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The Wisconsin
Literary
Magazine

Volume XVI



Number 6

“The Cat in the Sack”

A Drop O’Poteen

German Verse

PUBLICATION OF UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

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March 1917

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Literary Magazine

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The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

VOLUME XVI

Madison, March, 1917

Number 6

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THE LIT is now entering on its sixth issue. After reading at least ninety per cent of the manuscript submitted, the question very naturally arises,—what is the virtue of undergraduate writing, and especially of undergraduate poetry.

In general the material submitted for publication falls under three heads. The largest of these divisions might well be called that of the adolescent blossom. This sort of verse is usually crude, naive, and charming. At times it is self-revealing,—at times it is painful. Someone has complained that the young writer admits the writing of verse with the same sort of shame as he admits a first love affair. This, indeed is not to be wondered at. The poetical expression of an adolescent is a confession in much the same way as the admission of love is a confession. It has the same charms but it also has the same faults. Interesting as this type of writing is, it is unfortunate that, by the very nature of things, it can seldom win a place in the Lit.

A second type of verse is the verse of vanity. This type is almost always painful. It is often the expression of a precocious mind that begins writing verse for much the same reason as it continues to go to church. It happens to be "the thing that is done." The faults of this type of verse, are that it is insincere in content, superficial in quality, and crude in workmanship.

Perhaps the most valuable type of verse that we are permitted to read, is the verse of the self-conscious

craftsman. Because the author has realised that self seriously at work to master the media of expression. He succeeds not because his work is a study, nor because it tends toward sophistication, but because it is intelligent. The young writer who opens his mouth and expects to find it filled with song often finds it filled with sound only. He fails because his emotion has expressed itself in a form that is inadequate and unconvincing. And the editors, no matter how well they may understand the writers' motives, are forced to reject his expression because of this unfortunate fact.

And from this six months experience, the editors have gleaned for themselves a moral which they would like to submit to their readers and contributors. The writing of verse is a craft as well as a gift. It requires intelligence as well as feeling. It is a communication as well as an expression. The editors are always glad to read any verse that is submitted, but they would like to emphasize in these columns a moral which they themselves have learned and which they have often had occasion to emphasize privately, namely that the writing of effective verse requires the *intelligent* use of words.

THE Board of Regents must consider carefully the resolution, adopted by the Forum, requesting it to designate some university building in which all speakers of university organizations will be allowed to speak freely. The resolution represents not the attitude of a few radicals, but is the expression of a spirit easily recognized in the whole undergraduate body. Considering the well attended lectures in the last few months as well as the crowded discussions of the Forum, no one can doubt that there is among the students an increasing interest in the problems of the day. Nor can one doubt that this interest should not be fostered by presenting to it all the greatest movements which are influencing modern society. Yet, as the resolution points out, the present means of the University for doing this are limited "to the more conventional and accepted lines of thought" and must

to a great extent, therefore, utterly ignore a great part of the new lines of thought. Thus the University "picks and chooses," receives a prohibitionist here and rejects a socialist there.

It was a coincident that at the same time Mr. Max East was barred from speaking in the buildings of the University of Wisconsin, President Lowell withdrew his permission for a lecture at Harvard by Mrs. Skeffington on the grounds that "college halls are not to be used for propaganda". Yet Capt. Ian Hay Beith, who in Cambridge was publicly described as "having been sent by the British Government to explain Britain's part in the war", was welcome at Harvard. Thus at Harvard we see the same conditions as exist here. Of course there was a strong reaction against President Lowell's decision. No less conservative journal than the Nation, remarking that every Harvard undergraduate would profit greatly by hearing Mrs. Skeffington, upheld a writer in the *Crimson* who advanced the same ideas as are included in the Forum's resolution.

In regard to the actions of the authorities at Harvard and here, we cannot help but feel that they discriminate not against propaganda, but against certain subjects because, they say, the University must not be considered as supporting them. Harvard must remember that to its undergraduates, the Irish question is as vital as pro-Ally agitation, and Wisconsin must remember that to its undergraduates, socialism is as vital as prohibition. But as the Nation quoted from the *Crimson*, "If the University allows every expression of opinion, both from its faculty and from lecturers brought by the student organizations, it cannot be accused of giving support, as a university, to the opinions of any." In considering the resolution, the Board of Regents must remember that the Forum is not acting for itself alone but that it is the agent of the whole student body. And if the Regents grant the moderate request of the Forum, it will both confer a great benefit upon the undergraduate body and greatly enhance the educational value of the University.

IT IS with a distinct pleasure that we state the results of the so called, "Lit Campaign." About fourteen hundred new names have been added to the subscription list of the *Wisconsin Literary Magazine*, which almost doubles our previous circulation, and is about ten times as great as that of last year's magazine. The enthusiasm shown by more than a hundred women student solicitors and the ready response given by the faculty, students, and city residents has

convinced us that our aim, to introduce a *literary* magazine on the campus, has met with success.

It was with the feeling of experimenters that we started out six months ago on our new attempt. The general opinion then was that the term *literary*, whether as a name or as an expression of spirit, would be a detriment rather than a help to the progress of the magazine. We heard a great deal about the "popular demand," the "college spirit," the "ultimate failure of the highbrow," etc.

In spite of this pessimistic criticism we published our magazine and maintained our standards uncompromisingly.

In the progress of the Wisconsin Literary Magazine we find miniature portrayal of the conflicting tendencies of the larger world, the conflict of art vs. commercialism. It has shown the lack of foundation of the "popular demand" cry. It has further shown that students' interests are not limited to athletics and dancing. The success of the Lit campaign has convinced us that our students actually "need the Lit," and that the Lit has been expressing students' thoughts and students' sentiments.

It is needless to say that we are thankful to the many solicitors, whose prime interest in the campaign was to win *readers* not the prize. We wish to express our appreciation to both winners and losers alike for their heroic efforts.

Mortar Board has had complete charge of the administration end of this number of the Lit. It is a pleasure to recall to the reader the excellent work which this society is doing. It maintains a scholarship which is awarded to a woman student on the basis of scholarship and prominence in student life. It also maintains Mortar Board Cottage, a community house conducted on co-operative principles. As one way of acquiring the necessary funds for this work, Mortar Board earns the proceeds of one number of the Lit. The members of Mortar Board have conscientiously worked for the success of this issue and deserve the co-operation of the student body.

EDITORS

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| PHILIP A. ADLER | R. D. JAMESON |
| JOHN L. CLARK | MARJORIE KINNAN |
| AGNES DURRIE | ERNEST L. MEYER |
| ESTHER FORBES | MARY P. MORSELL |
| ROSE PEREL | |

“The Cat in the Sack”

Characters

Alan Sever, Captain of Artillery (Territorials).
Eloise, his wife.
Dr. Wadner.
Tabitha Robbins.
Boy Scout.

Scene:

A London suburb. A sitting room. At left a wood grate, a big settle at right angles to it. Center back, a curtained doorway into dining room. To the right, tables piled with red cross work, hospital shirts, surgical dressings, a bandage roller, etc. A flight of stairs comes down into the room at right; on the landing is a telephone. The room suggests refined and slightly romantic tastes (picture by Corot, “The Victory of Salamis”). Eloise, a slender, ultra-English young woman, sits on the settle, knitting. Doctor Wadner stands with his back to the audience—a stout round-shouldered back, in a tight frock coat. His high hat, gloves, and medical bag are beside him.

Eloise: Yes, this is my seventeenth pair of socks—Oh! (Her ball drops on the floor and rolls towards center.)

Doctor: (Picking up the ball) Ah! ah! got it!

Eloise: Thank you, Dr. Wadner. Ah well! everything I touch today seems to drop,—even the stiches.

Doctor: (Pacing up the room, stops by table at left.) It is because you are tired, Mrs. Sever. Has all this work been done in this house?

Eloise: Yes, the committee stayed all day today. The last one left ten minutes before you came.

Doctor: And I promised your husband to look out for your health while he is away—

Eloise: But you are satisfied aren't you? Quite satisfied?

Doctor: Well—er—not entirely.

Eloise: But Dr. Wadner I never in my life felt so—so *enduring* as I have since the war begun and I've had all this red cross work to do. I feel wound up as if I could go on forever.

Doctor: But it is hard—

Eloise: Hard? I suppose so. And it was hard, too, terrible to see Alan go, but oh Dr. Wadner, he went so happily, so gallantly, to die on the battlefield if need be, to protect his home and country.

Doctor: Oh, yes, of course Alan would be the first to go. He belongs to that—

Eloise: I was brave: I even urged him to go. I did not cry, not for three days, and then only when I found that baby picture of him, that one on the mantel.

His mother gave it to me. Do you know, it came over me suddenly that he has the same expression now sometimes, when he raises his eyes and looks at you; and I felt that I had sent a poor little child off to the war. I wanted to go straight to France, and carry him back home with me,—since then I've not cried at all.

Doctor: I wish you would cry—cry hard. You suppress too much, you're wearing yourself out—just look at your hands—relax them, please. There, relax. That is the trouble with you thoroughbred women, especially thoroughbred English women. It is like pressing more and more condensed air into a can; the stronger the can, the more terrific the explosion when it comes. I must warn you, Mrs. Sever, you must be a good child, eat more, cry more, think less, work less. You say you do not worry; are you sure?

Eloise: Yes, I do not worry. When Alan went off—that night I rode home alone in the cab, I said: “I'm coming back from Alan's funeral. If I ever see him again, I will take him as a miracle given back to me from the grave.” I have grieved for him and missed him, and glory in him. For what can a man do grater than give everything, even his life!

Doctor: Perhaps—well—

Eloise: Oh, I never loved him so before. I'm afraid I worship him. He seems removed from me in a way,—

Doctor: You do not speculate on where he is, and whether he's warm enough and has enough to eat, or think of him in a hospital?

Eloise: Just a little, sometimes when the bandages slip through my fingers—I fell—I feel—. And then the seams in the surgical shirts. Alan always hated rough seams, so I take care because—. But usually I feel I'm a soldier's widow, and *must* be brave because he was so brave. You know, I have not heard from him now for four weeks.

Doctor: How about sleeping? Eight hours a night?

Eloise: (Slowly, and tired) That's the only trouble: I was going to ask you to give me something—

Doctor: You don't sleep?

Eloise: Hardly ever, any more.

Doctor: Hum—

Eloise: I don't seem to need it. In the daytime I feel so vigorous, but I dread lying awake nights. I never try to go to sleep before one or two. Still, I suppose I must sleep, mustn't I?

Doctor: How long has this been going on?

Eloise: Two weeks.

Doctor: That counts for much of the change that I have noticed in you. You have a kind of ingrowing worry, one might say, which is worse than the hysterical sort; and you get no relaxation, even by sleep.

Eloise: But you'll give me something—

Doctor: (Opens his bag under the central light) You've no one to send to the chemist's tonight, have you?

Eloise: Why, I hate to: Robbins and Smith worked so hard with this committee here for lunch.

Doctor: These tablets are much stronger than you need. Therefore, I will cut each one in half. As soon as you are in bed and quite warm, take one half. If you do not sleep, then take the other; no more than that. They are very powerful. In this little bottle are enough to put the entire household to sleep forever, provided they are not "dope fiends" and hardened to it.

Eloise: Thank you, Dr. Wadner: and will I dream?

Doctor: Do dreams trouble you?

Eloise: Only when I think I see Alan as a child like the picture, crying for me and holding out his arms. Then I wake up and wish I could cry, too. We always have been so happy together—

Doctor: Ah, well, Mrs. Sever, sometimes they all seem like children to me—these poor little children of Europe, that suffer and die so dumbly, and yet so reproachfully, as children do. There is only a step between the baby and the man—twenty years at the most.

Eloise: And yet that step! It brings them into a kind of godhood, we women who sit and knit and sew within four walls, never understand.

Doctor: (Shakes his head) I'll look in tomorrow. (Shakes hands and says with feeling): You're a brave woman, Mrs. Sever.

