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# The Wisconsin Literary Magazine



Vol. XXIII

MAY, 1924

Number 7

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# The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

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## CONTENTS

Editorial.....	2
Homecoming..... <i>George C. Johnson</i>	3
May Night..... <i>Paula Otten</i>	3
The Letters of William James..... <i>Evander B. McGilvary</i>	4
Chinese Sketches..... <i>Cheng Yu Sun</i>	5
A Song in Praise of Master Herrick..... <i>Mary Zaturenska</i>	5
Shaw As a Positive..... <i>J. F. A. Pyre</i>	6
Wondering..... <i>Alice Corl</i>	6
The Return from Elba..... <i>George A. Jones</i>	7
The Balloon Man..... <i>Gertrude Enid Gessler</i>	7
Modern Trends in the Realm of Music..... <i>Leland A. Coon</i>	8
Valedictum Universitate..... <i>Oscar Riegel</i>	9
The Parting from the Hours of Worship..... <i>Nahami Krupp</i>	9
George Santayana, Wayward Sceptic..... <i>John Schindler</i>	10
Dusk Time..... <i>Alice Corl</i>	10
The Curtain..... <i>Catherine Davis</i>	11
"I Wish I Could Write"..... <i>George A. Jones</i>	12

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THE WISCONSIN LITERARY MAGAZINE is published during the scholastic year by students of the University of Wisconsin at Madison. The editors will be glad to receive contributions of short stories, essays, verse, sketches, one or two-act plays—anything—and are especially anxious to bring out new campus writers. Manuscripts may be dropped in the boxes on the third floor of Bascom hall, the Union building, or mailed to the editors, 752 Langdon street, Madison. Manuscripts must be typewritten, and a stamped and self-addressed envelope must be enclosed if the return of the manuscript is desired.



# Editorial

AT VARIOUS times during its varied career it has been the wont of the "Lit," like that muchly maligned still-birth of the Chicago Literary Times, the Proletarian, to point a commending or condemning finger at certain good or bad features of this puissant and great University of ours. The editors have tried their best to poke sacrilegious fingers where they ought not to be poked, and by some cabalistic disassociation of ideas present things to the campus in their true light.

In the main, however, this university world, bound on the south by Little Italy and on the North by McGonikle's pharmacy in Sun Prairie, has seen fit to ignore our alternate admonitions and odes of praise. Scornfully the stumrel freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, and post grads have refused to take to heart and mind the advice which the editors feel sure they would accept if this were an Utopian world. But the editors as stated editorially in the last issue of the "Lit," are a group of serious minded young men and women adhering to an as yet undefined set of ideals. With a pitiful naivete the "Lit" staff continues to pour out advice in return for the nominal two bits: cheap at the price.

And so it is with this issue of the "Lit."

Occasionally the "Lit" wakes from its complacent somnolence to find out something it never knew before. (Confessions are good for even literary people.) We did such a think just the other day. If the reader in his leisure moments will look on page 205 of the Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, Serial No. 1211, General Series No. 992, which carries the Announcements for 1922-23, he will find . . . Industrial Education and Applied Arts: II. Drawing, Painting, Design, and Crafts Work. Few of those on the hill, excepting those taking courses falling beneath this heading, are aware of the existence of such a school: an art school. To be sure, one has occasionally seen sweet serious-faced coeds and sheepish looking males defying grass stains by squatting in front of Music hall, busy sketching trees and foliage, or some such thing. But that, more than likely, is the limit of our knowledge that art classes are being conducted in the University.

Enviously watching her older sisters, the College of Agriculture and the College of Engineering, both heavily dated up with the Board of Regents, this ado-

lescent (she's only twelve years old) is forced to hide her light within the walls of the engineering laboratories. For the Board of Regents being practical, realizes that it must concentrate on the elder sisters: those are the two that carry the heaviest dowry. Some temperamental people wanted Art, so the Board of Regents copulated with Alma Mater and this little Art School was the result. Possibly there lingers in the collective minds of the Regents the popular conception of an artist: a man who tries to lure the innocent girl to his Paris atelier, a dirty-smocked, ill-kempt person forever theorising about Gauguin, Degas, Cezanne, and Picasso. Theorising and "getting nowhere."

This is certainly fallacious, for art, also, to a certain degree, must be practical. There are certain strict Roberts' Rules of Order that apply even to independent art. The basic teaching certainly is almost mathematical. If one wants to be trite one can say that art, if employed rightly, can be of use to the engineer, and even, *mirabile dictu*, the farmer! Certainly a beautiful bridge is better than an ugly one, an artistically laid out, yet practical, farm better than the atrocities that are seen so often nowadays. But we fear we are becoming lachrymose and maudlin in our panegyric to the art school.

Little is known of the applied arts course excepting its commercial art class. Yet this class is but a small portion of the studies offered. Better than average work has been done in portrait work, modelling, etching, woodcuts, architecture, and the minor arts of designing in metal and clay. A God-fearing, and hyper-prudent legislature, apprehensive for the safety of its sons and daughters, has handicapped the school by prohibiting working in life from the nude.

The applied arts department is far from perfect, yet offered the facilities that it should have there is no reason to disbelieve that it may become one of the best art schools in the middle west. So far it has been handicapped. So far it has not received the notice from our Board of Regents that it should have. Let us unite in silent prayer, holding the thought that eventually the Regents will deign to give it its due.

G. A. J.

\* \* \* \*

The editors confidently believe that the content of the present issue speaks for itself, or, at any rate, that comment of

their own would make the subtle intricate and the simple obvious. It will suffice then, to call attention perhaps needlessly, to the excellent articles by Professors McGilvary, Pyre, and Coons, all of whom responded enthusiastically to a desperate staff's cry for material by faculty members.

\* \* \* \*

With this issue, the Lit ceases its 1923-24 series of monthly campus disturbances. It is well; the editorial pens are running dry, and the advertising solicitors report themselves weary of the search for merchants' blood—kindly and sometimes freely given. These suffering mortals have been the victims of those leeches better known as campus publications through ten long months; they have submitted patiently, and it is hoped, with a reasonable measure of reward. For that reason the Lit is eager to add its probably feeble voice to the campus chorus now singing praises to the advertisers, bless 'em; they make our work possible, and deserve student patronage. May it be theirs.

\* \* \* \*

There are few farewells within the Lit's portals this year. The customary words of good will to the next year's staff need not be spoken. And all for the reason that the staff will go on next year as it has this, suffering only one irreparable loss. Oscar Riegel has already turned his thoughts from college literary magazines in general and the Lit in particular to the more immediate interest of a senior's thesis and wherewithal to combat the world in the fall; even now he superintends the manufacture of his cap and gown. Editorially he speaks his last word in the current issue under the title *Valedictum Universitate*. (Neither the editors nor the author assume responsibility for the accuracy of the Latin. Some may take it as a cryptic commentary on their pursuit of the humanities.) So the Lit takes this opportunity to bid Mr. Riegel farewell and also to wish and predict for him a significant future in the world where literature and all things literary are the greatest influence.

\* \* \* \*

The Spring elections to the staff were made soon after the appearance of the last issue. Charlotte Armstrong, Frank Jones, and George C. Johnson, erstwhile

(Continued on Page 19)

# Homecoming

By GEORGE C. JOHNSON

Fru Soderberg's loom filled the white-washed kitchen with a measured, thumping sound, and her kerchiefed head kept bobbing from side to side, up and down, as she thrust the shuttle back and forth. Axel, her husband, was at work with awl and knife upon a harness that had been patched and spliced a score of times before. Once he got up, shuffled across the room, lit the kerosene lamp that hung on the wall, wiped the tin reflector with his sleeve, and then went back to work. Several minutes later he saw a shadow flit across the frosted window pane, and the next moment the door flew open and in stepped Frithiof.

"Mama! Father—" he shouted, beginning at once to stamp the snow from his feet and remove his thin gloves. "It's biting cold walking all the way from Kvillefors. The boat docked last night, and I caught the first train. Come, Mama, kiss me. Don't stare so; I'm no ghost."

Fru Soderberg stumbled up from the loom, unraveling the whole evening's work in her haste. She seized the lapels of his threadbare coat and, looking up into his lean, young face, cried softly. Axel pressed his hand. "Well, well," he said, "so you're home; and it's been—how long? Oh yes, two years—sailing. My Frithiof a sailor! Well, well." He reached for his handkerchief and loudly blew his nose.

Frithiof stirred uneasily.

"What's all the crying for?" he said. "Haven't I come home? A fine way to greet a returned sailor! Mama, don't carry on so! Put on the coffee; let's have some coffee bread."

Fru Soderberg hurried to the fireplace, filled the big copper coffee pot from the oaken water bucket, and stirred the fire to a larger blaze. Frithiof walked slowly around the shadowed kitchen, taking old familiar objects in his hands, chuckling and talking half aloud.

"Your old coffee-set, Mama! It's all here; well, that's a surprise. Not even cracked. Do you remember what you gave me for playing water-carrier with the coffee pot? . . . That was a long time ago."

"Not so long ago," his father said. "Not so long."

"No, I don't suppose so," Frithiof replied. Then he laughed.

## MAY NIGHT

By PAULA OTTEN

INSIDE the gate, the irises abloom  
Are bathed in palest light  
Of ever shifting beams that  
shoot

Thro breeze-blown poplar leaves.  
So tall and strong you stand  
And smile at me, and talk  
Of books, of senators, of bees.  
A flame inside  
That scathes and burns,  
That must be crushed, suppressed,  
Nor must it leap nor show itself  
In my calm eyes.

The odorous breath  
Of honeysuckle blooms  
Are clustering thick about.  
They stifle me!

For breath I gasp,  
Or for a cooling breeze  
To sweep me thro and thro,  
To slow my pulsing heart.

I turn and fiercely tear  
A scented blossom spray  
And throw it to the ground,  
To choke a rising sob.

Soft rustling sounds  
Blow thro the leaves,  
And thro the darkened tree  
A stealthy moonbeam shoots

Onto your face,  
As frankly gay  
You flick your cigarette  
And ask

If I've seen Ruth today.

"My old crib! Are you still keeping that?"

"Oh yes, Frithiof," Fru Soderberg answered, glancing up at him with shining eyes. "Axel and I promised each other we'd save it—didn't we, Axel?"

"Yes, yes. Why shouldn't we? It took me a fortnight to make it."

"And I worked for months on the pillows and quilts: it's the finest lace in Smaland, too."

Frithiof looked at his mother; she was crying.

"Crying again? Shame!"

"Oh Frithiof, it's so good to see you—"

"Well, look here!" Frithiof suddenly exclaimed. "A new bake oven! What do you know about that! Did you make it, Father? I wonder if the coffee-bread

tastes better coming out of this new one."

"The iron work was given me by Nils, the blacksmith, in exchange for a pig. I did the brick work myself."

