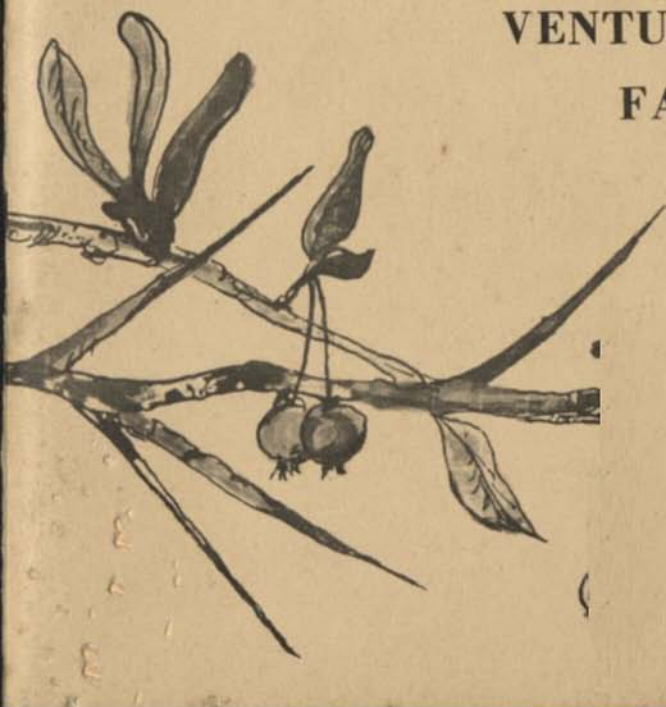




VENTURE

FALL 1965



The Literary Magazine of the University of Delaware

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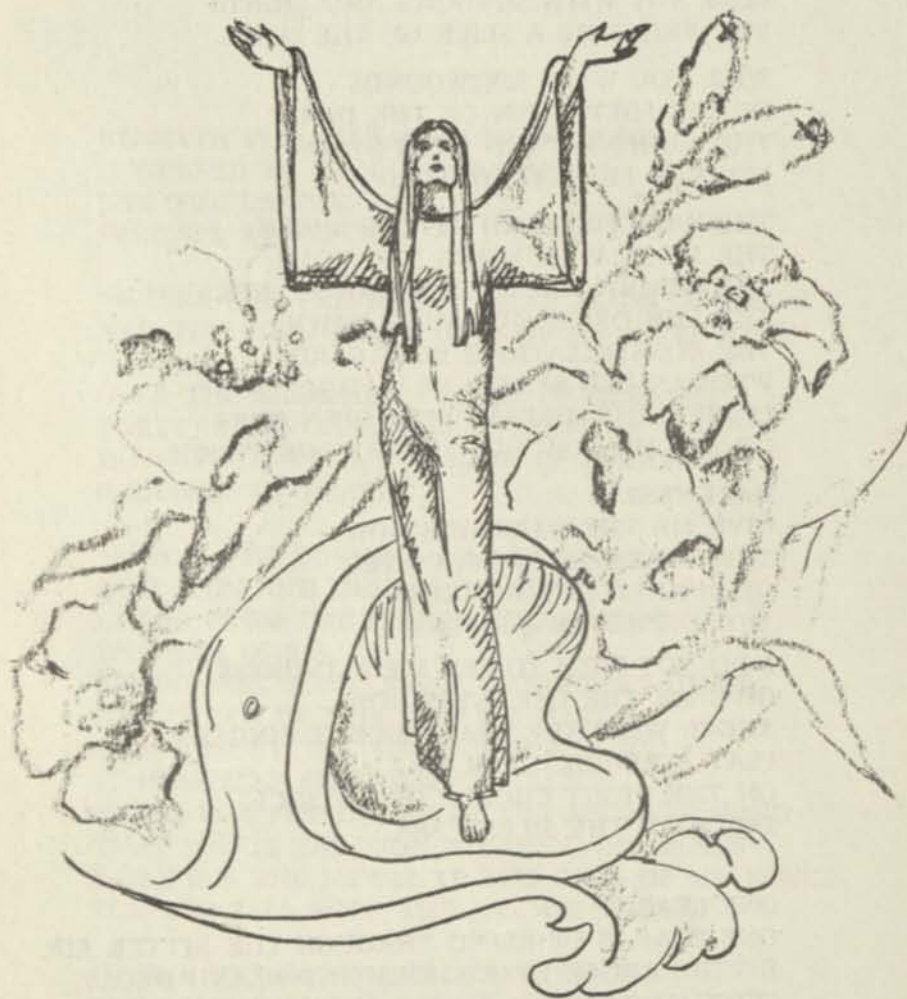
The Autobiography of An Agnostic

I stand reluctant sacrifice
 On existential altar of Occidental Aztec.
 I shall not stand before
 Th' ecclesiastical surgeon,
 Hands blood-red from obsideon stone,
 Thirsty to extract my intellect
 And hurl it bleeding to the altar
 of faith — that DAMNED commitment!
 I will not surrender metaphysical truth
 To have it violated upon the stone
 In blindly believing submission
 To faith, to dogmatic fiat
 Of Celestial Tyrant, of whose very being
 I cannot say I'm sure.

This Maiden Age

Beauty was born again at end of war:
She never knew virginity. As if chastity
Were a substance given in dole to each infant,
Hers has been expended, lost, or just misplaced
Before she was even conceived, or possibly,
Because she was not supposed to have been
Born at all, this surplus purity was used
To light a Golden Age. Some Satyr in the sky,
Looming like the intelligence of lust and loss,
Or swelling in the Age's midst like a drop
Of Blood from cancered flowers,
Shook in his thighs for Beauty's homeless holiness,
Waiting for the longest summer's wasted passage
To sing into the past, sink into the rubble.
Golden streets with steeple shadows altered, gray;
Amber into dust; sand engraved with steel and bone;
Arbors fallen into cyphers on the shore;
The nightly fragrance fouled with sulphur.
The perfect melodies at ancient squares
And under bough-arched woodways
And over lover's secret waters
Consumed within percussion breaking
As expectedly and suddenly as tears
That will would never release.
The country sleeps.

Remote from her beginning by non-being,
Alien to the self in separate slumber,
Beauty's shadow lies around the world,
And Satyr hovers everywhere
At war with her to find
The ancient, lost, and Sacred Spring.



Poems in C Minor

I.

DARKNESS.

I WANT THE DARKNESS NOW.
ANGEL WITH THE HOLLOW EYES,
PLAY NOT WITH SHADOWS AND LIGHTS
BUT BRING ME A SLICE OF THE DARK.

WILL YOU WRAP MY WOUNDS
IN THE SOFT LINEN OF THE DARK?
THE NIGHT BARBED WITH STARS
WOUNDS THE NAKED WIND . . .

THROUGH THE SAND OF THE SHORE
THE MOON IS SHIFTING THE FOAM.
THE SHADOW OF THE LIGHTHOUSE SEEKS
THE LIPS OF SELF-EVADING DAWN.
THE CONSTELLATIONS PLAY CARDS
WITH AN OLD SAILOR AT WATCH.
LIGHTHOUSE, DREAM WITH OPEN EYES
OF THE HOLLOW SKY ABOVE YOUR TOUCH.

DARKNESS.

GIVE ME THE DARKNESS NOW.
THE DARKNESS OF LOST EYES
OF BURNED OUT DESIRES
AND INSOLUBLE QUESTIONS.

I DO NOT WISH TO SEE MY BLINDNESS.
GIVE ME THE DARKNESS NOW.
ANGEL WITH THE TRANSLUCENT FINGERS
PLAY A REQUIEM FOR ME
ON THE TIGHT CHORDS OF MY SOUL
DOWN BY THE SILENT SEA.

II.

ONE LEAF.

ONE LEAF IS SWIRLING THROUGH THE BITTER AIR.
BITTER AIR OF OPAL SMOKE AND BLAND DECAY.
SUICIDAL LEAF,
WITH THAT LETHAL LEAP
ENDS THY VERDANT WORLD.

ONE WORLD.

SOMEONE IS RAKING LEAVES ON THE SIDEWALK,
THE FUNERAL PYRES BLIND THE SICKLY SUN.
WE ARE ALL ONE: THE SUN, THE LEAF AND MAN
UNITED IN THE INTEGRATING EMBRACE OF DEATH.

ONE MAN.

WALKING QUITE SENSELESSLY OVER
THOSE WASTED LIVES OF LEAVES.
SUICIDAL MAN,
YOU HOLD IN YOUR HAND
THE LIGHTSWITCH OF THE WORLD.

III.

BENEATH THE LETHAL SMILE OF HORUS
ENGULFED BY SMOLDERING SAND
LIES THE CARCASS OF A MAN
PERHAPS, AT PEACE.

"WHERE ARE THE WOMEN WITH FLESH OF LOTUS
AND THE COOL GREEN GAZE OF MY RIVER NILE?"

OVER THE BLEACHED DESERT OF SILENCE
TORTURED BY INSATIABLE THIRST
HOVERS THE FELINE SHADOW OF SEKHMET.
O LIONESSE OF DEATH.

"ACROSS THE BURNING DESERT:
SAND, SUN AND DESSICATED SILENCE
I FLEE FROM THE SELF-IMMOLATING SUN
TO THEE, OSIRIS.
FRIENDLESS, FORMLESS, A WANDERING SHADE
I MEANDER IN THIS ENDLESS MAZE
CROWNED BY THE THORNS OF THE SUN
IT IS MYSELF FROM WHICH I RUN.
IN TERROR FLEEING FROM THE ABRASIVE WIND
THAT SHIFTS THROUGH MY DECAYING FLESH
I CAN SEE THE JACKAL IN THE CAGE OF MY BONES
PLAYING BALL WITH THE ANEMIC MOON."

IN THE HYPOSTYLE HALL OF ETERNITY
SITS ANUBIS IN THE DIVINE PRESENCE
AND MEASURES THE SOULS OF MEN
AGAINST THE FEATHER OF INNOCENCE.

YES, THERE SITS ANUBIS THE JACKAL
AND MEASURES THE BURDENED SOUL OF MAN
AGAINST THE FEATHER OF A SWAN.

FOR OSIRIS IS JUST . . .

The Loss

Time, stop.

Allow me to step

From my picture and paint it anew

With perceptive orange and innocent blue:

My colors fade and I tire of the view.

A Visitor Comes

Tonight

The bright moonlight

Like a thief creeps in her room

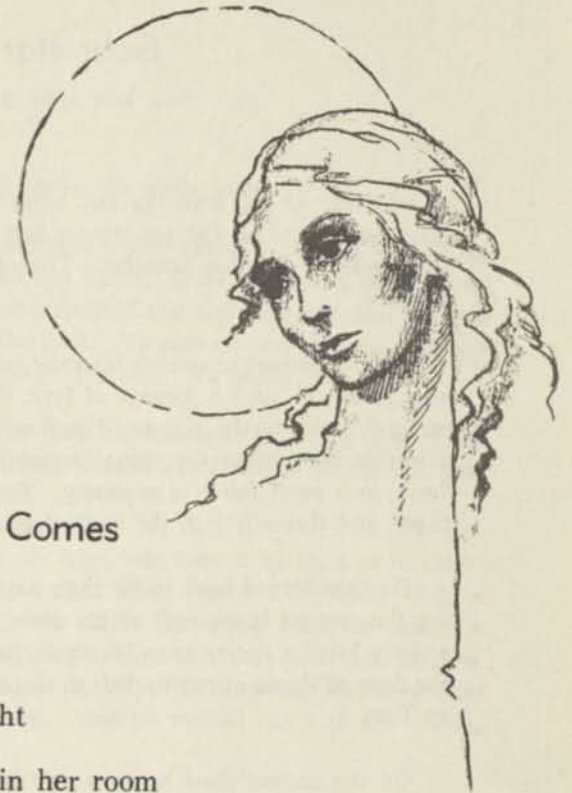
And steals her thoughts,

Hiding them in his heart.

What he has left for me

Her wild eyes alone

Will tell tomorrow.



Gabrielat Study

"Kevin. O my love the salt sting of the wind drives white fountains down before me on the sea waves, and I cannot find my way through this sad forest of dripping branches. The sweetness of drowning for you is mad gladness."

Gabriel paused to scratch his wrist reflectively, deciding if "glad madness" was better for such a passage of lyric flight. It was. He picked up his pen and boldly made the change. Reading the passage again, he now gave considerable thought to the sexual imagery. He was satisfied, but crossed out "my" in a swift burst of economy. So much for poetry. He crumpled the paper and threw it into the waste basket.

He then leaned back in his chair and placed his feet on the desk, examining the cement block wall of his dorm room. It was 9:45, almost time for a study break. Rising from his chair, he went quietly from the room, closing the door softly so as not to disturb the silent figure on the bed. Time to look up Tom.

On the second floor he went swiftly to Tom's room, knocked once, and entered without waiting for an answer. Suddenly, he stopped. The room was different. The beds were wrong. Two boys he had never seen looked up from their study desks at him.

"Yes?" one of them asked.

"I'm sorry, I must have the wrong room," Gabriel managed to say as he backed swiftly out of the room. He shut the door and looked at the number. 208. Tom was in 210. Gabriel shook his head and moved along the hall to the next room. He raised his hand to knock and saw the number, 212. Turning to the door across the hall, he saw that it was dutifully 211.

"But . . ." The words formed in his mind and his mouth shaped the syllable. He went back to the entrance of the hall and walked slowly down the hall again, counting the numbers. 000. 002. 004. 006. 008. He hesitated, then continued. 212.

Gabriel shook his head and went over to the Caveman's room. He knocked. "Yes?" He went in and stopped. Again, two strange faces stared at him.

"Is the Caveman in?" he forced himself to ask.

"Who?"

"Cambell."

One of the faces slowly shook back and forth. No.

"Isn't this his room?"

Again the shake of the head under the study lamp.

Gabriel walked out of the room and leaned against the tiled wall of the hall to light a cigarette with trembling hands. Down the hall a door opened and a face peered out at him. It disappeared and Gabriel could hear the door shut and the lock turn in the silent hall. He noticed now that the hall was silent but for the sound of breathing. His own. No radios, no voices. . . .

He went to the entrance of the hall, his footsteps following him. When he returned to his own room, he found himself stretched out on his bed, very dead.

It was then that Gabriel blew his horn. He blew it as hard as he could, expanding his chest and forcing the air. There was not a sound. Gabriel laughed softly and blew it again. No sound. Laughing fully, he looked at the body and blew his horn. Laughing so hard now that he could not blow, he had to rest a moment and gather his wind. He blew one last long blast and the walls of the room dissolved. Gabriel walked out into the waiting night.

The Room of Delphic Pine

Much more Doric there than first it seemed—
Pine-paneled walls which, practically
With Stoic will, could halt the strangling
Sieges of the scholar foe—
A heated haven of philosophy
Within a haggard world of snow.
The boards were knotted—
Their lustre, clear and yellow,
Their strength, pure form turned music—
Pillars of purer thought in warmer air
Making us sigh readily a long despair.
Of course, our clear thoughts, stained with
smoke and beer,
Made flare our peevish youth-fire's flame,
But we could hear Olympus rumble with our
far-off fame.

Life

Life
Why do you live?
What reason is there?
When you could burn
In everlasting fire?

You live because of
The whim of an eternal power
Who gives you a life
Worse than death,
Who promises happiness forever
And eternal life
Only to condemn you
For that which was not yours;

Unless in his duplicity
He grants you freedom,
Not the ability to be
As a vagrant thought,
Coming, going, appearing
Anywhere, at any time.

This is what you live for:
The hope that in his folly
He may grant you this
Instead of that.

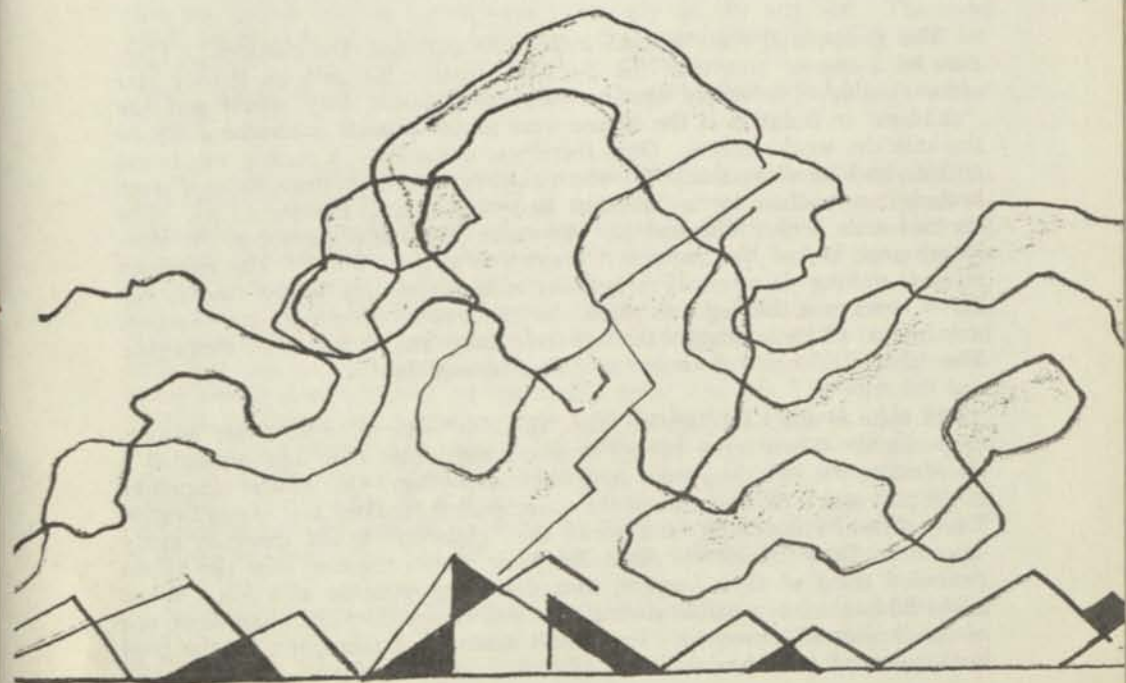
Thunderstorm

Black sculpture on grey,
power laden air, flowing
tension—serene pain.

A stab of beauty
a knife of ecstasy—I
Illuminated.

Hammer-hit marble,
drumming on the horizon,
call of raw beauty.

Night of anger and
love, delicate power, peace
and strife; death, life—Tao.



Love and Non Possumus

The asylum was all corridors that were vaults or tremendous expanse to the patients. Wounds seemed to pace the floor with padded feet, worrying and waiting to be claimed by psychic travailleurs, who would trade, change, or discard them indiscriminately but with an attitude of profound rationality. There is a tale still remembered of an epidemic of trees when the sad hospital abounded with human sycamores and maples. One man even ripped flesh from his chest with his fingernails because, "The Messiah was hanging there," he explained, "and I had to get rid of Him."

The Doctors were all brilliant men inspired by a frightened uselessness to face their patients with the inane compassion of science. Many of them believed that their analytic study might be rewarded with a mystic insight into a catatonic's silence, though the study was futile in itself. The dinner-table prattle and corridor colloquiums were esoteric and seemed stoical, for the patients were discussed in such detached abstractions. But, having dropped his professional guard once, one of the Doctors asked a patient, "Why won't — why *can't* you listen to me?" The patient replied, "Because you're not a prophet; you're one of us."