Eloise: Goodnight, Dr. Wadner. I'm so happy to think I shall sleep: goodnight.

(Dr. Wadner exits. Eloise stands, knitting for a moment. As she finishes the row, puts down the work, replaces the photograph on the mantel. Robbins, a solid country girl, comes in, and after glancing at her mistress, starts putting away the red cross things in boxes.)

Eloise: (Also starting to work) There are threads everywhere: I think the carpet-sweeper would take them up.

Robbins: Yes, Mrs. Sever: thank you. (she goes to get it).

(Eloise hums one of the Prince Charlie songs: "Follow thee, follow thee, wha wad na follow thee, etc. Robbins returns.)

Eloise: No, don't throw away those big scraps; nothing should be wasted in England now.

Robbins: Oh, no, M—Mrs. Sever. As I was saying to Cook: "Better save the ham fat and we'll make soup out of it—or if Mrs. Sever won't have it for soup, then soap."

Eloise: That's the idea: is my tea ready?

Robbins: Yes, kettle boiling.

Eloise: Then I'll have it here instead of going into the diningroom. And, oh, Robbins, what happened to the dragoon you were telling me about?

Robbins: Please, Mrs. Sever, I can—n—t say without—u—t c—crying.

Eloise: (Worried) Why, what has happened?

Robbins: It was those dirty Germans: they hurt him fierce, and he's back in the hospital with indigestion.

Eloise: But why do you cry? You said you hardly knew him.

Robbins: It's the idea, Mrs. Sever: I can't see a sodger no more but I could begin to cry, and sometimes I fairly bellow. (Goes off sobbing).

Eloise: But I don't cry, and I havn't heard from Alan for four weeks. Four weeks—oh, Alan!

(Robbins returns with a tablecover, tray, pot in a brilliant tea cosey, and sets a most attractive table by the settle. Picks the bottle of tablets off the floor where they have fallen.)

Robbins: And these, Mrs. Sever—are they red cross and go in the boxes, or your own?

Eloise: My own hospital supplies: there, put them on the mantel.

Robbins: You do look a bit tired, Mrs. Sever, if I may say it—wearied like, a bit, although you do take things so quite.

Eloise: I use will power, I suppose.

Robbins: Oh, Mrs. Sever, I *never* do. It's just the difference: why *We* never do seem like *You*, even when *We* marry *You*.

(Eloise sits down and begins moodily on her toast and jam. The telephone rings at the head of the stairs. Robbins answers.)

Robbins: Chelsea 8870; yes, sir, yes, I'll ask her.

Eloise: Who is it?

Robbins: Dr. Wadner asks if you are in bed yet. What shall I tell him, Mrs. Sever?

Eloise: Tell him I will be by eight o'clock.

Robbins: She says she's not in bed yet, but will be by eight o'clock. Yes, sir, Yes, sir; goodnight, thank you, sir. (As she starts down the stairs, the telephone rings again. Pause.)

Eloise: A mistake, probably.

(It rings again, imperiously. Robbins hesitates, goes up and answers it.)

A Drop O'Poteen

WHEN I was a bit of a lad I made my acquaintance with the faeries, the Cluricaune, the Pooka, the Merrow, and the rest of the legendary folk through Moirna, who was one of our family.

I am not quite sure, even at this time of my life, of the true status of Moirna. She called my mother Moreen and my father Shane,—still she was no kin of ours. No more was she a domestic of any kind you may think of, for my father was not in a way of keeping domestics.

I know only that Moirna was a little, white old lady, who, as she grew older and older, became smaller and smaller—after the manner of all old Irish women—until finally she shrank almost to nothing, and died at last; and that an old woman from a town hard by came to her wake and sang the Keen most strangely and weirdly, and that she lies now in holy ground with a neat stone at the head of her grave.

To me Moirna left a most strange legacy,—a bit of brown turf from the county Clare, the which she kept carefully in a little shell-box with her rosary and a ring and a bit of brown hair tied with a ribbon. I have kept it even to this day,—as a token of Moirna, whose memory is dim in my mind now.

Of a winter evening, when the lamp shed a yellow glow over the table and a patch of the carpet, but left all the corners dark, and when the stove had begun to pant with the burning of the birch-wood, throwing all sorts of fantastic shadows and flickers upon the floor,—then it was the best time of all for Moirna to be telling her stories of the little people. She would be a very little bundle then, it seemed, in the dark of her big rocking-chair; and her voice—that was still as soft and clear as any colleen's in the world—would be dreamy and low, and far away—as far away as the county Clare, in troth, where the little people hold forth still on moony nights.

My father and mother, who pretended to make fun at the stories of Moirna, would read the paper between them by the lamp light; but at last they would draw up their chairs and listen like any children. Then all at once they would look up and see the big eyes of us, and my mother would say, "Wisha, Moirna, you're frightening the birdeens." And then the story telling would be over for that night.

I have in mind now but one of the stories that Moirna was used to tell us. I cannot relate it in the words of her, for many of them were strange words to our tongue, and the soft brogue on them cannot be put down on paper. But since it seems so fine a tale to

me, I will give it to you, thinking the while of Moirna, who has been dead these many years.

In the vicinity of the village of Inchegeela, in the county Cork, there lived a good many years ago a decent, honest old fellow with the name of Michael Muldoon. In the time of the small-pox his wife—who was named by the name of Biddy—was carried off, and he was left alone with Molly, his daughter,—as clean and clever and pretty a girl as you could find in nineteen baronies. A proud man was Mick Muldoon of this same Molly, who was growing at last into such a colleen as set all the young fellows in that part of the country agrog with the beauty of her. But she would have none of them, but milked the cow, and boiled the potatoes, and kept a clean hearth-stone for Mick, who was needing a housekeeper as badly as any of them.

Well, one May-eve, when all prudent Christians lock tight the doors and shutters and keep under the thatch, Mick sat up late before the turf fire that glowed bright in the chimney. He had put under his belt that night the half of a bottle of poteen; but, in troth, that was no more than enough to put him in a sad and melancholy way. And so he sat smoking his dudeen and staring hard into the fire, thinking sometimes of Biddy, heaving a sigh now and then from the bottom of his brogues, and wishing that the bottle on the shelf was as full again as it had been that morning. To be sure, ill luck for him at the last because of it, Mick stuck to the bottle a little more than he ought to have done. And by the same token he was a conceited man in a way; for he would have it that there was not the man in the county Cork who could drink him under the table. And, in troth, the same had never been done in all the days of his whole life.

Molly, being wearied of sitting and looking into the fire, had fallen asleep on the rushes. With the red glow of the burning peat upon her, the pretty lips of her parted, and the flush upon her that sleep puts into the cheeks of girls, she was, to be sure, as pretty a sight as a body could wish to see in a week of Sundays.

Well, while Mick sat by the fire, his gone-out dudeen in his hand and himself dozing the while, there was a strange disturbance on the other side of the partition,—where the cow was kept, only she was out at pasturage now. Twice Mick was aroused a little and as many times he dozed off again. Then he sat up once and listened a spell, and from the other side of the wall came the queerest sound that you ever could think of. Rap-a-tap-tap, rap-a-tap-tap, rap!—for all

the world like a shoemaker soling a shoe. And all the while there was the whistling of the liveliest, prettiest little tune that Mick had ever heard in his whole life before.

"Whisht!" said Mick, rubbing his eyes, "there's going-on's in the cow's shed. I must be investigating."

And so he slipped on his brogues and unlatched the door very quietly. The moonlight fell fair as silver out of the clear sky, the mist had begun to sail in white wreaths over the brown heath, and it was very quiet except for the far-off barking of a dog in Inchegeela.

Mick looked about him with all the eyes that he had, but never a thing could he see, although the hammering and whistling kept up as merrily as ever. But at the last, where the moonlight came through a knot-hole he saw the little fellow,—a wee bit of a man no higher than a carrot top, and his face as brown and as wrinkled as a frost-nipped potato, except that his cheeks were as red as any apple, and his nose a fine, shiny purple on the end. He had got on his bit of a leather apron, and was soling a little shoe, hammering so busily and whistling so loudly that he never minded at all—or pretended not to mind at all—the intrusion of Mick, which was noisy enough, to be sure.

"The Lord bless us!" cried Mick aloud. "'Tis a Cluricaune!"

The little fellow left off his whistling and hammering then, and looked at Mick with a queer pair of little eyes that twinkled like stars do on a sharp night in winter.

"God save you, honest man!" said Mick very civilly. "'Tis a dark place you're after working in."

"There are lighter places under the moon, Mick Muldoon," replied the Cluricaune, hammering away as hard as ever he could.

"'Tis a chilly night for your honor with so little on your back," suggested Mick. And then—in what manner it ever came about was always a mystery to him—he found himself asking the little man if he wouldn't step inside and warm himself with a drop of poteen, there being the while not a drop of poteen in the whole of the house!

"I thank you kindly, Mick Muldoon," said the little man with a final rap of his hammer, and shoving his apron around on his hip. "'Tis many a day, in troth, since I have tasted good Irish poteen."

And so it was that Mick Muldoon, who, like any other decent Christian, should have kept tight locked in that night—it being May-eve then there is much for good and for bad abroad—was bringing under his own thatch to drink with him one of the little people themselves.

It being the case that the little fellow could nowadays

do more than just look over the edge of the table, even by standing on tip-toe on the stool, Mick fetched him a milk-pail, the little fellow perching himself like any cock-sparrow on the edge of the same, and drumming merrily with his heels against the side of it.

What on earth he would be giving the little man to drink from was a conundrum to Mick; but there was nothing of that to worry on, for the little man unslung from his belt a bit of a piggin, and set it at his place on the table.

Then, seeing that the little fellow was fixed, Mick took down the empty bottle—that wasn't empty either—and poured no more than a few drops into the piggin of the little man, afterwards filking his own glass,—never wondering at all that the bottle was full when a little before, to be sure, it was empty.

"Here's to your good health, your honor," proposed Mick, very respectfully. "May you live these hundred years to come!"

The little man took his drop with a flourish; it was good Irish poteen with the snap and fire in it, and that was not the end of it. Pretty soon the melancholy spell that was on Mick took to its heels for fair, and the best jokes that ever were heard in the county Cork came to his mind, the little fellow kicking his heels against the pail, and laughing at them fit to kill.

But all the while the bright eyes of him would never be still, but must be wandering here and about, going over most of the time to Molly, who was still asleep tight as a bat by the fire, her hair shining ruddy like gold in the glow of the peat, the breath coming soft between her lips, and her breast rising and falling like a bird's beneath her bodice.

And Mick and the little man drank and drank—enough to have put any common Christian under the table and up and under again, the little man holding his sides for laughing at the jokes of Mick, and his bright eyes wandering all the time to Molly, who was sleeping through all the disturbance.

(Continued on page 184)

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The Poetry of Francis Thompson

WHEN Arnold Bennett said that Francis Thompson has, "A richer natural genius, a finer poetical equipment than any poet since Shakespere," even the most ardent admirers of Thompson's poetry must feel that Mr. Bennett has allowed his enthusiasm to run away with him. But to balance this ecstatic statement, we have the opinion of other critics, who unite in saying, that the poetry of Francis Thompson, is but "sound and fury, signifying nothing." Perhaps there is something of truth in both of these statements. There are many evidences of startling power and rich genius in Thompson's poetry, there are also passages, whose content, one must admit, is largely sound and fury.

Francis Thompson was like Shelley in his startling incapacity for life, and in his mighty capacity for poetry. The chronicle of his life is largely one of practical failures and of suffering. After failing in his examinations in medicine, he fled to London, without any resources whatever; here he led a vagrant existence, and like De Quincey, became a prey to opium. Like De Quincey, also, he was befriended by a girl of the streets, whose memory he celebrates in several of his poems. Later he was rescued by Wilfrid and Alice Meynell, two of the leading Catholic poets in England, and he lived with them while producing much of his best work. The poet died in 1907, and the portrait we have of him by Melville Lytton, painted shortly before his death, reveals a man worn out by life—a man whose face makes one feel that he has been with the souls in Dante's Inferno. The thin cheeks, the strangely tragic eyes, and the mouth, half covered by a thin beard, leave an impression of haunting sadness upon the memory.