"Wonderful!" Frithiof said. "Come, tell me about everything here."

He drew his father to the table and they fell to talking.

Fru Soderberg smiled as she counted out the lumps of sugar, casting shy, hasty glances at her son, and when her eyes met his, quickly turned her head, laughing foolishly to herself.

"But my! how you've grown, boy," Axel exclaimed. "You're as big as Knut at Garda, and you're only—"

"Nineteen, the day we docked at Calcutta."

"To be sure; nineteen. Yes, yes; you were seventeen when you left. Seventeen—well, well." He looked at the floor and blew his nose.

Frithiof stirred uneasily and got up to help set the table.

"Not much of a Christmas this year," Fru Soderberg said. "All I made was coffee-bread. You see, ever since you—"

But Frithiof cut her short. "I noticed as I was coming up the hill that things were going pretty lively up at Eckman's. I stopped outside a minute and noticed that Carl Osterman was there."

"Oh yes," his mother replied. "He is just back from America. They say he did well over there. He's been seen with Greta Eckman a lot since he came home. They're to be married in Spring."

Frithiof dropped a cup. Fru Soderberg looked up into his face, then turned away, shaking her head. Frithiof walked slowly to the fireplace. Axel followed him with his eyes but did not see how he clenched his fist and bit his lip. Fru Soderberg picked up the pieces of broken porcelain and threw them into the dust bin. Twice she wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron.

"Come, Frithiof," she said at length. "Let's have our coffee."

"Yes, yes," Frithiof said and took his seat in silence.

"Do you use cream?" his mother asked. "I've quite forgotten—it's so long ago."

"Cream? Yes."

Fru Soderberg filled his cup, flavored it, and set it down before him. Frithiof

(Continued on Page 14)

# The Letters of William James

*An Abstract from a Longer Paper*

By EVANDER BRADLEY MCGILVARY

**I**N a letter William James once spoke of the little reading he had been able to do, "mostly philosophical technics, which, by the strange curse laid upon Adam, certain of his descendants have been doomed to invent and others, still more damned, to learn. But I've also read Stevenson's letters, which everybody ought to read, just to know how charming a human being can be." What James says of Stevenson one must say of James. Everybody ought to read his letters just to know how charming a human being can be.

Unlike Goethe, whom he admired as a healthy physical organization, James was, during the greater part of his life, an invalid. At twenty-four he was a nervous wreck. From Berlin where he had gone for study, he wrote his father after beginning to have hopes of improvement: "Although I cannot exactly say that I got low-spirited, yet thoughts of the pistol, the dagger and the bowl began to usurp an unduly large part of my attention."

While a student of chemistry at Harvard, James carried on a delightful correspondence with a much adored seventeen-year-old cousin, Minnie Temple. For some reason Minnie had taken it into her head to bob her hair, and Kitty, another cousin, wrote to William about it. The jocular reply ran: "Do you know, Kitty,—now that it's all over, I don't see why I should not tell you,—I have often had flashes of horrid doubts about that girl. Occasionally I have caught a glance from her furtive eye, a glance so wild, so weird, so strange, that it has frozen the innermost marrow in my bones; I have noticed fleeting shades of expression on her face, so short, but ah! so piercingly pregnant of the mysteries of mania—unhuman, ghoul-like, fiendish—cunning . . . Well, Kitty, after all, it is but an organic lesion of the gray cortical substance which forms the pia mater of the brain, which is very consoling to us all."

Four years later James was a member of a collecting expedition that under Agassiz went up the Amazon. Of Agassiz, James wrote, "I am convinced that he is the man to do me good." Here is an example of the way Agassiz did James good: "James," said the elder

man one day, "some people perhaps consider you a bright young man, but when you are fifty years old, if they ever speak of you then, what they will say of you will be this: That James—oh, yes, I knew him, he used to be a very bright young man." Perhaps it was just after some such cutting remark that James referred to Agassiz as "that old animal," and without doubt it was partly because of such remarks that thirty years later James said of Agassiz: "Here is no musty savant, but a man, a great man, a man on the heroic scale, not to serve whom is avarice and sin."

Soon after this expedition he made the acquaintance of O. W. Holmes, "The only fellow here (Cambridge)," he writes, "I care anything about is Holmes, who is on the whole a first rate article, and one that improves by wear." But there were other persons who interested him. "I made the acquaintance of Miss Fanny Dixwell of Cambridge, (the oldest), do you know her?" he inquired of a friend. "She is decidedly A 1, and (so far) the best girl I have known." The best girl James had so far known later became Mrs. O. W. Holmes. But the friendship was life-long.

It must have been red-letter days for his family when his letters arrived. What sister would not find the following letter a tonic? "Cherie de Jeune Balle,—I am just in from town in the keen, cold and eke beauteous moonlight, which by the above qualities makes me think of thee, to whom, nor to whose aunt, have I (not) yet written. (I don't understand the grammar of the not.) Your first question is 'Where have I been?' To C. S. Pierce's lecture, which I could not understand a word of—Then I turned to O. W. Holmes' home and wrangled with him for another hour . . ."

While studying in Berlin, young William did not confine himself to the professorial and literary class. A letter to his sister runs: "I enclose you the photograph of an actress here with whom I am in love. A neat coiffure, is it not? I also send you a couple more of my precious portraits. I got them taken to fulfill a promise I had made to a young Bohemian lady at Teplitz, the niece of the landlady. Sweet Anna Adamowics! (pronounce—vitch), which means des-

endant of Adam . . . I used to drive dull care away by writing her short notes in the Bohemian tongue, such as: 'Navsdy ludes v me mysli Rrohm pamatme tooji bodo biznu,' give me your photograph . . . 'mi luja,' I love etc. These were carried to her by her chambermaid, and the style, a little more florid than was absolutely required by mere courtesy, was excused by her on the ground of my limited acquaintance with the subtleties of the language. Besides, the sentiments were on the whole good and the error, if any, in the right direction. When she gave me her photograph (which I regret to say she spelt 'fotokraft') . . . she made me promise to send her mine. Hence mine!"

In the summer of 1878 occurred two of the most important events in James' life. He married Alice H. Gibbens, and he contracted with Holt to write a Psychology. With Miss Gibbens he fell in love at first sight. The day after being introduced to her, he wrote to his brother Wilky that he had met "the future Mrs. W. J." The marriage which resulted, was, to quote the editor of the Letters, "happy in the rarest and fullest sense," and "was to work an abiding transformation in James' health and spirits. No mere devotion could have achieved the skill and care with which his wife understood and helped him." She "entered into all his plans and undertakings with unflinching understanding and high spirit."

Of the honeymoon one of James' friends wrote to Lowell: "William has already begun a Manual of Psychology—in the honeymoon—they are both writing it." Evidently this same friend wrote to James in a similar vein. The reply was dictated to his wife: "As for the remaining matter of your somewhat illegible letter, what is this mythological and poetical talk about psychology and Psyche and keeping back a manuscript composed during a honeymoon? The only Psyche now recognized by science is a decapitated frog whose writings express deeper truths than your weak-minded poets ever dreamed. She (not Psyche, but the bride) loved all these doctrines which are quite novel to her mind, hitherto accustomed to all sorts of mysticism and superstitions. She swears

(Continued on Page 15)

# Chinese Sketches

By CHENG YU SUN

## I. My Chinese Flute

THESE is really little to say, but very much to think, about my Chinese flute which I brought over to America. As it hangs there on the wall, lonely and dusty, a feeling of its misfortune, its reproach, and its mourning always strikes me, as I foolishly gaze at it.

It is a very simple kind of flute about two feet long with only six stops. It is made of a slender piece of Spotted Bamboo, so called, tradition told me, because those spots are the imprints of the tear drops of Empress Sheng, who, four thousand years ago, used to weep in a bamboo wood for the Emperor who went away and died in a distant land. A new species of bamboo sprang up after that. There hangs my flute, spotted, here and there, with pearl-like dots, pitiful to behold!

My flute had a trembling and soothing tone, varying like soft sighs among the roses. Was it not magical that, when it was played by my cousin at Peking, I seemed to see and hear the wailing Empress herself? When the Tartars once invaded North China, camping one night near the Great Wall, a flute was heard in the silent night. It moved them to tears, like lost children; they soon went away, thinking of home. That was just a tiny, simple flute like mine, hanging there on the wall, lonely and dusty. Its tone has changed, miserably changed, since it came here. It is too delicate. It must be played in the serene, Oriental moon-light where it reigned, not applauded here in the shouting cities of modern science. The spirit of the Empress has fled back to China, leaving only a soulless piece of bamboo to me!

## II. A Tingtze

It was a Chinese Tingtze (or small Pavilion) of a hexagonal shape, hidden, like a blushing maiden, behind the thick leaves of willow trees. The scythe of Time and vicissitudes of a decaying life had done their work; the former brilliancy and cheerfulness in the days when it served as a favorite place in which the lords and ladies chattered gaily and drank their tea, existed no more. The doors and windows of fantastic shapes and colors were shattered and broken; the faded silk curtains, like sickly butterflies, dropped slowly and were blown off, showing the empty and silent interior of the Tingtze. Her day was gone; her

### A SONG IN PRAISE OF MASTER HERRICK

By MARYA ZATURENSKA

YOU sang the violet  
And rural village wakes,  
The muskrose dewy wet,  
And sugared wedding cakes.

And the maidens who would dance  
With honeysuckle crowned,  
Of Julia's languid glance,  
Her laughter's pleasant sound;

Corinna's lovely ways,  
Fresh as a cherry isle,—  
The hawthorny May days,  
Clear as her soft smile;

The English lanes, the sun  
Bright on the wild thyme.

No one today, no one,  
Can make such singing rhyme!

beauty, like a withered flower, was no longer appreciated by man; but her undying spirit, still remembering and clinging to her earthly frame, found solace under the caressing fingers of the moon and gentle winds, which fondly combed and washed her soft hair, the long mosses, hanging and flowing downward from the yellow, shining roof. And she was waiting.

## III. On the Great Wall

I was standing alone on the Great Wall of China, on one of the high ledges of the Tsing Lung mountains. The satisfaction of rest after the toil of ascending, the sudden realization of my child's dream and longing, and the majestic view obtained on the height of the wall, hopelessly captured me. Uttering a low groan, I surrendered incredulously.

There lay the Great Wall, from the east to the west, like an enormous dragon with its scaled, crested back of battlements bristling in the summer breezes, and its winding length zigzagging among the mountain tops, gliding down, here, to the deep ravine to drink in the mere, then shooting up, there, to bathe itself in the rolling clouds on the high peaks. Its head and tail, 1250 miles apart, were lost mystically from my eager sight.

