stomach. Molway must have been in a jam with his cab; the worst possible jam, a hit-and-run case perhaps. He hoped nothing had happened to his cab.

"Where's Molway, I asked you," the officer demanded.

Berrett's instinct was to protect his friend and buddy. "I don't know," he lied.

"Doesn't he work for you?"

"He did," Berrett answered, "but he left a couple of days ago. I haven't seen him since."

The trio heard the door below slam. The policemen became silent and listened expectantly. Berrett dared not cry out. Someone mounted the steps and in a few moments, Molway walked along the landing and into the room. It had been a cold, discouraging day and he had stopped for a few drinks after putting up his cab.

One of the plainclothes men grabbed him by the shoulder. Molway stared in amazement at the disordered room. "What's the idea of tipping the place upside down?" he began. His wrists were caught and handcuffs snapped upon them.

"So he left you a few days ago," jeered the officer, turning to Berrett. "You didn't know where he was? I think you'd both better come along."

They went to police headquarters in a squad car, hungry and puzzled.

IV

Eleven persons had looked into the muzzles of rifle, shotgun, and automatic at the Paramount Theater hold-up the day before. Occasionally during the twenty minutes it had taken the manager to get from his home to the theater they had lifted their eyes from the firearms to the faces of the three gunmen. One wore a handkerchief beneath his nose, covering the lower half of his face. Of the other two, one was very tall. The eleven witnesses were unquestionably nervous, but the two uncovered faces should have been stamped indelibly upon their minds.

But when the big black sedan that bore the gunmen to the Paramount Theater had roared away with two hundred dollars taken from the safe, and panic had somewhat subsided, no two of the witnesses could give the Lynn police similar descriptions of the criminals. Since Boston had the

largest and most complete Rogues' Gallery in New England, the eleven witnesses were brought by the Lynn police to Boston Police Headquarters to look through 2000 out of 150,000 faces in the hope of isolating at least one of them as a suspect. The racks are separated into divisions and subdivisions—cracksmen, forgers, auto thieves, burglars, gunmen—and so devised that by dropping each rack and moving the thumb slowly, faces drop quickly like the scenes in a penny peep machine, showing almost one a second. From out of these a couple of dozen were chosen, merely because some witness said, "That looks like him."

Out of this assortment two witnesses pointed doubtfully to the pictures of Clement Molway. The record showed that he was a taxi-driver. The bureau of hackney carriages showed that he had recently been licensed to drive for Louis Berrett. Sergeant Arthur Tiernan and special officer William Bonner were sent out to pick him up. They brought back both Berrett and Molway, two dazed and hungry drivers, for questioning.

Hours later Berrett and Molway sat in separate cells, heavy-eyed and weary, wondering what was the import of this long questioning. "Where were you at eight o'clock yesterday morning? What time did you leave your rooming house? What time did you check in at the garage? What time did you check out? How far is it to Lynn? To Lynn Square? How fast could you drive there? How fast did you drive there yesterday? You're a liar. You did drive there yesterday. Where's the gun? What gun? Don't give me that what gun stuff! You know what gun!"

Berrett shook his head and tried to clear it of the nightmare. He wondered what was the charge against him or Molway. It couldn't be a hit-and-run case. They wouldn't go to all this trouble. And why this query about the gun? He had never carried a gun in his life. Berrett could not know that it is considered good police practice to let the suspect tell himself and his questioners the charge, because when he does that he ties himself up to the crime. Berrett was told that he would be in the line-up tomorrow morning.

The line-up is a modern police institution. It is considered good evidence to have a victim pick out of a line of average men the person suspected of the crime. The line-up is usually made up of plainclothes men, inspectors, the janitor, salesmen trying to interest the department in traffic devices, telephone repairmen, any person in the corridor who does not mind devoting ten or twenty minutes to an interesting experience in the public interests. As a reporter I have been pressed into service a number of times. I have observed that it is next to impossible not to pick the suspect out. The decoys look on with interest or unconcern. The prisoners moisten their lips, swallow, look steadily into the eyes of the witness or victim, and in trying to make themselves appear unconcerned, make them-

selves conspicuous. I have tried acting in a line-up as I thought a defendant must feel, and with interesting results. I have been picked out twice as a snatch thief, once as a pickpocket; and once a woman hit me with an umbrella for having attempted to assault her.

Into this line-up on the following morning went Louis Berrett and Clement Molway. The police will tell you that they were fair about it. Molway and Berrett were both permitted to shave and wash and make themselves presentable so that beards and disheveled appearances would not give them away. They were placed apart in an average line-up and the Lynn witnesses were brought in separately. Out of eleven witnesses, eight walked down the line, each stopped first in front of Molway, placed a hand upon his shoulder and declared "This is one," and then in front of Berrett, saying "This is another."

Berrett and Molway were thereupon brought to the desk and formally booked for the murder of C. Fred Sumner, the bill poster in the Paramount Theater in Lynn. They were photographed, fingerprinted; their Bertillon measurements, their histories, and other information were recorded; and yet neither Louis Berrett nor Clement Molway knew what was the charge against him. They were turned over to the arresting officers, Sergeant Tiernan and Special Officer Bonner, to be delivered into the care of the Sheriff of the Essex County Jail in Salem. Handcuffed to Molway on the way to Salem, Berrett looked over at the arresting officers.

"Give us a break, will you?" he asked Tiernan. "Tell us what this is all about. What's the charge?"

"You know what the charge is, all right," Tiernan answered.

"You're bringing us to jail," Berrett persisted. "We know that. But it wouldn't hurt now to tell us why."

"You're charged with murder," Tiernan told him.

Berrett smiled genially. He thought it was a joke. Molway stared at them surprised and uncomprehending.

"Cut out the clowning," Berrett said. "I'm serious. Tell us! What is the charge?"

"I told you the charge," Tiernan snapped.

Berrett became silent, as did Molway. He couldn't believe it and he could not figure it out. He would wait and see what the day would bring.

Sergeant Arthur Tiernan came back from Salem that night and walked into the press room at police headquarters in Boston. He sat down, lighted a cigarette, and looked round at the reporters.

"You know," he said, "I have a hunch we've got the wrong guys for that Lynn job."

"What do you mean?" one of the reporters inquired. "Eight persons identified them, didn't they?"

Tiernan nodded. "I still have a hunch we're wrong," he said. "No two guys could put on the act they put on. Berrett really thought it was a stick-up when I walked into his place last night."

Sergeant Arthur Tiernan's conscience troubled him. He talked it over with his wife and told her of his doubts. When Molway and Berrett were about to go to trial for their lives for the murder of Sumner, Tiernan used his day off to go to Salem to tell the district attorney how he felt. He was told to go back to his own jurisdiction and police department; Essex County could very well take care of its own defendants. When Molway and Berrett stood in the shadow of the electric chair Tiernan was not called as a witness. His testimony, as the arresting officer, might strike a jarring note in what was admittedly a clinched case.

The district attorney had moved for an immediate trial, and the motion was granted. Eleven witnesses now pointed from the witness stand accusing fingers of recognition at them in the prisoner's dock. They were definitely on their way to the electric chair.

V.

The Commissioner of Public Safety of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is head of the uniformed State Police Force and Chief of the Division of State Detectives. For General Daniel Needham the office was a temporary resting place on his journey up the political ladder. As a candidate for Mayor of the city of Newton, the General needed an issue which would bring him favorably, and if possible spectacularly, to the attention of the electorate. A bill filed with the legislature for the unification of State, City, and Town police departments provided an excellent issue and an opportunity for unlimited public appearances to urge its adoption. A crime wave was mounting. The bill had popular support and was fought vigorously by politicians because it would end the authority of the city police commissioners and town chiefs and all of the political patronage and influence associated with their offices. It would end local police home rule, prevent ward heelers, city councillors, representatives and minor politicians from acting as "fixers" in drunken driving and minor misdemeanor cases, and would centralize police authority in a State Scotland Yard. Town police chiefs and city police commissioners were militant in opposition, and naturally those who opposed the bill wished to discredit the State Police as much as possible.

Berrett and Molway were on trial. The evidence of eye-witnesses pointed to their guilt. General Needham was inspired to frighten further the underworld and to keep himself before the electorate by buying exhibition space in the annual automobile show at Boston to display the modern arms, ammunition, radio, and other trappings for the apprehension of criminals employed by the progressive Department of Public

Safety. Throughout the day a uniformed State patrolman was on duty to hand out pamphlets, answer questions, and give impromptu lectures. After eleven at night the arsenal was unguarded except for a lone, elderly watchman in the basement who tended the fires and made a round every two hours among the glittering cars and automobile accessories in huge Mechanics Building.

Soon after midnight on Sunday morning, January 27, 1933, three men forced the rear door of Mechanics Building and walked stealthily down the steps and through the basement. The watchman heard them, saw them, and was too frightened to move. One was tall. The other was not quite so tall, but just as strong-looking. The third was slight and wore a handkerchief over the lower half of his face. An automatic was thrust into the watchman's stomach. He was bound and gagged and a few minutes later a big black sedan roared away with all that was important of the State Police exhibit, including machine gun, tear gas bombs, revolvers, arms and ammunition, and the police short-wave radio. Not until hours afterward—when the janitor had struggled free of his bonds—was Boston police headquarters notified.

Six days later, on February 2nd, the machine gun reappeared in the rural Massachusetts town of Needham, suddenly and with devastating effect. While the 9:15 morning train standing in the station divided one side of the town square from the other, three men walked into the Needham Trust Company. Two were tall. One was slight and wore a handkerchief over the lower half of his face. The tallest carried a Thompson submachine gun; the next, a woodsman's rifle; the third, an automatic. The first marched the treasurer, Arnold Mackintosh, into his own office and made him stand with his face to the wall. The second with the woodsman's rifle, blew the hand of Walter Bartholemey, an aged guard, from the handle of the iron grille gate to vaults and money, as Bartholemey tried to close it. The smallest remained on guard in the center of the banking room. A frightened girl reached the burglar alarm and pushed the button. The bell rang and Forbes McLeod, a stout, red-faced, kindly policeman, trotted leisurely around the 9:15 train to respond. The thing had to be answered although it was always going off accidentally anyway. A burst from the machine gun shattered the window in Mackintosh's office. Forbes McLeod dropped between the railroad tracks and the snow was quickly stained with crimson. The machine gun sprayed the town square, store fronts, and automobiles. Men, women, and children dived for cover. Three men came out of the bank, marching Treasurer Mackintosh before them. He was kidnapped and compelled to stand on the running board, a shield for the gunmen as they circled the town, passed the police station, and followed the patrol wagon to the square as it raced to answer the emergency call. The sedan sped through Needham Square and through

Needham Heights where Frank O. Haddock was arguing with Fireman Timothy Coughlan about Father Coughlin. Two blue uniforms became targets as the sedan sped by. Policeman and fireman dropped in the snow.

VI

The Needham bank robbery became my concern when it became my assignment as a newspaper reporter. State, City, and Town police were at loggerheads over the unification bill. When I arrived at the Needham bank at 10:10 that morning I found a group of open-mouthed, curious persons standing outside the bank, staring at it. Inside were two town policemen, dazed and still trying to comprehend that two of their companions and associates had been shot down. Boston police fingerprint and ballistic experts were scouring the bank for clues. I inquired what Boston police were doing outside of their jurisdiction and was told that they had been invited to come in by Chief of Police Arthur P. Bliss of Needham. State police had not yet been notified, although it is the common practice among town police departments to turn to the State Department of Public Safety for technical assistance or advice. Two hours later State Detective Michael Fleming learned of the robbery from a reporter in the adjoining town of Dedham and came immediately to the scene.

To the reporters who assembled in the Needham Trust Company it soon became obvious that little news concerning the robbery was to be developed by warring police departments. One man was already dead. Two were dying. The town was in a state of panic. Stores and business offices were closed. Residents barred themselves in their houses, fearing a return of the bandit car.

With police action at a standstill, the press stepped into the gap, not through any burning desire to perform public service, but to satisfy the thirst of city editors for copy. Interviews with bank employees provided meager descriptions of the trio. The bank treasurer, released two miles from town, could give no information. A fruit dealer wrote the registration number, but it proved to be that of a car which had been standing all day outside a Lawrence hospital.

The Commissioner released a statement pointing to the fresh crime as an illustration of the need for the adoption of the unification bill. Acting Governor Gaspar Bacon called a session extraordinary of the Governor's Council and offered a reward of $20,000. Meanwhile police officials were quibbling over jurisdiction and reporters were doing police work. A truck driver, unloading bananas in the town square, handed me a bullet that fell from a stalk as he dropped it from his shoulder to the floor. Captain Charles G. Van Amburgh, State ballistics expert, examined it that night under a microscope and from its markings found it to be identical with a bullet taken from the body of E. W. Clark of Fitchburg.

Another Fitchburg bullet was identical with one taken from the body of C. Fred Sumner, the Lynn bill poster. The three crimes were thus tied definitely together; obviously they were the work of the same gang. Molway and Berrett were in jail when the Needham crime was committed.

Gangsters flocked to police headquarters and formed a line outside the superintendent's door, coming singly or accompanied by attorneys. Known gunmen realized that they would be picked up and hastened to establish alibis, and although the stripe of yellow among them is amazingly pronounced, no hint of the identity of the Needham murderers came from them, not because they stood in fear, but for a reason as exasperating to them as to the police. They did not know. Police waited vainly for a stool pigeon to materialize.

Needham is one of the urbane bedrooms of Boston, populated with three- to five-thousand-dollar-a-year cocktail-drinking and public-spirited business men. A citizens' committee was organized to raise funds for the widows and to provide an annuity for them at town meeting, and out of this grew an irate subcommittee known as the "Vigilantes" (and christened by us in headlines "The Secret Six"), so indignant at lack of police action that they assumed police authority independently and hired a staff of private detectives to apprehend the murderers. Panic was at its peak, and private detective organizations were doing a thriving business at ten dollars per day per operative as private home and body guards and the independent detective bureau of the Vigilantes. To the various police departments, all this was merely more "propaganda" for the unification bill.

Clues to the solution of the crimes, overlooked by police, were actually in the record. Going through newspaper files on the night of the Needham crime after the bullet had raised the first serious doubt about the guilt of Molway and Berrett, I found these:

October 2—Capt. Lodge, U. S. A. held up outside Massachusetts Institute of Technology and robbed of keys to Cambridge Armory. Three men. One wore a mask.

October 2—Brookline Trust Company held up and robbed of $35-000. Gun held to police officer's back. No shooting. Four men.

November 10—First National Bank of North Easton held up and robbed of $20,000. No shooting. Four men.

December 4—Wollaston branch of the Quincy Trust Company held up and robbed of $20,000. Four men.

December 11—Attempt made to rob Iver Johnson Sporting Goods store in Fitchburg. Ernest W. Clark shot eight times, died December 14.

January 2—Paramount Theater, Lynn, held up, robbed of $200. C. Fred Sumner, bill poster, shot dead. Three men. One wore a mask. (Molway and Berrett arrested and on trial.)

January 27—State Police exhibit at Boston Auto Show robbed of

Thompson submachine gun, ammunition, and other equipment. Three men. One wore a mask.

February 2—Needham Trust Company robbed of $14,500. Officers Forbes McLeod, Frank O. Haddock, Guard Walter Bartholemey and Fireman Timothy Coughlan shot. Treasurer Mackintosh kidnapped and machine-gun volley fired over heads of C.W.A. workers at Needham Heights. Three men. One wore a mask.

The evidence up to this point led to these conclusions: 1. In four crimes, witnesses described three men, one wearing a mask. Two of the crimes were committed before Molway and Berrett were arrested; two after. 2. Sergeant Arthur Tiernan, the arresting officer, had been assailed by doubts amounting to such a positive conviction that he had gone to the Essex County distict attorney to urge their innocence. 3. Captain Van Amburgh's examination of the bullet tied three of these crimes together, one committed subsequent to the arrest of Molway and Berrett.

These considerations were brought promptly to the attention of the prosecution by newspapermen, but the answer was that Molway and Berrett were probably members of a gang now using the guns they had used. This could hardly be true because: 1. Sergeant Tiernan was positive that when he made the arrest neither Molway nor Berrett knew anything about the Lynn crime. He was sent out to pick them up and did so. 2. If Molway and Berrett were involved, facing the chair, one or the other would presumably talk. 3. If Molway and Berrett were members of a gang it must be a large gang. Three men were still operating. Four had been reported in three robberies. A total of $89,200 had been stolen. Well-financed gangs provide the best and most expensive counsel. The State had to appoint and employ counsel for Molway and Berrett. They had no money. 4. A gang of such size and importance could hardly operate without the knowledge of organized crime. 5. A $20,000 reward had been offered and failed to bring forward an informant. There is not a gang in the country that has not among its membership one who would turn up his own mother for $20,000.

Molway and Berrett were obviously innocent, but there was no way to bring these considerations before the jury. Opinions are not facts. The elective office of a district attorney or public prosecutor is not interested in evidence which breaks down a prosecution. District attorneys, in Massachusetts as least, are interested only in evidence which supports and leads to conviction. The truthful, but flimsy, alibis of Molway and Berrett were shot to shreds. Even the elderly woman whom Molway had carried as a fare less than half an hour before the Lynn murder turned out to be a distant, early acquaintance of Molway's brother. Neither had known it that morning; now it was held to prejudice her testimony. An ex-soldier in the Irish Republican army, who had been polishing brass

in the lobby of the Paramount Theater that morning, now added himself to those who positively identified Molway and Berrett as the murderers. Molway and Berrett were lost unless the real murderers could be found.

VII

Three days after the Needham murders, three police departments, still quarreling over the unification bill, were acting independently—with strange results. Raids were duplicated. Suspects released by one department were immediately rearrested by another for questioning. Boston police raided night clubs, brought in 30 gun toters, released 29, and turned one, wanted by the Philadelphia police, over to them. State police gave a harrowing half day to a mild-mannered German artisan from Providence because his odd employment of shaving the tops of butchers' blocks level caused him to carry in his car a portable circular saw that looked like a machine gun. Town police picked up three men in Attleboro returning from a party, because one of them had a gun, and a psychopathic in Turner's Falls who called on long distance to give the inside story of the holdup.

With such confusion prevailing in the police departments, it appeared wise for a news reporter to cut loose from all police departments and tie up with the Vigilantes. At least there was intelligent direction and a single purpose there. The Vigilantes became a prolific source of news because tipsters, who would not call the police, did not hesitate to call the chairman of the Vigilantes. Henceforth Lawrence Goldberg, another Boston reporter, and I worked together in co-operation with the Vigilantes, tracing and checking, with private detectives, the tips they received. Most of them were wild goose chases, but I quote here from my own notebook:

February 4—Tom Norris says that he got a tip from a woman in Cambridge, client of a lawyer friend of his, that she heard three men talking in a lunchroom next door to a palmist's at Central Square, Cambridge, about burning a car because it was getting too hot. They spoke about going to the Cider Mill at the Norwood-Westwood line to-morrow night. Gave information to State police. They went there to-night but nothing happened.

February 5—18 below zero. Twenty-five troopers set out for the cider mill at the Norwood-Westwood line early to-night, but the only things they examined were the warm shacks of the gravel pits. They returned and reported nothing.

February 6—Sedan of Clara Harrigan of Newton, stolen from front of Statler last November, found burned at Lily Pond road at Norwood-Westwood line, near cider mill, this morning. Reported to police by Buck, nephew of State Treasurer Jackson. Amelio Magaletti, Westwood cop, saw it burning last night, but did not report it because he thought they were burning railroad ties at the New Haven Yards. Needham witnesses identify it positively as bandit car.

February 7—27 below. No school. Three Norwood boys, Philip King, 19, John Maloney, 15, and Charles Parsons, 16, kicking through snow in Lily Pond road woods

found number plates and name plate of State police radio stolen from Mechanics Building.

With the burned car, the first tangible clue, in their possession, State police now took over the investigation. The car was dismantled, slowly and carefully, by experts. Tires and tubes were examined minutely for repairs. The superstructure had been destroyed by fire, but the chassis and engine remained unscathed. A "Lynch" suppressor was found under the hood, and the battery was found to be repaired with a peculiar "J-type" separator. These finds indicated radio shops and battery shops for further investigation.

News reporters urged the Commissioner of Public Safety to permit them to photograph the battery and to describe the repairs in technical terms for the battery trade in the hope that any battery man who recognized his work would come forward; but the General declared that to do this would "tip off" the murderers; they might kill the battery man to preserve their own security. He favored personal visits to battery shops to check up. Reporters pointed out there were but eighteen State detectives and about 10,000 battery shops. Molway and Berrett were on their way to the chair. The General was unimpressed. He was sure that Pretty Boy Floyd did the Needham job anyway; he gave us a publicity release to that effect and pointed out the similarity to Pretty Boy's technique in kidnapping a person to use as a shield. Pretty Boy would have had to be in two places at one time to do it; however, an official release of the Commissioner was news and was forthwith printed.

Since the General was determined to send personal representatives to the battery shops, Goldberg and I decided to beat them to it by telephoning every battery shop and garage. We were half way through the D's when the General relented, convinced by his Chief of Detectives, John F. Stokes, that the quickest way to reach the battery men was through the newspapers. On Sunday morning two Boston newspapers printed the picture of the battery and its description.

VIII

Alfred LeVierge operates a battery shop at the corner of Hendry and Bowdoin Streets, Meeting House Hill. In the same block is William Greene, who manufactures hulled corn for the chain-restaurant trade. Both places are open on Sunday. At about one o'clock, LeVierge walked excitedly into Greene's shop and showed him a picture and description in a newspaper. "I repaired that battery," he said.

"For whom?" Greene asked.

"A guy named Miller on Lawrence Avenue in Roxbury," said LeVierge; and then, remembering the reward, rushed off to tell the police.

Greene walked across the street and told Mrs. Greene. Mrs. Greene

called up my wife, who called me up. There was no Miller in the telephone book; but the street directory revealed a "Millen" at 39 Lawrence Avenue. The break had come. There was nothing to do now but to call the police and get a ring-side seat at the arrest. I reached for the telephone and called Captain Barrett of the State Police. "The battery in that Needham car," I told him, "was repaired by Alfred LeVierge of Dorchester for a Joseph Millen of 39 Lawrence Avenue. Better get a squad out there. Goldberg and I are leaving now."

"Okay," said Barrett wearily.

We gave the police about twenty-five minutes leeway and then went out to Lawrence Avenue.

The street was deserted when we arrived and we decided that we had waited too long. The police had been there. The arrest had been made. All that remained was to gather up such pictures and interviews as were available. Goldberg pulled up in front of 39 and we hopped out and climbed the wooden stairs to the porch. The front door was ajar. I pushed it open and Goldberg followed. A short, squat man of about fifty-five with a gray stubby beard was coming down the stairs. He was in shirtsleeves and tugging at his suspenders.

"Hello," he said gruffly.

"Hello," I answered.

"Who are you looking for?"

This was disconcerting. It was not the expected question.

"I'm looking for Joseph Millen," I told him.

"I'm Joe Millen," he said. "What do you want?"

Goldberg and I realized now that the police had not been here. "Have you got a big black sedan?" I asked lamely.

"What kind?" he asked.

"A Packard."

"No. I drive a Chevrolet. Are you from the registry?" (Meaning the registry of motor vehicles.)

I submit that a little plain and fancy lying under the circumstances was permissible. "Yes," I told him.

"The boys ain't home," he said. "Murton, he's gone to New York with his wife. Harry, he's in New York too; and Irving, I don't know where that boy is, but he ain't in now."

"Have any of the boys got a black Packard?" I asked him.

He shook his head.

"You say Murton is married," Goldberg put in.

Millen looked at Goldberg. Goldberg is Jewish. "Yeah, he got married," he nodded and taking one of his own people into his confidence became immediately indignant and profane. "Married a gentile," he said, "a couple of months ago. Sam Thorner married them. You know Sam?"

We both nodded. Sam is an assistant district attorney in Suffolk.

Conversation became general. It developed that Murton Millen was in the radio business with Abraham Faber on Columbus Avenue. (The radio business; that was interesting.) Harry had been playing in an orchestra in New York for months. That eliminated him. Joseph Millen was too old to fit the descriptions. Murton and Irving Millen remained: Murton, aged twenty-six; Irving, twenty-one.

A door was opened and a girl yelled something in Yiddish. Joseph Millen looked up and called back to her in Yiddish. Goldberg's eyes focused on three bags in the rear of the hallway. On top of one of them was the magazine of an automatic. Goldberg nudged me and nodded toward it.

"Come on. Let's get out of here," he said.

We backed out while father and daughter carried on a screeching conversation in Yiddish.

"What are they saying?" I asked Goldberg.

"She's bawling him out for talking to us about Murton and Irving. She told him he's crazy and he'll get them into trouble. She said something about keeping out of the cellar." (Weeks later a hideout was discovered under the foundation there with enough dynamite to blow the street to bits.)

Lawrence Avenue is a Jewish neighborhood. Ringing doorbells brought no corroborative evidence except that the Millens had carried a lot of heavy stuff into their house. Nobody had seen the big black sedan. Coming back to the Millen house again, we saw a Chevrolet parked in front. In it were two men. One gave his name as "Nelson"—the alias which the Millens used in New York and Washington. The other gave no name. (Nelson was later revealed as Irving Millen and his companion as George Frye, beau of one of the Millen girls.)

Goldberg telephoned Sam Thorner, and he came to his office to let us look at his marriage record. He had married Murton Millen and Norma Brighton, daughter of a Natick clergyman, four months earlier and the marriage certificate had been sent to their new home, 1175 Boylston Street.

The State police might have been delayed, we thought, in reaching the Millen home in Roxbury. We would go to State police headquarters now and clean up the loose ends. When we arrived there at 6:15 the place was deserted. We sat on a couple of desks, waiting for State detectives to bring in any or all of the suspects. At 6:30 Commissioner Daniel Needham came in, accompanied by Detectives Stokes and Ferrari. He smiled broadly in greeting and walked over to us.

"I have a statement to make," he said. "I feel that the photograph

printed this morning with the description of the battery may bring to light very shortly the name of the man who repaired the battery and . . ."

Goldberg and I snapped our notebooks shut and put our pencils away.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Don't you know yet who repaired that battery?" I asked the Commissioner.

"No," he said. "Do you?"

I nodded. "Yes. It was repaired by Alfred LeVierge of Dorchester for either Murton or Irving Millen of 39 Lawrence Avenue. Goldberg and I have just come from there."

"What do you mean?" The General was indignant. "You've been there already. Why didn't you tell us?"

"I did," I answered. "I telephoned Barrett this afternoon at about 2:15 and told him to have a squad of men down there."

Needham turned and looked at Barrett, who had just come into the office. "Oh yes," said Barrett. "Somebody did call this afternoon and said something about Lawrence Avenue. I made a note of it." He shuffled the papers on top of his desk and uncovered one. "Here it is," he said. "39 Lawrence Avenue."

"You didn't do anything about it?" Goldberg asked.

"I can't send a squad of men out on every wild tip that comes into this office," Barrett protested.

"Oh, no," said Goldberg. "That wouldn't be right. You'd rather let us chase down the wild tips for you. You'd rather let us walk empty-handed into a machine-gun nest as we did this afternoon. We have every reason to believe that we've talked with the murderers."

"You shouldn't have gone there," said the General. "You're guilty of obstructing justice."

Obviously police feeling concerning the unification bill was still running high. Although LeVierge had gone directly to the Boston police to report, the Boston police—up to 6:30—had not notified the State police. As it was, with the information in their hands at 6:30, the State police did not get to the Millen home until 9:15, two and three-quarter hours later. The Millens had fled.

Goldberg and I left the State police office and went direct to the Boston police where we were sure of instant cooperation, since this information we had would give them an opportunity to beat the State police to it. To Sergeant Timothy Donovan went the tip that Murton Millen and his wife lived at an apartment at 1175 Boylston Street. We were not walking into a second machine-gun nest if we could avoid it.

Meanwhile we tried to find out about Abraham Faber, Murton Mil-

len's partner in the radio business, and visited the Blue Hill Avenue tenement where the Fabers lived on the top floor. The Fabers were not at home, but from tenants on the first and second floors, we learned that Faber was a graduate of M. I. T. and keeping company with a Rose Knellar. The records at the college disclosed that he was graduated in September, 1927, and from the Aeronautical School in 1931, with a degree of bachelor of science; that he was a commissioned officer in the R. O. T. C., a medal-holding marksman and sharpshooter. He was thin, dark, and wore a small mustache, suggesting that a handkerchief might be used to cover such a prominent characteristic.

The work of assembling information was now completed. The dossier on all three was impressive. Apprehension of the Millens would henceforth be strictly the problem of police; conviction of them a problem for the district attorney. Captain John F. Stokes concentrated upon the Millens and Lieutenant Detective Joseph Ferrari upon Faber.

The Millens had gone, but Faber remained. He went to his radio shop as usual the following morning, where he was interviewed by Ferrari. He professed to know nothing of the murders and robberies, but admitted that he was the only dealer in town who carried "Lynch" suppressors in stock, and finally agreed to "help" the police in the hope of earning the $20,000 reward. Faber, playing detective to throw the police off his own trail, ultimately talked himself into the electric chair.

In the Millen apartment at 1175 Boylston Street, Boston police found a letter addressed to Saul Messenger of Mermaid Avenue, Coney Island. Messenger was found to be the go-between for the Millens, in hiding, and Faber in Boston.

The search for the Millens took sixteen days. On Sunday afternoon, February 25, Murton Millen, his wife Norma, and his brother Irving were trapped in the lobby of the Hotel Lincoln, New York City, by Coney Island police officers, Chief of State Detectives Stokes and two Burns men, Hall and Smith. In the fracas the heads of both Millens were laid open with clubs; Norma's shins were bruised, and a Millen bullet punctured the trouser leg of New York Detective John Fitzsimmons.

On the same afternoon Detective Ferrari in Boston broke down Abe Faber, who led a squad of State Police to the garage on Brinsley Street, Dorchester, where the big black sedan had been hidden for months. Here, piled under workbench and hidden under canvas, were the arms and ammunition stolen from armories and the State police exhibit, minus machine gun and radio; enough ammunition for a small army and enough dynamite to blow up a village. More interesting than any of these items, however, was a canvas bag plainly stamped in black, "Paramount Theater, Lynn."

IX

It might appear to the uninitiated that the innocence of Molway and Berrett was now established; that couriers would speed to the Salem jail with the necessary papers for their release. The movies would have it so. But the hard fact remained that Molway and Berrett were still defendants at the bar on trial for their lives. A district attorney had spent about eleven thousand dollars up to now to bring about their conviction, and the district attorney must go before the electorate six months hence to be returned to office.

A representative of the district attorney's office called at State Police Headquarters that night and was received by Lieutenant Detective Ferrari.

"You're not going to let these guys confess to the Lynn job, are you, Joe?" he was asked.

"What do you mean?" Ferrari answered. "The newspaper photographers were out there this afternoon. They took pictures of those Lynn money bags."

"But," protested the representative of the prosecution, "the district attorney is all ready to go before the jury with his argument to-morrow."

"Then that's just your tough luck," Ferrari answered. "I'm not going on the spot for you. Of course those guys are going to confess to the Lynn job."

The next day newspapers screamed the innocence of Molway and Berrett, but at 9 o'clock they were handcuffed to deputies and brought as usual from the jail to the courtroom and placed in the prisoner's cage. There was a conference of counsel at the bench and they were returned to jail. Considerable red tape yet remained to be untied before they could go free. Molway and Berrett spent that night in jail. The next morning at 9:30 they were formally freed in the courtroom. The district attorney offered to shake hands. Molway did. Berrett did not. Still freedom was not theirs. They were returned to jail while Commissioner of Correction and Sheriff agreed upon procedure. They returned to their cells but the doors were left open.

At 11 o'clock on Tuesday morning, Berrett lay upon the cot in his cell waiting impatiently for freedom and listening to his cell radio. A Yankee network announcer at station WNAC came on the air and in a happy, cheery voice announced:

"Lewis Berrett and Clement Molway, saved from the electric chair in the nick of time, stepped out into God's bright sunshine outside Salem jail this morning, free men."

Berrett ripped the radio from the wall and was restrained by a

prison guard as he tried to toss it over the railing and into the rotunda below.

Molway and Berrett were released that afternoon.

In justice to Brigadier General Daniel Needham, I must point out that he is an army officer with an excellent record, and a successful practicing attorney. He did not pretend to be a detective or a policeman. A Republican, holding an appointive office in a Democratic administration, his position was embarrassing and he became the victim of his own political issue—the unification bill, which disrupted police departments and set one against the other. The bill is, in my opinion, the answer to the Massachusetts police problem and should be adopted. He was sincere in his belief that publicity would prevent the capture of the Millens. An inexpert policeman, but a good executive, he might have made an excellent Mayor for the City of Newton, but he was defeated.

Berrett and Molway were reimbursed by the State to the amount of $2500 for their false arrest and trial. A special bill passed the legislature for that purpose. A few months ago, the Governor and his executive council awarded to Lawrence Goldberg and myself $4000 for uncovering information which led to the arrest and conviction of the Millens and Faber.

I saw Berrett on the street the other day. He was passing in his cab, yelled a greeting, and pulled up at the curb.

"I see you got a two-grand reward," he said. "How much was your cut?"

"What do you mean? How much was my cut? I got two thousand and Goldberg got two thousand. So what?"

Louis nodded. "I know," he said, "but how much did you get finally?"

"Two thousand dollars," I repeated.

Louis shook his head. "Gee, I don't see how you guys do it," he said. "I had to split my dough fifty-fifty with the politician who got it for me."

READING

In each of the first four sections of the essay, what material is presented and how is it related?

What are the main episodes of Parts V and VI? At the end of Part VI, what is the use of the summary?

What change of point of view adds impact to the narrative in the next two sections? At what point was this change anticipated?

How does the closing incident help to give unity to what has gone before?

INTERPRETATION

Whose story is this? How is it given more universal meaning than might ordinarily be expected? What is the meaning or meanings?

With what aspects of crime is this essay concerned that Kobler's and Bowen and McKelway's do not recognize?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Innocent Accused
The Police Officer
A Traffic Offense: Crime in Miniature
Opportunism in Justice

MURDER AT HARVARD*

by Stewart H. Holbrook

Stewart H. Holbrook (1893–) grew up in Vermont and New Hampshire, but has lived in Oregon since 1920. He is the author of many books about New England, the Northwest, and the lands between.

Until the gray and melancholy twenty-third of November, in 1849, the people of Boston, like most Americans elsewhere, had been talking of nothing but the great rush to the gold fields of California. Young men, old men, even a number of women, had been flowing out of the six Yankee states ever since news of the glittering, 24-carat creek bottoms arrived in New England; and those who had so far resisted the lure did little else than wonder aloud if they too had best not join the stampede.

That is, until November twenty-third. On that day Boston at least had something nearer home to occupy its attention, an event of such magnitude that the gold fever subsided. Dr. George Parkman had disappeared, manifestly, completely, in broad daylight.

It was incredible. It was almost as if the tall granite monument, marking a notable battle in nearby Charlestown, had suddenly disappeared into the bowels of the earth. A Boston Parkman simply did not, could not, disappear and leave no trace. The Parkmans were not that sort of people.

The police went immediately to work, and so did hundreds, perhaps thousands of citizens, spurred by a reward of $3000 for the doctor alive, or $1000 for his body.

It was simple to trace the eminent doctor's movements that day until about half-past one. He had left his Beacon Hill home about noon. He had gone to the Merchants bank on State Street. From there he had called at a green-grocers on Scollay Square to leave an order. A bit later he had been seen at the corner of Blossom and North Grove Streets, moving rapidly toward Harvard Medical College. At or near the college,

* From the *American Mercury,* LXVI (February, 1948), 228–233. Copyright, 1948, by The American Mercury, Inc.

it appeared, he had walked straight into Valhalla. Nor has he been seen since, though that was nigh a century ago.

II

Let us consider Dr. Parkman a moment. It was he, a Harvard man himself, who had given the very land on which the then new Medical College stood. Moreover, he had endowed the Parkman Chair of Anatomy, then occupied by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. The Parkmans had been prominent from what, even by Boston standards, were ancient times. His brother, the Rev. Francis Parkman, was a well-known divine whose son of the same name was on the verge of achieving fame as an historian. All of the Parkmans were well-to-do, and the doctor's wealth was such that his son, who never earned a penny in his life, was to leave five million dollars for the care and improvement of Boston Common.

The usually staid Boston press threw all its genteel standards out the window and went into a dither. Police arrested scores of obscure persons. And then, though neither police nor public knew of it, an astonishing incident occurred. Professor John White Webster made a call on the Rev. Francis Parkman. The professor said that he had had what he termed an "interview" with the missing man in the Medical College on Friday afternoon, the day of the doctor's disappearance, at which time he had paid Doctor Parkman the sum of $483. The latter had then, said the professor, left the college.

John White Webster was 56 years of age, a graduate of Harvard Medical. Since 1824 he had taught chemistry at Harvard, and since 1827 had held the Erving Chair of Chemistry and Mineralogy.

The Websters lived in Cambridge, had four pretty daughters, and were noted for the hospitality they lavished on faculty members and wives. Professor Webster's salary of $1200 annually was wholly inadequate. He had a small income from lectures, but because he was notably dull on the platform this source of cash grew steadily smaller. Yet, and while it was known to Dr. Parkman's kin that Webster owed the doctor money and that the doctor had gone to the professor to collect it, the professor was not under suspicion in regard to the mystery. Who *could* suspect a sound faculty member of the college on the Charles?

It began to look as though some thug had waylaid the doctor, done away with him, and made off with the $483 which, so Professor Webster said, he had paid the eminent man. Nothing whatever came of the activity of the police. The Charles River was dragged in vain. The theory of robbery and murder still held the fancy of both public and police, and apparently nobody suspected Professor Webster except a morose and obscure man named Ephraim Littlefield, a janitor at Harvard Medical College.

Just what started Littlefield to brooding over a possible connection between Professor Webster and the disappearance of Doctor Parkman is not known. He was of a particularly suspicious nature, this janitor, a man of dark moods, the kind one thinks of as looking at everybody and everything not directly but out of the corner of his rather grim eyes. Anyway, it appears to have been a generous act of Professor Webster's that set Littlefield on his trail like a hound of hell.

On the Tuesday following Parkman's disappearance, Webster had presented Littlefield with a thumping big turkey, a Great Auk of a bird, fowl to feed a generation of Littlefields. It was an astounding event, too, since it was the first gift the janitor had received in seven years of work at the college.

Littlefield not only brooded over the gift of the turkey, but he was troubled because talk on the street had it that "they'll sure find Doctor Parkman's body somewhere in the Medical College." (In those days, medical colleges were held to be notorious receivers of the products of professional body-snatchers.) "I got tired," said Littlefield in explaining his next move, "of all that talk about the college."

Accordingly, the janitor procured a sufficient number of demolition tools to have supplied wreckers for all of Harvard University. Into his dismal basement home at the Medical College he lugged drills, hammers, chisels, crowbars. He told his startled wife that he was going to do nothing less than dig through the brick vault under Professor Webster's laboratory room in the college. Mrs. Littlefield was dreadfully frightened, saying that, should knowledge of her husband's suspicions reach officials of the college, he would be dismissed from his job. Suspicion of a Harvard professor was an act against nature, perhaps even against God.

Irritated at his wife's attitude, Janitor Littlefield told her a few things. Just before Parkman's disappearance, he said, the janitor was helping Webster putter around in his laboratory. The two men did not hear a footstep. But suddenly Doctor Parkman appeared before them, and he was already speaking, speaking quick, loud and harsh. "Doctor Webster," he cried, "are you ready for me tonight?" Webster replied: "No, Doctor, I am not ready tonight." Parkman moved back toward the door, raised one arm and shook one fist. "Doctor Webster," he said savagely, "something must be accomplished tomorrow." Then he went out.

For the next several days Littlefield brooded and wondered whether, on the next call Doctor Parkman made on Professor Webster, the latter *had* been ready for him. "And *now,* Mrs. Littlefield," said the janitor to his wife, "what do you think?"

So, on what must have been a gloomy and foreboding Thanksgiving Day, while the astounding turkey simmered in the oven, Littlefield hammered and drilled his way into the solid brick wall of the vault beneath

Webster's laboratory. Progress was fearfully slow, but Littlefield was as determined as he was suspicious. At noon he refreshed himself with the great bird and cranberries, then returned to his labors. He continued his work on Friday and that night broke through. "I held my light forward," he related, "and the first thing I saw was the pelvis of a man and two parts of a leg. I knew," he added darkly, "this was no place for such things."

With what must have been a sound of triumph in his clipped speech, Janitor Littlefield called the police, who took one look at the ghastly contents of the vault, then drove madly in a hack to Cambridge and called on Professor Webster. Constable Derastus Clapp, a man of odd and devious Yankee ways, told the professor they would like him to attend them at the Medical College while a new search was being made. Webster replied that although the college had been searched half a dozen times, nevertheless he would be happy to accompany the officers. He got into the hack, which soon crossed the bridge into Boston—and continued on past North Grove Street and toward Leverett Street, where stood the hulking shape of Boston city jail.

"Stop," cried Webster, "we are going in the wrong direction."

But devious Constable Clapp was ready. "Oh, that's all right, professor," he said. "He is a new driver and somewhat green, but he will doubtless discover and correct his mistake." Boston had serene police officers in those days of Transcendentalism. . . .

Within a few moments Webster was in a cell of the jail. Reporters came, and next day the press and the town went delirious. "Horrible Suspicions!!", screamed the normally sedate *Transcript,* "Arrest of Professor J. W. Webster." Harvard College and Beacon Hill seemed about to tumble into the Charles River. The Gold Rush to California was forgotten. The *Transcript* shuddered in reporting the things Littlefield had found at the college and then, wholly losing control, it called on the Bard himself for words—*Oh, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!*

Never again, so far as I am aware, did a Boston newspaper feel that a murder called for Shakespeare.

III

Professor John White Webster was put on trial on the nineteenth of March, 1850. He seemed quite short in stature to the "expert stenographer" who reported the occasion, and of no great strength. The state's star witness, Janitor Littlefield, took the stand and his accumulated testimony was bad indeed for the poor professor. The defense attempted to throw suspicion on Littlefield himself, and it also presented a long and distinguished array of character and other witnesses. The Hon. John Gorham Palfrey, former editor of the *North American Review,* declared so-

norously that Professor Webster was a man of some temper but of extremely good heart. President Sparks of Harvard thought Webster "kind and humane." Nathaniel Bowditch, son of the celebrated mathematician, believed Webster to be "irritable though kind hearted."

Oliver Wendell Holmes, who gave his occupation as physician, testified both for the defense and the state. For the latter, he said that whoever had cut up the body alleged to be that of Doctor Parkman had certainly been handy with surgical knives.

The state was attempting to prove that the remnants of human mortality which had been discovered in the vault, in a tin box filled mostly with tanbark in Webster's laboratory, and in the laboratory stove, were those of Doctor Parkman; and the defense was doing its best to prove the fragments to have been almost anybody but Doctor Parkman.

Day after day the trial continued and much of Boston sought to get seats in the courtroom. This being in no way possible, Police Marshal Tukey solved it, as best he could, by clearing the visitors gallery every ten minutes, thus permitting, according to the record, sixty thousand persons to witness portions of the event of the century. One of the afternoons must have been particularly grisly, the one when Dr. Woodbridge Strong took the stand to discuss the matter of destroying bodies by fire. "I have dissected a good many bodies in my day," said Dr. Strong with evident relish. "I recollect a pirate I had given me one time, and as I only wanted the bones, I dissected him rapidly, and. . . ." Some of the less avid spectators were seen to leave the gallery.

Slowly, over what must have been ten terrible days for Professor Webster, the coils of circumstantial evidence closed around him; and late on the eleventh day the jury was charged by Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw, another Harvard man (1800), in an address which is still considered by lawyers to be one of the great expositions of all time on the subject of circumstantial evidence. Three hours later the jury returned with a verdict of guilty.

