FEBRUARY • 1949

BLUEPRINTS FOR A CHANGING AMERICA
Chester Bowles

CONFESSIONS OF A PLAYWRIGHT
William Saroyan

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TOMORROW

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Patterns of World Health

THE atomic weapon has definitely partitioned the world into two supremely great powers who respectively stand for two opposing ideologies that would seem, at the moment, almost irreconcilable. At this point it would appear that we humans hold in our hands the choice of life and death for the whole of mankind, but just as twilight and dawn govern the daily example of our workaday life, and as the seasons govern our will to survive, so can all of us by thoughtful responsibility make a humanitarian pattern for all.

Now that the New Year is fully launched, it is well for each to find where he stands as the year continues to unfold its unknown but ever adventurous pattern. Viewing ourselves pessimistically from the crest of the new year, one might be forgiven for believing that the world was preparing for its own liquidation, since the problems that have beset and dimmed out other civilizations seem to have come to a head in our world of today. However, by collective and unified action, we can successfully chart a middle way that will be significant as a responsible solution for human activity to deal with human needs in physical nature.

THE world can be brought to a deep concern for its own health and future, and the pattern of decline need not be accepted. In history's sequence, man has been around a long time and will, I believe, continue to survive. Only the prototype of his society will change. But finally, no matter what the pattern may signify, the great experience of life common to all men will continue, and it is to that experience alone that each one is responsible in his own individual way.

The special opportunity of our time is to build a world civilization which will unite the cultures and resources of East and West, for despite the technological advance of the West, the majority of humankind lives in the East. This is why we cannot write China off as a dead loss. We owe a debt to her as well as to all of the Orient, from which has come, not only the ancestry of America, but the origins and essentials of civilization as we understand it. This we must understand and be responsible for in order to appreciate our own way of life and achieve mastery over environment in the future. Believe, if it pleases you, that the world began about 4000 B.C., but always remember that such beginning refers only to our particular pattern of historical sequence.

In the months ahead the individual may not think of the world in economic terms alone, for man is something more than an economic risk and a political unit. The horizons of his self-realization are expanding hourly as science pushes the boundaries of our universal time-space concept into new fields, widening our visions and, alas, sometimes narrowing our boundaries.

IN order to bring the world into line and arouse its deep concern for its own health and future, decline and catastrophe must not be accepted. The creation of health within the nation and the world is our obligation. There are new scientific methods which each one can employ in order to resist disease. For instance, right now, research in poliomyelitis looks really promising. Large scale research projects are being undertaken and must continue in order to push forward evaluation of a possible preventive vaccine, as well as to discover drugs and other agents to arrest the progress of the disease. This is something to which each individual can bring a sense of responsibility and do his share in creating a new health pattern. In order that the good work that has already been achieved shall not be interrupted, more funds are necessary. Hospital costs have risen from 10 per cent to 12 per cent over last year and, more tragically, there has been an alarming increase of over 400 per cent in the number of cases reported. Miracles are being performed and people old and young who formerly would have been doomed to a life of affliction are being returned to their family and community. An appeal is now being made by the National Foundation of Infantile Paralysis for funds to meet what is a real financial emergency. In making his contribution, the individual must think of the health of all children and be a humanitarian in the fullest sense of the word, for the citizens of tomorrow who receive your help today will refuse to compromise with tyranny.

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T O M O R R O W

VOL. VIII, NO. 6 FEBRUARY 1949

"...EACH AGE IS A DREAM THAT IS DYING OR ONE THAT IS COMING TO BIRTH."

Blueprints for a Changing America

CHESTER BOWLES

WORLD WAR II has left a legacy of destruction almost beyond human comprehension. It has destroyed cities, factories, dams, power plants and railroads. Worse still, it has sapped the vitality, hopes and capacities of hundreds of millions of human beings upon whom world recovery must depend.

Against this background of world devastation, America appears as an economic dream world; physically untouched by war, her resources undamaged, her people largely prosperous and united. We own 70 per cent of the world's automobiles and trucks, 50 per cent of the world's telephones. We listen to 45 per cent of the world's radios. We operate 35 per cent of the world's railroads. We consume 59 per cent of the world's petroleum and 50 per cent of its rubber.

