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Wisconsin Literary Magazine



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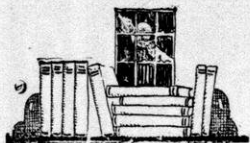
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(Wood-cut by Jim Chichester)

The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

Volume XXVI

MAY, 1927

Number 4

REVERIE

By

VIRGINIA HOILES

She sat staring at the open book in her lap, seeing nothing, only conscious of the page as a blur of black and white. For a moment she sat deriving a queer sort of enjoyment from watching the print's odd distortions through her tears.

At the opposite edge of the pool of lamplight, four girls in various stages of *deshabille* played bridge. The girl in the big chair became suddenly aware of loud laughter, of the whine and blare of a sentimental foxtrot, of conversational fragments.

"Yeh, Jack took me to see 'Curses and Kisses.' Quite some movie. No kidding! I was embarrassed to death!"

". . . we went to Hollywood. Terrible atmosphere. . . ."

"Isn't that philosophy course the nuts? You don't have to do a thing! All inspirational and that sort of rot, doncha know!"

"What? Oh, don't mention grades! Of course I didn't make mine. May I have a cigarette, please, somebody?"

The girl in the big chair writhed. She glanced down and heard again *Cyrano de Bergerac's* voice:

"To sing, to laugh, to dream,

To walk in my own way and be alone,

Free with an eye to see things as they are,

. . . . To travel any road

Under the sun, under the stars, nor doubt

If fame or fortune lie beyond the bourne. . . ."

She rose quietly, and a moment later found herself outside in the windy spring night. Through a dim avenue of swaying trees, the ruffled lake shattered a slender moon into a thousand dancing gold fragments.

Alone on the end of the pier, the girl, curled up with her head resting against a seat, drank in the exquisite harmony of fragrant wind and gold-flecked water.

It had always been this way, she reflected, as far back as she could remember. Petty ugliness and unhappiness in her daily life had always driven her to escape through the beauty nearest at hand. She wondered if the loneliness which invariably added to the charm of the escape was a form of conceit.

With a crooked little smile, she remembered arranging her roommate's birthday violets. They had been so cool and fragrant. As a child she had dreamed of falling in love with the first man who sent her tea-roses. Somehow, no one thought She caught herself up at the self-pitying little thought.

The girl lighted a cigarette. With a whiff of smoke came a host of memories, of flippant, eager-eyed boys, of colorful parties, of men she had idealized, half-loved, and forgotten. All her irresponsible frivolities of the last few years seemed, in this delicate night, empty, vulgar, and, even worse, to have given an impression of a self utterly unlike the inner reality. The girl had a cold, dull feeling of age and disillusionment. She was twenty.

The future ? It stretched ahead, a long gray road of daily routine, of work, of once-keen interests grown suddenly drab. Her literary aspirations appeared vague, presumptuous, and hopelessly distant. Who cared whether or not she was successful? The family, perhaps, but they would love her no matter what happened. Marriage but there was no one, at least as yet. Co-educational experience led one to doubt his existence.

For the millionth time there came rushing over her the old desire for the unknown, for some goal or purpose, some framework of truth on which to build, to embellish which she might use the perfected beauties now lying crude and latent in her heart. Dreams, dreams——was it only a dream-world, after all?

The cigarette hissed softly as it struck a mirrored star.

“IN NOMINE DEI”

By

J. M. S. COTTON

Sir Galahad Speaks:

I saw the Holy Grail—I saw It shine
Body and Blood that once were Bread and Wine,
I saw the Holy Grail—I saw It stand
upraised to Heaven by an Angel's hand:

there were white white hands that clung to my saddle-side,
and a maid distraught, with flowing hair, that cried,
and lips half raised for my shaking lips to kiss
in that Sacramental rite of earthly bliss—
but I spurned her from me, mine eyes were all afire
and I crushed my heart, and I crushed its young desire,
for what is a maiden's woe, and what avail
the world and its loveliness, when I seek the Holy Grail?

I saw the Holy Grail, I saw It shine,—
Body and Blood that once were Bread and Wine—

there were white white hands that clung to my shield that
night
as I knelt in chapel, by dimmest candle light,
there were white white hands, pale phantoms from out a
dream
and the curve of her face and throat and the eyes that
gleam.

I saw the Holy Grail, I saw It shine
but I have sacrificed this youth of mine.

JOHN

By

VIOLA WENDT

THE city below the hill lay half-outlined against the darkness of the summer night. Gleaming points of light shone out here and there, and around them the dim, haloed glow cast up shadows of buildings, or was reflected sharply in the black surface of the river which flowed about the base of the hill and into the city.

A broad paved highway ran up the hill to the little village at the top, and along the curb of the road a man climbed slowly upward. He was careless of the automobiles which rushed by him and saw only the smooth path before him. At the top he turned and looked back, not at the still, dark river along whose edge a train sped like a glittering whip lashed through the darkness, nor at the deep blackness beyond the city, but his eyes quickly searched out a tall spire among the dim buildings. It rose from the county courthouse, and although he could not see it from where he stood, the man knew that in the shadow of the surrounding trees stood a low, thick-walled building—the county jail. They had let him out of it half an hour ago, after an endless month of monotony. As he stood at the top of the hill, John Maetzer, who a short time ago had been simply number Six, shook his clenched fist toward the spire and in violent words cursed the city, the law, and the Almighty.

He turned sullenly into the main street of the little village in which he lived. The calm, soft evening had brought the population in this newer part of the town out of the houses—the adults onto the porches, the many youngsters onto the streets and sidewalks. John stepped almost angrily aside for the shouting groups of children playing jacks on the walk, and strode defiantly between the rows of eyes. He assumed hostility in every eye, and was suspicious of all the chat-

tering groups. So intent was he in his moody bitterness that he did not see the frequent gleams of friendliness, mingled with the disinterestedness or scorn, or heed the hearty voices which called after him, "Evening, John. Glad to see you back."

He hated these men with the hearty voices, for they were prosperous, cheerful men, owners of such things as the furniture and undertaking store, the mill, the hardware shop, and the gravel pit. He hated them because they spoke so indifferently of the law, and were even friendly with sheriffs and deputies. They drank the liquor he had made and had been jailed for; but John had discovered that the law was inexplicable and unjust. And he was always caught.

The hearty men laughed when John had passed by, for he was a sort of joke among them—an ignorant, vehement fellow, always with a chip on his shoulder, always in trouble, but a highly useful member of the community. They winked as they mentioned his usefulness.

Some of the wives of the hearty men laughed too, and some of them, having found the years of heartiness rather palling, hated and despised John for being the cause of another burst of it, and the more sensitive among them feared him because in his pitiable foolishness, he bore not only his own punishment but that which should have been their husbands.'

Among some of the groups there was righteous scorn. These were the people who talked with friendly respect to the sheriff, and who were free of the law, not by a sort of social and industrial position, as were the hearty men, but by their decent solvency and their upright citizenship.

The boisterous groups on the sidewalk, with the democratic gregariousness of children, were composed of representatives from many porches,

and vigorous controversy arose when John had passed.

John knew nothing of the chattering which had arisen after him, save that he hated the chatterers. He walked gloomily on to the older part of town, some two or three blocks down the street, for the town was very small. At a corner near his own weathered, unkept house he met the bank cashier, who greeted him, "Hello, John. Glad to see you back. How are things coming?"

The bank cashier was a politic fellow. His business thrived on friendliness, and he set out to be friendly. Everyone liked him, especially those who, had he been another sort of man, would have hated him fiercely, simply because he was a bank cashier and familiar with that commodity which was so unfamiliar to them. He knew everybody's business and he knew how to keep his mouth shut.

"I'm just coming home," John said. "They let me out after supper, the dirty crooks."

He paused, then clenching his fists, "God, they ain't got me yet. I'm going right home now and start in making more liquor than those dry fools ever saw. Hid the old still behind the cistern when they started getting wise, and they never got it."

"See here, John," said the cashier, partly amused and partly apprehensive, "they'll just get you again. And what will your wife and kids do?"

"The wife's fast at sewing pocket books, and Dan is a crack helping in stores and such things. That damn law's got all my money now, but I ain't going to give up a good business for them."

They had come to John's house now, and the cashier was glad to go on alone. John's house was old and unpainted, a leftover from the early days when the narrow, mud-streeted town had been planted by the vigorous, hard-drinking men and women from middle Europe, devout Catholics, who minded the law of this new land as little as they might. Gradually this old base had been over-spread by other foreigners and by

native Americans, the gravel-pit, the construction company, and the bank had been established, the street had been paved, and, finally, the prohibition law had been passed. There had been eight saloons in the old town with its population of two hundred; there were four hundred people in the new town, and half the saloons were essentially law-abiding.

John, too, was a left-over, for a great part of that first native generation which had sprung from the old immigrants had gained no vigor in its re-generation, but had been visited only with the weariness of the parents' toil.

John jerked open the back door of his house and stepped into the disorderly kitchen, which had futile attempts at order here and there as if under the touch of one who was half-careless, half-weary. A woman rose quickly from her work of sewing pocketbooks and came toward him.

She was a little woman, still young, but the spirit in her eyes were tired. She had borne John three children, one of whom they had buried at birth, and the early middle age of her race had come upon her.