The professor wasn't quite ready to greet the hangman, but his writ of error was denied, and he then addressed the Governor and Council, protesting his innocence. To no avail. And long before Professor Webster's neck was broken, on August 30, 1850, he made a long confession. Janitor Littlefield—and how smug *that* man must have felt—Janitor Littlefield had been right. Professor Webster *was* ready for Doctor Parkman, when he called for his money on that fatal Friday. What had then happened, according to Webster's confession, was this:

Parkman had come that day with the idea of getting some money. When denied it, he called Webster a scoundrel and had shaken his fist in the professor's face. Then, said Webster, "I felt nothing but the sting of his words . . . and in my fury I seized whatever thing was handiest—

it was a stick of wood—and dealt him an instantaneous blow with all the force that passion could give it." The one blow was enough. Parkman fell, bleeding at the mouth. Webster bolted the doors, stripped the dead man, hoisted him into the sink, and there and then dismembered him with the deft professional strokes that had been admired by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

IV

The painful celebrity that came to Harvard has been dissipated in the 98 years intervening, yet more than one member of the faculty long felt the blight cast by Professor Webster. Bliss Perry has related how his mother at Williamstown, Mass., refused to entertain a Harvard professor who had come there, circa 1870, as a delegate to a convention of New England college officials. Mrs. Perry vowed most firmly on this occasion that she could not sleep "if one of those Harvard professors was in the house." In this instance the professor, who had to find quarters elsewhere, was James Russell Lowell.

Another incident concerns sardonic Ben Butler, to whom Harvard had somehow neglected to grant an LL.D. While cross-examining a witness in court, and treating him rather roughly, the judge intervened to remind Butler that the witness was no less than a Harvard professor. "Yes, I know, your honor," said Ben. "We hanged one the other day."

For the next half-century or more, Harvard faculty members were constantly undergoing similar pleasantries, according to the late Albert Bushnell Hart, who told me that the ribbing was still prevalent in his early days at Harvard, in the eighties.

Although not all present-day sons of Harvard know that their university was the scene of one of the most celebrated crimes in the United States, Professor Webster's fame is secure. He remains the only Harvard professor to have performed lethally while a member of the faculty, and the sole college professor to gain entrance to the chaste pages of the *Dictionary of American Biography* on the strength of his stout right arm.

READING

With what incidents does Holbrook lead up to the arrest of Webster?

How are the details of the fourth section connected with the earlier sections?

Give further identification as literary figures of Francis Parkman, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, and Bliss Perry. To what writer was Lemuel Shaw related? If you do not remember it, turn back to Joseph Alsop's essay for an allusion to Webster.

What is Holbrook's tone? Discuss its fitness for a murder, for this kind of a murder, for one that happened over a hundred years ago. What are some specific ways that Holbrook establishes and maintains his tone?

INTERPRETATION

Compare Holbrook's account of the murder with one other account. (One is cited in the essay itself.) Could an author make Webster a pathetic figure, a tragic figure, or an unexemplary figure at will?

Compare the use of circumstantial evidence in this case with that in "Murder in Massachusetts." How alike are the Boston police of 1849 and 1934? How alike are the newspapers, the attitude toward crime, the concept of justice?

From the material presented here, how would you distinguish this crime from other crimes in the preceding essays? How did Webster's background and motives differ from those of the juvenile criminals previously considered?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Amateur Detective
A Murdering Minister
The Fine Art of Murder
Respectability and Crime

13
The Age of Danger

Not unrelated to the questions of freedom, race, and personal morality is the struggle between Russia and the United States that we call the cold war, the age of anxiety, or as we have here designated it, the Age of Danger. Who has the answer to the paramount question of our foreign policy? Is the enemy hunger as well as communism? What spectacular or dramatic development might break the stalemated armament race with Russia? What role shall the individual American citizen play in the Age of Danger? What plans does the Eisenhower administration propose?

OUR PLUNDERED PLANET*

by Fairfield Osborn

Fairfield Osborn (1887–), naturalist and conservationist, has been president of the New York Zoological Society since 1940 and of the Conservation Foundation since 1948. He has edited *The Pacific World* (1944) and *Our Plundered Planet* (1948).

Space, as well as time, is relative and our conceptions regarding both are constantly changing. Modern thought has come to recognize that space and time are closely interrelated. This realization has produced, within the present century, a new theory concerning the cosmic scheme, including even a new definition of infinity. While a concept having to do with the remote boundaries of the universe is not directly pertinent to the consideration of man's relationship with nature and, more particularly, with his own living spaces, we find that within recent decades our entire point of view concerning this earth-home of ours has also undergone a major change. The remarkable development of the technical sciences has caused the earth, among other things, to become constantly smaller. . . . The earth is referred to as one of the minor planets belonging to a star of moderate size. In itself this description is of no particular import, principally because it involves a consideration of size, or space, without relationship to time. Speed of communication and rapidity of transportation are eliminating distance. Yesterday we began using the moon's surface as a reflecting board for radar messages to the other side of the earth. No so long ago—in the sixteenth century to be exact—a round-the-world

* From *Our Plundered Planet,* by Fairfield Osborn (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1948), pp. 32–47, with omissions. Copyright, 1948, by Fairfield Osborn. Reprinted by permission.

trip, or message, took more than three years. Now it is possible to dispatch a message around the earth in a few seconds and to travel around it in less than four days.

So it is that the earth is constantly becoming smaller, or rather our knowledge of it is leading us to think of it as diminishing rapidly, which, after all, amounts to one and the same thing. As a consequence we are now thinking of mankind in terms of a world society. The boundaries or barriers between localities, nations, even continental populations, are dissolving. From a social or political point of view the process is slow and intensely painful—marked by rancor and bitterness, jealousy and warfare of unbelievable destructiveness. From a physical point of view, that is insofar as human beings themselves are concerned, there is no actual change. It is merely that people the world over are coming to realize the essential unity of mankind. The earlier reference to the likeness of all human beings, the fact that from a biological point of view no nations or races are disparate, that human beings throughout the world are of one species—or at most divided into groups or subspecies, all closely similar—makes this change in our conceptions of human civilization unavoidable and inevitable. Further, due to the existence today of world-wide systems of commerce, combined with new and so-called higher standards of living, all nations are dependent upon others in varying degrees for products, materials or goods that have become a necessary part of everyday living for most of the people on the face of the earth.

The conditions—whether material or social or even ideological—which exist among peoples in one section of the earth now have a bearing on the lives of peoples of far distant nations. No longer is an American unaffected by the trends of living conditions of other peoples, whether those of a country in the Western Hemisphere or even those on the exact opposite side of the earth. No longer can 3,000,000 people in India die of starvation, as they did in 1943, without a specific and cumulative effect on an Englishman in Sussex. The spoiling of the land and the ensuing destruction by floods in the great Yellow River Valley of China soon or late, in one manner or another, impinge on the well-being of peoples one thousand horizons away. The peoples of the earth, whether they will it so or not, are bound together today by common interests and needs, the most basic of which are, of course, food supply and other primary living requirements. These come, all of them, from nature and from nature alone—from the forests, the soils and the waterways. Man's problem in his earliest, dimmest, most faraway days was obtaining a living from these elements. The wheel of human destiny seems to turn, but the basic facts of life remain constant. Man's initial problem is still with him —can he obtain a living from nature? The population of the earth has increased almost five times within the last three centuries and doubled

even within the last century. Human civilization has permeated virtually every living area of the earth's surface. . . . Vast fertile areas in various parts of the earth have been injured by man, many of them so ruined that they have become deserts and uninhabitable. In such places flourishing civilizations have disappeared, their cities buried under wastes of sand, their inhabitants scattering to new lands. But *now,* with isolated and inconsequential exceptions, there are no fresh lands, anywhere. Never before in man's history has this been the case.

Actually the earth, from the point of view of its use as a place to live in, is far smaller than our minds picture it. We retain, even after we are grown-up, our first childhood impressions of the vastness of the "great round earth." We are apt to forget that almost three quarters of the earth is covered by water and that at least one half of all the land is uninhabitable because it lies in the polar regions or is extremely mountainous or is desert land. Consequently, there remain only about twenty-five million square miles, equivalent in round figures to about sixteen billion acres, that can be thought of as originally favorable to habitation by man. Divided by the number of people alive today, this would mean a theoretical maximum of less than 8 acres of naturally habitable land for each human being if the total habitable regions were divided equally. We must of course envisage all types of land, including those covered by forests, lying in grasslands, or those favorable to the cultivation of crops. In the present state of statistical knowledge we cannot estimate with exactness the proportions of the entire habitable areas of the earth that are devoted to the different uses to which man has put them. We do know that a very large proportion of the originally habitable areas have already been so misused by man that they have lost their productive capacity. Extensive areas of man-made deserts—sterile, barren, beyond reclamation —exist on every continent. Innumerable other areas, all over the earth, have been robbed of so much of their value that they are barely worth cultivation; the products from these lands possess little energy content; the people are undernourished.

As to the remaining amount of land that can be used for cultivation, the productive soil of the world is now so limited that it is estimated there are not more than four billion acres of arable land left to fill the needs of more than two billion people. A study made by the United States Department of State reports that the area of cultivated land in the world before the outbreak of World War II was somewhat less than two and one-half billion acres. If one takes the larger figure of four billion acres, representing the area of land estimated as now available or suitable for cultivation, it means that there are less than two acres per capita. Contrasted with this it is a generally accepted computation that two and

one-half acres of land of *average productivity* are required to provide even a minimum adequate diet for each person. Many countries have less than an acre of productive land per capita. No wonder there are world-wide shortages, and that the people of a number of nations are facing starvation.

Blind to the need of co-operating with nature, man is destroying the sources of his life. Another century like the last and civilization will be facing its final crisis. While there is a growing, frightened awareness of the oncoming peril—while in some countries corrective steps of almost sufficient vigor are being taken—the fact remains that the turning point of recovery and reclamation has not yet been reached either in this country or elsewhere. The issue has not yet been met. The third of the Four Freedoms, "Freedom from Want," Dumbarton Oaks, the San Francisco Conference, the United Nations meetings—all of these reachings of the human mind and spirit for a better world will prove meaningless and futile until this issue is met; until, through world-wide planning, we first protect what remains and then take steps, wherever possible, to start back on the long, slow road of reclamation.

This road can be found and traveled only if there is general understanding of the problem that confronts us and over-all programs, international as well as national, are devised to cope with it. Before considering some of the interrelated processes by which nature provides the essentials that are needed for man's survival, it would be well to give thought to the amazing increase in human numbers, especially within recent centuries.

In the misty eons of the past, when the human species had only a tenuous hold on life, the number of people in any given region must have been very limited. Through millennia of time the earth's human population increased but slowly. "Making a living" in a hunting or pastoral community was a difficult business. Actually, there are no reliable data as to the total population even throughout most of recorded history. In the early part of the seventeenth century, however, enough figures were gathered together from every continent and every country to provide a fairly reliable estimate of the earth's total human population. This "world census" indicated that the total number somewhat exceeded 400,000,000. In the year 1630, then, one could, for the first time, have some idea as to how many "neighbors" there were on the planet. That, one might say, was "just the other day"—only twelve generations ago, or merely four human lifetimes. It is not likely that the earth's population had previously been greater—a slow increase seeming to have occurred through tens of thousands of years, checked here and there by famines

or pestilences, finally reaching this figure of upwards of 400,000,000 people. For another two centuries there was a steady increase so that by the year 1830 the total world population had doubled.

Then came the violent explosive upsurge in human numbers. By the year 1900, or within three generations, the world population doubled again, touching the figure of one billion six hundred million persons. By 1940 the figure rose well over the two billion mark and is still steadily increasing. The rate of increase is now approximately 1 per cent per year. If this rate were to be continued, it would mean a doubling of the present world population in about seventy years. Obviously changing conditions in many countries will affect the rate of increase within the next few decades, yet students of population point out that by the end of this century there may be still another half-billion people on the earth and that the world population in a hundred years may considerably exceed the three billion mark.

These computations are in effect an extension of existing population trends in most of the countries of the world. It is not the affair of such experts to tell us how so great a number of people are going to be fed or how they are to receive enough of the other basic resources of the earth to support life, especially in view of the fact that hundreds of millions of people today are undernourished and otherwise lacking in the basic requirements of existence that alone can be provided by the earth's fertility. What a prospect! Of course, as we all know, these are momentous days and many things can happen to check population growth, even including the devastating use of atomic bombs in a new war. It is difficult to adjust one's mind to the possibility that the present negotiations between nations could fail to prevent such a savage denial of the right of human existence, and that the problem of the pressure of increasing populations—perhaps the greatest problem facing humanity today—cannot be solved in a way that is consistent with the ideals of humanity. There is an ironical twist to the fact that population pressures have long been recognized as one of the major causes of war. On the other hand, there is as yet scarcely any recognition of the self-evident fact that such pressures are the major cause of the world-wide depletion of the natural living resources of the earth. To put it somewhat differently, most people still have the notion that the living resources of the earth are illimitable and that they can be drawn upon as if there were an endless reserve. How naïve and typical the remark of a capable American businessman recently, when his attention was called to the fact that the forests of his country were being rapidly exhausted—"Oh well, we don't need to worry because if we use up our forests, we can get all the timber we want from Mexico." Let him go to Mexico and see what is happening there.

To retrace our steps for a moment—the causes for the explosive

increase in population within the last two centuries are obviously due to new discoveries that have made it possible for man to exploit far more effectively than he could previously the living natural resources of all of the continents of the earth and transport them readily from one part of the globe to another. There is a discernible rhythm between the accelerated tempo of trade and the accelerated tempo of human reproduction. Shades of Dr. Malthus! He was not so far wrong when he postulated that the increase in population tends to exceed the ability of the earth to support it, and that while food production might increase in arithmetical ratio, population tended to increase in geometrical ratio. There were several developments that the gloomy doctor did not foresee, among them the exploitation of the Western Hemisphere, especially the United States and Canada. Further, he did not anticipate the development of means of transportation such as the creation of the great systems of steamship lines and railroads, and now even air lines. Above all, he did not envision the invention of the internal combustion engine which has so incredibly accelerated the capacity to exploit the earth's resources of forests and croplands. This invention has brought its innumerable benefits and wreaked its irreparable damage.

In passing, it should be observed that the industrial revolution in Europe, with its accompanying tremendous increase in population, was to a very considerable degree supported and fed by the United States and Canada, whose land resources were hastily developed and prodigally expended to help meet the pressing demands of a population that increased from 175,000,000 to almost 400,000,000 in a little more than a century.

We have now arrived at the day when the books should be balanced. But can they be? The once apparently inexhaustible natural assets of this continent are now little more than sufficient to support its own increasing population, and the reserves in lands in the far corners of the earth are being drained through misuse.

If the total land area of the earth, amounting to somewhat more than 50,000,000 square miles, were divided by the earth's total population, we should find there is an average density of slightly more than 40 people to every square mile. This computation does not allow for the fact that only about one half of the lands of the earth are *habitable* and, like most statistics, has relatively little meaning except that it leads one to a closer study of the distribution of people over the surface of the earth. Such a study reveals certain startling conditions, perhaps the most extraordinary of which is that more than one half of all the people on the earth live on one twentieth of the total land area, or at an average density of 400 people to the square mile. Another one quarter of the earth's people live on an additional 13 per cent of the whole land area or at a density of about 86 people per square mile.

A somewhat different approach to this matter of the distribution of peoples, with an eye to where the principal concentrations occur, reveals the fact that there are three great clusters of humanity in three comparatively small regions of particularly favorable environment. One is the populous region of Europe, together with western Russia, bounded on the north by a line running just above Stockholm and through Leningrad, bounded on the east by the Ural Mountains, on the southeast by the Caspian and Persian Deserts and on the south by the Sahara Arabian Desert. This region contains more than 500,000,000 inhabitants who live on less than 3,000,000 square miles of land. In the Far East there are two great clusters of humanity. The larger of these is in an area that includes most of Manchuria, China as far south as Tonking, and Japan. Here there are approximately the same number of people on an area of less than 1,750,000 square miles. The third great cluster occurs in India and Ceylon, between the Thar Desert and the eastern edge of Bengal, where some 400,000,000 people are living, or starving, on about 1,000,000 square miles of land. Thus it is that in these three relatively limited regions of the Old World, aggregating less than one eighth of the earth's total land area, there are crowded together two thirds of the people of the earth. Incidentally, this means a density of about 400 people to each square mile, a figure eight times that of the density of the United States.

At first glance it would appear that the remaining 700,000,000 individuals must be comfortably off as far as living space is concerned. But it must be recalled that of the remaining land areas of the earth considerably more than half are too dry or too cold or too mountainous to be habitable, and that the habitable regions are those that lie in the Western Hemisphere, in Africa, in Australia or in some of the larger islands such as the British Isles or Java. Both the latter are now filled to overflowing, with densities running up to 700 people per square mile and populations, when added together, that approach the 100,000,000 mark —a fourth of the earth's population only twelve generations ago!

Most of the remaining 600,000,000 of the earth's people, then, live in the Americas, or in Africa, or in Australia. Descriptions of how they are faring and what they are doing with nature's resources . . . refute the idea that the three great clusters of humanity in the Old World, admittedly too large to be supported by the productive capacity of the lands in which they live, can draw indefinitely upon the richness of these newer regions that civilization has entered only within recent centuries.

In passing, it should be noted that the extraordinary concentration of approximately half of the people of the earth into urban centers belies the argument frequently heard to the effect that there are plenty of the earth's products to go around and that the shortages that are suffered are

due to the absence of efficient methods of distribution. It is apparent that the present means of conveying the earth's products from the regions where they are produced to the centers where they are consumed must, as matters now stand, be to a high degree skillful and efficient or a large proportion of the people of the earth could not continue to live at all.

There are those who believe that there are great possibilities of gaining additional subsistence from the earth through the *development* of the tropical areas of Africa and of the Amazon basin, where for obvious reasons there are as yet relatively limited human populations. One is inclined to say, "Who wants to live there?" While it must be granted that there are such possibilities and that ways and means may be discovered of making these areas more or less productive, the fact remains that these tropical regions do not lend themselves readily to cultivation, to say nothing of habitation, because of their excessive heat and torrential rains. The conversion of these tropical regions to agricultural productivity could not be accomplished except at prodigious cost. Further, it is only pressure of the most extreme kind that will make people move from one land to another.

Probably the most cogent answer to those who look to the development of these areas for partial relief from the dire want now afflicting great numbers of people is to point out that such a development would at best prove merely of temporary usefulness and would be a stopgap and not a cure. No real solution can be found until there is a complete revolution in man's point of view towards the earth's resources and towards the methods that he employs in drawing upon them. Are we not, too, leaning upon the frail reed of wishful expectancy in the face of the constantly growing pressures of increasing populations in every continent of the world?

READING

What is the main argument of each of the two parts? How does Osborn relate the parts?

What pertinence has the first paragraph of the essay to the rest of it?

Who is the Dr. Malthus whose "shade" is invoked? Also look up the term "Neo-Malthusian" in an available reference work.

INTERPRETATION

How does Osborn's article support or make impractical other approaches to the problem of war?

What bearing has the population-food problem on the question of world peace? What is its effect on the spread of communism? In the "three great clusters of humanity" what is the present political situation?

What principal solutions does Osborn hint at? Do you know of other solutions that have been advanced?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

An Irrigation Project
The Role of Scientific Agriculture
Modern Malthusians
We Don't Have to Starve
The Enjoyment of Pessimism

LET'S JOIN THE HUMAN RACE*

by Stringfellow Barr

Stringfellow Barr (1897–), educator and writer, holds degrees from the University of Virginia and Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar. From 1937 to 1946 he was president of St. John's College. He is now president of the Foundation for World Government. Among his books are *Pilgrimage of Western Man* (1949) and *Citizens of the World* (1952).

1

Our basic foreign policy since World War II has been to oppose Russia. But that is a negative policy, and, deep down underneath, most Americans know it. Now we are slowly discovering that we need a positive policy. We are discovering we need a positive policy because we are slowly discovering what the world's basic problem is.

The world's basic problem was recognized by Secretary of State Acheson in his speech to the United Nations on September 20, 1950, and by President Truman, speaking to the same body on October 23, 1950. But unless American public opinion also recognizes that problem, these two speeches will of course remain just speeches.

We have been sadly agreeing that this is no longer what Wendell Willkie called "one world" but that we are living in two worlds—the Communist world and the non-Communist. And now we are beginning to learn that Willkie was right. It is still one world, a world torn by tension between its two most powerful states, a world rising against inequality whether of race or of economic opportunity, but still one world inhabited by one human race. What will happen to this world will depend, not just on us, or on Russia, but on what the human race does. What should they do? If the American government is to find a foreign policy, a policy that is constructive and realistic, we American citizens had better have a good realistic look at the human race.

* From *Let's Join the Human Race,* by Stringfellow Barr (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950). Copyright, 1950, by the University of Chicago Press. Reprinted by permission.

2

But this is hard for us to do. In terms of food to eat and clothes to wear and houses to live in, the United States is a rich suburb, surrounded by slums. Some of the slums, like western Europe, were once elegant suburbs themselves, controlling every other continent on our planet. Some, like India, have not been powerful or elegant for hundreds of years. For a long time their citizens have been hungry, naked, and without decent shelter.

It is not easy for people who live in rich suburbs to understand the needs of people who live in slums. No bread? Why don't they eat cake? No money to buy clothes? Why don't they charge them? No roof on the house? They ought to phone a reliable contractor! Sick? They ought to call a doctor. Out of work? No real hustler stays out of work very long.

But a few of our economists and engineers, and a lot of our G.I.'s, have seen the staggering human misery of Asia, of Africa, of Latin America. The rest of us must just try to imagine it. Otherwise we won't understand the actual problems of the human race. And until we begin to understand those problems, our foreign policy will go on being unrealistic, and we Americans will ourselves seem less and less real to the two billion human beings who are not Americans. They may learn to fear us, but they won't understand us.

3

I believe there is a trick by which we Americans can understand these two billion men, women, and children scattered all over the globe. Will the reader play "Let's pretend" with me, the way children do? Let's pretend that you have not yet been born but will be born this year, somewhere on the planet, somewhere in this Mighty Neighborhood. And let's try to estimate your chances of living a happy, healthy, decent, and useful life.

If you are born this year, then on the same day more than 200,000 other babies will be born, all over the world.

You will have less than one chance in twenty of being born in the United States. Your chance of being born in the Soviet Union will be not much better. These countries may be heavily armed, but most people just don't live in them.

You will probably be colored. Remember that you and the 200,000 other squawking brats who will be the day's baby crop are going to be born all over the planet and that there are just not many openings in the places where the white race lives. You must take your chances with the other babies. And the chances are, you will be colored—colored black, or colored brown, or colored yellow.

Your chances of being born white this year are not more than one in three. Your chances of being Chinese are one in four; of being born in India, better than one in nine.

If you are born colored, you will probably be born either among people who have recently revolted and thrown out the white folks who used to govern them or else in a country that is still trying to throw the white folks out. If you are born in Africa, you are likely to learn the maxim: "Never trust a white man."

You have only about one chance in four of being born a Christian. It is far more likely that you will be born a Confucian or a Buddhist, a Mohammedan or a Taoist.

4

If you are born in the United States—and, remember, that's quite an *if*—you will probably live longer than a year. But if you are born in India, which is more likely, you have only a little better than a one-to-four chance of living more than a year. But cheer up! your chances in some places would be worse; and, besides, even if you survive babyhood in India, you have only a fifty-fifty chance of growing to maturity.

If you are born colored, the chances are otherwhelming that you will be chronically sick all your life—from malaria, or intestinal parasites, or tuberculosis, or maybe even leprosy. And even if you are not chronically sick, you are likely to be weak from hunger. You have about a two-to-one chance of suffering from malnutrition, either from too little food or from food that is not a balanced or nourishing diet. You have a reasonably good chance of experiencing real famine—to the point where you will be glad to eat the bark off a tree. But this chance is extremely hard to calculate.

Again, if you are born colored, you have only a one-to-four chance of learning to read. And since you almost certainly will not own a radio, you will be pretty well cut off from that part of the human family that has enough to eat and that is reasonably healthy. You will most likely live in a mud hut, with a dirt floor and no chimney, its roof thatched with straw. You will almost certainly work on the land, and most of what you raise will go to the landlord. In addition, you are likely to be deeply in debt to the local moneylender, and you may have to pay him annual interest of anywhere from 30 to 100 per cent.

5

But enough of this "Let's pretend." No need to be quaint about it. What I am describing is the actual condition of mankind in the middle of the twentieth century. To explain how it got there would involve a good deal of history for which we have no time here. The point is, that is where it got. Many millions of these sick, hungry, illiterate, and oppressed

people belong to "the free nations" we propose to lead in a crusade against communism. We had better take a good look at the real world we live in before we lead much further. We had better base American foreign policy on real facts.

When we Americans look at Russia, all that we see is tyranny. When millions of these wretched outcasts look at her, what they see is liberation from the landlord and the moneylender and the planned reconstruction of their country on the basis of modern machinery. They see a possible end to a kind of misery and despair which most Americans have never seen. Tyranny does not frighten them: they have never known anything else. We had better stop shouting slogans at them long enough to try with all our might to imagine their misery.

This misery, and not communism, is the basic problem of our one world—the one world which modern science and modern techniques have built. Communism is what the Russians propose as a solution to that basic problem—they say, the only solution. The world community is listening attentively for other proposals. The nearest to another proposal that it has heard was made by President Truman and presented as "Point Four" in his Inaugural Address of January 20, 1949. The President proposed a "bold, new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas." Eighteen months later, the U. S. House of Representatives voted $35,000,000 for Mr. Truman's "Point Four," and a Senate Committee promptly whittled it down to $10,000,000. That is less than New York City spent in 1949 to sweep its streets and dispose of its garbage. In terms of the problem of a sick world economy it is peanuts, and it is highly debatable whether it would not be better policy to do nothing. The best estimate I know of what World War II cost the United States is $330,000,000,000—*three hundred and thirty billion dollars.* Until the men and women and children now in the world have some hope of escaping from the hideous misery in which two-thirds of them are trying to live, can we hope to build a stable peace? Russia has offered them world revolution and a planned, productive, expanding economy. Our Senate Committee offered $10,000,000. (Later, that ten got painfully hoisted up to thirty-four and a half.)

Yet on February 2, 1950, Senator Brien McMahon had proposed ten *billion* dollars a year for five years as the American share toward rebuilding the world's economy. That is one thousand times as much as the Senate Committee seemed to think adequate. Only one thousand times.

On July 15, a few days after the Senate Committee bid peanuts, Walter Reuther, president of the United Automobile Workers, proposed thirteen billions a year for a hundred years, totaling over one trillion dollars.

Either Senator McMahon and Mr. Reuther have both gone mad, or else the Senate Committee is quite unaware of the problem these two men think we must tackle if we are to have peace. Senator McMahon's proposal last February was widely applauded both on the floor of the Senate and by the public. It must be that the committee that proposed $10,000,000 for "Point Four" was not really looking at the problem we are talking about.

Why not? The main item in our foreign policy is "Stop Communism." How? With guns? You cannot shoot communism with a gun. Communism is an idea and a program, which the Communists claim is the way—the *only* way—to rescue mankind from the ghastly misery in which most of it now lives. There is plenty of evidence that mankind is determined to be rescued. True, this is not the first time it has experienced misery. But it is the first time that hundreds of millions of human beings have become convinced that, because of new scientific knowledge and new technical skills, their misery is not necessary. In Asia, in Africa, in Latin America, that conviction is growing. And the people in these lands are determined to solve their economic problem.

The only way to stop communism is to offer the one world that we all live in a better solution of the real problem than communism offers, and certainly a better solution than peanuts. This fact is apparently what Senator McMahon and Mr. Reuther both know. A good many economists, engineers, and technicians all over the world know it too. Why have we Americans on the whole missed the point? Why have we tolerated a foreign policy which has so little to do with the real world mankind is living in? Why has our discussion of "Point Four" had so little to do with facts?

6

I think our discussion of "Point Four" has been based, like our present foreign policy, on false premises. I think we shall make no real headway with the problem until we base it on facts. Of course, Washington's accusations against Moscow and Moscow's accusations against Washington are facts too, but they are not facts of the same order as a hungry peasant or a piece of bread or a flooded river valley or a ruined irrigation system or a malarial swamp or a dying work animal or a broken wooden plow. It is facts like these that our foreign policy must mesh with—"facts of life"—of life and death. A foreign policy deals with foreigners, and these are the facts which most of the foreigners now alive are worried about.

Some two and two-tenths billions of human beings are alive today, and only a small fraction of them are either Russians or Americans. For most of them, there are far more urgent matters to think about than the cold war or communism or political freedom. They want to solve Problem Number One. We Americans have not been thinking clearly about Prob-

lem Number One—what we call "Point Four"—because, I believe, of the following false assumptions:

False Assumption Number One: That Russia is all that stands between mankind and a stable peace.

False Assumption Number Two: That American "know-how" and American money can rebuild the world economy, or enough of it to stop Russia.

False Assumption Number Three: That "free enterprise" (what the non-American world still calls "private enterprise") can do the job better than government.

False Assumption Number Four: That the job can be done on the basis of small yearly appropriations.

Let's examine these four assumptions carefully. In congressional hearings, in the literature on "Point Four," in public pronouncements on the subject, these four assumptions keep bobbing up. I believe it is these four false assumptions that have reduced the American discussion of "Point Four" to small talk. That leaves Russia's proposal of communism as the only proposal effectively on the table. Communism offers to rescue mankind from acute poverty, chronic starvation, constant plague, and bewildering ignorance. Communism is expanding because it has no competition.

7

"That Russia is all that stands between mankind and a stable peace." Our glance at the actual condition of mankind today should convince us that, if all the Russians in the world obligingly died this evening, and if all the Communists of whatever race were so kind as to commit suicide tomorrow at noon sharp, the world revolution for equality would not stop. We should remember that the "backward" peoples are not only hungry and sick and desperate; they now know that modern science and modern techniques make their hunger and sickness unnecessary. If they find that all the Communists have suddenly and unaccountably died, they will follow whoever else will promise to do something about it. The Asians and Africans will go on fighting or planning to throw the white folks out. The hungry will go on fighting or planning to eat. These peoples are in motion. You and I want peace and quiet, so we can enjoy our unbelievable standard of living. They have nothing to enjoy; so they want change.

In these circumstances, to suppose that these people would obligingly settle down, if we could just make Russia behave, is to live in an unreal world, not in the world that exists today. To think, therefore, that we can get a stable world by frightening or defeating Russia is absurd.

On the other hand, to hope that by being nice to Russia—and doing nothing else—we can have peace in which to enjoy life in America is equally absurd. Neither "containment" nor "appeasement" will bring us

peace. Our only chance is to do something about the real problem. To do that, we must look, not only at the Russians, but at the two billion other people whom she offers to rescue. What do they want? What do they think has to be done to make the world tolerable? For they might be right. Why allow the Communists to be the only people they can turn to for understanding and action?

Once we give up the childish belief that the Russians are all that stand between mankind and a stable peace, we can begin to think again. And if we think, we shall find a sensible foreign policy based on facts instead of fancies.

8

Our second false assumption is that American money and American *"know-how" can do the job, or anyhow enough of it to stop Russia.*

First, let's rule out this "anyhow" kind of thinking. What we want is a peaceful world, not just a world barely peaceful enough to stop Russia. Communism is indeed a very great evil; surely, we have not become so addled as to believe it is the only evil in the world. If we have, we shall fight it alone, because other peoples can name lots of evil things besides communism—things like hunger and disease, for example. The question is not whether American money and American know-how can do the job enough to stop Russia, but simply whether they can do the job.

I suggest that they cannot.

If you can imagine the American government abolishing its army, its navy, its air force, and canceling all its war contracts, then the billions of dollars it would save might go a long way toward putting the productive powers of the rest of the world into action. Unfortunately, such drastic disarmament would throw this country into an economic depression and cause widespread unemployment—with serious consequences for the world economy! But there is nothing to worry about, because clearly our government is going to do no such thing.

If, on the other hand, we are going to add a "Point Four" program for world economic development to our vast military program, then we will probably add what we have been adding—peanuts. So, in either case, we just haven't got the money the job will take.

As to our famous know-how, I think that word (which is pompous gobbledegook for "skill") has already done our thinking enough harm. It always implies that scientific knowledge and industrial technique can be found only in America. And this is simply not the case. In the field of science and technique American industry has always leaned heavily on Europe. Even the "backward" continents of Asia, Africa, and South America boast some excellent scientists and engineers, although they have fewer than they need and although those they have got lack the labora-

tory and factory facilities of Europe and America. The gobbledegook word "know-how" was popularized by those who wrote advertising copy for our industrial corporations, to flatter our national vanity. Besides, it filled us customers with proper awe for the mysterious and beneficent power of these corporations to supply us with gadgets which we ought to consider cheap at almost any price.

In two specific fields we do indeed excel. It was we Americans who, because of our huge free-trade home market, developed mass production and the low unit cost which mass production makes possible. The other way we excel is a psychological matter. Because we have lived for centuries amidst bountiful natural resources and in an expanding economy, we are perhaps the world's most hopeful people. We display, therefore, an initiative and a daring that the world really needs. Or, at least, we display them at home. We have not been displaying them lately in our foreign policy. If the economy of the world began to expand sharply, our hopefulness and initiative could prove extremely catching.

I suspect that the reason we like to think that only Americans have know-how is that we feel self-conscious about our riches in a poor world. Like most rich people, we would rather our neighbors thought of us as unusually skillful than as unusually lucky. Human beings envy good luck but they respect skill, and we Americans, quite naturally, would rather be respected than envied. But we will not decrease the envy by talking loudly about our know-how. And we should remember that any talk these days is loud—thanks to the world press and radio. We had better be careful not to sound to other nations the way the Russians sound to us when they claim that practically all important inventions and discoveries have been Russian.

The job that we have been talking about here needs technical men not only from America but from the whole world. It particularly needs those familiar with the local conditions, languages, and customs in the spots where the work has to be done. . . .

12

That "free enterprise" can do the job better than government. This, I have already suggested, is False Assumption Number Three in our American discussion of the main problem. Even more than our assumption that the problem is merely an American problem, this free-enterprise assumption cannot possibly produce anything bigger than peanuts for what is the biggest constructive job of modern times.

The assumption that private capital can do the job runs head-on against a hard fact: there is not enough private capital available. Private capital has other jobs to do. If we could solve the problem by leaving it to "business leadership," that would be fine. But we cannot. Private capital

goes only where those who manage it think it can make the most money. That is one reason businessmen proudly call private enterprise "free enterprise." It is free to hunt maximum profit. It is free to enter underdeveloped areas if it likes. Does it? The hard fact is that it does not—not in anything like the quantities needed. From 1945 to 1948, outside of the Export-Import Bank, American business invested only two and one-tenth billion dollars in all foreign countries, including the foreign countries that least need developing.

Some businessmen, confronted with this hard fact, try to get around it by claiming that they would gladly invest in underdeveloped countries if they could trust the governments of those countries. They are afraid of "socialist" controls, of currency restrictions that would keep them from converting their profits into dollars, of labor restrictions that would prevent them from getting "cheap labor," even of having their business nationalized without adequate compensation. So they want "treaty concessions"—dangerous words in most parts of the world. Most dangerous precisely in those parts that most need economic development, for those are the parts that have been colonies of Europe. Those are the parts that have been forced for centuries to make "concessions." So again they smell imperialism.

American businessmen propose that Washington guarantee them against losses from local political "interference." If Washington does, it will have strong reason to put pressure on local governments not to interfere. "Imperialism again," says the colonial world. This is the kind of policy we simply cannot follow except through puppet governments, well armed against "socialist discontent"—a term we could quickly shorten to "communism."

But even if Washington could be persuaded to create by these measures what some of our businessmen call "a favorable climate for investment," it would not work. The job is too vast for American business, and it is the wrong job. All those who know the problem are agreed that the things these countries need are road systems, school systems, public sanitation, hospitals, agricultural experiment stations, electric power, irrigation, before the "free enterpriser" can do his stuff.

Roads? No use boosting crops if you cannot get them to market. Schools? An illiterate population cannot compete in the modern world of technology. Public sanitation? With millions of people weakened by malaria, how can a country produce? Irrigation? Rich lands, without water, remain a desert, a desert that leaves the free-enterprise go-getter exactly where it leaves the Arab—helpless. What can he go and get? Sand?

In America the businessman *assumes* there are highways, that people can read his advertisements, that the population is reasonably healthy

and productive, that government irrigation works are available where water is short. He had better stop assuming such things about the countries we are discussing here. If he knew the facts, he would have stopped assuming before the congressional hearings ever started.

13

"But," says the businessman, "private enterprise built *this* country!" No. It helped build it. At every stage government intervened. It drove out the Indians, the Dutch, the French, the Spaniards. It made gigantic grants of land to the men who built our railways. Through a high tariff it gave American business a near-monopoly of the home market. It constructed vast irrigation works. It supplied a public health service. Government, local or national, built our roads—almost three and a half million miles of them. It built schools and paid teachers. It provides constant services to businessmen today. It put a floor of cheap power, navigation, and soil conservation under the Tennessee Valley. For these are things which private individuals cannot do, or cannot do well, except through the one agency that represents the entire community—government.

Even so, we Americans were able to do a bigger share as individuals than many peoples could hope to do today. Compare, for example, the Mississippi Valley in our country with the Orinoco Valley in Venezuela. I happen to choose these because I have been in both, but there are many other examples. Not only is the Mississippi Valley one of the two richest agricultural areas on this planet—because God, not "the American way of life," made them that way—but it never offered the vast sanitation problems that the Orinoco does, not even in its southernmost reaches.

Or take Asia and Africa. They are in many portions already supporting dense populations. North America was almost empty when we took over. Endless stretches of rich land, unclaimed except by sparse and primitive tribes, awaited our exploitation. In short, the parallel of our own national history cannot help us if we want to think about the real problem, instead of merely making patriotic speeches before congressional committees. And we should never forget that American history is quite well known in other countries, so that our speeches are likely to fall flat with the neighbors.

I may have sounded in these pages as if I were opposed to the American businessman. Far from it. He, too, can contribute, and contribute heavily, to the solution of our problem. But he cannot do it by exhibiting ignorance of American history, or ignorance of world geography, or ignorance of the history of European colonial management. You may be quite sure that those American businessmen who know these subjects are under no illusion that private business can solve this problem. . . .

17

There is a frightful obstacle to getting a common government by mutual consent. I am not speaking of the world community's many races or its many languages or its national jealousies or its different religions. Racism seems either silly or vicious to more and more men today—even white men, who have had a vested economic interest in racism. Language barriers are awkward, but they can be surmounted. Nationalism is violent today in countries that are fighting for national independence, particularly in Asia and Africa. But in the independent countries, nationalist feeling is beginning to look to more and more people like comic opera, and this for two simple reasons. First, economic nationalism squeezes hard on a great many people. Second, national governments can no longer offer their peoples even reasonable military security, not even by taxing them half to death and conscripting their strongest young men to boot. As to religion, there are not many parts of the planet where people are determined to force their religion on their neighbors or to refuse to live under a common government with neighbors of a different creed.

None of these obstacles to a common government is decisive. There is a much more serious obstacle. It is an obstacle that the philosopher Plato was speaking of when he said that most cities were not really one city but two—the city of the rich and the city of the poor. In the last century a Conservative prime minister of Britain wrote a novel under the subtitle, "The Two Nations"—the rich and the poor. History suggests that wherever a community is too sharply divided between rich and poor, one of two things happens: either the "city of the poor" rises and overthrows the other "city" or this other city imposes order by force on the city of the poor. If our generation were to set up a common government for the world community, before it moved aggressively to revive the world's economy, one of these two fates would sorely threaten it. In contemporary terms, the world government would be under heavy pressure to go Communist or to go Fascist.

The City of the Rich, based largely on the economy of the United States, sees this problem less clearly than does the City of the Poor—the hungry, half-naked, diseased, and mostly colored millions. If Americans propose to them a common government "to keep law and order" in the world-wide City of Man, to control "the bomb," and let us all enjoy life in peace, then those who are not enjoying life and who fear the bomb much less than they fear famine may well be unmoved. There is a lot of ease and abundance in America for a bomb to destroy, so we go to bed at night asking, "How can we sleep?" But they ask, "When do we eat?" Those questions measure a yawning gulf between the Two Cities—cities that really do need one government. It is true that man shall not live by bread

alone, but should this particular statement by Jesus Christ be quoted between meals to those who have had no meal at all?

Another way to state the problem of the Two Cities is to say that though law and order have to be *enforced* in human communities by means of government, no government enforces them for long that does not bother about justice. Today the City of the Poor might well wish to know whether the City of the Rich really cares, before setting up political housekeeping with it. Nothing would reassure it more quickly or surely than a frontal assault by the whole City on the unspeakable misery of most of its inhabitants. That is why President Truman's "Point Four" remarks, even though timid and vague, briefly stirred not only the consciences of Americans but the hopes of men throughout the planet. The discussion which followed those remarks has now bogged down, because the false assumptions on which it was based could not sustain its weight. So "Point Four" has become a gimmick in the cold war against Russia; and the problem back of the cold war, back of the Korean catastrophe, and even back of World War III, if that should break out before these words are in print—that problem has not been tackled.

How can it be tackled? Not by the American government, for reasons we have seen. Not by American business, for reasons even easier to see. Not by the common government of mankind, for mankind has no common government. The nearest thing to a common government that mankind has is the United Nations. Can the United Nations tackle the job?

18

It might. It would stand a better chance if its delegates were elected directly by the people of the world and not appointed by national governments with national policies. It would stand a better chance if it had some way of getting the money it needs, directly from the people and not by begging it from the national governments. This way, appropriations remain laughably small, and many governments stay in arrears even on these small appropriations. *And False Assumption Number Four is that the job can be done on the basis of small yearly appropriations.*

World War II cost mankind, in money spent and property destroyed, about two trillion dollars—plus blood and tears. Mankind gives the United Nations each year about one fifty-thousandth part of that sum. Still, it is a straw in the wind that the job we are talking about is one of the few things America, Russia, and every other member government in the United Nations have agreed on, even though their appropriations for that job have been absurdly small. The chief trouble with the United Nations has been that, on the one hand, too many people thought it could prevent war by police action, which its organization almost guaranteed it could not

do; and too few people realized that it could, in economic and social matters, do a very great deal. As a result, we fastened our eyes on the Security Council, where the name-calling goes on; we starved the Economic and Social Council; and we starved its specialized agencies. But even if we took "Ecosoc" and the agencies off their diet of peanuts and gave them money to work with, there would still remain a tough problem.

"Ecosoc," like the rest of the United Nations, is a creature of national governments, responsible to national governments, and therefore subject to the whims of national governments. It must live from hand to mouth, as national governments let it. But the job of getting the world's economy in motion must be done by a stronger, more stable agency than that. I believe that this country's experience with the Tennessee Valley Authority is the key to our problem.

Americans who happen not to travel in foreign countries cannot, I believe, imagine the prestige that TVA enjoys on our planet. Foreigners were not so impressed by Hiroshima and Nagasaki as we Americans were. They were shocked, but they did not admire. The destruction of those two cities by atomic bombs appears to many foreigners still as a moral stain on our fair name. This judgment is not restricted to pro-Communists. Foreigners are shocked, but often quite unimpressed, by our perpetual talk of the frightful new weapons we are preparing. They cannot see how an atomic war could possibly solve any of the world's basic problems. The overwhelming majority do not go into ecstasies over the capitalist system or the American way of life or free enterprise or the profit incentive.

But what they do profoundly admire is the way we strengthened the economy of the Tennessee Valley. In their minds the initials TVA go with the initials USA. For TVA, though limited to a single river system, indeed to only one tributary river system of the vast Mississippi Valley, nevertheless laid down the basic pattern for the frontal assault on poverty. The capital that was needed for the job did not come out of forced labor in the Tennessee Valley under the discipline of a dictatorship. It came out of public funds advanced from the capital accumulation of the entire American community of which Tennessee was one "underdeveloped" part. Finally, the prosperity it brought about in the Valley stepped up the economy of the entire American community.

19

Now it is worth noting that "the Authority" that did this job was not a regular government department, subject to political patronage and battling every year for government appropriations. True, it was a creature of Congress; it had to report annually to Congress; it could even be abolished at any time by Congress. But as long as it was not abolished, it could be decisive and flexible and responsible like a good private corpora-

tion. It could buy, sell, negotiate contracts, and sign on the dotted line. Also, it was a *public* corporation, and, although it might make "profits" on a given deal, it could not distribute those profits to private stockholders. The stockholders were the American people, who had put up the initial capital. The "board of directors" were the Congress, elected by the stockholders. And the policy the directors had laid down for management was to make the Valley prosper, in a way that no private corporation could.

Truly, this Authority was an extraordinary invention. It was something of a hybrid. It was "political" in the best sense: it was ultimately responsible to the people. But it followed many of the practices for which we praise sound business and for the lack of which we denounce government bureaucracies. To countless foreigners, it is the American answer to the challenge of communism and the only genuine alternative to the social revolution the Communists claim is necessary. As an American answer, it is much more impressive to foreigners than the atomic bomb is. The atomic bomb looks to them like an effort to get out of answering at all, like an attempt to dodge the world problem which the Russians claim they are solving. Let us never forget that the rest of the world is determined that their most urgent problem shall be solved, not dodged.