Our great natural resources, our abundant skills, our cars and telephones and railroads, our radios, movie houses, public libraries and public schools, our hundreds of thousands of miles of good highways, all add up to the highest standard of living in the world, infinitely beyond that of any other major country.

And yet, today, throughout America there is a growing uneasiness about our economic future. As we look abroad at the chaos of Europe and Asia, we wonder if we can continue to prosper on an island of plenty in the midst of a world of want.

We are proud that our private-enterprise system has demonstrated itself over a period of many years to be the most dynamic and most productive that the world has ever known, but we also know that this demonstration has been intermittent. We know that for every period of boom, our system has suffered a period of depression, and that as our economic system has grown more complicated the severity of these depressions has sharply increased.

A serious economic upset has followed every major war. World War II, because of its magnitude and intensity, engendered inflationary pressures far greater than any we had known in the past. And yet, from 1942 until June, 1946, through price, production, and credit controls, rationing, increased taxation and savings, we managed to keep inflation in check and our price level remarkably stable.

For once, it began to look as though inflationary history would not repeat itself. But in June, 1946, several business groups, such as the National Association of Manufacturers, convinced a wobbly Congress that "If price controls are discontinued, production will step up fast . . . prices will soon drop to reasonable levels." As a result, controls

CHESTER BOWLES *is Governor of Connecticut. He served as Federal Price Administrator and as a member of the Economic Stabilization and War Production boards during the war. This article forms a section of the book,* Saving American Capitalism, *edited by Seymour Harris, which has just been published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.*

were eliminated prematurely, and by July, 1948, wholesale prices had risen 53 per cent above the levels of June, 1946.

Most of us know that such excesses must eventually be paid for. As we see our economy distorted by inflation, we remember the dismal period from 1929 to 1933 when collapse followed the shaky good times of the 1920's. Our farmers know that corn once sold for 12 cents a bushel, cotton for 4½ cents a pound, wheat for 32 cents a bushel, and cattle for $3.28 a hundredweight. Our workers have not forgotten the days when fifteen million of them tramped the streets hopelessly looking for jobs. Our businessmen remember that in a single year thirty thousand firms went bankrupt, while 75 per cent of all American corporations operated in the red with a net total loss of 6 billion dollars.

Our uneasiness over the future of private enterprise in America has been increased by the gradual weakening of capitalism in many countries overseas before the war and at an increasing tempo in the postwar period. In the 1930's, we watched Hitler and Mussolini grow to power on the wreckage of capitalistic systems, which had failed to protect the people against the increasingly violent swings of the business cycle.

In the United Kingdom and France and other democratic European countries, we saw during this same period the gradual decay of the capitalistic framework. Capitalists in the United Kingdom and France were clearly losing their old willingness to take risks, their traditional drive to increase sales and profits through improved products and lower prices. Increasingly, they were turning to economic bomb shelters in the shape of cartels and monopolies designed to control production and prices and protect them from the rigors of the free market. As a result, we saw industrial production in these countries level out and labor productivity diminish for lack of plant modernization. These were not the only reasons, of course. Rigidities of other kinds were also harmful.

The decay of free capitalism in Europe during this critical period cannot properly be charged to the interference of unfriendly governments. The deterioration of risk-taking and enterprise took place, for the most part, under conservative governments. For sixteen of the nineteen years between 1919 and 1939, the United Kingdom was governed by the Conservative party.

IN our own country before the war, we saw signs of the same ominous influences which had seriously weakened capitalism in France, England, and other countries across the seas. Monopoly was growing. Many business groups, with little understanding of the workings of our economy —and even less understanding of the political temper of our people—were stubbornly resistant to even modest reforms. In our more exclusive clubs, it was freely stated that if our society was to remain "free," we must become accustomed to the presence of from five to eight million permanently unemployed.

When war broke out in 1941, our economic development had been seriously hampered by this philosophy of economic despair. In January, 1942, when President Roosevelt called for the annual production of 50,000 planes, many of the "practical" men were certain that he was asking the impossible. When he called for 5,000,000 tons of shipping, they said that only an economic novice could make such a demand, even though its purpose was a worthy one—namely, to fool the Nazis and the Japanese.