Nothing more than ranges and ranges of bald-headed mountains came to my eyes on the southern side of the wall; on

the north, however, I had a wide view. Far, far below, rested the Tsing Lung plain, bare, sandy, and wild, almost like a desert. The track of the Peking-Shiyuan Railway stretched northward across the plain like a fine piece of thread, while the train, coming out from the long tunnel beneath my feet, slowly crept forward like a tiny earthworm. Not far away, like files of marching ants, crawled some travelling caravans of camels. Farther north, there, appeared to be nothing but whirling sands and howling winds. The world seemed to have come to an end;—the same feeling that once moved the warlike Alexander to weep—there was nothing beyond!

For hours I sat alone in the shades of the wall, the cool breezes blowing ceaselessly through the openings of the battlements. In that undisturbed silence, I drifted back with the rolling years and saw dazzling visions of the olden days: I saw how Emperor Tsing, founder of the wall, mercilessly ordered the whole country to join the labor; how thousands of lives were sacrificed in the completion of that strenuous work; how smokes and fires were raised on its towers to indicate the coming of enemies; how the frontier soldiers were quickly summoned to guard the wall, lighting it like a flaming dragon; how the mighty hosts of the Tartars advanced and encamped on the Tsing Lung plain, covering it like the black woods; how their spears and arrows cracked and whistled in the air, and their battle-drums roared like peals of thunder, but all availed them not; and how, for more than two thousand years, the wall had been the chief protector of the Chinese civilization from being destroyed by the Northern Tribes.

Then all was silent. The Tsing Lung plain, the vast battle-field of old, stood there in desolation; the Great Wall, colorful in the history of man, became only a decaying emblem of past magnificence. Unnoticeably, a locust, solitary as I, had lighted on a brick of the battlement, and whispered its mournful message in my ears, dragging me out from antiquity. . . . But the Great Dragon had captured me!



# Shaw As A Positive

By J. F. A. PYRE

**I** REMEMBER distinctly the day I opened the English *Who's Who* to see what I could find about Bernard Shaw. That was about twenty-five years ago. Shaw had been a well-known character around London for ten years, and the first two volumes of plays had been out for a year or two; but he had made only a faint impression, as yet, on "The Four Lakes Region of Wisconsin." Hereabouts, the one-hundred-per-cent American (not yet so described by biologists) still smoked cigars, fifteen a day, and had not yet discovered golf as a means of girth-control, but sat on the front porch Sunday afternoons in aggressively fresh shirt, loosened—or no—collar, and high-visibility suspenders. Groups of college boys, here and there, bent on proving "real devils," had gone in for flannel shirts, outlawed celluloid cuffs, and substituted belts for suspenders and the bulldog pipe for the cigar; but any "traveled monsieur" who ventured to affect the effete cigarette would certainly be invited to try a "man's smoke." Short skirts, bobbed hair, and all the other bobs, belonged to the unvisioned future. Such in brief and trivial, but perhaps suggestive, terms, was the historic setting in which I opened my *Who's Who* to learn about Shaw.

Of what I learned, just one startling item remains, having stuck in my mind ever since, because so typical. Under the caption *Recreations*—where every British celebrity, after recording his mundane circumstances and achievements, finally closes-in on the sympathy of the British reader by declaring his addiction to golf, mountain-climbing, bridge-whist, or what not—the impudent Mr. Shaw had caused the following curt entry to be made: "*Recreations*, anything except sport." In that energetic delivery, "right on the nob" of British superstition, we have a fair specimen of the now familiar, and even a little trite, Shaw formula. There is not much *finesse* about it. Shaw "lands" on his objective through sheer quickness of hand and sureness of eye, or sometimes by sheer drive and reach. In ring-side parlance, he is a better fighter than boxer. He focuses on the vital centers—point of jaw, pit of stomach, kidney rib—and lashes straight in. He hits the British giant "right where he lives." At the

same time, he is not blind to the reciprocal advantages of amusing the spectators and annoying his adversary; quite aware that the nose, though not a vital organ, is a seat of pride, he is not averse

must be to all truly refined natures, they are not altogether inappropriate in a description of Shaw. As I have said, he is a born fighter. To Shaw's nature, conflict is sanitary; his spirit crows at it, and his intellect approves it. Hence, though he is ever quarrelsome, he is never ill-natured. He is vexatious on principle: "In this world if you do not say a thing in an irritating way," he explains, "you may just as well not say it at all, since nobody will trouble themselves about anything that doesn't trouble them." But he loves a row for the mere health of the thing. Let me quote a few sentences from one of his theatrical papers. After lamenting as a sign of decay the peacefulness that has settled down upon the Independent Theatre, he proceeds:

"In my barbarous youth, when one of the pleasures of theatregoing was the fierce struggle at the pit-door, I learnt a lesson which I have never forgotten; namely, that the secret of getting in was to wedge myself into the worst of the crust. When ribs and backbone were on the verge of collapse, and the stout lady in front after passionately calling on her escort to take her out of it if he considered himself a man, had resigned herself to death, my hopes of a place in the front row ran high. If the pressure slackened, I knew I was being extruded into the side eddies where the feeble and half-hearted were throwing away their chance of a good seat for such paltry indulgences as freedom to breathe and a fully expanded skeleton. The progressive man goes through life on the same principle, instinctively making for the focus of struggle and resisting the tendency to edge him on into the place of ease. When the Independent Theatre was started, its supporters all made for it, I presume,—certainly I did—because it was being heavily squeezed. There was one crowded moment when, after the first performance of 'Ghosts,' the atmosphere of London was black with vituperation, with threats, with clamor for suppression and extinction, with everything that makes life worth living in modern society. I have myself stood before the Independent footlights in obedience to my vocation (literally) as dramatic author, drinking in the rapture of such a hooting from the outraged con-

## WONDERING

By ALICE CORL

**I** WONDER where you are this dusky morn—

Snow stings my window-pane,  
And out between the hills the  
winds, forlorn,  
Sigh sorrow half repressed, their  
voices worn  
By an old refrain.

The ashes of our yesterdays are  
mine,  
Like petals sweet  
Dropped from some unforgotten  
valentine,  
Still musty-fragrant, faintly  
breathing wine,  
Dead love complete.

You have a new love for your  
heart's high flow;  
And so have I.  
But when the moon is new and  
lingers low  
In April sky, the mem'ry of a gold-  
en glow  
Which rippled by—

I wonder why you are so very far  
Away from me.  
Years, friends, and thoughts form  
an unending bar,  
While both of us adore the morn-  
ing star,  
The shifting sea.

The snow whirls in and out be-  
tween the hills;  
The winds forlorn  
Breathe lingering sighs; the dusky  
morning stills  
My wondering. The aged present  
fills  
A future worn.

to "drawing a little claret" now and then. Thus, never entirely losing sight of the eventual knock-out, he adds incidentally to the gayety of nations.

Repulsive as the foregoing metaphors

(Continued on Page 17)

# The Return From Elba

By GEORGE A. JONES

**W**ALLIE Karnup sat on the second step of the front stoop, thin legs extending out to the sidewalk, elbows resting on his knees, pointed chin cupped in his stubby hands. His lips were framed in a wistful, disconsolate pout.

The day he was eight years old Wallie had suddenly discovered that he could sit on the second step and have his legs touch the ground without undue stretching. This discovery had been a great comfort to Wallie. It showed that he was that much nearer manhood. You knew that in three years he would find the same comfort in swaying from a strap in a street car. You knew he would be giving up his seat with a polite brusqueness whenever the occasion presented itself, his body taut in the effort to form a nonchalant link between the strap and the floor, smiling at the other occupants of the car, happily unconscious of the mirth in their eyes.

Today Wallie found no satisfaction in his new accomplishments. A dusty shoe reached instinctively in the direction of a worried ant scurrying across the sidewalk towards the definite asylum of a distance crack. The ant was slaughtered. The murderer gazed dull-eyed at the remains.

Frances Parkins and Bill Roberts were passing on the other side of the street.

"Bet you can't guess where we're going!"

Wallie did not answer.

"Going over to Nettie Hamilton's yard, and Wallie Karnup can't come!"

"I can so. Nettie or her mother or her old grandmother can't keep me away if I want to go. I guess I'm a free man, aren't I?"

"Well, smarty, why don't you go?"

"Don't want to."

"Yaah . . . . That's a fib, Wallie Karnup!"

"Wallie Karnup slapped Nettie's face, and Nettie's grandmother told him he couldn't play in her yard until he apologized . . . ."

"And Wallie talked back, and . . . ."

Wallie got up and went into the house slowly, making as dignified a retreat as was possible. From behind the slammed door came faintly, "Wallie, bombally, finally, kesnally. Tee legged, toe-legged, bowlegged Wallie!"

Why did girls have to be so mean? Wallie always thought of Nettie as a little girl with her hair plastered tight to her head and braided in two tight pig-tails down her back, so that the part seemed almost a dent in the skull. He knew it took her Mother fifteen minutes every morning to comb and brush and braid that sunny, silky hair. Girls were funny. Nettie had dared him to slap her. Well, he had, and . . . What had

You could walk along from post to post if you were very careful about your balance . . . it was almost like walking tight rope in a circus. You might catch your foot in the wiry grapevine which almost obliterated the fence. All the girls were afraid to walk on it: all except Nettie. There was pie plant and catnip growing in the moist black earth at the foot of the fence. It was nice to lie on your belly in the grass and watch the clouds, trying to find faces or animals in them. Once Wallie had found a cloud that looked just like the Kaiser. Darn it, Nettie could be nice at times.

He got up and walked half-heartedly through the dining room and the kitchen into the pantry. It was quite cool there. He opened one of the icebox doors and began looking . . . .

"What are you doing, Wallie?" It was Mother. When he was younger and Granny had read *Little Lord Fauntleroy* to him, he had thought it would be nice to call her "dearest," but he never had.

"Looking for a lunch . . . . I think I'll go down river and look for crayfish or pollywogs. Can I, Mother?"

"Why certainly. Who's going with you . . . . Tom and Bill?"

"No, I'm going alone."

He watched her wrapping up sandwiches and a banana in oiled paper. Then she did the whole up in a neat package. He hadn't told her about Nettie, but she seemed to know and sympathize. There were a lot of things they didn't talk about, yet seemed to take for granted as being mutually known.

Wallie walked down to the end of the shady street speckled with sunshine like glittering broken glass. At the foot of the hill was the railroad track running along the edge of the river. He began walking down the track . . . it was hard work. The space between each tie was too short for him; if he skipped a tie, it was a long stretch for his legs.

Ugly paper mills, sooty and misshapen, were scattered on both sides of the river. A faint reek of sulphite was in the air. The subdued throaty contralto of turbine motors, monotonous, continuous, came to his ears. A canal separated the paper mills from the railroad embankment. In each paper mill at the water's level were black-grated maws like a bulldog's mouth, slowly sucking in the water.