20

A "TVA of the World" may sound to the reader like big-time talk—too big-time. Anyhow, a World Development Authority may not be the precise gadget to do the job. I did not write this book to persuade people it was. All I hope for is to have us look squarely at mankind's most urgent problem and to talk about it realistically, not on the false assumptions that communism is the problem, or that "Point Four" should be run from Washington with money put up by the American taxpayer, or that the whole program should be left to American private business, or that it can be done by small, uncertain, yearly appropriations to the UN. If we drop these false assumptions, if we start looking at the real facts about the human race, if we talk about them as members of the human race, if we stop planning *for* the rest of the race and start planning *with* them, we will find a way to handle this business. It is a vaster problem than any our grandfathers faced, but we have vaster means of solving it. There are people who dread hard jobs and who want to solve their problems with grandfather's means. But life is not like that. The same revolution in science and industrial techniques that put the One World problem in our laps put the means of handling it at our feet. We ought either to imitate the courage of our forefathers, who tackled big problems for their day, or else stop praising them. Praise by cowards or sluggards is an insult to heroes.

Besides, is it so much vaster than the problem of defeating Hitler in World War II? It should certainly be a lot cheaper. Walter Reuther estimates that our annual share of financing this peace offensive ought to be approximately one-hundredth of what World War II cost us. Senator McMahon proposed in February that our share ought to be ten billions a year. Senator McMahon shrinks from adding that much to our budget unless we first get international agreements that would let us cut our arms program by that much. Yet, a few months later, he and his fellow-senators voted that extra ten billions quickly to finance our intervention in Korea and permit other military interventions. The costs of World War III, toward which we are now heading, would make ten billion dollars look like chicken-feed.

No, we are still arguing about "Point Four," which is today a gimmick in the cold war like "The Voice of America" or civilian defense. Gimmicks with a ten-billion-dollar price tag are too high, even for the U. S. What we should be arguing about is not a gimmick for our present foreign policy, but a new and quite different policy. We should be shifting from the policy of "containing Russia" to the policy of joining the human race and doing our share to see that the human race dwells on this planet with decency and dignity. Once we make up our minds that that is our policy, we will call in the neighbors and with them find a way.

Nevertheless, although the facts which make it necessary to call in the neighbors do not depend on any single proposal of how we and the neighbors might do the job, it is not too early for each man among us to use whatever imagination he has and to talk out loud about what he is able to imagine. If you now agree that the neighbors must be called in, that the job must be done, it matters very little indeed whether you agree with the rest of this pamphlet. Because from now on I shall be imagining; and I hope that you can imagine something better. I wish that every man or woman who reads these words would think of something better, and talk about it with his neighbors. Then we would get some action. And the world would begin to hope again.

21

Anyhow, here goes. The modern world is largely governed by corporations. For example, even before Pearl Harbor, over two-thirds of the manufacturing facilities in the United States were owned and operated by only two hundred and fifty giant corporations. Between the two world wars, many big corporations made trade agreements, called "cartels," to control world markets. Now, because these giant corporations are run for private profit and often act against the public interest, the American government sometimes hales them into court. Moreover, our policy in Occupied Germany—or perhaps our publicly declared policy—was to break

up the international cartels. The fact remains that, though the modern corporation often acts irresponsibly, dangerously, and oppressively, it is the chief modern device for getting big jobs done.

Congress recognized this when it set up TVA as a *public* corporation, responsible to Congress. This pamphlet suggests that the UN set up a public corporation to do a job for the people of the world and that they give it so much money that men and women in every country will know that they mean business and can deliver. On the day that money was set aside, and long before the WORLD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY could plan its wise investment, hope would sweep the world where now fear holds it paralyzed. That day would be one of the great historic dates of the present century.

I would like to add a second suggestion. Voting for representatives in the "Peoples' World Assembly," which Mr. Reuther has proposed, would be one way of participating. But going down in your jeans to support their recommendations is another. I would like to see the Assembly issue long-term World Peace Bonds, including low-priced "baby bonds," that men and women everywhere could buy. I should like to see the face of the bond declare that the only "interest" the bond paid was the interest of all of us—world peace. I believe the human race would invest. I believe you and I would invest. Millions of men and women have agonized as they watched the third World War approach. Millions of men and women have cried in their hearts, or out loud to their neighbors: "This is madness, but what can *I* do?" I would have us answer that question. The funds thus raised would allow the Peoples' World Assembly to make loans to the Development Authority without waiting for the UN and the national governments it now depends on—even for the salaries of its own personnel. I think men and women everywhere would heave a sigh of relief that they had an agency of their own choosing, able to use their own money, to tackle the human problem which national governments are so slow to tackle.

If we did these things, I think the national governments would find out which way the wind is really blowing; they would quickly fall in line.

22

National governments need an example. The human race is engaged in a shoot-the-chute toward world-wide catastrophe. The brutal fact is that, as the world's economy has knit mankind closer and closer together, national governments begin to look like local governments—with each local government running an armed camp. That is why so much military policy today affects us as if Delaware should suddenly arm to the teeth, arrest spies, shriek that it was being encircled by New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, and start playing footsie with Connecticut and

Ohio. It is like one of those musical comedies in the movies, with the scene laid in some unknown, Balkan Ruritania, a comedy in which the Grand Duke (who loves the chambermaid) has an army of extras that march across the stage and then dash back again behind scenes so as to look like an army without unduly burdening the company's payroll. And international politics since V-J Day really would be comedy if they would quit using live ammunition. It is the slaughter that keeps us from laughing and makes us weep.

But the Peoples' World Assembly, which Mr. Reuther has wisely imagined, would win the respect which national governments are so rapidly losing. It could substitute statesmanship for "politics," because its assignment would be real. Its "bold, new program" could be really bold, where Mr. Truman's was condemned by nationalism to be timid. True, it could not be "new," any more than Mr. Truman's could be, because economic development programs have been carried on for some years now and have created a rich pool of technical experience. They have merely been too small to meet our enormous need.

The Reuther program could appeal to the common sense and human decency in the American people and silence our prattle, at congressional hearings on ECA or "Point Four," about "enlightened self-interest."

I may be blinded by the love I bear my own country, but I have seen no people in my travels more willing to do their share. And when a barn in the neighborhood catches fire, we do not stand around thinking about our enlightened self-interest before we pitch in with the neighbors. If lately we have seemed to, that is because we did not grasp the problem —a problem that was equally theirs and ours.

23

But the UN is dominated by local national governments that own it, pay for it, and want to use it for their local purposes. Suppose it is not allowed to set up a World Development Authority. What shall we do? Will anybody act?

Well, I have wondered why the churches have not acted. Intermittently, for nearly two thousand years, they have cleared land, taught farming and medicine, as well as just plain reading and writing. If asked whether they were helping Russia or hurting her, they could answer—I trust without embarrassment—that they were acting under orders from Jesus Christ and were prepared to take whatever consequences might follow. But, unless they were prepared to make the Great Proposal in such a form that a self-respecting Moslem, or Buddhist, or indeed atheist, could accept it, I doubt if they would get much help. Are they prepared to do that?

I have wondered, too, why a small group of men, from many differ-

ent countries but internationally known and trusted, did not meet somewhere in the world and issue the call to action. They could then set up the public corporation that could get things going.

Finally, I have wondered whether my generation has enough moral energy to set up the needed Authority by whatever method. It is so much easier to compete than to co-operate, so much easier to fight than to build. Our generation has been partially barbarized by two world wars and by planning for a third. If our statesmen are pygmies, I suppose we have ourselves to thank: we chose them—more or less.

In any case, it is not certain that our America is the place to launch such an idea. In 1776 we were a new and daring—and, in the eyes of others, dangerous and revolutionary—country, defying Europe's feudal traditions and declaring to the whole of mankind that all men are born free and equal. When we use words like that today, they do not carry conviction to the rest of mankind. Of all the industrially advanced countries, we are easily the most conservative, the most fearful of change, certainly the least interested in the idea of equality. Perhaps it is merely that we are the richest. Perhaps we must suffer dreadful catastrophe before we can share again the hopes of the less fortunate—that is, of the rest of the human race. Our sense of moral superiority and of our own benevolence cuts us off from the others. Maybe somebody else must make the Great Proposal, must call in the neighbors from all the Mighty Neighborhood.

24

And yet—and yet, we ought to be able to make it somehow. It was we who said that all are free and equal. It was our separate sovereign states that first showed the world how to build common political and economic institutions to handle the problems of all the men and women in them, regardless of what nation they live in. It was we who developed mass production to put goods in the hands of millions. It was our economy that men from every continent on earth built with their brain and brawn. It was when speaking of us that a great German immigrant, Carl Schurz, declared that America was a colony of mankind. The wealth of the world is concentrated in our land. Two world wars that very nearly shattered the rest of the world's economies put only a forced draft under ours, here beyond broad oceans which the weapons of neither war could pass. Must this incredible good luck leave us blind, self-righteous, belligerent, threatening to "get tough"? Or shall it wake us up from the dream-world of nationalism and conservatism in which we live, give us the will to open our eyes to the world of fact, to the world we really live in, a world which—despite the fear and frustration of these wasted years—is still one world?

If we do open our eyes, we shall quickly see what needs doing, and we shall ourselves call in the neighbors. We shall say to them: "We have

all been wasting time and wasting words. We have been wasting lives. We have been wasting the chance to act like men. Let us take common counsel for our common cause."

25

But let's be frank with ourselves. We have of late been forming habits of fear, not hope. We may go on as we have gone: arming, taxing ourselves, crying that the godless are at our gates. If we do, I think that all mankind will be heavily punished, the guiltless with the guilty. Part of our punishment will be that, refusing to see the world's oneness or our common destiny, we shall suffer each in his separate nation. A further collapse in the world economy would bring famine in India but not to us. It would bring us unemployment instead, and on a vast scale—poverty in the midst of plenty. We would have sent our sons all over the globe to put down revolution, and we would probably be rewarded in the long run by revolution at home. I have not urged this as the reason for acting, because I do not believe that the best reason for health is to escape the painful symptoms of disease. The best reason for health is this: a healthy man is a complete and proper man.

But if we insist on treating symptoms, I think that mankind—and particularly that little portion of it called American—is in for very rough weather. Perhaps a third World War may be needed to teach us. If so, when it is over, we may still arise and act. The tools to work with may by then have been nearly destroyed and the work may by that time be much harder to do. But there is a chance that we may have more wisdom too. And wisdom, armed with simple tools, might succeed where rich folly had failed.

READING

How do the title and first paragraph set the tone of this article? Where, later in the article, are the main concepts of the title and first paragraph introduced again?

What purpose is served by the "let's pretend" game of the third and fourth sections?

What main elements do the second and third false assumptions have in common? Upon what "true assumption" (as contrasted with the false assumptions) is the "TVA of the World" based?

INTERPRETATION

How valid is Barr's analogy of the rich suburb surrounded by slums? To what extent do you agree with him that human misery, not communism, is the basic problem of the world? Is it a fifth false assumption to believe that communism offers anything to depressed populations that democratic capitalism does not offer?

What do you think of Barr's proposal for lessening the disparity between our standard of living and that of the rest of the world? What objections could you make to his proposal?

This pamphlet first appeared in 1950. Have the intervening years weakened its argument or strengthened it?

Has Barr's program real validity? Or is it merely a stopgap in a hopeless situation?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Reformer
Philip Murray and Stringfellow Barr
TVA of the World
Our Brothers' Keepers

THE NYLON WAR*

by David Riesman

David Riesman (1909–), a graduate of the Harvard Law School, is professor of sociology at the University of Chicago. He has written *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) and many articles in professional journals.

Today—August 1, 1957—the Nylon War enters upon the third month since the United States began all-out bombing of the Soviet Union with consumers' goods, and it seems time to take a retrospective look. Behind the initial raid of June 1 were years of secret and complex preparations, and an idea of disarming simplicity: that if allowed to sample the riches of America, the Russian people would not long tolerate masters who gave them tanks and spies instead of vacuum cleaners and beauty parlors. The Russian rulers would thereupon be forced to turn out consumers' goods, or face mass discontent on an increasing scale.

The Nylon War was conceived by an army colonel—we shall call him "Y"—whose name cannot yet be revealed. Working with secret funds which the Central Intelligence Agency had found itself unable to spend, Y organized shortly after World War II the so-called "Bar Harbor Project," the nucleus of what, some five years later, became "Operation Abundance," or, as the press soon dubbed it, the "Nylon War." After experiments with rockets and balloons, it was concluded that only cargo planes—navigating, it was hoped, above the range of Russian radar—could successfully deliver the many billion dollars worth of consumer goods it was planned to send. Nevertheless, when Y and his group first broached their plans to a few selected Congressional leaders in the winter of 1951 they were dismissed as hopelessly academic. America had neither the goods nor the planes nor the politics to begin such an undertaking. But in the fall of 1952, with the country bogged down in a seemingly endless small-scale war in Korea, Y's hopes revived. For one thing, the cargo planes needed for the job were beginning to become available.

* Originally published in *Common Cause*. Copyright, 1951, by David Riesman. Reprinted in the *Christian Century* (May 2, 1951). The present version includes revisions made by the author for this book. Printed by the kind permission of Mr. David Riesman.

Moreover, a certain amount of overordering by the Armed Services, panicky over Korea, had created a stockpile of consumer goods. More important, the Administration, having locked up all known and many suspected Communists in one of the old camps for Japanese aliens, had still not convinced the country that it was sufficiently anti-Soviet, though at the same time many Americans wanted peace but did not dare admit it.

This is not the place to recount the political maneuverings that preceded Eisenhower's success in securing a two billion dollar initial appropriation from Congress, nor the Potomac maneuverings that led to the recruitment of top-flight production and merchandising talent from civilian life. Our story begins with Eisenhower going before Congress to secure authority to "bring the benefits of American technology to less fortunate nations" by round-the-clock bombing, the day after the news of the first raids hit the American public.

The planners of the Bar Harbor Project had staked American prestige, their professional futures, and the lives of six thousand airmen on the belief that the Soviets would not know of these first flights nor meet them with armed resistance. When the opening missions were accomplished without incident, permitting Eisenhower to make his appeal, Washington was immensely relieved; but when the second wave of planes met with no resistance either, Washington was baffled. It was at first assumed that the Soviet radar network had again simply failed to spot the high-flying planes —cruising at 48,000 feet and self-protected from radar by some still presumably secret device. We now know that what actually happened was a division of opinion in the Kremlin—we can piece the story together from intelligence reports and from clues in *Pravda*. A faction, led by foreign trade chief Mikoyan, maintained that the scheme was a huge hoax, designed to stampede Russia into a crusade against a fairy-tale—and so to make her the laughing stock of the world. He counselled, wait and see. And, indeed, it *was* a fairy-tale for secret police boss Kruglov, who argued that the raids had never taken place, but that reports of them had been faked by some Social Democratic East Germans who had somehow gotten access to the communications networks. When this idea was exploded, Kruglov counselled shooting the planes down, on the ground that they were simply a screen spying out plants for an atomic attack. Malenkov himself believed with repentant economist Varga that American capitalism had reached so critical a point that only through forcible gifts overseas could the Wall Street ruling clique hope to maintain its profits and dominance. Coupled with these divisions of opinion, which stalemated action, was the fear in some quarters that America might welcome attacks on its errand-of-mercy planes as a pretext for the war of extermination openly preached by some only mildly rebuked American leaders.

At any rate, the confusion in the Politburo was more than mirrored by the confusion in the target cities caused by the baptismal raids. Over 600 C-54's streamed high over Rostov, and another 200 over Vladivostok, dropped their cargoes, and headed back to their bases in the Middle East and Japan. By today's standard these initial forays were small-scale—200,000 pairs of nylon hose, 4,000,000 packs of cigarettes, 35,000 Toni-wave kits, 20,000 yo-yos, 10,000 wrist watches and a number of odds and ends from P-X overstock. Yet this was more than enough to provoke frenzied rioting as the inhabitants scrambled for a share. Within a few hours after the first parcels had fallen, the roads into the target cities were jammed. Road blocks had to be thrown up around the cities, and communications with the outside were severed. The fast-spreading rumors of largesse from above were branded "criminally insane," and their source traced to the machinations of the recently purged "homeless cosmopolitan Simeon Osnavitch (Rosenbloom)."

But the propaganda of the deed proved stronger than the propaganda of the word. As Odessa, Yakutsk, Smolensk, and other cities became targets of aggressive generosity, as Soviet housewives saw with their own eyes American stoves, refrigerators, clothing, and toys, the Kremlin was forced to change its line and, ignoring earlier denials, to give the raids full negative publicity. David Zaslavsky's article in the June 10 *Izvestia* heralded the new approach. Entitled "The Mad Dogs of Imperialism Foam at the Mouth," he saw the airlift as harbinger of America's economic collapse. "Unable because of the valiant resistance of the peace-loving democracies to conquer foreign markets, America's Fascist plutocracy is now reduced to giving away goods. . . ." Taking another line, *Red Star* argued that to accept American consumer goods would make stalwart Russians as decadent as rich New Yorkers.

However, the Russian people who could get access, either directly or through the black market that soon arose, to American goods seemed not to fear decadence. Again, there was a change of line. Falling back on a trick learned during Lend-Lease, it was claimed that the goods were Russian-made, and *Pravda* on June 14 stated that the Toni-wave kit had been invented by Pavlov before World War I. However Colonel Y's staff had anticipated this altogether routine reaction. On June 17, the target cities of that day—Kiev, Stalingrad, Magnitogorsk—received their wares wrapped in large cartoons of Malenkov bending over, in a somewhat undignified pose, to pick up a dropped Ansco camera. This forced still another switch of line. On June 20 Kruglov went on the air to announce that the Americans were sending over goods poisoned by atomic radiation, and all papers and broadcasts carried scare stories about people who had died from using Revlon or Schick shavers. And indeed booby traps

(planted by MVD) succeeded in killing a number of overeager citizens. For a while, this permitted specially-recruited Party members to gather up the goods and take them to headquarters for alleged de-radiation.

But here something unexpected occurred. We know from a few people who managed to escape to the West that a number of Party elements themselves became disaffected. Asked to turn in all American goods, they held on to some possessions secretly—there was a brisk underground trade in fake Russian labels. Sometimes wives, having gotten used to the comforts of Tampax and other disappearing items, would hide them from their more ascetic husbands; children of Party members cached pogo sticks and even tricycles. Thus it came about that when Party members were ordered to join "decontamination" squads the depots were re-entered at night and portable items taken. By the beginning of July, all attempts to deceive the people had only made matters worse; things were getting out of hand.

Faring badly in the "War," the Kremlin turned to diplomacy. On July 5 at U.N. headquarters Vishinsky described the airlift as "an outrage remindful of Hitlerite aggression" and, invoking Art. 39 of the U.N. Charter, he called on the Security Council to halt the "shameful depredations of the American warmongers." Lodge replied that "these gifts are no more or less than a new-fashioned application of ancient principles," and the Russian resolution was defeated 9–2. The next step occurred in Washington, when Ambassador Panyushkin handed Secretary Dulles a sharply worded note warning that "should these present outrages continue, the U.S.S.R. will have no recourse but to reply in kind."

Seattle was the first American city to learn the meaning of the Soviet warning as on July 15 a hundred Russian heavy bombers (presumably from bases in the Kuriles) left behind them 15,000 tins of caviar, 500 fur coats, and 80,000 copies of Stalin's speeches on the minorities question. When the Russian planes came, followed in by American jets, many were apprehensive, but as the counter-attack had been anticipated it proved possible to prevent incidents in the air and panic on the ground. Since then, Butte, Minneapolis, Buffalo, and Moscow, Idaho, have been added to the list of America's front-line cities. But in quantity and quality the counter-offensive has been unimpressive. Searing vodka, badly styled mink coats (the only really selling item), undependable cigarette lighters —these betray a sad lack of know-how in production and merchandising. In an editorial, "Worse than Lend-Lease," the N. Y. *Daily News* has charged that the Nylon War gives the Soviets free lessons in the secrets of America's success, but truly conservative papers like the *Herald-Tribune* see the comparative showing of Americans and Russians as a world demonstration of the superiority of free enterprise.

It is clear, at any rate, that free enterprise has not suffered much of a

jolt—nor, indeed, has the mounting inflation been much reduced—by the Russian campaign. To be sure, the massive air-borne shipments of caviar have made luxury grocers fear inventory losses and Portugal, heavily dependent on the American anchovy market, has been worried. But these pin-pricks are nothing to what is now becoming evident on the Russian side—namely the imminent collapse of the economy. For the homeland of centralized economic planning is experiencing its own form of want in the midst of plenty. Soviet consumers, given a free choice between shoddy domestic merchandise and airlift items, want nothing to do with the former and in a score of fields Russian goods go unwanted as the potential buyer dreams of soon owning an American version. Soviet housewives, eager to keep up with American-supplied "Joneses," pester their local stores, often to the point of creating local shortages—indeed, the American refrigerators have created demands, not only for electricity, but also for many foods which can now be stored (and hoarded).

Much of this disruption is the result of careful planning by the Bar Harbor Project's division of Economic Dislocation. The Division, for example, early began studies of Russian power distribution, and saw to the landing of 60-cycle radios, shavers, toasters, milking machines, in 60-cycle areas; 25-cycle appliances in 25-cycle areas, and so on, especially with an eye to areas of power-shortage or competition with critical industries. In cooperation with G. E., methods were worked out by which the Russian donees could plug their appliances, with appropriate transformers, directly into high voltage or street power lines; thus simply shutting off house current could not save the Russian utilities from overload. Similarly, drawing on the American monopolistic practice of tie-in sales, goods were dropped whose use demanded other items in short supply—oil ranges, for instance, were dropped throughout the Baku fields. Of course, mistakes were made and in one or two cases bottlenecks in the Russian economy were relieved, as when some containers were salvaged to repair a tin shortage of which the planners had not been advised.

But it is not only on the production end that the raids have been disruptive. Last Friday's raid on Moscow—when 22,000 tons of goods were dropped—may be taken as an illustration. For the first time General Twining's airmen tackled—and successfully solved—the knotty engineering problem of dropping jeeps (complete with 150 gallons of gasoline and directions in simple Russian). So skillfully was the job done that half the three hundred vehicles parachuted down landed directly on the Kremlin's doorstep—in the center of Red Square. The raid was given wide advance publicity through the Voice and leaflets and when the great day came Moscow's factories were deserted as people fought for roof-top perches; in addition, an estimated 250,000 collective farmers swarmed into the city. In fact, as people drift from place to place hoping that their ship

may fly in, the phrase "rootless cosmopolite" at last assumes real meaning. Economists, talking learnedly of "multipliers," calculate that Russian output is dropping 3 per cent a month.

The Kremlin has reacted in the only way it knows, by a series of purges. Sergei Churnik, erstwhile head of the cigarette trust, is on trial for "deliberate wrecking and economic treason." Bureaucrats live in terror lest their region or their industry be next disrupted by the American bombardment, and they waver between inactivity and frantic Stakhanovite shows of activity. These human tragedies testify to the growing fear in the Politburo concerning the long-run consequences of the American offensive. The tangible proofs of American prosperity, ingenuity, and generosity can no longer be gainsaid; and the new official line that Wall Street is bleeding America white in order to create scarcity and raise prices at home, while "believed," has little impact against the ever-mounting volume, and fascinating variety, of goods and rumors of goods. Can the capitalistic gluttons of privilege be such bad fellows if we, the Russians, are aided by them to enjoy luxuries previously reserved for the dachas of novelists and plant managers?

The Russian people, without saying so in as many words, are now putting a price on their collaboration with the regime. The price—"goods instead of guns." For Russia's industrial plant, harassed by the rapidly growing impact of Operation Abundance, cannot supply both, let alone carry on the counter-offensive against America. Intelligence reports speak of scheduled production cutbacks varying from 25 per cent on tanks to 75 per cent on artillery; it is symptomatic that washing machines, designed to compete with the American Bendixes which are being dropped in ever-increasing numbers, will soon start rolling off the assembly lines of the great Red October Tank Works—after its former manager had been shot for asserting that conversion to peacetime production could not be achieved in less than two years.

Meanwhile, diplomatic moves are under way—so, at least, the Alsop brothers report—to liquidate the Nylon War. It is obvious why the Russian leaders are prepared to make very considerable concessions in the satellite countries, in China, and in Indo-China in order to regain the strategic initiative in their domestic affairs. But on the American side the willingness of many to listen to Russian overtures is based on the success, rather than the failure, of the campaign. One sees a repetition of 1940 as the Washington *Times-Herald* and the *Daily Worker* join hands in attacking Operation Abundance, the former calling it "an international WPA," the latter arguing "you can't fight ideas with goods." Addressing the Stanford Alumni Club of Los Angeles, Herbert Hoover spoke for millions in observing that the monthly cost of the airlift has already exceeded the entire Federal budget for the year 1839. Still another tack has been

taken by Senators who want the airlift to continue, but with different targets; some, insisting that charity begins at home, have wanted free goods landed on their districts; others have supported the claims of Japan, the Philippines, or Franco. Still others fear that many of the airlift items could be reconverted in some way for use by the Russian war machine; they are especially opposed to the jeep delivery program, despite reports it is wreaking havoc with the gasoline supply. And the House Un-American Affairs Committee has charged that trade secrets are being delivered to Russian spies by Red homosexual officials and professors disguised as plane pilots.

These are the obvious enemies, and against them stand some obvious friends of the Nylon War. Both AFL and CIO, now in their eighth round of wage increases, vigorously support the program, though it is rumored that the Railroad Brotherhoods have done so only in return for a fact-finding board's support of a 14-hour week. Farmers have become reconciled by the promise that bulk agricultural products will soon move over the aerial transmission belt—in part to encourage the wanderings of Russian farmers. The business community is divided, with the CED, Juan Trippe, and Baruch leading the supporters of the airlift.[1] But it would be a mistake to assume that support of Operation Abundance springs only from hopes of material gain. The renewed fight against oppression and want, the excitement of following the raids in maps and betting pools, the ridiculousness of the Russian response—all these things have made many millions of Americans seem less anxious than they have been since the days in October 1950 when it seemed as if the Korean War would be quickly concluded.

Indeed, it is just this loss of tension which has given rise to much of the covert opposition to the Nylon War, as distinguished from the overt opposition already discussed. On the one hand, certain leaders are frightened that the Russian dictatorship may indeed be overthrown—as Colonel Y in his more optimistic moments had ventured to hope. This is thought to raise the possibility of all sorts of chaotic movements developing in Central and Eastern Europe, and even further west—Franco, for instance, feels threatened at the loss of his "enemy," and has offered to act as mediator in the Nylon War. On the other hand, it has become increasingly difficult for American politicians to frighten the American public

[1] It goes without saying that there are many fights within pressure groups as to *what* the airlift shall carry—and ideological considerations that are not confined to the Soviet side. Thus, the Committee Against Juvenile Delinquency has registered strong protests against sending comic books. More serious issues revolve around the Planned Parenthood League's campaign to get contraceptives included in the airlift items. In addition to humanitarian arguments, the claim is made that this will reverse the demographic trend now so favorable to Russia; the League's slogan is "Give them the tools and they will do the job." Walter Lippmann predicts a Rome-Moscow axis if the League should win out.

about Russia: the once-feared monolith now appears as almost a joke, with its crude poster-and-caviar reprisals, its riots over stockings, soap, Ronsons, and other gadgets which Americans regard in matter-of-fact fashion. The sharp drop in war sentiment in the United States has resulted in psychological and even actual unemployment for a number of people.

What do the coming months hold? It is significant that this depends almost entirely on the outcome of the American domestic struggle: the Nylon War has altered the whole power-complex which, as the Korean War dragged on, still heavily favored Russia. It is now Russia, not America, whose resources are overcommitted, whose alliances are overstrained. In fact, Mao's visit to Moscow at the end of July seems to have been attended with apprehension lest he ask America to cut Red China in on Operation Abundance—at a price, of course.

Meanwhile, Operation Abundance marches on, solving technical problems of incredible complexity. The latest move is the perfection of an ordering system whereby Russians can "vote" for the commodities they most want, according to a point system, by the use of radio-sending equipment, battery-run, with which we have provided them. The commodities available will be described over the Voice of America—now for the first time having something to "sell"—by Sears Roebuck-type catalogues, and by dropped samples in the case of soft goods. The method making it impossible for the Russian government effectively to jam this two-way communication of distributor and consumer is still the great secret of the Nylon War.

READING

Describe the tone of the essay? How does the tone enhance the effectiveness? Are there any lapses in it? Is the point of view consistent?

What incidental satire on American institutions and people does Riesman include? on Russian institutions and people?

Do the last three paragraphs have the same "loss of tension" that is reported for the country? If so, should they have been omitted or rewritten?

INTERPRETATION

Though this is a satiric fantasy, do you find elements of truth in it? Would it perhaps work after all? What would the American public say about it?

If American objections could be overcome and if the plan were activated, do you think the Russians would react in the way Riesman anticipates? How typical are the various Russian rejoinders and reactions that Riesman describes?

How much is Riesman's solution in keeping with the basic problem as outlined by Barr? Does he make any of the false assumptions that Barr lists?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

CARE Packages

An Editorial in the Chicago *Tribune*

A Program of "The Voice of America"
Assumptions of Riesman

THE BATTLEGROUND IS HERE*

by Barbara Ward

Barbara Ward (1914–) is a writer on economics and political science. Born at York, England, she studied at the Sorbonne and at Oxford, where she took her doctor's degree in philosophy, politics, and economics. She is an editor of *The Economist* (London), and is author of *The West at Bay* and *Policy for the West.*

Conflict and struggle seem to stretch into the future for the Western world. Unrelenting, undeviating hostility between the Soviet world and the free fills up the years as we look ahead. This is a struggle from which there can be no easy disengagement. The best we can hope for is to be able to live with it. The worst we can fear is to perish with it in what Marx foresaw as "the common ruin of the contending classes." But, one way or another, it is our destiny. Like the fifth and the sixteenth century of our era, the twentieth century lives under a star of discord. We shall deal with ourselves and with our policies all the better for recognizing that fact.

The first need is to accept the fact of struggle. But the second is to try to recognize the type of struggle in which we are engaged, and to see as clearly as we can what our part in it should be. This may sound a rather silly statement since most people feel they know very clearly what sort of fight this is, and as for defining our part in it, well, isn't it to win?

Yet it is not so easy as it seems to judge the nature of a great international conflict, as it were, *from the inside.* Every combatant tends to feel that his cause is right and that his first duty is to win. A cause may seem one thing when you are engaged in it. But it may be quite another if you make the effort to consider it from outside. That this is a desirable procedure from time to time in democratic communities is suggested by the fact that anyone attempting the same judgment in a Communist state would probably be shot.

This judgment cannot, however, be made without reference to history—our chief comparative standard and guide to objectivity. Nothing is more dangerous to the survival of a free Western society than the increasing neglect of history in our teaching and our interests. Dictators always attempt to distort or abolish history. Nowhere has the rewriting and the manipulation of history been more avidly pursued than in Soviet Russia.

* From the *New York Times Magazine,* January 27, 1952. Copyright, 1952, by the New York Times, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the author and publisher.

In free society we are abolishing the past, not by rewriting it or forcefully suppressing it but simply by losing all interest in it. This is as fatal for a society as it is for a man to lose his memory. The record of the struggles and hopes and faiths and fears that have created our free society is as much a part of us as the experiences and beliefs and trials by which adult man reaches maturity of character and judgment. History will tell us at once that this is not the first great struggle between rival systems of thought and life. We have been here before. Our former conflicts have much to tell us about our present battle—much that is encouraging, but also much that should cause us alarm.

On one aspect at least of the conflict, history offers enormous reinforcement to the West. Whatever else they may claim, the Soviets cannot claim that they are struggling for freedom. It is significant that while their propaganda blares night and day with pleas for a people's peace and a people's democracy, the idea of a "people's freedom" seems to have fallen by the way. "True" peace is never off their lips. True justice, true science, true self-government—they all appear, but it begins to look as though even in the vocabulary of double-talk the theme of true liberty and true freedom is felt to be unsafe.

Thus, not perhaps so much by our own performance as by the bankruptcy of our opponents, we in the West are on the side of freedom. Our freedom may not be complete. It is endangered by fear and hysteria, and suspicion and the smear campaign. It is undermined by racial prejudice. It is halting when the attempt is made to spread it beyond the established communities of the Atlantic. Yet, compared with the organized thuggery of the Soviet police state, we are free indeed, and our struggle is in the most direct sense the struggle of free men against total dictatorship.

This struggle, however, is not new, and the first light that history can throw upon our conflict is to show how often the forces of freedom have had to confront the power of tyranny, and how, in the long balance of the centuries, it is tyranny that has not endured. Greece facing the Persians, Rome the power of Carthage, Charles Martel defeating the Arabs at Poitiers, Christian Europe holding back Turkish tyranny at Lepanto and before the gates of Vienna, Britain breaking the might of Spain, then the hegemony of France, the two German wars, and now the stand against Soviet power—the thread of Western history runs through them all, the cooperation of men and nations to stem the tide of fanatical power.

History is thus, in the first place, an immense reinforcement to the West in its struggle. The side of freedom can clearly draw on unusual reserves and sources of hidden strength. The law which seems to have dominated the evolution of our species—that agile, adaptable, and appar-

ently intensely vulnerable man has a staying power out of all proportion to the formidably encased and armored but static dinosaur—is true of the evolution of our Western society. The dinosaurs lie piled behind us—Hitler in his bunker, Napoleon on St. Helena, Philip of Spain in his lonely palace, the Sublime Porte moldering on the Bosporus. We should not be too fearful of the dinosaur who now stands in our path.

History, however, is not quite so reassuring when we leave the general issue of the conflict for freedom and ask instead why the issue has turned out as it has, why the tyrannies have faded and freedom has retained its strength.

One reason is undoubtedly the paralyzing boredom and monotony of complete tyranny. The emotional stimulus needed to conquer absolute power fades. There is nothing to put in its place except the perpetuation of power for power's sake. Again and again, in reading history the student must be struck by the weariness of the tyrants, particularly the tyrants of the third and fourth generations. And nothing can—by definition—grow up from below to relieve and re-create them.

The most dangerous weakness of tyranny lies, however, in its capacity for over-reaching itself, for allowing an overweening pride and confidence to undermine the foundations of its own power. If history has any lesson to teach at all, it is that over-ambition, the state of exultation which the Greeks called *hubris* and which Stalin once termed "dizziness through success," is the undoing of tyrannical power.

When the Romans laid down as a maxim of their authority that they must defeat the proud but spare the weak, they also laid bare one secret of the outstanding duration and stability of their *imperium.* But where dictatorship leads to inhuman tyranny, to deliberate flouting of the laws of God and man, to an aggressive pursuit of self-interest and national aggrandizement, to a pitiless trampling upon the rights and interests of everyone else—then the days of that tyranny are numbered.

From Hitler's assumption of power to his ignominious death among the ruins of Berlin there ran only twelve short years. It is true that no empire in history has equaled his for *hubris,* violence and squalor. The sentence fell on him with corresponding speed. But even where the space is longer, ultimately the verdict is the same. It is here more than at any other point that one can observe below the surface of history the deep workings of a moral law.

Up to a point, this reflection can be nothing but encouraging to the Western side. If ever a regime seemed to have succumbed to the disease of *hubris,* it is the Soviet regime today. The break between Yugoslavia and the Cominform turned not on doctrine or policy or strategy or eco-

nomics. It turned simply on the overweening arrogance of the Soviet Government and of its agents in Yugoslavia. Tito's crime was to have permitted his own portrait to appear as large as Stalin's on the obligatory banners of party rallies and marches.

Yugoslavia is only the most open and publicized example of a process at work throughout the new Soviet empire. Soviet pride is not confined only to the usual field of imperialists—the gross exploitation of subject peoples. It creeps into their manipulation of science, into their frenzied boasts of being innovators and discoverers—of atomic energy, of internal combustion, of aircraft, no doubt of umbrellas and suspenders as well—into their underlying claim to remake human nature and the face of the earth. If ever a man tempted God, it is the master of the Kremlin. And history shows that the terrible words "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" work with the fatality of the law of gravitation.

But this is not all that history has to record. Freedom has survived, but at times at the cost only of tremendous suffering and of near-extinction. To be certain that in the long run the Soviet system will not prevail may tell us very little about the short run. In the short run it is quite as much the shape and the decision of Western policy that will determine the event, and when we look to ourselves any confident judgment, any easy assumption of safety, should be quickly dispelled.

In the first place, freedom itself must falter if its supporters fall, like their adversary, into the way of arrogance, national exclusiveness and overconfidence. True, the extent to which the United States, the most powerful economy in human history, has avoided the sin of *hubris* is remarkable. Few great ventures have been conducted with the tact and consideration displayed in the Marshall Plan, and no great nation has ever been less inclined to impose its own imperial control. It is also true that the British Commonwealth has proved one of the least arrogant empires in history. Otherwise transition from colonialism to free association could never have been accomplished.

Yet it must be admitted that these two leading communities in the free world can, from time to time, show alarming tendencies to fall back into self-righteous national exclusivism, and, which is worse, they appear to have an unhappy gift of exciting the worst in each other in this respect. In the division of policy over the Far East, for instance, critics on both sides of the Atlantic have tended to fall into frenzies of self-righteousness —the Americans accusing Britain of the lowest motives in safeguarding its interests in China and clinging to its "outworn imperial control of Hong Kong."

Answers no less smug and sharp have speeded back from Britain,

whose "objective efforts to recognize the facts in China" are compared with the sinister, power-hungry machinations of Senator McCarthy and the China Lobby.

These failures in good sense and neighborliness are a reminder that, even if we in the West are on the side of freedom, freedom is not a geographical or physical fact, located by necessity in the Atlantic world. Freedom in society is a projection of moral tone in that society, and as that great American Judge Learned Hand once said: "Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law or court can ever do much to help it."

To say that arrogance and freedom are uncomfortable bedfellows is only another way of repeating the truth—which can be said in a thousand ways—that freedom is a state of mind and soul. Economic and material forces may play some part in widening its meaning, but the meaning must first be there. "Free capitalism" and "free commerce" have not really expanded the area of freedom in Asia because the preconditions —a generation of men devoted to liberty, responsibility and self-government—did not exist.

If, then, the precondition of freedom is the moral integrity, the social discipline, the virtue, in short, of the men and women in the free community, what grounds have we for complacency these days?

It is only some two years ago that the Lynskey Tribunal in Britain revealed a degree of petty corruption, of unsavory links between gambling agents and lesser politicians, of income tax evasion and "cuts for the boys," which suggested that on the fringe at least the old incorruptibility of the civil service was being eaten away. Nor do Americans need to be reminded of the links between criminals and politicians that have been exposed in recent investigations. The individuals involved are hardly sentinels of freedom, and any social order that throws them up must look to its foundations.

These are not idle warnings. If history pronounces an inexorable sentence upon arrogance and *hubris,* its judgment on corruption and moral laxity is no less stern. Roman power crumbled from within before it was overcome from without. It was in the midst of a great banquet that Babylon saw the writing on the wall. The lax, easygoing Britain of Walpole almost perished before it was reinvigorated by the discipline of Pitt and the first stirrings of the Evangelical revival. The France that fell in 1940 was still the country of Stavisky, the *république des camarades.*[1]

The record is clear, the verdict inescapable. Free society is on trial from without under the pressure of Soviet hostility. But the pressure within to relax standards, to forego responsibility, to take the easy path, is

[1] republic of comrades.

even more formidable and more difficult, because less obvious, to resist. Yet if the struggle between the slave world and the free develops—as it shows signs of doing—into a long contest in which patience and staying power will count as much as guns and tanks, the issue may be decided not on the frontiers but in the very heart of the free world. The battlefield of honest government, civic responsibility, social conscience and human generosity will be the area where the real battle is fought.

READING

How do the remarks on history (in the second section) serve as the basis for the whole essay?

In what way does Barbara Ward handle the transition from tyranny to *hubris?* from *hubris* in Russia to *hubris* in America?

Why does Barbara Ward use the word *hubris* instead of an English equivalent such as "overweening pride"? Look up the term, especially in connection with Greek tragedy. Are there advantages as well as disadvantages in its use?

INTERPRETATION

Compare the emphasis upon *hubris* in the essays of Barr and Ward. In your opinion, which is nearer the truth?

Barbara Ward says that "one can observe below the surface of history the deep workings of a moral law." To what extent is this moral approach toward past and contemporary history shared by Barr and Riesman? Do you think it is the correct approach?

Examine a reliable account of one of the events mentioned in the second paragraph from the end. Does Ward simplify too greatly here and elsewhere? If she does, is her main argument weakened?

As Ward presents the case, what can American citizens do to help the West win the struggle with communism? If her program is more comfortable than Barr's, is it therefore less good? But is ridding oneself of *hubris* harder than it seems, and may thinking that one does lead to a new variety of *hubris?*

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Hubris on the Campus
What I Can Do
Freedom at Home
Ward and Riesman
Moral Law in History

THE FAITH WE HOLD*

by Dwight D. Eisenhower

Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–), President of the United States, commanded the Allied Forces, European Theater of Operations, during World War II. After the war he became Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and from 1948 to 1952 was President of Columbia University. *Crusade in Europe* is his memoir of the war years.

My fellow citizens:

The world and we have passed the midway point of a century of continuing challenge. We sense with all our faculties that forces of good and evil are massed and armed and opposed as rarely before in history.

This fact defines the meaning of this day. We are summoned by this honored and historic ceremony to witness more than the act of one citizen swearing his oath of service, in the presence of God. We are called as a people to give testimony, in the sight of the world, to our faith that the future shall belong to the free.

Since this century's beginning, a time of tempest has seemed to come upon the continents of the earth. Masses of Asia have awakened to strike off shackles of the past. Great nations of Europe have fought their bloodiest wars. Thrones have toppled and their vast empires have disappeared. New nations have been born.

For our own country, it has been a time of recurring trial. We have grown in power and in responsibility. We have passed through the anxieties of depression and of war to a summit unmatched in man's history. Seeking to secure peace in the world, we have had to fight through the forests of the Argonne to the shores of Iwo Jima, and to the cold mountains of Korea.

In the swift rush of great events, we find ourselves groping to know the full sense and meaning of these times in which we live. In our quest of understanding, we beseech God's guidance. We summon all our knowledge of the past and we scan all signs of the future. We bring all our wit and all our will to meet the question:

How far have we come in man's long pilgrimage from darkness toward the light? Are we nearing the light—a day of freedom and of peace for all mankind? Or are the shadows of another night closing in upon us?

Great as are the preoccupations absorbing us at home, concerned as we are with matters that deeply affect our livelihood today and our vision of the future, each of these domestic problems is dwarfed by, and often even created by, this question that involves all humankind.

* President Eisenhower's Inaugural Address, January 20, 1953. Reprinted by permission.

This trial comes at a moment when man's power to achieve good or to inflict evil surpasses the brightest hopes and the sharpest fears of all ages. We can turn rivers in their courses, level mountains to the plains. Oceans and land and sky are avenues for our colossal commerce. Disease diminishes and life lengthens.

Yet the promise of this life is imperiled by the very genius that has made it possible. Nations amass wealth. Labor sweats to create—and turns out devices to level not only mountains but also cities. Science seems ready to confer upon us, as its final gift, the power to erase human life from this planet.

At such a time in history, we who are free must proclaim anew our faith.

This faith is the abiding creed of our fathers. It is our faith in the deathless dignity of man, governed by eternal moral and natural laws.

This faith defines our full view of life. It establishes, beyond debate, those gifts of the Creator that are man's inalienable rights, and that make all men equal in His sight.

In the light of this equality, we know that the virtues most cherished by free people—love of truth, pride of work, devotion to country—all are treasures equally precious in the lives of the most humble and of the most exalted.

The men who mine coal and fire furnaces, and balance ledgers, and turn lathes, and pick cotton, and heal the sick and plant corn—all serve as proudly and as profitably for America as the statesmen who draft treaties and the legislators who enact laws.

This faith rules our whole way of life. It decrees that we, the people, elect leaders not to rule but to serve. It asserts that we have the right to choice of our own work and to the reward of our own toil.

It inspires the initiative that makes our productivity the wonder of the world. And it warns that any man who seeks to deny equality among all his brothers betrays the spirit of the free and invites the mockery of the tyrant.

It is because we, all of us, hold to these principles that the political changes accomplished this day do not imply turbulence, upheaval or disorder. Rather this change expresses a purpose of strengthening our dedication and devotion to the precepts of our founding documents, a conscious renewal of faith in our country and in the watchfulness of a divine providence.

