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The Wisconsin literary magazine. Volume XX, Number 4 January 1921

Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin, January 1921

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The Wisconsin
Literary

Volume XX

Magazine

Number 4

The Duchess of Padua

Bronze and Steel

Tenax Propositi

January, 1921

Twenty-five Cents

PUBLICATION OF THE STUDENTS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

“Tho days be dark and trade
be tough, it’s always well to make
a bluff, to face the world with
cheerful eye, as tho the goose were
hanging high.”

—Walt Mason.

We at “The Democrat” agree
with Walt. C’mon in and see
how cheerful we can make you
feel about your printing wants.

Badger 486—487—488

The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

Publication of the Students of the University of Wisconsin

Volume XX

Madison, January, 1921

Number 4

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THE DISAPPEARING INTELLECT The primary function of our colleges and universities is to develop the intellect and to give the student a background of culture. The modern desire for practicality and material results is bringing about a change that must, in the end, be deplored. It is, of course, undeniably wise to fit men for the exigencies of modern life, but it is not wise to bend all our efforts toward turning out a man equipped for the industrial struggle and only for the industrial struggle.

We are straying further and further from the type of college man and woman who values knowledge for itself, who is content to be initiated into the secrets of the arts and sciences of the world and to feel that he has gained. What we want today is something that is practical, something that will help us earn a better living. We forget that the greatest satisfaction in life does not come from sleeping on soft beds and riding in imposing motor cars.

The world ought to be able to expect from the average college bred man a greater degree of general learning and *savoir faire* than from the average man

who is not college bred. As it is, a line has to be drawn between men and women who are truly college bred and those who have merely been to college. In the end, the neglect of the higher, less tangible aims of a college education will result in the degeneration of its entire function, and our universities will become little more than trade schools.

THE UNIVERSITY EXPOSITION By all means let us have a University Exposition. It will be a way of demonstrating to those interested in us that we are accomplishing results. The agitation which has been begun by various campus organizations is entirely commendable, and we feel sure that an Exposition of 1921 would rival the success of the exposition of 1915. There is one point, however, of which it is hard to get a clear understanding. The plan is that every department of the University participate in the Exposition. One cannot help wondering what such branches as the Philosophy, History, and English departments will exhibit. The College of Agriculture will, of course, have curried cows, shaggy sheep, and priceless pigs as tangible proof of the good work which it is carrying on; the Engineers can display their skill in the use of the monkey-wrench and in problems in calculus; exponents of the various sciences can show their marvelous apparatus and what goes into it and what comes out; Home Economics can charm the soul of the visitor with doughnuts light as angel's food. But what of the Philosophy Department? Are we to be driven to the expedient of counting the convolutions of a man's brain when he enters college and then again when he leaves, in order to ascertain what benefit he has derived?

It is a perplexing problem. The History Department might exhibit on a platform a row of bright students who are able instantaneously to give the inquirer the date of any historical event.

For the English Department we offer the following suggestions: Let us have two sets of Freshmen,

labeled "Before and After Freshman English," the one group discoursing in the pure, untrammelled dialect of its native village while the other speaks the high, mellifluous diction of the Hill. In addition, two upperclassmen, a man and a woman, indicated to be majoring in English, can be seated behind desks on which lie great tomes of Anglo-Saxon. It is requisite that both these exhibits wear horn-rimmed glasses and be people of very high foreheads in order to meet the popular conception.

Perhaps the LIT would seem to be an exhibit of the achievements of the English Department, or at least of the College of Letters and Science. Yet, while its work is linked most closely with these branches of the University, its contributors are found in the tall grasses of the Ag campus and in the dingy corners of the machine shop almost as often as in the classic corridors of Bascom Hall.

No matter, whatever we exhibit, let us have the Exposition.

WHAT TO WRITE Time and again one hears people say, "Yes, I've written something or other, but I don't think it's what the LIT

wants." Why not? If it be well written, we can use a story that deals with a murder in far-off Singapore as well as one that unravels the minutiae of a scandal in a New England village. Certainly we must preserve a reasonably high literary standard in order to be true to the name and traditions of the magazine. We cannot accept that which is interesting but poorly written, nor that which is well written but not interesting. That is obvious. The LIT is not looking for what is known as "themes" unless themes have more than a mere class-room interest. Let us have, then, contributions that reflect life and experience as we know it, humorous or tragic, written in the king's—or is it proper to say "president's"?—English.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS We are experimenting this month with a new department devoted to giving the reader a glance at the people who write for the magazine. It is to be hoped that these glimpses of our *literati* will give the public a personal interest in them. We apologize beforehand for any indiscreet disclosures that we may be likely to make.

P. V. G.

THE DUCHESS OF PADUA

HORACE GREGORY

My mistress has strange shadows in her face
 And narrowed eyes where sadness falls serene,
 As in the portraits of the Byzantine
 Who on their panelled walls would deftly trace
 A wealth of beauty in its youthful grace.
 For Art came back again, a girlish queen,
 Whose heart was like the forest, cool and green;
 Whose love lay sleeping in a hallowed place.

My mistress rose like Venus from the sea,
 A sea of tears where youth and sorrow met
 There, in the darkness, with a purpose set
 To find the center of life's mystery.
 My mistress is like fated Juliet,
 Lost in the night of deepest tragedy.

Bronze and Steel

BY JOSEPH CHRISTIE DYAS

Again had the sons of Asshur prevailed in battle against the men of the great mountains far away to the north of Assyria. The warriors of Assyria were dark, lion-like men, of a rather royal sort of courage, yet, man for man, they were no match for the blond barbarian giants of the mountains, whose westward march from the old Aryan home on the plateau of Iran had brought them to that mighty upland the Hellenes called the Caucasus. It had been bought with blood from an earlier Aryan race whose contact with the empires of the south had weakened its blood and had infused a near-oriental strain into its thought. That earlier race the Hellenes knew as the Keltoi, the Celts.

And now they of the godlike features and the giant limbs, they whose descendants were to be the Goths and Vandals and Angles and Saxons and Norsemen, in their turn were fighting Assyria as their predecessors, the Celts, had fought Assyria, and before Assyria the old Babylon. They who were the Race of Destiny, they who were to be the greatest of all time, yet were being defeated in battle by the Semitic dwarfs of that southland far away beyond the mountains and the desert country.

For the sons of Asshur knew the secret of the white stone and the darker stone which was the color of the sun seen through the sand storms. Of the white stone that would bend and ring under a blow they made keen weapons, and of the darker stone they made themselves coverings to wear in battle, and it shone brilliantly in the sun. What the northern men called the white stone was steel, and the darker stone bronze. And so, though their courage and hardihood knew no bounds, and though they were most terrible in battle, their weapons of flint gave them only defeat.

Again had the sons of Asshur prevailed. In the sunset the red of the battle-ground became a bloody haze. From a heap of dead and many wounded, young Egil reared his mighty stature. The long golden mane of his hair was dyed red with blood. He bore five deep wounds. He was weak, yet, as he drew his splendid body erect, the air of him was that of the mountain eagle for which he was called. He raised his voice.

"They win because they know the secret of the white stone and the dark stone, and because they are many. To the land of Asshur I will go to learn the secret of the white and the dark stone. They will make me a slave, and honor will be stripped from me, but if I can learn what I seek and bring it back, the men of the south can no longer prevail. I am Egil, a leader of hundreds, named for the Soaring One. Let not my name be forgotten."

There was no answer. The wounded were dying. He alone had strength to stand erect.

Then he began the journey to the land of Asshur. First he went, reeling and often near to falling, to the edge of the ice river, high up on the mountainside. Springs were there, and he drank deep of the cold mountain water and bathed his wounds. Again he had a little of his old strength, and he rose and set off southward through the mountains toward the sand country beyond which lay what he sought. All night he journeyed, and with morning beheld the desert. One day he spent among his beloved pines on the bosom of the mountain. And with the end of that day he left the north country.

It was easy to find one's way across the desert, for the army returning to its home had left a broad track. Egil suffered much from the heat and the lack of water. But his tremendous resolution strengthened him and one day he reached the bank of a great river, down which he journeyed many miles. He saw villages, but these he avoided in the day. At night he drew near, silent as a shadow, and stole food.

And then came the day of his slavery. Awakened from sleep by a shout and a rush of heavy bodies, he found his arms pinned to the ground. He had slept too long. It was day, and he had been seen asleep. He did not struggle. He had foreseen that it must come at some time.

He was sold by the village headman to a slave trader going to the Great City, Nineveh. It was a long journey. At every village the slave trader stopped and bought and sold slaves, with much bickering and disputing, after the fashion of the East. He made many suzim exhibiting Egil, the terrible barbarian from the northern mountains, the only one who

had ever been taken alive. Egil was able, after a few weeks, to learn the speech of these men. It was difficult, but he was subtle of mind, and came to know many things.