"John," she said, and then stopped as she saw the intensity in his face. She was afraid of that look of fear and hate, and drew back before it, standing almost defensively before her baby's cradle.

"Where's the still?" John questioned hoarsely.

His wife shrank back, lifting her child to her bosom.

"They got it," she cried sharply, although she trembled.

John was stunned. With a sob he dropped onto a chair.

"God, Mary," he cried brokenly, "that damn law's got everything now."

He sat silent for a long time, breathing heavily. Mary stood trembling against the wall, waiting for the outburst of anger she knew would follow. Mary hated the law as John did, but with the submissiveness of the women of her race and class, she saw the futility of opposition. There

was no escape from the law if you were poor. It found you out always and took away what you had and gave it to the rich people. She was afraid of John's anger and his violent hatred against authority, because she knew that it was useless, and that his impotent determination to even up his wrongs, which the prosperous and hearty men found so funny, would only bring further evil. But John was her man, and she must submit to his judgments and his actions.

John's anger came—fiercely and passionately.

"They haven't got me yet. I'm going out and trim them all up. God, there ain't nothing right in this world!"

As he turned to go out, there was a loud knock at the door. Mary set the baby quickly on the floor and ran to the door, pushing John's hand from the knob.

"I forgot," she half-sobbed, "it's the school superintendent. He said he'd come back."

She opened the door, and a large man walked determinedly in, holding John's ten-year old son by his hand.

John said nothing.

The superintendent spoke a polite "good evening." Then, because in his eyes John was a stubborn social delinquent, who must be coerced with authority, he broke out, "See here, Maetzer, this son of yours has got to go to school. I'm not wasting words with you tonight. Either he goes to the Catholic school or to the public school. If he isn't enrolled in the Catholic school tomorrow morning, he's coming to the public school. Do you understand?"

John swore. "Dan ain't going to any school that the law keeps, and he ain't going to any school that damn Christianity keeps. He can learn enough from me."

The superintendent was sure of his power. "You heard what I said," and he went out.

"Come on, Dan, we're going to Joe's."

They left without turning to Mary, who sat weeping as she clamped metal fasteners on the pocketbooks.

John and Danny walked hand in hand along the dark street, Danny half-skipping along, as he tried to follow the long strides of his father. The evening had begun to grow cool, and a breeze moved quietly in the darkness. John was soothed, unconsciously, by the stillness, and by the firm, warm touch of his son's hand.

They soon came to "Joe's Place," a low, two-roomed building, a block off Main Street, a remnant of the old town. It was the haunt of Joe's friends—no prosperous men came there, save the bank cashier, and no officers of the law. They would have been greeted with dubious hospitality, so they went to more cordial places.

John and his son were welcomed gladly as they came into the narrow, hot room. They sat down at a table, and John ordered a drink. "Joe's Place" was by no means law-abiding, but Joe was a sagacious fellow who put a cover of respect over his hate and defiance and had so far kept up a good enough business, though always in danger.

The liquor and the men's interest in the details of his month in jail and in the purpose of the school superintendent who had been waiting around for several days, sent John's anger to his lips again, and he arose with a curse.

"Danny don't want to go to any school. Either they're kept by the law or by Christianity, and this damn Christianity has fallen. She had one human being once, but she ain't going to get him again. She's got no more to say about him, and the law hasn't either."

There was intense silence, broken by the laugh of a traveling man, a stranger who had come in for a drink.

"He's certainly excited," he spoke to the man next to him, expecting to be joined in his laughter. Instead, the whole group turned eyes of distrust upon him, and he arose quickly and went out, alarmed and surprised.

"My God," he muttered, "they're in earnest, the whole lot of them."

It was the bank cashier, who had come in a short while before for the weekly fortification of his policy, who tried to bring the situation to a less intense pitch.

"That's a fine lad you have there, Maetzer. He's getting bigger every day. He'll be taller than his father some day."

John's voice softened as he put his hand on his son's shoulder, and his eyes were proud as he spoke, "Danny's a prince of a fellow."

The child felt his father's pride keenly, and looked up in embarrassment at the eyes turned on him.

The cashier, though less sensitive than he was amiable and purposeful, was disturbed by the kindness with which these fathers of the town's young ruffians looked at the incorrigible rough-neck, of ill-repute among parents and children, but who seemed simple and childish enough as he regarded his father with dog-like admiration.

The unconscious understanding which passed between father and son brought back John's grievances upon him, and hot, defensive anger against the powers that demanded his son of him rose again in his breast.

"God, nobody's going to have Danny. None of these damn people that ain't got no brains. I'd like to go out and trim them all up. They ain't got no right living."

John lifted another glass to his lips with his shaking hands.

"Hey, Maetzer!"

A dirty youngster burst open the screened door and panted to John.

"Father Heidi wants you to come up right away. He didn't say why, but he wants you tonight." Then he added impudently, "I guess he's seen the school superintendent hanging around," and winked.

John was enraged and stubborn. Only the half-superstitious fears of his friends, the submissiveness of whose century-old Catholicism was still deeply branded, and the persuasions of the cashier led him at last to bid Danny go home, while he walked reluctantly with the dismayed but insistent cashier to the priest's house. The cashier urged John onto the walk that led to the house, and left him to go alone to the door. John knocked loudly with the boldness of fear, and was admitted into Father Heidi's parlor.

For an hour he sat before the black-robed priest, mute and unmoving. Terror and resignation overwhelmed him as the priest pleaded and warned with all the age-old arguments and threats of the church.

Finally the priest bade John good-night, holding in his hand Danny's enrollment slip for the parochial school, signed with John's painfully-written signature.

John stumbled home through the darkness, silently. Slowly he opened the door into his kitchen and walked across the room to his wife, who was trying to clamp pocketbooks while she rocked her fretful baby.

"They got him, Mary," he said as he sank down beside her. "They've got everything now."

BEFORE WINTER

THE wind's blue, herded horses wake
And toss their short white manes across the lake.

The black hand of a tree
Waves still one little tattered yellow handkerchief
to me.
—Helen E. Howe

THREE POEMS

By

JIM CHICHESTER

WITHIN THE CIRCLES

WHAT are the shadows that the oak trees make
At night when circling with a thin blue flame
The spot we lie upon? What name
Is given to the world where life may take
A sudden step across the planes? What frame
Divides the outer dark from ours? Oh, name,
Stay hidden lest the wordless wonder break.

We sense the circle and the thinner air,
Without new sight, without the force of wings,
In emanations from the touch of hair,
Or pulse of flesh, or old imaginings.
And Love, stripped of her earthly robes
Stands bare, and in the night of flame and shadow, sings.

BLACK SUN

"BLACK sun!" he cried, and then again, "Black sun!"
His fading eyes grew wide as though a light,
Long centuries obscured, burst on his sight,
But on his face a web of pain was spun,
And those who watched said, "Now it is begun."
They waited. Shadows of the dreaded night
Fell on the room, as on a golden field a blight,
And none gave heed to what he said save one.

That one spoke simply from his own death bed
Explaining what his friend's wild words had meant.
"Two suns, one black with heavy brooding dread,
The other like a healing sacrament,
Warred in his soul until our friend was dead.
The black sun conquered when his strength was spent."

GARNER THE FIELD

GARNER the field and take the grain,
Since Spring have I been idle.
I had no fear of drought or rain;
I had no horse to bridle.

I sing a pretty summer song;
I heap no store of yellow grain,
But you'll have bread the winter long,
And I shall starve again.

KANSAS PORTRAITS

By

ALEXANDER GOTTLIEB

OLD JOHN

OLD John was always standing in the middle of his truck farm.

He was fifty years old now; he had been thirty when his wife left him for another man. Old John had not complained; he had purchased three acres just south of town, waste land the salt company was glad to get rid of, and he farmed it.

In the fall his old figure blended with the garden. He would stand among the great cornstalks, sweet corn it was, and look around him. As grizzled as the stalks was Old John, heavily-wrinkled, with a drooping gray mustache. Over the tops of the stalks he would peer at the squash, the peas, the ruffed leaves of the potato plants. Cow Creek, faded blue like old John's overalls, flowed back of the potato patch.

"Yep," Old John would jokingly comment, "my wife was like the crick,—blue, so it runs away." But there was always a catch in his throat.

PETER J.

Peter J. Graber is a German farmer who is so good-hearted he has deeded a quarter-section to each of his seven sons-in-law.

"S'dorov!" calls out Pete when he enters the store. "Moyen!"

He clumps down in a chair by the oil-burner and spreads himself in front of the shirt counter. His face is wrinkled from the Kansas winds that blow too much when one is trying to harrow the coming wheat crop. Wheat-tassles stick up from the faded blue shirt that Peter J. wears. But his face is fresh and cheerful. It beams with good-heartedness, and when he smiles, every wrinkle in his face rewrinkles itself, and his gray-ing mustache that he forgets to cut turns up its ends.

He thumps on the counter when he is ready to buy and yells out, "Sell

me a shirt, quick, I got to get back and get those cows milked. Those boys of mine are too lazy." But he laughs heartily at the thought that his boys are not the best.