The enemies of this faith know no god but force, no devotion but its use. They tutor men in treason. They feed upon the hunger of others. Whatever defies them, they torture, especially the truth.

Here, then, is joined no argument between slightly differing philosophies. This conflict strikes directly at the faith of our fathers and the lives

of our sons. No principle or treasure that we hold, from the spiritual knowledge of our free schools and churches to the creative magic of free labor and capital, nothing lies safely beyond the reach of this struggle.

Freedom is pitted against slavery; lightness against the dark.

The faith we hold belongs not to us alone but to the free of all the world. This common bond binds the grower of rice in Burma and the planter of wheat in Iowa, the shepherd in southern Italy and the mountaineer in the Andes. It confers a common dignity upon the French soldier who dies in Indo-China, the British soldier killed in Malaya, the American life given in Korea.

We know, beyond this, that we are linked to all free peoples not merely by a noble idea but by a simple need. No free people can for long cling to any privilege or enjoy any safety in economic solitude.

For all our own material might, even we need markets in the world for the surpluses of our farms and our factories. Equally, we need for these same farms and factories vital materials and products of distant lands. This basic law of interdependence, so manifest in the commerce of peace, applies with thousand-fold intensity in the event of war.

So we are persuaded by necessity and by belief that the strength of all free peoples lies in unity, their danger in discord.

To produce this unity, to meet the challenge of our time, destiny has laid upon our country the responsibility of the free world's leadership.

So it is proper that we assure our friends once again that, in the discharge of this responsibility, we Americans know and we observe the difference between world leadership and imperialism; between firmness and truculence; between a thoughtfully calculated goal and spasmodic reaction to the stimulus of emergencies.

We wish our friends the world over to know this above all: we face the threat—not with dread and confusion—but with confidence and conviction.

We feel this moral strength because we know that we are not helpless prisoners of history. We are free men. We shall remain free, never to be proven guilty of the one capital offense against freedom, a lack of staunch faith.

In pleading our just cause before the bar of history and in pressing our labor for world peace, we shall be guided by certain fixed principles.

These principles are:

1

Abhorring war as a chosen way to balk the purposes of those who threaten us, we hold it to be the first task of statesmanship to develop the strength that will deter the forces of aggression and promote the conditions of peace. For, as it must be the supreme purpose of all free men, so it

must be the dedication of their leaders, to save humanity from preying upon itself.

In the light of this principle, we stand ready to engage with any and all others in joint effort to remove the causes of mutual fear and distrust among nations, so as to make possible drastic reduction of armaments.

The sole requisites for undertaking such effort are that—in their purpose—they be aimed logically and honestly toward secure peace for all; and that—in their result—they provide methods by which every participating nation will prove good faith in carrying out its pledge.

2

Realizing that common sense and common decency alike dictate the futility of appeasement, we shall never try to placate an aggressor by the false and wicked bargain of trading honor for security. Americans, indeed all free men, remember that in the final choice a soldier's pack is not so heavy a burden as a prisoner's chains.

3

Knowing that only a United States that is strong and immensely productive can help defend freedom in our world, we view our nation's strength and security as a trust, upon which rests the hope of free men everywhere. It is the firm duty of each of our free citizens and of every free citizen everywhere to place the cause of his country before the comfort, the convenience of himself.

4

Honoring the identity and the special heritage of each nation in the world, we shall never use our strength to try to impress upon another people our own cherished political and economic institutions.

5

Assessing realistically the needs and capacities of proven friends of freedom, we shall strive to help them to achieve their own security and well-being. Likewise, we shall count upon them to assume, within the limits of their resources, their full and just burdens in the common defense of freedom.

6

Recognizing economic health as an indispensable basis of military strength and the free world's peace, we shall strive to foster everywhere, and to practice ourselves, policies that encourage pproductivity and profitable trade. For the impoverishment of any single people in the world means danger to the well-being of all other peoples.

7

Appreciating that economic need, military security and political wisdom combine to suggest regional groupings of free peoples, we hope, within the framework of the United Nations, to help strengthen such special bonds the world over. The nature of these ties must vary with the different problems of different areas.

In the Western Hemisphere, we enthusiastically join with all our neighbors in the work of perfecting a community of fraternal trust and common purpose.

In Europe, we ask that enlightened and inspired leaders of the Western nations strive with renewed vigor to make the unity of their peoples a reality. Only as free Europe unitedly marshals its strength can it effectively safeguard, even with our help, is spiritual and cultural heritage.

8

Conceiving the defense of freedom, like freedom itself, to be one and indivisible, we hold all continents and peoples in equal regard and honor. We reject any insinuation that one race or another, one people or another, is in any sense inferior or expendable.

9

Respecting the United Nations as the living sign of all people's hope for peace, we shall strive to make it not merely an eloquent symbol but an effective force. And in our quest for an honorable peace, we shall neither compromise, nor tire, nor ever cease.

By these rules of conduct, we hope to be known to all peoples.

By their observance, an earth of peace may become not a vision but a fact.

This hope—this supreme aspiration—must rule the way we live.

We must be ready to dare all for our country. For history does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid. We must acquire proficiency in defense and display stamina in purpose.

We must be willing, individually and as a nation, to accept whatever sacrifices may be required of us. A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both.

These basic precepts are not lofty abstractions, far removed from matters of daily living. They are laws of spiritual strength that generate and define our material strength.

Patriotism means equipped forces and a prepared citizenry. Moral stamina means more energy and more productivity, on the farm and in

the factory. Love of liberty means the guarding of every resource that makes freedom possible—from the sanctity of our families and the wealth of our soil to the genius of our scientists.

And so each citizen plays an indispensable role. The productivity of our heads, our hands and our hearts is the source of all the strength we can command for both the enrichment of our lives and the winning of the peace.

No person, no home, no community can be beyond the reach of this call. We are summoned to act in wisdom and in conscience; to work with industry, to teach with persuasion, to preach with conviction, to weigh our every deed with care and with compassion. For this truth must be clear before us: whatever America hopes to bring to pass in the world must first come to pass in the heart of America.

The peace we seek, then, is nothing less than the practice and fulfillment of our whole faith among ourselves and in our dealings with others. This signifies more than the stilling of guns, easing the sorrow of war. More than escape from death, it is a way of life. More than a haven for the weary, it is a hope for the brave.

This is the hope that beckons us onward in this century of trial. This is the work that awaits us all, to be done with bravery, with charity, and with prayer to Almighty God.

My citizens—I thank you.

READING

Describe the language and general effect of the address. Point out specific instances where the occasion may influence the style.

What evidence of order and climax do you find in the nine principles?

What effect has the sentence "These basic precepts are not lofty abstractions, far removed from matters of daily living"? Is it needed? Is it altogether true?

INTERPRETATION

What implied arguments and disagreements do you find between this address and the essays of Barr and Ward?

Explain what President Eisenhower means by the abiding creed of the free "in the deathless dignity of man, governed by eternal moral and natural laws." How may this conception of the nature and destiny of man affect all our problems? What is the relationship between the dignity of man and our conception of equality?

Compare this inaugural address with one other by a president, such as Jefferson's first inaugural address, Lincoln's second, Roosevelt's third. Consider such matters as style, spirit of party, public conditions, underlying principles.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Recent Political Speech
A Famous Address
America Reaches Maturity
The American Spirit

COMMENT*

by the Editors of The New Yorker

Richard M. Nixon left out a verb when he took the oath of office. Few seem to have noticed the omission, and we saw no mention of it in the papers. When Senator Knowland charged Mr. Nixon to "support and defend" the Constitution, Mr. Nixon shortened the thing up and swore only that he would "defend" the Constitution. At first we thought our ears were playing us a trick, but later we heard a rebroadcast and the verb "support" was still missing. Probably doesn't make any difference. Nevertheless, we don't want Nixon to get notions in his head and feel he can slide into office by reciting any old sentence. We shall look to him to support the Constitution, very particularly. General Eisenhower, far from leaving anything out, put a word in. He said he would "faithfully execute the Office of *the* President of the United States." Shouldn't be a "the" in there. But we soon forgot both slips of the tongue and became lost in the sound and meaning of the Inaugural Address, which we found greatly moving—short words, beautifully assembled and resolutely uttered by a man summoned to act in wisdom and determined to do so. Such words often suffuse us with a sense of immense and undeserved personal luckiness and good fortune, of the sort that bathes free citizens who enjoy, by accident of birth, compassionate governments and the leadership of dedicated men.

READING

Compare the first sentence and the last, showing how they explain the structure.

INTERPRETATION

In your opinion are the editors of *The New Yorker* right in characterizing the address as they do?

TOPIC FOR WRITING

A Comment upon a Public Occasion

* From "The Talk of the Town," the *New Yorker,* January 31, 1953. Copyright, 1953, by the New Yorker Magazine, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the *New Yorker.*

4

The American Scene: Epilogue

In previous symposia, we have thought together about many facets of American living, but now we are going to attempt the clearly impossible but greatly rewarding task of trying to define the special meaning of American life. How do our folk heroes throw light on our national character? What are American young people really like today? How does American life look to two distinguished Britons? What is the spirit of our liberty?

PAUL BUNYAN AND RIP VAN WINKLE*

by Louis Le Fevre

Louis Le Fevre (1894–), a welfare worker in New York, is the author of *Liberty and Restraint* (1931).

The favorite heroes and legends of a people tell a great deal about their goals and the roads by which they seek satisfaction for their desires. Achilles and Odysseus represent contrasting phases of ancient Greek character; Siegfried and Hagen are not without value for the understanding of modern Germany; and the story of the Forty-Seven Ronin sheds light on Japanese ideals and Japanese methods of warfare. American life may be symbolized as a continuing debate between Paul Bunyan and Rip Van Winkle.

Paul is the epic hero of America, the man who gets things done on a vast scale. The giant logger, according to the legends, left Puget Sound, the Grand Canyon, and the Rocky Mountains as memorials of his exploits. Puget Sound fills the grave which Paul dug for Babe, the Blue Ox, who measured forty-two ax handles and a plug of chewing tobacco between the horns. The desert is barren because Paul drove all the trees down under the ground, using one of the Rocky Mountain peaks as a pile-driver. Paul is only one of a cluster of heroes, to whom such fabulous deeds are ascribed in popular legend. Tony Beaver, another logging superman, John Henry, the giant Negro, and Pecos Bill, the cowboy who rode a cyclone, are avatars of the same tradition.

Like Achilles, Siegfried, and other epic heroes, Paul Bunyan embodies the drive of impotent mankind for power. But Paul is not a warrior, nor does he seek leadership among men through wily tricks like Odysseus or Hagen. His goal is power over nature—forests, mountains, and rivers—not primarily over other men.

* From the *Yale Review*, XXXVI (Autumn, 1946), 66–76. Copyright, 1946, by Yale University Press.

Paul represents the American frontier tradition of titanic material achievement. The frontier had its Indian wars, which left such heroes as Daniel Boone; but the Indians were not formidable enough to make the struggle against them the major drama of the American stage. The ordinary American dreamed of exploiting the wealth of a continent more than of the conquest of a human foe. The Germans, whose heroes are Siegfried and Hagen, have followed such martial leaders as Frederick, Bismarck, and Hitler. With Paul Bunyan as a popular hero, America gave birth to lavish oil wells and swarming cars, to John D. Rockefeller and Henry Ford.

While men love power, they hate drudgery. Rip Van Winkle as a folk hero goes back to the legend of the Garden of Eden. The primal curse imposed on Adam was that he must earn his bread through sweat and toil. Adam's children have never welcomed this decree.

Our earliest human ancestors were wandering hunters, who took their food where they found it and, according to their skill and good fortune, feasted or starved. But with the development of agriculture, men learned by harsh experience through thousands of years that somebody must labor long hours in the fields in order to produce an abundant harvest. It was also necessary to save part of the crop for seed and to build up reserves for bad seasons to prevent famine. These necessities bore heavily on mankind. The burden of irksome labor was shifted whenever possible to slaves, or sometimes to the women of the tribe. Men remembered in legends of a Golden Age a happy past when their ancestors had been free from toil; and they dreamed of a future Utopia, where drudgery would no longer be enforced on their children. Philosophers and religious leaders offered similar ideals to their chosen followers. Plato exempted the citizens of his Republic from all physical labor. Jesus of Nazareth commended to his disciples the example of the lilies of the field, who neither toil nor spin, and admonished them to take no thought for the morrow, how they should eat or clothe themselves.

One of the most pervasive, almost universal American folk heroes is Rip Van Winkle. After Irving first told the story, Joseph Jefferson toured the country for forty years in the role of the lovable ne'er-do-well, who wandered with his dog and gun through the Catskill Mountains and slept for twenty years rather than stay at home to work and provide for his family.

Irving portrayed him with luminous clarity: "The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a

single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible."

Essentially the same character appears through every generation in American plays, songs, stories, on the radio and in the movies. This character is often presented as engaging and sympathetic, while the descendants of Dame Van Winkle, who tried vainly to nag her husband into compliance with the orthodox economic virtues, are the villains of the tale.

The economic virtues, nevertheless, were so vitally imperative that they almost completely established their supremacy. In the theories of Adam Smith and his successors, they were accepted as the mainspring of society. The settlement and tremendous growth of America, a virgin continent with a fabulous wealth of natural resources, opened an arena of incomparable magnitude. Here the spirit of Paul Bunyan found abundant fulfilment.

For the development of a continent, however, even under the most favorable conditions, many generations strove through lives of hard work and self-denial. Steady labor and thrift inevitably require a great deal of frustration and repression of normal human impulses. These repressions present areas for study, perhaps as important as those explored by Freud in his investigation of sexual repression. It is no more natural for man to toil long hours at disagreeable tasks, or to deny himself beefsteaks and pleasure driving, than it is for him to suppress his sexual impulses. The Rip Van Winkle complex may mean as much as the Oedipus complex in the modern American world.

The conflict between Paul and Rip can be traced through manifold phases of American literature and American life. It appears vividly in Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. Tom's bold spirit and inventive mind mark a true scion of the Paul Bunyan tradition. He is so eager to achieve adventures that when no real difficulties arise in setting Jim, the fugitive slave, free, he creates his own difficulties with fantastic ingenuity. In the whitewashing episode, he combines the triumphs of Paul and Rip; he gets the job done, while the other boys do the work. But Huck is the authentic heir of Rip. Drifting down the Mississippi on his raft with Jim, he escapes the well-meant efforts of the Widow Douglas to civilize him. "Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery," says Huck, "but a raft

don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft." There is nothing to do, he goes on, but fish and swim and sleep and drift with the current. And all the respectably trained boys envied Huck's freedom.

The tradition of Paul represents the conscious ambition of Americans to do great deeds, exaggerated to fantasy. It is expressed today in the Superman comics with all their swarm of imitators. American boys brag about their dreams of emulating such legendary heroes. In the world of reality, the spirit of Paul has filled American roads with cars in time of peace and the skies of the whole world with planes in time of war. The atomic bomb is the latest in a long series of triumphs.

Not many Americans, perhaps, would consciously admit a desire to follow in Rip's footsteps. But if the popular arts enable us to give vicarious satisfaction to our repressed desires, the protean descendants of Rip clearly manifest a powerful American rebellion against the orthodox virtues of sober thrift and hard work. Frank Bacon and Will Rogers as Lightnin' Bill Jones, the Sycamore family in "You Can't Take It with You," the Tussies in Jesse Stuart's yarn, Elwood P. Dowd in "Harvey," John, the witch boy, in "Dark of the Moon," are legitimate children of Rip.

A movie, "Tom, Dick and Harry," some years ago illustrated with unusual clarity Rip's perennial appeal. In this film, Ginger Rogers, as a telephone operator, received proposals from three suitors. Tom was a hard-working, ambitious salesman; Dick a rich man, apparently the perfect answer to a working girl's fondest hopes; and Harry a happy-go-lucky irresponsible boy, who, in Ginger's dream about him, welcomed the loss of his job, because it would give him more time to go fishing. At the end of the picture, Ginger refused the other two wooers to ride away on Harry's motor-cycle, today's equivalent of Huckleberry Finn's raft or Rip's magic flagon. A significant point is that three endings were made for this movie and were tried out on various audiences in pre-view showings. The choice of Harry represented a decisive popular verdict.

Illustrations might be multiplied. The desire of men for ease and leisure attains the same vicarious satisfaction in two categories of books immensely popular in America. A hundred years ago, Herman Melville returned from the South Seas to write "Typee." Since then, Stevenson, Frederick O'Brien, Nordhoff and Hall have repeatedly demonstrated the enthusiasm of our reading public for stories of South Sea Island life. The relative freedom of the islanders from the curse of Adam has perhaps contributed as much to their popularity as the unveiled charms of island girls. The unending series of best-sellers about Southern plantation life also testifies to the perpetual attraction for the American mind of a leisure class who transferred the necessity for labor to their slaves.

The conflict between Paul and Rip goes on within the mind and emo-

tions of every American. All men have some degree of ambition for achievement and some measure of desire for ease. This conflict can never find a final solution; like other struggles which involve the individual libido, it will be resolved most effectively when it is exposed to the full light of consciousness. Unconscious frustration and repression of emotional drives are the banes that irreparably poison our lives.

Like Paul Bunyan's ambitious dreams, Rip's rebellion against drudgery has directly affected the realities of American life. In the days of unrestricted immigration, native-born white Americans showed a decided tendency to avoid physical labor and to turn it over to Negroes and newcomers. Judge Gary of the United States Steel Corporation argued forcibly that the steel industry could not find the necessary workers without a constant flow of fresh immigration. Our emphasis on labor-saving as a goal still surprises foreign visitors. Automatic furnaces and electric kitchens are as American as corn on the cob. The automobile, which by its almost universal use most conspicuously distinguishes American life, gives satisfaction to the aspirations of both Paul and Rip. We generally drive our own cars; the driver enjoys the thrill of power under his command, while at the same time he escapes the physical labor of walking. Thus the ambivalent aspects of the American spirit are reconciled.

Henry Ford, as much as any living American, embodies the spirit of Paul Bunyan. His achievements in mass production are legendary marvels over the whole world. Ford tells in his autobiography that his father wanted him to stay on the farm; but his earliest recollection was that "there was too much hard hand labor" in farming and he still felt that way. He was willing to work night and day on his machines. "I cannot say that it was hard work. No work with interest is ever hard." Ford, like other men, in short, loved power and hated drudgery.

In our vast war industry, the exploits of such men as Henry Kaiser and Andrew Jackson Higgins exemplify the same combination of motives, with the mammoth plans of Paul accomplished by the minimum possible employment of manual labor. The Japanese built their airfields by the toil of countless coolies. We built ours with myriads of cats and bulldozers.

Our industrial civilization has profoundly changed the environment in which Paul Bunyan and Rip Van Winkle must seek to attain their goals. Paul has been a hero of American business men, the archetype of free enterprise. American capitalism has exploited the continent with bold imagination and abounding vigor. It has also supplied immensely powerful motives to counterbalance Rip's normal human weaknesses. It exerted the most vigorous pressure on each individual to work, to save, and to provide the good things of life for his family. This intellectual and emotional climate has perhaps contributed as much as our huge natural resources to the

mechanical and industrial leadership of America. The growth of giant industry, however, itself limits the opportunities for individuals to fulfil Paul's dreams. When some private enterprises number their workers by the hundred thousand, clearly not every boy can run a business of his own. But today our great enterprises are, of course, not all private enterprises, as witness the Panama Canal, Grand Coulee Dam, and the prolific activities of the T.V.A. which were government projects undertaken mainly for the public good rather than personal profit. The Russian Five-Year Plans have added more evidence that it is quite possible to make vast strides and to divorce the spirit of Paul from an exclusive devotion to personal financial profit.

The Industrial Revolution has also created a new world for Rip. It offers, for the first time, the possibility of freedom from the immemorial bondage of drudgery and scarcity; but it has multiplied a proletariat for whom the conditions of labor are sometimes more monotonous and irksome than before. Strong currents in modern life limit Paul's dream of individual power and exasperate Rip's rebellion against drudgery.

The appeal of Communist theory to idealists in all countries derives primarily from its ultimate promise of a free classless society in which all men will be liberated from the ancient lot of the masses, long hours of labor poorly paid. We no longer need throngs of hewers of wood and drawers of water. Wood stoves can be replaced by automatic furnaces; water can be brought a hundred miles from Rip's Catskills to the kitchens and baths of New York. The work that remains necessary can be divided so that everyone does his share, with no idle leisure class living on the toil of men reduced to abject poverty.

Communism is based, however, not only on a golden promise for the future but on bitterness for the present and the past. The doctrines of the class war and the dictatorship of the proletariat offer to labor a chance to avenge the frustrations imposed by the factory system. These doctrines express emotional drives like those which stirred Dame Van Winkle to natural indignation at the sight of her idle husband. The dancing grasshopper has always exasperated the ant. The Marxist theory of the class war is formulated in objective, scientific terminology; it looks towards a Utopian future of prosperity for all mankind; but it derives its fighting spirit from the frustrations of workers embittered by the knowledge that other men are not obliged to labor.

Class conflict is sharpened by the chasm between Paul and Rip, between men to whom work is a means to power and men to whom work is drudgery. Wherever Americans identify themselves with Paul Bunyan in their dreams, Marxist slogans fall on stony ground. Business executives, engineers, land-owning farmers, and highly skilled craftsmen, for example,

are seldom zealots of the class struggle. But workers on factory assembly lines will never look at their labor with the spirit of Paul. They have no individual choice as to how they shall do their work, little variety and no escape during working hours from the tedious routine of their jobs. They must find satisfaction elsewhere for their impulses and desires. When their lives do not yield an essential minimum of satisfaction, their frustration is often expressed in revolt against the conditions of their work. Outlaw strikes for trivial grievances may arise primarily from the age-old rebellion of Rip's children against the compulsion to irksome labor.

Frustration in any field, as Dr. John Dollard and his associates have shown, is easily transformed into aggression against others. The sex impulse may be sublimated in art or diverted into fierce advocacy of puritanical restraints for other people. The desires of men for ease and leisure may likewise be sublimated in stories of Rip Van Winkle or Huckleberry Finn, or in prophetic visions of Utopias; but when these desires are too harshly repressed, they provide fertile soil for the growth of racial and class hatreds. Men who live harsh lives often gain a sadistic satisfaction from the reduction of others to a still lower level. Many Southern poor whites hate the Negroes for the evils they themselves endure; and many middle-class Germans, ruined by inflation and the great economic collapse, listened eagerly to Hitler's tirades against Jews and foreigners.

Every newspaper shows that today's world is filled and overflowing with frustration for multitudes of men. But in a democracy, our leaders, to hold power, must convince the voters that the necessities of labor and self-denial are allotted according to principles of justice. These necessities can be ameliorated with advancing economic progress. In the world of the future, every man may have a measure of opportunity to realize his ambitions and of leisure to express his dreams.

In this country, the time is past when Paul Bunyan could go into the wilderness and carve out his individual empire in virgin country. The world which he seeks to develop is populated by other men. If he ignores the nature of human beings and confines his attention to mastery of material resources, he may destroy a people with atomic bombs or conquer them and rule by force. But democratic peoples are controlled by men skilled in the arts of persuasion; in short, they are governed by politicians.

A successful politician must understand the people whom he wishes to govern. He cannot act as if they were perfect citizens, moved only by disinterested reason; he must take them as they are. The alchemists, who tried to use chemical substances in accordance with preconceived theories as to how they ought to behave, did not accomplish very much. The politician deals with substances more complex and variegated than chemi-

cal elements; but this does not absolve him from the necessity of understanding the materials with which he works. In modern America, he must understand both Paul Bunyan and Rip Van Winkle.

No people could long survive the storms of harsh reality who accepted Rip's guidance as sole pilot. The South Sea islanders yielded before the white man. Owners of vast Southern plantations saw their culture uprooted and laid waste. Escape from all obligation to labor would mean destruction at the hands of more aggressive peoples.

Toil and hardship for their own sake, however, are dubious values in a machine age. The Germans preferred guns to butter; and the Japanese also looked with scorn on the softness and ease of American life. Our enemies found too late that we could outbuild the rest of the world in planes, precisely because mass production was prepared to give almost every American family a car.

There is no virtue certainly in labor and privation delegated to others. It does not harden our own children if other men's children work in sweatshops or live in slums. Sweatshops and slums anywhere in the world breed disease, cut-throat competition, unemployment, and war. Mass unemployment is the deadliest of all threats to the adventurous, constructive spirit of Paul Bunyan. Praise of traditional American values will strike deaf ears if ten million men can find no work and no income except a scanty dole.

The fatal doom of ruling classes and dominant nations through all history has been to seek Rip's goal of ease and leisure for their own children, while drudgery and poverty were imposed on men who could not escape their inferior lot. But frustrations imposed on subjects breed rebellions which eventually destroy the rulers. Rich men's sons are not often actuated by the fierce driving energy which impels those who fight their way up from poverty. Thus the attainment of wealth and power may sterilize the motives by which they were won. Paul Bunyan's children follow Rip's way of life until they are conquered by ambitious newcomers.

Neither Paul nor Rip can ever completely attain his goal in any human society. But the American tradition offers abundant opportunities for struggle towards both greater power and greater leisure for all mankind. In America, power over material things has far surpassed that attained in other lands. Power over other men rests on a fundamental basis of popular consent. And in America the struggle for freedom from drudgery has also won its greatest victories. With all our faults and failures, our economic injustice and racial discrimination, we try with increasing success to impose the harshest burdens of labor, not on slaves or women, servants or permanently depressed classes, but on our machines. Both Paul and Rip may still take hope in American life.

READING

How does the author introduce the comparison of Paul Bunyan and Rip Van Winkle? How does he develop it?

What relation does Le Fevre see between Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn and the Bunyan–Van Winkle cleavage? What other examples does he cite from literature and history?

Show carefully how he describes communism within his pattern of folklore. Do the same with other major observations he makes.

INTERPRETATION

Are national folk heroes necessarily national? To what extent does Le Fevre admit their internationalism? To what extent would he insist on their American essence?

Rip Van Winkle was introduced to the American reader in 1819 from German sources; Paul Bunyan was introduced in 1914 by a public relations man for a lumber company. Does the method or time of introduction affect Le Fevre's use? Should he mention these matters, or are they irrelevant to his strategy?

Compare Le Fevre's remarks on Ford with those of Frederick Lewis Allen and John Dos Passos. With whom is Le Fevre more nearly in agreement? Compare also his general use of folklore with Richard M. Dorson's.

How well does the Bunyan–Van Winkle cleavage explain the problems to which Le Fevre applies it? Are there other problems to which it might be applied?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Davy Crockett Legend
My Family and the Van Winkles
College Folklore Philosophized
Le Fevre's Method and a Character in Fiction
Folklore as Insight

THE YOUNGER GENERATION*

by the Editors of Time

Is it possible to paint a portrait of an entire generation? Each generation has a million faces and a million voices. What the voices say is not necessarily what the generation believes, and what it believes is not necessarily what it will act on. Its motives and desires are often hidden. It is a medley of good and evil, promise and threat, hope and despair. Like a straggling army, it has no clear beginning or end. And yet each generation has some features that are more significant than others; each has a quality as distinctive as a man's accent, each makes a statement to the future, each leaves behind a picture of itself.

What of today's youth? Some are smoking marijuana; some are dying in Korea. Some are going to college with their wives; some are making

* From *Time*, LVIII (November 5, 1951), 46–52. Copyright, 1951, by Time, Inc. Reprinted by courtesy of *Time*.

$400 a week in television. Some are sure they will be blown to bits by the atom bomb. Some pray. Some are raising the highest towers and running the fastest machines in the world. Some wear blue jeans; some wear Dior gowns. Some want to vote the straight Republican ticket. Some want to fly to the moon.

Time's correspondents across the U.S. have tried to find out about this younger generation [1] by talking to young people, and to their teachers and guardians. What do the young think, believe, and read? Who are their heroes? What are their ambitions? How do they see themselves and their time? These are some of the questions *Time*'s correspondents asked; the masses of answers—plus the correspondents' interpretation—contain many clashing shades of opinion, but nevertheless reveal a remarkably clear area of agreement on the state of the nation's youth.

Youth today is waiting for the hand of fate to fall on its shoulders, meanwhile working fairly hard and saying almost nothing. The most startling fact about the younger generation is its silence. With some rare exceptions, youth is nowhere near the rostrum. By comparison with the Flaming Youth of their fathers and mothers, today's younger generation is a still, small flame. It does not issue manifestoes, make speeches or carry posters. It has been called the "Silent Generation." But what does the silence mean? What, if anything, does it hide? Or are youth's elders merely hard of hearing?

They Are Grave and Fatalistic

Listen to their voices, in a college bull session:

"I think the draft has all the fellows upset. . . . They can't start figuring in high school or even in college what they want to do. . . . First thing you know, Uncle Sam has tagged them off base."

"The boys are upset about the Korean business because they can't tell from one day to the next what they are going to be doing, going into the Army or what."

"Sure, the boys say, 'What's the use? I'd just get started and whammo, I'm gone.' "

"It's hard to get married when you don't know what the deal is. Maybe your husband is off to Korea or somewhere, and there you are."

"With maybe a baby on the way."

"It's better to get a job and wait."

"That's the worst part."

The "Korean business"—and a lot of other business that may follow —is the dominant fact in the life of today's youth. "I observe that you share the prevailing mood of the hour," Yale's President A. Whitney Griswold told his graduating class last June, "which in your case consists of bargains privately struck with fate—on fate's terms." The hand of fate has been on the U.S. with special gravity since World War I; it has disturbed the lives of America's youth since the '30s, through depression and

[1] TIME's working definition of the younger generation: 18 to 28.

war. The fear of depression has receded; the fear of war remains. Those who have been to war and face recall, and those who face the draft at the end of their schooling, know that they may have to fight before they are much older.

But youth is taking its upsetting uncertainties with extraordinary calm. When the U.S. began to realize how deeply it had committed itself in Korea, youngsters of draft age had a bad case of jitters; but all reports agree that they have since settled down to studying or working for as long as they can. The majority seem to think that war with Russia is inevitable sooner or later, but they feel that they will survive it. Reports *Time*'s Los Angeles Bureau: "Today's youth does have some fear of the atomic age. But he does not feel as though he is living on the brink of disaster, nor does he flick on the radio (as was done in the '40s) and expect his life to be changed drastically by the news of the moment. There is a feeling that the world is in a ten-round bout, and that there will be no quick or easy knockout."

Hardly anyone wants to go into the Army; there is little enthusiasm for the military life, no enthusiasm for war. Youngsters do not talk like heroes; they admit freely that they will try to stay out of the draft as long as they can. But there is none of the systematized and sentimentalized antiwar feeling of the '20s. Pacifism has been almost nonexistent since World War II; so are Oxford Oaths. Some observers regard this as a sign of youth's passivity. But, as a student at Harvard puts it: "When a fellow gets his draft notice in February and keeps on working and planning till June, instead of boozing up every night and having a succession of farewell parties, he has made a very difficult, positive decision. Most make that decision today."

They Are Conventional and Gregarious

On a sunny Sunday not long ago, Sociology Professor Carr B. Lavell of George Washington University took one of his students on a fishing trip. He is a brilliant student, president of his class, a big man on campus, evidently with a bright future in his chosen field, medicine. In the bracing air, professor and student had a quiet talk. Why had he gone into medicine? asked the professor. Answer: medicine looked lucrative. What did he want to do as a doctor? Get into the specialty that offered biggest fees. Did he think that a doctor owed some special service to the community? Probably not. "I am just like anyone else," said the student. "I just want to prepare myself so that I can get the most out of it for me. I hope to make a lot of money in a hurry. I'd like to retire in about ten years and do the things I really want to do." And what are those? "Oh," said the brilliant student, "fishing, traveling, taking it easy."

Then they stopped talking, because the student had a nibble.

Perhaps more than any of its predecessors, this generation wants a good, secure job. This does not mean that it specifically fears a depression,

as some aging New Dealers claim. The feeling is widespread that anyone who wants to work can find a decent job; the facts confirm that feeling (and the starting pay is better than ever). But youth's ambitions have shrunk. Few youngsters today want to mine diamonds in South Africa, ranch in Paraguay, climb Mount Everest, find a cure for cancer, sail around the world, or build an industrial empire. Some would like to own a small, independent business, but most want a good job with a big firm, and with it, a kind of suburban idyll.

An official of the placement bureau at Stanford University finds college graduates mostly interested in big companies—and choosy about which ones they will work for. "Half the time a guy will turn down a good job because he has to work in the city [meaning San Francisco.] They all figure there's no future in being holed up in a little apartment in town for ten years or getting up at 6 in the morning to commute to work and then not getting home until after dark. So they all want to work down on the peninsula where they can have a little house in the country and play golf or tennis and live the good life."

Says one youthful observer who still likes his dreams bigger: "This generation suffers from lack of worlds to conquer. Its fathers, in a sense, did too well. Sure, there are slums left—but another Federal housing project can clean up the worst. Most of the fights in labor have simmered down to arguments around the bargaining table. Would-be heroes find themselves padded from harm—and hope—like lunatics in a cell. In business, the tax structure, social security and pension plans promise to soften the blow of depression or personal misfortune—and forbid the building of new empires. In science there is the great corporation (or the Government) glad to furnish the expensive machinery now necessary for the smallest advance—and to give its name, or that of its group research boss, to the new process, while plowing back the profits. A man goes bounding, with no visible bruises, among the pads of an overorganized society."

The facts are that the U.S. is a highly organized society, must be, and will get more rather than less organized; that the big corporation is here to stay (and is a progressive instrument of U.S. capitalism). What is discouraging to some observers is not so much that youth has accepted life within the well-padded structure of organized society and big corporations, but that it seems to have relatively little ambition to do any of society's organizing. What is even more disturbing is youth's certainty that Government will take care of it—a feeling which continues despite a good deal of political distrust of Government. Reports *Time*'s Seattle Bureau: "The Pacific Northwest is only yesterday removed from the frontier, but the 'root, hog, or die' spirit has almost disappeared. Into its place has moved a curious dependence on the biggest new employer—

Government. A 28-year-old aerodynamics specialist at Boeing says: 'I hope to work toward an income of $500 or $600 a month, after taxes. You know, only on a sliding scale for inflation. I'd just like to net $600, and then my family would always be O.K. You start earning more than that, and it's taxed away from you, so what the hell.' "

Says a 26-year-old promotion manager in Dallas: "Sure, I'd like to do something on my own, but I want to get well fixed first—make plenty of money and then maybe start some innovations."

This cautious desire to be "well fixed" and a little more has many causes: the war; the lingering shock of the Big Depression (which this younger generation felt or heard about in its childhood); and the hard-to-kill belief (still expounded in some college economics courses) that the frontiers of the U.S. economy have been reached.

There is also the feeling that it is neither desirable nor practical to do things that are different from what the next fellow is doing. Said a girl in Minneapolis: "The individual is almost dead today, but the young people are unaware of it. They think of themselves as individuals, but really they are not. They are parts of groups. They are unhappy outside of a group. When they are alone, they are bored with themselves. There is a tendency now to date in foursomes, or sixsomes. Very few dates are just a boy and girl together. They have to be with a crowd. These kids in my group think of themselves as individuals, but actually it is as if you took a tube of toothpaste and squeezed out a number of little distinct blobs on a piece of paper. Each blob would be distinct—separated in space—but each blob would be the same."

The Girls Want a Career—and Marriage

At the corner of Manhattan's Lexington Avenue and 63rd Street stands a 23-story building populated entirely by women, in which men are not permitted above the first floor. This does not mean that its inhabitants are not interested in men. The Barbizon hotel for women is considered a good, respectable address for out-of-town girls who have come to make a name for themselves in New York. In the small green lobby, through which moves a constant stream of eager young women carrying an air of determination, one aspiring young actress from Providence, R.I. said: "The men in New York are all the same. They're out for what they can get. I have a boy friend from home who comes to see me about every three weeks. He's a real home-town boy, all-American, clean-cut. He wouldn't speak the same language as these New York men. They're all trying to be big shots. I go out with them when he isn't here, but since I've been in New York I haven't met one man I can call a friend. . . . I won't marry until I've convinced myself that I've gotten everything I can out of acting. Back home, everybody's a home-body, wants to raise big families. I'm not ready for that yet. If I married this fellow from home, I know I'd have to quit acting right away. He just wouldn't stand for it. I don't think I could do both, anyway."

American young women are, in many ways, the generation's most serious problem: they are emotional D.P.s. The granddaughters of the

suffragettes, the daughters of the cigarette-and-short-skirt crusaders, they were raised to believe in woman's emancipation and equality with man. Large numbers of them feel that a home and children alone would be a fate worse than death, and they invade the big cities in search of a career. They ride crowded subways on which men, enjoying equality, do not offer them seats. They compete with men in industry and the arts; and keep up with them, Martini for Martini, at the cocktail parties.

There is every evidence that women have not been made happy by their ascent to power. They are dressed to kill in femininity. The bosom is back; hair is longer again; office telephones echo with more cooing voices than St. Mark's Square at pigeon-feeding time. The career girl is not ready to admit that all she wants is to get married; but she has generally retreated from the brassy advance post of complete flat-chested emancipation, to the position that she would like, if possible, to have marriage and a career, both. In the cities, she usually lives with a roommate (for respectability and lower rent) in a small apartment, fitted with chintz slipcovers, middlebrow poetry and a well-equipped kitchenette. Rare and fortunate is the bachelor who has not been invited to a "real, home-cooked dinner," to be eaten off a shaky bridge table, by a young woman who during the daytime is a space buyer or a dentist's assistant.

Says a Minneapolis priest: "The young American male is increasingly bewildered and confused by the aggressive, coarse, dominant attitudes and behavior of his women. I believe it is one of the most serious social traits of our time—and one that is certain to have most serious social consequences."

Their Morals Are Confused

The shrieking blonde ripped the big tackle's shirt from his shoulder and Charlestoned off through the crowded room, fan-dancing with a ragged sleeve. In her wake, shirts fell in shreds on the floor, until half the male guests roared around bare to the waist. Shouts and laughs rose above the full-volume records from *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. The party, celebrating the departure of a University of Texas coed who had flunked out, had begun in midafternoon some three hours earlier. In one corner, four tipsily serious coeds tried to revive a passed-out couple with more salty dog (a mixture of gin, grapefruit juice and salt). About 10 p.m., a brunette bounded on to the coffee table, in a limited striptease. At 2 a.m., when the party broke up, one carload of youngsters decided to take off on a two-day drive into Mexico (they got there all right, and sent back picture postcards to the folks).

The younger generation can still raise hell. The significant thing is not that it does, but how it goes about doing it. Most of today's youngsters never seem to lose their heads; even when they let themselves go, an alarm clock seems to be ticking away at the back of their minds; it goes off sooner or later, and sends them back to school, to work, or to war. They are almost discreet about their indiscretions, largely because (unlike their

parents) they no longer want or need to shock their elders. The generation has "won its latchkey." It sees no point or fun in yelling for freedom to do as it pleases, because generally no one keeps it from doing as it pleases. It is not rebellious—either against convention or instruction, the state or fate, Pop or Mom. Toward its parents, it exhibits an indulgent tolerance. As one young New Yorker put it with a shrug: "Why insult the folks?"

The younger generation seems to drink less. "There is nothing glorious or inglorious any more about getting stewed," says one college professor. Whether youth is more or less promiscuous than it used to be is a matter of disagreement. Fact is that it is less showy about sex. Whatever its immoralities, it commits them on the whole because it enjoys them, and not because it wants to demonstrate against Victorian conventions or shock Babbitt. In that sense, it is far less childish than its parents were. As a whole, it is more sober and conservative, but in individual cases, *e.g.*, the recent dope scandals, it makes Flaming Youth look like amateurs.

The younger generation is tolerant of almost anything, shocked by little. Young men who may personally think sex experience before marriage wrong are perfectly tolerant toward anyone who disagrees. Gay blades report that young women, when they turn down what is still known as a "pass," do so apologetically, as if they were exhibiting a social shortcoming like an inability to mambo. The girl's usual excuse: "I am *so* sorry, it's just the way I was brought up."

A paratrooper at Fort Bragg told a *Time* correspondent that he had nothing against pre-marital sex: "Before the property is yours, I don't see why anybody can't use it." But a buddy added: "After marriage, some guy taking my wife would be like taking my car and putting on a few extra miles. It might improve through use, but I like to drive my own." A student editor at Emory University states a widespread phenomenon among American women: "There are few who have any strong moral feelings against having affairs. They may be afraid. But if they kid themselves into falling madly in love, then it's all right."

Considering that its parents gave the younger generation few standards, few ideals, and an education increasingly specialized, *i.e.*, without cultural breadth, youth's morals have turned out far better than anyone had a right to hope. Almost of itself, it has picked up the right instincts from an American tradition older than its parents: it wants to marry, have children, found homes, and if necessary, defend them.

They Expect Disappointment

Intellectually, today's young people already seem a bit stodgy. Their adventures of the mind are apt to be mild and safe, and their literature too often runs to querulous and self-protective introspection, or voices a pale,

orthodox liberalism that seems more second-hand than second nature. On the whole, the young writer today is a better craftsman than the beginner of the '20s. Novelists like Truman Capote, William Styron and Frederick Buechner are precocious technicians, but their books have the air of suspecting that life is long on treachery, short on rewards. What some critics took for healthy revolt in James Jones's *From Here to Eternity* was really a massively reiterated gripe against life. But Jones is not the only young writer to wallow in a world of seemingly private resentments. Most of his fellow writers suffer from what has become their occupational disease: belief that disappointment is life's only certainty. The young writers of the '20s were at least original enough to create personal styles. Today the young writer's flair sometimes turns out to be nothing more than a byproduct of his neuroses.

Educators across the U. S. complain that young people seem to have no militant beliefs. They do not speak out for anything. Professors who used to enjoy baiting students by outrageously praising child labor or damning Shelley now find that they cannot get a rise out of the docile note-takers in their classes. The only two issues about which the younger generation seem to get worked up are race relations and world government; but neither of these issues rouses anything approaching an absorbing faith.

Many students and teachers blame this lack of conviction on fear—the fear of being tagged "subversive." Today's generation, either through fear, passivity or conviction, is ready to conform.

Marxism seems dead among the U. S. young; belief in democracy is strong but inarticulate. The one new movement that has begun in the younger generation is what Poet-Professor Peter Viereck calls the revolt against revolt—an attempt to give youth a conservative credo to stand up against the bankrupt but lingering political radicalism of the '20s and '30s.

One of the most significant facts about the younger generation is that increasingly larger numbers of it are seeking their faith not in secular panaceas but in God.

They Want a Faith

Near the Mount Zion Methodist Church just outside Atlanta, on Highway 41, a onetime barbecue pit has been turned into a Bible classroom. One evening recently, eleven disciples watched Robert L. West go over and flip off the light switch. "It's kinda dark in here without the lights," apologized West, as he walked behind the crepe-wrapped white cross now lighted up by two candles, "but I would ask you to look upon this symbol—perhaps the greatest in the world."

West, an 18-year-old son of a paper-plant foreman, who quit Georgia Tech because he found nothing but "hard, cold facts of engineering," looked like a churchly Frank Sinatra, in his Paisley bow tie and purple jacket, his big ears enlarged in shadows on

the blackboard behind him. He read his long text (*Luke 9:20–27: ". . . And be rejected of the elders . . .*"), and in a businesslike manner proceeded to expound it —the job of youth today. "Unless we, the young people of today, go to work, we're going to lose in the end. This symbol has stood for thousands of years. To us today it stands for sacrifice, the greatest sacrifice that He made for us. . . . And it stands for a call, a call to work . . . But we're afraid to take on something if we have to call on God to do it. We're ready to do anything if we can handle it with our own two hands. But we're afraid to try something too big, a job that takes God's help. . . . This place should be filled. . . . As we stand in front of this cross, lift up our shamed hearts to the work that is ours. . . ."

The younger generation is looking for a faith. The fact that it has not found one—that it isn't even sure where to look—is less significant than the fact that it feels the need to believe.

The generation of the '20s was devoutly iconoclastic. It put on (in the words of T. S. Eliot) "the black cap of *je m'en foutisme*"—of I-don't-give-a-damn-ism. It discovered with a mixture of horror and delight that it was living in a brand-new age, the 20th Century, and it decided to burn all the old cultural furniture. This huge fire, while it caused incalculable damage, cast a sharp, new light across U. S. civilization—and encouraged the younger generation of that day to do a whooping war dance around it. Gertrude Stein christened it the "lost generation," but she may have spoken too soon.