(Continued on Page 14)

## THE BALLOON MAN By GERTRUDE ENID GESSLER

**W**HEN the spring brings back  
happy skies  
And the soft, wondering  
laughter of children,

When the air is a blurred blue  
dusk from early bonfires  
And the scent of burning leaves  
is everywhere,  
Then Pietro shambles down the  
street,

Eyes laughing, teeth flashing,  
Bearing a bouquet of giant flowers,  
great golden bubbles,  
Sapphire, orchid and rose;  
They tug at slender cords,  
Longing to join their mate, the  
round sun,  
But Pietro holds fast his rainbow  
treasures,  
And the children run after him.

Now wistful spring comes back,  
And Pietro shambles down the  
street,  
Bearing iridescent bubbles,  
Little sisters of the sun.

they quarreled about? It seemed so important at the time, and now he had forgotten the reason. How did you apologize, anyway?

Wallie threw himself down on the couch in the library. The shades had been pulled to keep out of the humid August air. Wallie wished he hadn't slapped her face.

The Hamilton back yard was really an awfully nice place. There was the old, creaking, upright swing where you could sit and talk or swing lazily if you wanted to. And there was the lattice fence with square posts on top about a foot apart.

# Modern Trends in the Realm of Music

By LELAND A. COON

"IF KING TUT had been a composer, he would now be considered greater than Beethoven, for he has been dead longer." Thus reads the startling advertisement sent out by a confirmed Bostonian to stimulate the sale of the publications of a contemporary musician. This modern business man has merely capitalized a fallacious conception of otherwise human folk who insist upon basking in the halo of a past, much more alluring than the present not because of any proven superiority but due to common worship of things distant, unseen.

From a musical standpoint the present age is not individual in that it seems to many observers to be floundering about in a mire of uncertainty, without regard for certain standards of procedure previously conceded immutable, and offering no substantial contribution to encyclopedias of music which will be published fifty years hence. The same battle of judgments has already been waged on many occasions, nor will the present conflict be the last. Even staid old Mozart, whom some may call fearfully simple, in several of his orchestrations used simultaneously two wholly unrelated tonalities, a crime for which critics of today would dole out the extreme penalty to such as Swan Hennessy and certain of the French Six. Wagner's startling innovations in harmony, orchestration, and opera writing set the world agog when his works were first presented, but now we accept them without astonishment and in fact with the highest degree of admiration. Not so long ago the critics' ears were set wagging by one Claude Debussy who dared employ the harshest of dissonances, forbidden fifths and octaves, and who furthermore dared to call all this music. Even more recently have we said "thumbs down" in the case of Maurice Ravel, but all this adverse criticism has not prevented the knowing public from hailing Ravel as one of the outstanding figures of today whose work, moreover, is bound to survive.

We must remember, therefore, that any comment passed upon present tendencies is apt in the final analysis to prove inaccurate for we are much too near ourselves to judge with any degree of authority as to our own worth historically. Whether or not certain boldnesses in modern musical composition

are eventually accepted or rejected will depend, as has always been the case, upon a corresponding re-adjustment, a commensurate degree of education on the part of the listening and intelligently judging public. In other words, composer and auditor will be brought into sympathetic understanding only as the vast army of listeners succeeds in effecting within a period of several decades the same mental reactions which the genius has worked out in a far shorter space of time.

Only a few years since, an educator well known in the East publicly lamented the evident preference of present day composers for endless dissonance and expressed the wish that we might be carried back to the days of Beethoven. But who wants to stand still? Would Beethoven still be revered as a peer among composers if there had been a hundred others writing in the same style, employing the same comparatively limited compass of chords, and adhering to the identical forms used by everyone else? He would then be merely one of a convict mass, clad in the prevailing color, in a material dictated by tradition, with the stripes running in the same direction. We could not wish that Shakespeare and Chaucer had used the same choice of words, forms, phrases, and idiomatic expressions, for then each would have lost his individuality and contrast would not set one off against the other. I do not mean by this to belittle the real vital importance of the old masters in the shaping of musical progress, for without them we would not now possess such a wealth of inimitable literature. Their contributions are an integral part of the general evolution of style and content which has employed as its figureheads such men as Bach, Beethoven, Wagner, Debussy, and Ravel down to the strivings of the ultra-moderns.

What then are the characteristics of the present modernism together with its exaggerated forms which are arousing such widespread comment and criticism both favorable and adverse? The period of Romanticism, through which we have so recently passed, laid great stress upon the development of individuality coupled with an intense emotionalism which kindles the sacred fire in an art of necessity appealing to one's inner self, one's inner experience. Evi-

dently working on the assumption that individuality must be developed at all costs and that novelty implies worth, countless modernists are madly scrambling over each other in order to bring before the public something original, bizarre, which will tickle the public craving for things sensational, and the masses are all too often tricked into believing that such freakish productions are in truth entirely new concoctions. As a matter of fact, in a large majority of instances the compositions which we are terming "modern" are such only as they involve the twentieth century interpretation and application of principles which were either accepted centuries back or were that long ago discarded as undesirable. Eric Satie in many of his works uses no time or key signature, a device, or lack of it, which existed in the fifteenth century following the days of Hucbald and Guido. His writing is, nevertheless, often fully as rhythmic and technically related to a fixed tonality as some music of previous periods.

We were shocked when Debussy, and later Ravel, so criminally disregarded the generally accepted rules of harmony as to use parallel fifths and octaves, whereas these very intervals together with perfect fourths were the first intervals to be employed in polyphonic writing in a form known as the *organum*. These two men have simply taken the discarded, time worn intervals and by most clever manipulation have so placed and concealed them, and so arranged the remaining parts, that we cannot but admit that a distinctly individual coloring is thus produced, one which no previous musician had brought about, and one which is undeniably beautiful. An old vocabulary has thus been made to form a slightly divergent dialect. Even the seven note scale, used so frequently by Debussy, can be traced back to the time of the Arabians, although its more modern structure in whole tones is the result of gradual evolution. Certain of the chords encountered so frequently in Scriabine, Ravel, and Debussy have been generally recognized as legitimate for several centuries; but these men have written them in immediate succession without following them with the resolutions expected, as for example in Debussy's *La Cathedrale engloutie* and Ravel's *Pavane*.

(Continued on Page 13)

# Validictum Universitate

By OSCAR RIEGEL

**A** FORCE proceeding along a trajectory for a long enough time will leave some sort of motion-design in space. Likewise a porter throwing rubbish on an ash-heap will be the creator of an intricate design of cans, broken bricks, and medicine bottles. By a not over-intricate prestidigitation of reason the postulate might be made that a student in four years of university life achieves on the palempsest of his mind a pattern made up of the facets of his experience. The postulate is heavy, but not unbearable. It is only when the design becomes unbalanced and unsymmetrical that there is cause for concern.

\* \* \* \*

Nothing is more intolerable to me than thwarted curiosity.

In the back wall of my room on Queen street is a locked door. There are four panels in the door, two above and two smaller ones below. The knob is made of cold white porcelain, and it is attached to the door by a black iron neck. Two inches below the knob sharp shadows define the mosque-like outlines of a key-hole. There are varnished facings, a shallow lintel, and two hinges. Nothing else.

When I try the door the knob turns stiffly until I hear the muffled click of metal on metal. I push; my cheek lies against the cold varnish and the rough intaglio of the paneling; but there is no movement. I release the knob, the white porcelain flies under my hand with a spring-like vigor before my fingers are quite away. I hear the sharp kiss of metal on metal as the knob comes around. Complete silence.

And beyond?

At times, silence more profound than the lips of a corpse, deeper than the throat of a bird just dead. At other times, a faint sighing, like the slow sougning of waves heard far away, or the delicate whisper of wind between sleeping and waking. This fragile rush of air is a mystery. I do not understand. Sometimes I catch an echo of it in the passage of air through my own nostrils. I hold my breath, and the sound stops.

Yet it is to sound I lay my moral conviction that someone lives behind the door. When I lie in bed I hear the thump, thump, of heavy steps, and hold-

ing my wrist, I fall asleep over the task of synchronizing my pulse with the endless tread. The steps are dull, ponderous, slow, and, like a metronome, beat

## THE PARTING FROM THE HOURS OF WORSHIP

By NAHAMI KRUPP

**T**HERE came a day in Autumn  
lighted bright

With sunset; all the forest  
leaves shone red.

You stood between me and the  
sun,—the dead

Have faces not so ghastly grim and  
white.

Your staring eyes were glazed like  
frozen lakes.

The sun went out; there fell a  
stinging rain.

We heard the dead leaves cry as  
if in pain.

As it were now, I hear . . . . The  
forest shakes.

You watch; I watch; trees rock,  
the winds dilate . . . .

It is your flesh the winds are buf-  
feting!

It is my hair caught in the  
branches' swing!

The yellow leaves, the symbol of  
our fate . . . .

This heap of leaves and you and I  
all numb,

Tousled and torn, and blown at  
the winds' will:

They are shot apart and stagger  
down the hill;

We pass our separate ways, wind-  
bitten, dumb . . . .

with hypnotic regularity. Once, when I was awakened suddenly in the night by a stertorous sigh of terror whistling through the locked door, I heard the steps falling rapidly, like the hurried gallop of finger-ends upon a table. I listened until the sharp sighs sank into quiet breathings and the flying steps sobered into a slow, monkish walk.

And my neighbor sings. At first I heard nothing but an almost imperceptible modulation in the sighs; now, more and more frequently, the sounds gain in form, melody, and strength, like ap-

proaching music, until the sequences of song drench me like cold dew. In the shower of sound I begin to distinguish something familiar and bitter, a chaotic impetuosity of notes in *tremulo*, like Gounod's ballet music for the Dance of Phryné. Many of the bars are identical. There is the same frightened cynicism, the agony of self-revelation, the appalling vision of one's own soul. The time comes when the smashing staccato theme of the music, the unveiled spirit, horrifying the mind with its nakedness, and wrenching the body with the fury of an unleashed monster, rattles the locked door and screams through the key-hole. The grating minors riot into a cacophony of sneers, hollow jeering and cracked laughter of devils.

I picture my neighbor writhing on the floor. The cold moisture of his naked body clings to the bare boards. He is gaunt and wasted; his fingers are convulsed and jut out like talons of bone; stark horror sits in his eyes.

Now the body becomes quiet, the legs stiffen, the eyes take on a glassy expression, the music sinks into a feverish hissing. Only the hands move, marking time with rhythmical precision. They open convulsively, so that the fingers arch tightly back upon the fleshless joints; they close with a spasmodic jerk, so that bone strikes bone in a muffled rap. On and on, endlessly, all the rhythm of life moving in and out, back and forth, involuntary, meaningless, blind. Open, closed; stretch, rap; stretch, rap . . . . rap . . . . rap . . . .