Francis Thompson has not left a great bulk of work—two rather slender volumes of poetry, and a volume of essays, are all that we have of his. But in the poetry of these two volumes there is wonderful beauty. There are the *Poems on Children*, with their wistful musings and understanding of the child spirit, the *Sister Songs*, exquisite in their lyric beauty, the series, *Love in Dian's Lap*, the *Hound of Heaven*, the greatest and most widely known of Thompson's poems, and finally the remarkable odes, to mention only the most beautiful of the poems in the volumes. In the essays there are some critical studies in prose which always borders close to poetry, and among these, the essay on Shelley, especially, will make Thompson remembered as a wonderful interpreter of the poetic spirit.

Indeed there is much of the Shelleyan spirit in Thompson's work, and one is constantly tempted to

read Thompson into his own description of Shelley in the essay. Thompson's and Shelley's essentially child-like spirit is well expressed in this passage. "He is still at play, save that his play is such as manhood stops to watch, and his playthings are those which the gods give their children. The universe is his box of toys. He dabbles his fingers in the day-fall; he is gold-dusty with tumbling amidst the stars. He makes bright mischief with the moon. The meteors muzzle their noses in his hand. He teazes into growling the kenneled thunder, and laughs at the shaking of its fiery chain. He dances in and out of the gates of heaven, and its floor is littered with his broken fancies. He runs wild over the fields of ether. He chases the rolling world. He gets between the feet of the horses of the sun. He stands in the lap of patient nature, and twines her loosened tresses after a thousand wilful fashions, to see how she will look in his song. Thompson has much of this spirit in his attitude toward nature. He riots in the beauty of nature, and creates a thousand playful images out of her various aspects. But Shelley's attitude toward nature is essentially pagan, while for Thompson, nature is infused with religious mysticism. He continually interprets nature in terms of the Catholic sacraments. He calls the stars,

"Heaven's death lights which kindle yellow, spark by spark,

Beneath the dreadful catafalque of the dark."
Nature is also,

"A never-done ungaped at Pentecostal miracle."
Yet combined with this religious attitude toward nature, one feels the unconscious presence of the joyous pagan feeling for nature—the love of beauty for its own sake, the love of her as a breathing creature, and delight in her never to be exhausted images and phantasies. One finds such joyance in unnumbered passages. Take this from the "*Corymbus for Autumn*, for instance.

"How are the veins of thee, autumn, laden?
Umbered juices,
And pulped oozes,
Pappy out of the cherry bruises,
Froth from the veins of thee, wild, wild maiden.
With hair that musters, in globed clusters.
In tumbling clusters, like swarthy grapes,
Round thy ears and thy brow o'ershaden,
With the burning darkness of eyes like pansies,
Like velvet pansies,
Where through escapes,
The splendid might of thy conflagrate fancies,

With robe gold-tawny, not hiding the shapes,
Of the feet where unto it falleth down,
The naked feet, unsandalled,
With robe gold-tawny, which does not veil,
Feet where the red
Is meshed in the brown,
Like a rubied sun in a Venice sail."

This seems like paganism slightly drunken. Thompson has a Keats-like love of color. He speaks of the poppy springing from the grass like "a yawn of fire," he delights to describe the silver fin of a fish as it flashes through the deep water; he speaks of the young May moon

"Flying with slender white wings spread,
Out of its ocean nest."

He is almost Venetian in his love of reds, golds, and browns.

With Francis Thompson, images are a natural mode of expression—wonderful images which have an uncanny power of awakening the imagination, and bringing with them a vast train of suggestion. What Thompson says of Shelley's poetry is also true of his own. "It would be as conscious an effort for him to speak without images as it is for most men to speak with images. Suspended in the dripping well of his imagination, the commonest object becomes encrusted with imagery. To his ethereal vision, the most rarefied mental or spiritual music traced its beautiful corresponding forms in the sands of outward things. His thoughts became a mounted infantry, passing with baffling swiftness, from horse to foot, or foot to horse." And even Thompson's imagery is sometimes obscure, it is a beautiful joy even when one is most bewildered by its opulence. To him the winds have "whistling manes," and sweep like wild horses, "over the long savannah of the blue". He describes the sun, "shaking the bright dust from his parting shoon," and with characteristic delight in color, he speaks of crimson as, "illustrious sanguine," "like a grape of blood." Thompson's own metaphors best describes the image-fraught character of his verse.

"This treasure-galleon of my verse,

Fraught with its golden passion,

Oared with cadent rhyme,

Set with a towering press of phantasies."

But Thompson is also a poet of Catholic mysticism. Very few of his poems are directly devotional in nature, but his verse as a whole has much of the spirit of Catholicism. He is related to Crashaw, and to his own contemporary, Coventry Patmore, quite as much in a spiritual way, as he is to Shelley and Keats in the more fanciful and sensuous aspects of his verse. Yet Thompson is essentially modern, his very mysticism is a sign of his modernity. Out of Thompson's mysticism, there arises a delicate sense of the harmony of creation as a whole. In all the earth, he sees one

guiding principle, under the thousands of different forms which go to make up nature, so he says

"All things by immortal power,
Near or far,
To each other linked are,
That thou canst not stir a flower
Without trembling of a star."

Or again,

I do think my tread

Stirring the blossoms of the meadow grass,

Flickers the unwithering stars."

And the following beautiful metaphor:

"From sky to sod,

The world's unfolded blossom smells of God."

However, this mystical and ethereal quality of Thompson's poetry sometimes tends to make him obscure, and too remote from the ordinary experiences of humanity. Thompson's love poetry is not like other love poetry. He always seems to be standing upon a mountain height, singing of some seraphic vision, too beautiful for the majority of humanity to understand. With Thompson one has always the sense of being in a rarefied atmosphere.

One of the longer poems most characterized by this quality of ethereal loveliness, is the series, "Sister Songs," dedicated to Monica and Madelaine Meynell. In them he spirits us away to a land of fairy-like springtime, where visions come and go, and in between the pauses where the moving figures rest, there are soliloquies, and strange flights of thought. In "Love in Dian's Lap," we have another series which is very different from the ordinary love cycle. He seems to see in the body, but the veil of the spirit within, whose piercing cry is:

"Oh be true

To your own soul, dearest, as my life to you."

A kind of passionate pain vibrates through these poems, despite their emotional restraint.

Of Thompson's nature poems, three stand out predominant, "The Ode to the Setting Sun," "The Orient Ode" and "An Anthem of Earth." These all embody his religious and mystical attitude toward nature.

In the group, Sight and Insight, we have a series of introspective poems, many of them dealing with the philosophy of poetry and of art. In them Thompson expresses much of his personal philosophy.

"Not the Circean wine

Most perilous is for pain;

Grapes of the heaven's star-laden vine,

Whereto the lofty placed

Thoughts of fair souls attain,

Tempt with a more retributive delight,

And do disrelish all life's sober taste.

(Continued on page 186)

Verse

THE MASKS.

I cast them off, the masks which I had made,
 To shield my soul against reality.
 I placed them all before me in a row,
 And I looked at them aghast, as one who sees
 The shams and lies of all our daily life
 Wherewith one flatters friends and even him
 Whom one loves most—the masks which lent to me,
 A greater soul's depth or a clearer love.
 "I will be done with masks," I said again,
 Nursing the brave resolve within my heart,
 But all the time my shivering soul cried out,
 And strange and bare and wan it begged and cried.

Sudden there came a knock upon the door;
 I knew it was my love who waited there;
 I ran to meet him, let him hold me close,
 But as I sensed the magic of his lips,
 I knew the mask had claimed my soul again,
 The strange, fair mask which he had learned to love.

FOREBODING

That June we found blown roses everywhere—
 Roses which drooped their heavy crimson heads,
 Dark, wine-stained roses of impassioned reds,
 Baring their hearts without a dream of care.
 And as we gathered them one afternoon
 When love was warm, there came a sudden sense,
 Of wasted joy, and barren opulence,
 As if our love had blossomed all too soon,
 And spent its riches like a prodigal,
 Without a thought of future days and years.
 Then suddenly, he looked and saw my tears,
 And begged me tenderly to tell him all.
 And so I spoke, but bare words could not say,
 What fears now haunted my foreboding heart;
 Since then swift time has played its wonted part,
 And told him all I feared upon that day.

MARY MORSELL.

LIEBENSWERTE KLEINE

Siehst so kindefröhlich aus,
 Wunderliebe Kleine!
 Rufst die Herzensfreude 'raus;
 Wärs't du doch die Meine!
 Weisst ich nicht, wie schön du bist,
 Noch nicht, was die Liebe ist;
 Bleibst für ewig ungekusst,
 Liebenswert Kleine?

CLIFFORD F. GESLER.

IN THE RESTAURANT

Half wearily we sat and lingered there.
 Like melted gems, ruby and emerald,
 And golden topaz, with its lustre dulled,
 Rare wines gleamed, and the heavy-laden air,
 Was sick with unblent perfumes and with smoke.
 We sat and watched the strangely mingled throng,
 And heard some actress trill a silly song,
 And listening, we neither smiled nor spoke.
 The blaring music urged insistently,
 And as we rose to join the dancing crowd,
 The room seemed shrouded in a smoky cloud,
 And like a fair mirage there came to me,
 A vision of that day untouched by pain,
 When in the springtime, on a wind-swept height,
 Pine-laden breezes woke us to delight,
 And all the earth seemed freshly washed in rain.

MARY MORSELL.

ASHES OF SOUL

A tropic wind that pours its burning breath
 Across the sands, scorching the single flower
 That blossomed there; the all-consuming power
 Of hungry flames, embracing in mad death
 Each weaker force; long-gathering floods that tower,
 And break, and sweep headlong, in unchecked hour.

Across the desert of my life he passed,
 And withered what there was of beauty there,
 And, passing, left a blackened remnant, where
 Had gleamed the fires he kindled; then at last
 My shreds, my tears, my heart-cries did he bear
 On his wild torrent, far away, forever.

No Magdalene am I—he did not leave
 Enough of soul—ah, God!—enough to grieve!

M. K.

STUDENTEN FRUHLINGSLIED

Wie kann man doch studieren?
 Die Mädels sind so schön!
 Mit Feenaugen rufen sie,
 Mit Zauberlippen lächeln sie,
 Will man dennoch studieren,
 Schon bald muss man vergeh'n.

Man kann gar nicht studieren,
 Das Grün' ist all' herum;
 Und Mädelsstimmen klingen süß
 Wie Engelein im Paradies;
 Geht einmal man spazieren,
 So wird man völlig dumm!

CLIFFORD F. GESLER.

RECOGNITION

'Twas by your well shaped hand I knew you, friend,
 Your knowledge of the little wild things' ways;
 You knew where't was the golden willows bend
 Down to the lake, you knew the shaded, silent ways;
 When on the wind-swept fields we stood, I knew—
 How joyously you watched the light and shadow race!
 Could you have shaken off an aeon, say, or two,
 Yourself you had abandoned to the chase!
 How you were charmed—brown woods 'gainst golden grain,
 The beauteous curve the geese drew 'cross the skies,
 The sparrow on the swaying rye stalk, fain
 To burst with song—I saw the light within your eyes;
 By these I knew, but more than all I knew,
 By that creative thought afire in you.

SYLVA BEYER.

THE MOTHERS

At evening, when I feel the glow
 Of some low-hovering star,
 I wonder if it is the Heaven
 Where all the mothers are.

And if they linger at its rim,
 And through the twilight peer
 To watch the little children
 They have left behind them here.