JAKE SALZBURG

Jake Salzburg works in the salt mines, when he works. When he doesn't feel like working "in that goddam mine", Jake, reeking with the odor of salt brine, roams the streets. He walks into poolhalls, accosts policemen on street-corners, sits in front of hotels, or buttonholes every passerby to tell him how under-paid "us dogs down in the mine" are.

Overalls stiff around the legs with the hardened brine, wrinkled hat sharply-outlined by brine dried in its cracks, and the ever-present brine odor that will not disappear—Jake Salzburg. But Jake is proud of these clothes and his appearance.

"Hell yes," he says, "I know goddam well I smell like a skunk'd been around, but that's the way they pay us dogs down in the mines. Where the hell would I get dough for regular clothes?"

SIMPSON

"Pie-supper tonight!" Simpson would call out to me when I entered the store.

Pie-suppers were, to Simpson, stupid son of a stupid farmer, what manna was to the Hebrews in the desert. Simpson stood six feet two inches in his stocking feet, weighed 185 pounds, and was gentle as a baby.

Learning from the papers that farmers' sons were supposed to be disgusted with farms, he left, failed to pass the courses at the Salt City Business College, worked as a truck-driver at Swift's Poultry House, quit, and became a clerk in a clothing store.

Once I accused him of kissing a girl when he took her home from a pie-supper.

"Sure I kissed her," he acknowledged without shame, "and not only that, but I carried her clear from the Ford up to her front porch."

But Simpson has become ambitious and forgotten women and pie-

suppers, since he worked in the store a year;—yes, he has determined to be a champion billiard player, and he warily acknowledges winnings of \$3.65 in the last month.

SONGS FROM AFAR

Three Poems

By

STUART PALMER

FROM THE SHORE

To face into that darkness of the sea
Not as Leander went, his head held high
To catch a glimpse of a thin, far-off light
Or hear a faint sweet voice, ah no, not I.

But go as Sappho went, on a warm night,
Her soft white limbs embracing every wave,
Into the sea, her lover and her friend,
Into the sea, her lover and her grave.

To follow moonlight on the silver foam
Going as sea birds go, far out from shore,
Swimming till weariness had touched her lips,
To drift in sleeping . . . And to swim no more . . . !

PROMENADE

IN a shining house the dance begins
With the invitation of violins,
The wind blows snow against the pane
But the dancers whirl on, half-insane
With the rhythmic wail of a silver horn
While loves are ended and loves are born—
White wine is spilled on a whiter throat,
And the music sweeps to the last thin note—
Love is ended . . . as love begins,
This is the song of the violins.

TO C—

IT is over now as a storm is over,
I am free of you now as a ship is free
Of the wind that has made her a wild white rover,
Then driven her into a land-locked sea.

Here will I stay, in this quiet harbor,
Clear and serene are the lights on shore
Where a woman waits in a grape-hung arbor,
And I hear the wail of the wind no more.

A RHAPSODY IN GOLD

(being thoughts on a book by James Stephens,
yclept, *The Crock of Gold*)

By

DON TRENARY

AT the present day it is in poor taste, I realize, for one to like anything overmuch. If one does, one is socially ostracized. One's friends shed briny, silent tears when one's name is mentioned, and one's acquaintances dismiss him by a shrug of the shoulders and the word "low-brow" or "bourgeois". It is much better to say, "Ah, yes, it is good, but don't you think it has a touch of . . . ah . . . mid-Victorianism? Whereupon one's male companions give a hoot of pleasure and offer cigars, which is an advantage, and one's female companions invite one to address the Tuesday Afternoon Literary Club, which is none, and one's partner trumps one's ace out of pure admiration.

All of which is a mere prelude to the main purpose of this essay, namely, a book.

The name of the author of the book is James Stephens. He is an Irishman who, from his picture, appears to look like a cross between a gnome and a sardine sandwich. But that is not a sufficient classification. There are numerous, almost too numerous, Irishmen, many of whom look like a cross between a gnome and a sardine sandwich. There are many Stephenses, and even several James Stephenses. But there is only one James Stephens, in the biggest and best sense of the term. He is not the James Stevens who wrote highly improbable tales of one Babe and an ox that is blue. He is a quite different person. He is the James Stephens who, in his *Land of Youth*, described a positive thing, a scene, by the use of only negative elements, darkneses; who exposed the exquisite plight of Rhadamanthus in that delicious bit of dampoolery, *The Three-Penny Bit*; and who, in *Deirdre*, gave some idea of the fine magnitude of despair. He is,

in a word, that which explains everything and says nothing, James Stephens.

The name of the book is *The Crock of Gold*. The principal characters are a philosopher, his wife, several fairies, the most beautiful woman in Ireland, a pair of assorted gods, and a washboard. The story rambles genially along, stopping now to wonder what a cow thinks about, now to discourse on the song of birds, and now to trace the history of washing as an institution; sometimes it rises to description graphic yet inspiring; sometimes it gives vent to a thought that one has had often, but has been unable to put into words; sometimes it pauses, tongue in cheek, to give a puckish rap at the artificiality we call civilization; but never does it fall below the level of optimistic philosophy, of rippling prose, of literature.

But I am become frenzied. Memories of the studied, incongruous, wholly, youthfully insane discourse of the Philosopher with the policemen; of the delightful logic with which the Thin Woman confounded the Three Absolutes; of the thought-provoking dialogue between Pan and Angus Og; of every page, every paragraph, every word, come back upon me and make me an unfit product of a blase and egocentric age. I shall cease.

But there must be a last paragraph. There always is, every essay has one. So be it.

There are three kinds of books, books one would like to read, books one would like to say he has read, and books one would like to own. In the first class are *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and the *Decameron*. In the second class are *Gargantua* and the Odes of Ovid. In the third class is, without question, *The Crock of Gold*.

THE MIDDLE HOUSE

By

RUTH M. FULLER

A LONG the fence across the field from me there are three houses, and in the middle house, the white one, Martha lives; I mean she did live there, for today, just this afternoon she suddenly moved. She has gone, out to her other house, her country place. All her furniture has gone, or will be gone by tomorrow, and I should not care. I suppose I should feel relieved. Maybe she thinks I do. But I do not.

This is the reason. At night after I have gone to bed, in that brief period before sleep comes I have got into the habit of thinking about her. Not in a detailed way as of Martha reading in her orange reed chair, or Martha writing at her desk, or Martha preparing for bed, but just of Martha in the middle house just across the field from me, near me right then and all the time. It has become increasingly pleasant. But I have done nothing to show her how I felt. And now I have leisure to repent.

Tonight when all the lights are out and the stillness is oppressive I shall look through my two windows with their ruffled curtains and clear glass, at the stars and the slow-gliding moon almost surrounded by gray clouds, and I will think the familiar thoughts again. Martha is just across the field in her house. I shall see her tomorrow morning. She is a dear, a lovely woman. You are not to misunderstand me; she is lovely in mind and thoughts and character; she looks lovely too, especially in her yellow silk dress and in her fur coat. Her loveliness is not altogether the same as R. M. J.'s, but *she is another* story.

Well, tonight I shall lie gazing at the cloudy moon half-dreaming of Martha, and ugly dismal reality will tramp up the stairs and burst into my mind shattering the beautiful illusions right and left giant-like till nothing is left, but pieces glistening

like scattered glass across a highway. And cold emptiness will begin its ghostly vigil. Martha is no longer in the white house across the field. Her pretty drapes are down; her books are gone; her orange chair is gone; nothing is there.

I shall dream all night what I have half-thought for days and nights about her.

And now morbid imagination reads this unforseen plan into all her recent actions, and I blame myself for a million small appreciative things I did not say and do, for one reason, or another, or no reason. Yes, now I have become wrought-up at my neglect and disappointed that my plans have been shattered. I have done nothing, and my days of grace for doing something are at an end. Grim reality has laid my illusions low, and tonight my whole house rocks and totters in the raging wind. The cloudy moon grins leeringly at me through the window between the ruffled curtains as it glides by.

Martha is not in the middle house beside the fence across the field from me. All her furniture is gone, or will be gone by tomorrow. Nothing is there. The middle house stands out stark in the moonlight like a woman in a white nightgown.

Writing this has helped; it has swept the floors and flung the broken illusion pieces clattering on the ash-pile; it has driven ghastly reality clomping down the stairs and out. I would have cried, but now I cannot.

GETHEMANE

O CHRIST, they who talk
Of thy suffering
Know not thy keenest pain
Was loneliness,
The loneliness of being
Without a peer.

—Vera Root

TWO SONNETS

By

CONAR KILAINE

BECAUSE I found you in that outworn span
Of year, when summer, over-ripe and lush,
Faltered, then with a reckless haste began
To scatter gifts in last refulgent rush;
Because we saw the wanton moon arise
From her deep bed where sleeps the pulsing sea,
I kissed your parted lips with listless sighs
And told soft love words, murmured carelessly

You are forgotten now, save when again
Some scent of blossoms long since past their prime
Drifts through the heavy air. . . . I feel no pain
In finding love dies in a harsher time.

I know our love had been a stronger thing
My dear, had I but met you in the spring. . . .