To some, it seems that today's youth is really the lost generation. It does not believe that the wrecking of the '20s made sense, and even if it did, the '20s did not leave many values to wreck. Present-day youth has no living heroes and few villains. Said a professor of sociology: "We spend all our time debunking. We have no heroes, so how can you expect the young people to have any? We destroy them all. We've even done it in the sports world. Kids today feel they have to go all the way back to Babe Ruth to find a hero. Today the only heroes are the ones whom they can't destroy. And who are those? The heroes of the comic strips."

There is no formal religious revival among the young. God, for most young Americans, is still a vaguely comforting thought, theology a waste of time, and denominations beside the point. To large numbers of them, religion is still merely an ethical code. But God (whoever or whatever they understand by that word) has once more become a factor in the younger generation's thoughts. The old argument of religion *v.* science is subsiding; a system which does not make room for both makes little sense to today's younger generation. It is no longer shockingly unfashionable to discuss God.

Church attendance among the young has increased, partly because churches have made strong efforts to win new followers through social and sport activities. But there is an unquestioned spiritual need at work, too. Says Dean Robert Strozier of the University of Chicago: "They all

have a conscience." Says Historian Viereck: "They believe they believe; they do not necessarily believe. Not many of today's young people say they have seen God, but they think everybody needs to see God."

They Will Serve

Beside a Quonset hut at Kimpo Airport, more than 100 tired, unshaven infantrymen lolled in the dust, waiting patiently for planes that would take them to Tokyo. For some, Tokyo meant the first leg of the trip home. For others it meant only a temporary break in the dirty business of war. They had no yarns to swap, no desire to learn any more than they already knew about war. From a few groups came the click of dice, and the only voices audible over the distant roar of engines were the urgent pleas of crapshooters. At one group, a Red Cross worker paused to chat with a sergeant who had spent 13 months in Korea. Said the sergeant: "For 15 months the guys have been running up and down these mountains getting their fannies full of lead. And what have we proved? I got news for you, Mister: the next time this boy fights to defend anybody's country, it'll damn well be his own." But an officer said: "You seen Seoul? Well, I'd hate for that to be Decatur, Illinois."

The soldier in the combat zone is too preoccupied to do much thinking about the underlying reasons for his presence in Korea. He is concerned almost exclusively with personal problems, and the personal problem that overshadows all others is the problem of getting home. To justify his personal yearning to go home, he often subscribes to the thesis that Korea was a mistake (once back in the States, he will probably change his mind). In Korea, he does his job—because of his sense of duty to his country and his buddies, and because of his pride in his country and himself.

G. I. Joe's younger brother is better informed and educated, much better trained, and less sorry for himself. Mauldin cartoons today would not find the popularity they did in World War II. The AWOL rate is down, even the use of profanity has fallen off (at least in Stateside camps). "Little Joe" gripes about his officers, distrusts politics and government (it is universally believed that "Harry Vaughan can transfer any man"). He does not go in for heroics, or believe in them. He is short on ideals, lacks self-reliance, is for personal security at any price. He singularly lacks flame. In spite of this, he makes a good, efficient soldier—relying on superior firepower.

The best thing that can be said for American youth, in or out of uniform, is that it has learned that it must try to make the best of a bad and difficult job, whether that job is life, war, or both. The generation which has been called the oldest young generation in the world has achieved a certain maturity.

Young people do not feel cheated. And they do not blame anyone. Before this generation, "they" were always to blame. It was a standard prewar feeling that "they" had let them down. But this generation puts the

blame on life as a whole, not on parents, politicians, cartels, etc. The fact of this world is war, uncertainty, the need for work, courage, sacrifice. Nobody likes that fact. But youth does not blame that fact on its parents dropping the ball. In real life, youth seems to know, people always drop the ball. Youth today has little cynicism, because it never hoped for much.

Says a *Time* correspondent in Boston: "Young people most bitterly know the frightful cost of living to keep peace in the world, and they willingly submit to the cost, not from want of spirit, but from a knowledge that it is the best thing to do. You cannot say of them, 'Youth Will Be Served,' because the phrase suggests a voracious striking out from security, wealth and stability. The best you can say for this younger generation is, 'Youth Will Serve.' "

READING

How do the qualifications and affirmations made at the beginning about trying to "paint a portrait of an entire generation" prepare the reader?

For several of the seven sections in this essay show in detail what evidence is given and how fully it supports the statement made in the heading.

This essay caused widespread comment at the time of its appearance. How can you locate such comment in the library? Summarize one article that you find.

INTERPRETATION

How does the final heading serve to summarize the preceding ones? Do you regard it as a proper conclusion? With what points of the essay would you wish to take issue?

Do your responses to previous sequences of essays (as those on men and women, religion, race) bear out the observations of the *Time* editors? Do these essays support their view of what the older generation has taught the younger?

To what extent does the material of this essay substantiate the observations in "Paul Bunyan and Rip Van Winkle"?

This essay appeared in the fall of 1951. Has the younger generation changed since then?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Today's Big Man on Campus
Today's Popular Coed
Can the Older Generation Ever Know?
Still Their Parents' Children
The Coming Generation and America

THE UNHAPPY AMERICAN WAY*

by Bertrand Russell

Bertrand Russell (1872–), British mathematician and philosopher, has frequently held academic appointments in the United States. In 1950 he received the Nobel prize for literature. Among his many books are *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (1919), *Marriage and Morals* (1929), and *Authority and the Individual* (1949).

It used to be said that English people take their pleasures sadly. No doubt this would still be true if they had any pleasures to take, but the price of alcohol and tobacco in my country has provided sufficient external causes for melancholy. I have sometimes thought that the habit of taking pleasures sadly has crossed the Atlantic, and I have wondered what it is that makes so many English-speaking people somber in their outlook in spite of good health and a good income.

In the course of my travels in America I have been impressed by a kind of fundamental malaise which seems to me extremely common and which poses difficult problems for the social reformer. Most social reformers have held the opinion that, if poverty were abolished and there were no more economic insecurity, the millennium would have arrived. But when I look at the faces of people in opulent cars, whether in your country or in mine, I do not see that look of radiant happiness which the aforesaid social reformers had led me to expect. In nine cases out of ten, I see instead a look of boredom and discontent and an almost frantic longing for something that might tickle the jaded palate.

But it is not only the very rich who suffer in this way. Professional men very frequently feel hopelessly thwarted. There is something that they long to do or some public object that they long to work for. But if they were to indulge their wishes in these respects, they fear that they would lose their livelihood. Their wives are equally unsatisfied, for their neighbor, Mrs. So-and-So, has gone ahead more quickly, has a better car, a larger apartment and grander friends.

Life for almost everybody is a long competitive struggle where very few can win the race, and those who do not win are unhappy. On social occasions when it is *de rigueur* to seem cheerful, the necessary demeanor is stimulated by alcohol. But the gaiety does not ring true and anybody who has just one drink too many is apt to lapse into lachrymose melancholy.

One finds this sort of thing only among English-speaking people. A Frenchman while he is abusing the Government is as gay as a lark. So is

* From the *New York Times Magazine*, June 15, 1952, pp. 12, 30. Copyright, 1952, by the New York Times, Inc.

an Italian while he is telling you how his neighbor has swindled him. Mexicans, when they are not actually starving or actually being murdered, sing and dance and enjoy sunshine and food and drink with a gusto which is very rare north of the Mexican frontier. When Andrew Jackson conquered Pensacola from the Spaniards, his wife looked out of the window and saw the population enjoying itself although it was Sunday. She pointed out the scandal to her husband, who decreed that cheerfulness must cease forthwith. And it did.

When I try to understand what it is that prevents so many Americans from being as happy as one might expect, it seems to me that there are two causes, of which one goes much deeper than the other. The one that goes least deep is the necessity for subservience in some large organization. If you are an energetic man with strong views as to the right way of doing the job with which you are concerned, you find yourself invariably under the orders of some big man at the top who is elderly, weary and cynical. Whenever you have a bright idea, the boss puts a stopper on it. The more energetic you are and the more vision you have, the more you will suffer from the impossibility of doing any of the things that you feel ought to be done. When you go home and moan to your wife, she tells you that you are a silly fellow and that if you became the proper sort of yes-man your income would soon be doubled. If you try divorce and remarriage it is very unlikely that there will be any change in this respect. And so you are condemned to gastric ulcers and premature old age.

It was not always so. When Dr. Johnson compiled his dictionary, he compiled it as he thought fit. When he felt like saying that oats is food for men in Scotland and horses in England, he said so. When he defined a fishing-rod as a stick with a fish at one end and a fool at the other, there was nobody to point out to him that a remark of this sort would damage the sale of his great work among fishermen. But if, in the present day, you are (let us say) a contributor to an encyclopedia, there is an editorial policy which is solemn, wise and prudent, which allows no room for jokes, no place for personal preferences and no tolerance for idiosyncrasies. Everything has to be flattened out except where the prejudices of the editor are concerned. To these you must conform, however little you may share them. And so you have to be content with dollars instead of creative satisfaction. And the dollars, alas, leave you sad.

This brings me to the major cause of unhappiness, which is that most people in America act not on impulse but on some principle, and that principles upon which people act are usually based upon a false psychology and a false ethic. There is a general theory as to what makes for happiness and this theory is false. Life is conceived as a competitive struggle

in which felicity consists in getting ahead of your neighbor. The joys which are not competitive are forgotten.

Now, I will not for a moment deny that getting ahead of your neighbor is delightful, but it is not the only delight of which human beings are capable. There are innumerable things which are not competitive. It is possible to enjoy food and drink without having to reflect that you have a better cook and a better wine merchant than your former friends whom you are learning to cold-shoulder. It is possible to be fond of your wife and your children without reflecting how much better she dresses than Mrs. So-and-So and how much better they are at athletics than the children of that old stick-in-the-mud Mr. Such-and-Such. There are those who can enjoy music without thinking how cultured the other ladies in their women's club will be thinking them. There are even people who can enjoy a fine day in spite of the fact that the sun shines on everybody. All these simple pleasures are destroyed as soon as competitiveness gets the upper hand.

But it is not only competitiveness that is the trouble. I could imagine a person who has turned against competitiveness and can only enjoy after conscious rejection of the competitive element. Such a person, seeing the sunshine in the morning, says to himself, "Yes, I may enjoy this and indeed I must, for it is a joy open to all." And however bored he may become with the sunshine he goes on persuading himself that he is enjoying it because he thinks he ought to.

"But," you will say, "are you maintaining that our actions ought not to be governed by moral principles? Are you suggesting that every whim and every impulse should be given free rein? Do you consider that if So-and-So's nose annoys you by being too long that gives you a right to tweak it? Sir," you will continue with indignation, "your doctrine is one which would uproot all the sources of morality and loosen all the bonds which hold society together. Only self-restraint, self-repression, iron self-control make it possible to endure the abominable beings among whom we have to live. No, sir! Better misery and gastric ulcers than such chaos as your doctrine would produce!"

I will admit at once that there is force in this objection. I have seen many noses that I should have liked to tweak, but never once have I yielded to the impulse. But this, like everything else, is a matter of degree. If you always yield to impulse, you are mad. If you never yield to impulse, you gradually dry up and very likely become mad to boot. In a life which is to be healthy and happy, impulse, though not allowed to run riot, must have sufficient scope to remain alive and to preserve that variety and diversity of interest which is natural to a human being. A life lived on a

principle, no matter what, is too narrowly determined, too systematic and uniform, to be happy. However much you care about success, you should have times when you are merely enjoying life without a thought of subsequent gain. However proud you may be, as president of a women's club, of your impeccable culture, you should not be ashamed of reading a low-brow book if you want to. A life which is all principle is a life on rails. The rails may help toward rapid locomotion, but preclude the joy of wandering. Man spent some million years wandering before he invented rails, and his happiness still demands some reminiscence of the earlier ages of freedom.

READING

According to Russell, what are the two major causes of American unhappiness? How does he develop each?

How do the first five paragraphs anticipate the two major causes?

In the last paragraph Russell somewhat modifies his advice, yet what is the net effect—to weaken or to strengthen his argument?

INTERPRETATION

What would Russell say are the chances for happiness of the younger generation as described by the editors of *Time?*

Are Americans really less happy than other national groups? Are they less happy than they were fifty years ago? What is the nature of evidence for happiness?

Is Russell's assumption of happiness as an end one that all philosophers would assent to? What are other ends? What are other means of achieving the end of happiness?

"It is a kind of happiness to know to what extent we are unhappy."—La Rochefoucauld. "Happy are the people whose annals are tiresome."—Montesquieu. Comment on these quotations in the light of Russell's essay.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The Unhappy Student
Another Cause for National Unhappiness
Russell and Le Fevre
Success in America

MY AMERICA*

by John Buchan

John Buchan, first Baron Tweedsmuir (1875–1940), Scottish author of novels of adventure and biographies, served as Governor General of Canada from 1935 to 1940.

I

I first discovered America through books. Not the tales of Indians and the Wild West which entranced my boyhood; those seemed to belong to no particular quarter of the globe, but to an indefinable land of romance, and I was not cognisant of any nation behind them. But when I became interested in literature I came strongly under the spell of New England. Its culture seemed to me to include what was best in Europe's, winnowed and clarified. Perhaps it was especially fitted to attract youth, for it was not too difficult or too recondite, but followed the "main march of the human affections," and it had the morning freshness of a young people. Its cheerfulness atoned for its occasional bleakness and anaemia. Lowell was the kind of critic I wanted, learned, rational, never freakish, always intelligible. Emerson's gnomic wisdom was a sound manual for adolescence, and of Thoreau I became—and for long remained—an ardent disciple. To a Scot of my upbringing there was something congenial in the simplicity, the mild austerity, and the girded discipline of the New England tradition. I felt that it had been derived from the same sources as our own.

Then, while I was at Oxford, I read Colonel Henderson's *Stonewall Jackson* and became a student of the American Civil War. I cannot say what especially attracted me to that campaign: partly, no doubt, the romance of it, the chivalry and the supreme heroism; partly its extraordinary technical interest, both military and political; but chiefly, I think, because I fell in love with the protagonists. I had found the kind of man that I could whole-heartedly admire. Since those days my study of the Civil War has continued, I have visited most of its battlefields, I have followed the trail of its great marches, I have read widely in its literature; indeed, my memory has become so stored with its details that I have often found myself able to tell the descendants of its leaders facts about their forebears of which they had never heard.

My interest soon extended from the soldiers to the civilians, and I acquired a new admiration for Abraham Lincoln. Then it was enlarged to include the rest of America's history—the first settlements, the crossing

* From *Pilgrim's Way,* by John Buchan (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940). Copyright, 1940, by Susan Caroline, Lady Tweedsmuir. Reprinted by permission of the Trustees of the Tweedsmuir Estate, A. P. Watt & Son, Hodder & Stoughton, and Houghton Mifflin Company.

of the Appalachians, the Revolution, the building of the West. Soon America, instead of being the unstoried land which it appears to most English travellers, became for me the home of a long tradition and studded with sacred places. I dare to say that no American was ever more thrilled by the prospect of seeing Westminster Abbey and the Tower, Winchester and Oxford, than I was by the thought of Valley Forge and the Shenandoah and the Wilderness.

I came first into the United States by way of Canada—a good way to enter, for English eyes are already habituated to the shagginess of the landscape and can begin to realize its beauties. My first reflection was that no one had told me how lovely the country was. I mean *lovely,* not vast and magnificent. I am not thinking of the Grand Canyon and the Yosemite and the Pacific coast, but of the ordinary rural landscape. There is much of the land which I have not seen, but in the East and the South and the Northwest I have collected a gallery of delectable pictures. I think of the farms which are clearings in the Vermont and New Hampshire hills, the flowery summer meadows, the lush cow-pastures with an occasional stump to remind one that it is old forest land, the quiet lakes and the singing streams, the friendly accessible mountains; the little country towns of Massachusetts and Connecticut with their village greens and elms and two-century-old churches and courthouses; the secret glens of the Adirondacks and the mountain meadows of the Blue Ridge; the long-settled champaign of Maryland and Pennsylvania; Virginian manors more Old-England perhaps than anything we have at home; the exquisite links with the past like much of Boston and Charleston and all of Annapolis; the sunburnt aromatic ranges of Montana and Wyoming; the Pacific shores where from snow mountains fishable streams descend through some of the noblest timber on earth to an enchanted sea.

It is a country most of which I feel to be in a special sense "habitable," designed for homes, adapted to human uses, a friendly land. I like, too, the way in which the nomenclature reflects its history, its racial varieties, its odd cultural mixtures, the grandiose and the homespun rubbing shoulders. That is how places should be named. I have no objection to Mechanicsville and Higginsville and Utica and Syracuse. They are a legitimate part of the record. And behind are the hoar-ancient memorials of the first dwellers, names like symphonies—Susquehanna, Ticonderoga, Shenandoah, Wyoming.

II

"Ah, my cabbages!" Henry Adams wrote, "when will you ever fathom the American? Never in your sweet lives." He proceeds in his genial way to make epigrams about his own New Englanders: "Improvised Europeans we were and—Lord God!—how thin!"—"Thank God I

never was cheerful. I come from the happy stock of the Mathers, who, as you remember, passed sweet mornings reflecting on the goodness of God and the damnation of infants." Where an Adams scrupled to tread it is not for a stranger to rush in. But I would humbly suggest a correction to one reading which, I think, has the authority of Robert Louis Stevenson. America is, no doubt, a vast country, though it can be comfortably put inside Canada. But it is not in every part a country of wide horizons. Dwellers on the Blue Ridge, on the prairies, and on the western ranges may indeed live habitually with huge spaces of land and sky, but most America, and some of its most famous parts, is pockety, snug and cosy, a sanctuary rather than a watch-tower. To people so domiciled its vastness must be like the mathematician's space-time, a concept apprehended by the mind and not a percept of the eye.

"The largeness of Nature and of this nation were monstrous without a corresponding largeness and generosity of the spirit of the citizen." That is one of Walt Whitman's best-known sayings, but let us remember that the bigness of their country is for most Americans something to be learned and imaginatively understood, and not a natural deduction from cohabiting with physical immensities.

Racially they are the most variegated people on earth. The preponderance of the Anglo-Saxon stock disappeared in the Civil War. Look today at any list of names in a society or a profession and you will find that, except in the navy, the bulk are from the continent of Europe. In his day Matthew Arnold thought that the chief source of the strength of the American people lay in their homogeneity and the absence of sharply defined classes, which made revolution unthinkable. Other observers, like Henry James, have deplored the lack of such homogeneity and wished for their country the "close and complete consciousness of the Scots." (I pause to note that I cannot imagine a more nightmare conception. What would happen to the world if a hundred and sixty million Scotsmen, with their tight, compact nationalism, were living in the same country?) I am inclined to query the alleged absence of classes, for I have never been in any part of the United States where class distinctions did not hold. There is an easy friendliness of manner which conceals a strong class pride, and the basis of that pride is not always, or oftenest, plutocratic. Apart from the social snobbery of the big cities, there seems to be everywhere an innocent love of grades and distinctions which is enough to make a communist weep. I have known places in the South where there was a magnificent aristocratic egalitarianism. Inside a charmed circle all were equal. The village postmistress, having had the right kind of great-great-grandmother, was an honoured member of society, while the immigrant millionaire, who had built himself a palace, might as well have been dead. And this is true not only of the New England F. F. M.'s and the

Virginian F. F. V.'s, the districts with long traditions, but of the raw little townships in the Middle West. They, too, have their "best" people who had ancestors, though the family tree may only have sprouted for two generations.

No country can show such a wide range of type and character, and I am so constituted that in nearly all I find something to interest and attract me. This is more than a temperamental bias, for I am very ready to give reasons for my liking. I am as much alive as anyone to the weak and ugly things in American life: areas, both urban and rural, where the human economy has gone rotten; the melting-pot which does not always melt; the eternal coloured problem; a constitutional machine which I cannot think adequately represents the efficient good sense of the American people; a brand of journalism which fatigues with its ruthless snappiness and uses a speech so disintegrated that it is incapable of expressing any serious thought or emotion; the imbecile patter of high-pressure salesmanship; an academic jargon, used chiefly by psychologists and sociologists, which is hideous and almost meaningless. Honest Americans do not deny these blemishes; indeed they are apt to exaggerate them, for they are by far the sternest critics of their own country. For myself, I would make a double plea in extenuation. There are defects from which today no nation is exempt, for they are the fruits of a mechanical civilization, which perhaps are more patent in America, since everything there is on a large scale. Again, you can set an achievement very much the same in kind against nearly every failure. If her historic apparatus of government is cranky, she is capable of meeting the "instant need of things" with brilliant improvisations. Against economic plague-spots she can set great experiments in charity; against journalistic baby-talk a standard of popular writing in her best papers which is a model of idiom and perspicuity; against catch-penny trade methods many solidly founded, perfectly organized commercial enterprises; against the jargon of the half-educated professor much noble English prose in the great tradition. That is why it is so foolish to generalise about America. You no sooner construct a rule than it is shattered by the exceptions.

As I have said, I have a liking for almost every kind of American (except the kind who decry their country). I have even a sneaking fondness for George Babbitt, which I fancy is shared by his creator. But there are two types which I value especially, and which I have never met elsewhere in quite the same form. One is the pioneer. No doubt the physical frontier of the United States is now closed, but the pioneer still lives, though the day of the covered wagon is over. I have met him in the New England hills, where he is grave, sardonic, deliberate in speech; in the South, where he has a ready smile and a soft, caressing way of talking; in the ranges of the West, the cowpuncher with his gentle voice and his

clear, friendly eyes which have not been dulled by reading print—the real thing, far removed from the vulgarities of film and fiction. At his best, I think, I have found him as a newcomer in Canada, where he is pushing north into districts like the Peace River, pioneering in the old sense. By what signs is he to be known? Principally by the fact that he is wholly secure, that he possesses his soul, that he is the true philosopher. He is one of the few aristocrats left in the world. He has a right sense of the values of life, because his cosmos embraces both nature and man. I think he is the most steadfast human being now alive.

The other type is at the opposite end of the social scale, the creature of a complex society who at the same time is not dominated by it, but, while reaping its benefits, stands a little aloof. In the older countries culture, as a rule, leaves some irregularity like an excrescence in a shapely tree-trunk, some irrational bias, some petulance or prejudice. You have to go to America, I think, for the wholly civilized man who has not lost his natural vigour or agreeable idiosyncrasies, but who sees life in its true proportions and has a fine balance of mind and spirit. It is a character hard to define, but anyone with a wide American acquaintance will know what I mean. They are people in whom education has not stunted any natural growth or fostered any abnormality. They are Greek in their justness of outlook, but Northern in their gusto. Their eyes are shrewd and candid, but always friendly. As examples I would cite, among friends who are dead, the names of Robert Bacon, Walter Page, Newton Baker, and Dwight Morrow.

But I am less concerned with special types than with the American people as a whole. Let me try to set down certain qualities which seem to me to flourish more lustily in the United States than elsewhere. Again, let me repeat, I speak of America only as I know it; an observer with a different experience might not agree with my conclusions.

First I would select what, for want of a better word, I should call homeliness. It is significant that the ordinary dwelling, though it be only a shack in the woods, is called not a house, but a home. This means that the family, the ultimate social unit, is given its proper status as the foundation of society. Even among the richer classes I seem to find a certain pleasing domesticity. English people of the same rank are separated by layers of servants from the basic work of the household, and know very little about it. In America the kitchen is not too far away from the drawing-room, and it is recognized, as Heraclitus said, that the gods may dwell there. But I am thinking chiefly of the ordinary folk, especially those of narrow means. It is often said that Americans are a nomad race, and it is true that they are very ready to shift their camp; but the camp, however bare, is always a home. The cohesion of the family is close, even when its members are scattered. This is due partly to the tradition

of the first settlers, a handful in an unknown land; partly to the history of the frontier, where the hearthfire burnt brighter when all around was cold and darkness. The later immigrants from Europe, feeling at last secure, were able for the first time to establish a family base, and they cherished it zealously. This ardent domesticity has had its bad effects on American literature, inducing a sentimentality which has produced as a reaction a not less sentimental "toughness." But as a social cement it is beyond price. There have been many to laugh at the dullness and pettiness of the "small town." From what I know of small-town life elsewhere, I suspect obtuseness in the satirists.

Second, I would choose the sincere and widespread friendliness of the people. Americans are interested in the human race, and in each other. Deriving doubtless from the old frontier days, there is a general helpfulness which I have not found in the same degree elsewhere. A homesteader in Dakota will accompany a traveller for miles to set him on the right road. The neighbours will rally round one of their number in distress with the loyalty of a Highland clan. This friendliness is not a self-conscious duty so much as an instinct. A squatter in a cabin will share his scanty provender and never dream that he is doing anything unusual.

American hospitality, long as I have enjoyed it, still leaves me breathless. The lavishness with which a busy man will give up precious time to entertain a stranger to whom he is in no way bound remains for me one of the wonders of the world. No doubt this friendliness, since it is an established custom, has its fake side. The endless brotherhoods and sodalities into which people brigade themselves encourage a geniality which is more a mannerism than an index of character, a tiresome, noisy, back-slapping heartiness. But that is the exception, not the rule. Americans like company, but though they are gregarious they do not lose themselves in the crowd. Waves of mass emotion may sweep the country, but they are transient things and do not submerge for long the stubborn rock of individualism. That is to say, people can be led, but they will not be driven. Their love of human companionship is based not on self-distrust, but on a genuine liking for their kind. With them the sense of a common humanity is a warm and constant instinct and not a doctrine of the schools or a slogan of the hustings.

Lastly—and this may seem a paradox—I maintain that they are fundamentally modest. Their interest in others is a proof of it; the Aristotelian Magnificent Man was interested in nobody but himself. As a nation they are said to be sensitive to criticism; that surely is modesty, for the truly arrogant care nothing for the opinion of other people. Above all they can laugh at themselves, which is not possible for the immodest. They are their own shrewdest and most ribald critics. It is charged

against them that they are inclined to boast unduly about those achievements and about the greatness of their country, but a smug glorying in them is found only in the American of the caricaturist. They rejoice in showing their marvels to a visitor with the gusto of children exhibiting their toys to a stranger, an innocent desire, without any unfriendly gloating, to make others partakers in their satisfaction. If now and then they are guilty of bombast, it is surely a venial fault. The excited American talks of his land very much, I suspect, as the Elizabethans in their cups talked of England. The foreigner who strayed into the Mermaid Tavern must often have listened to heroics which upset his temper.

The native genius, in humour, and in many of the public and private relations of life, is for overstatement, a high-coloured, imaginative, paradoxical extravagance. The British gift is for understatement. Both are legitimate figures of speech. They serve the same purpose, for they call attention to a fact by startling the hearer, since manifestly they are not the plain truth. Personally I delight in both mannerisms and would not for the world have their possessors reject them. They serve the same purpose in another and a subtler sense, for they can be used to bring novel and terrible things within the pale of homely experience. I remember on the Western Front in 1918 that two divisions, British and American, aligned side by side, suffered a heavy shelling. An American sergeant described it in racy and imaginative speech which would have been appropriate to the Day of Judgment. A British sergeant merely observed that "Kaiser 'ad been a bit 'asty." Each had a twinkle in his eye; each in his national idiom was making frightfulness endurable by domesticating it.

III

The United States is the richest, and, both actually and potentially, the most powerful state on the globe. She has much, I believe, to give to the world; indeed, to her hands is chiefly entrusted the shaping of the future. If democracy in the broadest and truest sense is to survive, it will be mainly because of her guardianship. For, with all her imperfections, she has a clearer view than any other people of the democratic fundamentals.

She starts from the right basis, for she combines a firm grip on the past with a quick sense of present needs and a bold outlook on the future. This she owes to her history; the combination of the British tradition with the necessities of a new land; the New England township and the Virginian manor *plus* the frontier. Much of that tradition was relinquished as irrelevant to her needs, but much remains: a talent for law which is not incompatible with a lawless practice; respect for a certain type of excellence in character which has made her great men uncommonly like

our own; a disposition to compromise, but only after a good deal of arguing; an intense dislike of dictation. To these instincts the long frontier struggles added courage in the face of novelties, adaptability, enterprise, a doggedness which was never lumpish, but alert and expectant.

That is the historic basis of America's democracy, and today she is the chief exponent of a creed which I believe on the whole to be the best in this imperfect world. She is the chief exponent for two reasons. The first is her size; she exhibits its technique in large type, so that he who runs may read. More important, she exhibits it in its most intelligible form, so that its constituents are obvious. Democracy has become with many an unpleasing parrot-cry, and, as I have urged elsewhere in this book, it is well to be clear what it means. It is primarily a spiritual testament, from which certain political and economic orders naturally follow. But the essence is the testament; the orders may change while the testament stands. This testament, this ideal of citizenship, she owes to no one teacher. There was a time when I fervently admired Alexander Hamilton and could not away with Jefferson; the latter only began to interest me, I think, after I had seen the University of Virginia, which he created. But I deprecate partisanship in those ultimate matters. The democratic testament derives from Hamilton as well as from Jefferson.

It has two main characteristics. The first is that the ordinary man believes in himself and in his ability, along with his fellows, to govern his country. It is when a people loses its self-confidence that it surrenders its soul to a dictator or an oligarchy. In Mr. Walter Lippmann's tremendous metaphor, it welcomes manacles to prevent its hands shaking. The second is the belief, which is fundamental also in Christianity, of the worth of every human soul—the worth, not the equality. This is partly an honest emotion, and partly a reasoned principle—that something may be made out of anybody, and that there is something likeable about everybody if you look for it—or, in canonical words, that ultimately there is nothing common or unclean.

The democratic testament is one lesson that America has to teach the world. A second is a new reading of nationalism. Some day and somehow the peoples must discover a way to brigade themselves for peace. Now, there are on the globe only two proven large-scale organisations of social units, the United States and the British Empire. The latter is not for export, and could not be duplicated; its strength depends upon a thousand-year-old monarchy and a store of unformulated traditions. But the United States was the conscious work of men's hands, and a task which has once been performed can be performed again. She is the supreme example of a federation in being, a federation which recognises the rights and individuality of the parts, but accepts the overriding interests of the whole. To achieve this compromise she fought a desperate

war. If the world is ever to have prosperity and peace, there must be some kind of federation—I will not say of democracies, but of states which accept the reign of Law. In such a task she seems to me to be the predestined leader. Vigorous as her patriotism is, she has escaped the jealous, barricadoed nationalism of the Old World. Disraeli, so often a prophet in spite of himself, in 1863, at a critical moment of the Civil War, spoke memorable words:

> There is a grave misapprehension, both in the ranks of Her Majesty's Government and of Her Majesty's Opposition, as to what constitutes the true meaning of the American democracy. The American democracy is not made up of the scum of the great industrial cities of the United States, nor of an exhausted middle class that speculates in stocks and calls that progress. The American democracy is made up of something far more stable, that may ultimately decide the fate of the two Americas and of "Europe."

For forty years I have regarded America not only with a student's interest in a fascinating problem, but with the affection of one to whom she has become almost a second motherland. Among her citizens I count many of my closest friends; I have known all her presidents, save one, since Theodore Roosevelt, and all her ambassadors to the Court of Saint James's since John Hay; for five years I have been her neighbour in Canada. But I am not blind to the grave problems which confront her. Democracy, after all, is a negative thing. It provides a fair field for the Good Life, but it is not in itself the Good Life. In these days when lovers of freedom may have to fight for their cause, the hope is that the ideal of the Good Life, in which alone freedom has any meaning, will acquire a stronger potency. It is the task of civilisation to raise every citizen above want, but in so doing to permit a free development and avoid the slavery of the beehive and the antheap. A humane economic policy must not be allowed to diminish the stature of man's spirit. It is because I believe that in the American people the two impulses are of equal strength that I see her in the vanguard of that slow upward trend, undulant or spiral, which today is our modest definition of progress. Her major prophet is still Whitman. "Everything comes out of the dirt—everything; everything comes out of the people, everyday people, the people as you find them and leave them; people, people, just people!"

It is only out of the dirt that things grow.

READING

What stages are traced by Buchan in his discovery of America? How does he connect them?

With what transition does Buchan go from his consideration of variety to his description of two special American types and four special qualities? Does he avoid inconsistency?

What American historical characters are mentioned by Buchan? what non-American? How does the use of both groups help set the tone of the essay?

INTERPRETATION

What is the nature of your own sense of America? Does it cause you to take issue with Buchan or agree with him?

Compare the qualities that Buchan ascribes to Americans with those ascribed by Le Fevre. May some of the differences be accounted for by differences of the occasions of the essays?

"[Democracy] provides a fair field for the Good Life, but it is not in itself the Good Life." Discuss the implications of this, especially in its pertinence to Russell's essay.

On the whole the essay is presented as a eulogy of this country. Could the wise reader also use it as a criticism and warning? Explain.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

The American in Texas
The Vermonter in New York
A Foreign Friend on America
Trip to the West Coast
America and the Good Life

THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY*

by Learned Hand

Learned Hand (1872–) received his undergraduate and legal education at Harvard. Since 1924 he has served as judge of the U. S. Circuit Court in New York City. "The Spirit of Liberty" was delivered during World War II at an "I Am an American Day" ceremony in Central Park.

We have gathered here to affirm a faith, a faith in a common purpose, a common conviction, a common devotion. Some of us have chosen America as the land of our adoption; the rest have come from those who did the same. For this reason we have some right to consider ourselves a picked group, a group of those who had the courage to break from the past and brave the dangers and the loneliness of a strange land. What was the object that nerved us, or those who went before us, to this choice? We sought liberty; freedom from oppression, freedom from want, freedom to be ourselves. This we then sought; this we now believe that we are by way of winning. What do we mean when we say that first of all we seek liberty? I often wonder whether we do not rest our hopes too much upon constitutions, upon laws and upon courts. These are false hopes; believe me, these are false hopes. Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it; no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it.

* From *The Spirit of Liberty:* Papers and Addresses of Learned Hand, Collected, and with an Introduction and Notes, by Irving Dilliard (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), pp. 189–191. Copyright, 1952, by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

While it lies there it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it. And what is this liberty which must lie in the hearts of men and women? It is not the ruthless, the unbridled will; it is not freedom to do as one likes. That is the denial of liberty, and leads straight to its overthrow. A society in which men recognize no check upon their freedom soon becomes a society where freedom is the possession of only a savage few; as we have learned to our sorrow.

What then is the spirit of liberty: I cannot define it; I can only tell you my own faith. The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which weighs their interests alongside its own without bias; the spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded; the spirit of liberty is the spirit of Him who, near two thousand years ago, taught mankind that lesson it has never learned, but has never quite forgotten; that there may be a kingdom where the least shall be heard and considered side by side with the greatest. And now in that spirit, that spirit of an America which has never been, and which may never be; nay, which never will be except as the conscience and courage of Americans create it; yet in the spirit of that America which lies hidden in some form in the aspirations of us all; in the spirit of the America for which our young men are at this moment fighting and dying; in that spirit of liberty and of America I ask you to rise and with me pledge our faith in the glorious destiny of our beloved country.

READING

How does Hand introduce the subject of liberty?

What negations does he use to explain it? what affirmations?

Compare the style of "The Spirit of Liberty" with that of "The Gettysburg Address" in regard to vocabulary, imagery, rhythm, structure, and tone.

INTERPRETATION

This address, delivered in 1944, immediately became widely known and in the intervening years has often been reprinted. In your opinion, what is the reason?

Though the address was suited to a particular occasion, is it still valuable? Would the events of today suggest different emphasis if it were to be written now? Is there a danger of a superficial and sentimental reading? Does Hand attempt to prevent such misreading?

How fully do the major attitudes that you have developed from the essay sequences on such subjects as religion, business and labor, machines, democratic freedom, and race accord with Hand's statement of principle?

TOPICS FOR WRITING

A Political Faith

The Need for Affirmation

The Value of Negation

The American Scene

5

Six Stories

ARMY OF OCCUPATION*

by Kay Boyle

Kay Boyle (1903–) attended the Ohio Mechanics Institute for two years. Since her first book of short stories in 1931, she has published more than twenty volumes—among these *The White Horses of Vienna* (1936), *The Youngest Camel* (1939), and *The Smoking Mountain* (1951).

There was a train which left the Gare de l'Est at twenty-five minutes past nine every night, but it was not a French train. The guards at the platform gates were American M.P.'s, and the ticketmen were G.I.s. They looked at the French girls who had come this far to kiss goodbye the men who were going back, and they passed their judgments and their compliments on them. They watched the women and men who stood clasped together in a final embrace—Frenchwomen, and men of the American Army of Occupation going back for another stretch in Germany after a furlough spent in Paris in pursuit of love. The train known as the Duty Train, the "Main Seiner," made its thirteen-and-a-quarter-hour run between the two rivers of two countries. The German sleeping cars, and the third-class carriages renounced their former nationality in defeat and became links coupling together the disparate states of America, and the sad, wild longing outcry—no longer recognizable as singing —of the men of these states could be heard in the crowded corridors and the compartments even before the train pulled away. Even while the gates were sliding closed between the Frenchwomen and the last, racing uniformed men with the weight of their duffelbags balanced on their shoulders as they ran, the drunken speeches to Michigan or California or Maine were roared out through the open windows, and then the trainman's sharp, lingering whistle blew, and the lanterns swung, and the Duty Train pulled out into the dark.

It was a man's train, and yet a few scattered women used to ride on it—American women: Wacs, or Army nurses going back to duty, or War Department employees going where they had to go. Among these few women who went through the gates one cold February night, there was a slender, pretty girl in uniform, with the patch of a war correspondent on the right sleeve of her overcoat, and the letters "US" stitched on the left. She carried her Val-Pak easily in one gloved hand, and her hair was brushed out from under her Army cap, glossy and soft and nearly black. As she passed beneath the platform lights, the men at the windows called out to her and whistled, but in spite of the rouge on her mouth and the shortness of her skirt, there was a look of modesty, of shy-

* From the *New Yorker*, June 7, 1947. Copyright, 1951, by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the author and publisher.

ness and vulnerability about her, so that she seemed at once different from the other women hurrying by. Perhaps it was merely that she was alone, while the others hastened in twos or threes up the crowded, tenebrous platform, half running on their high, bold heels, with their breath showing white on the air before them as they talked or laughed aloud. Or perhaps merely that she walked with her head a little lowered, while the others did not, or else that the things that passed through her mind were different. She did not look toward the men, and she did not seem to hear them calling out.

When she came to the third-class carriage on which the letter "B" hung black on a square, white sign, she swung her Val-Pak up the high steps through the door. Although there were still six minutes before the train would go, the outcry had already begun in the packed, cold cars, and the girl made her way, a little hesitant, a little shy, past the soldiers blocking the corridor. "Roll me over / In the clover," wailed the voices in grief from behind the closed compartment doors, and far ahead, in almost unbearable sorrow, other voices cried out "Reminds me of / The one I love" in drunken, unmelodious complaint.

"Compartment 5, Seat 29," the girl said half aloud, holding her ticket in her hand. And then she had found the number, and she put her hand on the sliding door of Compartment 5 and pulled it back.

There were three soldiers sitting inside on the long wooden seats, and one of them, a sergeant, who was in the corner at the right of the door, must have just ceased singing, for his mouth hung open still. He held an uncorked bottle of cognac in one hand, and he looked up at the girl standing in the doorway, and then he threw back his head, and the girl could see his Adam's apple jerking in his throat as he bayed the wolf call long and wild and loud.

The soldier who sat across from him got slowly, carefully to his feet. "Take a glance, gentlemen, at what they're passing around with the coffee and leecures tonight," he said, and he reached out and took the Val-Pak from the girl's hand. He was a big, pink-skinned young man with heavy, sloping shoulders, and his reddish hair was cropped close upon his broad, round skull. "They take away Montmartre, but they give us a war correspondent," he said, and as he raised her bag to jam it onto the rack, he lost his balance and caught at the handle of the door. "What paper you representing?" he said.

The girl stood in the doorway still, troubled and young, with her dark hair soft around her face. She looked at the sergeant, who sat holding the bottle of cognac between his spread knees, and at the soldier standing beside her, whose eyes had begun at the patch on her shoulder and moved slowly, unsteadily down to her sheer stockings and her brown tie-shoes. Beyond them, there was a third soldier. He was sitting by the window and

had not turned his head, and now, as the Duty Train slipped into motion, she saw the platform lights flash in accelerating rhythm past his ear and the cap he wore pushed low upon his forehead.

"I'm free-lancing," she said. She did not say, *I am going to Germany to see him. He's showing them how to publish papers over there.*

"Have a seat," said the big soldier, swaying toward her. "You've never had it as good as this before. Everywhere else in the train they're packed in eight or ten to a compartment. You never had it so good anywhere you've ever been," he said.

"She's afraid. The poor little thing's afraid," said the sergeant. He sat looking up at her, his pale soiled hands closed on the cognac bottle that hung between his knees. "She's afraid of you and me and this here bottle."

"No," said the girl quickly, "I'm not afraid." She stepped inside, and because of the cold in the corridor she pulled the door shut behind her, and at once the sound of the singing was closed away, fainter and sadder, and she stepped past the two men and sat down on the same side as the sergeant, but at a distance from him. The two soldiers looked at her ankles and legs as she took her coat off; they watched her take off her fur-lined, good leather gloves, and fold them and put them into the brown leather bag that had hung from her shoulder by a strap. Then the sergeant raised the bottle of cognac to his mouth, his lips funnelling moist and red around the bottle's greenish glass. When he had drunk, he handed the bottle across to the big soldier with the reddish hair. He sat down again on the opposite seat, and raised the bottle to his mouth, and as he drank he swayed with the swaying of the train.

"I see you're married," the sergeant said to the girl. He sat looking down the length of the bench at her, and he jerked his chin in the direction of her hand. His chin was deeply cleft, and a thread of cognac that ran through the cleft and the stubble shone yellow in the compartment's naked light. "I see you got a ring on your finger," he said. The cuffs of his shirt hung loose below the sleeves of his blouse, and as he looked at her he fumbled a moment at the undone buttons at his wrists.

"Yes, I am. I'm married," the girl said.

The soldier had lowered the bottle now, and he wiped the mouth of it off with the inside of his hand. "Have a drink," he said, and he shifted down on the bench a little to hold the bottle out at her.

"No, thanks," said the girl.

"She's a lady," said the sergeant. He gave a sad, loud guffaw of laughter and slapped his thigh.

For the first time, the soldier sitting by the window turned his head and looked at them. "There's enough of them that ain't ladies travelling on this here train tonight," he said in a slow, stubborn voice. His face

hung narrow and pale between monumental ears, the features of it nearly poetic in their melancholy. "There's two sleeping-car loads of French war brides travelling right along here with us tonight," he said, and perhaps he should have been speaking of plowing one crop or the other under, or of getting silos full, instead of talking about women. "I don't envy them none that's getting them dames," he said.

"French war brides lying down in sleeping berths while American war correspondents have to sit up all night. That's rough. That sure is rough," said the sergeant, and the boy from the farm pushed his cap down lower on his brows and turned his face to the dark of the window again.

The big soldier handed the bottle of cognac back to the sergeant, and then he slid further along on the boards of the seat until he was sitting opposite the girl. "I got a bottle of Martell in my coat there that nobody's ever touched," he said. He leaned forward, his arms leaning on his thick, broad legs, his knees coming close to the girl's knees. "If that's what's keeping you from drinking, I'll get the new bottle out. You won't have to drink after anyone else. It's as pure as the driven snow," he said.

"It's not that," the girl said. She put her soft hair back from her shoulders, talking a little loud above the steady roaring of the train. "I just don't like the taste of it—not straight." For an instant, she saw the booths of the Third Avenue bar where they'd gone in the one winter they had had together, gone six nights a week in the early hours of the morning, after the paper had been put to bed. "My husband's a newspaperman," she heard herself saying, and now that she spoke of him, the tumult and outcry had seemed to cease in the train so that these strangers might listen, the cursing and crying and moaning for another country to come to a halt so that these others might hear more clearly the inimitable sound of love. "So we used to keep funny hours," she said, "and on the way home from work we'd stop in for a drink, at one or two o'clock in the morning, or whenever it happened to be. He needed something strong, and he'd take it straight, but I could never manage to get it down." She could see him in his old blue jacket sitting across a table from her, the first taste of the drink taking the weariness from his face, and giving the gentleness back to his mouth and eyes. "I haven't seen him in eight months," she said. "I've been around newspapers all my life, but I couldn't get over. I simply couldn't get them to send me over." *In thirteen hours now, a little less than thirteen,* she thought, glancing at the watch on her wrist. The distant voices in the train had begun to sing again, and she listened to the faint, far, nostalgic music as she sat smiling blindly at the soldier's swaying face.