But the timid thinkers of prewar America were soon proved wrong. As the months wore on, our country hummed again with all the full power of its huge industrial capacity. We met the president's goal of 50,000 planes and went on to double it. We quadrupled his estimate of 5,000,000 tons of shipping annually. Our farmers, with 10 per cent fewer workers, produced 30 per cent more farm products. In 1942, 1943 and 1944, the records show that

we produced more *civilian* goods than in any period of our history. And, on top of that, at the peak of the war effort we achieved an annual production rate of 100 billion dollars worth of military equipment and services.

Our wartime production record re-established our faith in what our industrial machine could provide for our people. As he saw our war factories working day and night, the man in the street visualized the torrent of consumer goods which these factories could produce for all of us in peace time.

Gradually, the conviction developed that depressions in the future must not be accepted as inevitable; that we must put outworn economic theories behind us; that somehow, and without loss of our individual freedom, we must keep our factories and our farms fully at work turning out the goods and services which our people—and indeed the whole world—so badly needed.

The millions who value human freedom cannot accept the dismal choice which the totalitarians of the Left and the Right seek to impose upon us. We must insist that our economic problems shall be solved constructively, peacefully, and above all under democratic institutions which respect individual rights.

Our task will not be an easy one. If we are to achieve a future in line with our American tradition, we must develop a clear understanding of how our economy works and why on occasion it has failed us in the past. We must reject the economic and political influences of the Hayeks,

Hazlitts, and Robeys, who seem to argue that the best means to improve the economic welfare of the many is to increase still further the economic power of the few.

THE basic economic principle in which a full-employment, full-production economy must be built, can be stated simply. *For every dollar's worth of production of goods or services, there is created one dollar of potential purchasing power.* If we produce 200 billion dollars worth of houses, vacuum cleaners, canned goods, industrial machinery, farm equipment, wheat, cotton, public schools, permanent waves, plumbing repairs or highways, we create 200 billion dollars worth of purchasing power in the hands of all of us.

If the level of production is to be maintained and increased, all of this money must be spent currently by individuals, groups and institutions. Otherwise, our economy will slip into a depression. If, for instance, 10 billion dollars of the 200 billion dollars in purchasing power created by 200 billion dollars in production remains unspent, then 10 billion dollars worth of goods and services will remain unpurchased and our production will be decreased by a similar amount.

This, in turn, will lead to the canceling of orders for new equipment and new plants, to increasing layoffs and unemployment. Purchasing power will shrink and we will begin to go downhill toward a depression, with each reduction of employment and each drop in purchasing power feeding on itself.

There are three groups in our economy which together are in a position to spend all the money represented by our total purchasing power. One of these groups is business. Each year, this group spends a varying amount of money on industrial expansion, inventories, new equipment and on buildings.

The second of our three groups of spenders is government—federal, state, and local. Each year, and in varying amounts, our governmental institutions spend money on schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, irrigation projects, police and fire departments, and on military and naval establishments.

The third of our three groups of spenders is the American people themselves. Each year, and again in varying amounts, we as consumers spend our wages, salaries, and dividends for food, clothing, travel, movies, washing machines, haircuts, vacuum cleaners, books and houses.

Although each of these three groups will change its pattern of expenditures from year to year, the total spent by all three must add up to the total income earned by everyone in the production of goods and services. The problem, therefore, becomes clear. In some way, a balance must be maintained between these three groups so that there will be a market for all the goods and services which we produce; so that production and employment can be maintained at a high level, a level which increases as our productive power increases.

The government's role in maintaining our total purchasing power is of vital importance, because of the impact of our present governmental budgets on our economy as a whole. It is doubly important because the percentage of our total purchasing power, which is supported by government expenditures, can be varied within reasonable limits each year in line with our total needs.

As we examine what government must and can accomplish, we are faced with many deep-seated inhibitions and prejudices. Americans over forty years of age came to manhood in an age when government's primary responsibilities were largely to keep down crime, to see to it that we had the nucleus of an army and navy, to keep up the roads and to levy a minimum of taxes. We were told that any expansion of government represented an encroachment upon individual liberties to be resisted to one's utmost and that even the necessary minimum of government was to be condoned rather than admired. The cartoons of our childhood presented public servants as fat politicians with chewed cigars, derby hats and thousand-dollar bills labeled "graft" dropping from their pockets.