He was going to Nineveh, the wonder of the world, Nineveh, the proud city, in the first flush of her glory, enriched by the spoils of a thousand conquered tribes and nations, Nineveh, the ruler city of a mighty and brilliant people, Nineveh, where Semiramis reigned. And of all the wonders of that city, Semiramis was the chief wonder, who was the most beautiful woman in the world, Semiramis, who rode to battle with her armies and slew men from her chariot with her slim, strong hands. It was said that she hated men, that sometimes she kissed, embraced, and stabbed.

So the band of slaves came to the city, and Egil, clad in his wolf skin, gazed long upon the mighty walls of brick and the great palaces and the lofty pyramid temples. His heart sank, but he clung tenaciously to his dream.

The trader was making much money exhibiting Egil when he was bought by the priesthood of Asshur, Assyria's greatest god. Now Egil saw no more the busy streets. He was taken up to the great pyramid on whose top burned the everlasting fire. Deep within the pyramid he lived for a long time. His wolf skin was taken from him and he was clothed in fine white linen. He ate the best of flesh and drank the choicest wines. He wondered, and asked questions, but the inscrutable priests said nothing. Once he heard himself referred to as an "offering to Asshur." Again he asked, but there was no response, neither a smile nor a frown.

He grew very beautiful, and regained his old strength. His wounds were long forgotten. Often the priests came to admire him. They seemed to feel themselves lucky to possess him. They would walk round him and touch his giant form delicately, and he, huge, silent, deep-eyed, endured it, thinking of his dream.

Then came an unusual day. His linen robes were exchanged for garments of even finer texture, his head was anointed with oil, and then his hair was washed and dried, and it seemed that its color was a deeper, richer gold than ever before. Never had his muscles seemed so supple, nor his strength so great. His eyes were clear as glacier ice, and as blue, and there was in him a deep joy, springing from perfect well-being. Now he was the Egil of old, named for the Soarer who gazes into the sun.

In the midst of a group of priests he was led upward along a great stairway in the heart of the pyra-

mid on whose top stood the temple of Asshur, and there he breathed the open air, and saw the clear sunlight of a perfect day. His quick glance took in the throne of the monarch, on which sat Semiramis, the Heaven-born. Her mere beauty was like a flame, and as a flame it burned to the core of him in an instant, yet that same instant he mustered the cold strength with which the North had marked his race, and the flame was put away from him. He turned his head.

Then he saw other things: a red sacrificial stone, a priest, waiting, a heavy knife in his hand, a knife keen and polished, of the white stone whose secret he sought. And he knew at once what it all meant. He was to be sacrificed to the god Asshur.

So this was the end of all his high resolves, and his beloved people would never learn through him the secret of the white and the dark stone. Within his mind he saw many battles of the future, in which his kinsfolk would be trodden down to defeat by these dark-faced swine. He saw the fair faces of his kindred. How ugly and mean compared to them were the faces and forms of these sons of Asshur, these dark eyes, these swarthy skins. Why, they were like the rot of the dunghill, while his people had the sunlight in their hair, and the pure color of the ice rivers in their eyes. His nation had a mighty destiny before it which must not be thwarted by these pieces of dirt. And he, who was of the noblest of his race, who carried its destiny in his hand, was to be slain as a sacrifice to a god who was mean, as the race which had created that god was mean. That very god was less noble than he. It was bitter. A long moment he reflected on these things, apparently unmoved, while a deep rage like the dull red of slowly rising lava in the wide deep pit of the fire-mountain crept from his heart to every fibre of his being. He trembled to it, and Semiramis and the priests smiled, thinking it was the quaking of fear.

With steady step he advanced to the stone of sacrifice and halted. He could not think. He felt only that deep rage of the dull red lava. He looked into the eyes of the priest, his hate increasing and concentrating. That face mirrored the soul of Assyria. The next instant he tore the knife from the hand of the priest and struck a crushing blow with his fist upon that hateful countenance. And the fight was on. With the heavy, murderous knife he fought and killed many, until the weapon was torn from his hand, and then he struggled on unarmed, raging like a furious tiger, foaming at the mouth, the insane battle fury of his race full upon him. He roared his battle

was having the most wonderful dreams about a sort of paradise. He took the poison by mistake, he said, but most of us thought it was suicide. An easy death, though!"

She smiled, recalling the bottle in her pocket, which was to give her just such dreams.

His eyebrows went up reprovingly.

"You surely don't believe anyone would be justified in taking 'an easy death' as the way out?" he cried.

"Why not? It depends on the circumstances, I think. Suppose anyone—I, for instance, were utterly tired of life, and could see no particular benefit to any one in my going on living?"

"But you are not, are you? You did not mean yourself, of course. If you—or anyone—were tired of living, it would be your own fault. Be like Pollyanna. It is easy to find something to be glad about. A person with any imagination should be able to think up ways of bettering his own condition, and one who didn't have any imagination would never know that he was unhappy."

"You are mistaken," she said, slowly, trying to control the trembling of her lips, "only those who have imagination are able to perceive their own misery so keenly that it overwhelms them."

"But think of the moral side of it," he argued, "what a terrible example a suicide is to other people! And an educated adult owes a debt to the world which has supported him through his childhood, and must live to pay that debt. One has no right to kill one's self."

"You remind me of social science classes," she said, drooping a little. "I can't answer your reasons, but you have not changed my belief."

"I learned it in social science classes at school," he beamed, "but surely you don't intend to—? You're happy, aren't you? Your eyes seem to be always asking me questions!"

"Yes, I am happy," she agreed, softly, "very happy! But I wish that you could think as I do about this."

"Oh, instead I'll make you believe with me if I have the chance," he said confidently, "I hope you will let me see you again? You've attracted me tremendously—you're so different. Will you give me your address?"

She hesitated. Might she not live, after all? If she had met him sooner—but now it was too late, and besides, he—Pollyanna! she spread her fingers in a little gesture of repulsion that he did not see.

"No, I don't think so," she decided.

"Please! Really, anyone could see that you're a nice girl—don't think I don't know you are, and I want to see you again."

"Perhaps I shall come here again," she mused.

"Oh, might I meet you here?" he begged, eagerly, "Will you come, say, Tuesday afternoon?"

"If it is possible," she said, her lips twisting into an odd smile.

"If you don't come then, I shall come Wednesday afternoon, and Thursday, and keep coming till you take pity on me. I wish—could you—would you have dinner with me tonight? I don't have to go to work till seven, and we could eat early."

She drew a long breath, and then shook her head. "I shall be very busy tonight," she said. "I wish I could, but I have another engagement that I couldn't break."

"It must be with someone you like very much!"

"No, it is someone I don't know very well, but whom I expect to like very much. A friend—and I must go now."

There seemed to be nothing more to say. Their eyes met, and his glance seemed to be holding hers, she could not tear her eyes away. His hand found hers, and she clung to it a moment, as though she were seeking courage.

"Goodbye," she said, and turned away.

"I've enjoyed looking at the pictures with you," he said, "they have lots of life, don't you think?"

She laughed a queer little laugh.

"No!" she moved toward the door. "There is no life here. These things are only decorative."

SONG

HORACE GREGORY

These are the gifts I made for you:
The sun, the soil, the rain, the dew,
The clouds, the wind, the changing blue
That swings into the sky
To say my love with silent tongues
When you go walking by.

And you may touch with raptured lips
Sweet draughts of life whose beauty drips
From this rich world that fades and slips
Into eternity.
And you shall take these gifts of mine
Without a word from me.

Egil was moved to deep interest. She was somewhat taller than the Assyrian men, and her form showed the greatest of woman strength, yet in it there was no harsh line, as he could readily note, for her draperies were of the thinnest silk, spangled with gold and silver and jewels. Diamonds glowed in her dark hair, between the red flowers there, flowers red as blood. Her brows were black and straight, though finely shaped and slender. Her eyes were very large, of the same deep color as a thunder cloud, neither purple nor black, yet seeming to be of both hues. Her straight nose had well cut, intense nostrils, sensitive to her moods. Her red mouth was at once sweet and bitter, firm and voluptuous. Her face as a whole had an intense beauty no man could ever forget, made terrible by the brilliant, individual mind whose every shade of thought or passion it reflected.

She went on, after a pause, in the same vein.

"I alone of women rule, and men I make my slaves by the power of my beauty and the strength of my will as queen. I have fought in battle, and it has pleased me to destroy men. Once in a long space I select a man upon whom to shower my favor, and him I possess utterly. The fool thinks for a time that he possesses me, and that I love him, but in the end I stab him, or, better still, I bar him from me while yet he may look upon my face, and I watch longing eat his heart away, until at last he slays himself. It pleases me better than battle or hunting.