\* \* \* \*

It is strange, now that I think about it, that the trajectory of a force proceeding across space should pass athwart the panels of a locked door. In the light of self-analysis (a thing which, by the way, the sages and savants of the modern world have lost in a maze of objective psycho-analysis) it is rather amusing that a person should show any interest in a locked door and a more or less spectral neighbor beyond. There is scarcely room in a world made up of a mechanical distribution of protoplasm and an orderly and academic arrangement of ideas for a belief in fauns and devils, or even for a conviction in the

(Continued on Page 13)

# George Santayana, Wayward Sceptic

By JOHN SCHINDLER

OF ALL moderns, G. Santayana is perhaps least interested in our modern world—when that modern world stands, as it does, for the emancipation of man. He has an interest in our particular age only in so far as it contains “the stars, the seasons, the swarms of animals, the spectacle of birth and death, of cities and wars”—which is to say that he is interested in things contemporary only in so far as what they describe is something positive and self-justified, something deeply rooted in our animal nature. A something . . . .

“which, like every vital impulse, is pregnant with a morality of its own. In vain do we deprecate it; it has possession of us already through our aims and tendencies. This spirit is amiable as well as disquieting, liberating as well as barbaric . . . .”  
(*Winds of Doctrine*).

What our age believes to be far reaching and deep-seated movements, are, for G. Santayana, merely surface twitchings, wholly ephemeral, and highly ironical in so far as they are accepted as the dawn-ing of a new life of man. Our age is simply the last stage in the negative reform and disintegration of the Medieval Ages. And those same basic principles which molded Medieval authority are already at work, quite unconsciously, in restoring order out of the ruins left by the process of disillusionment. As for our liberalism,

“If liberalism had been a primitive system, with no positive institution behind it, it would have left human genius in the most depressed and forlorn condition. The organized part of life would have been a choice among little servitudes, and the free personal part would have been a blank. Fortunately, liberal ages have been secondary ages, inheriting the movements, the feelings, and the social hierarchy of previous times, when men had lived in compulsory unison, having only one unquestioned religion, one style of art, one political order, one common spring of laughs and tears.”  
(*Soliloquies in England*).

There is more truth in this than most apostles of liberalism are willing to concede.

It would be unfair, however, to call G. Santayana a conservative in the sense in which the term is popularly used. He does not wish to preserve the social institutions which he particularly admires. He is quite able to contemplate their es-

sence, and that for him is quite sufficient. He entertains, nevertheless, a vigorous, though rather coolly expressed dislike for the essential feature which characterizes our contemporary age: disbelief

## DUSK TIME

By ALICE CORL

DUSK time in the gleaming street  
Satin smooth with rain,  
Double jewelled by the lamps  
Shining back again!

Are you lingering somewhere far  
Breathing deep the spring?  
Do you feel the lonesomeness  
That lamps and evening bring?

in finality, both in thought and in social systems. G. Santayana is a believer in rigidity and complete organization, and before he will ever feel at home in our intellectual world it must create a new system of organization and rigidity to replace that of the Medieval Ages.

He is in our world, and would be perhaps in any world, a loné figure—well nigh a god, dwelling on Olympus in beautiful and sufficient solitude, elevated high above the petty rumblings in the valley below. Godlike in his independence and range of vision he sits upon Olympus, absorbed in an occupation which is no less godlike, namely, to discover in man that which underlies his twitchings and turnings of dogma, which makes metaphysics possible—those principles of interpretation which are at work in man when he thinks.

It may quite truly be said, that living always there on that mountain top, G. Santayana cannot realize the depth and cataclysmic nature of man's recent social and mental revolutions. And it is interesting to find that among the integrative and creative influences at work in our present age he numbers Nationalism:

“In politics we move toward that sort of a reform which is integrative and creative . . . . Nationalism has slipped into the place of honor. It has become the one intrepid illusion, illusion when it is taken for an ultimate good.”

(*Winds of Doctrine*).

But to the Men of the Valley, and among them Bertrand Russel, there is anything

but a ground of hope in Nationalism. Apparently, G. Santayana and the Men of the Valley see matters, for some reason, in altogether different perspectives, from extremely varying fields of experience. And whatever errors the Men in the Valley may be committing in judging upon the matter, it is quite possible to suspect G. Santayana of being susceptible to the various erratic assumptions usual to gods which have dwelt upon Olympus since the days of Plato and Aristotle. Indeed in “*Scepticism and Animal Faith*,” we come to find just such assumptions strongly in evidence.

In *Scepticism and Animal Faith*, G. Santayana has given a systematic presentation of the philosophy which underlies his social attitude. Its presentation is remarkably lucid and enjoyable, graced with G. Santayana's beauty of style, truly philosophic temper, and wide range of intellect. It is a philosophy which gives one a sort of satisfaction not dissimilar to that which one gets from mysticisms. For it possesses that element of wholeness and inclusiveness of life which is so often lost sight of by much of modern thinking with that scientifically analytical temper which leads usually to over-specialization. It is a philosophy with a breadth and fullness which a philosophy of the Valley is very apt to miss. But again, to the thinker interested in contemporary problems, G. Santayana has little to offer. He is conducting a side attraction set off some distance from the main show, and everyone, but G. Santayana himself, soon finds himself wandering back to the Big Three Ring Tent where S. Alexander, John Dewey, Bertrand Russel, E. B. Holt, F. S. C. Schiller, etcetera, are performing, to resume the discussion by, “now as we were saying before we were so pleasantly interrupted.”

G. Santayana as a thinker has this merit, that he does not pretend to establish, by rational arguments, doctrines which we accept upon instinct, but cannot hope to prove. What G. Santayana wishes to do in *Scepticism and Animal Faith* is to determine those principles of interpretation, those tendencies to feign, those habits of inference which philosophy and thinking in general appeal to when they argue. The probe with which he hopes to come into direct contact with

(Continued on Page 14)



# The Curtain

By CATHERINE DAVIS

She is a swallowed woman whom age has made big. Incessant use of her hands has enlarged and roughened them. About them, though, is the semblance of a former grace and shapeliness. Neither the left forefinger, pricked with black needle marks, nor the dry redness of them can entirely conceal this. Her mouth is well set in downward quirks and her straight drawn hair, thinned and grown ugly in graying, gives a definite harshness to her face. On holidays when the family goes with her to their cousin's to take dinner, she crimps her hair. On those days her gray eyes are blue, almost, and she wears a flush in her cheeks. I wish Mr. Farber would tell her it is becoming. He, perhaps, has tried to and received her slurring retort, "What you want is a pretty thing for a wife." When she grows ugly, the tiny patterned veins of her eyeballs redden disagreeably. I have seen them.

Mrs. Farber is deaf; not slightly, nor completely either, but enough to make her only partially aware of sounds and intonations. (As a small child I knew her to be deaf, and so I have come to think of her as always being that way.) Lately, I have had to yell at her to make myself understood, and the effort is trying. We talk principally about household affairs. Her curtains stretched evenly this time. Ridiculous how quickly they get dirty in these days of soft coal. But there is no way of compelling your neighbors to use hard. I always agree and ask what kind of new clamps she uses on her stretchers. The boys need new shirts again, everyday ones. The washing machine is so hard on them and instructions are of no avail to wash-women. She will make white ones? And so we take each subject, she propounding or denouncing and I questioning and acquiescing. Why I go to see her I do not know. It is not out of sympathy nor from a sense of duty, but perhaps because I know she has so few who will afford the effort to talk to her. And I enjoy it.

Evenings just before the supper hour, I have found her often sitting in the dimness of the living room, searching up and down the street for some sign of life. There is a sense of expectancy in her attitude, but her face has the blankness of content. She knows by sight every black-coated figure of husbands return-

ing from work, knows where some turn in, where one is met by a sturdy-legged child. He, as he reaches her house, tosses this wee bundle of a child above his head, sets her down, adjusts the newspaper under her arm and, great and small, the two black figures take their way up the street. The rocking ceases then and two eyes strain after them. No sound is in the room. Then the rocking begins again and the eyes look up and down the street, contentedly. If it is not too dark, you may catch the glow of them, like blue discs. Then he comes, Mr. Farber. But the rocker does not change its time backward and forward and backward and forward. The eyes glint blackly, then. I hear his footsteps on the porch and in the hall; I hear him fumbling for the hook to hang his coat on. Then he comes into the hall again and clears his throat. Upon the instant the rocker suspends itself and she goes into the hall, sullenly. There is no sound of impact. They could not have touched, even. Only the words, "Well. I suppose you couldn't make it again tonight," come to me through the darkness. "Something came up, as usual," is answered in a low, smothered tone. She cannot have heard it, though. Upstairs, he clatters the soap dish and in the kitchen the clapping of covers over steaming pans is heard. She cannot hear my good-bye from the kitchen doorway, so I touch her arm and speak loudly.

When he cleared his throat she had stopped rocking so suddenly.

The oldest boy is away, now, practicing law in Iowa. The younger is in his eighth year of "trying his hand at things." Real estate, radio machines, and bonds are some of the many things that have passed through them. He is still trying. It wasn't at all necessary in trying one's hand at things, to get up early. Plenty of time, you know. So Mrs. Farber's task resulted each morning in arousing and threatening Chalmers out of bed. I have heard her from below, raise her voice in sarcasm, as if to hear it herself, until she was almost yelling at him, demanding if he thought he could get breakfast any time he got ready. Then she pounds angrily down the back stairway and stumps into the kitchen. I have not the heart to go in a few minutes later to surprise her in her task

of getting breakfast for him. There comes the plop of frying eggs and the thick sound of the batter being stirred. I slip out without my usual good-bye.

One morning Mr. Farber was coming out of the door as I turned in at their house, so he left it ajar for me. With some pleasantries on the weather, I went on inside and found the hall and house deserted. Only an intermittent jangling from below of a furnace shaker cut the quietness of the rooms. I went down finally and found her there, where he had left her, jerking at the shaker handle, scarlet-faced with the effort and with scorn, "Any ninny could get more heat from a match than he can from a furnace. I told him that. I'll do it myself." Her face bloated in anger and she cleared the floor of coal, before the furnace, with a vicious sweep. "Has he gone yet?" I nodded and followed up the stairs.

I did not go again for three days. We began about a benefit sale at once, both avoiding with extreme care the subject of the furnace. She had apparently been reading when I came in, so I lifted a magazine from the couch to glance over it. Half under a pillow, half under the magazine a black shapeless mass had been thrust. I held it up and unsurprisingly demanded "What is this?" She scarcely glanced up, but flung the pages across her open book and as if retorting, "Mr. Farber's been insisting on a smoking jacket. I finally had to make it." Queer, but I can't imagine Mr. Farber insisting on anything. It seems that mother saw Mrs. Farber, the day before yesterday at Madden's, shopping. It was that very afternoon, in fact.