I wonder if they watch us change
 With tender mother eyes,
 That they may know and greet us
 When we enter Paradise.

GEORGE ANUNDSEN.

TWO TRANSLATIONS FROM GERMAN

R. D. JAMESON.

OVER THE MOOR-LAND

Over the moor-land thunders my tread,
 Dull from the fallows the echo comes dead.

Autumn has come and the spring days have passed—
 At one time I dreamed that their glory could last!

Threatening fog clouds hover around
 Bare are the heavens, black is the ground.

Had I only not walked here once in the May!
 Living and loving passed quickly away.
 THEODOR STORM.

THE ASRA

Daily walked the wondrous lovely
 Sultan's daughter, slowly, slowly,
 By the fountain in the evening
 When the pure white water whispers.

Daily stood the fair young slave boy
 By the fountain in the evening,
 When the pure white water whispers,
 Daily he grew pale and paler.

And one evening came the princess
 Towards him with these hurried questions:
 "I must know thy name, boy, quickly,
 And thy home-land, and thy lineage."

And the slave boy said my name is
 Mohamed, I come from Yemmen,
 And my line—they are those Asra
 Who must die when love has touched them.

HEINRICH HEINE.

THE RIDER.

(Popular Version.)

I paddle the back of each spirit who tries
 To make of this earth a paradise.
 I rob the reformers of silly notions,
 I cause great scandals and smelly commotions;
 I know no crookeder scoundrel than I,
 But lo! they honor me when I die,
 And I'm a grafter, grafter!
 And I'm a grafter, grafter.

There is a warship that ne'er will be built!
 There is a pork-barrel that ne'er will be spilt!
 There is a budget whose funds are flown,
 And an innocent goat who's arrested alone!
 And I gather the kopecs, I gather them in
 From log-rolling brothers who wallow in sin.
 For I'm a grafter, grafter.
 Oh . . . I'm a grafter, grafter.

I rob the fool of his hard-earned cash,
 And wipe out a bank with a thunderous crash.
 And I rob the sinner and the saint,
 And swindle the "guy who is wise," but who ain't.
 Nor heed investigations, I
 Could graft from St. Peter when I die,
 I, just a grafter, grafter,
 Greater than God . . . I'm a grafter.

Sometimes my heart is filled with woe
 As I see some "graft commission" go
 To get my scalp, but strangely instead
 They heap new laurels on my head;
 With a slice of the swag I shut their eyes,
 And I fly on to a paradise
 Of grafters, grafters, grafters,
 Of grafters . . . grafters.

ERNEST MEYER.

O'Coogan's Dog

THE lights of the Last Chance saloon burned dimly through two greasy windows. The wind drove clouds of snow in powdery gusts up the lone street of Gulch City. Three horses, tails tucked in and heads hung low, stood in front of the saloon, their backs turned to the icy blasts. At intervals, frenzied laughter and yells broke out behind the walls of the saloon.

The horses shifted their weight uneasily and lifted their heads. A formless hulk pushed up to the hitching rail, taking shape as it neared the windows. A horseman swung stiffly from his creaking saddle. He tied his horse with numb hands and strode toward the door.

A louder laugh burst in the saloon, and the crash of a falling table mingled with the stamping of many feet. The door was flung open and a man pitched headlong across the step. Swearing and spluttering, he raised himself in the light of the open door.

"Damn that hound!" he cried, and stamped twice with his booted foot on a cringing shape huddled on the step. The animal whined plaintively, and struggled to escape. Angrily, the man kicked again and again. The whimpering grew weaker, and the shape lay still. The man raised the limp form into the light and flung it down again before the drunken revellers who had gathered about the door.

With the first crash, the newcomer had sprung across the porch and stood watching the beating. Now he stepped forward.

"Whose dog is that?" he asked.

The man who had stumbled through the door turned upon him fiercely. His eyes were bloodshot, his face purple. He swayed unsteadily upon his feet.

"That's my dog, an' what the—hic—hell's it to yu'?" he replied jerkily.

"It's a lot to me, savy? I don't stand by and see any dog treated that way."

The rough men closed in a circle about the two, who had entered the saloon. The dog lay quivering in the sawdust at their feet.

"He—hic—he's mine, an' I'll beat him when I damn please!"

The two glared at each other unflinchingly for a moment, and then the drunkard's eyes fell. The stranger stooped and touched the dog, noticing for the first time its graceful head and beautiful black coat. The animal cringed beneath his outstretched hand.

"What'll you take for him?" The words were curt, and surprised the circle of faces into open-mouthed astonishment.

"I don't sell 'im! Money ain't fit nor fine enough for that dog!" The tall frame straightened with the words, and for an instant the mad gleam left the drunkard's eyes.

"Then why don't you treat him decent, if he's so damn good? He's too good for the likes o' you!"

A man laughed boisterously at the remark, and someone slapped him across the mouth. All eyes turned toward the drunkard. He flinched, and mumbled inaudibly under his breath.

"Better leave 'im alone, stranger," one of the group broke the silence. "O'Coogan ain't in no pleasant mood tonight. Too much booze. Yu' can't buy the dog, no-how. I've tried it myself."

The stranger clenched his fist. His face flushed, and he turned quickly, as though to strike the drunkard, unmindful of the other's advice. The man caught his upraised arm and whirled him about.

"Don't! I tell yu'; it's no use foolin' with O'Coogan when he's drunk. He'll beat yu' to a pulp. Forget it!"

"Maybe you're right, pardner," said the stranger, and he drew back a step from the center of the group.

The dog had ceased its quivering, and looked up intelligently into the man's eyes. He nodded, and the animal wagged its tail slightly. Its eyes shifted un- easily to O'Coogan, and the black coat quivered again.

"Well, boys, I guess the drinks are on me." The stranger's voice had lost its angry tone. He stepped to the bar and motioned with a swing of his arm for the men to join him.

"Set 'em up there," he called. "Red-eyes all around!"

The men gulped the fiery liquid poured out before them. Even O'Coogan reached a scrawny hand to seize a glass, and spilled half the contents on his grimy shirt.

"Let's go again," said the stranger, depositing a roll of bills before him. Heads tilted back once more, and O'Coogan hung unsteadily to the edge of the bar.

The second drink brought the revellers out of the stupor into which they had fallen. As the rough voices and frequent guffaws grew louder, the stranger withdrew from the bar and sought the dog, which had crept to the farthest corner of the room.

The man viewed the animal admiringly. It was a powerful beast, black, save for a snowy breast, with a graceful, pointed head, and silken ears. A little stream of blood trickled to the sawdust beneath the dog's head. Its soft brown eyes looked up to the stranger as though to speak.

"You'll come out all right, old boy." The man was on bended knee, whispering. "Sure yu' will. He's a mean ol' cuss, that feller, but you'll come out all right. I'd buy yu' off him, yu' old shaggy hound, but I can't. Say, feller, how'd yu' like to hook up with me as a side pardner, eh pup? Yu' know sheep, don't yu', old shaggy?"

His voice crooned coaxingly over the dog, his back to the jostling crowd at the bar. He stroked the smooth head tenderly.

"We'll do it, ol'—ol'—what'd I call yu', pup? Oh yeah, Shaggy, ol' Shag. We'll do it, Shag. Get up, easy now, an' sneak your carcass out a' that door with me. Get me, pup?"

The man stooped across the room, holding the dog's head against his knee and pausing every few feet to encourage the animal with a few gruff words. At the door he straightened and looked back contemptuously at the group still guzzling on the money he had flung down.

"Damn yu' all, yu' dirty, sheep-smellin' lot! To stand around an' see a dog like this beat up! Yu' ain't fit to be called men. Ol' Shag won't mix with the likes o' yourn again, will yu', old boy? Good night to yu', yu' boozin' bums!"

No one heard. The door creaked open and the howling wind blew a cloud of snow on the floor, but the men at the bar did not turn from their drinking. The stranger's greenbacks were not yet exhausted.

O'Coogan had ceased to drink. He sat a huddled lump, propped against the corner of the bar, under the feet of his companions.

Wrapped in the folds of a woolen blanket, his dog was riding out into the storm across the pommel of a stranger's saddle.

* * * * *

A long, drawn-out whistle rose higher and higher, and dropped abruptly, while the echoes went chasing themselves down the canyon. From across the stream that leaped furiously over the boulder-strewn depth, a bark sounded in reply. A hawk flapped up from a cluster of pines and circled over head—a mere speck in the blue.

Behind a massive boulder almost hidden by the twining mountain roses stood a tall, bronzed man. His slouch hat shaded his eyes as he watched the foaming stream below. His lips pursed and the shrill whistle rose again, to break in a queer quaver, abruptly. A joyous yelp answered, and a black dog bounded up the slope to its master's side.

"Nice work, Shag, ol' boy." The man touched the dog lightly on the head. "I see you got 'em down to the mouth of the draw all right. There's few sheep dogs in this basin got anything on you, Shag. We'll

hit across the hill to camp so's to be there when the leaders reach bed-ground. Come along."

The herder slung a gun across his back and started up the mountain side, aiding himself with a stout, fancifully carved stick. The dog hung back, its gaze shifting from the man to the canyon's mouth, uncertainly. Faintly, the tinkling of a sheep bell could be heard at intervals above the dull roar of the mountain stream. The man turned and smiled reassuringly at his dog.

"It's all right, Shag. We're not leavin' 'em for long, an' besides, you ought to be a good 'nough sheep dog to know they're goin' to feed away from the sun, an' they'll be back to camp a'fore we will if we don't step out. Come on, boy—I tell yu', the sheep'll be all right. Hear me! They're all right! Come on, now!"

Shag dropped his tail and followed. The man, anxious to get his supper fire ablaze before his band came drifting in toward its accustomed bed-ground, forged steadily ahead. Now he stood for an instant on the sky-line, catching a few deep breaths before plunging down the opposite slope. A stiff breeze fanned his face with the perfume of pines and sweet mountain roses. A golden sun, fast turning red, was sinking in splendor behind him.

"Great weather we're havin', eh Shag? Why, Shag, where'd you go? Shag! Here, Shag!" The herder's voice rose in a harsh call. "Now what d'you s'pose is eatin' on that fool dog?"

He turned half around, his brow puckered in thought. He whistled loudly; the same queer quaver rose over the pines. Only the startled call of a magpie answered him. He repeated the whistle, and cupping his hands about his mouth, called down into the canyon.

"Shag! Sha-a-ag!" The echoes reverberated and died in a succession of "Here, Shag, here." The man heard a loosened stone go crashing down the mountain side, encouraging other fragments to follow. A moment later the dog arrived, sides heaving and tongue lolling. The man started to speak, but checked himself.

Shag's twitching nostrils had scented the breeze that swept up the slope, ruffling the glossy fur of his coat. His body grew rigid and his teeth were bared.

Far below, the white top of the herder's tent peeped through green foliage. A column of smoke rose languidly above the trees and was wafted away. At sight of the smoke, the man jerked himself up and stared fixedly at the white speck.

"Must be the camp tender, Shag, a-bringin' us some more grub. It's about time he was gettin' round to us; you know them beans are gettin' mighty tiresome."

(Continued on page 188)

HORACE ODES, LXXI

TRANSLATION

O tender maidens, sing Diana's praise,
 A hymn, ye boys, to the unshorn Cynthian raise,
 And both unite to celebrate the love,
 For fair Latona, of almighty Jove.

The Huntress joying in the woods and streams,
 The crown that on cool Algidus e'er gleams,
 In Erymanthus' silver covering,
 Or that of Cragus green, ye maidens sing.

And youths, to Tempe's beauty give a share
 Of praise, and to the Delian birthplace fair
 Of the archer god, who from his shoulder white
 Suspended wears a lyre and quiver bright.

Hunger and war and direful pestilence
 May these great gods, moved by your praise, send
 hence

Unto the Persians and the Britons bold,
 But from our Cæsar and great Rome withhold.

Rolf T. Johannesen.