"So I have chosen thee, and thou art finer than any I have chosen before. I desired thee suddenly, as thou wert fighting the priests, and I let the battle rage to the end and let thee draw near, very near, to death, before I snatched thee away."

"What if I refuse to be this plaything thou dost describe? I am a noble of my people. Our women-kind are held to be half divine, as from the womb of woman proceeds the life of the race. If our race be godlike, then must the mothers of the race be instinct with the spirit of our Gods."

"To refuse me means that thou goest back to die as a sacrifice."

Egil pondered. A plan was forming in his mind. This sacrifice of honor was for his race. Nothing else counted. Yet that his sacrifice might not be in vain, he must gain the ascendancy in this situation. Boldness and subtlety—these were a pair that must always win.

"I do not fear to die. Thou knowest that."

There eyes met. It was a struggle of wills. He seemed to compromise.

"It is not an unpleasant thing thou dost offer me,

Semiramis the Queen, yet my heart revolts at being a slave. Thou dost always speak the truth; then promise me that anything I ask of thee thou wilt give it to me."

"I will promise thee anything but kingship or freedom to leave the land of Asshur. While thou art new to me, O my toy, there is little that I may refuse thee. Thou art so strange and new. Never have I beheld such a man as thou art. Thy hair is like the sunbeams; thine eyes of a more wonderful color than the sky, thy skin so fair, yet everywhere hinting at rose color from the blood deep within it. Thy glance strikes to the heart, and though thou art beautiful, there is something in it that repels, yet thrills, something more than beauty, yea, something that repels like the hideous. Oh, oh—thou art—thou art hideous-beautiful!"

She wept.

"Egil embrace thou me!"

* * * * *

Five years had passed. Egil had proved a strange toy for Semiramis. By never giving too much, by always holding back a little of the deep charm of the personality he was, he strengthened upon her the hold he had secured when first their union began. No longer was it mere desire, passion, a wilful woman's insane whim. He had played his game well. Now she loved him, and she thought he did not love her, and was almost pitiful in the agony of her distress. And Egil's heart was nearly bursting within him to see it. Yet he must save all that affection for one grand burst of love in which to wring from her the secret of bronze and steel. He no longer thought of them as the white stone and the dark stone. He understood now what a metal was, but he could not learn anything about it for the secrets were closely guarded by the armorers. They were bound by the most terrible oaths to guard that knowledge, given by Asshur himself. Yes, for the sake of that secret with which to make his race great, he would tear the deepest and grandest affection of his heart down from its throne and make it serve the needs of ambition.

Oh, oh, one could never be sure of Semiramis! Here was danger! Here was something which called for all his skill in handling the heart of woman. For if he lost, he lost not only his life, but something greater than life. The queen part of her might regain ascendancy over the woman did she become suspicious, and then he was lost. She kept to her promises rigidly, and he had asked many unusual, almost impossible things, hoping that when he made the most important request, it would not be noticed among

them. He would put it forward first as one of his casual, unusual requests, and if it were refused, then would he try the last resort, the burst of affection, affection as he really felt it, without reserve or limit.

"Egil, thou other half of my self, give me thy love wholly. Oh, hold nothing back from me in the way of love! Thy kisses again have grown cold and hot by turns. What now can I give thee? Name it and it is thine."

"Let me reflect. I have many things I desire. There is hardly another thing in the world I might ask for, that my interest may be roused and my kisses heated."

It was night on the bosom of that eastern sea that lay to the south of the mouth of the Tigris. The breeze was gentle, the sea had the easiest of motions, and myriads of hot stars burned in the soft black sky. Upon a broad divan in the center of a pleasure barge manned by mutes, Egil lay with his golden head in the lap of Semiramis.

"It comes to me, the thought of what I want. I desire to know the secret of bronze, hardened bronze, and tempered steel. I have learned many things, but of that I am ignorant."

There was a long silence. Egil counted the beats of his heart. It seemed that Semiramis must hear it, it beat so loud. Why did she not answer? He counted nearly to the second hundred before she spoke.

"That would be very difficult. The armorers are sworn by the most terrible oaths to keep the thing secret."

He did not dare to sigh his relief.

"Hast thou no torturers, Semiramis the Queen? Is thy power waning that thou canst not bend an artisan to thy will?"

He felt her form stiffen with pride.

"I am yet the queen."

* * * * *

Deep down beneath the palace of Semiramis, deep in the dungeons, was a room of torture. By the dim light of a rush lamp, horrible human things were tearing to pieces bit by bit twenty men who lay bound upon the floor. Four men were dead under their hands and five more were dying. The wavering flame of the lamp cast yellow gleams upon the tall, slender figure of Semiramis the Queen and made even more huge the great form of Egil. Groans and cries echoed through that horrible place and wailed like hideous ghosts down the long, black passages out among the dungeons. But the torturers were unmoved, intent upon the niceties of their work. and

Semiramis smiled fondly up into the face of Egil, which was set like granite.

A man cried out.

"I can endure no longer. I will give up the secrets, all I know."

His torture at once ceased, but the torment of the others went on unceasingly. Three more gave up, but the rest died under the torture.

* * * * *

"Egil, I am grown weary of peace, and would go again to war. I should like to see thee fighting against men who are of thine own strength, not men who are mere dwarfs whom thou mowest down like chaff in battle. Again would I behold thee in the grip of the battle fury, as on that day long ago on the top of the pyramid. By the great god Asshur himself, thou wast most splendid then. Never since have I seen thee look so fine. Always now art thou calm as a sage, always thinking. What are thy thoughts, thou Egil? What thinkest thou when thy blue eyes flame and look far away, and thy face grows harsh and bleak, and thou art like the eagle, thy namesake?"

He looked into her eyes. It was necessary sometimes to be sincere, at least partly sincere.

"I dream of war and greatness! I mourn the lost fineness which I put from me at thy bidding, Semiramis the Queen!" He bowed his head and altered his voice to the proper pitch and quality. "But in the moments when thou dost embrace me, I mourn it not."

His voice carried with it conviction, for he knew how to put the ring of sincerity into every tone. And it was wise to allow the woman to think she knew him through and through, to hide his subtlety, to have some aspiration in her eyes, yet that aspiration simple enough.

"Ah, would that I were one of the great nobles of Asshur. I can have wealth and great houses if I wish, but I am only a poor outlander. I lack the finish of their ways, and they will never receive me as one of themselves."

That would do for aspiration.

"But perhaps by fighting for Asshur and making the people of the north country subject to thee, wondrous Semiramis, they will honor me and make me one of themselves. Though it is enough to be loved by thee. That of itself makes me noble in my own sight."

In deference to his sense of truth he tried always to put in as much of what was real as he dared. Poor, ruined child of ambition, forced by his aspiration to sell his nobility for greatness.

* * * * *

It was night in the Black Pass, far in the confines of the north mountains, whither Egil had led the army of Semiramis. Black walls of rock stretched upward on either hand to unknown heights. There had yet been no contact with the enemy, the terrible, fair barbarians.

Two hours had Egil slept in the arms of Semiramis. Now he awoke as he had wished, at a time when all the slaves were asleep. He roused her.

"Love, I would talk with thee." She awoke thoroughly at once. Never before had his voice sounded like this, with such a deep, sweetly sad note.

He lit a very small lamp. They were alone in the tent.

"Semiramis, not the Queen, but the Woman, I love thee with my whole heart. I have loved thee almost from the first, more strongly than thou didst ever dream. At thy grief for lack of love, my heart seemed torn in two, but know now, Woman, that I love thee more than I love all things else, save one. I love thee more than life, or honor, or happiness."

"Oh, Egil, I am so wondrously happy, yet what is that thing which thou lovest more than thou lovest me?"

"Nay, I do not love it at all, yet it comes between thee and me. But let us not think of it now. Let us love one another as true mates while we can." And gently he kissed her forehead in a way he had never kissed her before. He drew her down prone upon the cushions beside him and pillowed her head upon his breast. There was no passion in this thing, only the gentlest and truest of love between them. And so they talked calmly and sweetly, he with a note of unutterable sadness in his voice, for which she could not account.

Then resolution seemed to come to him, and he rose and looked at the water-crock which marked the hours. It was after midnight. He picked up a silken scarf and came back to her, holding the silken scarf in his hands. He shuddered at the thing he was about to do, the thing that the greatness of his kinsfolk demanded. She watched him, fascinated. Then he bent down suddenly and gagged and bound her with the silken scarf. She made no resistance, which made it harder for him to do.