I'm always glad for Christmas because of Mrs. Farber. It gives her a working basis for surprises. All year she plans and makes things, unsuspected, for Mr. Farber and the boys, then leaves them lying about the house or in their rooms, half thrown on a chair or stuffed in a dresser. They do not dare thank her for them. At Christmas time they do, but not as my father and mother thank one another. I go over and take my choicest present for them to see. Then Mr. Farber picks up his presents, one by one, and says for each, "Just what I've wanted all year." He throws back his head a bit. By that, I know he wants her to

(Continued on Page 13)

# I Wish I Could Write

By GEORGE A. JONES

**T**HE train is slowing down for a station. Through the dirty, gray-coated window I can see nothing but an occasional light moving past sluggishly. The carmine blob of a signal light, and then nothing. The signal lights pass still more slowly; now I can make out the light shining dully from behind the concentric circles of the glass. The train has stopped. Voices come to me as from a distance: two Jewish salesmen carefully picking to pieces the towns they must visit, the eunuch-like voice of the conductor forever reiterating "Who?" and the monotonous response of the man seated beside him, "So-and-so, he's in a pretty bad way."

The train has started again. Absent-mindedly I dig my fingernails into the red plush of my seat. Less red spots on the seat make it seem like mahogany veneer shaved here and there by a carpenter's plane. Smoke strands from cigars, pipes, and cigarettes clash, intermingle, and then eddy through the car. They are like wisps of mists retreating up the sides of a valley before the rising sun. There is a flaw in the window opposite me. I revolve my head about the flaw, distorting the reflection grotesquely. The reflection seems like the head of a Velasquez dwarf or a character in one of Goya's *Caprichos*. In disgust I brush away the cigarette ash I allowed to spill over my vest.

I wish I could write. Oh, yes, I can write, but how? Insincerely, slave to the cleverly worded phrase, to the O. Henry climax. Amusing yes, but as far as approaching reality, as far as portraying life accurately. . . . When I tell people I want to write they answer, "Ah, yes, how nice. A journalist." And they smile politely and vacuously, and I smile back at them a licorice-sweet smile, and try to explain. To write sincerely, to portray the life about me, to approach reality: already in my mouth the words are bloated, distorted, vague as the reflection of my head against the flaw of the window across the aisle from me. The cranium of a Velasquez dwarf,—that is my writing.

The fat body of the brakeman waddles drunkenly up the aisle. His legs, in parentheses, straddle the arms of two seats opposite each other. He is lighting the two gas lights: the electric lights are already on. The flicker of the gas seems

orange in contrast to the white glare of the electric globes. The match burns his fingers. . . . he lets it drop slowly to the cement floor. If a match should burn my fingers I should throw it down angrily, and probably swear. Yes, I should swear. I admire the poise of the fat brakeman. What are his thoughts; I grant they are few, but of what does he think? What is his private life, is he still a bachelor or is he married? Where does he live? What will he be like thirty years from now?

A well-built nonchalant fellow enters the car. He lets himself down into a seat with dignity. His clothes are of the collegiate type; he, too, probably goes to the University. His body seems muscular, yet I imagine his legs are thin. He will wear red and black checkered golf hose. His hair is plastered close to his head like the skull cap of a clown. His face is finely chiselled: the nose, of a Grecian type, is a trifle too long; the eyes, beneath thin eyebrows, are cold, speculative. The thin lips twitch down in disdain: they are sensuous. Every week-end he will get drunk in a dignified fashion. Probably even his hang-over periods are dignified. Occasionally he will frequent a bordello. Even in his passion he will be disdainful, speculative. He will treat the woman as a cat treats a mouse; the veneer of polite boredom will disappear and leave him naked in all his crudity. Then he will return to the fraternity house and tell the brothers of his conquest, and laugh lewdly.

What is the psychology of such a person? What is his family like? What sort of a girl will he marry? For I feel sure he will marry. How long will she be happy?

I light another cigarette, and pull at it unthinkingly, hardly inhaling.

A short, thin Italian has stopped by my seat, silently offering magazines and cheap candy. I shake my head, but as his eyes seem disappointed, I lose my dignity, take pity on the man and look over his stock. He knows little of it. His nose is long, thin, and curved; his head is square, covered sparsely with black hair flecked with gray. He has prominent cheek bones, beneath which the wrinkled cheeks are sunken. The ears stick out slightly, yet are well shaped. Thin bloodless lips are almost

hidden beneath a large closely clipped moustache. The long nose and small eyes remind me of an anteater, yet the way the head sinks down in his collar makes me think of a round backed tortoise.

"You like t' take a reload mep?" He knows nothing of his business; he does not know how to "sell himself." This is his first night on the train. He does not know when we will arrive in Madison. A suppressed tragedy seems to lurk in those black eyes. How does he find America, the land of promise? What time does he have to spend at home? How many children must he clothe and feed? What does he think of his children growing up with a different set of morals and customs than his? Does his wife have to work, or is she dead?

He has passed up the aisle. Again the train has stopped; there is but one more station before Madison. I get up and start back to my seat in the rear car where I have left my coat and hat and suitcase. The train has suddenly become flooded with girls and fellows returning to school. Directly in front of me are three girls looking for seats. The last girl wears a yellow slicker, a glaring, violent yellow slicker. I hate them: they are the yellow succubi that haunt my dreams. Why I hate them I cannot say; I cannot give reasons for the majority of my private hatreds. The girl's hair is shingled and cuddles about the nape of her neck in little tufts like brown cat's fur rubbed the wrong way. A magenta and purple and orange scarf fights with the slicker. Instinctively I try to catch a glimpse of the face: I am disappointed. Her laugh is boyish, yet harsh. More than likely she gives a hot party.

I am in my seat. A worried little woman with thin hair rebelliously floating down over her forehead had taken my seat next to the window. Her little feet, encased in sensible high shoes rest on a worn traveling bag. Alternately she looks through the window and nervously powders her nose. What is she worrying about? Is she afraid she will not be met at the station, or is it a matter of greater importance? Women of her type are apt to worry over the trivial things, and then be calm in times when worrying is excusable. I am fascinated by a faint

(Continued on Page 22)

## VALEDICTUM UNIVERSITATE

(Continued from Page 9)

metaphysical significance of a locked door.

Now that I am laughing quietly to myself and examining my door more carefully I observe that the three pairs of brass knuckles on the two hinges do seem a bit tight and rusty, and that even by hammering out the brass pin that holds them in place the door might stoutly resist physical persuasion.

In mock anger I strike the locked door and listen to the hollow reverberation of the blow. There is a sharp, stinging sensation in the skin drawn tightly over my knuckles, and the bones themselves painfully record the violence of the concussion. A force proceeding along a trajectory . . . .

## THE CURTAIN

(Continued from Page 11)

hear. She is fussing about the Christmas tree. She tells me when showing her presents, "I've needed them all year." Then she lays them down, folding some very precisely in boxes, taking a long time over them. Then I urge my sister to go over to see them, just so they can thank each other all over again.

Late spring comes eventually, bringing husbands and wives out on their porches to sit and murmur in the early twilight. Mr. and Mrs. Farber are there too, in the drifting light, but the only murmur is the low groan of Mrs. Farber's great rocker. And when the darkness comes the only light is from the glowing tip of Mr. Farber's thick cigar, except—and I have seen it only twice—the deep black glint of Mrs. Farber's eyes when the far rays of the street light have caught them for a moment. They search the darkness, expecting, hoping perhaps for something. So their evening passes and ends each night in the same way. The slow deep grunt of Mr. Farber's "Well—," which Mrs. Farber does not hear. Then the louder, "Well—," with head thrown back, a tired, endless effort to make her hear.

"Well, what?"

"I guess I'll run on up—late." So he goes, the screen door jingling its loose hook after him. Alone in the darkness she sits, rocking ponderously, backward and forward, backward and forward.

## MODERN TRENDS

(Continued from Page 8)

When properly written and played these chords, decidedly dissonant by nature, lose their usually acrid character and take on an element of great individual beauty. If you know just how to handle a sweet briar rose you forget the uncomfortableness of the fuzzy, thorny stem in admiring the exquisite coloring of the flower itself.

Certain modern composers, however, not content with expressing their originality in a slightly different juggling of subject matter already tested out, seem to have jumped to the other extreme in the world-wide scramble for producing the novel and sensational. This can all be traced to the widespread class and national discontent which demands the overthrow of the ancient at all costs simply for the sake of substituting the untried. Not satisfied that art has hitherto been associated with the beautiful we are resorting to the ludicrous, the grotesque, in order to tickle the public palate. Painting takes upon itself the task of immortalizing a corpulent, distorted subject such as one would expect to find in a sausage factory. Music gains its inspiration from a sparkling guillotine, an awkward peasant trying to dance the stately minuet, the thrilling adventures of a wooden soldier, or the return of mule drivers from their daily round of æsthetic pursuits.

The twentieth century mind is demanding not only shorter forms than were in vogue at the time of Beethoven and of Wagner, but it also prefers an absence of form bordering upon license. The symphonic number of former days, we say, is far too long and tiresome. We prefer a tone poem, a brief presentation of impressionism, a ten minute symphony, a quartet to last only five minutes, but within this limited period we must live fast, experience much, and above all things get the worth of our money. We rush to a concert, worry through it, and insist upon donning our coats and hats during the final number so as to precipitate ourselves into some social function. "Speed, brevity, and variety" is our national slogan. The phonograph has played an important role in developing such a taste on the part of the public. In order to carry on a prosperous business, the machines must be reasonable in price, hence small. Records of limited capacity demand brief forms in order that they may be completely recorded. Consequently, the more extended forms of the old masters are not heard by the masses

except in the larger towns and cities.

This craving for the brief and miniature has also given rise to the use of short phrases in literature and painting as well as in music. Abbreviated sentences, daubs and splashes of color, and limited melodic lines have come into being simultaneously. In fact, melody seems to have gone down to a watery grave, in the sea of impressionism. Gabriel Faure of the French school is a unique example of the few who have succeeded in retaining melodic ideas of any substantial length and at the same time constructing them of such beauty as to catch public favor. Mahler, on the other hand, in attempting to present lengthy phrases has so enriched them that the resulting compositions are too heavy for general public consumption.

The trend of the times may be summed up by saying that composition is in a state of flux, of transition which from our present limited viewpoint appears to be of an uncertain outcome. Just what will stand the test of time and what will be the types of the future is not for us to say. Charles Louis Seeger, Jr. likens modern music to a "broad stream in a flat country." In other words, the stream must come to mountainous regions, to the summits, before it can be counted a mighty, definite force. Just what our own American music will be is a matter of query. Some say our future lies in the way we employ our negro and Indian folk songs. Others aver that American ideals and American philosophy should inspire, but we are yet too composite to be able to determine just what real Americanism is.

Various organizations are aiding in encouraging the modern composer and in crystalizing national and group tendencies. The Berkshire Festival in our own country presents at stated intervals a series of programs made up of the works of living composers, and substantial prizes are awarded those adjudged the most meritorious. The "Societe Independente Musicale" in Paris affords to native artists an opportunity of having their compositions performed in public. At the recent six day session of the Salzburg Festival, thirty-five numbers of ultra-modern music were presented. The final choice of the composers to be represented was made by an international jury which was not allowed to base its decisions on national prejudice.