And in a way that was true—at least it was not a lie, for the patient believed it—many of the patients did. To them, the Doctors might have been just another tree, hung with dangling panaceas. Many of the patients had returned to normality following such an insane gesture as plucking one of the magic fruit and eating it. Nevertheless, this was gratifying to the Doctors for they had come to some use, even though not as a direct result of their erudition.

The nurses and male keepers called the patients "the children". They were of a coarser sort than the Doctors, treating the patients strictly and often roughly, but rarely cruelly. For punishment they would put the "children" in isolation if the offense were severe enough, otherwise a rap on the knuckles would suffice. Once there was a murder. A patient was found striking and breaking the bones of an already dead roommate using a piece broken from a chair for a club; but he swung it as if it were an ax. The stunned male keeper who had just discovered the tragedy grabbed the murderer's arm, looked him sadly in the eye and asked, "Why?" The murderer replied, smiling proudly, "I'm building a house for my lovely family, but first I must split this log into planks for the walls." Two more male keepers ran in, and all three dragged the murderer away, and he was never seen again. The other "children" all conjectured that he was dead.

In spite of their subjugation, the "children" seemed to like their keepers very much. When some college drama group came over and presented a melodrama, the reactions were somewhat surprising. One of the characters in the play was a combination of the unscrupulous landlord and Simon Legree. Every time he appeared in a scene the "children" would cheer in giddy approval. In a therapeutic discussion later it was revealed that the villain reminded them of their keepers, thus deserving immense affection. When asked how this was possible after all the evil things the villain had done, one of the "children" answered, "He doesn't mean it—I mean, it's for the good in the long run, what he does."

Now in the room where that murder had occurred there had slept three persons. One, of course, was dead, another, as I have told, was taken away; now the third was transferred to another room. He was called Mr. John. Though this was the time of the tree epidemic, Mr. John seemed to have a high resistance—almost an aversion, really, to becoming a tree; for those who did catch the tree infirmity usually affected a great delight in it—but not all did.

Quite unknown to the Doctors, Mr. John acquired an hallucination upon being settled in his new room. It was in the form of a dark gaunt man in blue jeans and a black sweater. He was first noticed by Mr. John while he was sitting on his bed tying, doubling, and redoubling the knots of his shoelaces. He had a great fear of losing his shoes, believing one could not walk without them. For several minutes the hallucination stood near the doorway, staring at him with his deep, bedouin eyes set close to an aquiline nose.

"This hand is for striking," he finally declared, raising his right hand, "and this *head* is for being struck. That is me and man: strike, be struck. My heart is a heath; if you are pure you will earn it. But you are not pure; I can see that. Therefore you must pose to me no questions, for I will not answer them. Occasionally I will speak holy truths; you may or may not listen as you choose. Call me Imshad. I will move and gradually will I reach the wall, at which time—well, that is not for you to know . . . Say something, John."

"I don't like you, Imshad."

"Come here, John."

Mr. John arose and approached him determinedly. So fast that Mr. John did not see it, Imshad struck him terrifically on the left ear. The room spun and his ear rang like a cathedral. He moved about to strike back but held off as Imshad tilted his head forward in offering. "You could not strike me; your affection for me will change," he said triumphantly, but without smiling.

Mr. John's face looked as if he saw some simple logic in Imshad's actions and returned with the resignation of acquiescence to his bed. Imshad remained stationary, with his eyes fixed on the wall as Mr. John undressed and prepared for sleep. He hung his apparel, a summer suit, in the closet by the foot of his bed, took his white pajamas from his closet shelf, and put them on. He pulled back his blankets and sat on the bed's edge. As he reached for the light above his pillow he noticed Imshad's countenance subtly revealed at once fear and desire. It was almost as austere as stone until Imshad swallowed heavily and tightened his lips momentarily. At this, Mr. John felt hate catch in his throat and compassion shoot up the back of his neck. He flicked out the light cursorily and quickly lay down and covered himself all in one movement. As the darkness became only dimness, Imshad was seen in the periphery of his vision as a shadow. Though no breathing was heard, the shadow was almost audible. A moist burning traced Mr. John's eyes. As if to blink, he closed them, but did not open them, and he fell asleep.

Sleep had obscured the last night's happenings momentarily, and Mr. John started awake fumbling in his mind to discover the cause of his apprehension. Then he saw Imshad, farther from the door, closer to wall, relaxed but motionless.

"Take to the world, John. You needn't be concerned for or about me until night is again approaching. Then I will teach you more."

So Mr. John resigned himself to his diurnal habits: the washing, the talks with the Doctors, the milling, the painting, the tests, the reading, the exercise, the work, and the walking and thinking. All these activities blended with the amorphous past, exterior to Imshad's presence, and meaningless. On the few occasions when Mr. John was returned to his room that day he ignored Imshad; indeed, he was only passively aware of his existence. But by the time of the final return for sleep he had become increasingly dreadful of Imshad and entered his room wan and bilious.

Imshad was then almost half-way to the wall. His face had assumed a strangely pathetic aspect. Mr. John saw in him some restrained agony.

"Well, John, sit down."

Mr. John crossed the room and sat on the edge of his bed. Imshad swallowed thirstily.

"Do you want me to get you some water?" offered Mr. John.

"I told you never to ask me a question."

"But . . ."

"No questions!" Imshad's eyes rolled and his head tilted up, pulling at his neck.

"Now, John . . ." Mr. John thought he detected the distortion of a solicitous smile on Imshad's lips, but no, that could not be. "I'm going to tell you the simple parable of the umbrella choosers."

Mr. John loosened his tie.

"Not long ago, in this land, there lived three pilgrims—for all men in parables, John, are pilgrims. Now it came to pass, on one rainy day, that these three pilgrims, each returning from separate parts of the city where they worked, were each caught with no protection from the storm. The only recourse for each of them was to find the nearest store and purchase an umbrella.

"Now the first pilgrim, the least blessed, was examining a selection of umbrellas. He was in search of the strongest. He found at last one with an all-metal skeleton and handle. The fabric was treated canvas. It would withstand the tempest, so the pilgrim bought it and went on his way, secure through the storm.

"The second pilgrim, who was the second-least blessed, entered another store and inspected the umbrellas for the least expensive. He found one made of plastic, with a fragile stock and flimsy fabric that was satisfactory to his needs. He bought it and left, feeling secure that he could afford now to weather other storms.

"Now the third pilgrim, who was the most blessed, came to his store. He did not know what he might buy. As he was scrutinizing the umbrellas, his eyes fell upon a wondrous sight—the wooden handle of a black umbrella. The handle was thick and assertive, pigmented like calf-skin, with a large and sturdy curve. The feel was hard and virile to his grasping hand. He knew immediately that he would buy it and it would become a part of him. So when he left, he went in human grace, secure that he would walk fulfilled in

and storm."

After a short silence, Mr. John shrugged awkwardly and forced an aspirated chuckle. He was about to say something, but decided against it.

Time frequently played tricks on Mr. John, and the next thing he knew was that morning had come and that he was lying on his bed with his clothes still on. And what was worse, all the day's activities seemed to come out of order: eating then washing, unpainting, and leaving a Doctor's room first and then entering, with the discussion therein occurring apparently as he washed his face. It was as if he were watching a film that had been cut up and spliced back together out of order and often backwards. But the absurdity and free confusion was pervaded by the awesome dread that seemed to have no object.

But one thing fell into order. And that sudden shift to order crashed at Mr. John's brain it was so abrupt. It was the end. It was an end that the day's chaos had twisted toward. It was an awakening and a *denouement*.

There Mr. John was, in his room, just after entering the door. Imshad was knotted on the floor in severe pain, and his head scraped the cement wall as he writhed—abjectly writhed was Mr. John's first impression.

"John," he said, and then continued in a tone that suggested no one should notice he was suffering, "I have another story — one more parable to tell you, John."

Mr. John moved over and sat on his bed. Imshad glared at him a warning that he ought not dare to indicate any cognizance of his pain.

"This is the parable of the poet and his divine love."

As he continued his short narration, his voice would often choke, and his head would knock against the wall, emphasizing both his pain and the parable.

"There was once a devoted and dutiful poet. He created with infinite dedication to his work. We was trying to compose a perfect distich, which would stand alone as a harmonious cenoby of words. He knew that the perfection of his couplet would be perfection only to him, for he judged the soul of each word as it was in accord with his own nature. First he wrote,

I am fire, and a glacier through the eye;
and then,

I am Love from a bold embittered sky.

And already he felt great love for his yet imperfect code of faith. But something in the poem was reprobate. Something kept it from complementing his vision. He raised his pen hand, the veins distended and pulsing over the muscles of his arm, and lowered it intent on altering two words, the rhythm, and the meaning of the poem. He struck out and obliterated "bold embittered" and probed his deepest knowledge for the words and rhythm that would mystically reveal his every inclination. He found a divine and ambiguous anacoluthon that would expand like a dying sun. The poem read,

I am fire, and a glacier through the eye;

I am Love from a NON POSSUMUS sky.

So the poet thought to himself, 'I am not an avenger, but the arbiter of my own love.' And he was above all men."

Imshad spoke the last sentence barely audibly. His eyes were closed and he breathed softly and calmly.

Mr. John felt no more disgust for Imshad, only he still felt fear. He drew his palm across his face and sighed, watching Imshad huddled against the wall. He arose and looked down at the strange figure of his insanity.

"John, John, why do you do this to me?" asked Imshad, shuddering from some hidden agony.

"I — I'm not doing anything, Imshad. I *do* understand, now; I *do* love you."

Imshad stared balefully at Mr. John for a long moment and said, "Yes. That is true. That is it." His mouth dropped open cavernously and his neck stiffened as if he were bellowing a wild and horrible scream, and then he vanished.

In the next few days it was apparent to the Doctors that Mr. John was coming around. He was even seen leaving his room barefooted in the morning. So finally, within a few months, he was released to his family, and the Doctors all were amazed with themselves at their success. Mr. John — or Mr. Bleakens, since that was his true identity, had entirely forgotten about his nightmare with Imshad and resumed a normal life.

But once a certain phrase obsessed him while he was at his Sunday Mass and remained with him for several hours. Father Letheman had moved up to the pulpit for his short sermon. He scanned the congregation with his deep bedouin eyes and asked rhetorically, "What can we do for saintly intercession in our struggle to remain in grace?"

For some reason that dark phrase stole into Mr. Bleaken's mind:
NON POSSUMUS.



Sand

Underneath the quasi-tropic
Sun and stately royal palms of
El Dorado, California
Lie rank after rank of dwellings
In the shimmering heat, alike as
Cookies on a cookie sheet. Yet
Some are different: cutting straight as
A surveyor's line across the
Housing developments is an
Epidemic of red-lettered
Signs declaring that the houses
Must be emptied, then destroyed or
Moved, by lawful order of the
California State Highway Department.
It is done. Then yellow scrapers,
Trucks, bulldozers, concrete spreaders,
And grass seeders race through town in
Quick succession, leaving in their
Wake a freeway. Through the treetops
On six lanes atop a grassy
Mound the motorist may ride now.
You might never know you just passed
Over El Dorado — unless you
Read the turn-off sign.)

* * * *

Out upon the sun-washed beach a
Boy into the soft sand settles.
Spellbound in the magic, charming,

Warm grit, he begins to mold it,
Pushing, pounding, digging, tugging
Armfuls of the stuff about — a
Happy little mortal bulldozer.
Then exquisitely he fashions
From the piles of fill and trenches
Highway lanes and ramps that lead to
Unconstructed and imagined
Places. As he chews his lips in
Avid concentration, visions —
Overpasses, cloverleaves, and
Tunnels — dance mirage-like on the
Warm sand.

* * * *

In the fading, splendid glow of
Sunset on the beach a figure
Strolls alone. Democritus is
Musing, "There are only atoms
And the void." He stoops and scoops some
Sand into a pile, and marvels
Boyishly, "New worlds are rising
Out of chaos by selective
Aggregation of these atoms
Of like size and shape. I think the
Particles quite as important
As their sum." He then walks on.
Late that night the tide is higher
Than expected. Water, frothy
At the edges, soon engulfs a
Model highway and a little
Pile. When the tide subsides, the
Beach is smooth and fresh, awaiting
Dawn, philosophers and boys.

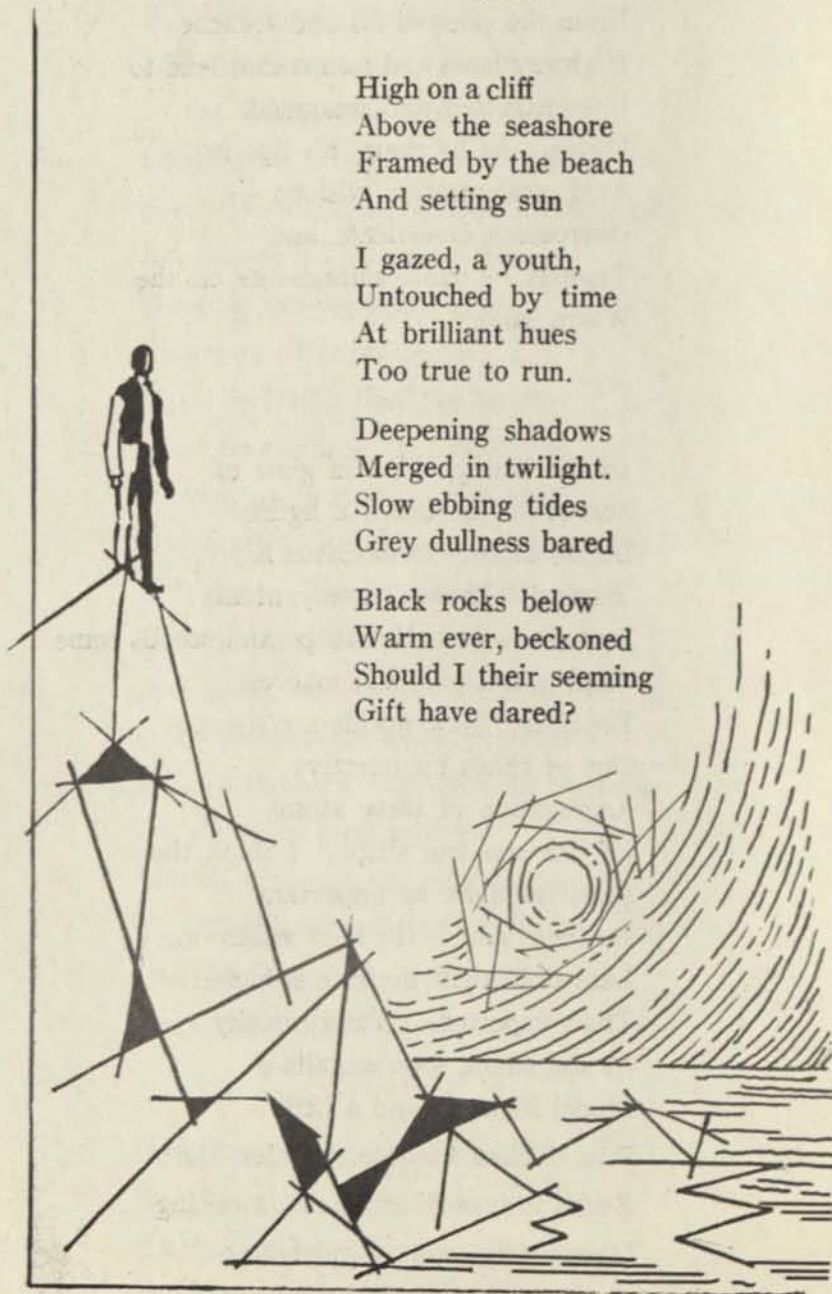
Poem

High on a cliff
Above the seashore
Framed by the beach
And setting sun

I gazed, a youth,
Untouched by time
At brilliant hues
Too true to run.

Deepening shadows
Merged in twilight.
Slow ebbing tides
Grey dullness bared

Black rocks below
Warm ever, beckoned
Should I their seeming
Gift have dared?



Howling Alone

The wills of ancient deities declare
Incomprehensible rewards which gods
Decreed too late, and man was promised heir
To nothing but the dust; if now the odds
Of possible apocalypse are nil,
And we poor shivering dogs before a tomb,
No momentary flame defers the chill
Of howling, empty-fisted heirs, to whom
A prophet's only promise is the wind.
Watch out, we're in the endless pit, where skies
Are floors, where outcast angels lay and grinned;
Forget the old futural lullabyes,

*Evacuate the castle: Someone lied,
For God left no insurance when He died.*

The City: 1944

At four o'clock in the morning
It was four o'clock at dawn
The sky opened its fiery jaw
And devoured the sleeping town.

In the void of hollow horror
Upon the skeletal street
Who shall close the eyes of the city
That charred corpse at our feet?

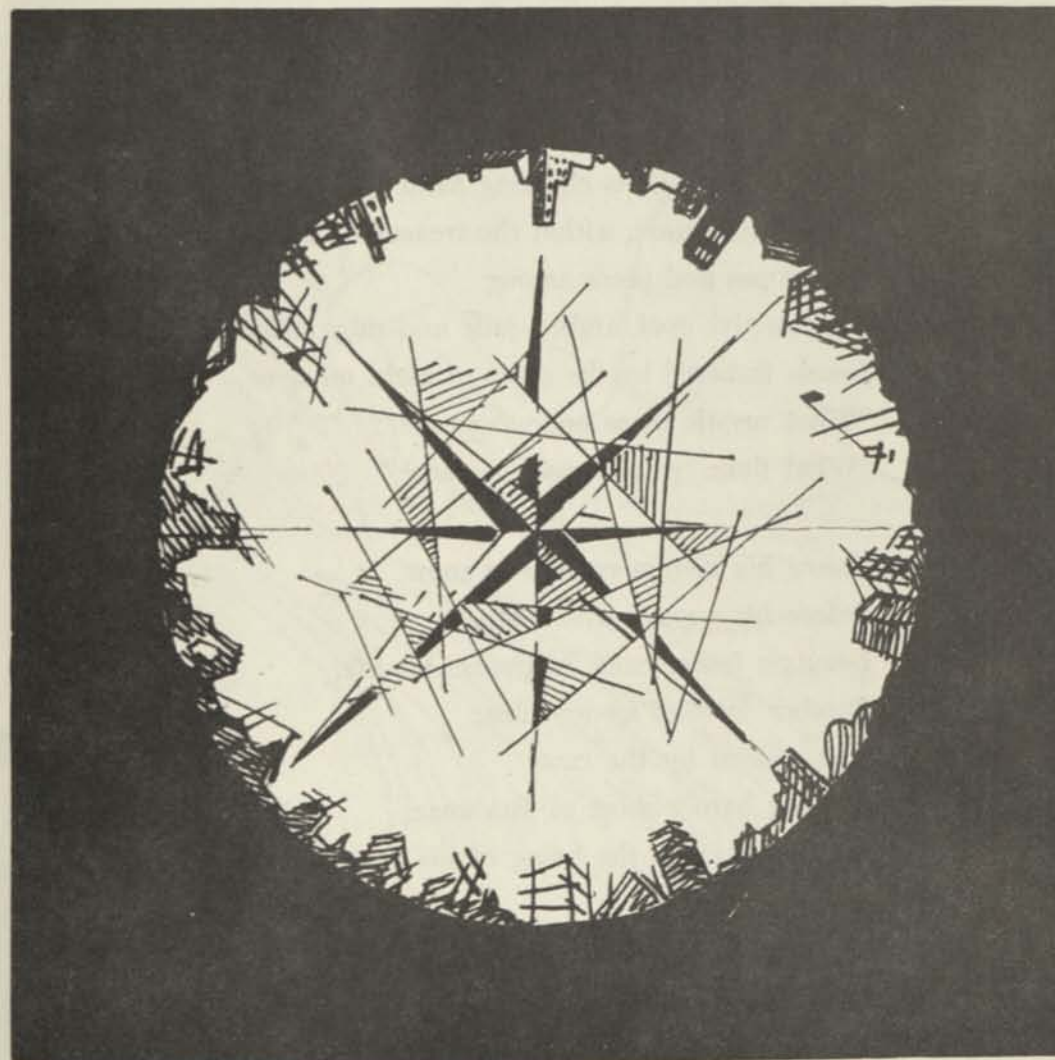
At four o'clock in the morning,
A usual pale lipped dawn —
They slashed the wrists of the city
And the sky came stumbling down.