"Loved one, my heart is broken, but Assyrian, I have triumphed. I came to the land of Asshur to gain the secret of bronze and steel! I hate the Assyrian. His very gods I hold in contempt. I have learned the secret of bronze and steel and am taking it back to my people. In this thing I have come to love thee, the part of thee that is woman, but the part

of thee that is Assyrian I hate. I have led this army into a place where it may be destroyed by hurling stones upon it from the cliffs above. Soon I leave to bring about that end. And then my kinsfolk shall be armed with bronze and steel, and there shall be no limit to the mightiness of their destiny!"

He looked down into her eyes with mixed feelings. But there was no resentment in her eyes, only longing, wistfulness, affection.

"I may not take thee with me, Woman, for in the new life that I must build thou hast no part. It belongs wholly to the destiny of my people. Nor will I leave thee here to return to Assyria a broken and defeated queen, for this army *must* be destroyed. I cannot bear to think of thee in flight, thou who wert never before defeated, wandering in the desert, suffering hardship, returning at last to Nineveh, thy power broken, no longer a queen, to be supplanted by some great noble and made his slave. Many there hate thee. Nay, thou shalt never lie in another's arms!"

He raised high a short Assyrian sword to stab, but she lifted a free hand with a gentle gesture and pointed to her mouth. He bent low and loosened the scarf a little, listening.

"Loose me," she whispered; "I will not scream. Love, I break no promises. I am still royal, though powerless."

In an instant he had loosed her and clasped her to him.

"Goodbye, Egil, I recognize the greatness of thy race and of thee. Now, if I could, I would raise no hand to prevent the realization of thy dreams. For me there is but one course. Give me the sword and I will kill myself. I would spare thee the doing of it, Egil. Give me that royal death. Let me not be done to death here in the loneliness and the dark even by thee. That is too mean. Thou mayest safely give me the sword, for now thy schemes are dearer to me than is Assyria or queenship, because those schemes are thine. And I will wait loving for thee beyond the gates of death, if there is any beyond, and when thou are treading the path to the star realms of thine own hero Gods, and if thou wilt then have me, I shall be all thy Woman, and no part Assyrian."

He put the sword into her outstretched hand, kissed her, and strode from the tent.

* * * * *

In the morning, Egil stood with a band of blond warriors upon a scene of slaughter in the Black Pass. Of the army of Assyria, not one man remained alive. Egil turned to his kinsfolk and addressed them.

"I have gone to the land of Asshur and have brought back the secret of the white stone and the darker stone. Much have I endured, many things of which ye have no knowledge, that it is not needful ye should ever know. The secret of the white stone and the darker stone I will give to all who care to learn, that the knowledge may spread through the

race. And then ye shall be armed, and being mightier of form than the men of other nations, and nobler, ye shall be the race of High Destiny, the Aesir, the Lords of the World!

"And at the end of the time of teaching, when I see you fully armed, my life shall be my own again, to lose in battle, and to regain beyond."

"SAILS"

(An Old Sailmaker)

HENRY SCOTT RUBEL

Did you ever hang out in Frisco,
Or run on the Japanee mails?
If you ever put out of Seattle
You couldn't help knowing old "Sails."

A hard weather-beaten square-rigger,
An hombre who knew every shoal
From Penang, Tahiti and Joburg,
To seventeen miles from the pole.

I can see the old salty foam breaking
Clear over the foremast and poop,
And Sails in his yellow "Sou'wester"
Was getting us round Guadeloupe.

Oh, Sails was a helmsman and sailor,
A rigger, a master, a cook,
A lawyer, a doctor, and tailor,
Who never looked into a book.

I know Sails could not write a letter,
I'm sure that he never could read,
But this seemed to make him the better,
And a warm-hearted Christian indeed.

I never have seen him excited,
But I've seen him and heard him get sore.
He was like tons of powder ignited,
He'd explode in a frightening roar.

I can see his great shoulders heaving,
A belaying-pin in his grip,
And then all hands started in leaving
For crannies deep down in the ship.

I can tell you that Sails was a ripper,
And he had swearing down to an art,
But there never was salt-water skipper
Who had such a wonderful heart.

Old Sails was profanely perfect,
And never did read nor write.
But I guess the reason we loved him,
Was because he could laugh, cuss, and fight.

The cholera got him, off Chile.
He sewed up his own canvas sack.
And I pulled the toggle that dropped him to rest
Down under our foamy track.

Tenax Propositi

A. C. HAMILTON

It was a hot afternoon, mucky in fact, just as August afternoons are apt to be. Carl was wallowing in the dirt beneath the front porch. At times he pressed his nose against the latticed squares and viewed the beautiful outside world with the dubious look of one forever doomed to live in a dungeon. He was playing at Monte Cristo, our time-honored game of solitaire, wherein the lone player incarcerated himself in the dungeon beneath the front porch, and spent the time at his disposal in vowing that he would get out and right the wrongs that had been so maliciously heaped upon his innocent head. As I said, it was a game designed for certain especial occasions when the solitary actor found himself alone—a thing which seldom happened in our family. Thus, according to all rules of order, Carl had no business to be playing Monte Cristo on that particular afternoon, for George and I had already invited him to play “businesses” along the hedgerow, and Ray and Edward had likewise generously offered to let him be George Washington in “Washington crossing the Delaware.” He had rebuffed both invitations, and had withdrawn to the seclusion of his cell to mope and torture his imagination.

As the primogeniture chieftain of the clan it was within my power to punish this serious infraction of the unwritten law, but the heat had melted away my ego, and I withdrew to the shadows of the hedgerow, where George had already put our office in order. George and I played at “gas business” until I had paid out all my money, whereupon he promptly refused to sell any gas to me for credit and closed shop. No amount of argument could induce him to do otherwise, so I finally gave up trying. While he was painstakingly balancing his ledgers with the aid of a pencil stub and much crossing of eyes—George had an uncanny habit of looking cross-eyed whenever he became intensely interested in anything—I lay stretched upon my back beneath the hedge and peered up through the leaves at the small patches of blue sky beyond.

From the front porch came the sounds of George Washington crossing the Delaware. The old porch swing was creaking ominously. “The Delaware must be rougher than usual today,” I thought to myself. Gradually the sounds faded from my consciousness, and I fixed my attention upon the patches of blue sky

between the leaves. I resolved to go eagle hunting, and, trundling my fancy’s aeroplane from its hanger, I closed my eyes and took flight.

Up, up, up, I sailed, until our house was a mere white dot in a green postage stamp yard. I couldn’t even see the hedgerow any more, so straightening out the plane I headed for the Rocky Mountains, which presently loomed up ahead. I crossed back and forth over the snow-covered peaks, and swooped down the valleys between, but no eagles. I wondered if they had seen me coming and had made off. I’d fool them, I’d use my invisible aeroplane the next time I went hunting. But—unholy doubt—had they perhaps heard my engine? I remembered distinctly that Ray and I had detected the presence of an aeroplane quite recently by the sound of its engine while it was a mere speck above the horizon. After a few perfunctory capers to delight the natives whom I felt must be watching my daring feats, I gave up all hope of eagles for that day and sailed straight for home.

Immediately upon landing, I sat up and demanded of George, “Can’t you invent a noiseless engine?”

He looked up from his ledgers, “What do you want it for?” he asked.

“For an invisible aeroplane to go eagle hunting with. My engine scares all the eagles away now.”

He nodded sagely, twirling the pencil stub between his pursed lips, “I’ll think about it to-morrow,” he said, turning once more to his bookkeeping.

“But I want it today,” I put in, piqued by his indifference to what I considered such an important issue.

He looked up again, keeping a smudgy forefinger on the middle of a column of figures. That I should try to force his inventive genius nettled him. He scowled, “For Pete’s sake, shut up. How can you comspect me to run this gas company when you keep howling about aeroplane engines? You can’t use it today, anyway, because all the eagles are scared away. And besides—,” he added threateningly, “maybe it can’t be made anyway.”

This last statement struck my hopes to earth with a dull thud, for when George’s inventive skill proved unavailing, a thing usually fell through. True, I might conjure up in my mind a noiseless engine to put in my invisible aeroplane, but it would have to be submitted to George’s inspection. The invisible

aeroplane itself was beyond the realms of the mechanical and hence he disdained all connection with it, but the engine was within his particular field, and must have his approval, for no engine, however well built, could run without George's official sanction. Therefore, when he scouted the idea of a silent motor, I quaked in my boots, and saw my future eagle hunts doomed to failure, even if I used an invisible aeroplane.

"I'll take you hunting sometimes," I cajoled him.

"Don't want to go hunting for eagles," he grunted. "Besides, aeroplanes cost a lot of money to run. You'll be bankrupt before you get to be a man."