THE lonely wheeling gull in flight will cry
Above some shaken stretch of coast and then,
As with the wind-blown spume his call goes by,
Then will you know my loneliness. Seek when
The dawn has struck the brazen gong of day
Above the universe, to find some peace
In life, some beauty long since fled away
From out your cramping soul, and know surcease
From pain awaits you now within my arms
No more. Soon will you learn to know
Defeat, as now I know it. Your own charms
Awaken me no more and life runs slow.

Ah, yes, you yet will know and need some day
The love your fair white hands have cast away.

DAWN AT SEA

By

STUART PALMER

ALL that there was to meet my eye
Was sky and sea and sea and sky
And one lone seagull swinging by.

It seemed no sun had ever shone—
I stood and watched an hour, alone—
The changes in that monotone.

The cold gray seaweed drifted past,
A golden streak slipped down the mast,
And then the sun was up at last!

WHAT IS JUNE?

By

JIM CHICHESTER

THERE is no voice tonight.
The purple martin cries,
A golden slice of moon
Sails through the glowing skies.

There is no moon tonight.
The words of love are still—
Lilac scent; a lonely sound,
Two woods on the hill.

There is no voice tonight,
Nor tears upon my cheek.
Oh what is June to me—
Unless, unless you speak?

CHINESE ADVICE

INVITE guests,
But do not invite woman guests.
To have three women—
Hundred birds leaving nest.
—Kwei Chen

LOVERS

THE sun and the moon are lovers
Who wander through the night
And the day
Apart,
Lead on by the promise
Of a momentary meeting
At dawn
And again
At dusk.

—Vera Root

THE FLAME

By

LEWIS HERZBERG

AFIRE huddled to the earth,
And seethed and glowered there.
And caught the shadows unaware,
And scattered them—and sent them where
The wild cat lingered in his lair.

The flame leapt high and higher still,
The shadows fled across the hill—
The trees were lighted by the flame
That mocked the dark—and laughed inane
To see the shadows disappear,
When ere its flaming tongue appeared—
And sent them flying.

The flame leapt high—but
Its life was spent—
It could but die;
And from where it sent
The shadows flying across the hill,
Softly they came stealing back
Defiant, for the flame now lacks
The power to do them harm.

Once more the wood enshrouded lay;
Once more enveloped in its cloak,
And hidden was its bright array
Well guarded by the lingering smoke—

EDITORIAL

As this world of transient phenomena forces itself upon our consciousness more and more with each new daily contact with life, we are forced to admit that there is something missing. Surely, life is not so perfect as we had thought before we began looking for perfection. Again we repeat, something is lacking—a good many things, in fact.

That is essentially not a new discovery, except as it relates to the things we have in mind. But it is something to talk about; and editorials must say *something*. We have heard it said, too, in composition classes and elsewhere, that one should write only of the things one knows about; and while that limits our scope painfully, still we believe that there is something lacking. We shall try to explain ourselves.

It seems that at one time or another we went so far as to deplore "the passage of what might now be termed 'the golden age' of art and literature at Wisconsin." And as time takes us farther and farther in the other direction, we are more certain that "the golden age" is one of the vital things that is missing. Perhaps it comes and goes; we are not deluded into thinking that we are riding on its crest. The quality of material which has appeared in the Lit (and it is the best to be obtained here) is adequate proof to the contrary.

We are not confessing that we have failed. We have done what we could to arouse interest, to collect manuscript that is not altogether childish, and to publish a literary magazine in the best traditions of the Lit of a more golden age than this. If anything, the University has failed. It has not given the Lit (and this may apply to other literary ventures as well, as far back as such ventures go) the support it should have as a comparatively worthy enterprise. Of course we do not hope to compete with a humorous publication, or with amateur theatricals; but it would seem that the faculty, at least, might be interested to a slight degree. The president himself continues to write inspirational blurbs for newspaper syndication.

Here is something which interests us. We have in our yearly subscription list the names of at least five professors. And that is not because they have not been given the oppor-

tunity to subscribe. In fact, one worthy professor of English, when asked to purchase a copy, assailed us with fine scorn and these words: "Oh, the Lit is much too sophisticated for us professors!" Perhaps he does not realize how much material we are forced to use out of his very department, for lack of more creative work done with the urge of creation itself.

Of course the faculty turns with interest to a very fine first novel written by one of its members. (See book section for review.) We grasp at this as possible evidence of the beginning of a new "golden age," but remember immediately that it is but one sign, and not from the student body where such a revival naturally must begin. On the other hand, a novel from a former—student rebel, shall we say—if it creates a stir at all, creates one of disapproval. He has done something unprecedented; fie on him.

"Why, he's famous—he has published in *The Dial*," says the enthusiastic youngster.

And the faculty frowns at too much sophistication! Well, what of it? We feel honored that some of the material published within the past year is to appear in *The Dial*. It is proof to us that the Lit is not yet altogether dead. Why, then, do we not rest content? Probably because the search for some degree of perfection is far more intriguing than self-satisfaction.

"So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."

That might be the end, but it is not.

With the aid of a new president, a slightly tolerant board of regents, and a continuous drive for money, a bigger and better college is growing up around us. More education for more people for less money, (eventually, seems to be the motto in this new era of pedagogy. Its spirit is strident in the clamor of riveters and the horns of motor-cars. B. A. degrees for the multitude!

But where do art and literature come in? Oh, the Lit has a nice, cozy office in a basement, and it will have to move next week—to make room for a more prosperous organization. The Bascom addition contains an amateur stage: competition for musical comedy. The University will build another library—some day. And so forth.

Of course true art does not need palatial quarters nor ideal surroundings. We are inclined to cherish the romantic conception that the best art has been produced in attics—at least, in surroundings, not always too sympathetic, in which the artist finds himself.

Thus far, however, we have discovered very few attics; and we are not sure whether this lack has very much to do with the present sterility of artistic production. We are more inclined to see it in the unsympathetic attitude of faculty and students, in the general spirit of material progress, manifest so completely on every hand in our daily lives. However, it is said that if a person is going to write, he will write regardless of all existing circumstances. Then, the writing that is not done only goes to prove that the very urge of self-expression is absent as well.

Perhaps the picture is not quite so dark as we have painted it. We may have been blinded with looking too hard and too long at "the golden age," when youth clamored to be heard and insisted that people listen. In those days, youth had something to say;

and when he had said it here, he went out into the world, still demanding attention—and getting it. He is out there now, writing a novel, or painting a picture; publishing in *The Dial*, or writing strong, courageous words not learned in college. He will not be absorbed by the glorious spirit of American progress; he is unwilling to admit that such a state exists, for he is not part of it. Rather, he remembers when he was part of "the golden age" of a youth not far distant; and his present achievements grow out of the glory of those days.

That is what we miss, half in sadness and half in joy, because those days of more than ordinary significance existed and now are gone. It has been our aim to bring them back, and if we have not succeeded, at least we have contributed our effort in the very tangible form of the Lit. Its contents stand, not so much for the attainment of an ideal as for the striving toward something we dimly remember as brave and true and good.

And now, for the last time, "Ave atque Vale."
—C. G. S.

IT RAINED FOR TWO DAYS

By

HELEN E. HOWE

OLD things that were, brood under roofs at night,
In darkness unfolds the great fragrant rain flower.

The sun is shining. The rain is dancing by the blue hills
in a beaded skirt.

I hear at night the swaying of the rain,
A tall sad field of many voiced grass
In which the wind walks always.

Waken, you closed in the dark dream of low singing,
Day comes, and the spell is not lifted, but continues,
Still unravels, in dusk, the enchanted fabric of silver,
Still the long pearls slip from the murmurous drifting threads.
A grey light is.

DEMI-GODS

By

JAMES HATCHER

DORIAN Gray would seem like a smudged charcoal drawing beside the clean-cut beauty of Mark. His wavy, blond pompadour crowns a high forehead. Clear blue eyes and a determined chin further signify strength of character. The proud head tops a well-knit body of medium height. Mark *is* handsome.

He walks firmly and carries himself with an almost martial bearing. People say of him, "There is a boy who knows where he is going."

To see him is an inspiration. Mark unconsciously radiates youth and health and high, perhaps unattainable, ideals. His passing is like a life-giving breath. You feel quickened to higher and better things—you evolve vague, beautiful thoughts.

The other day Mark wrote a play. It was a morbid, tragic thing with the scene laid in an undertaker's back room and with two cadavers as stage furniture. And the chief character, a drab little undertaker's assistant, committed suicide at the final curtain.

* * * * *

Pan loved beauty. His sensitive soul responded instantly to the stimulation of fair women, good music, art, drama, true literature. He appreciated the classic elegance of the Greeks, and idolized handsome bodies. Whatever was crude, deformed, uncouth, or ugly grated on Pan like the harsh rasp of a dull file. If his surroundings were not beautiful, he sought solace in books, reading always the things of pure beauty—Edgar Saltus, Oscar Wilde, d'Annunzio. Pan loved tasteful clothes and jewels—he had a topaz of at least 50 carats.

One day in a large museum he saw a delicately molded marble of Sappho. It was an exquisite, dreamy piece stimulating to the imagination. To Pan it was soul-stirring. His desire for this marble became intense. The more he looked at it, the more the mania grew with him that he *must* have it.