And there scattered the fragments
Of burning brick and glass
In the cathedral the Madonna is seeking
Her lost smile in the molten mass.

At five o'clock in the morning
That day of blinded dawn
The chrome silence plated the sky
And the blood froze on the lawn.

Who shall collect the atoms
Of flame fragmented lives?
On the street a child is running
From powdered blood and trenchant cries.

At six o'clock in the morning,
But time was timeless now
They wrung the tissue of the sky
And the tears began to flow.



Persephone in Snow

"Who am I?" she says.

"Who am I?"

Sifting herself in drifts of hoary horoscopes.

Like a child immersed in winter universes,

Shrunk among her own perceptions,

Child Persephone is climbing hand and foot

Beneath the stars, within the treasured flakes.

She gropes and peers among

The massive opal, amber, jade and ruby molecules —

Jewels fathered by the seeds of night on snow.

"What mystic maze announces me?"

"What flake, what shape in stars?"

Before his metamorphosis in snow,

Before his voyage over Lethe

Beauty's father came to choose his life,

Another form of ice and fire;

Was offered by the cave

A being barely short of Brahman,

And he assumed the being of his daughter.

Perhaps she wanders backward

For some sparkling sign of her peripheral birth,

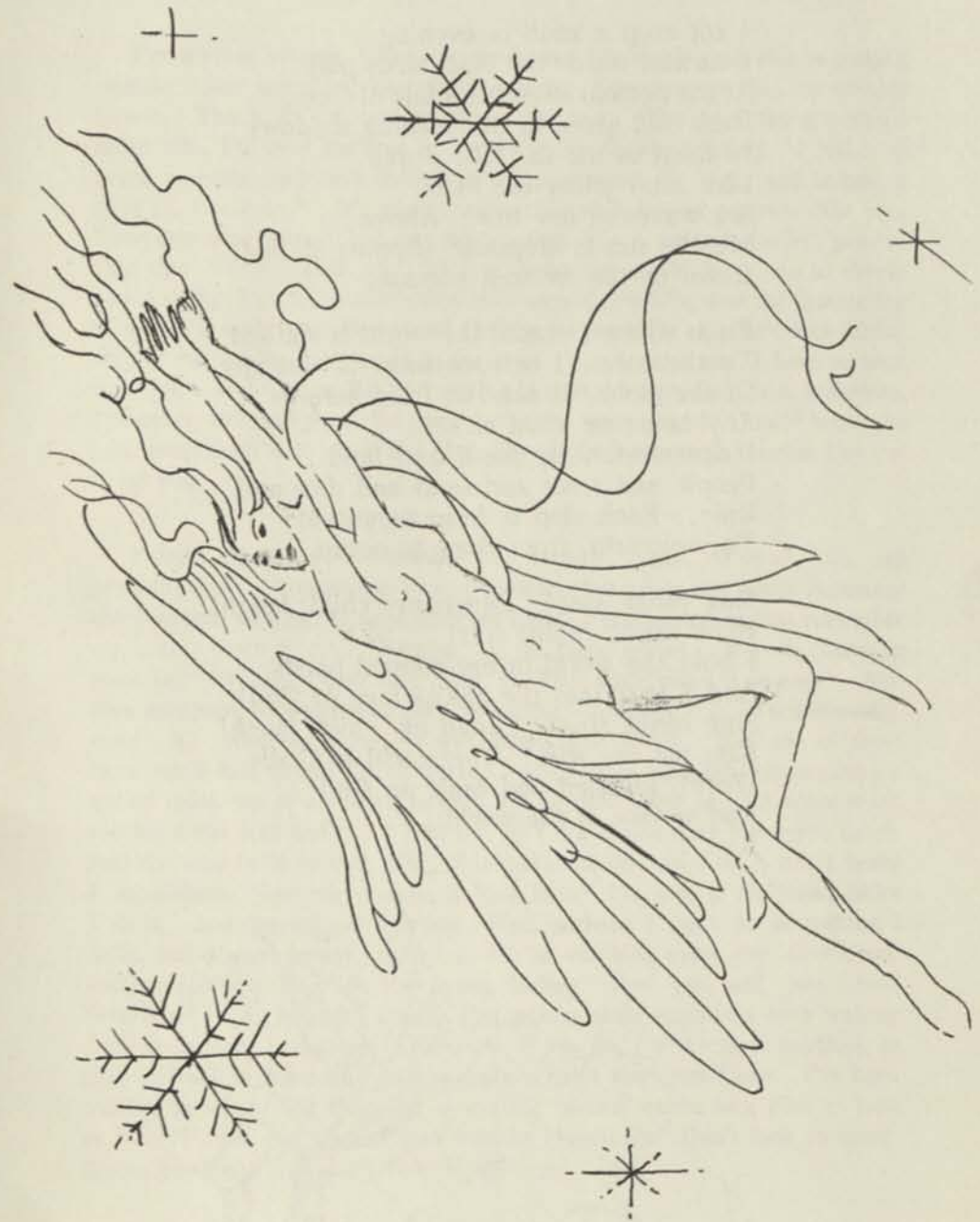
The promise of complete release.

Perhaps it's only his regret, sucking back on life.

Perhaps she's been alive a thousand years.

"Who am I?" she says.

"Who am I?"

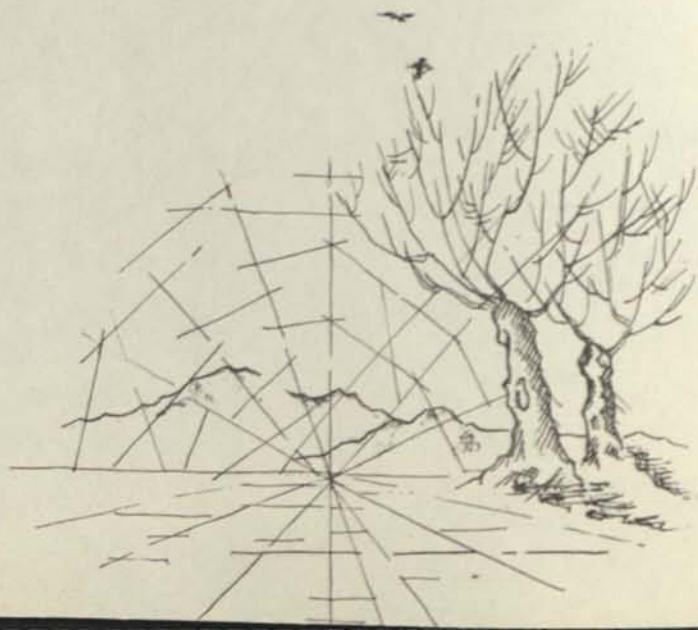


Poem

I am atop a knoll in evening.
I sit and watch the blackbirds play.
At the bottom stretches a line of trees,
Dark and green in the evening shadows.
In front of me the hills ripple
Like sand under the little
Sea waves at low tide. Above
Me the sun is dropping, slipping sliding
Down to the western horizon.

From where I stand, the world is slashed
To the core. I can see into the entrails
Of the globe. I can run from here to
Any house or wood or sea;
I can stretch my hand and hold
People and trees and sand and dew and
Rain. Each step is from mountain
To mountain, from river to ocean.

Sing birds, sing! Laugh my child, laugh!
Blow wind! Shine star!
I hold the world in my cupped hands,
And I look into the naked face of God!
Sing birds, sing! Laugh my child, laugh!
Kiss me my wife! The world is God's
World, founded and built on God;
And we are of the world.



Falling Down An Elevator Shaft

I'm waiting for you, Gwen, oh yes I am. I'm waiting for you to make a mistake. Just one tiny, tiny little mistake. One flaw in that impeccable facade. That's all I'm waiting for. Just one. Why, if I thought you'd never slip, I'd have nothing to live for. Absolutely nothing. I wake up every morning with one thought, "today may be the day; and if not, I have all tomorrow." It's really rather enjoyable having someone like you. Everyone should have one—an egotist that is. A perfect, perfect person. One that NEVER slips up. Oh, yes, everyone should have one to dream about. Why, I spend so much time in dreams of presiding over the destruction of a well poised you. Dreams of choking on martinis, of a hairpiece falling out, of contact lenses dropped in the soup. Yes, I can wait. I have nothing but time. And I know I'm not waiting in vain, because sometime, sometime, I'm going to catch you. So you'd better be very careful. You'd better be sure every hair is in place and your lipstick isn't smeared, because I'm out to get you.

I don't suppose you remember last Saturday night, do you? No, you probably don't. You wouldn't recall spending five and a half hours discussing the National Football League with *my* date. I don't suppose you remember my sitting down to play "Exodus" on the piano either. Or your charming remarks, "Oh dear, I love that piece, my little niece plays it so well." And then everyone suggested you play, of course—and you did. Tschaikowsky, wasn't it? Anyhow, Gwen, it was lovely, just lovely. But one of these days you'll flub it, and I'll be there. I won't be in the bathroom washing a spilled drink out of my skirt, either. I'll be right there and I'll wince when you hit a flat note and say, "Tsk, tsk, isn't it a shame she's losing her touch. And she used to do so well, too." But that's not very original, is it? I heard it somewhere. Now where could it have been? Oh, yes, in the boss's office I think. And the subject was me. Well, perhaps I can't do as well as I could, but I want to see you try it. I'll be watching every day, Gwen, and waiting for you to push the wrong button. And you will, you know. Sometime. I do hope it's soon. I'm getting quite impatient with waiting for you to make a mistake. Of course, if you do, I won't have anything to look forward to anymore. You're quite a habit now, you know. I've been waiting so long. But I'm used to waiting. I can wait a long time as long as I know that you'll make that mistake eventually. Don't look so smug, Gwen, you know you can't keep it up.

I thought that I almost had you once last year. It was a tennis exhibition and you didn't want to go. But I fixed it so you had to go, didn't I. Yes, I thought I was getting you at last. How did I know he was your old tennis

coach? And how could I have known he'd ask you to play? I can't honestly believe you didn't want to, Gwen. You looked so nice in that short white skirt and the whole game never mussed your hair a bit. Nothing ever does. You were so gracious and smiling. No, I can't believe you didn't want to play. I think you tricked me into tricking you so that you could play without seeming immodest. Oh, Gwen, I'm right behind you, waiting. It won't be long now, I'm sure. You can't possibly keep it up very much longer. I'll be waiting and watching for you. If one manicured fingernail breaks or if I see one frown where a smile should be, or if you're anything less than the perfect hostess, the perfect guest, the brilliant conversationalist, the indefatigable, imaginative, shining magnet that you are, I'll be there.

So, Gwen, you'd better be careful. Be sure that your perfectly formed little nose is powdered. But most of all, be sure you don't stand too near the elevator shaft when the elevator isn't there. Remember now, because I'll be waiting.

The End

New York

From concrete, earth and stone,
With the aid of mechanical shovel and fork
Has grown
New York.
Steel, glass and cement
Have sent
A pattern
Of cavernous columns into the sky
That make Manhattan.
But this is a city that will not stand
As monument or epitaph to any man or land,
For its peakes and its shallows rise and decay,
Crests replace crests, while slums crumble away,
Penthouse is built and doss house recedes
With the needs
Of New York;
And this changing city cannot be
Our cenotaph to posterity,
For when we are gone, it will not remain;
Pile driver, bulldozer, shovel and crane
Will flatten each tower and build it again.

The Laughing Lady

The laughing lady is fat and jolly,
Her hips rotating, with a chuckling cheek;
She stands, her torso circumventing door,
And shakes the house, shakes the second floor.

Her eyes are round, cut into the night
Like beads with a siren's driven force,
And loud, like a screaming jackaw caught in flight.
Call her the Donkey Woman, call her a jackass if you like:

She will only laugh the louder, split the timber,
Bring chaos when the carnival comes to town;
She is the circus woman, loud and bright,
Followed by clowns, coming from the night.

When I dream, she follows me like a lingering scent;
I know her fatness, know the raddled thighs
That carry her, like the jackass carries the clown,
Into the outside circle to be crowned.

There is a band that plays an entree to the wind,
And the crowd performs (I hear them shout and cry)
Like the birds that flock to the town square,
Flock to the town circle, flock to pick and tear

At the remaining dream of the jolly laughing lady
Who is the list thing that we can see
As the crowd comes closer, closer to the ring,
Comes closer to touch the elusive laughing thing.



We'll Worry About The Lamp Tomorrow

Stella Robinson, Miss Stella Robinson, was a short, stout little lady. She never went out without a hat and somehow always made those who met her think of Spring Byington. Not that she looked like the actress, rather that after looking at Miss Robinson and then looking away one felt as if they had just been face to face with the TV star.

Today was a very important day for Miss Robinson. She was going to redeem her green stamps.

Early in the afternoon she just popped into the store for a minute. She went to the young salesgirl. She only wanted to inquire if the shipment had come in yet. Yes, it had. Well, that was a relief. She didn't have her stamps with her just now, she carefully explained, they were at her home close by but she was going to come in later and buy a few things. A lamp and a clock were what she was interested in.

Miss Robinson had been in last Wednesday, too, though the girl didn't remember that. She saw so many faces, some would stick in her mind and some wouldn't. Miss Robinson had a face that didn't.

As Miss Robinson left the store she decided that when she returned she would try to engage one of the other salesgirls, they were older. The young one seemed kindly but she was so brisk. Why, it made one feel almost faint to watch her hurry so.

The afternoon passed as Miss Robinson carefully chose her groceries. After paying for them she went home and then, taking her stamp books, she returned to the store.

She was happy to note that the previous crowd of Christmas shoppers had now thinned out to a few browsers. The salesgirls now seemed relaxed and unhurried. She went to the counter and again the young one came to wait on her. Well, no matter, she'd make the best of it. The girl was suddenly joined by a slightly older woman, very lively in a discordant way. It was the older one who asked what items she wanted. Miss Robinson didn't lose her flustered pleasantness—it had grown on her for too many years to be disturbed easily. She leafed through the catalogue. At last she found the lamp she wanted and gave the number for that, slowly, ignoring the fact that the woman had said the same number while she had been leafing through the book. Miss Robinson described the lamp and explained why she wanted it.

She found the clock page and then said she really couldn't decide. There were two that she liked. This one—pointing—and an oblong one. The woman said a number and the girl suggested she look at their display. Miss Robinson looked and then gave a number—again the same as the woman had already said—which was called to the back.

A third woman brought out the items. Miss Robinson relaxed as she saw that this woman walked slowly toward her. They shared an aura of confusion within all this preciseness of living that made Miss Robinson feel very comfortable.

As they together removed the boxes of the clocks Miss Robinson explained why she couldn't decide. "I wanted to make sure the cord is long enough," she said, "I keep pushing them off the table and breaking them."

The woman made some reply as Miss Robinson began to examine the clocks. She took her time, even walked over to the gift display to see which looked best among the lamps and flowers. Her examination stretched to ten minutes and then finally she felt ready to explain her choice to the waiting woman.

"Yes, I like this one better," she said, indicating her choice, "The cord is better matched to the clock, don't you think? The other doesn't match half as well."

Again the woman made a neutral reply. And now the stamp books. Miss Robinson removed them from her carefully arranged purse and placed them on the counter. She started to look through them. Finally she handed one to the waiting woman and allowed her to look through it. The little guarantees had already been made up and the total had been calculated. Miss Robinson fumbled with each book before she handed it over. The woman checked and rechecked.

Then Miss Robinson overheard a nearby customer tell the girl that it was raining. "Oh, my, is it raining hard?" No, it had just started. "Well, I'd better check. You see, I don't want these things to get wet. I don't have a car."

A passing salesgirl couldn't restrain a surprised, "You don't have a car?"

"No, but I live close by. I'll just check on the rain." Miss Robinson scuttled to the door, and then outside and even a short distance up the street. She remained out of sight for perhaps three minutes and then returned saying, yes it was raining and she couldn't carry her things in the rain. "Could I just leave them here until tomorrow?" she asked the woman whose counting had been interrupted and who was waiting for a decision about the rain. The lively one was just passing. "Has everything been paid for?" she inquired, and then nodded assent.

Miss Robinson relaxed. She could come again tomorrow.

The woman had again started counting and now suddenly said that there weren't enough stamps.

Again Miss Robinson started fumbling around with the books. Finally the woman said that stamps could now be bought from a machine at the end of the counter. Twenty-five cents for a hundred stamps.

Oh, well, she hadn't brought her money with her but she had bought groceries today. Six dollars and thirty-five cents worth and she had those stamps at home. Wouldn't that be enough?

No, the woman pointed out again that even with those she would be a hundred stamps short.