“The Human Comedy”

SHE was no longer listening to the man across the table, telling of his enthusiasm for Father Coll and the Episcopal Order of the Holy Cross. For the moment she had forgotten her companion, forgotten the other occupants of the restaurant, forgotten even the toasted cheese sandwich before her. She was thinking of the conversation she had had with Mary only yesterday.

She had said to Mary in a burst of undergraduate revolt, “I see no reason for forcing your opinions on others, or even for defending them if they will hurt your reputation for conservatism. You may say I am a hypocrite, perhaps, and I realize that today it is Bruno we idealize, because he wouldn't keep still, and Latimer we scorn, but I don't blame him. I think it silly to stand up and say ‘I believe in smoking or suffrage, or a single standard of morals,’ to Puritanical, narrow-minded, middle-westerners, who never will see your point of view.”

She was called back to the present by the voice of the waiters shouting into the opening that connected with the bar. “Two sloe gin fizzes, five Bud, two dark.”

She smiled at the man instead of saying, “Isn't it fun to come here,” and looked around the room appreciatively. Everything about it appealed to her—the smoke that hung over her head, the greasy smell that penetrated her clothes, the imitation panels of the walls, the big dishes on the plate rail with their pictures of fat Franklins cutting cheeses, of red-coated hunters, of Dutch windmills and of colored flowers.

“I like to watch you, Sue,” the man spoke. “Your love of experience and new sensations are delightful to observe. You are exactly the young person Max Eastman was thinking of.”

“Yes, I know,” she broke in, “the young person who takes up atheism, pessimism, Christianity, Hindu philosophy—just experimenting with life.”

She looked at the man with satisfaction. They always enjoyed each other. He awoke her interest—and perhaps more than interest she had admitted to herself that afternoon when he had called up to say he was back from the East for a few days.

“There's a thrill in this for me, you know, because I feel I am out of my world of classes and books.” And she stopped to glance again around the room, at

the three French professors in one corner, and at a bold young man in a brown suit and pink shirt who made no secret of holding the hands of a good looking, very blond girl.

"I always liked it here when I was in college, and it's good to get back. Your town is so isolated and out of the world. I wonder if you even know there is a war? Oh, New York's the place to live, and the school I'm teaching in is ideal." He, too, was young. "Father Coll has given me a raise, and will make it two hundred with a little cottage thrown in if I get married," he went on. "He wants all the young masters to get married, for some reason. There's a regular man, Father Coll. I wish he could talk to you. You have never told me how you feel toward certain things in life; religion, for instance. You have always been strangely silent and let me do the talking."

The girl smiled as she drank her coffee. One of the things that had interested her in this man was his ardent belief in the Episcopal church. She liked to hear him stand up for it and for all the details of its creed. Most of the men she knew were scoffers and skeptics, who laughed at religion.

"You, the dilettante and philosopher, what do you believe?" he demanded with an earnestness beneath his lightness that startled her.

She watched her hands crushing the napkin in her lap and felt the blood making her cheeks hot, as she realized what his question meant.

She thought of that conversation with Mary. "I am not a Christian," she said after a minute, not daring to look at the man's set lips.

"What do you mean?" he asked at last.

"I mean I do not believe that a God created the world or that Christ is the son of God. I do not believe in the ascetic ideal of humility. I think that Christianity has failed."

A vast feeling of freeness swept over her. Never to herself had she thus renounced the views of her childhood. Filled with radiance she looked up.

The man puffed his cigar slowly before he said, with no show of emotion:

"I could never marry an atheist."

The exultation fled, leaving only that heightened beating of heart. She sat quite still, watching the waitress drink the last drops in the beer glasses before she handed them back to the bar.

They rose to go. The girl looked into the mirror as she passed to fix her hat, and smiled grimly.

"The wild joys of living," she murmured.

AGNES DURRIE.

"The Cat in the Sack"

(Continued from page 168)

Robbins: Chelsea 8870. No, sir, I'm not Grey—Grey preceded me. I'm Robbins, Mrs. Sever's new maid. Damn *what*, sir? Oh, it's Mrs. Sever you'd speak with. What am I to tell her first? (her face changes suddenly, lighting up). Oh, sir, *really*? She's right here: I'll tell her,—yes, gently. (Screams): Mrs. Sever, you're not to get excited, but it's him; your husband's down at the station.

Eloise: (Seizes the phone) Alan, oh, Alan, is it true? Yes, hurry, hurry; I'll come down—No, that would be better; you'll be here in eight minutes. Alan, dear if you knew how I long, how I— (as she turns from the phone her face becomes composed). We'll need more supper than this, Robbins; isn't there a chicken, and green gage tarts?

Robbins: (Almost in hysterics, chants): Only to think of it. Only to think he's come 'ome, he's 'ome.

Eloise: Robbins, Robbins, you're not crying, are you?

Robbins: For joy, m'm, to think your husband's coming home.

Eloise: Yes coming home covered with glory, his sad duty fulfilled.

Robbins: Oh, I don't care about the glory, 'long as he's 'live and well. There's many that ain't.

Eloise: Perhaps a million have gone out like candles; but Alan came through it all, proved, a man!

Robbins: There's still clutter about, from the horspital work.

Eloise: We must get it out of sight—but I believe I'd rather have him realize how we have worked and do work to do our part. Oh, Robbins, you've never seen him, he's not like other men, he's both tenderer and stronger, and the bravest man that ever walked.

Robbins: I'm sure he's all of it, Mrs. Sever.

(Eloise stands at the window, turns from it, pacing up and down in great agitation. Robbins comes in almost panting, holding a cold chicken on a platter.)

Eloise: Why, Robbins, what a way to serve a chicken.

Robbins: Oh, please, Mrs. Sever, I'm that hurried.

Eloise: (Starts back from the window). Oh, a taxi—no, it's going by. It's here—he's come, he's— (rushes from room).

Robbins: (Watches in silence from window at right. Then catches her breath, her face very tragic). Oh, Lord, Lord, and the little boy is leading him. I hadn't thought, it'd be he couldn't see!

(Enter first, a boy scout of Sunday-School express-

ion, carrying valises. Then Eloise and Alan, close together—without speaking. Alan is a muscular, active creature in khaki uniform; his square head is lowered and bandages are across his eyes.)

Boy Scout: I've put them here, captain.

Alan: Thank you, boy, you've helped me a lot.

Boy Scout: I'd do more than that. I'd just as soon go blind for our side.

Alan: Oh, going blind is not the hardest part; goodbye.

Boy Scout: Goodbye, Captain.

(Exit Boy Scout.)

Alan: Eloise, are we alone?

Eloise: Yes, Alan—oh, Alan, your poor eyes. (She almost sobs, but recover herself.)

Alan: I know it is hard, Eloise, for you to—to—

Eloise: But think how much harder if I had found you a coward. I'd rather have you not—not be able to see, than that.

Alan: Would you really?

Eloise: You have gone through everything, and gone through splendidly. Alan, I always loved you, now I believe I worship you as well. (She kisses his hands and draws even closer to him. She is on her knees beside him on the settle, and enough higher so that his heavy head rests in the hollow of her shoulder.)

Alan: I am tired, tired, tired. There is much I must tell you, but it cannot be tonight.

Eloise: But one thing, please. Tell me first, what do the doctors say about—(she presses her lips to his forehead) about your eyes?

Alan: They say that sight has been permanently destroyed. A shell burst very near. My men and piece were blown to atoms. Three days later when I came to—I found—

Eloise: Yes, yes, oh, dear man—

Alan: At first I asked for lights—and did not believe the truth—until I burnt my fingers with a lighted match and never saw the flame.

Eloise: But the thought—the terrible realization.

Alan: Of course I had a great many thoughts, but they were not the terrible ones I would have expected. First I was struck with the justice of it.

Eloise: Justice?

Alan: Yes, because I had seen things so inhuman, so ghastly, no eye could look upon them—forbidden things—like the face of God. It was not exactly my eyes' fault, yet it seemed just that they should never see again.

Eloise: Alan, I'm frightened—don't—don't—

Alan: And then I felt utter comfort and relief. I was out of it all. Through, through—my share was done. I could crawl off somewhere and take time to die. Next cot to mine was a Canadian—his left hand

shot off. He told me all about it—in whispers, when he came to know and trust me—that too was ghastly.

Eloise: Was it—so dreadful?

Alan: Yes, because I was thinking what one goes through before he does such things.

Eloise: What things? How do you mean?

Alan: Eloise, the Canadian—nice chap, too. Was court-martialed and shot—self inflicted wounds, you know. He would rather shoot his hand off than stand it longer. Many hundreds do that. The doctors raise their eyebrows at close-range wounds in the feet or left hand.

Eloise: Coward!

Alan: (Does not speak. He draws back a little from Eloise). Was he? I don't know. It takes so many things to make up a coward. Perhaps he had not had protein enough, or the letter he wanted, or his teeth ached—well, anyway he could not endure it longer. He told me how the idea began to haunt him. He'd look at his left hand and wish it would drop off—but it didn't, and at last—but we are all cowards—all—

Eloise: I'll not believe you, dear Alan—you are my proof. Why have you lost your—

Alan: Lost what? Lost my faith in my fellow-men? I haven't. I know them better and love them more. I have not even lost faith in myself although I—I—. Let me tell you more about the hospital.

Eloise: Yes, please, unless it tires you.

Alan: I must tell even if it kills me. I used to lie on my back in the blackness, so comfortable at last, with even my boots off, and I'd say to myself: "I am an old man; let the young men fight, but I am through—nothing is left in life but Eloise."

Eloise: You old!

Alan: I've lived life through. It is finished. At the beginning of the fighting my nerves weren't so jumpy, but instead of getting hardened—it grew worse—to see white maggots in live flesh, to smell gangrene—pah! and then to sit all day long, through long weeks—I, my gunners and the piece, among beet and potato patches, dropping shells, one every ten minutes—on whom? Once we were among the sand dunes with the sea at our elbows—then back again in the unending mud of the potato patches. And these shells of ours—sometimes they seemed so futile—we never saw them strike—it was like attacking the ocean with a pea-shooter. Again, I could feel confident that every one bit into warm flesh.

Eloise: Why talk about this side of war? Tell me of the glorious things you have seen.

Alan: I saw nothing glorious.

Eloise: No meeting of brave men, face to face?

Alan: There was hand-to-hand fighting only once. I believe I liked that—I needed exercise and my blood

was up. There was a big German who didn't know he was killed. A bayonet had ripped a hole in him the size of his head. I suppose he thought it was a joke someone had played on him, for he began to laugh, and we all laughed. It was funny.

Eloise: Funny! how could you! Don't you remember the lines:

"And honor while you strike him down,
The foe that comes with fearless eyes—"

Alan: Ever since I've been bothered by the silly fear he was someone I had known at the Universität. Still, at the time that hand-to-hand business was all funny and fun. It made us sleep like dormice that night. It was not that, that broke me down.

Eloise: How do you mean—broke you down?

Alan: Made me glad my eyes were gone, so I'd not have to go back.

Eloise: Oh, Alan! And your great-uncle—

Alan: My great-uncle was a fool.

Eloise: His war poems will live forever.

Alan: They will not outlive this war.

Eloise: I should think you would have been sorry to have been forced out of your place of honor at the front.

Alan: My place of honor on my stomach, behind a filthy barn, with straw pulled over us to fool airmen—place of honor?

Eloise: But we don't need to discuss that, do we?

Alan: No, there is nothing worth discussing, or worth thinking about,—no nor worrying over, is there?

Eloise: I—(puts both hands to his head and jumbles with bandages.) I must tell you something—the truth.

Eloise: What is it? Your head aches and the bandage—

Alan: They are so hot, and the room seems so cold, but there is nothing, nothing.

(Eloise goes to the grate and pokes the fire. Stands turned from him, leaning on mantel piece. Alan slowly pulls off the bandages and gets to his feet.)