That night a lecture was given in a distant wing of the museum. Pan attended, slipped away to his beloved Sappho, knotted a soft cord about her slender neck, and lowered her out of a window.

When he was arrested, he told police that he had been hypnotized by an old lawyer, who was an incurable art addict. The judge sent Pan to the state penitentiary for five years and his soul became famished with lack of beauty. Only ugliness and vice and suffering were about him.

One morning they found him strangled by the sheet he had knotted to the high bars of his cell window, and this note lay on the narrow table:

"I am a pagan—sheer beauty is the daily food of my life—I have been starved to death."

* * * * *

Dick wandered slowly into the house the other day with a whimsical expression playing about his lips and eyes. He seemed somehow a little more mature. I thought, maybe Dick has seen light and intends to hit the books in a final splurge before exams. All through the semester he had drifted aimlessly, cutting far too many classes, never studying, frequently getting tight and distracting the freshmen from their work. His attitude had been careless and a little defiant.

Dick didn't want to stay in school. Ever since his father died last year he had ached to get a job and support his mother, but she had insisted on his graduating and Dick had drifted along with no heart in his studies.

A fine body developed by football, a quiet air, a likeable character—that was Dick.

His roommate, Jack, entered the living room shortly after and planted himself on the davenport beside me. From him I learned the reason for Dick's saddened, slightly older expression. His little mistress, Ev, had been taken away to jail in another city.

UHLINE

By

DOROTHY KORNHAUSER

I

IT is difficult to write of Uhline—knowing him, as I did, on and off—and particularly since he has been dead now, nearly three years. Death, somehow, changes your point of view. There is a certain sentiment attached to it, especially in regard to a person who has interested you more than the rest, that often leaves your final opinion more tolerant than critical. Perhaps, too, you are just a trifle more lenient because you are a bit shocked and awed at the unexpected news of a person's passing, and the surprise of it lives with you long after—although I confess that I was not surprised, and that I had always felt that death in Uhline's case was imminent.

I knew him first at the University where we were Juniors together. I had known him before that, but only by campus talk and under-graduate gossip. People took no pains to hide the fact that throughout the whole school he was universally disliked by faculty and students—both men and women, who had no kind words for him, except a forced bit of praise for his brilliant record. The reason, I think, was because they were afraid of him—afraid of his cool grey eyes, the thin lines of his lips, the cutting clarity of his voice; not that he was ever definitely rude or aggressively over-bearing, but it is true that he bore himself as a person quite aloof from the student body—mentally and physically. Coming, as he did, from a long line of famous and distinguished New Englanders, and brought up, as he was, in ultra-formal and dignified surroundings, it must have pained him considerably to rub shoulders with the sons and daughters of small-town business men and middle-western farmers. At this time, the State University was rather a local affair, and there were few Easterners from larger cities in attendance. People asked 'why the duce' he'd

come, or why he didn't go to Harvard where he'd find plenty of his own kind. Personally, I believe he came out of a certain curiosity, and because the 'crudities of Mid-Western civilization,' as he dared to say, might give him the opportunity to make a superior impression. There is no doubt but that he was superior—always well-dressed and carefully poised, and he did get splendid grades. How well I remember (in those spring days when neither of us had opened a book for a week) sitting in a back row trembling in my boots, while Uhline recited blandly and quietly under the very nose of the professor! Half the time it was probably the exceeding sureness with which he faced the world that forced it to believe in the genuineness of his ability. At any rate, the faculty called him 'The sophisticated young gentleman from Boston,' in a tone that was not always complimentary, and the students mimicked his curt nod—the shrug of his thin shoulders, and dubbed him 'my lord, Snob,' which was highly indicative of their feelings.

We became acquainted on a fine spring day, when he suggested cutting a class we had in common to go for a walk. To say that I was startled and not a little flattered is putting it mildly. Perhaps it was because he wanted some one to talk to—since no one, I suppose, can be continually dependent on himself for entertainment—or perhaps he wished to be amused at my expense—whatever his motive, he was careful not to show it, but spoke of things in general, books, classes, sports—but not much of sports. He disliked strenuous activities, nor can I imagine him flushed and panting, sweating his heart out at a game of football, or something of the sort, like the rest of us. With the unreasonable snobbishness of a royal official, he considered it below his dignity.

'That sort of thing,' he said disdainfully, 'belongs to the herd. The cultured minority are interested in higher thought and education, along with material success and social prestige.'

At the end I left him, cursing him out as a stupid, conceited ass—trying to put on airs—a prig—a sissy—narrow-minded—intolerant, and a list of other things that occurred to me at this moment of wrath. But I was obliged to admit that he was not stupid—his marks proved that—and he was no sissy. He was as I and as far as I know afraid of nothing on God's green earth—except, perhaps, loss of position.

As the days passed, I began to see a great deal of him, even though I had so thoroughly scorned him at our first interview. His sincere and perfect faith in himself amazed and fascinated me, and I found myself spending long evenings at his rooms, whose extreme neatness from book-case to shoe-shelf never ceased to astound me. He seemed to know exactly where each article lay and his letters and papers were carefully pigeon-holed. I can always see him sitting quietly at his desk, his long, elegant fingers continually putting things to rights—straightening odds and ends, while he talked quickly and firmly as though he were addressing the whole world. He had an unusual gift of speaking his thoughts in a concise and clear manner—possibly because they too were pigeon-holed in his mind like everything else he possessed—and to me, his ideas were simply stupendous; doubtless it was because I was younger than he and consequently less mature. But even now, eight years later, when I consider him as he was, I cannot believe that a boy his age (twenty-two at the most) could possess the information, the mental poise and introspective capacity that he had attained. Most likely it was the result of his upbringing in a stern and scholarly atmosphere and the fact that he had done a tremendous amount of reading. At any rate he was far beyond

me and though I realized that he used me merely as an excellent and accommodating listener, my curiosity forced me to forgive him any number of times for the arrogance of his attitude.

Our Junior year ended with a discussion of this very thing—superiority.

I shall never forget that last hot June night, when school was over—when the streets of this little town that depended so greatly on college for their very life and whatever gaiety it might bring them, lay silent and somehow saddened at the passing of those young feet. I believe that Uhline, too, felt the solemn quiet of this night, broken only by the steady whirr of gaslights and their retinue of hard-backed beetles and fluttering moths, but he only remarked in a slightly cruel tone, that the fields were pleasantly quiet, now that the 'herd' had gone. As we walked, he went on:

'I speak of them as the "herd," because they are to an extent blind, dumb, unintellectual—as unaesthetic as cattle. They make me sick with the vulgarities of their thoughts and actions.

'Sometimes in classes I've nearly gone mad listening to those stupid fellows with nothing but the blood of peasants in their veins, airing their corn-beef views on the vivid beauty of Keats or the aerial charm of Shelley, My God, man—what's the good? Only a lot of laborers going to waste. I suppose in generations to come they shall be lifted intellectually at the expense of the minority of people like you and me, and our poor professors. But until then I'll be damned if I'll associate with them. I'm through with this place. I've had enough of their black bread and sour wine. If you come from a family like mine, high-born for generations and of nation-wide importance for centuries, it's easy enough to inherit the feeling that democracy is a tremendous bore. The only way out is to keep the upper hand. Make 'em afraid if you must. Aristocracy has lasted these many

years because of the power of fear. Everything lasts because of that—religion, tradition, whole dynasties, even love. And I shall win, too, because they are afraid of me already, in my desires for intellectual and material wealth and power. When I die, I shall go knowing that I am as far superior to them as the tallest sky-scraper to the meanest peasant's hut!

You can imagine the effect of this speech on me. I could have screamed with laughter at his unbounded conceit, and at the fool he was making of himself before me, or I could have torn his wild ideas to pieces—the utter rot he had been talking—his narrowness and blind one-sidedness, and yet on the other hand, I had a distinct desire to run away from him, to leave him and his cold, scheming ambitions, because, though I hate to admit it—there was something in his voice that made me afraid. But all I did, was to say, a bit sarcastically:

'You sound like the boy Napoleon. Just what are you going to make of yourself—who are you planning to become, God or Plato or Mr. Rockefeller?' With the lack of understanding that accompanies such an ego, he took me quite seriously.

'Perhaps,' he said, flicking away his cigarette into the street, 'I shall be a combination of all three.'

II

When I came back to school for my Senior year, I found that Uhline had not returned. No one had heard from him during the summer and consequently knew nothing of his whereabouts. I believe that while the campus was relieved at his disappearance, it also missed him. It missed his slim, commanding figure, his good-looking clothes, his abstract air and ultra-casual half-smile.

In December I had an unexpected letter.