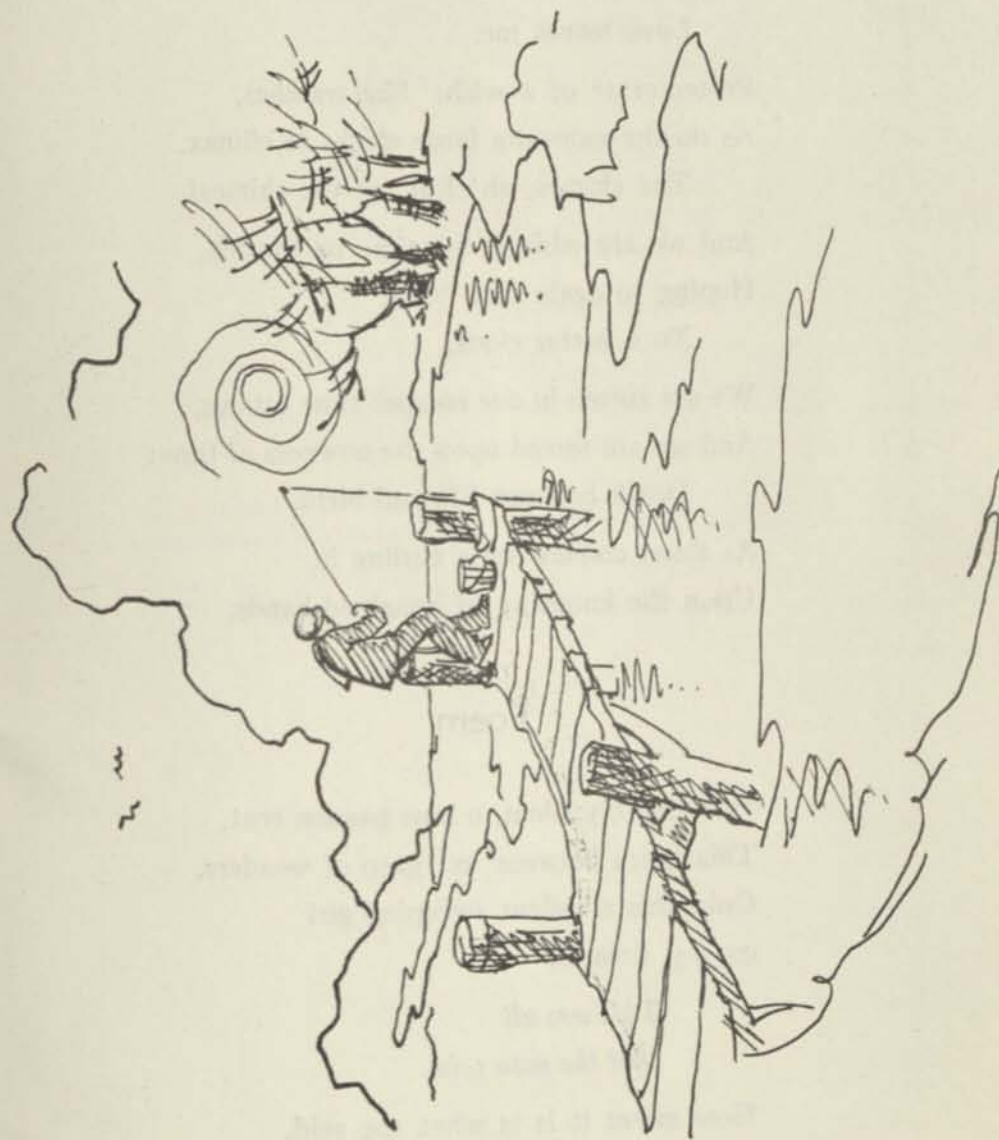
Well then, something would have to go back. It would be the lamp, Miss Robinson decided. She picked up the box and handed it to the waiting woman.

The lamp was returned to the stock room, its guarantee was torn up and it was erased from the record sheet. Miss Robinson said she'd come for the lamp tomorrow if the woman would just hold it for her. She was reassured that there were plenty in stock—no need to hold one. Miss Robinson happily stated that the clock was just small enough for her to carry comfortably without getting it wet. And then, cheerfully Miss Robinson said, "We'll worry about the lamp tomorrow," and the thought of that followed her all the way home.

Where The River Bend

Here, where a rotting wooden pier
Sinks into the gray mud river,
An old man casts his baited line
Into the dying artery.
Here too, a smell of oil and swamp hovers
Above the dark scum surface of the stream,
And yet, these waters glitter with a light;
A swirl of sunset reds and yellows
In myriad tableau—the glitter
And the haunting stillness of a flame.
I have to think of moths
Dancing above a candle
In the deep of night:
They flutter closer and closer
'Til contact is made. There is a flash
And then nothing.

The old man
Draws in his line,
Baits it and casts it back again:
Never is there rest here where he exists and dies.
The light grows dim—the landscape dark.
Lost in memories,
His dark eyes flash with memory's fires.
They darken. He vanishes into night.
There is nothing left behind
But the slow eddied lapping of the stream
Against the pier.



Poem

Raw moment: leave me, leave me.

Upon the arrival of this moment,

Love leaves me.

Protectorate of a wish: She watches,

As do the moments force clocks to climax.

The chimes, oh! but for the chimes!

And we are wishing for time backwards,

Hoping to again turn back

To a better clock.

We are rotten in our escape: time eats us,

And we are forced upon the nowness of time:

Death between life and birth,

As these chimes come curling in

Upon the kneading of imagined hands.

Poem

How deathly silent, o how passion rent,

This space between us. gasp of wonders.

Only this ah silent sweeping girl

ov my dreams.

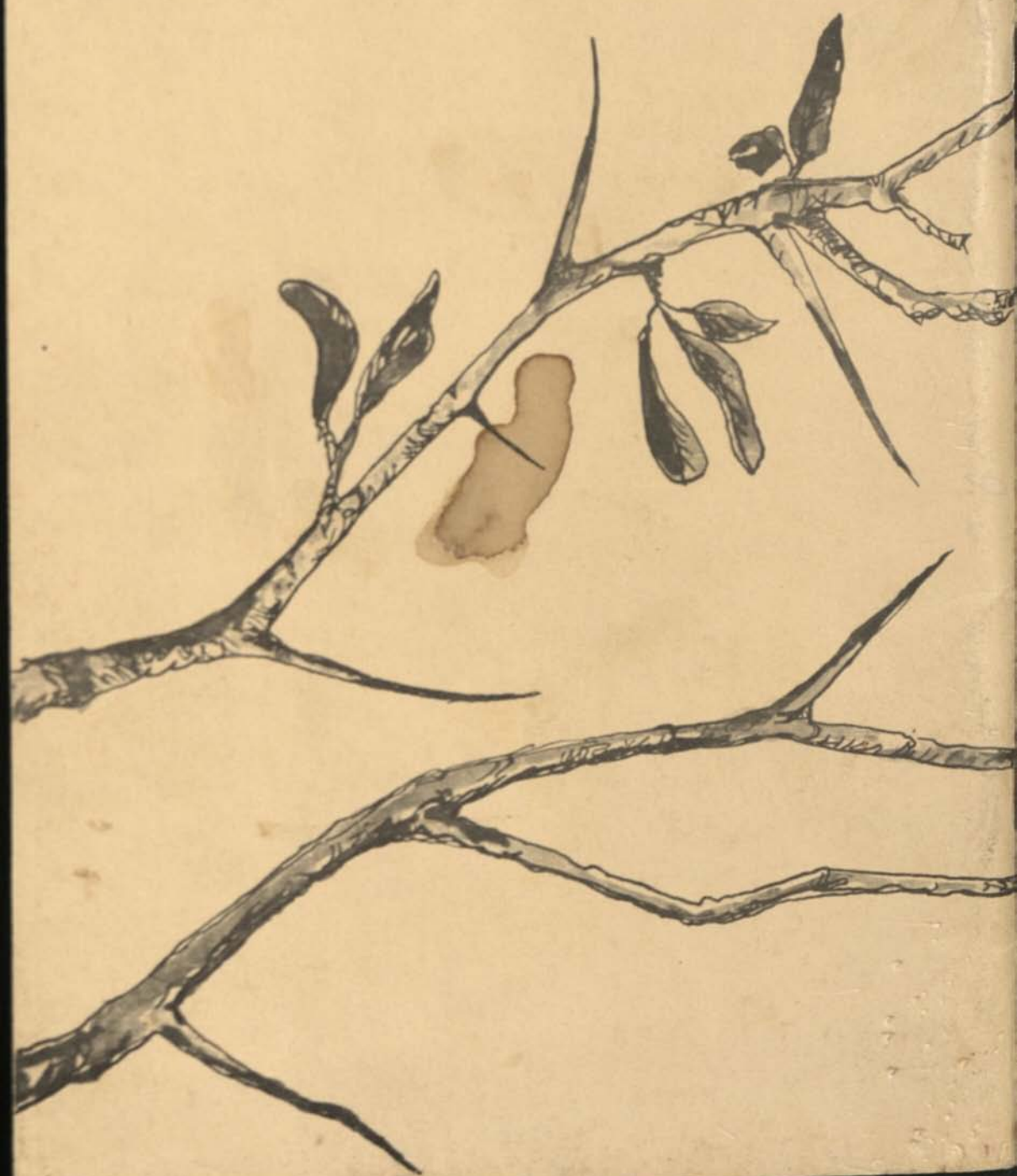
This was all

that the man said.

How sweet it is is what she said,
that sweeping debutante: swirl-girl.

Leave it to me I'll love you always.

You wait. I said it. but I'll survive.



Written above Ulleswater

Here in the land of the lakes and fells,
Of mountains and orderly wilderness dwells
The heart of England.

As yet only nibbled by oncoming tides
Of exterior showmanship, in each crevasse lies
A moment of England.

And still while the gay sun pours onto the beaches,
And climbs to the mountains in lakelying reaches,
Clear waters run swiftly to fill with delights
The pockets and pits in the hills and the heights
And the bracken dips down to the stillwaters' edges,
Confined to their ground by the stone workers' hedges;
All England is young. The sky and the air
Is as clear as the swift fairy streams, and as fair.

Thoughts wend,
like mobile smoke
Into a slow kelimoscope.
watching this fine
Progress of relief and outline,
Bloss casts a spell that snuffs the mind,
For the flame ~~did~~^{does} not move on
when the oxygen was gone,

Oh bearded monkey, I would leave
Your land if I were able;
Give me a visa and I will slip
You five people under the table.

The first will buy you American pills
To cure your monkey illness,
The second will buy you American drugs
To cure your vocal shrillness
~~Spend the third on some old~~
~~The third you can spend on Russian guns~~
~~Against the eventual~~
~~to put down your ~~sub~~ ferment,~~
~~And ~~have~~ the ~~can~~ rest~~
~~Put the rest you ~~should~~ house in a good Swiss bank,~~
To use in your ^{long} ~~chance~~ retirement.

The third will buy you Russian guns

Where has the deep sun gone,
That the sky is in twilight,
And the morning is mocked by a limp and pale night?
Hope and love have allied to despair,
And falseness reckons in honour. Where
Is the sun?
Why has despondency come?
For this is the morning of angels,
And instance of love
For the image that fills
Every rhythm of life with new life
Of the fire,
And I cry for the face that resembles the face
And the smile of the heart and the touch of delight,
And I weep for the twinkle
That looks like the star
When the twinkle is hidden;
But the real tears flew far
To the West,
And I long for the day of rest.

On Watching a Friend's One Sided Love Die

20

Earth knows not thy beauty,
Nor heaven such glory in her skies.
Praise hangs longingly,
And beauty lives
Into eternity.
Man knows not the passion,
Nor the splendour in thine eyes,
But hope lives longingly,
When beauty dies
Into eternity.
Love knows not a limit,
But in quiet sadness cries,
No longer longingly;
Thy beauty dies
Into eternity.

The silent night clings longingly
Around a quiet world of calm
Where I can be myself. The sham
Of day to day existence floats
As iron clouds above my head,
For I have fled
Once more from all the masks.
Each morn. I sally forth again to show
An image of myself to those who care to see;
Come nightfall once again to dreams I go,
Myself once more to be.
I wish I were away
From this poor tragedy of forcing smiles
And playing parts all day.
But this is armour I must wear,
Or mask to hide when other masks appear;
This is the task to bear
'Gainst all but those whom I hold dear.
But life becomes a world of fears
If left alone with tears,
With no respite
But the night,
Just dreams on clouds,
And crowds, and crowds
And people frantic behind shrouds
Of secrecy,
Hypocrisy,
Laughing hollowly at naught,
Just caught,
And I cannot escape,
But watch with time things grow upon the mind.
A mask through its so constant use
Begins to fit the face;
To be unkind,
Abuse,
Disgrace,
This is just protection,
And if there is no place
To cast it off, so it must stay,
And watch my dreams fade into day,
And watch me fade away.

Shall I make recompense to thee sweet child
For words that may have caused the secret hurt?
A moment shall I play the dreamer's part,
To love my little lass so'sleep and mild?
Beguiling face, so quiet o'er the wild confusion
Confusion 'neath the gentleness thou art,
The every sense was actively alert
Beneath the tired eyes that always smiled.
What are the thoughts you cherish with such care
That not one word betrays what lies behind
Those eyes? Once we were lovers, even there
You were all faint with feeling, yet your mind
Was timid as a girl first tasting love;
Farewell, my dear bewildered little dove.

Oh bearded monkey, I would leave
Your land if I were able;
Give me a visa and I will slip
You five people under the table,

The first will buy you American pills
To cure your monkey illness,
The second will buy you American drugs
To cure your vocal shrillness
Spend the third on old Russian guns
Against your eventual ferment,
And put the rest in a good Swiss bank
To use in your long retirement.

Love comes in three different ways,
And each a happy clappered bell,
To ring the quickly passing days.

Love comes as the jingle plays,
And as the tune soon 't will dipel
To ring the quickly passing days.

The evening prayer bell ever stays
That found song~~st~~ will forever swell
The love that comes three different ways.

But one bell rings the sun's first rays,
And echos every hill and dell
To ring the quickly passing days.
And with this love 't is I will tell
This birthday, how I wish you well;
With love that comes three different ways,
To ring the quickly passing days.

FOR

LOCATION

SUBJECT

One is the smallest of the number men

Two is a little bigger and he's not so thin

Three is a little older and she's very round,

Four has got a tummy nearly on the ground;

Five has got an ^{ascot} hat that is far too big

Six has got a tiny head and wears a wig

Seven stands very straight and has a mighty nose,

Grannie eight is very trim in bonnets and bows,

Grandpa nine is stern and old and grave, and then

Comes rich old uncle zero who with one makes ten.

To pause a while and think 'mid rushing time,
To let the hours roll by and hinder not,
But stop a while on this perennial spot,
And chase the hasty minutes into rhyme.
These times are short, so may they be enjoyed
With music, love and all the heart's desire,
And may there be the things which you desire
To make your day, no matter how employed.
And yet to pause and think on what it is,
This day that is called birthday once a year,
Is it now a triumph as was His?
Another anniversary's good cheer?
Maybe it has other meaning still,
But let it be whatever you may will.

Sonnet on This Love

19

Oft' have I queried of the course of love,
That in the matrix of a soul I find
The idol of a dreamer's restless mind,
Oblivious of what the time may prove.
A haunting beauty carries me above
The passing planes that cupid sometime deigned
To loan mankind; a whisper in the wind
Said of some eyes, so cupid has to move.
And if I worship something that I fake
Into a lasting idol of an age,
Mother nature many tributes make
Her in her birth; but this is hollow wage
To one who has no anchor or no stay,
But with the weakest wind may blow away.

Sonnet to a Pseudo Starlet

19

A pretty lady is a foolish flower
That she in many men takes small delight,
To bathe in flatters, never to requite
Their love, but lead and favour them so far
As draws forth further praises to her star.
A danger lies lest she should think the sight
Of her calls forth in man the loyal might
Of passion. This is not in her power.
As she, man thrives on conquest, not for love,
But for the jealous eyes that are his guide,
So like a flattered puppet she will move
To be no more than food for his dear pride.
Delight in fools, but sometime have a care
Lest beauty turn thy life into despair.

This only

Hot sun, hot upon the crimson moon
Scorch rays, labour in the heavy air,
Burn sun, the world may cinder all too soon,
Cry your heat upon the sand, no life is there.
The rivers dried up long ago,
Where forests grew the land is bare,
Alone, the snad waves, where the hot winds blow.

Cold moon, cold upon the frigid night,
Cold sand, cold upon the darkened soul,
Freeze air, freeze into an icy bite,
To cut into the scorch marks of the hot day's dole.
What further sorrow could you find?
What further bell of sadness toll?
What further curse to load upon your wind?

Epitaph to Youth

The world is full of little things,
The big are hard to find;
Youth is the age when laughter rings
The emptiness of the mind.
Too soon will come the awkward truth,
So have fun while you can,
This is the story of the youth,
The memory of ~~the~~ man.

Old sun of evening dark'ning to the night,
Your rays are loosing light and turning red;
Here on the watery surface you have spread
Those dying beams that hasty take to flight.
The waves reflect third echos of your might
That change you to a sad old man instead;
You sink beneath the waves to lay your head
And bid the day and everything goodnight.
To give my love and love a lasting kiss
Watched only by the sun's old knowing face;
This moment that a lifetime won't dismiss,
But brief, still honour as a holy place.
Goodnight old man, goodnight until the morn',
When you will watch the world wake with your dawn.

Sonnet to a Young Prostitute

18

She stands there smoking by the darkened door;
Poor child, what luckless fortune's lack of care
Before life's cruel blast has left you bare?
If there is cause, what did this happen for?
You are too young to blame you for a whore,
It is the gnawing bite of cruel despair
And mental hopelessness that left you there,
A rancid particle upon life's floor.
You may well scorn me for my stupid sorrow,
Or leer at me: 'Go fight some other cause!'
But can you still know longing for the morrow?
Or does life's repitition have no pause?
Still, for your plight I'll say a little prayer,
And add a curse for they that put you there.

Bethlehem

16

A brilliant star once shone amid a night
Of heavenly glory, o'er a cattle shed
In which a maid with child layed her head,
And brought into the world a baby, white
And soft, and gurgling with delight
At all the world he saw around his bed,
The animals, the shepherds and the kings, led
By the star unto this sacred sight.
Let us sing of Bethlehem this morn.,
Angels, sound your trumpets, cherubs sing!
Baby Jesus on this day was born,
Left every bell on heaven and earth now ring.
And may mens' minds awhile this feast day dwell
On kindness, love and things the child did tell.

New York

From concrete, earth and stone,
with the aid of mechanical shovel and fork,
Has grown
New York.

Steel, glass and cement
Have sent
A pattern

Of cavernous columns into the sky
That make Manhattan,

But this is a city that will not stand
As monument or epitaph to any man or land,
For its peaks and its shallows rise and decay,
Crests replace crests, while slums ^{crumble} ~~scatter~~ away,
~~Penthouse or loss house~~

Penthouse is built and loss house recedes
with the needs

Of New York;

And this changing city cannot be
Our cenotaph to posterity,

For when we are gone, it will not remain;
Pile driver, bulldozer, shovel and crane
Will flatten each tower and build it again.

Sweet, clear, the pipes are playing,
Morning is come,
Restless the morning breaking,
O'er sweet home,
Dawn breaks as once it used to
Long years ago,
Back from the same still hill tops;
Pounding my heart waits,
The day breaks,
The same day,
The same day of childhood is dawning just once more,
Breaking just once for
An infant awakening,
A peace from the turmoil on the storm sea shore.

This distillation column,
This

A dirty stack clawing at the sky,
is A pedestal for the chemical industry

~~To which ~~many~~ ~~being~~~~

To stand a statue of Separatine,
The chemical engineering queen.

As all queens, her throne is high 4
Above the dirt, in keeping with ^{her} majesty, 6
Far from the belching chimneys which reach 4
up, their nostrils wide, and bleach 4
Someone else's countryside. 4

If God sat in an office, clean,
And worked up earth on an I.B.M. computing machine,

Now that you are leaving,
There are ~~three~~ things
which we would like to do:

First, we would like a hot line to Warsaw
For when the analog computer starts to buzz
sing

No one else knows what the heck it's buzzing

Second, and I assure you
The order may be switched,

Our best wishes for you

Go with you to Poland,

Hoping you visit us again,

To join in the fun

of trying to make new computers run.

Who can tell?

Perhaps our next computer will have a bell
That rings when ever it gets botched,

And sings this song:

"Bodan could tell you what is wrong".