His intractability terrified me. George was a frugal soul, and once he became convinced that a thing would lose rather than make money, his mind was instantly set against it. In desperation I plunged my hand into my pocket and drew forth a piece of licorice which I had been hoarding against a rainy day. It was a small piece, somewhat bewhiskered with foreign articles which had accrued to it during its stay in my pocket. I held it out toward him. He grabbed it eagerly and put it in his mouth, whiskers and all. Tonguing the bearded tid-bit reflectively, George began to draw pictures on his ledger pages. I could see that the sketches roughly resembled gasoline engines and my hopes rose swiftly.

Suddenly he stopped and scowled uglily, squirting licorice over the lawn in lieu of tobacco juice. He drew out from among his effects an automobile advertisement, and studied it assiduously. I hung upon his every move, holding my breath for fear that it might disturb his thoughts. Finally he shrugged his shoulders and put the advertisement away.

"Can't it be done?" I asked in an agony of doubt.

"Sure," he said, "but I'll have to see what kind of a rigamajig I'll have to use." I nodded seriously. George has a technical language all his own, and heaven help anyone who confesses his ignorance of it. "You see," he went on, assuming his professional cross-eyed frown, "to make an engine noiseless I have to have a rigamajig to put in the jurntwasher. That's what stops the explosions."

"But I thought engines always exploded," I said unwittingly.

He gave me a withering look. "Of course all ordinary engines explode, but this engine can't explode, or it will make noise."

"But how will it go, then?" I asked weakly.

"Go? Go?" He stopped, seeming to cudgel his brains. "Why it goes by compressure of course." He proceeded at once to outline a series of intricate mechanisms by which he purposed to convert the

exoline—a fuel which he had just invented expressly for use in the noiseless engine—into power, without exploding it. His technical language and descriptions were fast exceeding my perceptions when a disgusted howl attracted our attention. It was Carl, Monte Cristoing under the front porch. He was objecting in loud and somewhat colorful language to the porch swing ferry. It seems that while he did not care particularly whether or not the Delaware flowed above his dungeon while George Washington and his doughty rebels navigated it, he did most strenuously object to having Washington and his army convert the river into a drill ground and mark time on the roof of his cell—and what is more to the point, he was voicing his sentiments in no indirect manner of speaking.

I arose, crossed the lawn, and squatted down outside his prison. He was beating the under side of the porch floor with his fists and howling, "Shut up, up there. How can I think down here?"

"Carl," I called through the lattice. He seemed not to hear me. I called again. No response. I got to my feet, and mounting the stairs to the Delaware, requested George Washington to halt his army. Ray regarded me quizzically.

"What's the matter now?" he asked.

"Your're disturbing him," I pointed toward the floor.

"He shouldn't be playing Monte Cristo," shouted Edward, "and you know it. You wouldn't let me yesterday morning."

"Nor me either," put in Ray, coming to life again. "We don't have to stop," he added pugnaciously.

"The dickens you don't," I flared up, indignant that my authority should be questioned by a mere private in the ranks.

The two exchanged glances, glances fraught with dire intentions. I backed to the wall. These two had an age-long habit of sticking together through thick and thin—a sort of mutual protection agreement—and it appeared that they were about to put forth a solid front now.

Without stopping for further parley they advanced. I did not feel much like squabbling, especially with the odds against me, so I motioned them back with a mysterious air. I had caught sight of George coming toward the house with the business paraphernalia in his arms, and was playing for time, pending his arrival. They had noticed him also, and scenting treachery, decided that discretion was the better part of valor, and immediately assumed very peaceable expressions.

George came up to us and stopped. Intuitively he

sensed the situation. To my surprise and consternation, he sided with the recalcitrant Ray and Edward, grumpling, "It's his own fault. He hasn't any right to be Monte Cristo now."

"I know it as well as you do," I said testily.

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" he challenged.

"Squirt him, squirt him!" whispered Ed hoarsely, dancing up and down in the ecstasy which this thought engendered. A low grown came up from below.

"Sh!" warned George, "he'll hear you." Then turning to me he said, "That's a good idea; let's do it."

The idea, reflected and magnified by their pleasurable grins, seized upon me. "All right," I assented, "Come on." The four of us adjourned to the hydrant at the side of the house. George attached the hose while I stretched it along the walk to the edge of the porch. Edward who, owing to his tender years, never seemed able to restrain his giggles, was delegated to turn on the water when given the signal. Then the rest of us, belly to ground, in approved Indian fashion, wriggled to the other end of the hose. Taking my rightful place as commander I peered around the corner.

Carl was sitting all hunched together in the center of his enclosure. I drew up the hose, stealthily poked the nozzle through an opening in the lattice work, and withdrew to signal for water. It came. We could hear it gurgle swiftly through the hose. Carl emitted a heartrending shriek. We retreated hastily toward the alley, shutting off the water and picking up Edward on the way, for Carl, when aroused, like Arthur's Galahad, had the strength of ten. We were none too quick, for as we passed behind the protecting walls of the barn, a great clod of dirt plopped at our heels. With shouts of glee we galloped down the alley.

"We're pioneers running from the Indians," shouted George.

"Yes, and Ed is our wives and children in wagons, because he can't run fast," panted Ray. "I'll stay behind and be rear guard."

Nobody disputed him and he dropped back several paces. Ed didn't particularly like being made to play wives and children but the unheroic part had fallen to his lot so often that he accepted it without demur, and accordingly stopped galloping and settled down to the steady gait which was expected of wagons which contained wives and children. Clods continued to kick up the dust at our heels. Presently one of the missiles, made of sterner stuff, to wit—a fragment

of rock, struck Ray squarely between the shoulders, and with a howl of fear and pain he quickly abandoned his rôle as rear guard and galloped to the head of the line.

As we came out upon a cross street George swerved to the right, yelling, "Down the street—it's paved—he can't find any rocks there." George has a blessed faculty of being able to think while running at top speed. Grasping the situation as pointed out to us, we described a wide arc and followed him, I, dragging Edward by the hand to increase his speed, and Ray, blubbering about the bruise on his back, thereby coming near to stumbling several times, for which George scored him roundly.

When we pulled up, some two blocks farther on, and discovered that the pursuit had been abandoned, our former rear guard was still filling the air with his lamentations.

"Aw keep still, can't you?" exclaimed George in deep disgust. "Who ever heard of a pioneer crying all day because an Indian threw a rock at him. Gee whiz, a pioneer could get his head shot off and he wouldn't make as much noise as you are making."

"Neither would I," wailed Ray. "But Indians shouldn't throw rocks," he declared suddenly.

"Ugh!" grunted George. Here I intervened in Ray's behalf.

"Where did it hit you," I asked solicitously, putting my hand upon his back and beginning to rub gently. Ray blubbered an unintelligible reply. I went on feeling up and down his back until I saw him wince. I had found the sore spot. To strip up his shirt was but the work of a moment, and then all of us gathered around to determine the extent of his injuries.

A red spot about the size of a walnut between his shoulders was the only thing we could find.

"Cheer up," I said, "you're not killed."

Ray faced about. He had quit crying. We wiped his tear- and sweat-stained face with one hand and stuffed in his shirt with the other. George sidled from one foot to the other, every line of his face and body delineating impatience.

"Well, what are we going to do now?" he asked.

"Let's go home," said Edward. "It's too hot to run around this afternoon."

"Huh! You just have been running more than a mile now, and you're still alive," grumbled George.

No longer provided with the spur of an active enemy in hot pursuit, I had lost interest in foreign fields and consequently cast my vote in favor of going home. Ray followed suit, and we started back. At

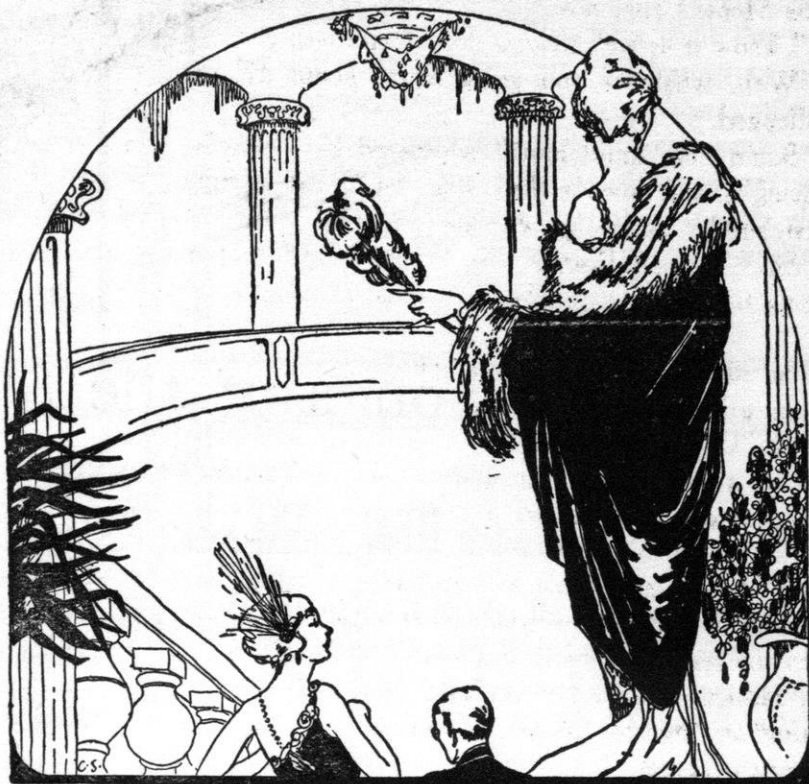
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first George threatened to leave and seek adventure alone, but at length he decided to accompany us, and accordingly fell in behind, but with exceeding ill grace and much growling.