Alan: (Softly). You are magnificent, Eloise; tired as you are—always magnificent.

Eloise: (Wheeling about, and crying out). Alan! Your eyes, you see, you are looking at me, you see!

Alan: I am looking at you. I see you again—at last. (Tries to take her in his arms. She resists gently, turning her face from his.)

Eloise: No, not now; don't Alan. We must talk this out, and at arms length. So this is the truth.

(Both sit down. Alan's face in his hands.)

Alan: The truth. I am not blind, and I have escaped from that hell-pit.

Eloise: What am I to think, what feel? Alan I have worshipped you, and you, you have taken to, to

tricks to get out of your sacred duty. But dear, let me see your eyes, oh! and such scars!

Alan: They are not pretty. It is a miracle that sight came back.

Eloise: A trick!

Alan: The Canadian gave me the idea.

Eloise: The coward without a hand?

Alan: The "coward without a hand." It was so easy a thing to do, nothing like shooting off one's hand. Merely silence. The doctors did not expect me to recover. There I lay, contented, warm, at peace. By the time my other shrapnel wounds had healed, I could see again.

Eloise: Alan, and you never told, neither the doctors or your superiors.

Alan: Never told, and never will.

Eloise: You mean to live this lie, let the world think you have given next to life itself. While really—

Alan: While really I have given my life. There is nothing left in me—except—well, sawdust, maybe.

Eloise: Your ideals.

Alan: Gone. Sawdust.

Eloise: Oh, how you have deserted them, what a level of lies.

Alan: For the first time I stand upon the truth.

Eloise: We must talk this out.

Alan: I'm pretty much all in, and my talking may not be coherent. Tell me about yourself—(points to the red cross work)—you've been working hard.

Eloise: Alan, you'll tell *them*—the authorities, that you can see, won't you?

Alan: No—

Eloise: You'll live this dreadful lie—make people think you've sacrificed your sight, when really you haven't?

Alan: I will not go back.

Eloise: Afraid?

Alan: (Wearily) Call it that—call it anything. I've told you I've come to the end. I didn't know there was an end—I never supposed I was a coward.

Eloise: Nor I—before.

Alan: It is not that I'm afraid to die—sometimes when I lay in the mud behind by barn, and tried to sleep, I would wish the mud would rise up like a river and suffocate me. Lieutenant Campbell confessed to me he used to whistle to the shells when he heard them coming—just as you'd call a dog—because he too had come to the end. Gone out now, old chap—Dardanelles—dysentery.

Eloise: I understand how it is. You poor boy, you're all tired out. When you're rested, then promise me, dear, you'll not shirk.

Alan: Shirk? I will.

Eloise: Only think of the past,—the nobility of

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life we have tried to live together. Thing of your ancestors.

Alan: (Impatiently) Yes, and your father's sword. Just think of my noble ancestors, traveling about dressed up like furnaces. Think of Salamis, (points at picture) while we're thinking (yawns wearily); think of the Iliad and the Odyssey, and the King of France, he had a hundred men, he marched 'em up a hill, and he marched 'em—

Eloise: What *are* you saying?

Alan: And he marched 'em down again (yawns again). What you can't think of, is what is happening on the Continent today—this moment.

Eloise: Have some tea, dear, and then you'll feel more fit—and chicken.

Alan: Oh, Lord, yes (straightens up).

Eloise: (Ringing) We'll have some fresh.

Alan: And these jolly tarts. I say, wife, bully beef is not like this.

Robbins: (Entering with a pot in her hand) Was it for fresh tea, Mrs. Sever, please?

Eloise: That's right, thank you.

(Exit Robbins).

Alan: (Eating rapidly and eagerly. Talks with his mouth full). The jam they give us in the army is beastly American trash. Oh, here's the salt. Come, sit down by me and have a bite.

Eloise: I can't, dear.

Alan: Can't—are you ill?

Eloise: (Smiling thinly) No—o—o—

Alan: Dr. Wadner was to keep an eye on you. He's done so, has he?

Eloise: Yes, he was here this afternoon.

Alan: Did he leave you these tablets?

Eloise: Yes, to take if I couldn't sleep; but don't handle them while you're eating. They're deadly poison.

Alan: Hmm—is that what he feeds you on?

Eloise: I'm only to take one a night. You've enough in your hand to kill a person.

(Alan puts them down carelessly. He goes on eating luxuriously. There is a considerable pause, during which Alan appears perfectly settled; Eloise very restless and nervous.)

Eloise: Now that you've eaten, you must feel better—and stronger.

Alan: When I've finished this leg, I'll be a new man.

Eloise: You always did like to eat pretty well.

(Alan does not answer)

Now that you're through, let's go on talking where we had left off.

Alan: I did not realize we had left off.

Eloise: Oh, yes, while you were eating we were just marking time. Come, Alan, tell me one thing—

only promise me one thing. (He gets up, his napkin jammed in his hand, and stands beside her by the stairs. As they talk, he gradually sits on the lower one, in an attitude of utter exhaustion.)

Alan: Yes, dear.

Eloise: Already you are looking better; and in a week from now, don't you think you will feel well enough to at least offer your services? Perhaps they'd excuse you, anyway.

Alan: Artillery officers are too rare and valuable to be excused. I am tired, Eloise; can't we wait until morning?

Eloise: No.

Alan: Be reasonable.

Eloise: Be a man.

Alan: What will you force me to do? Go back to that inferno I've escaped?

Eloise: Yes, it is the *only* thing you can do—I'm sorry if it is an inferno.

Alan: And if I refuse?

Eloise: We will know that you are shamming—getting out of your work—oh, Alan, is it to you I'm talking?

Alan: I don't know,—I suppose so. I am very tired and so sleepy. It does not seem to be you and I who are talking, but strangers a long way off.

Eloise: If you don't go back, I will always hate and loathe you—yes, detest the sight, the very feel of you.

Alan: Don't push me further than I can bear—don't, dear.

Eloise: (Very straight). You must promise me now to do your duty.

Alan: Duty? A beastly word? You do not understand—*never*. Men die for your sort—and resent them; you always force them to go farther than they can. Please don't crowd me farther: try, dear, to understand.

Eloise: Promise me, or I will leave this house to-night.

Alan: Theatrics!

Eloise: I mean it. I'd rather have no husband than a milk-sop.

Alan: (with the air of a man going back to the beginning and going all over it again). But don't you see, Eloise? It is not fear of death, exactly. How can I make it clear? It's the terrible hours and thoughts—I suppose having been a German university student made me a little less bitter. I'd think about the good old fellows and the—well (yawns again) the German girls I'd been in love with.

Eloise: Oh, *Alan*, how could you—you never told me—

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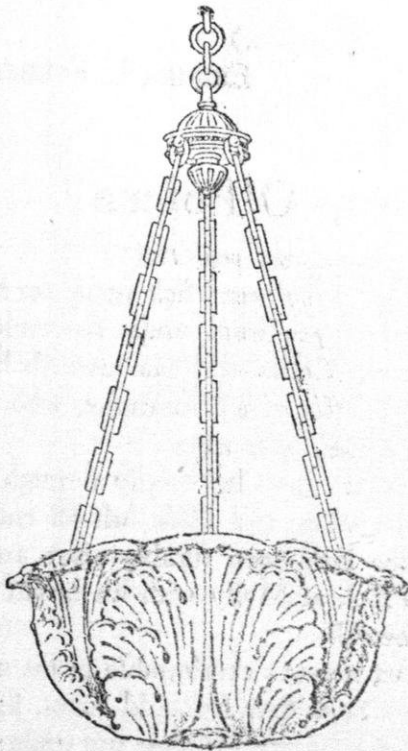
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Alan: No, I never did, but I feel as if I can't keep things back tonight.

Eloise: You were in love with—a—a lot of those disgusting fat *Fraüleins*.

Alan: One in particular—her mother ran the pension. We'd meet at night in the little rose garden—there were gravel walks that crunched—we walked on the grass, still as cats. In the middle was a cupid fountain, that looked drunk; and there was an iron bench in the dusk of the lindens where we sat close, close and warm. I thought of her often while I was pumping explosives into her countrymen. Perhaps this very shell, I'd say, will send her "intended" back to her with something missing, lower jaw for instance—it musses a man up horrid to lose a lower jaw—one line of teeth seems so futile—and they stand out like keys of a piano—look as—

Eloise: Stop—stop! You have grown vulgar and brutal—as well as a coward. Then all this disgusting affair about—that German. Now I know I am leaving. No, let me pass.

Alan: (stops her as she tries to pass him on the stairs). Will you listen to reason? Yes or no?

Eloise: No.

Alan: Then you are a fool as well as a tyrant.

Eloise (breaks down, crying very softly): Alan, I never cried while you were gone, not even when you came back blind—but now—now that I have come to loathe you—

Alan: Can't we settle things tomorrow?

Eloise: No, no—I am leaving you tonight.

Alan: Oh, of course I'll be the one to go. After all, I don't seem to care.

Eloise: Then go *tonight*, Alan, and re-enlist.

Alan: Anyway I'll leave this house tonight—(he sighs, goes over to the settle, starts picking up his things, then sits heavily down).

Eloise: Alan?

Alan: Yes.

Eloise: Tomorrow you'll be so glad you've done all you should.

(Exit Eloise.)

Alan: (to himself) Let the young men fight, I am through, through, through with everything—

Robbins: (enters) May I take off the plates, please, Captain Sever?

Alan: Yes, take 'em and break 'em. I don't care.

Robbins: Oh, *sir*. But here are Mrs. Sever's tablets—I'll take them to her first.

Alan (lifts his head with interest): Tablets—Oh.

Robbins: Yes, *sir*, to make her sleep.

Alan: Jolly little tablets those are—here, I'll take charge of them. (Sits with his feet up, toying with the bottle, seeming half asleep.)

(An inter-phone rings. Robbins trots off up the stairs.)

Alan: It must be Mrs. Sever.

Robbins: Yes, *sir*, I fancy so.

Eloise (voice from above): Alan, Alan!

Alan (sleepily): Yes?

Eloise: Nothing. I was wondering if you were still there.

Alan: (sits up, puts his feet down): I'm just leaving.

(He fumbles about with his valises in a futile way, but drops them listlessly. Passes his hand several times rapidly across his mouth. His face shows signs of conflict, then settles into lines of utter weariness. He goes into room in center back. Robbins returns to room and goes on with work of clearing up the supper table. She has a large tray, which she packs; removes it, folds the table and pushes it against the wall, goes to the fireplace, demolishes the fire, takes up photograph of Alan as a child.)

Robbins: The poor, pretty little creature: to think these babies have to do what they do. (Hums a little of the Prince Charlie song: "Follow thee, follow thee, etc." When things are set straight for the night she starts to carry the heavy tray into the dining room. As she enters gives a short scream, which is followed by the crash of the falling tray.) Mrs. Sever—he's—Mrs. Sever! Mrs. Sever—a doctor—he's— (She re-enters with the little bottle in her hand.)

Eloise: (voice from above) What is wrong? Is Captain Sever there? (Appears hurriedly in wrapper, sees the bottle in the girl's hand, and collapses on the top stair.)

(Curtain.)

ESTHER L. FORBES.

A Drop O'Poteen

(Continued from page 170)

But the melancholy came over Mick again, for he—the same as was never yet drunk under the table by any man in the county Cork—was fair towards being drunk under it by this bit of a Cluricaune, who took straight Irish poteen like it was water.

The peat began to glow less redly through the white coating of the ashes, and Mick left off entirely with his joking, the little man turning clear around between drinks to look at Molly with his bright eyes that would never be still.

And Mick, being noways comfortable in his mind, filled his glass more times than he could count, the little fellow drinking him piggin for glass the while; and

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at last Mick came to see *two* little men, and then he couldn't see any, and then he went under the table.