Lastly, take with you

This more lasting token of our esteem;

And since you are a socialist,

We knew you'd value more content and less packet,

So we went to a Sale

And got you twice the records in half the jacket.

Death

'He hath revenge on Death, for he died well'
A poet wrote in life's far-distant spring,
Stumbling on truth. Death's fabled heaven and hell
And drearier prospect yet the new times bring
Of a blank nothingness hedge like a ring
The seeming self, whose lifelong passing-bell
Tolls in his ears, although the mind may cling
To fragile hopes the gathering years dispel.

But 'Die before you die' the Prophet said.
Give up the seeming self that from the world
~~Passes to~~ ^{Falls into} Death; remains that Self instead
Wherein earth, heaven and hell as dreams are furled.

The world in you, not you in it, has died,
For That you are, and no thing else beside.

~~10 12~~
11

The Elixir of Youth

The frosty years have in their grip
This ailing body that at last
Into Death's refuse-bin must slip.
Then let it go,
Or quick or slow,
Like autumn flower in wintry blast.

For I have drunk Youth's elixir,
His joy made firm, his follies fled.
Life like a May-day chorister
Throbs into song.
The heart, grown strong,
Dances and sings where grief lies dead.

This world and body are not me.
They are a dream from which to wake.
Whatever in their fate may be
Cannot destroy
The vibrant joy
Or turn to night the bright daybreak.

When even imperfect sight can bring
Such joyful certitude as this,
Who to the seeming self would cling,
In a barren land where no birds sing,
Lost to Awareness, Being, Bliss?

italics

The Dream-Self

You dreamed you were a postman, say, last night:
And do you ask to-day if he still is—
The postman-you, who never really was
But only seemed to be?
It is so plain to see!

What was he then? Had he a self? a soul?
Or was he just a mask you took? And was
The dream with all the dream-folk he found real
A world no further true
Than in the mind of you?

Why cling in vain to such a phantom self,
Within the brief horizons of a dream?
An intuition of eternity?
Right—but whose? The dream's?
What is, or what just seems?

Be Still

Thou art?—I am?—Why argue?—Being is.
 Keep still and be. Death will not still the mind,
 Nor argument, nor hopes of after-death.
 This world the battle-ground, yourself the foe
 Yourself must master. ^{Eager the mind to seek,} ~~Wily and strong the mind~~
~~Though oft astray,~~ ~~To grapple and deride.~~ So many years
~~breaking control, hungrily plunging back~~
~~From peace to turmoil, causing its own distress,~~
 Then crying for relief, as if some God
 Barred from it jealously the Bliss it sought
 But would not face.

Till in the end,
 All battles fought, all earthly loves abjured,
 Dawn in the East, there is no other way
 But to be still. In stillness then to find
 The giants all were windmills, all the strife
 Self-made, unreal; even he who strove
 A fancied being, as when that good knight
 Woke from delirium and with a loud cry
 Rendered his soul to God.*

Mind, then, or soul?
 Break free from subtle words. Only be still,
 Lay down the mind, submit, and Being then
 Is Bliss, Bliss Consciousness: and That you are.

*It is noteworthy that he did not cease to be Don Quixote but realized that he never was Don Quixote.

The Day of the Shady Tree.

There was the day when

Joy was nature,

Simple instinct, you may say;

Then,

Someone said it was very infantile

Smiling like babies smile at each other;

We must look farther

To an ultimate joy

When nature is slave to our call,

And knowledge will give us all.

So we left the plough and the shady tree

To look for a new destiny.

We watched engines grow powerfully,

But lost was our native joy,

Lost, and we were as babies who'd lost their smile

Meanwhile

We became confused.

Suddenly things were complicated,

And simplicity very outdated.

Instead of being happy,
Everyone was sad trying to be happy,
Finding out where they went wrong.
Lots of people found different ultimate answers,
And wrote long lists of commands.
Some became law,
But things weren't the same any more.

A Smile

Earth knows not the beauty,
Nor heaven such glory in her skies,
Where praise hangs longingly,
And beauty lives
Into eternity.

Man knows not the passion,
Nor the warmth within the eyes
Where hope lives longingly
While beauty dies
Into eternity.

Then love knows not a limit,
But in quiet sadness cries,
No longer longingly,
If beauty dies
Into eternity.

tracks of our last little stroll. well,
here it is:

she stands there smoking by the darkened door,
Poor child, what luckless fortune left you there,
Before life's bleakest blast, to leave you here,
To see you hurt. what did this happen for?

You are so young, I would you weren't a whore,
Your youthful glow is sucked e'er it has bloomed,
So soon, so quietly your life is doomed,
This tragedy will wrangle ever more.

You may or may not spurn my quiet sorrow,
I know not why it is, or what the cause;
Can you still have a longing for the morrow,
or does your sorry life now know no pause?
still, for your flight I'll say a little prayer,
And add a curse for they that put you there.

Believe it or not, I really was
moved.

Give my love to the others.

Love
Adam.

Kyrelia

When dreams glance homeward to the distant past
But sadly to return, Memories of glances
And yearning tears for distant fantasies
Of wonder

Make magic pipes on sudden mornings shatter sleep
And dreams of thunder:
Humble tunes awake to tears that melt to joy
And dance across the fields. Then render
Me to melodies of wild flowers in the constant fields,
And let me dream of sleep.

But in the hills the clouds grew dark,
Surging in a constant rhythm,
Growing in fury
To curse the mountains with their anger. But hark
The pipes sound from the hillx tops,
And at once the hills are calm.

Sweet, clear, the pipes are playing,
Morning is come,
Restless the morning breaking,
O'er sweet home,
Dawn breaks as once it used to
Long years ago,
Back from the same still hill tops
Sadly I go.
Clouds crowd the massive mountain,
Omens ripped the air,
Winds shreaking fled the torment,
Rocks staggered bare;
Now only wet rock faces
Look up to the sky,
Watch ragged cloud banks melt
And meekly slip away.

The tune that wakes me from my sleep,
The pipes that played through dreams and waking,
Play from afar;
So fear no more the nightly thunder:
Dreams the distant pipes are taking
Back to the bower.

The shastris.

Hovering stillness, calm-wet before the storm,
One gnarl and night,
One long sound, unsensed to threat whines round.
Same, same life,
Same false safe surface on breath pent,
Below, nerve shocked it was too taut and tense,
So turning, turned ~~ref~~ false, I am for now false right.

Old shastris in his cave, quiet quite,
Still as stars by lamp, brought fear.

I stop as a struck fork,
Prostrate, too weak for fight,

Peace seeps, shock sleeps.

High clouds today fly high, will shake;

With peace nerve shock slips still,

The soul sinks safe, watching the shastris smile.

I find you in the pale gold of the moonlight,
In the magic nights, when all the air is filled with a tender radiance.
I hear you in the liquid songs of the birds:
In their varying voices, rising and falling,
Pleading and calling.

In the deep cool green of grass,
In the shadowy swaying of trees,
In the purple gloom of flowers,
You are there.

When the evening sky, gemmed with a single star,
Grows violet behind the dark trees,
I call you.

When the long shadows of the morning fall lightly over the wet grass,
And the little faces of the violas are dim with dew,
I greet you.

You are the glory of the buttercups; you are the waves of grass
when the wind passes over.
You are the sweetness of lilac: you are the beauty of the earth.
You are the song in my heart ---
Oh my Beloved!

Build her a Palace

How shall you fashion for her a home
Who has dawned on your life as its Morning Star?
Lady of Silence, she may not roam
With a lost low wail down the winds afar!

Shall you build her a palace of fairy foam
Light as a sigh o'er the sunlit seas,
Toppled by the flower of fancy's dome
That is wafted at eve down the lingering breeze?

Shall you weave her a willowy, bowery nest
Of the stars and ~~then~~ trees and the faint moon shine,
With the shaft of a cloud on its purple crest
To bear her the glow of your heart's red wine?

Shall you shape her a mystical House of Dream,
Rosy and golden as skies at dawn,
Wrapt in the pearl of a shadowy gleam
That has shot from the heart of the Star of Morn?

Build her a Palace of Death and Birth,
Of the Faith that lingers though Hope roams far,
Of the winds and the seas, and the dear warm earth,
And the Beauty that broods o'er the Morning Star.

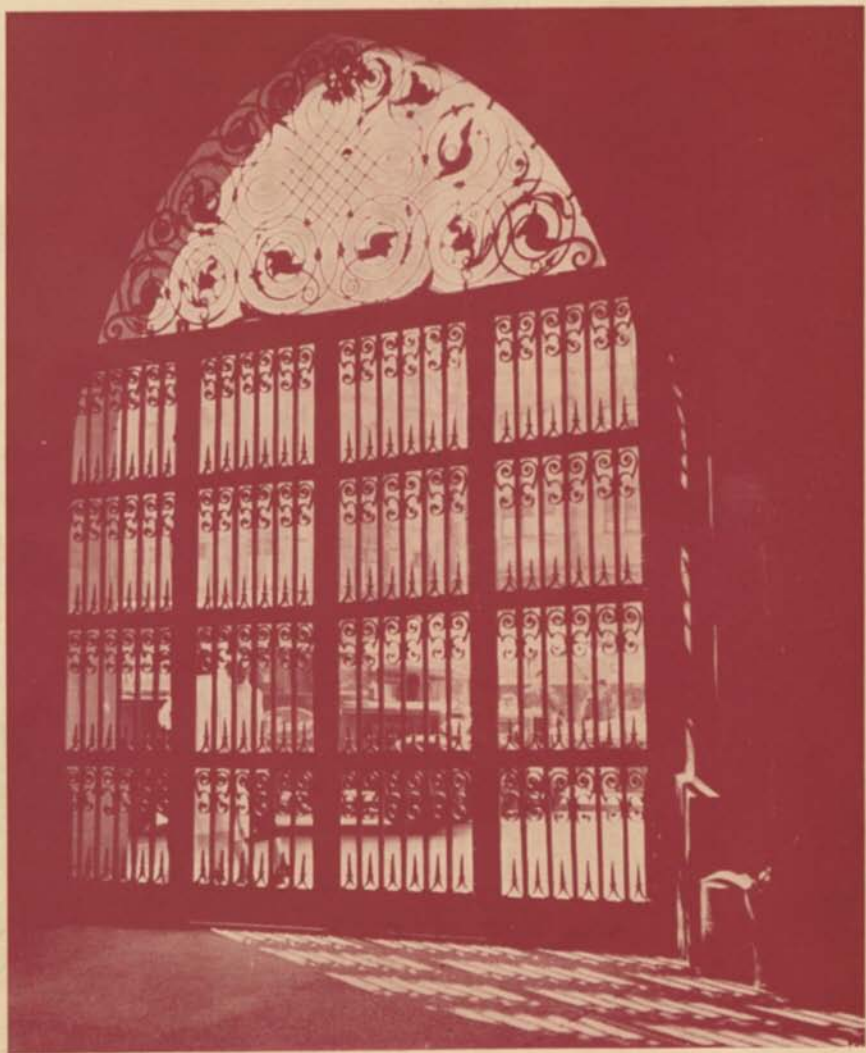
I find you in the pale gold of the moonlight,

Epitaph to a Motorcyclist

Blood,
Red porter of well washed bone;
A gown
Body's gone,
Cast away.
New blood,
Wet and dry upon the stone.

A tomb
Unmeant,
A gloom
Of death
Unwanted.
Tomb
Of stone,
Blood
On a splinter of bone.
Earth to earth
And death.

Written a few hours after seeing the actual
thing.



mermaid

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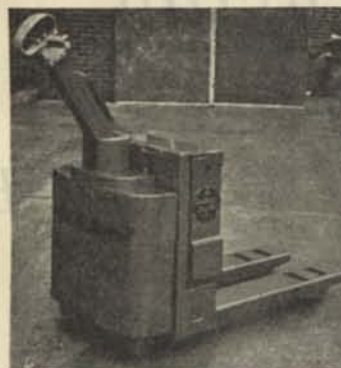
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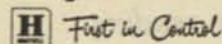
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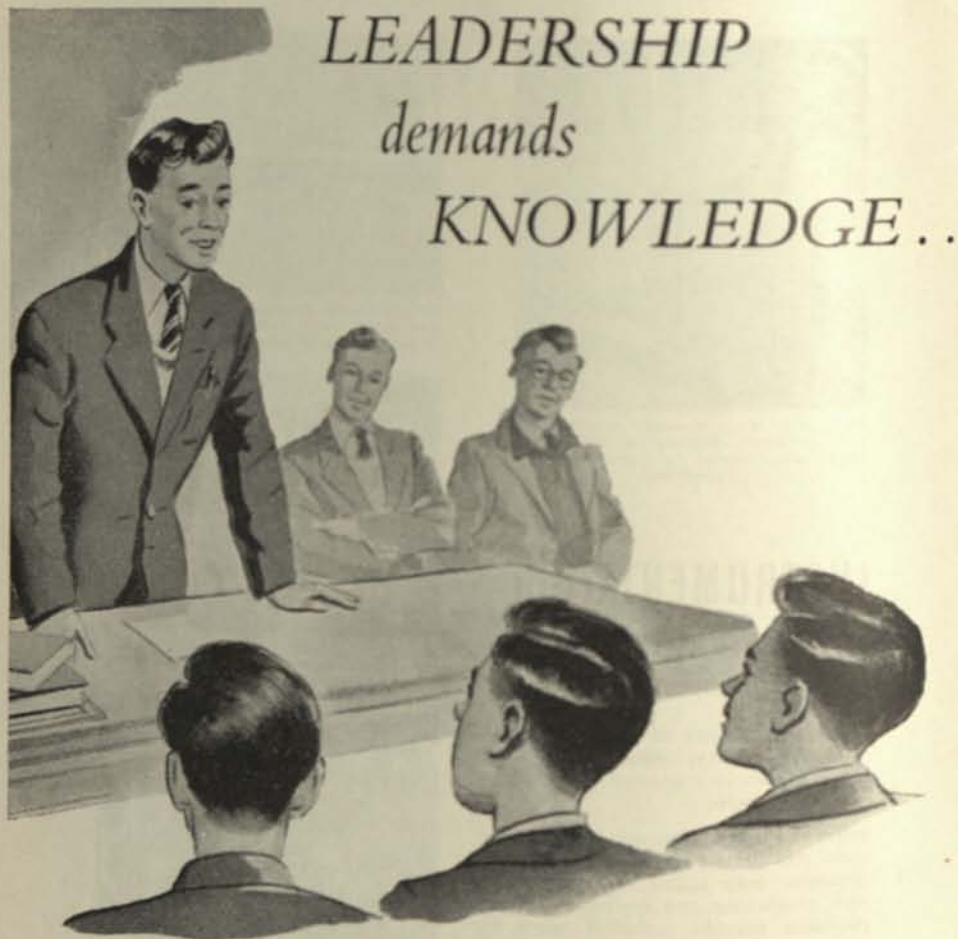
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Mermaid

Spring, 1959

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EDITORIAL

A UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE IS AT A DISTINCT DISADVANTAGE IN relation to its reading public. The undergraduate community in any civilised society is one of the most sophisticated in reading tastes. Undergraduate writing, however, reflects the immaturity of youth. This should not be condemned, for immaturity is a necessary and natural stage in the development of all writers. Indeed, one of the duties and one of the honours "Mermaid" is proud of is to publish and encourage juvenalia. From the severely practical point of view this situation creates a considerable gulf between youthful writer and experienced reader. It is further widened because "Mermaid" has been the stronghold of two most difficult literary forms—lyrical verse, requiring a very experienced technique, and the short story, demanding great discipline and economy of style.

This edition, therefore, is an attempt at experiment; to build a bridge between student reader and student writer. With this in mind I have encouraged the publication of work by the older members of the university community. This not only gives the reader the pleasure of reading more mature work, but also gives the undergraduate writer a standard to aim at side by side with his own work. Further, I have tried to concentrate upon an art form, largely neglected to-day from the aesthetic point of view, of which the student, by the nature of his training, possesses considerable experience—the essay. This has two advantages. An essay presupposes a fund of knowledge worth communicating to others. The student, as his varied interests, experiences and intellectual activity demonstrates, possesses such knowledge. Secondly, having something to say is half the battle in developing a free, lucid and living technique, whether in verse or prose. I lament the neglect

of the masters in this field—Joseph Addison, Dean Swift, Oliver Goldsmith, Samuel Johnson. So skilled were they that their style frequently transcended the matter at their disposal. For the beginner, having something worthy to say will help strengthen stylistic weaknesses and mitigate the inadequacies of youth. Form and matter are complementary; each will help the other. That dynamic, elusive fusion of the two is the goal of all poets in whose wakes "Mermaid" humbly endeavours to follow.

THOUGHT FOR A CENTENARY

(with apologies to Professor Lowenstein)

Of course I honour Darwin,
His general scheme makes sense:
Warring, yet somehow akin,
Some triumph, some go hence.

But, sitting on this bench,
And questioning his worth,
I watch a peacock with his wench,
Immodest lord of earth.

I cannot count as credit
The glory of that tail,
For survival dragging debit
In the evolutionary scale.

Darwin's shadow makes me mock,
Yet my pleasure's unrestrained;
For there's something in a peacock
That still needs to be explained.

R. F. WILLETTTS
(Senior Lecturer in Greek)

CHARLES DARWIN AND THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIC EVOLUTION

[This article is written as a tribute to Darwin at the time of his centenary and as the first of a series of articles encouraging discussion and the furthering of knowledge of the Victorian era. It is by Professor O. E. Lowenstein, D.Sc., F.R.S., Mason Professor of Zoology and Comparative Physiology.]

WHOEVER looks at the world around him and especially at the numerable different types of living organisms—plants and animals—is bound sooner or later to ask the question: "Have all these been the same from time immemorial or have there been times in the past when the waters and continents and the air above them abounded with life quite different in appearance? If the latter were true, how did our present day forms of life originate, and is it likely that in the millions of years to come they will give place to others as different again in type and habit?"

Had this question been asked anywhere within the compass of western civilization a little more than 100 years ago, the answer would quite likely have been: "Yes, all 'creatures' as they are in existence now were specially created at the beginning of the world a few thousand years ago, and the way in which this happened is described in the pages of Genesis."

If the question were asked today, the answer would be different. It would be that we have every reason to assume that life on earth dates back up to a thousand million years and that it started by a gradual transformation of inorganic materials into living organisms. The present multiplicity of types of highly complex living organisms is the end product of a long history of evolutionary change. This represents the latest and most dramatic chapter in the story of cosmic evolution of the solar system.

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that Evolution is a cosmic concept and is thus not confined to the problem of the origin and history of living organisms. That this is so should be abundantly clear to all who have listened to this year's Reith Lectures on "The Individual and the Universe." However, we are concerned here exclusively with the biological aspects of the question.