As we neared the barn from the alley side we reconnoitred with great show of scoutly ceremony. After some minutes spent wriggling along the alley upon our stomachs, George lost all patience and rashly dashed up to, and around the barn. Shamed by this display of recklessness, which in view of the

late bombardment was little short of suicide, we arose and tore after him. The enemy was nowhere in sight. Evidently he had abandoned all thought of reprisal.

We walked across the back yard and along the side of the house to the front. From beneath the front porch came a solemn voice. I stopped and held up my hand, motioning for silence. The voice was heard again. It was Carl, Monte Cristoing. Carl is nothing if not tenacious.

Songs of the Sierras

FRANCES DUMMER

THE PACKER'S SONG

Oh the city folks they all take their pride
In their ways and their fixings fine,
But they ain't no use on the desert side,
An' a packer 's the life for mine.

They wash their plates twenty times a week
Just for fear o' plain grease and such,
They make their coffee to close t' the creek
An' their hardtack aint fit fer dutch.

They walk up mountains and call it fun,
But the most of 'em sure can't ride,
Then at night they sing "when the day is done"
Round a fire a lash rope wide.

Their pleasure's in quitting the city game
For the life that is "wild and free."
I like the city when this grows tame,—
Still—a packer 's the life for me.

THRILLS

The Glacier's brook
On my body seems
A-chill:
Till thru my senses
Quick-tingling streams
A thrill.

Unbroken snow trail
A stumbling mare—
A spill:
And down below you
Not much but air—
A thrill.

A lonely night-time
Of space and shade
So still:
A friendly camp fire,
A moon, a maid—
A thrill.

LE CONTE CANYON

There's laughter in the lonesomeness
Of sun and windy sky
And mellow earth-fun chorusing
To silent passers by,
The chuckling river's boistrous glee,
And gleams that twitch the eye.

There's power beyond man's fear or wish,
Stillter than unborn time,
In mile-deep rock sustaining rock,
In green thin-sheeted slime
Corroding slow where droppings splash;
And in the white dawn's rhyme.

There's memory of times forgot,
Of friends as yet unknown;
Swift thrill of kinship with the stars,
Yet sense remote, alone,
As ere God thought creation's plan,
Or seeds of worlds were sown.

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EDWIN MOFFATT

Great furrowed deeps upon his face,
Where Time has marked him for her own.
The scar of fears—the scald of tears—
These came apace;
And now the Years
Set him apart; his friends are flown,
His victories to the world unknown.
One cursed him, blindly, as he stood—
And yet the fight he fought was good.

A burning gash across his cheek.
The seal of age? No! but a day
In steel-hot rain—Hell torture—pain. . .
He scarce can speak;
Nor will again,
So lives apart. And One will say,
“Such is the world—the cold world's way.”
Forgotten now is Argonne Wood.—
And yet the fight he fought was good.

THE HOUSE ON THE BROAD HIGHWAY

(With Apologies)

DOROTHY SHANER

I have built me a house on the broad highway
Where humanity passes by,
But I need not open wide the door,
Nor raise its curtains high.
I need not answer the loneliness
Of the hearts that travel the road,
Nor need I even see the strength
With which they carry their load.

Yes, I may draw my curtains close,—
Tho I keep out the light of day,
I keep out, too, the petty cares
Of those who travel the way.
They have their joys and I have mine,—
Mine in itself is complete,
The life that is passing by my door
I do not desire to meet.

So I have drawn my curtains and closed the door
And kept out the light of day,—
But I've kept my heart unmoved by the cares
Of those who pass on the way.

F. J. Schuch

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Three Sketches

MARGERY BODINE LATIMER

I.

VOICES

It was a day of sticks and stones, with frisky sprites behind. A world of trees that sang their song in one voice. Leaves that rustled like thousands of lips struggling to say the same word. A sun that looked in through kitchen windows and let her smile fall upon bended heads.

A child lifted her face toward the rays of light and tried to catch them to her. They were like golden lanes that led up, and up. On the table was a brown bowl with heaps of flour that made desert dunes, pools of molasses,—thick and deep, and raisins as brown as the thoughts of dwarfs.

"Gizzie," said the child, in her serious way, "God is in everything, isn't He?"

The maid opened her mouth that was too full of teeth. "Lord!" she exclaimed, "What in the world do you mean?"

"Don't you think . . ."

"Ah! Ah!" Her laugh was like the snipping of giant scissors. "Do you think that God is in this here molasses and flour?"

The trees sang their song in many voices . . . The leaves trembled and turned their faces to the earth. The sun caught her rays and held them back.

II.

GREEN CASTLES

A little girl with loose braids and dragging apron strings. A boy with eager eyes and a red pocket-book of a mouth. Hanging branches that swept the ground and made a leafy tent. A grassy floor that was smooth and soft.

"Let's go up." The little girl peered through the leafy masses at the rough branches that led to the sky.

"Wait," said the boy, "I've got to fix this sail." He bent over a gleaming white sail that floated and waved.

"I can't hardly believe it."

"You don't believe anything."

"I do too . . . Didn't I help to make it?"

"She's all ready." His mouth puckered. "Come on, let's go up."

They began climbing toward the sky through a

slender castle of green. At the top was a world of misty blue. A world that held everything. A land unexplored—strange and cloudy.

"Now," he ordered, "when I say 'Go' you push off. I'll—I'll go," he ended with desperate pride in his voice, "to the moon and maybe farther."

"Don't go! I'm afraid it won't float. Don't—you'll be killed. Please don't leave me . . ."

"This thing's got to float. Give me a shove—quick!"

The girl's face grew hot. She leaned over the side of the little ship.

"I'll go with you," she whispered, "I'll shove off and then jump in. . . We'll go together."

"Hurry then." His voice was unsteady.

"Wilf," she said suddenly, "If this could really work why didn't someone discover it before?"

The little ship was smaller and heavier. The sail not quite so white. The world more unknowable than before.

III.

BLIND WALLS

Laughter—sharp, hard laughter that cuts and tears. Children running, shouting with delight—playing unconsciously with a cruel intuitive joy. Crumbly brown walls with wooden doors for words and stern windows for eyes. Blind eyes—blind—all of them blind.

A little girl hugs the wall. Her fair hair blows about her white face, her great eyes look out at the throngs of screaming children with trembling terror. A child who had once trusted everyone—loved everyone.

"Tag me! Tag me!" They scream to one another and fall over themselves like round animals with unsteady legs.

"Catch me, I give you leave this time. Oh! Oh!"

The lonely child wanted the sun to draw her up into its world and let her be alone with only her mother.

Two little girls were coming toward her—half-running, half-hopping. A great fear clutched her. What if they asked her to play with them? What could she say? She couldn't tell them that she was afraid of them—afraid of their games. Long sobs came with tears behind. Her heart wanted to break

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away. But they shouldn't see her tears. She looked down at the shining toes of her new oxfords—oxfords with careful bows.

The little girls were whispering. To her sensitive ears the sounds were like shouts.

"I ain't a'scared, you bet. What you so scared about? Watch me fix her?"

She advanced slowly, looking behind her from time to time to be sure that she had the support of her friend. Then she stopped.

"Here you," she said slowly. "You ain't half as good as you think you are. My ma says so." She shook her hard braids at the child who was so alone. A crowd gathered. Pointing fingers. Horrid faces.

They showed their tongues and their teeth like the faces of dead animals with gaping mouths.

The bell rang out harshly.

"Come on, come on. . . See who gets in first!"

They ran against one another, each one fighting to get ahead.

"Look at her! Look at her! Teacher says she don't know beans when the bag is open."

Great sobs in her throat kept her from swallowing. Hot tears burned behind her eyes. The world was. . . She clutched her little white handkerchief in both hands and turned her face to the wall.

The heavy door banged shut.

FLIGHT

MAVIS MC INTOSH

I believe in Love and Laughter!
Youth is mine, and what comes after
Is the time to spend in sighing.
Age is only years of dying!