'My dear Hathaway,' it began, and then after some formal preliminaries—

'No doubt it will amuse you to hear that the Rockefeller clause of our con-

versation has been thoroughly nipped in the bud. Shortly after I left school, my father, for whom I have always had immense respect and admiration, committed suicide, having lost the whole of our fortune and those of most of our friends in a fake investment. It has practically been proved that he had planned to profit at their expense, but something slipped—I refrain from giving you the details as it only makes the picture so much blacker. At any rate you can guess that the whole business was a horrible blow to me, since I could not and cannot believe that my father—one of the most respected and powerful of all the Uhlines—could have stooped to such a thing. As a result, I have been for the last five months, a poor orphan thrust on life's treacherous tide at the mercy of the cruel world, or some such rot. In fact I am faced with becoming a clerk at Philene's or secretary to J. B. Yates, of Yates and Loeb Establishment of Interior Decorating. It is not very difficult, is it, to guess which I shall choose? Yates was a small-town banker from somewhere in the West, and is now one of the richest interior decorators in Boston—a man with no more refinement than a pig, but of remarkable and dynamic energy. He has a daughter, Victorine—fat and coarse. She reminds me of some heavily scented cheap perfume. Loeb is a greasy little Jew with a brain like an adding machine and marvelous artistic taste, who is responsible for the reputation of the business, and owns the best half of it. Should I obtain this position, I find that I shall be used as a buffer between these two and the nouveau-riche trade that the firm caters to. They were tremendously pleased with my appearance, and never fear, I shall be careful to strike the right note. My name itself is a drawing-card. In time—who knows? I may become indispensable—'

And so on, with his usual cool confidence, and these broad assumptions that were positively child-like in their faith. I could picture Uhline's face

as he wrote that letter, stern but nevertheless boyish in contour, with his jaw set against the agony of disgrace, but more firmly set with determination in regard to his future.

The next letter came in June. I think I am not wrong in imagining a marked change in his attitude. There were no preliminaries. He merely wrote:

'How different this June from last! I almost envy you the quiet of that dumpy little town and those long hours in inevitable class-rooms. Anything would be better than my stuffy little office and this heat! My God, what weather. Hot, damp, humid—you know what Boston's like in the summer. And the people! Speaking of the herd—nothing but fat, fussy fools—in and out of here every day, and most of them women at that, with nothing on their minds but how to get ahead of their neighbors in the matter of walnut side-boards or furnishings for Victorian bed-rooms. You can't teach them originality or the meaning of the word taste. Sometimes I am tempted to tell them what garish artists they are—insult them some way or other—but I suppose there's a certain loyalty to anything you're tied to,—business or marriage or your own principles, that keeps enforced graciousness intact, and contracts piling into Yates and Loeb. Nevertheless, I loathe these dullard plutocrats as only a Uhline could, and my only amusement in these moments is to see their reaction to the correctness of my personality. Could you see them put on corresponding "airs," it would do your heart good. I loathe, them, more, if possible, than those low, unprincipled fakers, Yates and Loeb, but I shall beat them—wait and see. I was not born a Uhline for nothing.'

I omit the rest—but you can see for yourself, that although Uhline was still determined, the coolness of his attitude was fast disappearing. I think for the first time in his life, he was coming in contact with people and circumstances that were stronger than he. It must have been Hell for

him—taking orders from either Yates or Loeb, upon whom, if the truth were known, he had probably not impressed the nobility of his mind and person to such a great degree; and bowing before the god of money—the sort of thing that would most deeply offend him. Undoubtedly he was a materialist in a certain sense, but most likely the materialistic methods of Yates and Loeb were not on the same level of fineness as his own. Indeed, from what I learned afterwards, a person less well-bred and less sensitive than Uhline might well have been disgusted. At the time, in memory of his arrogance, I felt a sort of exultation in the fact that (as I gleaned between the lines) he was being properly squelched. After all, didn't he deserve it? But now that I have read this letter over—I have nothing but pity for his extreme youth, which, in its lack of logic and the real knowledge of things as they are, made him as much at home in the world's china closet as the proverbial bull.

III

In June, 1923, I went to Boston on business,—three years after that letter from Uhline. In the meantime I had heard nothing about him or from him, and though for months I forgot him, somehow or other, I caught myself speculating now and then, as to just what happened to him—whether that ridiculous conceit of his foisted on the world, by a still more ridiculous will, had triumphed or been trampled on.

After some delay, I discovered his name in the 'phone book and decided to call on him without first letting him know. Oddly enough the evening reminded me of that first June night—the same heat and brooding quiet in Boston's narrow streets—the same June beetles buzzing in irritating attendance on the weary street-lights. I found his house at No. 27, Mt. Vernon Street—a street of musty old houses that had at one time rivaled those of Beacon Hill, but now stood in shabby pseudo-respectability. Frankly, I could not picture

Uhline in these surroundings without vague forebodings of ill-fortune.

A woman came to the door, and on my explaining that I was an old acquaintance of Uhline's begged me to come into the living-room. As I followed her down the gas-lit hall, I smelled the heavy scent of some cheap perfume. I sat down opposite and couldn't help but notice her nervous, restless manner and the fact that her painted cheeks were streaked as though she had been crying. A diamond comb sparkled in her black hair and her dress had some sort of jet trimmings that sparkled in spite of their sombre nature. It was with a little shock of distaste that I learned she was Mrs. Uhline.

I have often heard Rodney speak of you,' she began in a shrill unpleasant voice, 'and from all he said I should imagine that you were just about his only friend. He weren't so popular at college, I take it?' I hastened to assure her of the contrary. For some reason, I felt ill at ease—perhaps it was the heat—and I was suddenly sorry that I had come.

'Personally,' she went on, 'I'm all for havin' friends—the more the merrier! I always said that to Rodney, but he never seen my point. It was like that from the start, although he used to be pretty nice to me all right, when he was working for Dad. Once we got married (leaning toward me confidentially) an ice-berg couldn't ha' been any colder, and gosh how he disapproved! I know you don't mind my telling you this, but you're a friend of his and besides you're a good listener, you are. (I wonder if Uhline had told her that, too.) Anyhow he hated my friends; "loud," he called 'em and "garish" and "vulgar." Now if there's one thing I'm not, it's "vulgar."'

I hoped that my eyes, roving nervously as they did about this room, seeing first the sofa with its sagging springs and shabby cushions, the lamp with its pink shade and gold fringe, and the gaudy velvet curtains that hung in the door-way, would

not betray the fact that I could have burst out laughing—not because she amused me (far from it!) but because the thought of Uhline in these surroundings was such a wholly monstrous idea.

'Of course I was a fool to marry him, but I loved him then just as much as I hate him now. Only two years ago, too! I was just a kid then, but I'm a woman now!'

There was a mysterious and sinister triumph in her voice and expression that made me turn away, disgusted by those heavy-lidded black eyes and dirty, pink-enamelled fingernails that picked at a rip in the sofa cushion.

'You see the way it was, Dad took sick,—high blood pressure—and when he was dying, he made a will leaving his share of the business to me. Then Rodney saw his chance to get a foot in the business, so he—he married me. He was smooth, he was; Dad and Loeb had it fixed up between themselves that I was to marry Loeb. Imagine that for a husband! And when Loeb got on to our marriage which we'd been keeping quiet, he goes and tells Dad—sick as he was. Well, Dad just naturally threw a fit and the first thing he did was to tear up his will, leaving everything to Loeb, and then the shock killed him. At least that's one time that Uhline wasn't so smart, and believe me, I always held it up to him!'

'What I didn't put up with after that, isn't worth talking about. He was always correcting me for the way I talked and dressed—what I ate—who I saw—what I bought. Married me for my money, he did, and then treated me like dirt—!' She broke off furiously and turned her spiteful black eyes on the head of the Arab warrior, hanging disdainfully in all its Oriental glory against the wall.

'It's not as if I didn't try to smooth things over, because I knew the whole thing was a mistake; but I guess I didn't know how. Whenever I got a bit affectionate—and why shouldn't I? I had a perfect right to, being his wife—he'd send me away like you

would a dog and I was fool enough to stand for it. But he acted so superior all the time that I began to be afraid of him. And who wouldn't I'd like to know? Acting like I wasn't as good as he, just because we didn't like the same things and silly things like that.'

She pulled a crumpled handkerchief out of her lace sleeve and began to weep-unashamed by my presence. I didn't know quite what to do. But since I had no sympathy to offer I asked hurriedly:

'What happened then?'

'Rod got a job in a dry goods store—twenty-five per,' she went on, controlling herself. 'He had to, because Loeb fired him and we had to live somehow. You can bet it was swell for me after I'd been living like a lady ever since I'd come to Boston. Finally I couldn't stand it any longer so I got a job, too, and I didn't see Rod any more than I had to. He got worse and worse; there was no living with him. He used to come home nights and rave around about the poor guys he worked next to—gosh, you'd think it was a criminal disgrace to be a clerk! Sometimes I was afraid he'd go clear off his nut talking the way he did about "being a gentleman" and "lowering yourself" and hating plain folks. If he didn't preach at me, he'd sit there sour and glum as though his life was an awful failure. He was only twenty-eight, too, I told him we'd better separate—that I was gonna leave him, but he took hold of me and talked an hour on duty and loyalty to principles and marriage and anything you set out to do. He said we were going to stick this out, and he was gonna be famous and wonderful and God knows what all. Sometimes I was terribly proud of him, to hear him talk, and he was such a gentleman, too, with real looks and real manners—not like the boys I've always known. But I had too much common sense to feel that way often; he was superior all right, but he was crazy, too,—crazy on the subject of *being* somebody; and once he was, he wasn't gonna give a hang

for anybody else, either. After he shot himself, I honestly didn't know whether to be glad or sorry. I think he did it because for all his big talk, he really was afraid—afraid of common people, you know, and afraid to soil his lily white self, mixing up with the other side of life that wasn't so nice as he'd been used to. Guess he just couldn't stand things, and me, or my friends, or working or living here.' She stopped short, but added reminiscently, 'I was scared of him, and I hated him, but I loved him, too. Funny, isn't it?'