Exactly 100 years ago, in 1858, Victorian England experienced the shock of the joint publication by Charles Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace of a scientific paper: "On the Tendency of Species to form Varieties and on the Perpetuation of Varieties and Species by Natural Means of Selection." This was followed in 1859 by the appearance of "The Origin of Species" by Charles Darwin. This book, considered to be amongst the most important books of the nineteenth century, is by no means easy to read, in spite of the fact that it is the work of a master of the art of writing. It is full of accounts of highly technical biological matters and it represents a meticulously documented and closely reasoned summary of the labours of many years. It is as astonishing as it is symptomatic for the spirit of the times that a second edition appeared within less than two months after the publication of the first. The book gave rise to a wave of popular interest and disputation. Why? Obviously not because Darwin showed conclusively that certain finches in the Galapagos Islands off the South American continent are related by common descent, but because everybody realized that, if accepted, the concept of organic evolution would prove to be indivisible and thus apply also to the origin of Man. Darwin says very little about this in the "Origin." He dealt with this question in his book on "The Descent of Man" which appeared in 1871. In it Darwin asserts that "purely a product of natural selection, Man differs from animals physically, mentally and morally, but only in degree and not in kind."

I have said the concept of evolution is a cosmic one, and both its cosmic and its biological implications have exercised the mind of Western Man ever since the great nature philosophers of antiquity broke away from story telling and temple lore to turn to a reasoned enquiry into the nature of reality. Some of them may have come near enough to guess that living forms as they knew them had arisen gradually through a continuous change in the spatial patterning of eternally moving atoms. Thus in the sixth century B.C. Anaximander said that Man arose from some other kind of animal, probably aquatic, and Empedocles a century later describes the combination and re-combination of elements as leading to the appearance of ever different things. Only the successful combinations survive, whilst all others perish. This may also have been the view of his contemporary Democritus to whom Antiquity owed the first clear concept of the working of "natural laws"

and of the possibility to account for natural phenomena on strictly causal grounds. All change according to him is merely a re-arrangement of atoms and nothing new arises out of nothing.

Aristotle, the greatest biologist of Antiquity classified the animals known to him in a way showing an astonishing degree of insight into important distinguishing characteristics on the one hand and relatedness in form on the other. He did not make it clear, however, whether or not the forms making up his *Scala Naturae* of increasing complexity represented in his opinion a mere hierarchic side-by-sideness of Platonic Form or the products of evolutionary history of change from generation to generation.

Just before the advent of Christianity, Lucretius wrote the masterly poem "De Rerum Natura" in which he has bequeathed to us the whole panorama of antique opinion on the nature of reality. A passage in Book V could be translated thus: "... then the new-born earth put forth herbage and trees first, and afterwards generations of mortal creatures rising in many kinds and in many ways by different processes." A little further on in his version of Genesis by natural law he says: "Time changes the nature of the whole Universe and one state of things must pass into another and nothing remains as it was. All things move, all are changed by nature and compelled to alter ... what earth bore, she can bear no more, but she can bear now what she bore not before."

Seventeen centuries later Descartes says in his Discourse on Method (Part 5): "So that if God had given the world no other form than that of chaos, provided only he had established certain laws of nature and had lent it his concurrence to enable it to act as it is wont to do, it may be believed, without discredit to the miracle of creation, that in this way alone things material might in the course of time have become such as we observe them at present. Their nature is much more easily conceived when they are beheld coming gradually into existence in this manner than when they are considered as produced at once in a finished and perfect state."

It appears clear from the context that Descartes includes plants and animals among the things having thus gradually emerged. So far as man is concerned he was in a dilemma, from which arose his famous speculation as to the relationship of Man's Body and his Soul.

In a historical sketch of the progress and opinion on the origin of species Darwin passes over any allusion to the subject by classical writers except for a passage from Aristotle. In this, Aristotle deals with adaptations of organs by an internal spontaneity and with the fact that things not so adapted have perished and still perish. Darwin does, however, acknowledge that before him the Frenchmen, Buffon, Lamarck and Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, and in this country his own grandfather Erasmus Darwin and among others his contemporary, Herbert Spencer had been speculating on organic evolution. It is clear, therefore, that the idea of organic evolution was not a new one in 1859.

Why then, one may ask, did Darwin's *Origin* create such a stir? The answer lies chiefly in two reasons. Firstly, no one before Darwin (and Wallace) had been in a position to back up his speculations on organic evolution by a convincing body of factual evidence. Secondly, no one, even including Lamarck, had so far brought forward an acceptable suggestion as to a possible mechanism by which organic evolution could have been achieved within the framework of natural laws and without the intervention either of a Creator or some other intangible force. Darwin and Wallace did both.

The factual evidence presented in the "*Origin*" (although meagre in comparison with what is available now) was overwhelming, and the functional hypothesis fitted in well with the idea of Newtonian causality.

Let us now look a little more closely at Darwin himself and his work. After two years as a medical student in Edinburgh and three years, nominally as a student of Divinity, in Cambridge, he graduated in 1831. By that time he had—as was possible in those days—also learnt a lot about Zoology, Botany and Geology. His father who had predicted on account of his preoccupation with snipe-shooting and beetle-collecting that he might turn out to be a disgrace to himself and his family was, however, wise enough not to force him to become a clergyman. Finally, after some considerable resistance, he even allowed him to enlist as a "Naturalist" aboard H.M.S. *Beagle* for a five-year voyage of survey to the coast of South America. Darwin set out, strongly holding the orthodox views of his time concerning the immutability of living organisms, but during the voyage he "was much struck with certain facts of the distribution of the organic beings inhabiting South America

and in the geological relations of the present to the past inhabitants of that continent." After his return in 1837, it occurred to him "that something might perhaps be made out of this question by patiently accumulating and reflecting on a series of facts which could possibly have a bearing on it." This he did. A sketch written in 1842 and a longer essay in 1844, finally led up to the publication of the "Origin" which he was urged by his friends, the Geologist Lyell, and the Botanist Hooker, to complete in 1859, after the joint publication of the gist of his and Wallace's ideas had forewarned the scientific world of what was in the wind.

In the "Origin" which he calls with characteristic modesty an "imperfect abstract," Darwin marshalled an impressive array of evidence in favour of the gradual evolution of organisms. This evidence he derived not only from observations in the field but also from a wide range of disciplines, such as Plant and Animal Breeding, Palaeontology, Geographical Distribution, Comparative Anatomy, and Embryology. This alone would have been a revolutionary contribution to scientific Biology. Darwin, however, did more. He presented a well argued and convincing theory which provided a rational explanation of the mechanism by which the evolutionary changes are brought about in nature.

Darwin's argument can be summed up as follows: Organisms reproduce at a rate far in excess of the number ultimately surviving. The individuals making up a certain species show considerable variation and thus not all of them are equally fit to achieve success in the reproduction of their kind. This will lead to the competitive elimination of the less well adapted and to the natural selection of those whose characters harmonize best with environmental circumstances. Provided many of the variations in organisms are heritable, a change in the environment of the species either by active migration, by passive transfer, or by a gradual transformation of geological or climatic factors will lead to an accompanying change in the specific characteristics of successive generations.

What this clear, and yet so simple hypothesis meant to contemporary thought can best be demonstrated by what Thomas Henry Huxley, who was to be the great Paladin of Darwinism, said after the publication of the "Origin." He described it as "a flash of light in the darkness." Here was the working hypothesis that had been sought by all who, like Huxley, had got lost in the battle of speculation between those favouring immutability of

species and the transmutationists. "In 1857," Huxley says, "I had no answer, in 1859 I said to myself: How extremely stupid not to have thought of that."

The ensuing battle between the defenders of religious dogma and those scientists and laymen who found Darwin's ideas acceptable is one of the most remarkable chapters in the history of the Victorian era. And yet Darwin, like Descartes, before him suggested a perfectly acceptable formula for agreement. In his essay of 1844 he wrote: "It is derogatory (to assume) that the Creator of countless Universes should have made by individual acts of His Will the myriads of creeping parasites and worms which since the dawn of life have swarmed over the land and the depth of the ocean. . . . We see in all this the inevitable consequences of one great law of the multiplication of organic beings not created immutable. . . . From death, famine, and the struggle for existence we see the most exalted end which we are capable of conceiving namely the creation of the higher animals has directly proceeded. . . . There is a grandeur in this view of life with its several powers of growth, reproduction, and of sensation, having been originally breathed into matter. . . ."

Stubborn adherence to the word cult of fundamentalist interpretation of the Scriptures lead to an acrimonious controversy up and down the country. This brought no laurels to the protagonists in either camp. Even the great debating victory won by T. H. Huxley over Bishop Wilberforce at the meeting of the British Association at Oxford in 1860 sounds hollow to us, accustomed as we are to the more substantial argument of facts in twentieth century science. Towards the end of the century Darwin's Theory ran into serious trouble. Lack of knowledge concerning the way in which heredity operates caused considerable difficulties in the detailed application of the hypothesis of natural selection to evolutionary fact.

However, the advent of the twentieth century and with it the birth and rapid success of genetics brought a full vindication of the selectionist interpretation of the mechanism of evolution. One could only wish Darwin had been able to witness the ultimate triumph of his life's work. It now stands more secure than ever, backed up by an ever increasing body of facts, both observational and experimental, and by the development of an eminently successful technique of rigorous reasoning employed by the modern Geneticist.

SKULL

A Prose-poem

The yellow parchment bones remain; the orbits are surrounded
by their mass onto the naked cheeks.

A double indentation for the nose

While below, protrude the teeth of chalky brown:

Useless and smooth; the polish and peppermint of toothpaste
has gone.

Bluebottle eyes, red meat and blood. White axonal nerves
Only spaces now—foramina—have left their paths upon the
roughened base.

The lower forward jaw: strength of character or stubbornness?
The mandible, solid and acrid, now moves by hinges.

Now dried and vacant: once it housed a soft, grey, thinking
brain

Under the calvarium are rounded hollows

Maps engraved upon their lateral wall

Mark tracks of voyaging meninges.

Below, the largest foramen of all:

Foramen Magum. Through here the brain stem passes

Conveying sense and knowledge from the body.

Who was this framework? When moribund did he think of
his future?

Of being transversely hewn and roughly handled by a student

Who nobly tries to learn his gnarled notches

And probes routes throughout the brittle bones

Into hidden sinuses below? and fears lest he cracks them.

The outer sutures, jigsawedly uneven

House Wormean islets. Features hidden in life by white porous
skin.

Chasmic holes and jugged jugular space.

Ethmoid, lachrymoid—for weeping.

What unpressurised tears would now be shed

By those who loved him? Dead.

This was a man.

SIMON J. SHAUDT
(Medical School)

TO MARIANNE MOORE

Madame. It is only to those with experience
That you appeal. The eye
Encrusted with the vigour of the day
Might correspond with you, or ear
Etched with the coolness of the night,
Hear you, but the flat-pavement foot
Would miss you thoroughly.

This delicacy of sense requires itself
Within the circumference of the reader.
This glistening tone or earthy purity
Of visualised experience respects
Detachment, not the curiosity of those
Who hunger for your "poetry"
And somehow fail to find it.

Only the smooth music of your beat will charm
The hungry ear that waits, that stands
Flushing before you to be told
Cool observations you have made
With your so thoroughly scientific mien—
If their prejudice permits of it.

DAVID J. ANDREW
(Medical School)

MELANCHOLY HOURS

Melancholy hours,
Sadness of disquiet soul,
Spirit of the old concealing night
That lingers, where the pensive flowers
Of joy are lying cold.
There is no light;
Beneath the crags where coldness cowers,
Dear thoughts, like shadows of the night,
Close on the heart,
And when their loves have told,
Disperse to leave an abyss filled with fright.
There is no sound,

Save 'plaining of unhappy thought,
Bursting from a mind wherein it sought
To find escape.
The world around
Is darkened, as a rain cloud overhead
Denies the gay sun rays; they erstwhile fought
To bring a little joy where joy was nought,
Where joy was dead.
The moonshine mocks the glorified myth of day
With icy blue;
The coldness of the night
Lies still around the worlds where melancholies play,
Beneath the moon,
The moon's reflected light.
The owl is sad,
The air is sad,
And joy has layed abundant head to lie,
While loving thought
Emotion fought,
To loose, to contemplate, and then to fly.

Disquiet hours,
Fears of melancholy soul,
To quiet roll
Up from the deep,
Too quiet climb, too quickly grow,
Too quickly burst upon unwary sleep,
And slip below the slender hours,
And weep.
There is no sound,
Save drums that beat a heavy mythful tune
Unto the night,
Unto the waning moon,
The world sings round the ears
Of travellers that wander where
Nowhere they may retreat,
But live in fears,
In rhythm of the plaintive drums that bleat,
In rhythm of the quietness;
There is no sound.

ADAM OSBORNE
(Chemical Engineering, II)

SALOP DAYS

On summer nights on Bredon
The air was still and rapt;
The meadow kine were lowing,
By cowhands softly slapp'd:
And town folks scarce descried
The sound of youths and maids
Committing rape and suicide.

'Tis winter now on Bredon
And Margret's cheek is pale.
Her eyes are wet with tears, lad
That once were green as kale—
They have no smile for me,
She has not had a man, lad
Since 1893.

KEITH W. ROBERTS
(Post Graduate, English)

ELEGY FOR SUMMER

The long fingers of evening
are feeling into the woods;
the last pence have fallen
in the solar meter,
and earth, once wake,
has now dropped off. . . .

Tristan and Isolde!
you've had it now; you're glowing out:
your tongues have ceased to throb
and swallow up the night:
the forest's quieter now, save at its edge sometimes
an old man hears the chattering dentures
of a busy factory press
savaging the soil;
while wanton fumes drag in the night
your ghosts fall from their stance.

D. ALEXANDER CRAIG
(Post Graduate, Education)

ERNIE'S HOLIDAY

LIFE IN THE FLAT FENS OF LINCOLNSHIRE SEEMS TO CRAWL ALONG in the most uneventful of uneventful fashions. The people live in stark isolated houses, or in small muddy villages barbarically named Sots Hole or Saint John in the Hough (pronounced Huff). Seldom do they leave the fens and outsiders are repelled by green acres of unsavoury cabbages.

Imagine then the excitement when Ernie Parker decided, after fifty-five years of labouring in the productive, but unpicturesque fenland fields, that he would turn his back on them for a week and take his wife to the seaside. Admittedly, he chose only to go as far as Yarmouth, but at least it was over the border and Ernie did not feel able to stand his ground against more mountainous countryside. Norah Parker was not enraptured with the idea but acquiesced. It was a point of honour with her to care for her husband's physical well-being, so she knitted all Ernie's thick heavy socks herself and saw to it that they were solidly darned. She insisted also on a stout leather belt with which to hold up his trousers instead of the more common habit of a piece of binder-twine, which she asserted let in all manner of draughts besides tending towards indecency. She decided, therefore, that the benefits of a rest and sea-air would outweigh the disadvantages of foreign cooking and the awful possibility of damp beds.

The great day came, and Norah and Ernie set off up the undeviating road to the desolate bus stop passed by the Yarmouth-bound coach. Though on holiday their talk was of the probable outcome of the harvest, for while the wheat stalks were still green, the heads were beginning to turn a pale yellow. They noted with annual surprise that part of the barley had been flattened by the inevitable winds.

The small green bus came spinning along the road raised above the surrounding fields. They climbed aboard, found seats and were silent, numbed by the slow comforting whine of the engine, alone in a private-public world. Ernie had a desire to stand up and sing and wondered what was preventing him. Norah's thoughts were still running in their accustomed channel and she was rehearsing what she would say to the neighbours when they returned home. Rousing himself from the benumbed state in which he felt uncomfortably that he had been indulging in thoughts which

did not belong to him, Ernie noticed that they had reached the outskirts of the town. The vehicle laboured into the coach station and the driver, suddenly conscious of a larger space of tarmac than usual, performed a fancy swirl and curve which neatly rounded off the journey.

With some incompetence and scolding from Norah, they found themselves outside and set off for the boarding house. Norah soon found that the superior residence was not superior to home and began even to hold a contrary opinion. The interior spring may once have been an improvement on the native flock mattress but at this late stage in its career rather too many of the springs had sprung for comfort. As for having more than one veg. other than the spud, and oranges in the rice pudding, Norah had never heard the like of such extravagance. She made a mental note to exclaim over it to her friend the district nurse, for the standards of Norah Parker were the unquestioned ones among her small circle of acquaintances.

Ernie, however, enjoyed such lack of frugality and filled his days with darts, good food and the beneficent sunshine, for the weather was kind to them. He spent his lunch-times and evenings playing darts against the stiff Norfolk opposition and the rest of the day lazed on the beach with his shirt off an unusual freedom, for even during harvesting the men of the fens rarely remove their shirts. Norah knitted, looked round the shops and went to the shows on the pier with a sister exile from the fens.

The tragedy, without allowing time for decent preparation of emotion, struck on the last night of their stay. Ernie had a heart attack and was dead before Norah had time properly to awake. To deal with the situation was not beyond her capacities. Assuming a mood of grief tempered by the need for immediate practical action, she woke and informed the landlady who waited with her until the commercial life of Yarmouth began its day, then made arrangements to get Ernie and herself home. On the way she reflected that the socks she had been knitting him were too small for her son-in-law and consequently would be wasted. That evening as she and the district midwife were laying Ernie out, the nurse commented on his suntan. "O yes," answered Norah, "His holiday did him good."

LEIGH DIAMOND
(English, III)

IMAGINARY REALITY

What fair face and gleaming eyes do I behold:
Or streams of silken hair with tinted gold?
What dazzling beauty glads mine eye
'Neath the hazy sun and the ice-blue sky:
Who treads angel-like in the new-mown field,
To whose call I have to yield:
For resist I cannot the compelling guile
Of this earthly spirit's entrancing smile.

The morning mist has left the dew-topp'd grass
And through earth's rural paradise I seem to pass;
On either side fast-flowering hedgerows lie;
Could I but rest here before I die.
But on I must, I hear my enchantress call,
A re-echoing echo through the hillside waterfall;
The rock-rebounding cataract pushes its way,
Showering thirsty banks with bespattering spray.

And so through gurgling glen the vision fades,
Whilst the day-wearied sun gives way to the evening
shades,
Turn back I must and wend my homeward way,
Nocturnal noises tell me not to stay.
On the gold-emblazoned ridge I see the moon to peep
And setting stars suggesting sleep.
So sleep I shall and merge me with the descending mist
Which calls me to the final, everlasting tryst.

DAVID HURST
(Law, I)

HYPERMNESTRA

This poem is after an ode of Horace, or rather the last stanzas of one. In the first stanzas the poet has been wondering what he shall sing to the girl, Lyde, that he may tempt her to listen. His thoughts lead him to the story of a heroine of Greek mythology, Hypermnestra.

She was one of the fifty daughters of Danaus, king of Argos. His brother Aegyptus, had fifty sons whom he wished to marry to their cousins. Danaus, who hated his brother, consented, but secretly ordered his daughters to kill their husbands on the bridal night. All obeyed, except Hypermnestra who spared her Lynceus, and helped him to escape, although she knew well the price she would have to pay for her disobedience.

According to the legend, the wicked sisters were punished in Hades by being condemned for ever to fill with water a jar, the bottom of which was riddled with holes.

To Lyde of the sisters' sin,
And labours fam'd, our muse will sing,
And of the fatal jar whence spring
Perpetual leaks, of dooms which in
The gloom of Hell for them lie stor'd.
O, wicked! Nought is more abhorr'd
Than finding heart to slay one's kin.

Yet one bride to the nuptial brand,
By playing nobly false, was true,
Whose virtue like a lode-star thro'
The ages shall all time withstand.
"Arise," she bade her spouse, "arise,
Lest with the sleep of death thine eyes
Be sealed by this a trusted hand.