When he came to his mind again, the morning was reaching with her white hand over the hill tops to raise herself up from sleeping, the turf had fallen to white ashes in the chimney, the pale daylight came through the shutter chinks, and it was very eerie and onearthly in the cabin.

And the first thing that Mick noticed after his mind was clear and he came to remember the drinking bout with the Cluricaune, was that Molly was nowhere at all in the cabin.

'Tis said that he hunted for a year and more than that on the heath-moors and in the bog-lands, up hill and down dale, but never a sign was there to be found in the whole land of Molly, who, to be sure, had been carried off by the Cluricaune.

And this is Moirna's story as she told it to me. You may take it or leave it, as you fancy, but Moirna gave me her word that when she was a child her grandmother—who told her the same story at first—had seen on Mick Muldoon's table—he being then long dead—a little white circle no bigger than a finger ring that was left where the Cluricaune had set his piggen.

W. O'MEARA.

Poetry of Francis Thompson

(Continued from page 172)

'Tis to have drunk too well
The drink that is divine,
Maketh the kind earth waste,
And breath intolerable."

And for Thompson it indeed seems true, that it is not the joys of sense, which leave the greatest disillusionment, but the mystical joys, that "Do disrelish all life's sober taste."

But Thompson's greatest and most enduring poem, the one which those who know nothing else of his work have read, is the "Hound of Heaven." It is difficult to describe the impression which a first reading of this poem produces on the mind. Perhaps it is most like the impress of a red hot iron upon the memory. One seems whirled away, out of time and space, into the vast reaches of the heavens, where one feels the terror of a soul fleeing from God, "the tremendous lover." After reading it one feels breathless and weary, as if one had been through a strangely terrible experience. The words of the poem are burning words, and the irregular ode form has a terrible emotional sweep, accentuated by fearful pauses of suspense, and then another onrush of biting, pain-coined words. The poem describes the flight of the soul from the threat of that Divine Love which has marked it down, and fol-

lowed it across the world, forbidding it human affections, beauty, the love of children, knowledge, art, and nature itself, while it keeps on its flight. At last, hopeless and weary, we have the bitter cry of the soul.

"Naked I wait thy love's uplifted stroke!

My harness piece by piece thou hast hewn from me,
And smitten me to my knee,
I am defensely utterly."

And the complaint of the man robbed even of his dreams;

"Yea, faileth even now dream

The dreamer, and lute the lutanist.

Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossomy twist
I swung, the earth, a trinket at my wrist,

Are yielding - - - - -

Ah, must

Designer infinite!

Ah must thou char the wood

Ere thou canst limn with it?"

But at last the pursuit ends, bitterness ceases, and we have a note of submission in the quiet close. The poem is full of strangely moving passages.

"I fled him down the nights and down the days;

I fled him down the arches of the years;

I fled him down the labyrinthine ways

Of my own mind, and in the midst of tears

I hid from him, and under running laughter.

Across the margent of the years I fled,

And troubled the gold gate-way of the stars,

Smiting for shelter at their clang'd bars."

But all is vain—

"Nature, poor stepdame cannot slake my drought;

Let her, if she would owe me,

Drop yon blue bosom veil of sky, and show me

The breasts of her tenderness;

Never did milk of hers once bless

My thirsting mouth."

But even in the splendor of the "Hounds of Heaven", the faults to which Francis Thompson is prone, are sometimes visible. His faults are chiefly faults of excess—faults of a too luxuriant imagination, which often revels with but little restraint in words, and colors, and images, and sounds, merely for their own sake. Sometimes he is helplessly drunk with his own inspiration, and he is even embarrassed by his own poetic riches, but even in the moments of greatest excess, one feels beneath the prodigality of his poetry, a passionate sincerity of thought and feeling. Thompson's vocabulary, also, is often unusual, and archaic, and too Latinized. Many of his words jerk the reader up, and startle him by their peculiarity. Such a word for instance, as "battailously," such a phrase as "illuminate and volute redundance," and his continued

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use of "purpureal", and "gyres", and "rubiginous."

But after all, it seems that the limitations of Francis Thompson's poetry, are the limits of language as a means of expression. His visions throng so swiftly, his pictures are so vivid and the passions back of his poetry so tremendous, that words seem poor, futile things, incapable of expressing what the poet feels. Thompson seems indeed, a Titan among recent poets. Often even his very faults seem magnificent, and when he succeeds, his poetry is such as to take by storm, with its mighty sea of verse, rising and falling, and irresistibly advancing. Thompson was a practical failure, and a dreamer, but nevertheless, he wrought strangely transcendent ecstasies from the shattered fabric of his existence. With him one always hears the voice of "one who has striven to look into the life of things." He has soaring aspiration, intense spiritual passion, and occupation with the great problems of the inward life. So perhaps, Thompson, the dreamer, was not mistaken in his estimate of his own poetry in "The Poppy":

"I hang among men my useless head,
And my fruit is dreams, as theirs is bread.
The goodly men, and the sun-hazed sleeper,
Time shall reap, but after the reaper,
The world shall glean of me, the sleeper."

MARY P. MORSELL

O'Coogan's Dog

(Continued from page 176)

Then the man noticed the angry eyes of the dog and saw the teeth snap savagely.

"Why, what's the matter, Shag? Yu' don't think it's somebody else, do yu'? Nobody else—" he stopped short. His eyes, like the dog's, glittered for a moment as a fresh puff of wind came up the mountain. He stared down into the valley unseeingly. A vision of a hideous purple face passed before him. He saw Shag lying senseless on a sawdust floor, the center of a group of rough, drunken men. A little stream of blood trickled down over the snowy breast—. The herder broke away from the dream.

"Shag," he said curtly, "if it's him we won't go down. But we'll look first an' see. I heard as how that hound had got wind o' where we was workin', an' would be comin' clear from Gulch City to find you and me. Yu' can't be disguised, Shag. Everyone knows yu' if they ever saw yu' before." The man's voice was harsh, unnatural. After a silence—"I guess it's O'Coogan, damn him!"

The two started cautiously down the slope, the dog always alert, the hair rising higher on its back as the scent grew stronger. They could see the front of the

tent now. Two horses were tethered nearby. The tent flap shook violently as they watched, and a man stepped out, carrying a rifle in his hand. The herder dropped behind a boulder.

The man below scanned the horizon carefully, as though looking for someone. Something glittered on his breast in the light of the setting sun. Straining his eyes, the herder saw that it was a metal star. A frown puckered his brow, and he cast a sidelong glance at the dog standing tense beside him. Shag growled lowly, and his teeth flashed again.

"Don't see 'im yet, but I can spot his band headin' up the draw." The sheriff's voice sounded uncomfortably near. "I reckon he'll be comin' in soon now."

An indistinct reply came from within the tent. The herder could catch a few words of the deep, wheezing voice. "Bunch of sour dough biscuits here—must have been figurin' on a cold supper—no doubt but what th' dog'll be with him." A string of mumblings followed.

Shag's ears had lifted eagerly at the sound of the first voice. Now they lay back flat, like a cat's, and his body quivered as the voice in the tent continued.

"Come on, Shag; we'll go down, boy."

The flattened ears raised a trifle. This was the man he had served and loved since that blinding snow storm had spirited him away to a new world. He would stay by this new master until death. All the sorrows and joys that came into his lonely life the herder had recounted to his faithful friend as to a brother. A great understanding had grown up between them, the man reasoning, the dog feeling, the brotherhood they lived each day.

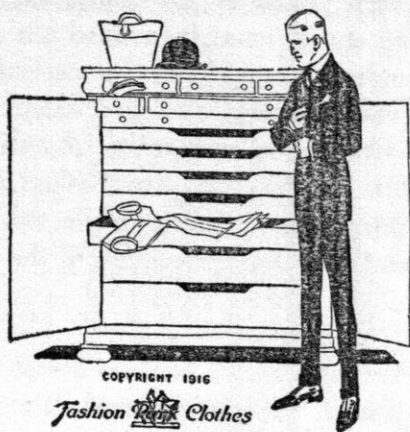
One day during the previous summer the camp tender had told the herder of O'Coogan's wrath when he awoke from his drunken stupor to a realization of his loss. His frenzied search for the missing dog had become a common story of the Gulch. But Shag was far away across the divide, and it was not until the following spring that O'Coogan had found trace of his quarry.

Now they were here, there was nothing left to do but give up. A wild idea of resistance and bloodshed flashed in the mind of the herder. No—that would be folly. He might flee, taking Shag with him, as he had done before, but well he knew the impossibility of crossing the divide without food. And if he should reach civilization, Shag would at once be recognized by ranchers in the Gulch. He must give himself up.

"Shag, old boy, come on, I say."

The voice was sterner now, and the dog slipped without a whimper to its master's heels. No attempt was made at concealment; the herder was determined.

The crackling of bushes brought the two men out of



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the tent in a jump. Not a word was spoken as the herder stalked up to them, the dog skulking behind, his hair on end and his eyes glaring.

"Your name's Larns' ain't it?" The sheriff spoke authoritatively.

"Well, I ain't heard it now for 'most four months, but seems to me that's about right; eh, Shag?"

Shag's tail gave a barely noticeable dip.

"Is that dog your'n?" asked the sheriff.

"I've had 'im for some time."

"Is he *your'n*?"

"Yeah—ain't *yu*, pup?" The dog rubbed his slender nose against the herder's boot.

"You're a da—"

"Never mind—" the sheriff broke off O'Coogan's oath. Larns paid no attention, his eyes fixed on the sheriff.

"Where'd you get 'im, if he's your'n?" he went on.

"Stole him!" The words were frank, and spoken so quickly that the sheriff almost doubted if he had heard aright.

"We know that," he said, "an' that's why we're here. The dog belongs to this man—" he indicated O'Coogan with a jerk of his thumb—"an' you'll have to give him up and come along with me. Don't make any trouble an' it'll be a damn sight better for you. We'll start right after we eat a bit o' grub."

"What about th' sheep?" was all Larns said.

"That's right, too. Guess we hadn't better leave 'em over night. We'll camp here and take 'em down in the morning. Then you can have 'em counted and turn 'em over to someone else. I reckon you won't be herdin' sheep in these parts for a while yet."

"But say," O'Coogan interrupted, "I can't stay here tonight. I've got t' be back at Gulch City by Thursday. Let me go down with th' dog, an' you can come on with your man in the morning. I'll send somebody back from the ranch to help you with the sheep."

"You'll never get the band down through the timber without Shag." The herder spoke up quickly, as though to offer the sheriff a suggestion.

"That's right," agreed the sheriff. "You'd better go down alone, O'Coogan, an' leave the dog with us to help handle the sheep."

O'Coogan left ten minutes later, hardly waiting to eat a bite of the greasy supper cooked over the little sheet iron stove. The sheriff and his prisoner sat down before the tent door and watched the horseman winding his way down the canyon until he was lost in the

gathering gloom. Shag settled comfortably beside his master. The sheriff scarcely noticed the herder, his thoughts wandering away with the curling smoke of his pipe. Finally he rose, stretched himself, and prepared his bed before the open tent. A full moon outlined the pines on the ridge and bathed the canyon with its mellow light. A long while the herder sat motionless, until the heavy breathing of the sheriff told that he slept.

* * * * *

The words choked in the herder's throat as he whispered to his friend. Shag understood, too. His pleading eyes searched his master's, and he seemed to say, "Help me, pardner, help me!"

"No, Shag, I can't do it. *Yu*' ain't mine. The law of man says *yu*' got to go. That cuss'll beat *yu*' to death soon. Shag, ol' boy, it's hard, mighty hard. *Yu*'ve been a pal to me. I couldn't a-stuck to it without you. . . . Say, Shag, ol' feller, I can't let *yu*' go back to *him*. What d'you say? I might—I've heard o' how they've done it a-fore. Answer me, Shag—will you go back to that cuss or—or not?"

The dog's tail wagged eagerly. He buried his cold muzzle in the hand of his master.

"All right, boy—it's hard, mighty hard. But it's easier than—" His voice choked and the sentence remained unfinished.