It's no funnier in Victorine's case than in mine. I felt as she did about him, but of course, in a much more unemotional and unintimate way, as if he were a curious character from a book, rather than a human being. As I said in the beginning, death begets sympathy; somehow I must defend him. In reality I do not think he killed himself because he was a coward, but simply because the creed he was loyal to, turned out to be false, and rather than live a life that was against every principle he believed in, he took the most graceful way of giving the stage to the herd—getting out mind you, before it took possession. I do not for one moment feel that he died realizing it had trampled on him.

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS IN CHICAGO By Ben Hecht

Pascal Covici \$2.50.

A new Hecht anthology is always of interest, but here we have a book that is of a double interest. In the first place, it contains some of the finest sketches and tales that the author has done, all of them dealing with Chicago, and the majority with Bohemian Chicago. But the second point—it is one of the most beautiful books on the stands this year. Bound in a colorful paper cover and each page decorated with black and white cubist sketches, it cannot help but appeal to the artistic eye. It is a book for the collector and for the connoisseur of artistic book-making.

M. R. S.

BOOK NOTES

THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY

By Will Durant

Simon & Schuster \$5.00

College sophomores, just learning to think for themselves, openly push aside the book that is written down for them—and secretly keep it in mind to read, surreptitiously if necessary, at the first opportunity. *The Story of Philosophy* is such a book. They prefer, at least, to say they have read Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* or Spinoza's *Tractatus Politicus*. They are sophomores.

When they have reached the dignity—and the wisdom—of juniors and seniors, or if they grow only into maturer sophomores, they learn that a little knowledge is better than a reference list of barren titles. Then will they cease to look with scorn upon the outline, the story, the lecture.

No doubt, of the thousands who take elementary and advanced courses in philosophy each year, no more than a few have the interest and the courage to humanize it for themselves. Ethics, politics, logic—dry material, unless presented as in our own incomparable Philosophy 25.

But now, Will Durant, himself a college professor and I imagine a sympathetic one, has humanized philosophy by humanizing the philosophers. His book is a story, *The Story of Philosophy*, of the lives and dreams and struggles of men who loved Truth in all things, and exactness and clarity of mind. They wanted to know the "why" and "how" of life, of thought which derives from life, and even of death; so they reached out into worlds unknown, unexplored, to satisfy an intellectual curiosity which could not be denied.

Socrates, eternally questioning, expecting no answer but that which echoed with his words; Aristotle, with his world growing from an inner reality; in England, Francis Bacon, concise metaphysicist, scientist, essayist; then Spinoza; Voltaire with a great political philosophy; the gigantic intellectualism of the Germans, comprising an idealism and a practical basis

for all philosophy, represented by Kant, Hegel, the pessemistic Schopenhauer, the inspiring Nietzsche; and on to American philosophers, including, of course, William James who wrote words with wings—they are all there, and more. Mr. Durant dismisses the Epicureans with a sentence, and we feel the loss. But such a gigantic opus, "the lives and opinions of the greater philosophers," even though it be written for the popular mind, must necessarily suffer exclusions.

Needless to say, *The Story of Philosophy* is not intended to be used as a text-book. It is too well written for that. But as a valuable reference for the jaded mind grown weary with a mathematical study of philosophy, the book should be on every student's book shelf. Nor can we learn profound philosophy from it. Its most important use is in the humanizing of knowledge, which it does in the easy, familiar manner of the popular lecturer. Fortunately Mr. Durant has a sense of humor, which, if it descends to punning occasionally, is welcome in a work of this kind.

The most important facts to be noted are that this book is written in an interesting style, presented so that its contents can be understood, even by the sophomoric mind, and that it is bound and illustrated beautifully. Its contents remain for the reader to glean for his own wisdom and pleasure.

C. G. S.

THE SOMBRE FLAME By Samuel Rogers

Payson & Clark Ltd. \$2.50.

Already Alan Folke is a living character to us, a disappointed old man locked into the darkest recesses of his mind, never to escape. And we hate Justine, thoroughly—except at such moments when we admire the very things in her that we hate. But why did he marry her? Why was she untrue to him? Why did he leave her, only to be tormented for years with the vision of her? The eternal why—and as we ask ourselves those questions, the answers are realized in the analysis of the characters



Samuel Rogers

which Mr. Rogers has made. He has left no detail half-told, no inner quality unrevealed. And the whole has been done in a workmanlike and artistic manner. *The Sombre Flame* is undoubtedly a carefully written novel; we noted niceties of writing that are conspicuously absent from the hurried work of the modern novelist. Psychologically, too, it seems to be a sincere and authentic presentation of emotions which have grown out of very human situations. For his characters are human as only mankind with all his faults and some of his virtues can be. Alan, with his New England sense of right and wrong, his sensitive nature, and his vain hope that seclusion would heal his wounds; Justine, who never understood him and who was so far from his world, centering her interest around her selfish desires; Mrs. Folke and Jean—they are all part of a story that comes to life as we read. But Mr. Rogers has not left his characters to their own devices; their story is sombre and bitter and caustic, cast through at times with a beauty that lies in fine writing and in thinking that is clear and clean-cut.

No one who reads *The Sombre Flame* will forget its story that progresses almost with tragic fatality through incident after incident of defeat to the only end that is possible. It is a fine book, sincerely written.

C. G. S.

THE ROAD TO THE TEMPLE By
Susan Glaspell
Frederick A. Stokes \$3.00

In life, George Cram Cook had many friends. And now, this biography written by his wife will add as many more as read the book and marvel at the man who was born on the Mississippi and died in the shadow of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. Half biography, half autobiography, gleaned from the countless jottings and notes that he left, gleaned from personal contact with the man, and from an inner sense of his greatness of spirit, Miss Glaspell has written more than that. She has re-created the man who was her husband; and his story reads more thrillingly than any novel.

Always profoundly aware of the world about him, of illimitable space and time, and of the wonder of life itself, Jig Cook, very early in life, discovered to some degree the reason for being. He held his arms to heaven, and all else was forgotten for the moment. Living the simple life of a farmer, that he might have time to think and write, using his Harvard and Heidelberg education as the means to an end, he went even farther into the realm of the unknown.

But he was not content to remain there beside the Mississippi. He came to Chicago, then to Provincetown, where he organized the Provincetown Players. Jig Cook it was who first produced the plays of the young Eugene O'Neill on the Provincetown stage, always with the ideal of that group in mind, to furnish an opportunity for the creation of a new beauty in American art for the sake of the art itself.

Always he kept in mind his childhood dream of Greek beauty and life; and when he thought his work in America was done, he went to Greece, to the Parthenon, to Olympus, to the land of long-sought gods. There he lived, learning the Greek language and customs, living intensely and beautifully as Socrates might have lived.

Undoubtedly Jig Cook was a strong character; one might even call him a great man. Miss Glaspell could not have made him more a god if she had omitted his faults and carried him to Olympus on her praise. But her picture of his life, her re-creation of it, interspersed with the living words of the man himself, is adequate to arouse respect and admiration and friendship from all who read this biography. It is the kind of book one takes up, knowing he is going to talk with an old friend. A great work and a great man.

C. G. S.

BLACK APRIL By Julia Peterkin.
Bobbs Merrill \$2.50.

Black April is more than a novel—it is the revelation of a race, the drawing of the curtain on an old play that has never been presented. Julia Peterkin has caught the fundamental traits of the negro race and has displayed them in a manner so plain, so appealing, and in parts, so repelling, that she has succeeded in presenting a picture of sincerity and of realism.

With the expectation of another *Nigger Heaven* and with a vague hope for something different, *Black April* was a great surprise. It is a new kind of novel with a new kind of subject. There is no plot, or at least, no development of the character of a particular individual. Instead, the presentation is of a group, and the novel is centered on that group, rather than on an individual. The character of Black April stands out, of course, but he is not a real hero. We can call him the leading character, perhaps, but only because he is the leader of the colony and of the life on Blue Brook plantation.

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Black April shows the ruling factors in negro life, and the author has made these factors so real that at last the negro is understandable in a measure at least. The superstitious fear and the lust of the negro are drawn in such a way as to explain the entire race.

Black April is not a novel that one will read and forget. Its very life will make it live long in the memories of its readers.
M. R. S.

THE OLD COUNTESS By Anne Douglas Sedgwick
Houghton Mifflin Company \$2.00

That indefinable something that is old France—the skilful portraying of antiquity of beauty, and of fear that haunts the major characters of the plot—all of these are woven together into a delightful and yet somewhat melodramatic story which Anne Douglas Sedgwick has called *The Old Countess*.

The sharp contrasts and definite similarities in the French and English characters are portrayed in the persons of Jill Graham and Marthe Luderac as only a person with keen insight into both could appreciate. Perhaps the fact that Anne Sedgwick was born in America, educated in France, and is now living in England accounts for her insight into the lives of both nationalities.