The sergeant had been watching her, and now he put the cork back into the bottle of cognac, and pressed it down with the cushion of his

thumb. Then he propped the bottle upright in the corner, against the wooden panelling, and he slid unsteadily along the boards until he had come close to the girl. "We're good guys. We're all right guys," he said, and it might have been that the words she had spoken had touched some troubled springhead of emotion in him. "You just got to try and understand us." His tunic was open, and his big, soiled hands were fumbling in his pockets, and after a moment he brought a piece of paper out. "I got this to show the Army. I got this to show them I wasn't off somewhere getting drunk, like they might think I was," he said, and his black-rimmed fingers held the creased bit of paper out to her, and she took it in her hand.

There was an English doctor's name and address in Somerset printed out at the top of it, and under this the simple, explicit statement of fact was made: "This is to certify that John Henley White, born January the fifteenth, 1947, died of pulmonary pneumonia on February the nineteenth, 1947, and that his father, Sgt. Harry White, of the United States Army, was present at his funeral. Here witness my Hand and Seal . . ."

Behind the sergeant, the cognac bottle had toppled over, and it rolled back and forth on the wooden seat with the motion of the train. As he reached back for it, he kept his eyes on the girl. She looked slowly up from the words that were written on the piece of paper.

"Surprises you, uh?" He took the cork out of the bottle with his teeth, his head tipped sidewise to do it, and still he did not take his eyes from her, and he waited a moment before beginning to drink. "Surprises you to find out I had a son, don't it?" he said. He was almost smiling, as if relishing the wiliness of some trick he had played.

The girl folded the paper where it had been folded before, and he looked at her fingers as she gave it back to him.

"The nineteenth of February. I'm sorry," the girl said in a low voice.

"Sure. Four days ago," said the sergeant. A dribble of cognac was running down his chin. He put the doctor's certificate away in his inside pocket, and he passed the bottle of cognac to the soldier on the other seat. "He was five weeks old, John Henley White. My wife's an English girl, married her two years ago over there when we were stationed in Somerset," he said. "That's where I come from now. She sent me the telegram last week and I flew over. I took one of them big planes, not any of these here little French crates but the big, four-motor jobs you read about in the papers always cracking up." His heavy lips hung open, bright and moist, and his eyes, with a slight glaze on them now, were fixed on her face. "I bet I gave you a surprise. I bet you'd never have taken me for a married man," he said.

"Look," said the big soldier, and he leaned toward the sergeant

from the opposite bench. "Does it occur to you that the lady is bored with all this kind of talk? Does it occur to you that beauty incarnate doesn't give a snap of her dainty fingers for your relatives?" He handed the bottle back to the sergeant, and the sergeant lifted it and threw back his head and drank what cognac remained in the bottom of it, and then he dropped the empty bottle on the floor and kicked it under the seat. "You got to make yourself interesting to a lady," the big soldier said. "Tell her about your travels, the countries you been to, the kind of things you seen." He stopped talking, and he sat there looking at the girl, his big, square-boned knees in the khaki cloth almost touching her knees. "In the past three days I've been in Paris, I spent two hundred thousand francs, and I don't regret a penny of it. Not for what I got," he said.

The little farm boy by the window, with the cap tipped low on his brows, turned away from the rushing darkness of the night outside and looked at them bleakly, almost reproachfully, again. "I don't envy you what you got in Paris. I don't envy nobody anything he's got," he said. "I could of had exactly the same as anybody else. I could of had a French war bride travelling right along with me on this here train tonight. I could of been taking her to Bremerhaven the way the rest of them are going, if I'd of been sucker enough to marry her."

The sergeant gave a yipe of laughter. "You sound as if you turned kinda choosy just when you hadn't ought," he said, and he slapped his thigh, and guffawed high and loud.

"I found out too much just in time," said the farm boy, speaking slowly, stubbornly. He looked at them in something like hesitation a moment, as if there were more to say and as if he were about to say it, and then he turned back to the fleeting darkness, to the memory of the fields of home, the valleys and hills and the snowbound roads of home to which his longing gave substance in the foreign night. "Roll me over/ In the clover," came the faint, sad chorus of crying down the corridor, and the farm boy rubbed his hand quickly on the pane. "Well, what do you know, it's snowing," he said. The big soldier stood up from his place opposite the girl and began making his way unsteadily toward the corner by the door where the two swaying khaki overcoats hung. "I bet there's a lot of that laying around home now," said the farm boy by the window.

"A lot of what?" said the sergeant, holding his loud, high laughter in.

"Why, snow," said the little soldier, as if surprised that it fell in this foreign country. "Real, winter snow. I bet they're out coasting at home tonight."

The big soldier had reached the overcoats, and he stood there sway-

ing and groping in the pockets of one of them. In a moment he brought out a fresh bottle. "This time you're going to start it off," he said to the girl. He sat down facing her again, and he held the bottle between his knees as he uncorked it. "You're going to have first go at this one, just to sweeten it for the rest of us." He held the bottle toward her. He had spread his big legs wide, one on each side of her silk-clad legs now, ready to close in on them in flagrant embrace.

"No," said the girl. "I'm tired. I want to try to get some sleep."

"Man," said the sergeant, "she just don't like Martell. You can tell that the way she's looking at it. She don't like your brand nohow, boy, so you might as well take it away." He slid back up the seat until he was in the corner by the door where his overcoat hung above him, and he reached up and pulled a bottle out of a pocket. "The brandy of kings," he said with a roar of laughter. "Good old Courvoisier," he said, caressing the bottle in his black-nailed hands.

"You see," the girl began in a quiet voice once his wild, high laughing had ceased, "it's after half past ten at night."

The big soldier opposite her was smiling, his heavy, sloping shoulders hunched forward, and he held the bottle of Martell toward her still. "You'd better try some of this before you drop into the arms of Morpheus," he said.

"No," said the girl again, and, with her coat around her, she moved down the boards of the seat and settled herself by the window. Just across from her now, the little farm boy was asleep with his narrow, tired face against the glass. "I'll take this end," she said, making it sound natural and right above the steady, mechanical rhythm of the train. "You two will have all the room you need up there." But the sergeant's arm had reached out and gone suddenly around her. He brought it tight around her neck, with the back of his soiled hand pressing her throat, and his knuckles forcing hard against her jawbone and her chin.

"Not until I get what I want," he said. She could taste his breath on the little space of air between them as he forced her head and her soft, glossy hair back hard against the side of his face. "I want to get some of that rouge off your mouth. I've been wanting to ever since you walked through that door," he said.

"Would that I might leap to the lady's defense," said the big soldier, "but you outrank me, Sergeant, you outrank me." He had shifted down closer to the farm boy so as to sit nearly opposite to her still, and his legs in their khaki were stretched out now as if in longing toward her. "You take what you're entitled to, Sergeant," he said, and he lifted the bottle of Martell and took a long deep drink. "You take it first. I'll take what's left."

The girl's heart beat swiftly in impatience and outrage a moment

while the back of the sergeant's hand forced up her chin. She was thinking fiercely, *They can't do anything, not a single thing. In a little while he'll walk down the platform, looking in every window for me. . . .*

"Stop being fools," she said in a low, unshaken voice, and she twisted within the crook of the sergeant's arm, and with her two hands she lifted the weight and the abomination of his flesh, and flung his arm away. His will, and his tough physical power, seemed suddenly to have ebbed in weariness, or hopelessness, or in the remembrance of some half-forgotten grief, and his hand, with the sleeve unbuttoned at the wrist, fell soiled and empty on the wooden seat.

"What I need is a drink," he said.

It was then, as he lifted the bottle of Courvoisier to drink, that the compartment door was jerked suddenly back, and a tall, young, blue-eyed corporal stepped in. He wore a battle jacket, with three years of overseas stripes on his sleeves, and his hair was black, and it fell loosely across his forehead, soft and untractable, as if it had just been washed that afternoon. He closed the door behind him, and he stood with his handsome young head lifted, holding to the handle of it still, his grave eyes looking straight toward the corner where the girl sat with her legs drawn up under her and her coat around her in the cold.

"I saw you in the station when you came through the gate," he said. "I thought maybe you had a sleeping berth, and then I just saw you now through the compartment window as I came down the hall." He did not seem to see the others sitting in the compartment with her, or the sergeant's legs stretched out like a barrier across the aisle. "I've got a seat in the car next door," he said. "I mean a seat with upholstery—second class. You'd be better off in there, if you'd like to take it," he said.

"And you?" said the girl, speaking quickly to him.

"I'll switch with you," he said.

The big soldier had been drinking from his bottle of Martell, and now he wiped his mouth with the side of his hand and held out the bottle to the corporal. "Oh, young Lochinvar, take a drink of this," he said.

But the corporal had not seemed to hear him speak. He was looking straight at the girl as he stepped across the sergeant's outstretched legs. "I'm so sick of looking at Frenchwomen," he said, and he sat down on the wooden seat beside her, sitting sidewise so as to look into her face. "You're American. You're wonderful," he said.

"Take it somewhere else," said the sergeant, who slumped on the bench behind him, but the corporal might have been a deaf man for all that he knew the sergeant was there.

"I haven't been home for eighteen months," said the corporal, his voice eager, his blue eyes in their short, thick fringes of black lashes fixed on her eyes, his ears deaf to everything except what she might say.

"Eighteen months is a long time to be away from where you want to be."

Behind him, in the corner, the sergeant straightened up, and slapped his thigh, and roared aloud. "It's rough, it sure is rough them treating you like that," he said, and he lifted the bottle of Courvoisier and drank again.

"I want you to have my seat in the other car," said the corporal. With his long, narrow fingers he combed the loose hair back off his brow. "You're beautiful. You're like all the girls at home who don't come over."

As if the single word "home" had sounded clear as a clarion call above the rushing tumult of the train, the farm boy by the window roused from sleep and raised his head. "You on your way to Bremerhaven?" he asked in his slow stubborn, perplexed voice. He sat looking across at them, and at the light, in bewilderment a moment, blindly fingering the stuff of his uniform as if it were not khaki but denim or corduroy, perhaps, that he had expected to find there. "You on your way home, too?" he said. But the corporal had not seemed to hear him.

"I haven't anything against the French," said the corporal, looking at the girl still. "But the women aren't like you. Your skin is different, and your hair, and the sound of your voice is different."

"You'd better watch out, Corporal," said the big soldier, and he grinned at them from the other bench. "She's got French blood in her. She's got a drop or two of English, too."

"No," said the corporal, and although he heard the sound of words at last, he did not turn his head from the sight of her. "They don't make them like that over here. They don't know how," he said.

"There're plenty of them there French ones on the train tonight," said the farm boy by the window. "War brides. French war brides," he said, looking at the corporal. "Some fellas don't seem to give a whoop and a holler what they get hold of. Maybe they don't know something I found out just in time about the French," he said.

"Isolationist, are you?" said the big soldier, and he lowered the bottle of Martell.

"Sure," said the farm boy in his slow, stubborn voice. He turned his face back to the darkness of the night. "That's the word I was looking for," he said, and he drifted bleakly into sleep again.

The sergeant had got unsteadily up from his place by the door, and with one hand he held to the baggage rack above him for stability while he took the two or three steps down the compartment to where the corporal sat beside the girl. "I guess ladies and gentlemen don't drink the way the rest of us do?" he said, and he stood there swaying above them. His tunic hung open still, and in the hand that swung by his side he held the half-empty bottle of Courvoisier.

"Sure, I drink," said the corporal, glancing up at him. "I've been drinking for two days in Paris. I don't want to drink any more." He shook the hair back off his forehead, and then his blue eyes looked eagerly, earnestly, through their smudged fringe of lashes at the girl. "I've got a house at home, a house of my own," he said. "My uncle left it to me. I've rented it to a family. They pay me a hundred and twenty-five dollars a month, and I'll get more when the O.P.A. controls are off. But I don't want to live there. I'm just telling you about it so that you'll know. What I want to do is to go up to Alaska," he said, his voice grave, eager, young. "I want to open up some kind of an inn, something with cabins, or maybe bungalows, in the woods around it, up on the Alaskan highway. I've been getting estimates on the price of land up there, and building's cheap once you get your ground cleared. Do you think you'd like Alaska?" he said. "It would be for about three months of the year, the season up there, say the fifteenth of June to the fifteenth of September, and I'd build something really good, something picturesque. Do you think you'd like to take a chance on it?" he said.

The sergeant made another unsteady step, and now he stood between the girl and the corporal, a swaying barrier, holding with one hand still to the baggage rack above his head.

"Perhaps we could talk about it tomorrow," the girl said, and she touched the corporal's sleeve an instant. "I'm tired. If you meant what you said about the seat in the other car, I'd like to take it—"

The sergeant's head swung like a bell between them now, his moist lips open. "You get out of here," he said to the corporal. "Get out quick."

"No," said the corporal. He looked up in almost childlike credence and trust at the sergeant. "I'm twenty-three," he said, and he put the hair back off his forehead. "I swear I've been looking for twenty years for her. I never thought I'd find her overseas." He turned back to the girl again, and he went on, saying, "I'm from Oregon, but that doesn't mean I want to spend my life there. I'd want the woman who married me to have as much say about that as I have myself. But I'd like you to think about Alaska. I'd like you to keep it in mind." He put his hand in his blouse now, and he felt in the inner pocket of it. "I've got some photographs I could show you—just small ones, but they'd give you an idea," he said. "There're trees there that take your breath away, bigger than in California even, and when you get up high enough, it's glacier country."

The sergeant swung, seemingly without muscle or bone, like a hanged man between them. "Go on. Get out of here. Get out," he said.

"Sure," said the big soldier on the other side. "You be a good boy and run along back to Oregon."

"You'd better go," said the girl in a soft voice to the corporal. "You

go, and I'll go with you." She had gathered her coat closely around her, and she slid her legs carefully, cautiously down.

"Yes," said the corporal, but he did not get up from the bench. He sat there looking at her. "My God, you're beautiful. I love you. I respect you," he said.

The sergeant held with one hand to the baggage rack still, and although he had scarcely seemed to move, he raised the nearly empty bottle he held in his other hand, and he brought it down, vicious and hard, on the side of the corporal's head. For an instant the corporal's underlip quivered like a child's, but he did not fall at once; he even sought to rise to his feet, with a look of surprise and sickness on his face. And then his eyes closed, and he sloped sidewise, huddled within himself, and the sergeant lurched aside to let him slip to the compartment floor. When he was down, lying full-length as if in sleep, the sergeant leaned over him in silence and hit him again, this time across the forehead where the loose hair fell upon his brow, and what was left of the cognac ran out of the mouth of the bottle and splashed across the front of the corporal's blouse and stained the campaign ribbons on his breast. The girl sat gripping her coat around her with her trembling hands, and her teeth were shaking in her head.

"Let's kick the guts out of Oregon for interfering where he wasn't wanted," said the big soldier. He tried to get up from his seat, but he couldn't stand any longer. Beyond him, the farm boy slept in peace against the cold dark window glass.

The bottle of Courvoisier had dropped from the sergeant's hand with the force of the last blow he had given, and now he stooped down, grunting, his soiled fingers groping for the bottle as it rolled back and forth across the compartment floor. When he had got hold of it again, he raised the emptied bottle above the corporal's head.

"Don't touch him! Don't you dare to hit him again!" the girl cried out. She had jumped to her feet, she had flung herself forward as if to save from annihilation the actual flesh and bone of all that remained of decency. *There're other people on this train, like people you know, like people you see in the street,* she was thinking in panic. *There're Wacs, and brothers, and sons, and husbands . . . there're people singing.* She could hear their voices, far, unheeding, calling out in nostalgia, as the Germans had called out before them, to a loitering, blond-headed woman named "Lili Marlene." *People who understand words, if I can get to them, if I can say the words to them,* she was thinking, and her legs shook under her as she walked. She had got past the big soldier, who sprawled in stupor on the bench now; she was making her way past the body of the corporal. The sergeant stood upright, his legs straddling the fallen man, the empty bottle hanging from his fingers, swaying, half smil-

ing, before the compartment door. "Get out of my way!" she cried out in fury to him. "Get out of my way!" And he did not speak, but, half smiling still as she flung by him, he lifted his hand and stroked her soft dark hair.

Outside in the cold of the corridor she began to run past the closed compartment doors, the drawn curtains, the masked lights, running fast, with the tears falling down her face, toward the sound of the sad, sweet, distant voices in the rushing train.

THE BRIDE COMES TO YELLOW SKY*

by Stephen Crane

Stephen Crane (1871–1900), after attending Lafayette and Syracuse, became a free-lance writer in New York City. With the publication of *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) his reputation was established, though the earlier *Maggie* (1893) had marked the beginning of his short but extraordinary literary career.

I

The great Pullman was whirling onward with such dignity of motion that a glance from the window seemed simply to prove that the plains of Texas were pouring eastward. Vast flats of green grass, dull-hued spaces of mesquite and cactus, little groups of frame houses, woods of light and tender trees, all were sweeping into the east, sweeping over the horizon, a precipice.

A newly married pair had boarded this coach at San Antonio. The man's face was reddened from many days in the wind and sun, and a direct result of his new black clothes was that his brick-colored hands were constantly performing in a most conscious fashion. From time to time he looked down respectfully at his attire. He sat with a hand on each knee, like a man waiting in a barber's shop. The glances he devoted to other passengers were furtive and shy.

The bride was not pretty, nor was she very young. She wore a dress of blue cashmere, with small reservations of velvet here and there, and with steel buttons abounding. She continually twisted her head to regard her puff sleeves, very stiff, straight, and high. They embarrassed her. It was quite apparent that she had cooked, and that she expected to cook, dutifully. The blushes caused by the careless scrutiny of some passengers as she had entered the car were strange to see upon this plain, underclass countenance, which was drawn in placid, almost emotionless lines.

* From *Stephen Crane: An Omnibus,* edited by Robert Wooster Stallman (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1952). Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright, 1925, by William H. Crane, and 1952, by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

They were evidently very happy. "Ever been in a parlor-car before?" he asked, smiling with delight.

"No," she answered; "I never was. It's fine, ain't it?"

"Great! And then after a while we'll go forward to the diner, and get a big lay-out. Finest meal in the world. Charge a dollar."

"Oh, do they?" cried the bride. "Charge a dollar? Why, that's too much—for us—ain't it, Jack?"

"Not this trip, anyhow," he answered bravely. "We're going to go the whole thing."

Later he explained to her about the trains. "You see, it's a thousand miles from one end of Texas to the other; and this train runs right across it, and never stops but four times." He had the pride of an owner. He pointed out to her the dazzling fittings of the coach; and in truth her eyes opened wider as she contemplated the sea-green figured velvet, the shining brass, silver, and glass, the wood that gleamed as darkly brilliant as the surface of a pool of oil. At one end a bronze figure sturdily held a support for a separated chamber, and at convenient places on the ceiling were frescos in olive and silver.

To the minds of the pair, their surroundings reflected the glory of their marriage that morning in San Antonio; this was the environment of their new estate; and the man's face in particular beamed with an elation that made him appear ridiculous to the negro porter. This individual at times surveyed them from afar with an amused and superior grin. On other occasions he bullied them with skill in ways that did not make it exactly plain to them that they were being bullied. He subtly used all the manners of the most unconquerable kind of snobbery. He oppressed them; but of this oppresion they had small knowledge, and they speedily forgot that infrequently a number of travellers covered them with stares of derisive enjoyment. Historically there was supposed to be something infinitely humorous in their situation.

"We are due in Yellow Sky at 3:42," he said, looking tenderly into her eyes.

"Oh, are we?" she said, as if she had not been aware of it. To evince surprise at her husband's statement was part of her wifely amiability. She took from a pocket a little silver watch; and as she held it before her, and stared at it with a frown of attention, the new husband's face shone.

"I bought it in San Anton' from a friend of mine," he told her gleefully.

"It's seventeen minutes past twelve," she said, looking up at him with a kind of shy and clumsy coquetry. A passenger, noting this play, grew excessively sardonic, and winked at himself in one of the numerous mirrors.

At last they went to the dining-car. Two rows of negro waiters, in glowing white suits, surveyed their entrance with the interest, and also the equanimity, of men who had been forewarned. The pair fell to the lot of a waiter who happened to feel pleasure in steering them through their meal. He viewed them with the manner of a fatherly pilot, his countenance radiant with benevolence. The patronage, entwined with the ordinary deference, was not plain to them. And yet, as they returned to their coach, they showed in their faces a sense of escape.

To the left, miles down a long purple slope, was a little ribbon of mist where moved the keening Rio Grande. The train was approaching it at an angle, and the apex was Yellow Sky. Presently it was apparent that, as the distance from Yellow Sky grew shorter, the husband became commensurately restless. His brick-red hands were more insistent in their prominence. Occasionally he was even rather absent-minded and far-away when the bride leaned forward and addressed him.

As a matter of truth, Jack Potter was beginning to find the shadow of a deed weigh upon him like a leaden slab. He, the town marshal of Yellow Sky, a man known, liked, and feared in his corner, a prominent person, had gone to San Antonio to meet a girl he believed he loved, and there, after the usual prayers, had actually induced her to marry him, without consulting Yellow Sky for any part of the transaction. He was now bringing his bride before an innocent and unsuspecting community.

Of course people in Yellow Sky married as it pleased them, in accordance with a general custom; but such was Potter's thought of his duty to his friends, or of their idea of his duty, or of an unspoken form which does not control men in these matters, that he felt he was heinous. He had committed an extraordinary crime. Face to face with this girl in San Antonio, and spurred by his sharp impulse, he had gone headlong over all the social hedges. At San Antonio he was like a man hidden in the dark. A knife to sever any friendly duty, any form, was easy to his hand in that remote city. But the hour of Yellow Sky—the hour of daylight—was approaching.

He knew full well that his marriage was an important thing to his town. It could only be exceeded by the burning of the new hotel. His friends could not forgive him. Frequently he had reflected on the advisibility of telling them by telegraph, but a new cowardice had been upon him. He feared to do it. And now the train was hurrying him toward a scene of amazement, glee, and reproach. He glanced out of the window at the line of haze swinging slowly in toward the train.

Yellow Sky had a kind brass band, which played painfully, to the delight of the populace. He laughed without heart as he thought of it. If the citizens could dream of his prospective arrival with his bride, they

would parade the band at the station and escort them, amid cheers and laughing congratulations, to his adobe home.

He resolved that he would use all the devices of speed and plains-craft in making the journey from the station to his house. Once within that safe citadel, he could issue some sort of vocal bulletin, and then not go among the citizens until they had time to wear off a little of their enthusiasm.

The bride looked anxiously at him. "What's worrying you, Jack?"

He laughed again. "I'm not worrying, girl; I'm only thinking of Yellow Sky."

She flushed in comprehension.

A sense of mutual guilt invaded their minds and developed a finer tenderness. They looked at each other with eyes softly aglow. But Potter often laughed the same nervous laugh; the flush upon the bride's face seemed quite permanent.

The traitor to the feelings of Yellow Sky narrowly watched the speeding landscape. "We're nearly there," he said.

Presently the porter came and announced the proximity of Potter's home. He held a brush in his hand, and, with all his airy superiority gone, he brushed Potter's new clothes as the latter slowly turned this way and that way. Potter fumbled out a coin and gave it to the porter, as he had seen others do. It was a heavy and muscle-bound business, as that of a man shoeing his first horse.

The porter took their bag, and as the train began to slow they moved forward to the hooded platform of the car. Presently the two engines and their long string of coaches rushed into the station of Yellow sky.

"They have to take water here," said Potter, from a constricted throat and in mournful cadence, as one announcing death. Before the train stopped his eye had swept the length of the platform, and he was glad and astonished to see there was none upon it but the station-agent, who, with a slightly hurried and anxious air, was walking toward the water-tanks. When the train had halted, the porter alighted first, and placed in position a little temporary step.

"Come on, girl," said Potter, hoarsely. As he helped her down they each laughed on a false note. He took the bag from the Negro, and bade his wife cling to his arm. As they slunk rapidly away, his hang-dog glance perceived that they were unloading the two trunks, and also that the station-agent, far ahead near the baggage-car, had turned and was running toward him, making gestures. He laughed, and groaned as he laughed, when he noted the first effect of his marital bliss upon Yellow Sky. He gripped his wife's arm firmly to his side, and they fled. Behind them the porter stood, chuckling fatuously.

II

The California express on the Southern Railway was due at Yellow Sky in twenty-one minutes. There were six men at the bar of the Weary Gentleman saloon. One was a drummer who talked a great deal and rapidly; three were Texans who did not care to talk at that time; and two were Mexican sheepherders, who did not talk as a general practice in the Weary Gentleman saloon. The barkeeper's dog lay on the board walk that crossed in front of the door. His head was on his paws, and he glanced drowsily here and there with the constant vigilance of a dog that is kicked on occasion. Across the sandy street were some vivid green grass-plots, so wonderful in appearance, amid the sands that burned near them in a blazing sun, that they caused a doubt in the mind. They exactly resembled the grass mats used to represent lawns on the stage. At the cooler end of the railway station, a man without a coat sat in a tilted chair and smoked his pipe. The fresh-cut bank of the Rio Grande circled near the town, and there could be seen beyond it a great plum-colored plain of mesquite.

Save for the busy drummer and his companions in the saloon, Yellow Sky was dozing. The new-comer leaned gracefully upon the bar, and recited many tales with the confidence of a bard who has come upon a new field.

"—and at the moment that the old man fell downstairs with the bureau in his arms, the old woman was coming up with two scuttles of coal, and of course—"

The drummer's tale was interrupted by a young man who suddenly appeared in the open door. He cried: "Scratchy Wilson's drunk, and has turned loose with both hands." The two Mexicans at once set down their glasses and faded out of the rear entrance of the saloon.

The drummer, innocent and jocular, answered: "All right, old man. S'pose he has? Come in and have a drink, anyhow."

But the information had made such an obvious cleft in every skull in the room that the drummer was obliged to see its importance. All had become instantly solemn. "Say," said he, mystified, "what is this?" His three companions made the introductory gesture of eloquent speech; but the young man at the door forestalled them.

"It means, my friend," he answered, as he came into the saloon, "that for the next two hours this town won't be a health resort."

The barkeeper went to the door, and locked and barred it; reaching out of the window, he pulled in heavy wooden shutters, and barred them. Immediately a solemn, chapel-like gloom was upon the place. The drummer was looking from one to another.

"But say," he cried, "what is this, anyhow? You don't mean there is going to be a gun-fight?"

"Don't know whether there'll be a fight or not," answered one man, grimly; "but there'll be some shootin'—some good shootin'."

The young man who had warned them waved his hand. "Oh, there'll be a fight fast enough, if any one wants it. Anybody can get a fight out there in the street. There's a fight just waiting."

The drummer seemed to be swayed between the interest of a foreigner and a perception of personal danger.

"What did you say his name was?" he asked.

"Scratchy Wilson," they answered in chorus.

"And will he kill anybody? What are you going to do? Does this happen often? Does he rampage around like this once a week or so? Can he break in that door?"

"No; he can't break down that door," replied the barkeeper. "He's tried it three times. But when he comes you'd better lay down on the floor, stranger. He's dead sure to shoot at it, and a bullet may come through."

Thereafter the drummer kept a strict eye upon the door. The time had not yet been called for him to hug the floor, but, as a minor precaution, he sidled near to the wall. "Will he kill anybody?" he said again.

The men laughed low and scornfully at the question.

"He's out to shoot, and he's out for trouble. Don't see any good in experimentin' with him."

"But what do you do in a case like this? What do you do?"

A man responded: "Why, he and Jack Potter—"

"But," in chorus the other men interrupted, "Jack Potter's in San Anton'."

"Well, who is he? What's he got to do with it?"

"Oh, he's the town marshal. He goes out and fights Scratchy when he gets on one of these tears."

"Wow!" said the drummer, mopping his brow. "Nice job he's got."

The voices had toned away to mere whisperings. The drummer wished to ask further questions, which were born of an increasing anxiety and bewilderment; but when he attempted them, the men merely looked at him in irritation and motioned him to remain silent. A tense waiting hush was upon them. In the deep shadows of the room their eyes shone as they listened for sounds from the street. One man made three gestures at the barkeeper; and the latter, moving like a ghost, handed him a glass and a bottle. The man poured a full glass of whisky, and set down the bottle noiselessly. He gulped the whisky in a swallow, and turned again toward the door in immovable silence. The drummer

saw that the barkeeper, without a sound, had taken a Winchester from beneath the bar. Later he saw this individual beckoning to him, so he tiptoed across the room.

"You better come with me back of the bar."

"No, thanks," said the drummer, perspiring; "I'd rather be where I can make a break for the back door."

Whereupon the man of bottles made a kindly but peremptory gesture. The drummer obeyed it, and, finding himself seated on a box with his head below the level of the bar, balm was laid upon his soul at sight of various zinc and copper fittings that bore a resemblance to armor-plate. The barkeeper took a seat comfortably upon an adjacent box.

"You see," he whispered, "this here Scratchy Wilson is a wonder with a gun—a perfect wonder; and when he goes on the wartrail, we hunt our holes—naturally. He's about the last one of the old gang that used to hang out along the river here. He's a terror when he's drunk. When he's sober he's all right—kind of simple—wouldn't hurt a fly—nicest fellow in town. But when he's drunk—whoo!"

There were periods of stillness. "I wish Jack Potter was back from San Anton'," said the barkeeper. "He shot Wilson up once—in the leg—and he would sail in and pull out the kinks in this thing."

Presently they heard from a distance the sound of a shot, followed by three wild yowls. It instantly removed a bond from the men in the darkened saloon. There was a shuffling of feet. They looked at each other. "Here he comes," they said.

III

A man in a maroon-colored flannel shirt, which had been purchased for purposes of decoration, and made principally by some Jewish women on the East Side of New York, rounded a corner and walked into the middle of the main street of Yellow Sky. In either hand the man held a long, heavy, blue-black revolver. Often he yelled, and these cries rang through a semblance of a deserted village, shrilly flying over the roofs in a volume that seemed to have no relation to the ordinary vocal strength of a man. It was as if the surrounding stillness formed the arch of a tomb over him. These cries of ferocious challenge rang against the walls of silence. And his boots had red tops with gilded imprints, of the kind beloved in winter by little sledding boys on the hillsides of New England.

The man's face flamed in a rage begot of whisky. His eyes, rolling, and yet keen for ambush, hunted the still doorways and windows. He walked with the creeping movement of the midnight cat. As it occurred to him, he roared menacing information. The long revolvers in his hands were as easy as straws; they were moved with an electric swiftness. The little fingers of each hand played sometimes in a musician's way. Plain

from the low collar of the shirt, the cords of his neck straightened and sank, straightened and sank, as passion moved him. The only sounds were his terrible invitations. The calm adobes preserved their demeanor at the passing of this small thing in the middle of the street.

There was no offer of fight—no offer of fight. The man called to the sky. There were no attractions. He bellowed and fumed and swayed his revolvers here and everywhere.

The dog of the barkeeper of the Weary Gentleman saloon had not appreciated the advance of events. He yet lay dozing in front of his master's door. At sight of the dog, the man paused and raised his revolver humorously. At sight of the man, the dog sprang up and walked diagonally away, with a sullen head, and growling. The man yelled, and the dog broke into a gallop. As it was about to enter an alley, there was a loud noise, a whistling, and something spat the ground directly before it. The dog screamed, and, wheeling in terror, galloped headlong in a new direction. Again there was a noise, a whistling, and sand was kicked viciously before it. Fear-stricken, the dog turned and flurried like an animal in a pen. The man stood laughing, his weapons at his hips.

Ultimately the man was attracted by the closed door of the Weary Gentleman saloon. He went to it and, hammering with a revolver, demanded drink.

The door remaining imperturbable, he picked a bit of paper from the walk, and nailed it to the framework with a knife. He then turned his back contemptuously upon this popular resort and, walking to the opposite side of the street and spinning there on his heel quickly and lithely, fired at the bit of paper. He missed it by a half-inch. He swore at himself, and went away. Later he comfortably fusilladed the windows of his most intimate friend. The man was playing with this town; it was a toy for him.

But still there was no offer of fight. The name of Jack Potter, his ancient antagonist, entered his mind, and he concluded that it would be a glad thing if he should go to Potter's house, and by bombardment induce him to come out and fight. He moved in the direction of his desire, chanting Apache scalp-music.

When he arrived at it, Potter's house presented the same still front as had the other adobes. Taking up a strategic position, the man howled a challenge. But this house regarded him as might a great stone god. It gave no sign. After a decent wait, the man howled further challenges, mingling with them wonderful epithets.

Presently there came the spectacle of a man churning himself into deepest rage over the immobility of a house. He fumed at it as the winter wind attacks a prairie cabin in the North. To the distance there should have gone the sound of a tumult like the fighting of two hundred

Mexicans. As necessity bade him, he paused for breath or to reload his revolvers.

IV

Potter and his bride walked sheepishly and with speed. Sometimes they laughed together shamefacedly and low.

"Next corner, dear," he said finally.

They put forth the efforts of a pair walking bowed against a strong wind. Potter was about to raise a finger to point the first appearance of the new home when, as they circled the corner, they came face to face with a man in a maroon-colored shirt, who was feverishly pushing cartridges into a large revolver. Upon the instant the man dropped his revolver to the ground and, like lightning, whipped another from its holster. The second weapon was aimed at the bridegroom's chest.

There was a silence. Potter's mouth seemed to be merely a grave for his tongue. He exhibited an instinct to at once loosen his arm from the woman's grip, and he dropped the bag to the sand. As for the bride, her face had gone as yellow as old cloth. She was a slave to hideous rites, gazing at the apparitional snake.

The two men faced each other at a distance of three paces. He of the revolver smiled with a new and quiet ferocity.

"Tried to sneak up on me," he said. "Tried to sneak up on me!" His eyes grew more baleful. As Potter made a slight movement, the man thrust his revolver venomously forward. "No; don't you do it, Jack Potter. Don't you move a finger toward a gun just yet. Don't you move an eyelash. The time has come for me to settle with you, and I'm goin' to do it my own way, and loaf along with no interferin.' So if you don't want a gun bent on you, just mind what I tell you."

Potter looked at his enemy. "I ain't got a gun on me, Scratchy," he said. "Honest, I ain't." He was stiffening and steadying, but yet somewhere at the back of his mind a vision of the Pullman floated: the sea-green figured velvet, the shining brass, silver, and glass, the wood that gleamed as darkly brilliant as the surface of a pool of oil—all the glory of the marriage, the environment of the new estate. "You know I fight when it comes to fighting, Scratchy Wilson; but I ain't got a gun on me. You'll have to do all the shootin' yourself."

His enemy's face went livid. He stepped forward, and lashed his weapon to and fro before Potter's chest. "Don't you tell me you ain't got no gun on you, you whelp. Don't tell me no lie like that. There ain't a man in Texas ever seen you without no gun. Don't take me for no kid." His eyes blazed with light, and his throat worked like a pump.

"I ain't takin' you for no kid," answered Potter. His heels had not moved an inch backward. "I'm takin' you for a damn fool. I tell you I

ain't got a gun, and I ain't. If you're goin' to shoot me up, you better begin now; you'll never get a chance like this again."

So much enforced reasoning had told on Wilson's rage; he was calmer. "If you ain't got a gun, why ain't you got a gun?" he sneered. "Been to Sunday-school?"

"I ain't got a gun because I've just come from San Anton' with my wife. I'm married," said Potter. "And if I'd thought there was going to be any galoots like you prowling around when I brought my wife home, I'd had a gun, and don't you forget it."

"Married!" said Scratchy, not at all comprehending.

"Yes, married. I'm married," said Potter, distinctly.

"Married?" said Scratchy. Seemingly for the first time, he saw the drooping, drowning woman at the other man's side. "No!" he said. He was like a creature allowed a glimpse of another world. He moved a pace backward, and his arm, with the revolver, dropped to his side. "Is this the lady?" he asked.

"Yes; this is the lady," answered Potter.

There was another period of silence.

"Well," said Wilson at last, slowly, "I s'pose it's all off now."

"It's all off if you say so, Scratchy. You know I didn't make the trouble." Potter lifted his valise.

"Well, I·'low it's off, Jack," said Wilson. He was looking at the ground. "Married!" He was not a student of chivalry; it was merely that in the presence of this foreign condition he was a simple child of the earlier plains. He picked up his starboard revolver, and, placing both weapons in their holsters, he went away. His feet made funnel-shaped tracks in the heavy sand.

THE BEAR*

by William Faulkner

William Faulkner (1897–) is a native of Mississippi, where he has spent most of his life. He is author of about twenty books of fiction; among them are *Sanctuary* (1931), *Light in August* (1932), *Wild Palms* (1939), and *Intruder in the Dust* (1948). In 1950 he was awarded the Nobel prize for literature.

He was ten. But it had already begun, long before that day when at last he wrote his age in two figures and he saw for the first time the camp where his father and Major de Spain and old General Compson and the others spent two weeks each November and two weeks again each June. He had already inherited then, without ever having seen it, the tremendous bear

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with one trap-ruined foot which, in an area almost a hundred miles deep, had earned itself a name, a definite designation like a living man.

He had listened to it for years: the long legend of corn-cribs rifled, of shotes and grown pigs and even calves carried bodily into the woods and devoured, of traps and deadfalls overthrown and dogs mangled and slain, and shotgun and even rifle charges delivered at point-blank range and with no more effect than so many peas blown through a tube by a boy—a corridor of wreckage and destruction beginning back before he was born, through which sped, not fast but rather with the ruthless and irresistible deliberation of a locomotive, the shaggy tremendous shape.

It ran in his knowledge before he ever saw it. It looked and towered in his dreams before he even saw the unaxed woods where it left its crooked print, shaggy, huge, red-eyed, not malevolent but just big—too big for the dogs which tried to bay it, for the horses which tried to ride it down, for the men and the bullets they fired into it, too big for the very country which was its constricting scope. He seemed to see it entire with a child's complete divination before he ever laid eyes on either—the doomed wilderness whose edges were being constantly and punily gnawed at by men with axes and plows who feared it because it was wilderness, men myriad and nameless even to one another in the land where the old bear had earned a name, through which ran not even a mortal animal but an anachronism, indomitable and invincible, out of an old dead time, a phantom, epitome and apotheosis of the old wild life at which the puny humans swarmed and hacked in a fury of abhorrence and fear, like pygmies about the ankles of a drowsing elephant: the old bear solitary, indomitable and alone, widowered, childless, and absolved of mortality—old Priam reft of his old wife and having outlived all his sons.

Until he was ten, each November he would watch the wagon containing the dogs and the bedding and food and guns and his father and Tennie's Jim, the Negro, and Sam Fathers, the Indian, son of a slave woman and a Chickasaw chief, depart on the road to town, to Jefferson, where Major de Spain and the others would join them. To the boy, at seven, eight, and nine, they were not going into the Big Bottom to hunt bear and deer, but to keep yearly rendezvous with the bear which they did not even intend to kill. Two weeks later they would return, with no trophy, no head and skin. He had not expected it. He had not even been afraid it would be in the wagon. He believed that even after he was ten and his father would let him go too, for those two weeks in November, he would merely make another one, along with his father and Major de Spain and General Compson and the others, the dogs which feared to bay at it and the rifles and shotguns which failed even to bleed it, in the yearly pageant of the old bear's furious immortality.

Then he heard the dogs. It was in the second week of his first time in

the camp. He stood with Sam Fathers against a big oak beside the faint crossing where they had stood each dawn for nine days now, hearing the dogs. He had heard them once before, one morning last week—a murmur, sourceless, echoing through the wet woods, swelling presently into separate voices which he could recognize and call by name. He had raised and cocked the gun as Sam told him and stood motionless again while the uproar, the invisible course, swept up and past and faded; it seemed to him that he could actually see the deer, the buck, blond, smoke-colored, elongated with speed, fleeing, vanishing, the woods, the gray solitude, still ringing even when the cries of the dogs had died away.

"Now let the hammers down," Sam said.

"You knew they were not coming here too," he said.

"Yes," Sam said. "I want you to learn how to do when you didn't shoot. It's after the chance for the bear or the deer has done already come and gone that men and dogs get killed."

"Anyway," he said, "it was just a deer."

Then on the tenth morning he heard the dogs again. And he readied the too-long, too-heavy gun as Sam had taught him, before Sam even spoke. But this time it was no deer, no ringing chorus of dogs running strong on a free scent, but a moiling yapping an octave too high, with something more than indecision and even abjectness in it, not even moving very fast, taking a long time to pass completely out of hearing, leaving then somewhere in the air that echo, thin slightly hysterical, abject, almost grieving, with no sense of a fleeting unseen, smoke-colored, grass-eating shape ahead of it, and Sam, who had taught him first of all to cock the gun and take position where he could see everywhere and then never move again, had himself moved up beside him; he could hear Sam breathing at his shoulder, and he could see the arched curve of the old man's inhaling nostrils.

"Hah," Sam said. "Not even running. Walking."

"Old Ben!" the boy said. "But up here!" he cried. "Way up here!"

"He do it every year," Sam said. "Once. Maybe to see who in camp this time, if he can shoot or not. Whether we got the dog yet that can bay and hold him. He'll take them to the river, then he'll send them back home. We may as well go back too; see how they look when they come back to camp."

When they reached the camp the hounds were already there, ten of them crouching back under the kitchen, the boy and Sam squatting to peer back into the obscurity where they had huddled, quiet, the eyes luminous, glowing at them and vanishing, and no sound, only that effluvium of something more than dog, stronger than dog and not just animal, just beast, because still there had been nothing in front of that abject and almost painful yapping save the solitude, the wilderness, so that when

the eleventh hound came in at noon and with all the others watching—even old Uncle Ash, who called himself first a cook—Sam daubed the tattered ear and the raked shoulder with turpentine and axle grease, to the boy it was still no living creature, but the wilderness which, leaning for the moment down, had patted lightly once the hound's temerity.

"Just like a man," Sam said. "Just like folks. Put off as long as she could having to be brave, knowing all the time that sooner or later she would have to be brave to keep on living with herself, and knowing all the time beforehand what was going to happen to her when she done it."

That afternoon, himself on the one-eyed wagon mule which did not mind the smell of blood nor, as they told him, of bear, and with Sam on the other one, they rode for more than three hours through the rapid, shortening winter day. They followed no path, no trail even that he could see; almost at once they were in a country which he had never seen before. Then he knew why Sam had made him ride the mule which would not spook. The sound one stopped short and tried to whirl and bolt even as Sam got down, blowing its breath, jerking and wrenching at the rein, while Sam held it, coaxing it forward with his voice, since he could not risk tying it, drawing it forward while the boy got down from the marred one.

Then, standing beside Sam in the gloom of the dying afternoon, he looked down at the rotted over-turned log, gutted and scored with claw marks and, in the wet earth beside it, the print of the enormous warped two-toed foot. He knew now what he had smelled when he peered under the kitchen where the dogs huddled. He realized for the first time that the bear which had run in his listening and loomed in his dreams since before he could remember to the contrary, and which, therefore, must have existed in the listening and dreams of his father and Major de Spain and even old General Compson, too, before they began to remember in their turn, was a mortal animal, and that if they had departed for the camp each November without any actual hope of bringing its trophy back, it was not because it could not be slain, but because so far they had had no actual hope to.

"Tomorrow," he said.

"We'll try tomorrow," Sam said. "We ain't got the dog yet."

"We've got eleven. They ran him this morning."

"It won't need but one," Sam said. "He ain't here. Maybe he ain't nowhere. The only other way will be for him to run by accident over somebody that has a gun."

"That wouldn't be me," the boy said. "It will be Walter or Major or——"

"It might," Sam said. "You watch close in the morning. Because he's smart. That's how come he has lived this long. If he gets hemmed up and has to pick out somebody to run over, he will pick out you."

"How?" the boy said. "How will he know——" he ceased. "You mean he already knows me, that I ain't never been here before, ain't had time to find out yet whether I——" He ceased again, looking at Sam, the old man whose face revealed nothing until it smiled. He said humbly, not even amazed, "It was me he was watching. I don't reckon he did need to come but once."

The next morning they left the camp three hours before daylight. They rode this time because it was too far to walk, even the dogs in the wagon; again the first gray light found him in a place which he had never seen before, where Sam had placed him and told him to stay and then departed. With the gun which was too big for him, which did not even belong to him, but to Major de Spain, and which he had fired only once—at a stump on the first day, to learn the recoil and how to reload it—he stood against a gum tree beside a little bayou whose black still water crept without movement out of a canebrake and crossed a small clearing and into cane again, where, invisible, a bird—the big woodpecker called Lord-to-God by Negroes—clattered at a dead limb.