I shall not wait with shortened breath
And tear-blurred eyes for bitter death;
Not even Time can make me stay
When I have danced my Youth away!

For when the Love and Laughter go
I shall be gone, tho none may know.

The Line of Least Resistance

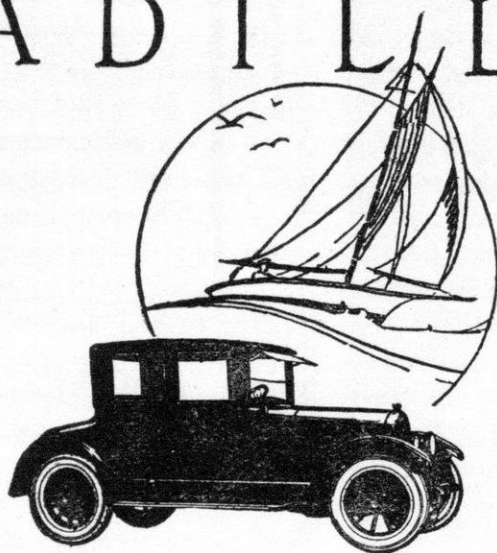
BY KATHERINE ROCKWELL

Jim and I were freshmen together. We had a room over in the Irving. There was a fireplace, a good rug, a lamp of Jim's that shed an intimate mellow light, some prints that were not bad, and a comfortable lot of books strewn about. We used to come home from classes on dark winter afternoons and, after building up the fire, smoke and talk about things, the real things of life we called them: Art, philosophy, God, poetry, war. And then, after having become sufficiently entangled, we would change the subject of discussion to ourselves. We were morbidly introspective and analytical, and, of course, came to no definite conclusion, only succeeding, at best, in attaining a mutual understanding of one another's ideas. Then we turned our attention to the rest of the university. It was through a haze that we

saw it, spread like a panorama before our eyes. We viewed from a distance objectively the figures walking about. Sometimes we would become interested in one, and our sympathy and imagination, stimulated by some sort of appeal, would see the whole, and thus complete the story. We made life art, and described in sketch or poem what we saw.

There were a few English instructors who used to be very decent to us. They invited us out to dinner often, and on occasions took us to some parties. They weren't really parties, just informal gatherings, but very interesting. The women were instructors and a few girls who had studied art in New York the summer before. They all smoked, and everyone talked to whom and about whom or what they pleased. Often someone would play the violin or piano. Jim

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and I were about the youngest there, though none of them was very old. They had all written or painted or done something interesting, and the talk was clever. Jim shone more than I did. He really pulled me with him to a certain degree, but he brought out in me undeveloped tendencies which I always knew existed, but to which I had never given much expression. Somehow, though, I felt that there were some of this little crowd who thought me just a "nice kid,—quick at imitating and liking and appreciating the artistic and clever sort of thing, who, maybe, some day might do something." That is one of the things, you see, that Jim and I thought about me. But as I said before, they were all very decent to us.

At the end of the year, after having been soaked in this atmosphere of ego, art, introspection, and endless talking, we both emerged the typical conventionally unconventional undergraduate cynics and pessimists, pessimists because we couldn't possibly be optimists, and we had not yet learned to go ahead blindly buffeting against we knew not what.

We both made fairly good grades that year, and we both had read a great deal and written a few fairly good things. But sometimes I would come home, and, after reading, talking, or writing a bit, I would look through the smoky haze and wonder, "Is this living or am I only talking and writing about living? I'm not doing anything, I don't meet and know many people. Is this life, or am I letting life slip beyond me?" I was afraid.

This was all two years ago. I am a junior now. Jim and I parted at the end of that year. He went east to Harvard. We haven't written, but I have heard that he is very interesting, and has done well in

a quiet way. I have been living in my fraternity house, that is to say, I eat and sleep there. I really live somewhere between it and the campus. I am counted a fairly big man in my class. On the hill I do not stand so well, for I just get by with the least effort possible. I do not have time for anything but being a good fellow and a big man in the class.

At first I was considered a queer duck, rather odd, sort of an intellectual or something equally pernicious. Maybe if there had been another queer duck for me to pal about with over at the house I'd have done so and remained unchanged. As it was, I decided to be absolutely normal, or shall I say subnormal? I've gotten over having queer ideas that do not fit with anyone else's, or can't be used for a definite purpose. I have rubbed against all sorts of people until the edges have been knocked off my peculiarities. I have adapted myself to characters with whom at first I had nothing in common, until my own character has lost its ego. I have become broad, but have I become so broad that I am flat? I have lived, in that I have done things in college and have met many people. I have not written a thing worth reading. I have been happier, in a certain unthinking existence, but has it been worth it?

To-day I had a letter from Jim saying that he was coming back for the second semester, and asking me to share an apartment with him. Should I do it? Would I miss what I have gained now? Could I do it? Or, shall I write him that, "I'm awfully sorry, old man, but I can't very well break away from the crowd. Of course, I'll see you a lot, and things will be just the same as before—"

Oh, damn the line of least resistance!

The Soul of a Freshman

FRANK GRAY

The clock in the steeple was striking five; its strokes intruded with piercing clangor on the stillness of the late winter afternoon. The University campus was nearly deserted; the buildings were vacant-eyed and gloomy in the early twilight. A light snow had been sifting down, but now the air was clear, and filled with a penetrating chill. The snow blanket deadened every salient feature in the landscape of its identical color and hue—there was only the white and black.

In a corner office on one of the upper floors of the large building on the hill, a man was still working. His light gave forth the one radiant gleam of life in

the darkened, cavernous halls. The man sat at his desk by the window reading over student themes, a stack of which lay in the little pool of lamplight at his elbow.

Presently he laid down the paper which he had been reading, and turned away to rest his eyes. As he gazed quietly out of the window his face in repose seemed to hold an expression of weariness—a weariness more inherent and fundamental than could be caused by tired eyes. The contour of the face was strong, almost rugged, with well poised chin and high imposing brow; his features expressed mature intellect and strength of character; the eyes were keen and

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searching beneath heavy brows, but the mouth—there was a brooding spirit in the lowering curve of his lips, and an inflexibility, that suggested thwarted ambition, disillusionment of years, withered idealism. He was not by any means venerable in years, but now he looked old, so old.

As he looked away over the snow bound reaches of the campus, he mused inaudibly to himself: The penmanship of these freshman themes was bad—very bad. He must not forget to propose at the next faculty meeting that a course be given in penmanship, to correct these scraggly hieroglyphics. Strange, that young men and women of college age should have so little to say—in most of the themes there was evidence of a grinding-out process, a conscious effort to meet the requirement in number of words, with no thought of sympathy for the unfortunate professor who must read them. And yet, it was interesting to probe the inner recesses of the undergraduate mind. The immaturity of the writers prevented them from concealing their personal identity behind the scrawly words on the pages. For instance, here was a student who, in trying to prove that student life was undemocratic, had unwittingly displayed the narrowness and pettiness of his disposition, and his envious, rather bitter temperament. The man at the desk smiled a little wanly as he contemplated this paper—the inner workings of the boy's mind were so painfully evident.

Original Item Has Been Damaged

one could regain his perspective and become reacquainted with himself here in the warm confines of the office, the limited radiance of the reading light, the deep-seated comfort of the desk chair.

But this would never do . . . He must finish the task at hand, and betake himself homeward to a warm supper. Restlessly he detached another folded paper from the diminishing heap, and settled himself to read. The handwriting of this one was better, the student had obviously taken pains to render the production in his best style.

The subject of the theme dealt with a boy's personal life at the University. He had been reared on a farm, over in the hills along the Mississippi, and in

coming to school he had left his home for the first time. . . Rather a commonplace introduction: most of them opened that way—where they lived, what they had done, why they had come to the University. . . The story went on to state how changed conditions had induced revolutionary ideas into the boy's mind; new companions had brought pressure to bear upon ideals which were fostered by wholesome family life on the farm, and had eventually distilled out of his character most of the innocent faith and clean puritanism. New habits of life, and after that—the reaction: the college life was replete with novelty to eyes long deprived of unusual sensations. Subsequently, the boy fell easily toward the other extreme and followed the superficial trend of the pleasure loving crowd. Wine, song, and goodfellowship—"Garden of the Gods."

Then a day of reckoning. There was a scene in the office of the Dean, where the boy was informed in no uncertain terms that his work at the University was almost a total failure, and he was advised to withdraw before the end of the term. The ensuing lines of the boy's theme were eloquent with crude, boyish sincerity, and with more than a hint of raw tragedy.