The melodramatic situation in which Dick Graham, an English artist, finds himself is that of loving two women at the same time, and being loved by three. His wife, an English sportswoman is the typical "pal" who loves Dick but does not understand his temperamental nature. Marthe Luderac, a musician, and friend of Jill's, finds that death is the only way out of the impossible situation. And, Madame de Lamouderie interesting to Dick as a subject for his canvas, is interested in him as a sought-for lover to return the days of her youth.

Into the plot Anne Sedgwick has sprinkled a layman's knowledge of music and art, an over-done sense of premonition, and a code of mid-victorian morals. The tale is charming

if the reader is not too critical, and the characters portray in detail the types which they represent. I. S.

THE GOLDEN DAY By Lewis Mumford

Boni & Liveright \$2.50.

"The settlement of America had its origins in the unsettlement of Europe." With epigrammatic finality, Mr. Mumford begins his book, which, he says, "rounds out the study of American life begun in *Sticks and Stones*." To get at the origins of the American mind, he goes as far back as the thirteenth century and the development of medieval culture in Europe. Its ultimate effect upon a transplanted Anglo-Saxon mind is subtle but sure.

The romanticism of the pioneer, rough and unfeeling though he was, marks the beginning of a long line of pioneers of culture, men like Emerson and Thoreau, and is vividly portrayed in chapters that cover a long period of American life. Then came a golden age, with culture at its peak. Skeptics who doubt the right of America to claim a culture of its own can scarce doubt any more, so surely has Mr. Mumford drawn the picture.

Thus, through all the periods in America's literary and life history, Mr. Mumford leads the reader with new ideas and beautifully turned phrases, until enthusiasm for this book forces one to read rapidly and surely to the end. It is a mark in present day criticism of the past, a mark that stands the tests of scholarship, critical insight, and good writing. For the student of literature or the casual reader, *The Golden Day* will prove equally interesting. It is a book to be read by everyone interested in American culture, past and present.

C. G. S.

THE SUN ALSO RISES By Ernest Hemingway

Scribners \$2.00

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The outstanding characteristic of Ernest Hemingway's latest novel is its dialogue. Never have I read conversation that is as fresh, as brilliant,

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or as living. The dialogue is not, as is so often the case, partially good and partially strained, but is continuously and exhilaratingly delightful, and by means of it the characters are admirably delineated and exposed.

The story is told by one Jacob Barnes, journalist and man of the world, and only now does it strike me that there is no real plot, so entertaining and vivid are the pictures he draws of Montmartre cafes, Spanish bull-fights, and the hundred and one other adjuncts of continental life.

The heroine, Lady Brett Ashley, is not at all a heroine, but a singularly frank and appealing sinner, who lives not only wisely, but exceedingly well. Michael Campbell, her fiance, shows his devotion by earnest drinking and the leaving of Lady Ashley to her own devices.

Ernest Hemingway seems to portray continental life quite frankly, neither glossing over its immorality nor exaggerating it, but stating it in a fashion that makes one condemn it on principles and then wonder how soon one can go and see for one's self just how pleasant such a life might be.

E. C. S.

THE HARD-BOILED VIRGIN By
Frances Newman

Boni & Liveright \$2.50
Brown Book Shop

The title of this novel gives the reader a first impression that is rather misleading. Katharine Faraday is far from being hard-boiled; She is merely aware that, as the author says, "her circulation is as limited as that of Henry James' novels," and accordingly is forced to hide herself from people with an acquired reserve.

The story itself concerns the life of Katharine Faraday from some time shortly after her birth until her twenty-sixth year, and her actions and thoughts present an interesting and plausible picture of the feminine mind. Katharine Faraday is the leading character of the book; the others are brought in to show merely the sources of her information, or the results of her actions.

The style of *The Hard-Boiled Virgin* is truly unique. There is no conversation, and there are practically no direct statements. Every sentence is an example of carefully selected words, which purposely obscure the meaning, and allow various interpretations. And the masterful quality of such involved phraseology is sustained throughout, thrilling and bewildering the reader.

Although the story proves that Katharine Faraday does not live up to her appellation, it is an admirable title.

Some critic has said that mere man can not grasp one tenth of the subtleties held between the covers of this book, so we shall go back and re-read again and again, until we are convinced that our mereness is incurable.

E. C. S.

WINTERWISE By Zephine Humphrey
E. P. Dutton \$2.00

The small and seemingly unimportant things in life make up a large portion of this delightful book. And yet, when taken collectively, their individual importance magnified and raised to a higher plane by profound sympathy with life, those small things take on importance, until they overshadow days that would be unbearably dull without them.

Zephine Humphrey has written, in the form of a journal, the everyday occurrences of a winter farm in New England. With nothing else of importance, the weather is always a convenient topic for conversation, or essay writing. But there are books to be read and conversations to be talked out; cats to be cared for and sunshine on snow and the purple shadow of a tree against the sky to be seen. Christmas brings festivity in the village and contemplation in the farm house. And through the long winter there is nothing to bore the reader, and everything to satisfy a longing for quiet, deep rest and association with the gods.

The style of this volume is as simple as the country-side and as restful and

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full of satisfaction. It is good to read such a book after the harrowing experiences of many of our portrayals of modern life. There is indeed a place for such informality of subject matter and style in American literature.

C. G. S.

THE ROYAL ROAD TO ROMANCE

By Richard Halliburton

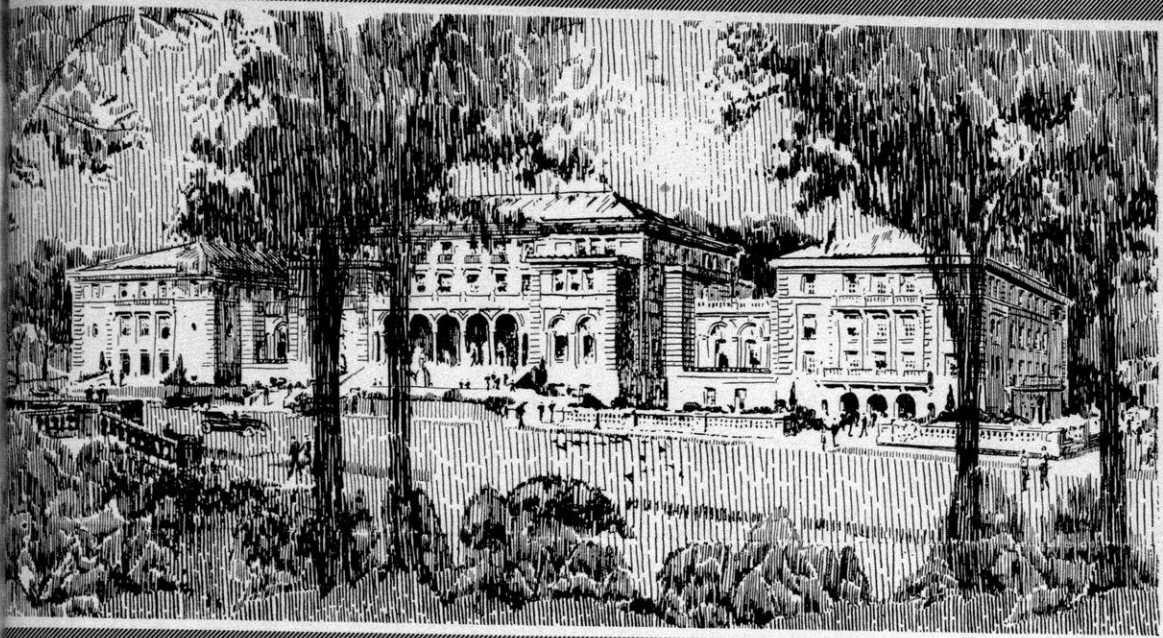
Bobbs Merrill \$5.00

Some people have all the luck in the world; and then write about it to tease or delight those who are not so fortunate. It is commonly supposed that adventure comes to those who seek it, especially in out of the way places of the earth. So Richard Halliburton doffed a Princeton graduating cap and gown to try his luck in the search for romance which has lured young men since romance existed.

He went to Europe as many college men go—the tramp-steamer route. But once there, all Europe called; so he bought a bicycle, closed his eyes and set his finger on a map, and started out. The Matterhorn beckoned, and from its summit he looked out over all Europe. To Paris, where he met Mlle. Piety, queen of the Folies Bergere; to Andorra, and on to Spain, and back again to Monte Carlo, Italy, Egypt. He swam the Nile, climbed the pyramids, and went on East to the Orient.

Adventure after adventure turned up, saddened at times by disagreeable occurrences—that was the royal road which Halliburton set out to travel. Through India, the Malay Peninsula, and Japan before he returned home, after nearly two years of bumming, lay the road of his adventure. And those are only a few of the places on the face of the globe at which he found romance awaiting him.

We might envy him, but his book is so much an enthusiastic story, so racily written, carrying one as on a magic carpet into all the secret and romantic places of the earth, that we follow breathlessly, living with him in his adventures, and, if not wholly satisfied with our lot, more than ever determined to take the road to romance someday ourselves. C. G. S.



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