It was a stand like any other, dissimilar only in incidentals to the one where he had stood each morning for ten days; a territory new to him, yet no less familiar than that other one which, after almost two weeks, he had come to believe he knew a little—the same solitude, the same loneliness through which human beings had merely passed without altering it, leaving no mark, no scar, which looked exactly as it must have looked when the first ancestor of Sam Fathers' Chickasaw predecessors crept into it and looked about, club or stone ax or bone arrow drawn and poised; different only because, squatting at the edge of the kitchen, he smelled the hounds huddled and cringing beneath it and saw the raked ear and shoulder of the one who, Sam said, had had to be brave once in order to live with herself, and saw yesterday in the earth beside the gutted log the print of the living foot.

He heard no dogs at all. He never did hear them. He only heard the drumming of the woodpecker stop short off and knew that the bear was looking at him. He never saw it. He did not know whether it was in front of him or behind him. He did not move, holding the useless gun, which he had not even had warning to cock and which even now he did not cock, tasting in his saliva that taint as of brass which he knew now because he had smelled it when he peered under the kitchen at the huddled dogs.

Then it was gone. As abruptly as it had ceased, the woodpecker's dry, monotonous clatter set up again, and after a while he even believed he could hear the dogs—a murmur, scarce a sound even, which he had probably been hearing for some time before he even remarked it, drifting into hearing and then out again, dying away. They came nowhere near him. If it was a bear they ran, it was another bear. It was Sam himself

who came out of the cane and crossed the bayou, followed by the injured bitch of yesterday. She was almost at heel, like a bird dog, making no sound. She came and crouched against his leg, trembling, staring off into the cane.

"I didn't see him," he said. "I didn't, Sam!"

"I know it," Sam said. "He done the looking. You didn't hear him neither, did you?"

"No," the boy said. "I——"

"He's smart," Sam said. "Too smart." He looked down at the hound, trembling faintly and steadily against the boy's knee. From the raked shoulder a few drops of fresh blood oozed and clung. "Too big. We ain't got the dog yet. But maybe someday. Maybe not next time. But someday."

So I must see him, he thought. *I must look at him.* Otherwise, it seemed to him that it would go on like this forever, as it had gone on with his father and Major de Spain, who was older than his father, and even with old General Compson, who had been old enough to be a brigade commander in 1865. Otherwise, it would go on so forever, next time and next time, after and after and after. It seemed to him that he could never see the two of them, himself and the bear, shadowy in the limbo from which time emerged, becoming time; the old bear absolved of mortality and himself partaking, sharing a little of it, enough of it. And he knew now what he had smelled in the huddled dogs and tasted in his saliva. He recognized fear. *So I will have to see him,* he thought, without dread or even hope. *I will have to look at him.*

It was in June of the next year. He was eleven. They were in camp again, celebrating Major de Spain's and General Compson's birthdays. Although the one had been born in September and the other in the depth of winter and in another decade, they had met for two weeks to fish and shoot squirrels and turkey and run coons and wildcats with the dogs at night. That is, he and Boon Hoggenbeck and the Negroes fished and shot squirrels and ran the coons and cats, because the proved hunters, not only Major de Spain and old General Compson, who spent those two weeks sitting in a rocking chair before a tremendous iron pot of Brunswick stew, stirring and tasting, with old Ash to quarrel with about how he was making it and Tennie's Jim to pour whiskey from the demijohn into the tin dipper from which he drank it, but even the boy's father and Walter Ewell, who were still young enough, scorned such, other than shooting the wild gobblers with pistols for wagers on their marksmanship.

Or, that is, his father and the others believed he was hunting squirrels. Until the third day, he thought that Sam Fathers believed that too. Each morning he would leave the camp right after breakfast. He had his own gun now, a Christmas present. He went back to the tree beside the

bayou where he had stood that morning. Using the compass which old General Compson had given him, he ranged from that point; he was teaching himself to be a better-than-fair woodsman without knowing he was doing it. On the second day he even found the gutted log where he had first seen the crooked print. It was almost completely crumbled now, healing with unbelievable speed, a passionate and almost visible relinquishment, back into the earth from which the tree had grown.

He ranged the summer woods now, green with gloom; if anything, actually dimmer than in November's gray dissolution, where, even at noon, the sun fell only in intermittent dappling upon the earth, which never completely dried out and which crawled with snakes—moccasins and water snakes and rattlers, themselves the color of the dappling gloom, so that he would not always see them until they moved, returning later and later, first day, second day, passing in the twilight of the third evening the little log pen enclosing the log stable where Sam was putting up the horses for the night.

"You ain't looked right yet," Sam said.

He stopped. For a moment he didn't answer. Then he said peacefully, in a peaceful rushing burst as when a boy's miniature dam in a little brook gives way, "All right. But how? I went to the bayou. I even found that log again. I——"

"I reckon that was all right. Likely he's been watching you. You never saw his foot?"

"I," the boy said— "I didn't——I never thought——"

"It's the gun," Sam said. He stood beside the fence, motionless—the old man, the Indian, in the battered faded overalls and the five-cent straw hat which in the Negro's race had been the badge of his enslavement and was now his regalia of freedom. The camp—the clearing, the house, the barn and its tiny lot with which Major de Spain in his turn had scratched punily and evanescently at the wilderness—faded in the dusk, back into the immemorial darkness of the woods. *The gun,* the boy thought. *The gun.*

"Be scared," Sam said. "You can't help that. But don't be afraid. Ain't nothing in the woods going to hurt you unless you corner it, or it smells that you are afraid. A bear or a deer, too, has got to be scared of a coward the same as a brave man has got to be."

The gun, the boy thought.

"You will have to choose," Sam said.

He left the camp before daylight, long before Uncle Ash would wake in his quilts on the kitchen floor and start the fire for breakfast. He had only the compass and a stick for snakes. He could go almost a mile before he would begin to need the compass. He sat on a log, the invisible compass in his invisible hand, while the secret night sounds, fallen still at his

movements, scurried again and then ceased for good, and the owls ceased and gave over to the waking of day birds, and he could see the compass. Then he went fast yet still quietly; he was becoming better and better as a woodsman, still without having yet realized it.

He jumped a doe and a fawn at sunrise, walked them out of the bed, close enough to see them—the crash of undergrowth, the white scut, the fawn scudding behind her faster than he had believed it could run. He was hunting right, upwind, as Sam had taught him; not that it mattered now. He had left the gun; of his own will and relinquishment he had accepted not a gambit, not a choice, but a condition in which not only the bear's heretofore inviolable anonymity but all the old rules and balances of hunter and hunted had been abrogated. He would not even be afraid, not even in the moment when the fear would take him completely —blood, skin, bowels, bones, memory from the long time before it became his memory—all save that thin, clear, immortal lucidity which alone differed him from this bear and from all the other bear and deer he would ever kill in the humility and pride of his skill and endurance, to which Sam had spoken when he leaned in the twilight on the lot fence yesterday.

By noon he was far beyond the little bayou, farther into the new and alien country than he had ever been. He was traveling now not only by the old, heavy, biscuit-thick silver watch which had belonged to his grandfather. When he stopped at last, it was for the first time since he had risen from the log at dawn when he could see the compass. It was far enough. He had left the camp nine hours ago; nine hours from now, dark would have already been an hour old. But he didn't think that. He thought, *All right. Yes. But what?* and stood for a moment, alien and small in the green and topless solitude, answering his own question before it had formed and ceased. It was the watch, the compass, the stick—the three lifeless mechanicals with which for nine hours he had fended the wilderness off; he hung the watch and compass carefully on a bush and leaned the stick beside them and relinquished completely to it.

He had not been going very fast for the last two or three hours. He went no faster now, since distance would not matter even if he could have gone fast. And he was trying to keep a bearing on the tree where he had left the compass, trying to complete a circle which would bring him back to it or at least intersect itself, since direction would not matter now either. But the tree was not there, and he did as Sam had schooled him—made the next circle in the opposite direction, so that the two patterns would bisect somewhere, but crossing no print of his own feet, finding the tree at last, but in the wrong place—no bush, no compass, no watch—and the tree not even the tree, because there was a down log be-

side it and he did what Sam Fathers had told him was the next thing and the last.

As he sat down on the log he saw the crooked print—the warped, tremendous, two-toed indentation which, even as he watched it, filled with water. As he looked up, the wilderness coalesced, solidified—the glade, the tree he sought, the bush, the watch and the compass glinting where a ray of sunshine touched them. Then he saw the bear. It did not emerge, appear; it was just there, immobile, solid, fixed in the hot dappling of the green and windless noon, not as big as he had dreamed it, but as big as he had expected it, bigger, dimensionless, against the dappled obscurity, looking at him where he sat quietly on the log and looked back at it.

Then it moved. It made no sound. It did not hurry. It crossed the glade, walking for an instant into the full glare of the sun; when it reached the other side it stopped again and looked back at him across one shoulder while his quiet breathing inhaled and exhaled three times.

Then it was gone. It didn't walk into the woods, the undergrowth. It faded, sank back into the wilderness as he had watched a fish, a huge old bass, sink and vanish into the dark depths of its pool without even any movement of its fins.

He thought, *It will be next fall.* But it was not next fall, nor the next nor the next. He was fourteen then. He had killed his buck, and Sam Fathers had marked his face with the hot blood, and in the next year he killed a bear. But even before that accolade he had become as competent in the woods as many grown men with the same experience; by his fourteenth year he was a better woodsman than most grown men with more. There was no territory within thirty miles of the camp that he did not know—bayou, ridge, brake, landmark, tree and path. He could have led anyone to any point in it without deviation, and brought them out again. He knew the game trails that even Sam Fathers did not know; in his thirteenth year he found a buck's bedding place, and unbeknown to his father he borrowed Walter Ewell's rifle and lay in wait at dawn and killed the buck when it walked back to the bed, as Sam had told him how the old Chickasaw fathers did.

But not the old bear, although by now he knew its footprints better than he did his own, and not only the crooked one. He could see any one of the three sound ones and distinguished it from any other, and not only by its size. There were other bears within these thirty miles which left tracks almost as large, but this was more than that. If Sam Fathers had been his mentor and the back-yard rabbits and squirrels at home his kindergarten, then the wilderness the old bear ran was his college, the old

male bear itself, so long unwifed and childless as to have become its own ungendered progenitor, was his alma mater. But he never saw it.

He could find the crooked print now almost whenever he liked, fifteen or ten or five miles, or sometimes nearer the camp than that. Twice while on stand during the three years he heard the dogs strike its trail by accident; on the second time they jumped it seemingly, the voices high, abject, almost human in hysteria, as on that first morning two years ago. But not the bear itself. He would remember that noon three years ago, the glade, himself and the bear fixed during that moment in the windless and dappled blaze, and it would seem to him that it had never happened, that he had dreamed that too. But it had happened. They had looked at each other, they had emerged from the wilderness old as earth, synchronized to the instant by something more than the blood that moved the flesh and bones which bore them, and touched, pledged something, affirmed, something more lasting than the frail web of bones and flesh which any accident could obliterate.

Then he saw it again. Because of the very fact that he thought of nothing else, he had forgotten to look for it. He was still hunting with Walter Ewell's rifle. He saw it cross the end of a long blow-down, a corridor where a tornado had swept, rushing through rather than over the tangle of trunks and branches as a locomotive would have, faster than he had ever believed it could move, almost as fast as a deer even, because a deer would have spent most of that time in the air, faster than he could bring the rifle sights up with it. And now he knew what had been wrong during all the three years. He sat on a log, shaking and trembling as if he had never seen the woods before nor anything that ran them, wondering with incredulous amazement how he could have forgotten the very thing which Sam Fathers had told him and which the bear itself had proved the next day and had now returned after three years to reaffirm.

And now he knew what Sam Fathers had meant about the right dog, a dog in which size would mean less than nothing. So when he returned alone in April—school was out then, so that the sons of farmers could help with the land's planting, and at last his father had granted him permission, on his promise to be back in four days—he had the dog. It was his own, a mongrel of the sort called by Negroes a fyce, a ratter, itself not much bigger than a rat and possessing that bravery which had long since stopped being courage and had become foolhardiness.

It did not take four days. Alone again, he found the trail on the first morning. It was not a stalk; it was an ambush. He timed the meeting almost as if it were an appointment with a human being. Himself holding the fyce muffled in a feed sack and Sam Fathers with two of the hounds on a piece of a plowline rope, they lay down wind of the trail at dawn of the second morning. They were so close that the bear turned without even

running, as if in surprised amazement at the shrill and frantic uproar of the released fyce, turning at bay against the trunk of a tree, on its hind feet; it seemed to the boy that it would never stop rising, taller and taller, and even the two hounds seemed to take a desperate and despairing courage from the fyce, following it as it went in.

Then he realized that the fyce was actually not going to stop. He flung, threw the gun away, and ran; when he overtook and grasped the frantically pin-wheeling little dog, it seemed to him that he was directly under the bear.

He could smell it, strong and hot and rank. Sprawling, he looked up to where it loomed and towered over him like a cloudburst and colored like a thunderclap, quite familiar, peacefully and even lucidly familiar, until he remembered: This was the way he had used to dream about it. Then it was gone. He didn't see it go. He knelt, holding the frantic fyce with both hands, hearing the abashed wailing of the hounds drawing farther and farther away, until Sam came up. He carried the gun. He laid it down quietly beside the boy and stood looking down at him.

"You've done seed him twice now with a gun in your hands," he said. "This time you couldn't have missed him."

The boy rose. He still held the fyce. Even in his arms and clear of the ground, it yapped frantically, straining and surging after the fading uproar of the two hounds like a tangle of wire springs. He was panting a little, but he was neither shaking nor trembling now.

"Neither could you!" he said. "You had the gun! Neither did you!"

"And you didn't shoot," his father said. "How close were you?"

"I don't know, sir," he said. "There was a big wood tick inside his right hind leg. I saw that. But I didn't have the gun then."

"But you didn't shoot when you had the gun," his father said. "Why?"

But he didn't answer, and his father didn't wait for him to, rising and crossing the room, across the pelt of the bear which the boy had killed two years ago and the larger one which his father had killed before he was born, to the bookcase beneath the mounted head of the boy's first buck. It was the room which his father called the office, from which all the plantation business was transacted; in it for the fourteen years of his life he had heard the best of all talking. Major de Spain would be there and sometimes old General Compson, and Walter Ewell and Boon Hoggenback and Sam Fathers and Tennie's Jim, too, were hunters, knew the woods and what ran them.

He would hear it, not talking himself but listening—the wilderness, the big woods, bigger and older than any recorded document of white man fatuous enough to believe he had bought any fragment of it or Indian ruthless enough to pretend that any fragment of it had been his to convey.

It was of the men, not white nor black nor red, but men, hunters with the will and hardihood to endure and the humility and skill to survive, and the dogs and the bear and deer juxtaposed and reliefed against it, ordered and compelled by and within the wilderness in the ancient and unremitting contest by the ancient and immitigable rules which voided all regrets and brooked no quarter, the voices quiet and weighty and deliberate for retrospection and recollection and exact remembering, while he squatted in the blazing firelight as Tennie's Jim squatted, who stirred only to put more wood on the fire and to pass the bottle from one glass to another. Because the bottle was always present, so that after a while it seemed to him that those fierce instants of heart and brain and courage and wiliness and speed were concentrated and distilled into that brown liquor which not women, not boys and children, but only hunters drank, drinking not of the blood they had spilled but some condensation of the wild immortal spirit, drinking it moderately, humbly even, not with the pagan's base hope of acquiring the virtues of cunning and strength and speed, but in salute to them.

His father returned with the book and sat down again and opened it. "Listen," he said. He read the five stanzas aloud, his voice quiet and deliberate in the room where there was no fire now because it was already spring. Then he looked up. The boy watched him. "All right," his father said. "Listen." He read again, but only the second stanza this time, to the end of it, the last two lines, and closed the book and put it on the table beside him. "She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss, for ever wilt thou love, and she be fair," he said.

"He's talking about a girl," the boy said.

"He had to talk about something," his father said. Then he said, "He was talking about truth. Truth doesn't change. Truth is one thing. It covers all things which touch the heart—honor and pride and pity and justice and courage and love. Do you see now?"

He didn't know. Somehow it was simpler than that. There was an old bear, fierce and ruthless, not merely just to stay alive, but with the fierce pride of liberty and freedom, proud enough of the liberty and freedom to see it threatened without fear or even alarm; nay, who at times even seemed deliberately to put that freedom and liberty in jeopardy in order to savor them, to remind his old strong bones and flesh to keep supple and quick to defend and preserve them. There was an old man, son of a Negro slave and an Indian king, inheritor on the one side of the long chronicle of a people who had learned humility through suffering, and pride through the endurance which survived the suffering and injustice, and on the other side, the chronicle of a people even longer in the land than the first, yet who no longer existed in the land at all save in the solitary brotherhood of an old Negro's alien blood and the wild and in-

vincible spirit of an old bear. There was a boy who wished to learn humility and pride in order to become skillful and worthy in the woods, who suddenly found himself becoming so skillful so rapidly that he feared he would never become worthy because he had not learned humility and pride, although he had tried to, until one day and as suddenly he discovered that an old man who could not have defined either had led him, as though by the hand, to that point where an old bear and a little mongrel of a dog showed him that, by possessing one thing other, he would possess them both.

And a little dog, nameless and mongrel and many-fathered, grown, yet weighing less than six pounds, saying as if to itself, "I can't be dangerous, because there's nothing much smaller than I am; I can't be fierce, because they would call it just a noise; I can't be humble, because I'm already too close to the ground to genuflect; I can't be proud, because I wouldn't be near enough to it for anyone to know who was casting the shadow, and I don't even know that I'm not going to heaven, because they have already decided that I don't possess an immortal soul. So all I can be is brave. But it's all right. I can be that, even if they still call it just noise."

That was all. It was simple, much simpler than somebody talking in a book about youth and a girl he would never need to grieve over, because he could never approach any nearer her and would never have to get any farther away. He had heard about a bear, and finally got big enough to trail it, and he trailed it four years and at last met it with a gun in his hands and he didn't shoot. Because a little dog—— But he could have shot long before the little dog covered the twenty yards to where the bear waited, and Sam Fathers could have shot at any time during that interminable minute while Old Ben stood on his hind feet over them. He stopped. His father was watching him gravely across the spring-rife twilight of the room; when he spoke, his words were as quiet as the twilight, too, not loud, because they did not need to be because they would last, "Courage, and honor, and pride," his father said, "and pity, and love of justice and of liberty. They all touch the heart, and what the heart holds to becomes truth, as far as we know the truth. Do you see now?"

Sam, and Old Ben, and Nip, he thought. And himself too. He had been all right too. His father had said so. "Yes, sir," he said.

THE SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO*

by Ernest Hemingway

Ernest Hemingway (1894–), novelist, was born at Oak Park, Illinois, and received his formal education in the public schools there. Among his books are *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), and *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952). His fame as a hunter and fisherman approaches his reputation as a writer.

Kilimanjaro is a snow-covered mountain 19,710 feet high, and is said to be the highest mountain in Africa. Its western summit is called the Masai "Ngàje Ngài," the House of God. Close to the western summit there is the dried and frozen carcass of a leopard. No one has explained what the leopard was seeking at that altitude.

"The marvelous thing is that it's painless," he said. "That's how you know when it starts."

"Is it really?"

"Absolutely. I'm awfully sorry about the odor though. That must bother you."

"Don't! Please don't."

"Look at them," he said. "Now is it sight or is it scent that brings them like that?"

The cot the man lay on was in the wide shade of a mimosa tree and as he looked out past the shade onto the glare of the plain there were three of the big birds squatted obscenely, while in the sky a dozen more sailed, making quick-moving shadows as they passed.

"They've been there since the day the truck broke down," he said. "Today's the first time any have lit on the ground. I watched the way they sailed very carefully at first in case I ever wanted to use them in a story. That's funny now."

"I wish you wouldn't," she said.

"I'm only talking," he said. "It's much easier if I talk. But I don't want to bother you."

"You know it doesn't bother me," she said. "It's that I've gotten so very nervous not being able to do anything. I think we might make it as easy as we can until the plane comes."

"Or until the plane doesn't come."

"Please tell me what to do. There must be something I can do."

"You can take the leg off and that might stop it, though I doubt it. Or you can shoot me. You're a good shot now. I taught you to shoot, didn't I?"

* From *The Fifth Column and the First Forty Nine Stories,* by Ernest Hemingway (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938). Copyright, 1936, 1938, by Ernest Hemingway. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

"Please don't talk that way. Couldn't I read to you?"

"Read what?"

"Anything in the book bag that we haven't read."

"I can't listen to it," he said. "Talking is the easiest. We quarrel and that makes the time pass."

"I don't quarrel. I never want to quarrel. Let's not quarrel any more. No matter how nervous we get. Maybe they will be back with another truck today. Maybe the plane will come."

"I don't want to move," the man said. "There is no sense in moving now except to make it easier for you."

"That's cowardly."

"Can't you let a man die as comfortably as he can without calling him names? What's the use of slanging me?"

"You're not going to die."

"Don't be silly. I'm dying now. Ask those bastards." He looked over to where the huge, filthy birds sat, their naked heads sunk in the hunched feathers. A fourth planed down, to run quick-legged and then waddle slowly toward the others.

"They are around every camp. You never notice them. You can't die if you don't give up."

"Where did you read that? You're such a bloody fool."

"You might think about some one else."

"For Christ's sake," he said, "that's been my trade."

He lay then and was quiet for a while and looked across the heat shimmer of the plain to the edge of the bush. There were a few Tommies that showed minute and white against the yellow and, far off, he saw a herd of zebra, white against the green of the bush. This was a pleasant camp under big trees against a hill, with good water, and close by, a nearly dry water hole where sand grouse flighted in the mornings.

"Wouldn't you like me to read?" she asked. She was sitting on a canvas chair beside his cot. "There's a breeze coming up."

"No thanks."

"Maybe the truck will come."

"I don't give a damn about the truck."

"I do."

"You give a damn about so many things that I don't."

"Not so many, Harry."

"What about a drink?"

"It's supposed to be bad for you. It said in Black's to avoid all alcohol. You shouldn't drink."

"Molo!" he shouted.

"Yes Bwana."

"Bring whiskey-soda."

"Yes Bwana."

"You shouldn't," she said. "That's what I mean by giving up. It says it's bad for you. I know it's bad for you."

"No," he said. "It's good for me."

So now it was all over, he thought. So now he would never have a chance to finish it. So this was the way it ended in a bickering over a drink. Since the gangrene started in his right leg he had no pain and with the pain the horror had gone and all he felt now was a great tiredness and anger that this was the end of it. For this, that now was coming, he had very little curiosity. For years it had obsessed him; but now it meant nothing in itself. It was strange how easy being tired enough made it.

Now he would never write the things that he had saved to write until he knew enough to write them well. Well, he would not have to fail at trying to write them either. Maybe you could never write them, and that was why you put them off and delayed the starting. Well he would never know, now.

"I wish we'd never come," the woman said. She was looking at him holding the glass and biting her lip. "You never would have gotten anything like that in Paris. You always said you loved Paris. We could have stayed in Paris or gone anywhere. I'd have gone anywhere. I said I'd go anywhere you wanted. If you wanted to shoot we could have gone shooting in Hungary and been comfortable."

"Your bloody money," he said.

"That's not fair," she said. "It was always yours as much as mine. I left everything and I went wherever you wanted to go and I've done what you wanted to do. But I wish we'd never come here."

"You said you loved it."

"I did when you were all right. But now I hate it. I don't see why that had to happen to your leg. What have we done to have that happen to us?"

"I suppose what I did was to forget to put iodine on it when I first scratched it. Then I didn't pay any attention to it because I never infect. Then, later, when it got bad, it was probably using that weak carbolic solution when the other antiseptics ran out that paralyzed the minute blood vessels and started the gangrene." He looked at her. "What else?"

"I don't mean that."

"If we would have hired a good mechanic instead of a half baked kikuyu driver, he would have checked the oil and never burned out that bearing in the truck."

"I don't mean that."

"If you hadn't left your own people, your goddamned Old Westbury, Saratoga, Palm Beach people to take me on——"

"Why, I loved you. That's not fair. I love you now. I'll always love you. Don't you love me?"

"No," said the man. "I don't think so. I never have."

"Harry, what are you saying? You're out of your head."

"No. I haven't any head to go out of."

"Don't drink that," she said. "Darling, please don't drink that. We have to do everything we can."

"You do it," he said. "I'm tired."

Now in his mind he saw a railway station at Karagatch and he was standing with his pack and that was the headlight of the Simplon-Orient cutting the dark now and he was leaving Thrace then after the retreat. That was one of the things he had saved to write, with, in the morning at breakfast, looking out the window and seeing snow on the mountains in Bulgaria and Nansen's Secretary asking the old man if it were snow and the old man looking at it and saying, No, that's not snow. It's too early for snow. And the Secretary repeating to the other girls, No, you see. It's not snow and them all saying, It's not snow we were mistaken. But it was the snow all right and he sent them on into it when he evolved exchange of populations. And it was snow they tramped along in until they died that winter.

It was snow too that fell all Christmas week that year up in the Gauertal, that year they lived in the woodcutter's house with the big square porcelain stove that filled half the room, and they slept on mattresses filled with beech leaves, the time the deserter came with his feet bloody in the snow. He said the police were right behind him and they gave him woolen socks and held the gendarmes talking until the tracks had drifted over.

In Schrunz, on Christmas day, the snow was so bright in hurt your eyes when you looked out from the weinstube and saw every one coming home from church. That was where they walked up the sleigh-smoothed urine-yellowed road along the river with the steep pine hills, skis heavy on the shoulder, and where they ran that great run down the glacier above the Madlener-haus, the snow as smooth to see as cake frosting and as light as powder and he remembered the noiseless rush the speed made as you dropped down like a bird.

They were snow-bound a week in the Madlener-haus that time in the blizzard playing cards in the smoke by the lantern light and the stakes were higher all the time as Herr Lent lost more. Finally he lost it all. Everything, the skischule money and all the season's profit and then his capital. He could see him with his long nose picking up the cards and then opening, "Sans Voir." There was always gambling then. When there was no snow you gambled and when there was too much you gambled. He thought of all the time in his life he had spent gambling.

But he had never written a line of that, nor of that cold, bright

Christmas day with the mountains showing across the plain that Barker had flown across the lines to bomb the Austrian officers' leave train, machine-gunning them as they scattered and ran. He remembered Barker afterwards coming into the mess and starting to tell about it. And how quiet it got and then somebody saying, "You bloody murderous bastard."

Those were the same Austrians they killed then that he skied with later. No not the same. Hans, that he skied with all that year, had been in the Kaiser-Jägers and when they went hunting hares together up the little valley above the saw-mill they had talked of the fighting on Pasubio and of the attack on Pertica and Asalone and he had never written a word of that. Nor of Monte Corno, nor the Siete Commum, nor of Arsiedo.

How many winters had he lived in the Voralberg and the Arlberg? It was four and then he remembered the man who had the fox to sell when they had walked into Bludenz, that time to buy presents, and the cherry-pit taste of good kirsch, the fast-slipping rush of running powder-snow on crust, singing "Hi! Ho! said Rolly!" as you ran down the last stretch to the steep drop, taking it straight, then running the orchard in three turns and out across the ditch and onto the icy road behind the inn. Knocking your bindings loose, kicking the skis free and leaning them up against the wooden wall of the inn, the lamplight coming from the window, where inside, in the smoky, new-wine smelling warmth, they were playing the accordion.

"Where did we stay in Paris?" he asked the woman who was sitting by him in a canvas chair, now, in Africa.

"At the Crillon. You know that."

"Why do I know that?"

"That's where we always stayed."

"No. Not always."

"There and at the Pavillion Henri-Quatre in St. Germain. You said you loved it there."

"Love is a dunghill," said Harry. "And I'm the cock that gets on it to crow."

"If you have to go away," she said, "is it absolutely necessary to kill off everything you leave behind? I mean do you have to take away everything? Do you have to kill your horse, and your wife and burn your saddle and your armour?"

"Yes," he said. "Your damned money was my armour. My Swift and my Armour."

"Don't."

"All right. I'll stop that. I don't want to hurt you."

"It's a little bit late now."

"All right then. I'll go on hurting you. It's more amusing. The only thing I ever really liked to do with you I can't do now."

"No. That's not true. You liked to do many things and everything you wanted to do I did."

"Oh, for Christ sake stop bragging, will you?"

He looked at her and saw her crying.

"Listen," he said. "Do you think that it is fun to do this? I don't know why I'm doing it. It's trying to kill to keep yourself alive, I imagine. I was all right when we started talking. I didn't mean to start this, and now I'm crazy as a coot and being as cruel to you as I can be. Don't pay any attention, darling, to what I say. I love you, really. You know I love you. I've never loved any one else the way I love you."

He slipped into the familiar lie he made his bread and butter by.

"You're sweet to me."

"You bitch," he said. "You rich bitch. That's poetry. I'm full of poetry now. Rot and poetry. Rotten poetry."

"Stop it. Harry, why do you have to turn into a devil now?"

"I don't like to leave anything," the man said. "I don't like to leave things behind."

It was evening now and he had been asleep. The sun was gone behind the hill and there was a shadow all across the plain and the small animals were feeding close to camp; quick dropping heads and switching tails, he watched them keeping well out away from the bush now. The birds no longer waited on the ground. They were all perched heavily in a tree. There were many more of them. His personal boy was sitting by the bed.

"Memsahib's gone to shoot," the boy said. "Does Bwana want?"

"Nothing."

She had gone to kill a piece of meat and, knowing how he liked to watch the game, she had gone well away so she would not disturb this little pocket of the plain that he could see. She was always thoughtful, he thought. On anything she knew about, or had read, or that she had ever heard.

It was not her fault that when he went to her he was already over. How could a woman know that you meant nothing that you said; that you spoke only from habit and to be comfortable? After he no longer meant what he said, his lies were more successful with women than when he had told them the truth.

It was not so much that he lied as that there was no truth to tell. He had had his life and it was over and then he went on living it again with different people and more money, with the best of the same places, and some new ones.

You kept from thinking and it was all marvelous. You were equipped with good insides so that you did not go to pieces that way, the way most of them had, and you made an attitude that you cared nothing for the work you used to do, now that you could no longer do it. But, in yourself, you said that you would write about these people; about the very rich; that you were really not of them but a spy in their country; that you would leave it and write of it and for once it would be written by some one who knew what he was writing of. But he would never do it, because each day of not writing, of comfort, of being that which he despised, dulled his ability and softened his will to work so that, finally, he did no work at all. The people he knew now were all much more comfortable when he did not work. Africa was where he had been happiest in the good time of his life, so he had come out here to start again. They had made this safari with the minimum of comfort. There was no hardship; but there was no luxury and he had thought that he could get back into training that way. That in some way he could work the fat off his soul the way a fighter went into the mountains to work and train in order to burn it out of his body.

She had liked it. She said she loved it. She loved anything that was exciting, that involved a change of scene, where there were new people and where things were pleasant. And he had felt the illusion of returning strength of will to work. Now if this was how it ended, and he knew it was, he must not turn like some snake biting itself because its back was broken. It wasn't this woman's fault. If it had not been she it would have been another. If he lived by a lie he should try to die by it. He heard a shot beyond the hill.

She shot very well this good, this rich bitch, this kindly caretaker and destroyer of his talent. Nonsense. He had destroyed his talent himself. Why should he blame this woman because she kept him well? He had destroyed his talent by not using it, by betrayals of himself and what he believed in, by drinking so much that he blunted the edge of his perceptions, by laziness, by sloth, and by snobbery, by pride and by prejudice, by hook and by crook. What was this? A catalogue of old books? What was his talent anyway? It was a talent all right but instead of using it, he had traded on it. It was never what he had done, but always what he could do. And he had chosen to make his living with something else instead of a pen or a pencil. It was strange, too, wasn't it, that when he fell in love with another woman, that woman should always have more money than the last one? But when he no longer was in love, when he was only lying, as to this woman, now, who had the most money of all, who had all the money there was, who had had a husband and children, who had taken lovers and been dissatisfied with them, and who loved him dearly as a writer, as a man, as a companion and as a proud possession; it was

strange that when he did not love her at all and was lying, that he should be able to give her more for her money than when he had really loved.

We must all be cut out for what we do, he thought. However you make your living is where your talent lies. He had sold vitality, in one form or another, all his life and when your affections are not too involved you give much better value for the money. He had found that out but he would never write that, now, either. No, he would not write that, although it was well worth writing.

Now she came in sight, walking across the open toward the camp. She was wearing jodhpurs and carrying her rifle. The two boys had a Tommie slung and they were coming along behind her. She was still a good-looking woman, he thought, and she had a pleasant body. She had a great talent and appreciation for the bed, she was not pretty, but he liked her face, she read enormously, liked to ride and shoot and, certainly, she drank too much. Her husband had died when she was still a comparatively young woman and for a while she had devoted herself to her two just-grown children, who did not need her and were embarrassed at having her about, to her stable of horses, to books, and to bottles. She liked to read in the evening before dinner and she drank Scotch and soda while she read. By dinner she was fairly drunk and after a bottle of wine at dinner she was usually drunk enough to sleep.

That was before the lovers. After she had the lovers she did not drink so much because she did not have to be drunk to sleep. But the lovers bored her. She had been married to a man who had never bored her and these people bored her very much.

Then one of her two children was killed in a plane crash and after that was over she did not want the lovers, and drink being no anaesthetic she had to make another life. Suddenly, she had been acutely frightened of being alone. But she wanted some one that she respected with her.

It had begun very simply. She liked what he wrote and she had always envied the life he led. She thought he did exactly what he wanted to. The steps by which she had acquired him and the way in which she had finally fallen in love with him were all part of a regular progression in which she had built herself a new life and he had traded away what remained of his old life.

He had traded it for security, for comfort too, there was no denying that, and for what else? He did not know. She would have bought him anything he wanted. He knew that. She was a damned nice woman too. He would as soon be in bed with her as any one; rather with her, because she was richer, because she was very pleasant and appreciative and because she never made scenes. And now this life that she had built again was coming to a term because he had not used iodine two weeks ago when a thorn had scratched his knee as they moved forward trying to

photograph a herd of waterbuck standing, their heads up, peering while their nostrils searched the air, their ears spread wide to hear the first noise that would send them rushing into the bush. They had bolted, too, before he got the picture.

Here she came now.

He turned his head on the cot to look toward her. "Hello," she said.

"I shot a Tommy ram," she told him. "He'll make you good broth and I'll have them mash some potatoes with the Klim. How do you feel?"

"Much better."

"Isn't that lovely? You know I thought perhaps you would. You were sleeping when I left."

"I had a good sleep. Did you walk far?"

"No. Just around behind the hill. I made quite a good shot on the Tommy."

"You shoot marvellously, you know."

"I love it. I've loved Africa. Really. If *you're* all right it's the most fun that I've ever had. You don't know the fun it's been to shoot with you. I've loved the country."

"I love it too."

"Darling, you don't know how marvellous it is to see you feeling better. I couldn't stand it when you felt that way. You won't talk to me like that again, will you? Promise me?"

"No," he said. "I don't remember what I said."

"You don't have to destroy me. Do you? I'm only a middle-aged woman who loves you and wants to do what you want to do. I've been destroyed two or three times already. You wouldn't want to destroy me again, would you?"

"I'd like to destroy you a few times in bed," he said.

"Yes. That's the good destruction. That's the way we're made to be destroyed. The plane will be here tomorrow."

"How do you know?"

"I'm sure. It's bound to come. The boys have the wood all ready and the grass to make the smudge. I went down and looked at it again today. There's plenty of room to land and we have the smudges ready at both ends."

"What makes you think it will come tomorrow?"

"I'm sure it will. It's overdue now. Then, in town, they will fix up your leg and then we will have some good destruction. Not that dreadful talking kind."

"Should we have a drink? The sun is down."

"Do you think you should?"

"I'm having one."

"We'll have one together. *Molo, letti dui whiskey-soda!*" she called.

"You'd better put on your mosquito boots," he told her.

"I'll wait till I bathe . . ."

While it grew dark they drank and just before it was dark and there was no longer enough light to shoot, a hyena crossed the open on his way around the hill.

"That bastard crosses there every night," the man said. "Every night for two weeks."

"He's the one makes the noise at night. I don't mind it. They're a filthy animal though."

Drinking together, with no pain now except the discomfort of lying in one position, the boys lighting a fire, its shadow jumping on the tents, he could feel the return of acquiescence in this life of pleasant surrender. She *was* very good to him. He had been cruel and unjust in the afternoon. She was a fine woman, marvellous really. And just then it occurred to him that he was going to die.

It came with a rush; not as a rush of water nor of wind; but of a sudden evil-smelling emptiness and the odd thing was that the hyena slipped lightly along the edge of it.

"What is it, Harry?" she asked him.

"Nothing," he said. "You had better move over to the other side. To windward."

"Did Molo change the dressing?"

"Yes. I'm just using the boric now."

"How do you feel?"

"A little wobbly."

"I'm going in to bathe," she said. "I'll be right out. I'll eat with you and then we'll put the cot in."

So, he said to himself, we did well to stop the quarrelling. He had never quarrelled much with this woman, while with the women that he loved he had quarrelled so much they had finally, always, with the corrosion of the quarrelling, killed what they had together. He had loved too much, demanded too much, and he wore it all out.

He thought about alone in Constantinople that time, having quarrelled in Paris before he had gone out. He had whored the whole time and then, when that was over, and he had failed to kill his loneliness, but only made it worse, he had written her, the first one, the one who left him, a letter telling her how he had never been able to kill it. . . . How when he thought he saw her outside the Regence *one time it made him go all faint and sick inside, and that he would follow a woman who looked like her in some way, along the Boulevard, afraid to see it was not she, afraid to lose the feeling it gave him. How every one he had slept with had only made him miss her more. How what she had done could never matter*

since he knew he could not cure himself of loving her. He wrote this letter at the Club, cold sober, and mailed it to New York asking her to write him at the office in Paris. That seemed safe. And that night missing her so much it made him feel hollow sick inside, he wandered up past Taxim's, picked a girl up and took her out to supper. He had gone to a place to dance with her afterward, she danced badly, and left her for a hot Armenian slut, that swung her belly against him so it almost scalded. He took her away from a British gunner subaltern after a row. The gunner asked him outside and they fought in the street on the cobbles in the dark. He'd hit him twice, hard, on the side of the jaw and when he didn't go down he knew he was in for a fight. The gunner hit him in the body, then beside his eye. He swung with his left again and landed and the gunner fell on him and grabbed his coat and tore the sleeve off and he clubbed him twice behind the ear and then smashed him with his right as he pushed him away. When the gunner went down his head hit first and he ran with the girl because they heard the M.P.'s coming. They got into a taxi and drove out to Rimmily Hissa along the Bosphorus, and around, and back in the cool night and went to bed and she felt as over-ripe as she looked but smooth, rose-petal, syrupy, smooth-bellied, big-breasted and needed no pillow under her buttocks, and he left her before she was awake looking blousy enough in the first daylight and turned up at the Pera Palace with a black eye, carrying his coat because one sleeve was missing.

That same night he left for Anatolia and he remembered, later on that trip, riding all day through fields of the poppies that they raised for opium and how strange it made you feel, finally, and all the distances seemed wrong, to where they had made the attack with the newly arrived Constantine officers, that did not know a god-damned thing, and the artillery had fired into the troops and the British observer had cried like a child.

That was the day he'd first seen dead men wearing white ballet skirts and upturned shoes with pompons on them. The Turks had come steadily and lumpily and he had seen the skirted men running and the officers shooting into them and running then themselves and he and the British observer had run too until his lungs ached and his mouth was full of the taste of pennies and they stopped behind some rocks and there were the Turks coming as lumpily as ever. Later he had seen the things that he could never think of and later still he had seen much worse. So when he got back to Paris that time he could not talk about it or stand to have it mentioned. And there in the café as he passed was that American poet with a pile of saucers in front of him and a stupid look on his potato face talking about the Dada movement with a Roumanian who said his name was Tristan Tzara, who always wore a monocle and had a head-

ache, and, back at the apartment with his wife that now he loved again, the quarrel all over, the madness all over, glad to be home, the office sent his mail up to the flat. So then the letter in answer to the one he'd written came in on a platter one morning and when he saw the handwriting he went cold all over and tried to slip the letter underneath another. But his wife said, "Who is that letter from, dear?" and that was the end of the beginning of that.

He remembered the good times with them all, and the quarrels. They always picked the finest places to have the quarrels. And why had they always quarrelled when he was feeling best? He had never written any of that because, at first, he never wanted to hurt any one and then it seemed as though there was enough to write without it. But he had always thought that he would write it finally. There was so much to write. He had seen the world change; not just the events; although he had seen many of them and had watched the people, but he had seen the subtler change and he could remember how the people were at different times. He had been in it and he had watched it and it was his duty to write of it; but now he never would.

"How do you feel?" she said. She had come out from the tent now after her bath.

"All right."

"Could you eat now?" He saw Molo behind her with the folding table and the other boy with the dishes.

"I want to write," he said.

"You ought to take some broth to keep your strength up."

"I'm going to die tonight," he said. "I don't need my strength up."

"Don't be melodramatic, Harry, please," she said.

"Why don't you use your nose? I'm rotted half way up my thigh now. What the hell should I fool with broth for? Molo bring whiskey-soda."

"Please take the broth," she said gently.

"All right."

The broth was too hot. He had to hold it in the cup until it cooled enough to take it and then he just got it down without gagging.

"You're a fine woman," he said. "Don't pay any attention to me."

She looked at him with her well-known, well-loved face from *Spur* and *Town and Country,* only a little the worse for drink, only a little the worse for bed, but *Town and Country* never showed those good breasts and those useful thighs and those lightly small-of-back-caressing hands, and as he looked and saw her well-known pleasant smile, he felt death come again. This time there was no rush. It was a puff, as of a wind that makes a candle flicker and the flame go tall.

"They can bring my net out later and hang it from the tree and build

the fire up. I'm not going in the tent tonight. It's not worth moving. It's a clear night. There won't be any rain."

So this was how you died, in whispers that you did not hear. Well, there would be no more quarrelling. He could promise that. The one experience that he had never had he was not going to spoil now. He probably would. You spoiled everything. But perhaps he wouldn't.

"You can't take dictation, can you?"

"I never learned," she told him.

"That's all right."

There wasn't time, of course, although it seemed as though it telescoped so that you might put it all into one paragraph if you could get it right.

There was a log house, chinked white with mortar, on a hill above the lake. There was a bell on a pole by the door to call the people in to meals. Behind the house were fields and behind the fields was the timber. A line of lombardy poplars ran from the house to the dock. Other poplars ran along the point. A road went up to the hills along the edge of the timber and along that road he picked blackberries. Then that log house was burned down and all the guns that had been on deer foot racks above the open fire place were burned and afterwards their barrels, with the lead melted in the magazines, and the stocks burned away, lay out on the heap of ashes that were used to make lye for the big iron soap kettles, and you asked Grandfather if you could have them to play with, and he said, no. You see they were his guns still and he never bought any others. Nor did he hunt any more. The house was rebuilt in the same place out of lumber now and painted white and from its porch you saw the poplars and the lake beyond; but there were never any more guns. The barrels of the guns that had hung on the deer feet on the wall of the log house lay out there on the heap of ashes and no one ever touched them.

In the Black Forest, after the war, we rented a trout stream and there were two ways to walk to it. One was down the valley from Triberg and around the valley road in the shade of the trees that bordered the white road, and then up a side road that went up through the hills past many small farms, with the big Schwarzwald houses, until that road crossed the stream. That was where our fishing began.

The other way was to climb steeply up to the edge of the woods and then go across the top of the hills through the pine woods, and then out to the edge of a meadow and down across this meadow to the bridge. There were birches along the stream and it was not big, but narrow, clear and fast, with pools where it had cut under the roots of the birches. At the Hotel in Triberg the proprietor had a fine season. It was very pleasant and we were all great friends. The next year came the inflation and the

money he had made the year before was not enough to buy supplies to open the hotel and he hanged himself.