Quietly the herder raised the rifle that lay at his feet. His hand shook violently when he tested the trigger.

"Shag"—the voice trembled and broke. "Shag, ol' boy, good-bye. O'Coogan'll never get you now. You're mine for good. . . . Better shake hands first—that's the boy! Now the other one—good fellow! So-long, ol' shaggy feller, so-long . . ."

His arm steadied and he raised the gun. The herder saw two brown eyes looking up at him from the end of the barrel. The gun shook in his hand and fell. The cords stood out on the man's neck like ropes, cold sweat broke out on his brow. His face twitched as he leveled the gun again.

* * * * *

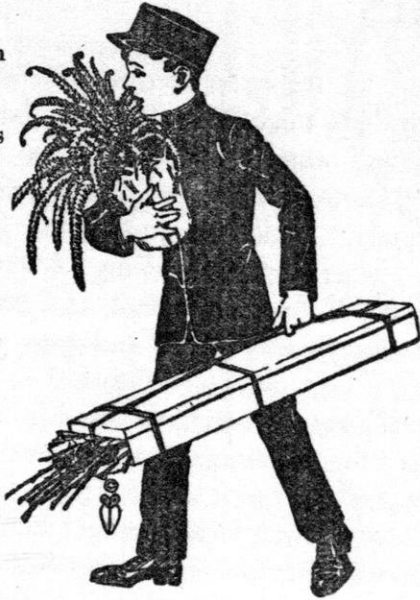
The sheriff sprang from his blanket at a single bound, wide awake in an instant, his gun already in his hand. He looked about him excitedly, wondering what had called him so suddenly from his sleep. Then his mind cleared.

"Who—who shot?" he demanded angrily.

"I did," said Larns. "What about it?"

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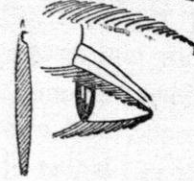


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THE QUEST FOR "A THEME"

LO the poor Freshman with untutored mind! Is not he to be pitied? Hither he comes after wallowing in the slough of ignorance, and over his budding joy is flung the chilling frost blanket of Themes, dozens of Themes, hundreds of horrible Themes! Alas! how ruthlessly he must wrench open the doors of his imagination—if he be so ill-starred as to have one—and how blindly stumble through the deep caverns of thought, where in some long forgotten cavity of the mind is said to dwell that elusive animal, The Theme! So long is it since a perfect Theme has been found that many hold it to be a species extinct. Now and then ancient skeletons are exhumed, and many dead or mangled Themes are brought to light; but such paleographic specimens appeal only to the curious-minded,—surely not to the Freshman.

However, upon a most pressing request—I might almost call it a command—I, like hundreds of other benighted creatures, was prevailed upon to go (coerced into going) in search of one of these famed beasts. To bring back anything like a fine specimen meant, I was assured, glory unspeakable; to return without one, bathos,—also unspeakable. For days I traveled in the well-trodden paths of a healthy mind, seeking in vain for any sign of such a beast. Now and then I saw a few short stories gamboling on the green, or heard the gay notes of a flock of poetries circling high above me; or there in a sunny meadow I espied a novel thoughtfully browsing, but I drew no nearer the goal of my search. Gradually, however, the path grew rougher, and soon I was traversing those deep and treacherous caves of thought so seldom visited. Flocks of outlines rustled past me on their sable wings; while summary sentences wriggled their hideous forms beneath my feet. Long, loose sentences lay spread to trip the unwary, and now and then an essay, a vague phantom, would come flitting by, its baleful eyes gleaming with a phosphorescent light, its screeches like uncanny laughter seeming to jeer at my fruitless quest. I fearfully skirted dark pools, shrinking with loathing from the bloated impromptus that hopped sluggishly from underfoot. This was indeed a ghastly region, a fit home for the Theme. My light of hope and reason was growing dim and flickering; but I pressed on, driven by the thought of what would happen if I returned empty-handed. At times, in the distance I would descry a vague shape drinking from a pool of ink or browsing on the poisonous growths of theme-paper that grew in dank clusters from the walls of the

caverns. A feeling of horror came over me. I felt that my light might give out, and that I should lose myself and wander forever in these gruesome corridors. However, lured on by phantoms, I proceeded desperately. Suddenly, just before me, I beheld a gaunt Theme staggering along. I hastened forward, and, as it fell, I rushed upon it, and would have seized it, but alas! it was so old and worn out that it died before my very eyes, and shriveled up into a heap of skin and bones. Though defeated in my purpose, I at least had the encouragement of knowing that at last I had reached the haunt of the Theme, and that here in this gloomy, unexplored region, amidst this murky, miasmal atmosphere I must surely find one.

While I stood musing thus, I heard something approaching, and looking up I saw a band of Themes coming directly towards me. I sprang forward with alacrity, but I was hampered by my vocabulary, and my foot slipped in a slimy growth of punctuation. The result was that I fell. Before I could recover, the whole troop of Themes had dashed over my prostrate form and disappeared in the distance. I was badly bruised, but since my light was still burning, I staggered frantically on, only to come upon another misfortune. For I stepped by accident into a nest of prefixes and suffixes. These tiny pests swarmed about me, stinging me repeatedly with their derivations; and it was only with the utmost exertion that I finally eluded them. But now a happy change of fortune held the promise of a reward for my long search, for just in front of me I dimly beheld a splendid young Theme, the picture of grace and agility! I crept cautiously up with the idea of grappling with it; but all my endeavors to capture it proved useless, for it was too sprightly, and my light was too dim, and finally I lost it.

I had despaired and was vaguely trying to grope my way back to more familiar paths, when I saw an oddly built Theme shambling clumsily into a chamber nearby. With a glad cry of triumph, I rushed up and seized it by the title. It resisted and struggled vigorously, but I gave its topic sentence a few quieting twists, and tying some loose sentences about its neck, I started to return. By this time my light of reason was reduced to so dim a glow that I seemed unable to advance. After innumerable difficulties, however, I managed to get out of those frightful depths, dragging my reluctant Theme after me.

But what a shock it was after all my struggles, when I beheld the creature in the clearer light of reason. Alas! it had no outline. Its head, tail, and body

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seemed disastrously mixed. Its structure was truly appalling. It was so freckled over with misspellings, so disjointed, and so devoid of the least sign of intelligence, that I became convinced that it was not after all a genuine Theme. Therefore I took it to a noted unnaturalist, pending whose verdict I am outlining a history of my explorations to be published in ten volumes.

CHARLES M. DAVIDSON.

A CHAMBER OF HORRORS

IT has been a long-recognized fact that peoples of the highest civilization are prone to cherish in their breasts venomous evils, which, when the protection of years has brought strength, will arise and sting the ones that have sheltered them. Certain American economists of the ultra-competitive school point out the trusts as such "ungrateful children." Today this is deplored and to some extent remedied, but why, I ask, is the race of dentists permitted to continue their flagrant and inhumane practices under the very eyes, and consequently the noses, of this great commonwealth.

In the days when the industrious Salemites spent their busy hours in improving the ducking stool, a man who could, uninjured, ram a sword down his throat, was either singed at the stake or perhaps even tossed into the mill pond. But today the dentist is permitted to chuck yard after yard of shining and deadly instruments past our tonsils and into the privacies of our larynxes without a suggestion of public censure. I hope, by the enumeration of the wrongs perpetrated upon the unsuspecting citizen, to arouse common ire to the point at which legislation may be enacted that will restrain these fiends from continuing their devilish pursuits.

Today I visited the offices of one of these persons. The floors of his room were carpeted with thick oriental rugs, a most bold flaunting of the prosperity he had gained from his malign practices. As an added goad he had provided a reading table with several periodicals of a humorous nature, no doubt hoping by this contrast to enforce upon his victims the horrors of the tortures that were to follow.

He opened the door, and I, murmuring faintly, "Caesar, we who are about to die," displaying a rare fortitude of spirit that is borne in moments of greatest stress, crossed the room and seated myself in the contrivance which he was pleased to call a chair.

"Fine weather," he remarked gloatingly, the meantime feeling the edges of several of his instruments. His statement was a gross misrepresentation, for though I remembered having made the same mental observation earlier in the day, I now noted that the sky had

clouded and the atmosphere assumed a chilliness that numbed to the bone.

"Open," he commanded in a tone that indicated that he was about to add "Sesame." In fact he treated my mouth much in the manner that one would investigate a grotto which could be enlarged by means of a little pressure. I reminded him that there were several minor physical limitations, such as jaw-bones, that made further exposure a trifle inconvenient. Suddenly he seized a curious weapon very similar to the old Saxon mace, which I believe was used in battle, and vigorously pounded upon a tooth which had up to the present time performed its duties of mastication without a vestige of complaint. But, like the mighty British rock made famous by a life insurance company, the sturdy molar absolutely and unconditionally refused to budge more than an inch. For a moment I rejoiced that he was foiled, but with the evil genius of a demented mind, he suddenly shifted his attack and skirmished about the offending tooth, pushing first on one side and then on the other. This strategy proved too much, and unconsciously I quoted—

"She stirs, she starts, she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel."

Then he ceased, and with the air of a Sherlock Holmes who has discovered a golden hair upon the bar, shook the battle-ax in the remainder of my face and said, "Ha-ha, Ha-ha, the tooth is perfectly sound."

Inwardly offering up thanks that I had not consulted him as to the condition of my heart, I continued to imbed my fingers in the arms of the chair.

Finally, by an admirable maneuver, he uncovered a cavity, which he carefully enlarged with the aid of several most efficient tools. At this point I enjoyed a few moments respite, as he was forced, much to his evident annoyance, to search through his cabinet for more instruments, as he could easily observe that there were still a few cubic inches of mouthspace available. At length, having crowded in the last bit of hardware, he removed his hands from my tonsils, being careful not to disturb the positions of the weapons, and proceeded to take a short recess.

Finally he was regretfully forced to admit that the job was complete, and retiring to the portal, he questioned in honeyed tones as to the hour when "I would like to come again."

With an effort I restrained my wrath, ignored his sarcastic stressing of the word "like," agreed to his terms, and feebly pulling my hat over my prematurely grey hair, stumbled from his den.

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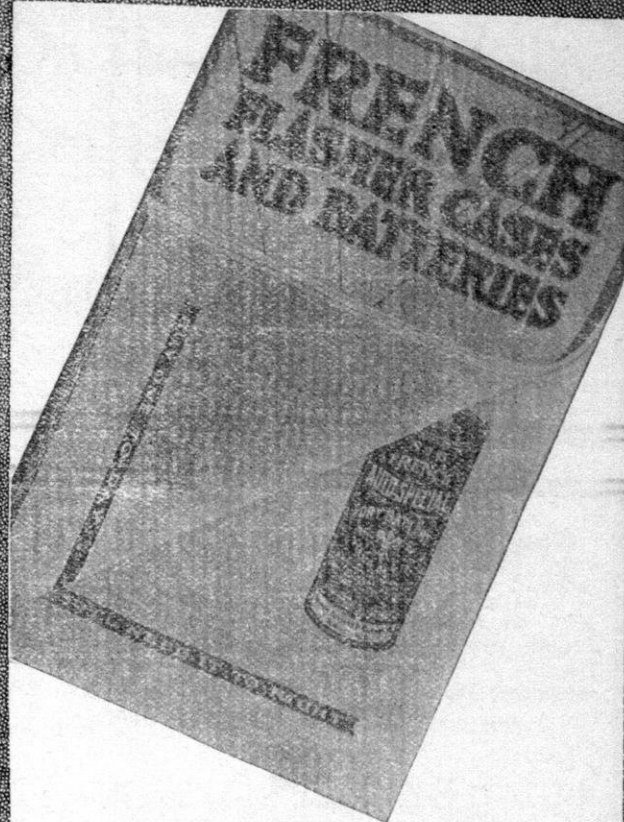
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