Hence, from my vicious sire begone,
And from my sisters vile for they,
Each to her own, now rend their prey,
Like lionesses lit upon
Some calves—ah me! Yet I of kinder
Blood do thee no hurt, nor hinder
Thee from flight, but spur thee on.

So let my father punish me,
With cruel chains or exile by
Numidian shores, for sparing my
Poor spouse—haste thou o'er land and sea,
Favour'd by Venus and the night,
God speed! and on my tombstone write
A plaintive line in memory."

After Horace: Odes III, xi.

RAYMOND CHECKLEY
(Law, II)

A MODERN PENITENTIAL PSALM

Lament: Through the dust do I crawl, O Lord,
 Lord, Thou hast witnessed my fall.
Out of the abyss do I call, O Lord,
 Lord, hear Thou my call.
My questions I have carved in the pine trees,
And Thy answers are in the echoing of mountain tops:

Litany: Lord, there is life—
 While there is life there is death;
Lord, there is birth—
 Birth is the beginning of death;
Lord, all things are known unto death—
 All things:
Lord, give unto us the mystery of death—
 Mystery of death . . .
 . . . Of death
 Death.

SEAN COTTER
(Law, III)

2. Let my father's hand be
 W. the hand that is
 I have seen in the
 I have seen in the
 I have seen in the
 I have seen in the
 I have seen in the
 I have seen in the

1. Let my father's hand be
 W. the hand that is

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

I have seen in the
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 I have seen in the

1. Let my father's hand be
 W. the hand that is

**fROM
sIngle
vIsIOn**

IAN ROLFE

" "I am glad that my knowledge of astronomy is very poor."

"Why so?" asked Voss.

"To understand the stars would spoil their appearance."

Voss snorted for the defencelessness of such a statement."

This first plagiarism, from Patrick White's novel "Voss," conveniently starts me into this collection of thoughts, initially provoked by the Phoenix Exhibition of the '56 Society last summer and later enhanced by a visit to the Brussels Exhibition.

The Brussels Exhibition entitled "Progress and Man," aimed at presenting a new humanism. It was an attempt to show that "we must all, the whole world over, stop boasting about technology and mobility and try to use them to make life better and more exciting—instead of technology and mobility using us to make life monotonous and frustrating." It put forward a way out of this present situation which is so horrifyingly like Samuel Butler's Erewhonian Machine Society.

The aim of the Phoenix Exhibition was simply the aim of all Art, to quote Emerson, that it "should exhilarate . . . too feeble fall the impressions of nature on us to make us artists. Every touch should thrill."

Where is the link between these exhibitions we may ask? I believe, as did a few pavilion organisers of the Brussels Expo, that this same exhilaration or thrill could be exploited as one of the most powerful driving forces in any movement towards a new humanism. The great architect Le Corbusier, whom I shall have occasion to quote time and again, has written, "when individual consciousness has been changed, and only then, the collective mechanism set right again, will function on a true axis." He has never deceived himself about the difficulty of the problem—"Public opinion is overcharged by the shouts and shrieks of innumerable egoistic proposals from all sides. Each proclaims the greatness of his principles and each promises to bring happiness. And mostly under so much generosity and nobleness lies hidden nothing but business alacrity."

Thus, we see that the greatest cause of present-day, much-maligned apathy is this age-old one of the loss of perception or sensitivity to surroundings. This is the good brave cause which Michael Polanyi takes up in "Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy" where he attempts "to re-equip men with the faculties which centuries of critical thought have taught them to distrust." William Blake would have called these the faculties of two-fold vision—

"May God us keep
From single vision, and Newton's sleep."

Although many no longer accept that which the symbol of God mediates in this quotation, the lines can still be re-interpreted in a very vital way. The single vision—objectivity—characterises our present technocracy; the scientific method has since led to vast material discoveries beyond

Blake's conception; but the potentiality of these new resources to affect our senses directly—and hence our thought and action—has to a large extent been ignored. The second sight—Blake's all—is that of subjectivity, that vision of an object which gives us this exhilaration, this mental surge. The Uomo Universale should exercise both these faculties of vision and strive to balance them.

What does all this mean? In trying to convey this sensation of second sight we are immediately faced with the problem of incommunicability. Perhaps the nearest we can get is a stick of celery. We all know the excruciating sensation of biting and chewing a fresh, crisp stick of clean, white celery with its attendant rush of salivary juices: we can all feel what the writer means when he states "a shadow *crystallised* out upon the ground." *not good* It is the orgasm of aesthetic experience which "takes hold of your throat and viscera." This ability to feel, to empathise, is ~~being deliberately destroyed today, a deliberate closing of the~~ "doors of perception." The art snobs have engendered a culture of anti-art snobism, until, as Hoggart puts it "being able to feel one of the main herd, is made the excuse for gross insensitivity; that insensitivity feeds on its own pride, the 'hubris' of the 'ordinary chap'."

How can we attack this contrived sterility of present-day experience? As always—by true education, in Goethe's sense of "forming tastes rather than by communicating knowledge." New methods of sense-awakening exist today but have not yet been fully exploited, among them the animated cartoon, musique-concrète, the Goons, the poème électronique, posters, television. All these could be used to awaken the individual's sense to the present state of small-mindedness, evidence of the social decadence of the West.

One of the most powerful tools for awakening the individual's visual awareness of his surroundings is design. Every day we see and comprehend, but do not *apprehend*, new technological devices, new buildings, new books with their typographical outlays. The spreading of discrimination and awareness among university people who after all, are potential patrons in this technocracy, must therefore be one of the aims of any educational system except the most reactionary.

"Shock is the principal weapon in the armoury of design." We must employ this shock to awaken apprehension today. Thick skins must first be punctured with a series of shocks and made sensitive before the more subtle or finer arts can be expected

to arouse any emotion. This was the aim of the Phoenix Exhibition—we presented objects from Science Departments in such a way as to emphasise their visual qualities. We viciously contrasted a pierced combustion chamber with dendritic organic and inorganic forms, so that the harsh quality of the smooth, polished and pierced metal surface beside a richly coloured, branching sea-fan provided two visual extremes, each enhancing the other. One of the most tragic pastimes at that exhibition was to observe the number of people whose immediate instinctive reaction—"What is it?"—blinded them to the visual impact of the objects. It was this attitude which gave rise to the question "What's the point of the exhibition?"—the point *was* the exhibition, a visual stimulus.

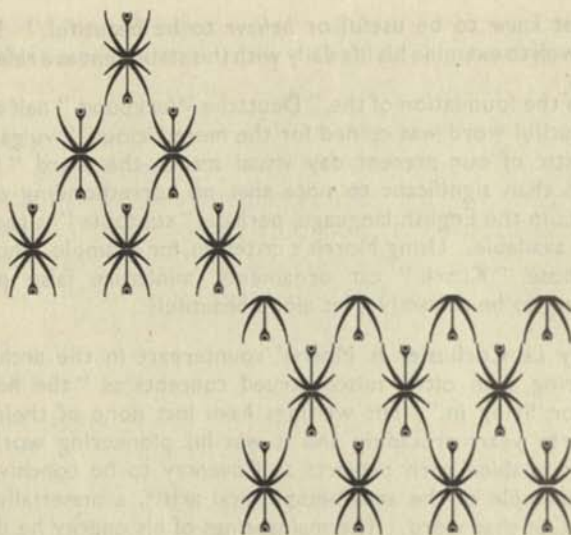
This decay of the perceptive, or apprehensive faculty, the sensitivity to visual stimuli, has been accelerating during the past few hundred years. Le Corbusier has alighted on one minor manifestation of this decadence—"It is a curious end-result of civilisation that men, who used to wear ostrich plumes on their heads, rose, white and royal blue, a vesture of brocades or shimmering silk, should no longer know how to do anything but thrust their hands into the pockets of black trousers . . . Costume reveals the most fundamental feelings." Perhaps the only period when art was in any sense completely integrated was in the primitive communist society of prehistoric man. The German pavilion at Brussels tried to convey this point on one floor devoted to Everyday Requisites—"At first glance one can see that they are not things man requires as he does air, warmth, bread and water. They are things he can undoubtedly do without, if living means no more than continuing to survive. We are not the first to have learned this lesson. Prehistoric man had learnt it, for next to his arrowheads and bone fragments are found wood carvings and coloured pebbles. One would have thought that people had enough to do then, killing their bison and keeping their cave fires burning. And yet it seems that they too would have known a cold and hunger, had they not needed something more than being warm and well fed."

Not until each one of us feels it essential to have beauty around him will society begin to thrive. Each of us must feel, as well as realise, that subtopian sin is one of the filthiest obscenities before we can afford to become complacent. William Morris at the end of the last century, challenged every individual with this pregnant maxim—"have nothing in your homes that

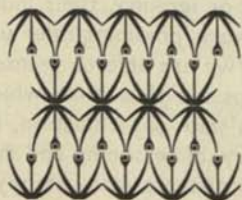
you do not *know* to be useful or *believe* to be beautiful." Everyone would do well to examine his life daily with this statement as a referendum.

With the foundation of the "Deutsche Werkbund" half a century ago, a beautiful word was coined for the meretricious, "vulgar trash" characteristic of our present day visual scene—the word "Kitsch"; it is more than significant to note that no corresponding collective noun exists in the English language, perhaps "subtopia" is the nearest neologism available. Using Morris's criterion, for example, who actually believes those "Kitsch" car ornaments, miniature false portholes and the like, to be attractive, let alone beautiful?

Today Le Corbusier is Morris' counterpart in the architectural field, offering such often misconstrued concepts as "the house is a machine for living in." His writings have lost none of their vitality during thirty years crusading and it was his pioneering work of the 1920's that enabled such projects as Coventry to be conceived. He is a fine example of the anti-metaphysical artist, a materialist in the finest sense of that word. The mainsprings of his energy he describes thus—"Although difficulties increase with each fresh stage of my own development, I am always glad to be able to pursue that exhilarating activity day by day. It saddens me to realise how few suspect the existence of this source of joy, and how many persist in seeking an inaccessible or deceptive paradise elsewhere." Some of this joy is communicated in his writings, for example, when under the influence of the Parthenon on the Acropolis at Athens he pours out the following—"The effect of a work of art (architecture, statue or painting) on its surroundings: waves, outcries, turmoil, lines spurting, radiating out as if produced by an explosion: the surroundings both immediate and more distant, are stirred and shaken, dominated or caressed by it. . . . I have not experienced the miracle of faith, but I have often known the miracle of inexpressible space, the apotheosis of plastic emotion." Unlike the majority of great artists he is not afraid of a wholly materialistic interpretation of the aesthetic experience—"Architecture should use those elements which are capable of affecting our senses and of rewarding the desire of our eyes, and should dispose them in such a way that the sight of them affects us immediately, by their delicacy or brutality, their riot or serenity, their indifference or their interest. These forms . . . work physiologically upon our senses and excite them. Being moved we are able to transcend the cruder sensations. Certain relationships are thus born which work upon our perceptions and put us into a state of satisfaction, in which man can employ fully his gifts of memory, of reasoning and creation." This physiological explanation of beauty disturbs many sloppy-minded



"shock
is
the
principal
weapon
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the
armoury
of
design"



romanticists. A very close analogy can be drawn between the perception of beauty and that of pain. The feeling of pain can be fairly satisfactorily explained in neurological terms. However, to explain what pain is to someone suffering from toothache does little to alleviate his particular sensation of pain. Similarly, to explain beauty in terms of aesthetic theories and neurological concepts does nothing to diminish the sensation "coenaesthesia" of it. To explain such feelings rationally is far from explaining them *away*. In fact, quite the reverse: the more that can be known of pain and beauty the more we shall be able to exploit them.

Too often is art associated with art galleries, music with concert halls: a superfluity to many, an overburden on society and not one of its "everyday requisites." The purists who refuse to consider that anything so mundane as a poster or a dessertspoon is capable of possessing beauty, and art-snobs who maintain a schizoid schism between art and life, the one ethereal, the other sordid and "worldly" have both been responsible for producing this, what can only be termed *bourgeois* fragmentation of life. To them life is not seen—like art—as a "unity within diversity," a faceted gem, but as a necessary chaos to be transcended. Works of art are hung on walls not merely as economic investments but as a further sham, a bolster to "elegance" on its rotten foundation—"throughout the world works of art were made to lie. The great courageous artists of all periods were shown to us falsely, under a thick layer of dirt accumulated for centuries. Patina! Distinguished, reassuring, calming, emollient patina, very much in harmony with the dark buildings and false taste of the interiors. Tintoretto, the variegated colourist, was nothing but a pool of tobacco juice," Le Corbusier once wrote.

Art, via education, needs to be reinstated in every way of life. The exhilaration derived, will lead to a reappraisal of man as a social animal. Reactionary societies which thwart this newly aroused passion of "beauty for all" will then be superseded. Art *could* lead an economic revolution—it has already done so in many boldly conceived architectural experiments—the new environment triggering off previously blanketed thought.

I have been driving this point home *ad nauseam* because I believe it to be vitally important. The idea is not original but because of its nature has always been difficult to convey. Let Le Corbusier provide us with a suitable policy statement with which to conclude:

"Our constant aim, which we must pursue with patience and cunning, must be to throw out of action all the forces that make for the opposite of Joy—that is to say, Despair. Despairing cities! The despair of cities!"



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Title page set in a 19th century wooden Northumberland cattle-poster typeface, the remainder in Times New Roman, Bembo, Gill Sans and Gill Sans Bold.

METHUSELAH

"Smash the bastards, dirty yellow monkeys,
Wipe them out, for they're devils not men."

"Give education, dams, democracy,
Love your neighbour, turn your cheek again."

They will not be blotted out; they will rise,
Rise and blot you out, for they are men.

They will smite that other cheek with hatred in their
eyes,

Constitutionally accuse and strike again.

Will we find, when we have watched this happen,
Hoping to help, but harming here or there,
That, nearing the darkness of no complication,
We know an answer to man's bewildered prayer?

And if by then it is too late to give,
Perhaps ask the question: Just why did we live?

JEAN M. ROBERTS
(Post Graduate, Education)

ANY WOMAN

Her eyes evaporated
A surface tendency
Of polite feeling,
Which I cautiously accepted
As a drop of emotion;
Knowing that it was semi-
Detached from sincerity,
Carefully concealing
A considered notion
That we should marry,
Since she found meaning
In circles, of society,
Counters of wealth, seeming
Manners, and all the other
Suspenders of convention.

W. CHEVERST
(Philosophy, I)

L'APRES-MIDI DES SIRENES

(Prose-Poem in stanzas)

Future is fury, and life unspent, if unfelt,
before we tumble off; round and round the maypole—
that is the cult, or the swans accentuating the water,
the weavers binding new lambs to dead prisons
the press in Austin's for that extra special car.

—and surely that afternoon when all glowed—
“see then, friends,” how she swings around,
“how she waves,” and summons them,
the tall, egoistic creatures, breath of an autumn wind,
see how she dips her heart, “how she waves,”
(wie sie winkt) as the ship, this time, sinks.

But surely he can feel amongst the horrid clouds of sea-
anemones
the crowded ships circling round the tunneling whirlpool
there,
the pores of all the water feel the gliding schooners,
the old smacks crunch the waves, swept on.

How can he see her sitting there enthralled by the tide,
caressing the waves, the foam surging through the ship's bow,
the water-logged cabin where the scent flows, and the quiet
harbour?

Rest a while? Drive on.
The sky threatens thunder claps—but the sea-air!
After all, this is the wild thyme on banks where only weeds
can bloom.
though we, like loving swans contented roamed once upon
that earth.

D. ALEXANDER CRAIG
(Post Graduate, Education)

REFLECTIONS ON THE FENS

These fenland roads have lost all dignity
Of mountainous danger or autobahn splendour.
Though high, they pass like servants, overawed,
Useful to the fields for carrying swedes;
And docile tarmac, dead, serves rampant green,
Where sweet black earth exerts its rule again.

Man is a midget in lake-flat fenland,
The tractor's roar lost in seas of muting brown.
But right-angled ditches, oddly stained
With rusty coloured water brought by men,
And monstrous dykes that firmly block the view,
Containing, if one cares to climb and see,
The water's baffled danger, swan-ridden, still:
These bear the Ages' witness to man's wit,
His power and constancy in search of food.

This strange land from the sea,
Red-veined by ditches, muscled by dykes,
Increases thousand-fold, corn for sea-shells,
Through the mind that built the pumping station,
The will that controls that loud-beating heart.
And yet this mind lives in the mandrake form
Which bumps untidy on that fly-size tractor;
An insect, moving on the far-spread earth,
Who constrains the land to serve him.

JEAN M. ROBERTS
(Post Graduate, Education)

THE WONDERFUL BAR OF SERGE POSVONLVITCH

SERGE POSVONLVITCH FINISHED HIS BREAKFAST—POMEGRANATE soup, and five glasses of tomato juice with Worcestershire sauce—and then went to his desk to find out what he had done the previous night. Serge had toiled after drinking a quart of vodka as he always did when he wanted to do his best work, but, as usual, he did not know fully until the next morning what he had accomplished. Among the pile of six inch cigarette filters and crumpled papers, he found a three page development of a formula taken from the *von Heilden-Smith* equation. Serge quickly recalled, of course, that the equations were now actually the Russian *Ivansky-Slivinitich* proofs. After all Posvonlvitch was a Russian scientist, and the Russians had made all scientific discoveries in the world since early Comrades Java and Piltown discovered fire and the wheel. At any rate, his several pages of figures merely solved some of the variable gas problems which had not yet been classified by science. Serge was somewhat ashamed to have wasted an entire quart of vodka on such obscure work but nevertheless turned it in to his group-leader that afternoon.

At this time Russian science was taking a breather after bouncing its last Sputnik off the barriers of space. The Commission of the Bureau of Scientific Investigation was getting worried about the apparent slow-up of their researchers who in turn were having bad dreams about salt-mines. As a result of this lethargy the Posvonlvitch equations built themselves up, by way of several echelons of Soviet researchers, to a major scientific discovery, at least as far as *Pravda* and the propaganda bureau were concerned.

An enterprising young engineer in an aeronautical laboratory hidden in the Urals, read these equations and saw a possible application for them. He presented his subsequent idea to his superior who, seeing two ready-made comrade scape-goats, proceeded with development of the idea, calling in a crew of nuclear physicists and aeronautical engineers. In a few weeks they had assembled the device—an iron bar coated with successive layers of sodium, plastic and brass, connected to a small black box. This device, commonly known as "the bar" changed the world to what we know to-day.

This wonderful instrument worked upon a circuit which set up a repulsion field between sodium atoms. When switched on,

the atoms of sodium in the bar repelled themselves violently from all other atoms of sodium more than two feet away. Thus, when the bar was strapped to the back of a man, he was forced up and away from the earth. The bar came complete with an intensity-speed rheostat and a rudder-like device for effortless steering.

The Russian army, only for purposes of "defensive security," immediately seized the device and prepared to outfit an army of flying infantrymen. They gave a rush order for twenty-five thousand iron bars to be delivered within three months. When they found that no facilities existed in Russia for the handling of metallic sodium in large enough quantities, the army placed the order in the hands of the ingenious and naive Americans. The Yankees set up a mass-production plant in almost no time and went to work.