In conclusion, then, may we summarize by observing that just how much of present day music is actually modern is more or less of an enigma, that if permanent

(Continued on Page 19)

## GEORGE SANTAYANA

(Continued from Page 10)

these basic subjective principles is Kant's transcendental criticism sceptically applied. G. Santayana imagines his instrument to be thoroughly worthy of his purpose. But it soon becomes evident that transcendental criticism (and *sceptical* transcendental criticism for that matter) is itself a crystallization of traditional canons of thought, and determines at the beginning the essential nature of that which is to be found; it implies beforehand several assumptions concerning the discovered. In short, G. Santayana is far from being the last word as a sceptic; and most of what he finds owes itself to the method he uses in finding it. To use his own term, he must be called another Wayward Sceptic, perhaps even one of the least honest of sceptics, certainly much less honest than Hume. His scepticism lacks that invigorating freshness one is entitled to expect in a scepticism; one must feel continually that one has met all this before—and one has, often; the positive features of the system date back to Thomas Aquinas and Plato, the sceptical features are garnered from here and there in Kantianism.

This same traditional factor which underlies and is assumed in his sceptical transcendental critical method is that same element which prevents him from taking a vital interest in our changing world. His assumptions remain peculiarly untouched by contemporary thought and movements. It is possible of course that beneath all the changes which the human animal and human thinking may undergo there are some factors which remain constant, some factors we may always appeal to in the face of the hundred thousand winds that wage destruction over the earth. Those factors which G. Santayana finds, do not seem, however, to be of such a basic nature; and if taken purely as dogma, do not seem to be a prosperous dogma. The raising of more fundamental questions has eluded his scepticism, largely, I think, because he has chosen to live upon a mountain—a mountain visited by the shades of Plato, Aristotle, and Spinoza. And meanwhile, the floods continue to batter and roar in the Valleys.

## THE RETURN FROM ELBA

(Continued from Page 7)

Wallie was hot. Dust, scuffed up in walking, obscured his shoes and stockings. The ties were hot beneath his feet; the rails seemed to quiver from behind a veil of hot air. Sweat, beaded in small pearls, oozed down his flushed face. The light brown hair, usually so unruly, was plastered to his forehead in damp, oily, spit curls.

Perhaps he had walked for two hours. It was not the happy party he had hoped it would be. Wallie looked at the sun . . . it must be after two. Ahead of him was a curve in the track; a senile crab apple tree was insecurely anchored on the hillside sloping towards the town. It was the only shady thing in sight.

Stretched out beneath the tree, Wallie ate his lunch slowly. He was not so hungry as he thought he would be, and he threw away two sandwiches and half of the banana. He had taken off his shoes and stockings, but the weeds were dusty like everything else. The stubble pricked his tired legs. Insistently the buzz of flies, spiralling madly above the remains of his lunch, came to him.

Through half-shut eyes he looked ahead. Funny he hadn't noticed that the canal had ended; now there was only the river. Painfully he got to his feet, and, shoes and stockings in his hand, walked down to the river's edge. He sat down on a tanned rock shaped like the rump of some fairly tall giant, against which the current spanked half heartedly. The water was cool to his tired feet. For a long time he sat there, absent-mindedly fingering a water blister on the sole of his left foot.

It must be getting late. He wouldn't have time to look for crawfish; he could do that tomorrow, anyway. Slowly Wallie climbed the hill again and started home. It was nice to walk on level sidewalks again. The blister was throbbing with an insistent, disconcerting regularity. Wallie wished he had asked Mother for a little money; then he could buy a soda or a root beer. Only now he noticed that he was thirsty.

Wallie was near home. The clock in the Methodist church began to strike off the hour. Once, twice . . . was it only two o'clock? Wallie had thought it about five.

A block ahead Wallie saw a small, cozy, frame house. He stopped; it was the Hamilton house. Should he go around the block? Wallie hoped Nettie wouldn't be out on the front porch. He walked on, his feet carrying him forward slowly.

(Continued on Page 15)

## WISCONSIN LITERARY MAGAZINE

## HOMECOMING

(Continued from Page 3)

stared at it. Axel coughed. His wife studied her hands in silence.

"I sold the cow last summer," Axel began loudly. "I used the money to buy a plow—one of the new kind from America. It was a great help this fall."

"Is that so?" Frithiof said.

"Yes, but the farm seems bigger than before, and I've got a twitching in my back. It's hard work plowing—alone."

"Yes, so it is."

"Tell us about the countries you've seen," Fru Soderberg quickly interrupted.

"Oh, there's nothing to tell; never saw much, working in the stoke hole."

"Were you in America?"

"No."

A deep quiet fell upon the old pair. Frithiof began to crumble his coffee-bread into tiny bits, rolling them slowly between forefinger and thumb.

Axel coughed.

"For a week last September I hired Reuben Johansson to help me dig potatoes. But hired help costs more than it used to. Besides, they're shiftless. Now, if you—I mean—you see, when the spring plowing begins, a little help—you know—that is, if the boats aren't out."

"I know, Father, it's hard; but—you understand."

"Yes, yes, to be sure; we understand, don't we Mama?"

"Yes, we understand. But it's not the same as if some young person—I mean, it's kind of lonesome nights, especially in winter."

"Of course," Frithiof said slowly. "Of course; that's true." He said no more and drained his coffee-cup in one swallow. He poured another cup, drank the coffee black, set the cup down, and began to turn it slowly around between his hands, staring at the dark coffee grounds.

Finally he looked up and spoke.

"How long ago did it happen, this—this betrothal?"

"Last August."

"I see. Last August. I was in Liverpool then." He got up from the table. "My room, Mama, is it ready?"

"Oh yes; just wait. I'll warm it up for you." Fru Soderberg hurried out of the room, sniffing and biting her lip.

Frithiof turned to his father.

"I'm tired. Can you have the sledge ready in the morning?"

"The sledge? Well, well. What for?"

"The boat's pushing on to Hamburg day after tomorrow, and I've got to go—that is, you see, if I don't, why then maybe somebody else will. Good night."

## LETTERS OF WILLIAM JAMES

(Continued from Page 4)

by reflex action now, and believes in universal Nothwendigkeit. Hope not with your ballad-mongering ever to gain an influence. We have spent, however, a ballad-like summer in this delicious cottage among the hills. We only needed crooks and a flock of sheep. I need not say that our psychic reaction has been one of content—perhaps as great as ever enjoyed by man."

During a trip abroad, James learned of his father's fatal illness, and from London on his way home he wrote what is altogether one of the most filial letters ever penned. The whole deserves to be read, but it is long, so only some passages can be quoted: "Meanwhile, my blessed old Father, I scribble this line (which may reach you though I should come too late), just to tell you how full of the tenderest memories and feelings about you my heart has for the last few days been filled. In that mysterious gulf of the past into which the present soon will fall . . . , yours is still for me the central figure. All my intellectual life I derive from you, and though we have often seemed at odds in the expression thereof, I am sure there's a harmony somewhere, and that our strivings will combine. What my debt to you is, goes beyond my power of estimating,—so early, so penetrating and so constant has been the influence . . . As for us, we shall live on, each in his way,—feeling somewhat unprotected, old as we are, for the absence of the parental bosom as a refuge, but holding fast together in that common sacred memory. As for myself, I know what trouble I've given you at various times, through my peculiarities, and as my boys grow up, I shall learn more and more the kind of trial you had to overcome in superintending the development of a creature different from yourself, for whom you felt responsible . . . As for the other side, and Mother, and all our possibly meeting, I can't say anything. More than ever at this moment do I feel that if that were true, all would be solved and justified . . . Good-night, my sacred old Father! If I don't see you again—Farewell! A Blessed Farewell! Your William."

At the time of his father's death, William had two sons, one three years old and the other one year old. Unfortunately we have no letter announcing the birth of either his first born nor of the second child. But we have a card which he wrote to a friend announcing the birth of his daughter: "My livestock (Continued on Page 16)

## THE RETURN FROM ELBA

(Continued from Page 14)

From the back yard came laughing voices. Through the corner of his eye Wallie saw them in the swing . . . . Nettie and Frances, Bill and Rex Colby. Nettie was nice at times . . . . he couldn't go down river or hang around home all the time.

Slowly he went up on the porch. As Wallie had expected, the screen door stuck and then yielded suddenly: he almost lost his balance. The letter slit in the door, usually so expressionless, seemed to grin triumphantly at him. No, he wouldn't. He rang. Wallie could hear the bell coughing asthmatically from the kitchen. Perhaps they hadn't heard; perhaps they had seen him and wouldn't come to the door. Somebody was coming. The door opened. It was Mrs. Hamilton's mother. To Wallie she seemed very stern, cold.

"Will . . . will you beg my pardon?" Had he said that right?

"Will I . . . what? Wallie tried to elude her, but she had her arms about him and was laughing. He hated women's hands, always mussing a fellow's hair.

"Marie, here's someone who wants to know if we'll beg his pardon." Wallie noticed Mrs. Hamilton had come to the door. He wished Nettie's grandmother would let go of him.

"Will we beg his pardon?" Wallie felt uncomfortable: Mrs. Hamilton was laughing too. He found himself seated in the sitting room.

"Nettie, Nettie, will you come here a minute?"

There came a "Yes, Mother," and Nettie entered the room a moment later.

"Nettie, Wallie Karnup has come over to see you." Nettie looked at him, somewhat indifferently, Wallie thought. But he was wrong.

Come on out in the yard, Wallie. We're just going to have a circus and nobody can skin the cat and hang by their toes. You be the trapeze man."

Three hours later Wallie heard the telephone ring in the house. He had not noticed the time. The ring of the telephone had come to him from a long way off. Mother wanted him to come home.

Wallie said good-by to everyone, especially Nettie. He walked home, very tired but quite happy. He wondered how Mother knew he was over at the Hamilton's. After all, Nettie's grandmother was sort of nice.

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## LETTERS OF WILLIAM JAMES

(Continued from Page 15)

is increased by a "Tochterchen," modest, tactful, unselfish, quite different from a boy, in fact a really epochmachendes Erzeugniss. I shall begin to save for her dowry and perhaps your Harold will marry her. Their ages are suitable."