You could dictate that, but you could not dictate the Place Contrescarpe where the flower sellers dyed their flowers in the street and the dye ran over the paving where the autobus started and the old men and the women, always drunk on wine and bad marc; and the children with their noses running in the cold; the smell of dirty sweat and poverty and drunkenness at the Café des Amateurs and the whores at the Bal Musette they lived above. The Concièrge who entertained the trooper of the Garde Républicaine in her loge, his horse-hair-plumed helmet on a chair. The locataire across the hall whose husband was a bicycle racer and her joy that morning at the Crémerie when she had opened L'Auto *and seen where he placed third in Paris-Tours, his first big race. She had blushed and laughed and then gone upstairs crying with the yellow sporting paper in her hand. The husband of the woman who ran the Bal Musette drove a taxi and when he, Harry, had to take an early plane the husband knocked upon the door to wake him and they each drank a glass of white wine at the zinc of the bar before they started. He knew his neighbors in that quarter then because they all were poor.*

Around that Place there were two kinds: the drunkards and the sportifs. The drunkards killed their poverty that way; the sportifs took it out in exercise. They were the descendants of the Communards and it was no struggle for them to know their politics. They knew who had shot their fathers, their relatives, their brothers, and their friends when the Versailles troops came in and took the town after the Commune and executed any one they could catch with calloused hands, or who wore a cap, or carried any other sign he was a working man. And in that poverty, and in that quarter across the street from a Boucherie Chevaline and a wine co-operative he had written the start of all he was to do. There never was another part of Paris that he loved like that, the sprawling trees, the old white plastered houses painted brown below, the long green of the autobus in that round square, the purple flower dye upon the paving, the sudden drop down the hill of the rue Cardinal Lemoine to the River, and the other way the narrow crowded world of the rue Mouffetard. The street that ran up toward the Panthéon and the other that he always took with the bicycle, the only asphalted street in all that quarter, smooth under the tires, with the high narrow houses and the cheap tall hotel where Paul Verlaine had died. There were only two rooms in the apartments where they lived and he had a room on the top floor of that hotel that cost him sixty francs a month where he did his writing, and from it he could see the roofs and chimney pots and all the hills of Paris.

From the apartment you could only see the wood and coal man's place. He sold wine too, bad wine. The golden horse's head outside the

Boucherie Chevaline where the carcasses hung yellow gold and red in the open window, and the green painted co-operative where they bought their wine; good wine and cheap. The rest was plaster walls and the windows of the neighbors. The neighbors who, at night, when some one lay drunk in the street, moaning and groaning in that typical French ivresse[1] *that you were propaganded to believe did not exist, would open their windows and then the murmur of talk.*

"Where is the policeman? When you don't want him the bugger is always there. He's sleeping with some concièrge. Get the Agent." *Till some one threw a bucket of water from a window and the moaning stopped. "What's that? Water. Ah, that's intelligent." And the windows shutting. Marie, his femme de ménage, protesting against the eight-hour day saying, "If a husband works until six he gets only a little drunk on the way home and does not waste too much. If he works only until five he is drunk every night and one has no money. It is the wife of the working man who suffers from this shortening of hours."*

"Wouldn't you like some more broth?" the woman asked him now.

"No, thank you very much. It is awfully good."

"Try just a little."

"I would like a whiskey-soda."

"It's not good for you."

"No. It's bad for me. Cole Porter wrote the words and the music. This knowledge that you're going mad for me."

"You know I like you to drink."

"Oh yes. Only it's bad for me."

When she goes, he thought, I'll have all I want. Not all I want but all there is. Ayee he was tired. Too tired. He was going to sleep a little while. He lay still and death was not there. It must have gone around another street. It went in pairs, on bicycles, and moved absolutely silently on the pavements.

No, he had never written about Paris. Not the Paris that he cared about. But what about the rest that he had never written?

What about the ranch and the silvered gray of the sage brush, the quick, clear water in the irrigation ditches, and the heavy green of the alfalfa. The trail went up into the hills and the cattle in the summer were shy as deer. The bawling and the steady noise and slow moving mass raising a dust as you brought them down in the fall. And behind the mountains, the clear sharpness of the peak in the evening light and, riding down along the trail in the moonlight, bright across the valley. Now he

[1] Drunkenness.

remembered coming down through the timber in the dark holding the horse's tail when you could not see and all the stories that he meant to write.

About the half-wit chore boy who was left at the ranch that time and told not to let any one get any hay, and that old bastard from the Forks who had beaten the boy when he had worked for him stopping to get some feed. The boy refusing and the old man saying he would beat him again. The boy got the rifle from the kitchen and shot him when he tried to come into the barn and when they came back to the ranch he'd been dead a week, frozen in the corral, and the dogs had eaten part of him. But what was left you packed on a sled wrapped in a blanket and roped on and you got the boy to help you haul it, and the two of you took it out over the road on skis, and sixty miles down to town to turn the boy over. He having no idea that he would be arrested. Thinking he had done his duty and that you were his friend and he would be rewarded. He'd helped to haul the old man in so everybody could know how bad the old man had been and how he'd tried to steal some feed that didn't belong to him, and when the sheriff put the handcuffs on the boy he couldn't believe it. Then he'd started to cry. That was one story he had saved to write. He knew at least twenty good stories from out there and he had never written one.

Why?

"You tell them why," he said.

"Why what, dear?"

"Why nothing."

She didn't drink so much, now, since she had him. But if he lived he would never write about her, he knew that now. Nor about any of them. The rich were dull and they drank too much, or they played too much backgammon. They were dull and they were repetitious. He remembered poor Julian and his romantic awe of them and how he had started a story once that began, "The very rich are different from you and me." And how some one had said to Julian, Yes, they have more money. But that was not humorous to Julian. He thought they were a special glamorous race and when he found they weren't it wrecked him just as much as any other thing that wrecked him.

He had been contemptuous of those who wrecked. You did not have to like it because you understood it. He could beat anything, he thought, because no thing could hurt him if he did not care.

All right. Now he would not care for death. One thing he had always dreaded was the pain. He could stand pain as well as any man, until it went on too long, and wore him out, but here he had something that had hurt frightfully and just when he had felt it breaking him, the pain had stopped.

He remembered long ago when Williamson, the bombing officer, had been hit by a stick bomb some one in a German patrol had thrown as he was coming in through the wire that night and, screaming, had begged every one to kill him. He was a fat man, very brave, and a good officer, although addicted to fantastic shows. But that night he was caught in the wire, with a flare lighting him up and his bowels spilled out into the wire, so when they brought him in, alive, they had to cut him loose. Shoot me, Harry. For Christ sake shoot me. They had had an argument one time about our Lord never sending you anything you could not bear and some one's theory had been that meant that at a certain time the pain passed you out automatically. But he had always remembered Williamson, that night. Nothing passed out Williamson until he gave him all his morphine tablets that he had always saved to use himself and then they did not work right away.

Still this now, that he had, was very easy; and if it was no worse as it went on there was nothing to worry about. Except that he would rather be in better company.

He thought a little about the company that he would like to have.

No, he thought, when everything you do, you do too long, and do too late, you can't expect to find the people still there. The people all are gone. The party's over and you are with your hostess now.

I'm getting as bored with dying as with everything else, he thought.

"It's a bore," he said out loud.

"What is, my dear?"

"Anything you do too bloody long."

He looked at her face between him and the fire. She was leaning back in the chair and the firelight shone on her pleasantly lined face and he could see that she was sleepy. He heard the hyena make a noise just outside the range of the fire.

"I've been writing," he said. "But I got tired."

"Do you think you will be able to sleep?"

"Pretty sure. Why don't you turn in?"

"I like to sit here with you."

"Do you feel anything strange?" he asked her.

"No. Just a little sleepy."

"I do," he said.

He had just felt death come by again.

"You know the only thing I've never lost is curiosity," he said to her.

"You've never lost anything. You're the most complete man I've ever known."

"Christ," he said. "How little a woman knows. What is that? Your intuition?"

Because, just then, death had come and rested its head on the foot of the cot and he could smell its breath.

"Never believe any of that about a scythe and a skull," he told her. "It can be two bicycle policemen as easily, or be a bird. Or it can have a wide snout like a hyena."

It had moved up on him now, but it had no shape any more. It simply occupied space.

"Tell it to go away."

It did not go away but moved a little closer.

"You've got a hell of a breath," he told it. "You stinking bastard."

It moved up closer to him still and now he could not speak to it, and when it saw he could not speak it came a little closer, and now he tried to send it away without speaking, but it moved in on him so its weight was all upon his chest, and while it crouched there and he could not move, or speak, he heard the woman say, "Bwana is asleep now. Take the cot up very gently and carry it into the tent."

He could not speak to tell her to make it go away and it crouched now, heavier, so he could not breathe. And then, while they lifted the cot, suddenly it was all right and the weight went from his chest.

It was morning and had been morning for some time and he heard the plane. It showed very tiny and then made a wide circle and the boys ran out and lit the fires, using kerosene, and piled on grass so there were two big smudges at each end of the level place and the morning breeze blew them toward the camp and the plane circled twice more, low this time, and then glided down and levelled off and landed smoothly and, coming walking toward him, was old Compton in slacks, a tweed jacket and a brown felt hat.

"What's the matter, old cock?" Compton said.

"Bad leg," he told him. "Will you have some breakfast?"

"Thanks. I'll just have some tea. It's the Puss Moth you know. I won't be able to take the Memsahib. There's only room for one. Your lorry is on the way."

Helen had taken Compton aside and was speaking to him. Compton came back more cheery than ever.

"We'll get you right in," he said. "I'll be back for the Mem. Now I'm afraid I'll have to stop at Arusha to refuel. We'd better get going."

"What about the tea?"

"I don't really care about it you know."

The boys had picked up the cot and carried it around the green tents and down along the rock and out onto the plain and along past the smudges that were burning brightly now, the grass all consumed, and the wind fanning the fire, to the little plane. It was difficult getting him in,

but once in he lay back in the leather seat, and the leg was stuck straight out to one side of the seat, where Compton sat. Compton started the motor and got in. He waved to Helen and to the boys and, as the clatter moved into the old familiar roar, they swung around with Compie watching for wart-hog holes and roared, bumping, along the stretch between the fires and with the last bump rose and he saw them all standing below, waving, and the camp beside the hill, flattening now, and the plain spreading, clumps of trees, and the bush flattening, while the game trails ran now smoothly to the dry waterholes, and there was a new water that he had never known of. The zebra, small rounded backs now, and the wildebeeste, big-headed dots seeming to climb as they moved in long fingers across the plain, now scattering as the shadow came toward them, they were tiny now, and the movement had no gallop, and the plain was as far as you could see, gray-yellow now and ahead old Compie's tweed back and the brown felt hat. Then they were over the first hills and the wildebeeste were trailing up them, and then they were over mountains with sudden depths of green-rising forest and the solid bamboo slopes, and then the heavy forest again, sculptured into peaks and hollows until they crossed, and hills sloped down and then another plain, hot now, and purple brown, bumpy with heat and Compie looking back to see how he was riding. Then there were other mountains dark ahead.

And then instead of going on to Arusha they turned left, he evidently figured that they had the gas, and looking down he saw a pink sifting cloud, moving over the ground, and in the air, like the first snow in a blizzard, that comes from nowhere, and he knew the locusts were coming up from the South. Then they began to climb and they were going to the East it seemed, and then it darkened and they were in a storm, the rain so thick it seemed like flying through a waterfall, and then they were out and Compie turned his head and grinned and pointed and there, ahead, all he could see, as wide as all the world, great, high, unbelievably white in the sun, was the square top of Kilimanjaro. And then he knew that there was where he was going.

Just then the hyena stopped whimpering in the night and started to make a strange, human, almost crying sound. The woman heard it and stirred uneasily. She did not wake. In her dream she was at the house on Long Island and it was the night before her daughter's début. Somehow her father was there and he had been very rude. Then the noise the hyena made was so loud she woke and for a moment she did not know where she was and she was very afraid. Then she took the flashlight and shone it on the other cot that they had carried in after Harry had gone to sleep. She could see his bulk under the mosquito bar but some-

how he had gotten his leg out and it hung down alongside the cot. The dressings had all come down and she could not look at it.

"Molo," she called, "Molo! Molo!"

Then she said, "Harry, Harry!" Then her voice rising, "Harry! Please, Oh Harry!"

There was no answer and she could not hear him breathing.

Outside the tent the hyena made the same strange noise that had awakened her. But she did not hear him for the beating of her heart.

THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER*

by D. H. Lawrence

D. H. Lawrence (1885–1930), British novelist and poet, was the son of a coal miner. Suffering from tuberculosis, he traveled widely and lived at many places, some of his last years having been spent at Taos, New Mexico. Among his novels are *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *Women in Love* (1920), *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), and *The Plumed Serpent* (1925).

There was a woman who was beautiful, who started with all the advantages, yet she had no luck. She married for love, and the love turned to dust. She had bonny children, yet she felt they had been thrust upon her, and she could not love them. They looked at her coldly, as if they were finding fault with her. And hurriedly she felt she must cover up some fault in herself. Yet what it was that she must cover up she never knew. Nevertheless, when her children were present, she always felt the centre of her heart go hard. This troubled her, and in her manner she was all the more gentle and anxious for her children, as if she loved them very much. Only she herself knew that at the centre of her heart was a hard little place that could not feel love, no, not for anybody. Everybody else said of her: "She is such a good mother. She adores her children." Only she herself, and her children themselves, knew it was not so. They read it in each other's eyes.

There were a boy and two little girls. They lived in a pleasant house, with a garden, and they had discreet servants, and felt themselves superior to anyone in the neighbourhood.

Although they lived in style, they felt always an anxiety in the house. There was never enough money. The mother had a small income, and the father had a small income, but not nearly enough for the social position which they had to keep up. The father went in to town to some of-

* From *The Portable D. H. Lawrence* (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1947). Copyright, 1933, by the Estate of D. H. Lawrence. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

fice. But though he had good prospects, these prospects never materialized. There was always the grinding sense of the shortage of money, though the style was always kept up.

At last the mother said: "I will see if *I* can't make something." But she did not know where to begin. She racked her brains, and tried this thing and the other, but could not find anything successful. The failure made deep lines come into her face. Her children were growing up, they would have to go to school. There must be more money, there must be more money. The father, who was always very handsome and expensive in his tastes, seemed as if he never *would* be able to do anything worth doing. And the mother, who had a great belief in herself, did not succeed any better, and her tastes were just as expensive.

And so the house came to be haunted by the unspoken phrase: *There must be more money! There must be more money!* The children could hear it all the time, though nobody said it aloud. They heard it at Christmas, when the expensive and splendid toys filled the nursery. Behind the shining modern rocking-horse, behind the smart doll's-house, a voice would start whispering: "There *must* be more money! There *must* be more money!" And the children would stop playing, to listen for a moment. They would look into each other's eyes, to see if they had all heard. And each one saw in the eyes of the other two that they too had heard. "There *must* be more money! There *must* be more money!"

It came whispering from the springs of the still-swaying rocking-horse, and even the horse, bending his wooden, champing head, heard it. The big doll, sitting so pink and smirking in her new pram, could hear it quite plainly, and seemed to be smirking all the more self-consciously because of it. The foolish puppy, too, that took the place of the teddy-bear, he was looking so extraordinarily foolish for no other reason but that he heard the secret whisper all over the house: "There *must* be more money!"

Yet nobody ever said it aloud. The whisper was everywhere, and therefore no one spoke it. Just as no one ever says: "We are breathing!" in spite of the fact that breath is coming and going all the time.

"Mother," said the boy Paul one day, "why don't we keep a car of our own? Why do we always use uncle's, or else a taxi?"

"Because we're the poor members of the family," said the mother.

"But why *are* we, mother?"

"Well—I suppose," she said slowly and bitterly, "it's because your father has no luck."

The boy was silent for some time.

"Is luck money, mother?" he asked, rather timidly.

"No, Paul. Not quite. It's what causes you to have money."

"Oh!" said Paul vaguely. "I thought when Uncle Oscar said *filthy lucker,* it meant money."

"*Filthy lucre* does mean money," said the mother. "But its lucre, not luck."

"Oh!" said the boy. "Then what *is* luck, mother?"

"It's what causes you to have money. If you're lucky you have money. That's why it's better to be born lucky than rich. If you're rich, you may lose your money. But if you're lucky, you will always get more money."

"Oh! Will you? And is father not lucky?"

"Very unlucky, I should say," she said bitterly.

The boy watched her with unsure eyes.

"Why?" he asked.

"I don't know. Nobody ever knows why one person is lucky and another unlucky."

"Don't they? Nobody at all? Does *nobody* know?"

"Perhaps God. But He never tells."

"He ought to, then. And aren't you lucky either, mother?"

"I can't be, if I married an unlucky husband."

"But by yourself, aren't you?"

"I used to think I was, before I married. Now I think I am very unlucky indeed."

"Why?"

"Well—never mind! Perhaps I'm not really," she said.

The child looked at her, to see if she meant it. But he saw, by the lines of her mouth, that she was only trying to hide something from him.

"Well, anyhow," he said stoutly, "I'm a lucky person."

"Why?" said his mother, with a sudden laugh.

He stared at her. He didn't even know why he had said it.

"God told me," he asserted, brazening it out.

"I hope He did, dear!" she said, again with a laugh, but rather bitter.

"He did, mother!"

"Excellent!" said the mother, using one of her husband's exclamations.

The boy saw she did not believe him; or, rather, that she paid no attention to his assertion. This angered him somewhat, and made him want to compel her attention.

He went off by himself, vaguely, in a childish way, seeking for the clue to "luck." Absorbed, taking no heed of other people, he went about with a sort of stealth, seeking inwardly for luck. He wanted luck, he wanted it, he wanted it. When the two girls were playing dolls in the

nursery, he would sit on his big rocking-horse, charging madly into space, with a frenzy that made the little girls peer at him uneasily. Wildly the horse careered, the waving dark hair of the boy tossed, his eyes had a strange glare in them. The little girls dared not speak to him.

When he had ridden to the end of his mad little journey, he climbed down and stood in front of his rocking-horse, staring fixedly into its lowered face. Its red mouth was slightly open, its big eye was wide and glassy-bright.

"Now!" he would silently command the snorting steed. "Now, take me to where there is luck! Now take me!"

And he would slash the horse on the neck with the little whip he had asked Uncle Oscar for. He *knew* the horse could take him to where there was luck, if only he forced it. So he would mount again, and start on his furious ride, hoping at last to get there. He knew he could get there.

"You'll break your horse, Paul!" said the nurse.

"He's always riding like that! I wish he'd leave off!" said his elder sister Joan.

But he only glared down on them in silence. Nurse gave him up. She could make nothing of him. Anyhow he was growing beyond her.

One day his mother and his Uncle Oscar came in when he was on one of his furious rides. He did not speak to them.

"Hallo, you young jockey! Riding a winner?" said his uncle.

"Aren't you growing too big for a rocking-horse? You're not a very little boy any longer, you know," said his mother.

But Paul only gave a blue glare from his big, rather close-set eyes. He would speak to nobody when he was in full tilt. His mother watched him with an anxious expression on her face.

At last he suddenly stopped forcing his horse into the mechanical gallop, and slid down.

"Well, I got there!" he announced fiercely, his blue eyes still flaring, and his sturdy long legs straddling apart.

"Where did you get to?" asked his mother.

"Where I wanted to go," he flared back at her.

"That's right, son!" said Uncle Oscar. "Don't you stop till you get there. What's the horse's name?"

"He doesn't have a name," said the boy.

"Gets on without all right?" asked the uncle.

"Well, he has different names. He was called Sansovino last week."

"Sansovino, eh? Won the Ascot. How did you know his name?"

"He always talks about horse-races with Bassett," said Joan.

The uncle was delighted to find that his small nephew was posted with all the racing news. Bassett, the young gardener, who had been

wounded in the left foot in the war and had got his present job through Oscar Cresswell, whose batman he had been, was a perfect blade of the "turf." He lived in the racing events, and the small boy lived with him.

Oscar Cresswell got it all from Bassett.

"Master Paul comes and asks me, so I can't do more than tell him, sir," said Bassett, his face terribly serious, as if he were speaking of religious matters.

"And does he ever put anything on a horse he fancies?"

"Well—I don't want to give him away—he's a young sport, a fine sport, sir. Would you mind asking him himself? He sort of takes a pleasure in it, and perhaps he'd feel I was giving him away, sir, if you don't mind."

Bassett was serious as a church.

The uncle went back to his nephew, and took him off for a ride in the car.

"Say, Paul, old man, do you ever put anything on a horse?" the uncle asked.

The boy watched the handsome man closely.

"Why, do you think I oughtn't to?" he parried.

"Not a bit of it! I thought perhaps you might give me a tip for the Lincoln."

The car sped on into the country, going down to Uncle Oscar's place in Hampshire.

"Honour bright?" said the nephew.

"Honour bright, son!" said the uncle.

"Well, then, Daffodil."

"Daffodil! I doubt it, sonny. What about Mirza?"

"I only know the winner," said the boy. "That's Daffodil."

"Daffodil, eh?"

There was a pause. Daffodil was an obscure horse comparatively.

"Uncle!"

"Yes, son?"

"You won't let it go any further, will you? I promised Bassett."

"Bassett be damned, old man! What's he got to do with it?"

"We're partners. We've been partners from the first. Uncle, he lent me my first five shillings, which I lost. I promised him, honour bright, it was only between me and him; only you gave me that ten-shilling note I started winning with, so I thought you were lucky. You won't let it go any further, will you?"

The boy gazed at his uncle from those big, hot, blue eyes, set rather close together. The uncle stirred and laughed uneasily.

"Right you are, son! I'll keep your tip private. Daffodil, eh? How much are you putting on him?"

"All except twenty pounds," said the boy. "I keep that in reserve."

The uncle thought it a good joke.

"You keep twenty pounds in reserve, do you, you young romancer? What are you betting, then?"

"I'm betting three hundred," said the boy gravely. "But it's between you and me, Uncle Oscar! Honour bright?"

The uncle burst into a roar of laughter.

"It's between you and me all right, you young Nat Gould," he said, laughing. "But where's your three hundred?"

"Bassett keeps it for me. We're partners."

"You are, are you! And what is Bassett putting on Daffodil?"

"He won't go quite as high as I do, I expect. Perhaps he'll go a hundred and fifty."

"What, pennies?" laughed the uncle.

"Pounds," said the child, with a surprised look at his uncle. "Bassett keeps a bigger reserve than I do."

Between wonder and amusement Uncle Oscar was silent. He pursued the matter no further, but he determined to take his nephew with him to the Lincoln races.

"Now, son," he said, "I'm putting twenty on Mirza, and I'll put five for you on any horse you fancy. What's your pick?"

"Daffodil, uncle."

"No, not the fiver on Daffodil!"

"I should if it was my own fiver," said the child.

"Good! Good! Right you are! A fiver for me and a fiver for you on Daffodil."

The child had never been to a race-meeting before, and his eyes were blue fire. He pursed his mouth tight, and watched. A Frenchman just in front had put his money on Lancelot. Wild with excitement, he flayed his arms up and down, yelling *"Lancelot! Lancelot!"* in his French accent.

Daffodil came in first, Lancelot second, Mirza third. The child, flushed and with eyes blazing, was curiously serene. His uncle brought him four five-pound notes, four to one.

"What am I to do with these?" he cried, waving them before the boy's eyes.

"I suppose we'll talk to Bassett," said the boy. "I expect I have fifteen hundred now; and twenty in reserve; and this twenty."

His uncle studied him for some moments.

"Look here, son!" he said. "You're not serious about Bassett and that fifteen hundred, are you?"

"Yes, I am. But it's between you and me, uncle. Honour bright!"

"Honour bright all right, son! But I must talk to Bassett."

"If you'd like to be a partner, uncle, with Bassett and me, we could all be partners. Only, you'd have to promise, honour bright, uncle, not to let it go beyond us three. Bassett and I are lucky, and you must be lucky, because it was your ten shillings I started winning with. . . ."

Uncle Oscar took both Bassett and Paul into Richmond Park for an afternoon, and there they talked.

"It's like this, you see, sir," Bassett said. "Master Paul would get me talking about racing events, spinning yarns, you know, sir. And he was always keen on knowing if I'd made or if I'd lost. It's about a year since, now, that I put five shillings on Blush of Dawn for him—and we lost. Then the luck turned, with that ten shillings he had from you, that we put on Singhalese. And since that time, it's been pretty steady, all things considering. What do you say, Master Paul?"

"We're all right when we're sure," said Paul. "It's when we're not quite sure that we go down."

"Oh, but we're careful then," said Bassett.

"But when are you *sure?*" smiled Uncle Oscar.

"It's Master Paul, sir," said Bassett, in a secret, religious voice. "It's as if he had it from heaven. Like Daffodil, now, for the Lincoln. That was as sure as eggs."

"Did you put anything on Daffodil?" asked Oscar Cresswell.

"Yes, sir. I made my bit."

"And my nephew?"

Bassett was obstinately silent, looking at Paul.

"I made twelve hundred, didn't I, Bassett? I told uncle I was putting three hundred on Daffodil."

"That's right," said Bassett, nodding.

"But where's the money?" asked the uncle.

"I keep it safe locked up, sir. Master Paul he can have it any minute he likes to ask for it."

"What, fifteen hundred pounds?"

"And twenty! And *forty,* that is, with the twenty he made on the course."

"It's amazing!" said the uncle.

"If Master Paul offers you to be partners, sir, I would, if I were you; if you'll excuse me," said Bassett.

Oscar Cresswell thought about it.

"I'll see the money," he said.

They drove home again, and sure enough, Bassett came round to the garden-house with fifteen hundred pounds in notes. The twenty pounds reserve was left with Joe Glee, in the Turf Commission deposit.

"You see, it's all right, uncle, when I'm *sure!* Then we go strong, for all we're worth. Don't we, Bassett?"

"We do that, Master Paul."

"And when are you sure?" said the uncle, laughing.

'Oh, well, sometimes I'm *absolutely* sure, like about Daffodil," said the boy; "and sometimes I have an idea; and sometimes I haven't even an idea, have I, Bassett? Then we're careful, because we mostly go down."

"You do, do you! And when you're sure, like about Daffodil, what makes you sure, sonny?"

"Oh, well, I don't know," said the boy uneasily. "I'm sure, you know, uncle; that's all."

"It's as if he had it from heaven, sir," Bassett reiterated.

"I should say so!" said the uncle.

But he became a partner. And when the Leger was coming on, Paul was "sure" about Lively Spark, which was a quite inconsiderable horse. The boy insisted on putting a thousand on the horse, Bassett went for five hundred, and Oscar Cresswell two hundred. Lively Spark came in first, and the betting had been ten to one against him. Paul had made ten thousand.

"You see," he said, "I was absolutely sure of him."

Even Oscar Cresswell had cleared two thousand.

"Look here, son," he said, "this sort of thing makes me nervous."

"It needn't, uncle! Perhaps I shan't be sure again for a long time."

"But what are you going to do with your money?" asked the uncle.

"Of course," said the boy, "I started it for mother. She said she had no luck, because father is unlucky, so I thought if *I* was lucky, it might stop whispering."

"What might stop whispering?"

"Our house. I *hate* our house for whispering."

"What does it whisper?"

"Why—why"—the boy fidgeted—"why, I don't know. But it's always short of money, you know, uncle."

"I know it, son, I know it."

"You know people send mother writs, don't you, uncle?"

"I'm afraid I do," said the uncle.

"And then the house whispers, like people laughing at you behind your back. It's awful, that is! I thought if I was lucky . . ."

"You might stop it," added the uncle.

The boy watched him with big blue eyes, that had an uncanny cold fire in them, and he said never a word.

"Well, then!" said the uncle. "What are we doing?"

"I shouldn't like mother to know I was lucky," said the boy.

"Why not, son?"

"She'd stop me."

"I don't think she would."

"Oh!"—and the boy writhed in an odd way—"I *don't* want her to know, uncle."

"All right, son! We'll manage it without her knowing."

They managed it very easily. Paul, at the other's suggestion, handed over five thousand pounds to his uncle, who deposited it with the family lawyer, who was then to inform Paul's mother that a relative had put five thousand pounds into his hands, which sum was to be paid out a thousand pounds at a time, on the mother's birthday, for the next five years.

"So she'll have a birthday present of a thousand pounds for five successive years," said Uncle Oscar. "I hope it won't make it all the harder for her later."

Paul's mother had her birthday in November. The house had been "whispering" worse than ever lately, and, even in spite of his luck, Paul could not bear up against it. He was very anxious to see the effect of the birthday letter, telling his mother about the thousand pounds.

When there were no visitors, Paul now took his meals with his parents, as he was beyond the nursery control. His mother went into town nearly every day. She had discovered that she had an odd knack of sketching furs and dress materials, so she worked secretly in the studio of a friend who was the chief "artist" for the leading drapers. She drew the figures of ladies in furs and ladies in silk and sequins for the newspaper advertisements. This young woman artist earned several thousand pounds a year, but Paul's mother only made several hundreds, and she was again dissatisfied. She so wanted to be first in something, and she did not succeed, even in making sketches for drapery advertisements.

She was down to breakfast on the morning of her birthday. Paul watched her face as she read her letters. He knew the lawyer's letter. As his mother read it, her face hardened and became more expressionless. Then a cold, determined look came on her mouth. She hid the letter under the pile of others, and said not a word about it.

"Didn't you have anything nice in the post for your birthday, mother?" said Paul.

"Quite moderately nice," she said, her voice cold and absent.

She went away to town without saying more.

But in the afternoon Uncle Oscar appeared. He said Paul's mother had had a long interview with the lawyer, asking if the whole five thousand could not be advanced at once, as she was in debt.

"What do you think, uncle?" said the boy.

"I leave it to you, son."

"Oh, let her have it, then! We can get some more with the other," said the boy.

"A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, laddie!" said Uncle Oscar.

"But I'm sure to *know* for the Grand National; or the Lincolnshire; or else the Derby. I'm sure to know for *one* of them," said Paul.

So Uncle Oscar signed the agreement, and Paul's mother touched the whole five thousand. Then something very curious happened. The voices in the house suddenly went mad, like a chorus of frogs on a spring evening. There were certain new furnishings, and Paul had a tutor. He was *really* going to Eton, his father's school, in the following autumn. There were flowers in the winter, and a blossoming of the luxury Paul's mother had been used to. And yet the voices in the house, behind the sprays of mimosa and almond blossom, and from under the piles of iridescent cushions, simply trilled and screamed in a sort of ecstasy: "There *must* be more money! Oh-h-h; there *must* be more money. Oh, now, now-w! Now-w-w—there *must* be more money!—more than ever! More than ever!"

It frightened Paul terribly. He studied away at his Latin and Greek with his tutors. But his intense hours were spent with Bassett. The Grand National had gone by: he had not "known," and had lost a hundred pounds. Summer was at hand. He was in agony for the Lincoln. But even for the Lincoln he didn't "know," and he lost fifty pounds. He became wild-eyed and strange, as if something were going to explode in him.

"Let it alone, son! Don't you bother about it!" urged Uncle Oscar. But it was as if the boy couldn't really hear what his uncle was saying.

"I've got to know for the Derby! I've got to know for the Derby!" the child reiterated, his big blue eyes blazing with a sort of madness.

His mother noticed how overwrought he was.

"You'd better go to the seaside. Wouldn't you like to go now to the seaside, instead of waiting? I think you'd better," she said, looking down at him anxiously, her heart curiously heavy because of him.

But the child lifted his uncanny blue eyes.

"I couldn't possibly go before the Derby, mother!" he said. "I couldn't possibly!"

"Why not?" she said, her voice becoming heavy when she was opposed. "Why not? You can still go from the seaside to see the Derby with your Uncle Oscar, if that's what you wish. No need for you to wait here. Besides, I think you care too much about these races. It's a bad sign. My family has been a gambling family, and you won't know till you grow up how much damage it has done. But it has done damage. I shall have to send Bassett away, and ask Uncle Oscar not to talk racing to you, unless you promise to be reasonable about it; go away to the seaside and forget it. You're all nerves!"

"I'll do what you like, mother, so long as you don't send me away till after the Derby," the boy said.

"Send you away from where? Just from this house?"

"Yes," he said, gazing at her.

"Why, you curious child, what makes you care about this house so much, suddenly? I never knew you loved it."

He gazed at her without speaking. He had a secret within a secret, something he had not divulged, even to Bassett or to his Uncle Oscar.

But his mother, after standing undecided and a little bit sullen for some moments, said:

"Very well, then! Don't go to the seaside till after the Derby, if you don't wish it. But promise me you won't let your nerves go to pieces. Promise you won't think so much about horse-racing and *events,* as you call them!"

"Oh, no," said the boy casually. "I won't think much about them, mother. You needn't worry. I wouldn't worry, mother, if I were you."

"If you were me and I were you," said his mother, "I wonder what we *should* do!"

"But you know you needn't worry, mother, don't you?" the boy repeated.

"I should be awfully glad to know it," she said wearily.

"Oh, well, you *can,* you know. I mean you *ought* to know you needn't worry," he insisted.

"Ought I? Then I'll see about it," she said.

Paul's secret of secrets was his wooden horse, that which had no name. Since he was emancipated from a nurse and a nursery-governess, he had had his rocking-horse removed to his own bedroom at the top of the house.

"Surely, you're too big for a rocking-horse!" his mother had remonstrated.

"Well, you see, mother, till I can have a *real* horse, I like to have *some* sort of animal about," had been his quaint answer.

"Do you feel he keeps you company?" she laughed.

"Oh, yes! He's very good, he always keeps me company, when I'm there," said Paul.

So the horse, rather shabby, stood in an arrested prance in the boy's bedroom.

The Derby was drawing near, and the boy grew more and more tense. He hardly heard what was spoken to him, he was very frail, and his eyes were really uncanny. His mother had sudden strange seizures of uneasiness about him. Sometimes, for half-an-hour, she would feel a sudden anxiety about him that was almost anguish. She wanted to rush to him at once, and know he was safe.

Two nights before the Derby, she was at a big party in town, when one of her rushes of anxiety about her boy, her first-born, gripped her heart till she could hardly speak. She fought with the feeling, might and main, for she believed in commonsense. But it was too strong. She had to leave the dance and go downstairs to telephone to the country. The children's nursery-governess was terribly surprised and startled at being rung up in the night.

"Are the children all right, Miss Wilmot?"

"Oh, yes, they are quite all right."

"Master Paul? Is he all right?"

"He went to bed as right as a trivet. Shall I run up and look at him?"

"No," said Paul's mother reluctantly. "No! Don't trouble. It's all right. Don't sit up. We shall be home fairly soon." She did not want her son's privacy intruded upon.

"Very good," said the governess.

It was about one o'clock when Paul's mother and father drove up to their house. All was still. Paul's mother went to her room and slipped off her white fur cloak. She had told her maid not to wait up for her. She heard her husband downstairs, mixing a whisky-and-soda.

And then, because of the strange anxiety at her heart, she stole upstairs to her son's room. Noiselessly she went along the upper corridor. Was there a faint noise? What was it?

She stood, with arrested muscles, outside his door, listening. There was a strange, heavy, and yet not loud noise. Her heart stood still. It was a soundless noise, yet rushing and powerful. Something huge, in violent, hushed motion. What was it? What in God's name was it? She ought to know. She felt that she knew the noise. She knew what it was.

Yet she could not place it. She couldn't say what it was. And on and on it went, like a madness.

Softly, frozen with anxiety and fear, she turned the door-handle.

The room was dark. Yet in the space near the window, she heard and saw something plunging to and fro. She gazed in fear and amazement.

Then suddenly she switched on the light, and saw her son, in his green pyjamas, madly surging on the rocking-horse. The blaze of light suddenly lit him up, as he urged the wooden horse, and lit her up, as she stood, blonde, in her dress of pale green and crystal, in the doorway.

"Paul!" she cried. "Whatever are you doing?"

"It's Malabar!" he screamed, in a powerful, strange voice. "It's Malabar!"

His eyes blazed at her for one strange and senseless second, as he ceased urging his wooden horse. Then he fell with a crash to the ground,

and she, all her tormented motherhood flooding upon her, rushed to gather him up.

But he was unconscious, and unconscious he remained, with some brain-fever. He talked and tossed, and his mother sat stonily by his side.

"Malabar! It's Malabar! Bassett, Bassett, I *know!* It's Malabar!"

So the child cried, trying to get up and urge the rocking-horse that gave him his inspiration.

"What does he mean by Malabar?" asked the heart-frozen mother.

"I don't know," said the father stonily.

"What does he mean by Malabar?" she asked her brother Oscar.

"It's one of the horses running for the Derby," was the answer.

And, in spite of himself, Oscar Cresswell spoke to Bassett, and himself put a thousand on Malabar: at fourteen to one.

The third day of the illness was critical: they were waiting for a change. The boy, with his rather long, curly hair, was tossing ceaselessly on the pillow. He neither slept nor regained consciousness, and his eyes were like blue stones. His mother sat, feeling her heart had gone, turned actually into a stone.

In the evening, Oscar Cresswell did not come, but Bassett sent a message, saying could he come up for one moment, just one moment? Paul's mother was very angry at the intrusion, but on second thought she agreed. The boy was the same. Perhaps Bassett might bring him to consciousness.

The gardener, a shortish fellow with a little brown moustache, and sharp little brown eyes, tip-toed into the room, touched his imaginary cap to Paul's mother, and stole to the bedside, staring with glittering, smallish eyes, at the tossing, dying child.

"Master Paul!" he whispered. "Master Paul! Malabar came in first all right, a clean win. I did as you told me. You've made over seventy thousand pounds, you have; you've got over eighty thousand. Malabar came in all right, Master Paul."

"Malabar! Malabar! Did I say Malabar, mother? Did I say Malabar? Do you think I'm lucky, mother? I knew Malabar, didn't I? Over eighty thousand pounds! I call that lucky, don't you, mother? Over eighty thousand pounds! I knew, didn't I know I knew? Malabar came in all right. If I ride my horse till I'm sure, then I tell you, Bassett, you can go as high as you like. Did you go for all you were worth, Bassett?"

"I went a thousand on it, Master Paul."

"I never told you, mother, that if I can ride my horse, and *get there,* then I'm absolutely sure—oh, absolutely! Mother, did I ever tell you? I *am* lucky!"

"No, you never did," said the mother.

But the boy died in the night.

And even as he lay dead, his mother heard her brother's voice saying to her: "My God, Hester, you're eighty-odd thousand to the good, and a poor devil of a son to the bad. But, poor devil, poor devil, he's best gone out of a life where he rides his rocking-horse to find a winner."

THE USE OF FORCE*

by William Carlos Williams

William Carlos Williams (1883–), contemporary American poet, critic, and short story writer, was born at Rutherford, New Jersey. As a doctor of medicine, he practiced pediatrics for more than forty years. He received the Dial Award in 1926 and the National Book Award in 1950. Among his books are *Paterson, Collected Short Stories, The Collected Later Poems of William Carlos Williams, The Collected Earlier Poems, Make Light of It,* and *The Autobiography of William Carlos Williams.*

They were new patients to me, all I had was the name, Olson. Please come down as soon as you can, my daughter is very sick.

When I arrived I was met by the mother, a big startled looking woman, very clean and apologetic who merely said, Is this the doctor? and let me in. In the back, she added. You must excuse us, doctor, we have her in the kitchen where it is warm. It is very damp here sometimes.

The child was fully dressed and sitting on her father's lap near the kitchen table. He tried to get up, but I motioned for him not to bother, took off my overcoat and started to look things over. I could see that they were all very nervous, eyeing me up and down distrustfully. As often, in such cases, they weren't telling me more than they had to, it was up to me to tell them; that's why they were spending three dollars on me.

The child was fairly eating me up with her cold, steady eyes, and no expression to her face whatever. She did not move and seemed, inwardly, quiet; an unusually attractive little thing, and as strong as a heifer in appearance. But her face was flushed, she was breathing rapidly, and I realized that she had a high fever. She had magnificent blonde hair, in profusion. One of those picture children often reproduced in advertising leaflets and the photogravure sections of the Sunday papers.

She's had a fever for three days, began the father and we don't know what it comes from. My wife has given her things, you know, like people do, but it don't do no good. And there's been a lot of sickness

* From *Make Light of It,* by William Carlos Williams (New York: Random House, 1950). Copyright, 1933, by William Carlos Williams. Reprinted by permission.

around. So we tho't you'd better look her over and tell us what is the matter.

As doctors often do I took a trial shot at it as a point of departure. Had she had a sore throat?

Both parents answered me together, No . . . No, she says her throat don't hurt her.

Does your throat hurt you? added the mother to the child. But the little girl's expression didn't change nor did she move her eyes from my face.

Have you looked?

I tried to, said the mother, but I couldn't see.

As it happens we had been having a number of cases of diphtheria in the school to which this child went during that month and we were all, quite apparently, thinking of that, though no one had as yet spoken of the thing.

Well, I said, suppose we take a look at the throat first. I smiled in my best professional manner and asking for the child's first name I said, come on, Mathilda, open your mouth and let's take a look at your throat.

Nothing doing.

Aw, come on, I coaxed, just open your mouth wide and let me take a look. Look, I said opening both hands wide, I haven't anything in my hands. Just open up and let me see.

Such a nice man, put in the mother. Look how kind he is to you. Come on, do what he tells you to. He won't hurt you.

At that I ground my teeth in disgust. If only they wouldn't use the word "hurt" I might be able to get somewhere. But I did not allow myself to be hurried or disturbed but speaking quietly and slowly I approached the child again.

As I moved my chair a little nearer suddenly with one cat-like movement both her hands clawed instinctively for my eyes and she almost reached them too. In fact she knocked my glasses flying and they fell, though unbroken, several feet away from me on the kitchen floor.

Both the mother and father almost turned themselves inside out in embarrassment and apology. You bad girl, said the mother, taking her and shaking her by one arm. Look what you've done. The nice man . . .

For heaven's sake, I broke in. Don't call me a nice man to her. I'm here to look at her throat on the chance that she might have diphtheria and possibly die of it. But that's nothing to her. Look here, I said to the child, we're going to look at your throat. You're old enough to understand what I'm saying. Will you open it now by yourself or shall we have to open it for you?

Not a move. Even her expression hadn't changed. Her breaths however were coming faster and faster. Then the battle began. I had to do

it. I had to have a throat culture for her own protection. But first I told the parents that it was entirely up to them. I explained the danger but said that I would not insist on a throat examination so long as they would take the responsibility.

If you don't do what the doctor says you'll have to go to the hospital, the mother admonished her severely.

Oh yeah? I had to smile to myself. After all, I had already fallen in love with the savage brat, the parents were contemptible to me. In the ensuing struggle they grew more and more abject, crushed, exhausted while she surely rose to magnificent heights of insane fury of effort bred of her terror of me.

The father tried his best, and he was a big man but the fact that she was his daughter, his shame at her behavior and his dread of hurting her made him release her just at the critical moment several times when I had almost achieved success, till I wanted to kill him. But his dread also that she might have diphtheria made him tell me to go on, go on though he himself was almost fainting, while the mother moved back and forth behind us raising and lowering her hands in an agony of apprehension.

Put her in front of you on your lap, I ordered, and hold both her wrists.

But as soon as he did the child let out a scream. Don't, you're hurting me. Let go of my hands. Let them go I tell you. Then she shrieked terrifyingly, hysterically. Stop it! Stop it! You're killing me!

Do you think she can stand it, doctor! said the mother.

You get out, said the husband to his wife. Do you want her to die of diphtheria?

Come on now, hold her, I said.

Then I grasped the child's head with my left hand and tried to get the wooden tongue depressor between her teeth. She fought, with clenched teeth, desperately! But now I also had grown furious—at a child. I tried to hold myself down but I couldn't. I know how to expose a throat for inspection. And I did my best. When finally I got the wooden spatula behind the last teeth and just the point of it into the mouth cavity, she opened up for an instant but before I could see anything she came down again and gripping the wooden blade between her molars she reduced it to splinters before I could get it out again.

Aren't you ashamed, the mother yelled at her. Aren't you ashamed to act like that in front of the doctor?

Get me a smooth-handled spoon of some sort, I told the mother. We're going through with this. The child's mouth was already bleeding. Her tongue was cut and she was screaming in wild hysterical shrieks. Perhaps I should have desisted and come back in an hour or more. No doubt

it would have been better. But I have seen at least two children lying dead in bed of neglect in such cases, and feeling that I must get a diagnosis now or never I went at it again. But the worst of it was that I too had got beyond reason. I could have torn the child apart in my own fury and enjoyed it. It was a pleasure to attack her. My face was burning with it.

The damned little brat must be protected against her own idiocy, one says to one's self at such times. Others must be protected against her. It is a social necessity. And all these things are true. But a blind fury, a feeling of adult shame, bred of a longing for muscular release are the operatives. One goes on to the end.

In a final unreasoning assault I overpowered the child's neck and jaws. I forced the heavy silver spoon back of her teeth and down her throat till she gagged. And there it was—both tonsils covered with membrane. She had fought valiantly to keep me from knowing her secret. She had been hiding that sore throat for three days at least and lying to her parents in order to escape just such an outcome as this.

Now truly she *was* furious. She had been on the defensive before but now she attacked. Tried to get off her father's lap and fly at me while tears of defeat blinded her eyes.

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