Unfortunately, when the government started issuing flying-bars to the Russian infantry, the desertion rate went up almost immediately. Hundreds left the glorious land of the people and went to the decadent West where the energetic Russian youth did all sorts of strange things to the European birth-rate.

When the Western world saw the flying-bar a cry went up for luxury models. An Italian company soon began production of racy, stream-lined models—and the rest of the world followed suit. Detroit converted its factories to turning out bars with stain-proof upholstery and side fins. The Swiss, of course, made the precision models which were eventually used for racing.

The mobility given to owners of flying-bars led to many international complications. Smuggling became a popular sport and profitable enterprise. Meanwhile economists were having a field day studying the results of free trade among the nations of the world. The Iron Curtain was crumbling overnight.

Finally, however, the Kremlin in desperation, amassed a glorious army of flying fighters to strike a frantic blow for world Communism. The troops sped across national boundaries to the West aiming at strategic defence positions. With the terrific density of personal flyers in the western European countries, however, a surprise attack had become impossible. As the army neared its objectives a flight of bombers bore down upon them. The terrified troops fell in confusion and proceeded to mix with the local populations. Most led happy capitalistic lives thereafter. The Kremlin,

realising its lost cause, allowed an intergrating world to relax into a lasting peace.

American mass-production techniques quickly reduced the cost of bars to the point where a schoolboy could purchase a pocket bar to carry his girl-friend's books home for him. There was an unprecedented revival of religion as people felt the power of God while flying through low-hanging clouds. Man was freed from the cares of the world, even literally. A Michigan high school boy discovered that a space-ship could be built by placing a bar at one end of a long tube. Soon bustling colonies were founded on the Moon and Mars.

Utopia had been realised; man's problems had been solved by a Russian scientist—Serge Posvonlvitch. Recognising this, Nobel Prize-winner's contribution to humanity, the U.S.A. brought Posvonlvitch to the States and showered him with everything desired by man: a mansion on the Californian coast, a complete wardrobe, national publicity with ticker-tape parades, plenty of parties and liquor and gorgeous women. In fact, Serge was almost divinely happy. He had the most delicious pomegranate soup imaginable—there are no pomegranates like Californian pomegranates . . . but then, of course there is no vodka like Russian vodka.

ROGER JONES
(English Department)

SLIDE

On the ebon flattened stage is a rectangle.
The translucency of its metabolic mark
Arises from the chasmic depth.
A turgid streak
Of hoary rope is downward bent to peer:
It is an eyelash, reflected by the oblique concave light.

Magnified spot. Once fleasized
Now disproportioned to artifaxed mammosity.
The hitherto present molecules of matter incipient
Appear: their stark bareness
Exposed. A mystery revealed
To some is latent still to others.
O blatant dilater of the real to
Giantism enlarged!

SIMON J. SHAUDT
(Medical School)

THE INVADERS

Charging in their chariots of iron;
Shouting, their sea of spears surging
Hungry men with blonde beards urging
Horses, their hearts hungry for victory
The invaders came, the valley thundering.

In houses, hungry women and children,
Terrified of the tall torment, cower
Christ crucified is now near, searing.
Send help! but none came
Only a great turmoil and fearing.

Fire! free flame, licks the windows,
Wise men walk wearily nightwards,
Until houses hungry-eyed cinders
Showed stark naked, the beggars
Picking the last victuals.

DAVID J. ANDREW
(Medical School)

FOR A BIRTH

To you is given Life from suffered pain.
To us you bring your infant light
By which we see the dust and cobwebs
Of our dazzling prison smaller than your cell.
You know before you come that we are mortal
And knowing this before you come to life
You will forgive our ways, our nuclear power
Our half-made thoughts which greet when you come.
May you be one for our green fields and sunlight
Though you have had your share of both already;
We have had some of both but in small measure
And we have lost our seasons and ourselves.
We want you with us, child, but even more
We want to be with you and come awake
In the sweetness of your sleeping and pass
Into the glory of your home as you pass into ours.

B. G. SHARP
(Post Graduate, French)

CARILLON

Once in a hundred years, they say,
A nightingale sings on New Year's Day,
And all good people, grave and gay,
Pause to wonder—as well they may!

And old men shake their heads and say
“When we were young ’tweren’t never the way
“to sing of Summer before it were May!
“Belike come May we’ll be carryin’ the hay!”

But lads and girls grow hushed and stay
Under the starlit sky, and pray
To Eros to grant their young desire,
For the nightingale sets their hearts on fire.

While stockbrokers mutter, and bear, and boom,
And soothsayers, with incredible gloom,
Prophecy pestilence, horror and doom. . . .

The philosopher comes from the inner room
And walks in the garden, to study the bloom
Of the golden rose, who lifts her face
To the rain of music that floods this place. . . .
While the nightingale sings on and on
As he sang in time long past and gone.

The nightingale sings on New Year's Day,
(Once in a hundred years, they say!)
And all good people everywhere
Lift up their hearts and say a prayer. . . .
Swear to be kind, unselfish and true,
In the year of grace that's forever new.

And the nightingale sings on and on
As he sang in time long past and gone
In the hanging gardens of Babylon.

NINA PEARSON
(Lecturer in Music)

CRANTOCK

Langarroc's¹ mighty dead lie safely here
Beneath the angry sea and Cornish coasts:
Their power and pride, both past, are buried deep near
Crantock, where sleep their children and which boasts
That once the Gannel² was English shipping's haven.
These days are done and only legend now lives on;
Their coffins hewn of stone are sand-sunk, save one³
Which rests among its dead descendants, long since gone
From the sound of the chiming churchyard clock.
Still the hamlet sleeps in England's industrial roar,
An unspoiled guardian of its ancestors' carved rock,
Hewn for posterity's gaze beside the sea-swept shore.⁴
So, when we depart from this ill-fated age,
Langarroc's dead, not ours, will remain upon life's stage.

DAVID HURST
(Law, 1)

1 Langarroc, once the capital of Britain, lies under Crantock and Pentire.

2 Gannel, a river, once the "Thames of England," now a small inlet.

3 An unearthed stone coffin, now in the small churchyard.

4 Mysterious rock-carving, inscribed:

"Mar not my face but let me be
Secure in this lone cavern by the sea,
Let the wild waves round me roar,
Kissing my lips for evermore."

“A PRESS OF PAPER-BACKS”

FOR books are not exactly dead things, but doe contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soule was whose progeny they are; nay they do preserve as in a violl the purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them . . . who kills a Man kills a reasonable creature, Gods Image; but hee who destroyes a good Booke, kills reason itselfe, kills the Image of God as it were in the eye.”

AREOPAGITICA.

This wonder that was a book in Milton's day has become the tragic hero in the drama of Supply and Demand. It has fallen from high to mean estate. Instead of being revered for centuries in a place of honour, the fate of the book lies now with the dustbin or the graveyard of the Jumble Sale. The demand of many people for reading matter, though laudable in itself, has resulted in an emphasis on quantity and all its attentive evils. The ubiquitous paper-back is responsible for much of this trend. It has helped to supply the necessary medium giving rise to the situation which De Tocqueville describes in **Democracy in America**.

“ . . . Among democratic nations, a writer may flatter himself that he will obtain at a cheap rate a meagre reputation and a large fortune. For this purpose he need not be admired; it is enough that he is liked. The ever-increasing crowd of readers, and their continual craving for something new insure the sale of books which nobody much esteems.”

In spite of this mediocrity which paper-back publications encourage, and the attitude of contemptuous familiarity towards books which they have partly fostered, paper-backs have done invaluable service during the past few years. Through the cheap, paper covered book the great writings of the world have been brought within the reach of everyone. One bookseller has commented that the Penguin edition of **The Iliad** has sold more copies than any other single paper-backed book that even the post World War II era of “sophistication” and violence has produced.

Penguins are, of course, the pioneers and collosi of the paper-back world. **The Times** has paid them the paramount tribute, in November 1950, when discussing The Penguin Book Exhibition, “The whole array exemplifies one of the various achievements of the

twentieth-century in bringing the wider public into close touch with what is best in learning and literature."

Their supremacy is not going unchallenged. With improved printing techniques, paper being available in large quantities and at cheap prices, an increasing and avid market at hand, other paper-backs are blossoming forth—Pan Books, Pocket Books, Thrift Books, Guild Books.

A revolution is taking place in which the book is becoming only a means to an end, purely a medium for communicating, designed to last a couple of years and then to be thrown away or renewed at will. Fortunately this extreme may not come, for the next stage in the evolution suggests that the love of a book for its own sake is by no means dead. This is the carefully designed, well printed book, maintaining quality in both matter and presentation. Fine examples of these, and with which we are particularly concerned, are the **Faber Paper Covered Editions**. Suited to both university tastes and pockets, they can be treasured for a long time. In a quiet way they achieve a milestone, for they are the first paper-back results of the policy of a major printing house to reprint their best "hardboard" works in a special, cheap but good edition.



This situation suits "Mermaid" well. In reviewing these **Faber** editions, she can provide reviews of books which students enjoy and can afford, yet at the same time avoid the problem of topicality which has been a drawback to reviews in the past. Reviews will occur from time to time as new paper-back editions appear. In this edition we review the first five **Faber** paper covered books to come out.

COLLECTED POEMS 1909—1935

T. S. Eliot (5/-)

This paper-back is a fine addition to any library of such books. But for its shiny cover, it is the same as the board bound edition, with narrower margins and slightly inferior paper. The type face and the lay-out are those of the more expensive edition, liberally spaced and easy to read.

Presumably both editions are printed from the same type set and that is what makes this one so modest in price. Faber have achieved a very high standard in the printing of verse. Poems are allowed to spread themselves on a page and a sense of luxury is thus imparted. When poems are so printed, it is as good as a wordy manifesto in support of the doctrine that poetry is to be read for pleasure, not hunted for, duty bound, in diminutive italics. Any one who has used the O.U.P. half guinea Byron will know what I mean. Here, each poem has its own page, standing independently, as if this is the very least we could do for them. The inking is a little irregular, but that is a fault strangely known even in Faber's more expensive editions. The printing of the prose notes to **The Wasteland** is ugly, emphasising the smallness of the pages and the size of the type. In general, however, whether familiarity is the cause, which this edition does nothing to disturb, or whether Faber really have found the best type size and face for the printing of short poems, this is aesthetically a very satisfying book.

As an edition of Eliot, it has its limitations. It is no new selection, but Mr. Eliot's early definitive edition. Had it been extended to cover all four **Quartets**, it would have been more complete. The Eliot figure, who stubs his intellect against a craggy world is very apparent, but the solution, his own interpretation of the word common to all men, is unequally represented at this date, by **Burnt Norton**. However, as a cheap reprint of a familiar book, it is very welcome and a delight to handle. Perhaps we can look forward to the **Quartets** appearing in the future. K. W. R.

WHO MOVED THE STONE ?

Frank Morrison (5/-)

A neat, business-like edition of what must now be considered a classic of its kind. Frank Morrison applies the skill of the historian,

the deductive insight of the criminologist and the disciplined imagination of the poet to the mystery of the Trial, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of Christ. His style, if the paradox may be permitted, is intoxicatingly sober. He impresses by sheer objectivity of approach and by his honesty and candour. It has been said no man can be converted by argument—only through faith. This book is brilliant argument and even if Morrison, therefore, cannot convert, he causes the most bigoted atheist to reconsider, brings a source of hope to the agnostic, while the Christian is reinforced in his belief by a fresh and exciting perusal of well-known facts.

"There may be, and as the writer thinks, there certainly is, a deep and profoundly historical basis for that much disputed sentence in the Apostle's Creed—'The *third day* he rose again from the dead'." The author's modesty is impressive.

VERSE AND WORSE

A Private Collection by Arnold Silcock (5/-)

"Rhymes with ideas and origins as diverse and remote from each other as the Archbishop of Canterbury is from the Moulin Rouge." So runs the preface to this delightful book, and leafing through the pages one soon finds ample justification for the statement. Like most anthologies it is a variable affair but there are a number of pearls in it which are so deftly cast by authors both sung, unsung and anonymous, that no collection of comic and not-so-comic verse is complete without this book.

It is impossible to give a full account of the riches, but some which struck me must be mentioned if only for selfish reasons. There is, for instance, a section in which the accent is on, well, accent. One entitled the **Voice of America** goes:

*Toity poiple boids
Sitt'n on der coib
A' choipin' and a' boipin
An' eat'n doity woims.*

A different "boid" is mentioned in a cockney saga which concerns "a bleed'n' sparrer wot lived up a bleed'n' spaht" and which quite definitely points a moral in the last verse.

Then under **Potted Biography** there is a gem of Ogden Nashery by Robert Longden:

*The Emperor Caligula
's habits were somewhat irrigula
When he sat down to lunch
He got drunk at onch.*

Where now?—wherever your fancy takes you. There is the inevitable Houseman parody of the "bacon's not the only thing that's cured by hanging on a string" kind, while John Squire considers what might have happened **If Gray had had to write his Elegy in the Cemetery of Spoon River instead of in that of Stoke Poges.**

The misery of the now-wedded man is dealt with in the **Come Live with Me and Be My Love** section:

*The glances over cocktails
That seemed to be so sweet
Don't seem quite so amorous
Over the Shredded Wheat.*

There's another cereal joke early on in the book where a Russian standing on Nevski Bridge is forced through lack of food to eat his beard admitting that though "It's tough this stuff to eat, it's a darned sight better than Shredded Wheat."

Or perhaps you would like to know about the lady of Tottenham who tore off her knickers, while at tea at the vicar's because, she explained, "she felt 'ot in 'em." Hmm. . . . There is a wonderful poem about Orkney seen through somewhat sanguinary eyes:

*This bloody town's a bloody cuss—
No bloody trains, no bloody bus,
And no one cares for bloody us—
In bloody Orkney.*

If you savour the epigram or the irreverent verse, you will enjoy this paperback immensely. It has everything from the **Lamentations of the Poet MacGonagall** to an account of what happened to the gentleman who "was strolling down the street in drunken pride." It is tremendous value for money. K.T.

LORD OF THE FLIES

William Golding (5/-)

"Oh no, this could not possibly happen—especially to English boys!" we exclaim, tossing **Lord of the Flies** on one side. Then Golding's art whispers insinuatingly into our ears—"Or could it?" and our consciences wriggle uneasily within us. . . .

This is an uncomfortable book. It attacks the very roots of "civilisation," making the word "vencer" apparent in all its reality, shakes our complacency and leaves us in the daze that follows a nightmare. In some ways, reading this book is an unbearable experience, for **Lord of the Flies** is full of horror. It is suggested horror rather than that obviously described. Golding's power as a writer lies in his ability to twist the imagination, to reverse the accepted point of view, without the reader ever realising that it is happening, or has happened. He hints, insinuates and finally wafts us to a terrible climax, drags us to the edge of insanity—maybe even beyond, for he is a master at evoking those dim regions where sanity and madness intermingle. Then, suddenly we are returned to the relative comfort of reality with a reassuring bump. Nevertheless we are left with that persistent, nagging thought—"it could so easily happen. . . ."

AN EXPERIMENT WITH TIME

W. J. Dunne (5/-)

Dunne's work was first published in 1927. Since it first appeared it has been republished several times and subjected to a certain amount of revision. He has also written another three books on Serialism. It is some time since a new edition of **An Experiment with Time** was produced, and this the first pocket edition.

The first and most important question which the reviewer must ask is: Is a new edition justified? Since 1927, such ideas as the concept of Relativity and Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty have ceased to be considered revolutionary, and have become part of the everyday currency of physics. It is in the light of a rapidly expanding and changing physical science that we must consider the pertinent relevance of Dunne's work. Some of the ideas which

he advances have become well-known in a partial form, and it is an altogether good thing that the mathematical reasoning leading to the formulation of these ideas should again be presented to a critical examination and discussion. The mathematics although theoretically comprehensible to anyone with an average depth of mathematical knowledge probably cannot be reasonably criticised by anyone without some more advanced training. I must, therefore, limit myself to the more general approach.

Dunne deals in the most literal sense with "the stuff that dreams are made of." As is well-known, his experiments were suggested by dream experiences and consist essentially in recording a subject's dreams immediately on waking. He then attempted to establish a relation with past and future events. Dunne applied strict statistical method to the interpretation of his results and they show range of accuracy of forecast from very low to very high. A serious criticism of this type of work is that, as psychologists have shown, many dream experiences can be accounted for best in terms of subconscious hopes, fears and desires within the subject and it is not easy to determine where wish-fulfillment and wish-expression give way to precognition. Dunne's is dangerous ground for experiment, and it is a matter of personal opinion with regard to the validity which may be assigned to the results obtained by his methods. Both the method and results have been the subject of much controversy both learned and popular, physical and metaphysical since the book first came out. Its appearance now in a form accessible to students and others of limited means who will find interest and profit in the discussion of these theories, is a publishing event to be welcomed.

The edition contains all the appendices and the note by Eddington. In my opinion, it would have increased the value of the edition considerably, if someone such as Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University, U.S.A., who is well-known for his experiments on telepathy, could have written a foreward, or epilogue, assessing the work in light of recent advances in physical and psychic thought.

B.J.B.W.

Contributions for the next edition are welcome and must be in the Editor's hands no later than the end of the present term.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank Professor Lowenstein for his article. I also wish to express my gratitude to all those whose names are never seen but without whose help this magazine could never be published.

PRIZE

The President of the Guild of Undergraduates has kindly presented a prize of two guineas, to be awarded for "the best contribution to *Mermaid* by a writer affiliated to the Guild." It is to be known as the "President's Prize."

APOLOGIES

I should like to apologise on behalf of the magazine for the inordinate number of mistakes which appeared in the last edition. In particular apology is owed to Mrs. N. Pearson and Mr. A. D. Ford. Such mistakes will not occur again.

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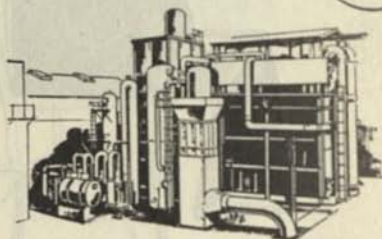
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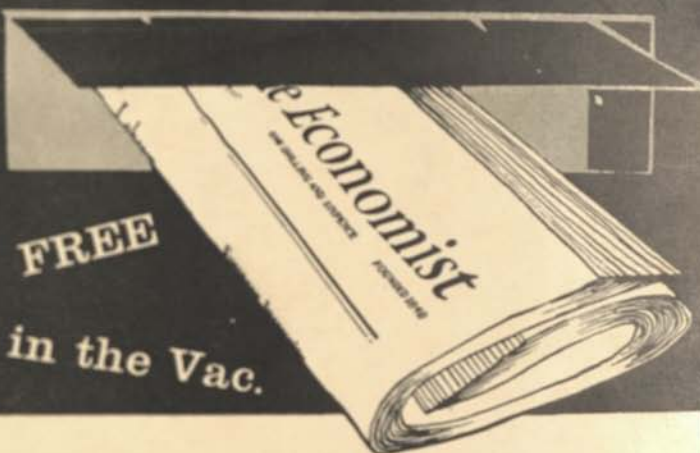
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