James' letters to his children are among the most readable in the two volumes. Their quality is sometimes such as not to be readily appreciated by the ordinary child. But it must be remembered that the children brought up in the family of William James must have been at home with a vocabulary and a type of humor far beyond the range of commonplace. To Henry, eight years old at the date of this letter he wrote: "You lazy old scoundrel, why don't you write to your old Dad? Tell me how you enjoy riding on horseback, what Billy (6 years old) does for a living, and which things you like best of all; the new kind of things you have to do with in Aiken . . . Your tooth was a precious memorial—I hope you'll get a better one in its place. Send me the other as soon as it is tookin out . . . If any of George Washington's baby teeth had been kept till now, they would be somewhere in a public museum for the world to wonder at. I will keep this tooth, so that, if you grow up to be a second George Washington, I may sell it to a museum. When Washington was only eight years old his mother didn't know he was going to be Washington. But he did be it, when the time came . . . Kiss your dear old Mammy and that belly-ache of a Billy and little Margaret Mary for her Dad. . . . Good-bye! Your Loving Dad."

Margaret Mary was then one year old. When she was seven, James wrote to her. "Sweetest of living Pegs,—Your letter made glad my heart the day before yesterday, and I marvelled to see what an improvement had come over your handwriting in the short space of six weeks. 'Orphly' and 'ofly' are good ways to spell 'awfully.' . . . There is an immense mastiff in my house here. I think even you would like him, he is so tender and gentle and mild, although fully as big as a calf . . . his tail keeps on wagging all the time, and he makes on me the impression of an angel hid in a cloud. He longs to do good."

James' Psychology was completed in 1890. Like most authors, he looked on his production with mingled feelings, and he had a very decided preference for a handsome page. To his publisher he wrote: "If there be anything which I

(Continued on Page 19)

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## SHAW AS A POSITIVE

(Continued from Page 6)

ventional first-nighter as even Mr. Henry James might have envied. But now that glory has departed."

We see that the person sketched in these two little vignettes, Shaw, the "barbarous youth" struggling at the pit-door, "wedged into the worst of the crust," and Shaw, the successful dramatist, standing in the main glare of the most advanced theatre of the English-speaking world, successful because he is the focus not only of the applause but of the hooting,—is one and the same Shaw. And he is the same Shaw that Mr. Henderson described as standing before riotous audiences in the streets and parks and dockyards of London "with his long, loose forms, his baggy and rather *bizarre* clothes, his nonchalant, quizzical, extemporaneous appearance; with his red hair and scraggly beard, his pallid face, his bleak smile, his searching eyes flashing from under his crooked brows; with his general air of assurance, privilege, and impudence."

Yet Shaw is no mere brawler. This would be but a vulgar spectacle if it were animated only by pugnacity and the love of excitement. But:

"This is the true joy of life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of Nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. And also the only real tragedy in life is the being used by personally minded men for purposes which you recognize to be base. All the rest is at worst mere misfortune or mortality: this alone is misery, slavery, hell on earth; and the revolt against it is the only force that offers a man's work to the poor artist, whom our personally minded rich people would so willingly employ as pandar, buffoon, beauty monger, sentimentalizer, and the like."

Shaw has been so uniformly apprehended in terms of his negations that one has a sensation of being rather quaint in approaching him on the affirmative tack. But here is the decree of a

(Continued on Page 18)

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## SHAW AS A POSITIVE

(Continued from Page 17)

faith positive: *"Identify yourself with the purpose of the world."* Life has human pre-eminence in proportion as we can command it and give ourselves to it, and these things we can do only by commanding ourselves. To do either we must face realities; for to give ourselves to unrealities is simply to throw ourselves away. Let us romanticize our own passions and senses and we are "hand and foot in Belial's gripe." Let us be hoodwinked by the social shibboleths of the deceivers and the self-deceivers and we are in a merry dance of the devils indeed. Here is the individualist germ in Shaw's socialistic plasm. He abhors any philosophy which forbids us to will our own being and therefore the becoming of the world; which makes us passive instead of active. A life worth its breeding is a life of adventure, of creations, and of growth. It can be none of these unless it is willed from within. To be only a sensitized receiver, played upon from without, is to sink back towards the original slime, and to spend oneself chasing after erroneous grails is to be on cross-ways with "the purpose of the world."

Hence Shaw's feud with conventions or institutions that tend to reduce life to a routine or a humbug; his onslaughts on "morality" when morality means mere conformity with prevailing practice or opinion; on "romance" which is a mere toilette for enhancing the allurements of the animal it professes to clothe; on science even, when, as so often, it becomes a prodigious machine at the beck of bullies or of boobies; and so on, in the realms of politics, diplomacy, finance, industrialism, war, and religion.

It is a vexing, uncomfortable, impatient, mentally and spiritually arduous philosophy, well-calculated to annoy poor Babbitt in his bath-tub with other worries than whether the water be too hot or too cold, or the soap scented or scentless. For the worst feature of Babbitt's mental opacity is inability to see himself.

"Dares he behold the thing he is,  
what thing  
He would become is in his mind  
its child;  
Astir, demanding birth to light  
and wing;  
For battle prompt, by pleasure  
unbeguiled."

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EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 2)

faithful and worthy contributors, are now introduced as editors.

\* \* \* \*

The task is now complete. The year has been a hectic one. Like the wife in Chaucers' tale, the Lit business managers at Union building door had five, and editors, two. Twice financial ruin and resultant cessation of publication reared their ugly heads, grimaced, and finally withdrew once more to their murky fens, not without intimation that they might once more appear. The Lit will go on as long as it can pay its debts, and on the determination of the feasibility of such an undertaking rest the plans for next year. The future is brighter now than ever before, and it is hoped that the Lit may eventually become self-respecting as well as self-supporting.

\* \* \* \*

In the meantime, the editors put down their pens, lock up the manuscript drawer, and, wrapping their ink-spotted togas close about, turn toward the editorial Valhalla, wondering half-cynically and half-amusedly whether or not there is such a place, and if there is, where in sam hill it can be found. J. F. W.

MODERN TRENDS

(Continued from Page 13)

progress is to be made, the public as well as the composer, must react to changing conditions, and that in any event the present flux and searching is bound to result in worthy contributions to musical literature. In the words of Darius Milhaud, the leader of ultra-moderns, "There is no modern manifestation of musical thought which is not the outcome of a solid tradition and which does not also open a new and logical path to the future."

LETTERS OF WILLIAM JAMES

(Continued from Page 16)

loathe it is a mean overgrow page in small type, and I think the author's feelings ought to go for a good deal in the case of the enormous rat which his ten years of gestation has brought forth."

Nine days later he wrote to his wife: "The job is done! All but some paging and a half a dozen little footnotes." Two days later he wrote: "I came home very weary, and lit a fire and had a delicious two hours all by myself, thinking of the

(Continued on Page 20)

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## LETTERS OF WILLIAM JAMES

(Continued from Page 19)

big etape of my life which now lay behind me (I mean that infernal book done) . . . . The joke of it is that I who have always considered myself a thing of glimpses, of discontinuity, of apercus, with no power of doing a big job, suddenly realize at the end of this task that it is the biggest book on psychology in any language except Wundt's, Rosmini's and Daniel Greenleaf Thomson's! Still if it burns up at the printing office I shan't much care, for I shan't ever write it again!!"

James' banter of his brother Henry on his later style of writing shows what James can do in the way of literary criticism: "You said you would consider your bald head dishonored if you ever came to pleasing me by what you wrote, so shocking was my taste. Well, only write for me and leave the question of pleasing open. I have to admit that in 'The Golden Bowl' and 'The Wings of the Dove' you have succeeded in getting there after a fashion, in spite of perversity of method and its longness, which I am not the only one to deplore. You know how opposed your 'third manner' of execution is to the literary ideals which animate my crude and Orson-like breast, mine being to say a thing in one sentence as straight and explicit as it can be made, and then to drop it forever; yours being to avoid naming it straight, but by dint of breathing and sighing all round and round it, to arouse in the reader who may have a similar perception (Heavens help him if he hasn't) the illusion of a solid object, made (like the ghost at the Polytechnical) wholly of impalpable materials, air, and the prismatic interferences of light ingeniously focused by mirrors upon empty space."

But James was too many-sided to be appreciated from short excerpts from his letters. All one can do is to see enough to wish for more. Nothing that was human was alien to him—except cant (spelt with a c or a capital K) and mathematics. (The post-card to Miller shows this latter defect in twenty words.) " 'My idea of algebra,' says a non-mathematically minded student, 'Is that it is a sort of form of low cunning.'" But nothing human that James touched remained just human: It acquired the virtue of being touched by James.

*Editor's Note: This paper is an abstract made by the editors from a long paper. Professor McGilvary read neither the copy nor the proof.*

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## Under the Apple Tree

By OPAL FINBERG

**T**HE Serpent was a cute little one of a Nile green color dotted with triangular black spots. He, curled up on one end of the bench with his head resting on his tail, was staring at Eve with a laughing look in his beady, black eyes. Eve appeared to be a little uncomfortable. She put her bare feet under the bench. The Serpent uncurled and curled up again his well-brushed tail, lit a Benson and Hedges, and looked questioningly at Eve through the smoke.

"Where is Adam?"

"The poor dear is having bad luck in Wall Street and is spending the week-end at the office with his broker."

"And Eve has to sit around in her garden all alone? These modern husbands! Don't you ever get tired of—of it?"

"Why, no, not often. The garden keeps me very busy. The cut-worms are attacking the peanut crop. The garden is rather lovely for this time of the year, don't you think?"

"The city must be very hot. Maybe Adam doesn't do all his business at the office."

Eve buried her toes in the sand. The serpent lifted an eyebrow, lit another cigarette, and changed the subject.

"I'm motoring down to Bath-Sheba to the races tomorrow. The week has been very dull here—except for you, Eve. They say it's comparatively cool down there. And Cleo's having a house party. Don't you want me to stake a little on Zev for you?"

Eve offered him lemonade. The serpent took a sip and replenished it with

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the contents of a monogramed silver flask which he produced from his hip pocket.

"Adam doesn't approve of women gambling. I imagine it will all be quite gay. I hope you have a good time."

"Thank you, my dear. Won't you come along?"

He leaned over and poured a little Gordon into her cocoanut shell. Eve pretended not to notice.

"Oh, really, I couldn't. Adam may come home unexpectedly."

"But I can't leave you here all alone with the servants, can I?"

"But you don't have to go, do you? But, of course, if Cleo is expecting you?"

\* \* \*

And When Adam slammed the garden gate, they were peacefully playing double solitaire under the apple tree.

### "I WISH I COULD WRITE"

(Continued from Page 12)

blue vein which striates the paleness of her face.

I should like to write. Here in this car, and in the smoking car is life itself if one could only pierce the veil of reserve, and learn what is moving these people. "Material for a dandy story," my friends tell me when I relate an incident that has interested me. Yes. What does the brakeman, the college student, the candy and magazine vendor think about? Of what was the little woman worrying? I do not know; I shall never know. And I can only imagine.

Through the mist of the dirty window the capitol dome shines. The occupants of this car and of all the cars will surge from the train, and I shall do the same. They will go their various ways, and I shall go mine. They will live their lives that are hidden from me and I shall live mine. I wish I could write of this life that is teeming and surging about me.

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