"That night when I went home I knew what an awful thing I had done, I sat in my room and thought till I couldn't think any more. Then I ran out into the night and wandered for hours along the shore of the lake. It wasn't so much for myself that I grieved, but it tortured me to think of my mother and my father, you see I am the only child, and they made a sacrifice to send me here and they counted so much on the outcome of my career. They put all of their hopes in me, their only child, and I failed them. How could I ever go home and face them? The picture came clearly to my mind of dad and mother sitting there in the front room by the stove, reading and talking together, so happy in the belief that I was doing something higher in life than they had ever done. Gee, but I couldn't break that dream, why I'd rather have killed myself. And so for a long, long time I walked up and down the shore of the lake, thinking and thinking. It came back to me bitterly that I had wasted myself on shallowness and cheapness. My friends were not sincere, nor were they real men, just floaters and wasters, like me. And the gambling, drinking, carousing—how foolish it all seemed, how childish, and I had thought it was so manly to do those things.

"The next morning I went back to the office of the Dean. I walked up and down past the place for half an hour to get up my nerve, and then I went in. I begged him to give me a new start, just one little chance to make good, and he did. I thanked him

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from the bottom of my heart, and I guess my voice was pretty husky with gratitude. Now I'm going to show them all, that stern old dean up in his office on the hill, those democratic friends of mine, and best of all those two old people over in the western hills."

The professor laid the paper carefully down among the others on his desk. As he contemplated the blank wall in front of him, a dreamy mistiness came into his eyes—emotion most unbecoming to a professor of English. The pitiful little drama in those pages brought back a flood of memory pictures of his own remote college days. It was a smaller college, a different system, but there were professors in those days, too, and deans, and most realistic of all, youth—blind, impetuous, blundering youth. And there was a vivid scene. . . . Yes, it might almost have been yesterday the remembrance was no poignant: studies low, career blasted, parents wasting away with imaginary grief. Would he ever forget that night? He too had fought out his battle alone under the stars; and along the water—a river it was, that flowed by the campus. He had walked there for hours, tasting all the sweet, mad despair of fading dreams. And, if he remembered rightly—yes, he had wept—thrown himself down on the grass and sobbed

like a baby. The severe countenance of the professor relaxed into a wry, smile at this thought—what a silly young ass he had been; it had all come out right in the end; and yet, there was suffering, and a scar that would remain.

Outside, the darkness had descended with profound suddenness. Lights winked through the trees, down below, and in the houses along the avenue. The wind whined with ghastly loneliness about the cornice, and through the half protected courtyard. The man started nervously, as though he had been discovered in some untoward act, glanced at his watch, and turned decisively to the folded theme which he still clenched absently in tense fingers. His eye hurriedly scanned the closely written pages: Punctuation, very bad; spelling worse. His blue pencil made lightening strokes across the face of the manuscript. Bad grammar here, crude phraseology there (rule 132 violated), a misplaced paragraph at the last. He sat for a moment regarding the paper with an eye of judgment; then, with inevitable precision, he marked the theme FAIL, snapped out the light, and thudded away down the hall towards home and a belated supper.

Contributors

Joseph C. Dyas is a Federal Bonus student, whose ease in dealing with the family life and daily occupations of the Tigris-Euphrates valley is the result of thorough study. He is also the author of a 100,000 word novel (unpublished) based on Norse mythology.

* * * *

A. C. Hamilton is a tall, gangling sort of youth, who has served in the Navy, and whom one would hardly suspect of being America's Kenneth Grahame. He says that he is fond of Latin titles.

* * * *

Adah Newcomb is a stranger to the staff. She seems to be enjoying life, if her story can be taken to reflect her views.

* * * *

Katherine Rockwell writes for the Cardinal. She is worried lest someone take personally "The Line of Least Resistance." Whoever you are, she would like it made clear that she does not mean you.

* * * *

Edwin Moffatt is a mystery. His name does not appear in the Student Directory, but the manuscript of his poem was unmistakably addressed to the LIT. Will he kindly make himself known if he is still with us?

* * * *

Of course, Frank Gray's *chef d'oeuvre* is "Bare Hands," a story the equal of which we have not seen for a long time. May he write another like it very soon.

Praise bestowed on Mavis McIntosh's lyrics would sound fulsome. Her delicacy and skill are above praise.

The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

Published Monthly during the Academic Year by Students at the University of Wisconsin. Annual subscription, \$1.50; single copies, 25c. Entered as Second Class Matter at the Post Office at Madison, Wis.

Publication Office: Room 33, Union Bldg.

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REVIEWS

"*Europe: A Book for America*," by Samuel Roth, (Boni & Liveright) is of a flavour too strong to be popular. Books like this, books that are coarse and true and acrid, are usually not meant to be widely read. This one, however, as its subtitle implies, was evidently written with the wish that it would find a large public. Mr. Roth is not pleased with Europe, to put it mildly, nor with the late war, and most Americans are, if not pleased, at least content; therefore, he conceives it a necessary duty to strip off the blindfold and to show us our playfellows as they really are. The book as a mission, and what use to write a book with a mission if those for whom it is designed do not read it?

It should be read—and taken seriously. There are too many Americans who have a great, blind faith in such frail structures as our omnipotence, the sincerity of European statesmen in their protestations of honesty and unselfishness, and the efficacy of the war in making the world "a decent place to live in." They should be made to realize that if we meddle any further in European politics we must do so in a more or less cynical spirit, keeping our powder dry. It is not necessary that we meet vicious practices with vicious practices; our future glory lies in proving to the world the strength of our nobility and honesty, but we must be careful.

Europe is a warning. In free verse form we are given impressions of the characters of our various late allies as well as of those of our enemies, and these characters are not pleasant to contemplate. We are in a dangerous neighborhood; that is Mr. Roth's message to America. There are hatreds in Europe, centuries old, which we cannot destroy with kind words; there is greed with which no League of Nations can cope, not now and not for a long time to come. We must go into the game with open eyes, and Mr. Roth, because he loves America, attempts to help her open her eyes to the dangers which beset her.

There is much in this book, astonishingly much for a thin volume of sparse free verse. There are new and illuminating views of the mission and place of America in the world; striking pictures abound in it; the author has compressed whole works on history, sociology, and philosophy into a handful of pregnant sentences. The fervour of reading on from one arresting phrase to another, from one pitiless expression to the next, is so strong that when one comes to the part dedicated to "My People" (the Jewish race), there is hardly any preparation for the gentle sympathy and tender love that it expresses. For once Mr.

Roth's skepticism fails him, and he weeps the sorrows of his race and prophesies of its future glory.

Dominating everything is hope for America as the liberator of the world. The little book calls to her at once "Danger!" and "Courage!" It would be an admirable text-book for the public schools. Though there are those who will in their banality cry out against the author as a cynic, he is not a cynic, for a cynic has no faith, and he has faith in the future of America. His attitude is, indeed, not unlike that of an anxious hen watching over a single chick surrounded by hungry and malevolent rats. P. V. G.

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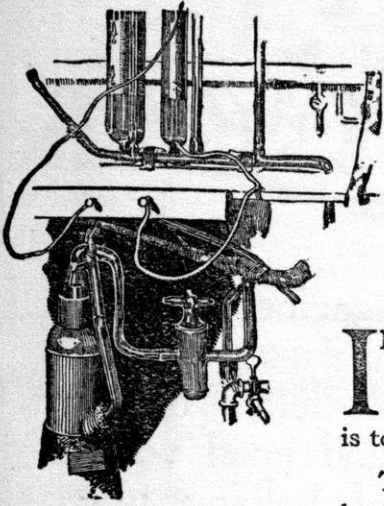
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What Is Vacuum?

IF THE traffic policeman did not hold up his hand and control the automobiles and wagons and people there would be collisions, confusion, and but little progress in any direction. His business is to *direct*.

The physicist who tries to obtain a vacuum that is nearly perfect has a problem somewhat like that of the traffic policeman. Air is composed of molecules—billions and billions of them flying about in all directions and often colliding. The physicist's pump is designed to make the molecules travel in one direction—out through the exhaust. The molecules are much too small to be seen even with a microscope, but the pump jogs them along and at least starts them in the right direction.

A perfect vacuum would be one in which there is not a single free molecule.

For over forty years scientists have been trying to pump and jog and herd more molecules out of vessels. There are still in the best vacuum obtainable more molecules per cubic centimeter than there are people in the world, in other words, about two billion. Whenever a new jogging device is invented, it becomes possible to eject a few million more molecules.

The Research Laboratories of the General Electric Company have spent years in trying to drive more and more molecules of air from containers. The chief purpose has been to study the effects obtained, as, for example, the boiling away of metals in a vacuum.

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No one can foretell what will be the outcome of research in pure science. New knowledge, new ideas inevitably are gained. And sooner or later this new knowledge, these new ideas find a practical application. For this reason the primary purpose of the Research Laboratories of the General Electric Company is the broadening of human knowledge.

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