To the man in the street, this shopworn view has been harder and harder to take. With the development of the country, it has become increasingly clear that our government must grow up to larger responsibilities. As our economic and social system evolved and took on new complications, a revision of the older attitude toward government was inescapable. Without such a revision, how could we expect government, forced by implacable events into new responsibilities, to discharge them efficiently, adequately and without destroying our liberties?

If we are unprepared to accept *enough* government, we will end up with *too much*. It may be paradoxical but it is true. If we are reluctant to grant our government enough power to meet its essential tasks, the unsolved tasks will overtake us, and in the ensuing crisis we will be obliged to go far beyond what would have been necessary in government control had we taken adequate steps sooner.

The government, as I see it, has five fundamental roles. Its first responsibility is a traditional one: the maintenance of an adequate army and navy, the collection of taxes, the building of roads, schools, hospitals, the maintenance of an efficient post-office system and other fundamental government services. On this, there can be but little disagreement.

The second role of government is to act as an umpire between the four major groups which make up our economy: business, labor, the farmer, and all of us as consumers. In the early days of our economic history, this role was relatively unimportant. But the growth of Big Business led to Big Farming and Big Labor. This, in turn, has led us toward Big Government, government strong enough to protect the interests and rights of 140 million citizens, who otherwise would be at the mercy of the highly organized groups representing business, labor, and the farmer.

One of the major responsibilities of government in this

field is the curbing of monopoly. In the last twenty-five years, the march of American business toward monopoly has been rapid. Giant corporations have gained control of large segments of our economic life. Opportunities for the little fellow have gradually diminished, as tens of thousands of G.I.'s anxious to go into business for themselves are beginning to realize.

In many industries, this tendency towards bigness has led to increased efficiency. But in most areas it has driven us further and further from the capitalistic ideal of a free market and free competitive enterprise. There are three million businesses today in America. And yet, 455 corporations, totaling one eighth of 1 per cent of all corporations, now control 51 per cent of American business assets.

WE have already witnessed the destructive effect of monopoly on the prewar capitalism of Britain, France, and other countries. In this testimony to the development of monopoly in America, we see the same cancerous growth at work in our own economy.

If the decline of competition proceeds during the next few years at its present rate, and if the economic (and, therefore, political) power of the United States continues to be concentrated in fewer hands, then we shall find ourselves face to face, to an increasing degree, with monopoly fixed prices, directed markups, inferior products, wholesale destruction of small business and eventually a regimented economy.

We cannot fight monopoly with outworn slogans and concepts. We need, first of all, a clearer concept of what monopoly is and how it works. This concept should be based on the realities of our modern economy and the economic need for mass-production techniques, and not on an emotional prejudice against "bigness" as such.

We should then start by tightening our present antimonopoly legislation and providing funds for its vigorous enforcement. In industries where the law is skirted rather than broken, government studies of economic malpractices, well publicized where necessary, may serve to develop an increased degree of competition. If, as many respected economists suspect, this effort should prove at least a partial failure, a more direct approach will become necessary.

Government could, for instance, establish production goals for basic industries where production restraints are holding down output. These goals would be based on the needs of our economy operating on a basis of full production and full employment. If these goals cannot be met by existing privately owned industries within a reasonable period, government would fill in the production gap by establishing its own plants. If, at any time, private owners wished to take over these government-built plants, they could do so by paying the current replacement cost.

Such direct action would be a long step short of government ownership. If a tightening of our antitrust legislation fails to achieve its objective, the fact that government itself had the legal power to fill in the production gap might be sufficient in itself to increase production and bring down prices in monopolistic areas in our economy. By moderate means, if possible, but by more far-reaching methods if moderate means fail, we must free our economy of monopolistic road blocks.

As part of our campaign against monopoly, we should carefully re-examine our patent legislation. No individual or firm should be allowed to hold back a new product or an improvement in an old product through a patent monopoly. Today, many inventions remain on the shelf because their owners are unwilling to undertake the necessary capital investment to put them to good use. In the meantime, others are deprived of an opportunity to move ahead in the spirit of risk-taking and enterprise, which will always be the lifeblood of our private-enterprise system.

Restricted industrial production has its counterpart in the labor movement in featherbedding and other make-work practices. Both of these evils grow out of the concept that we dare not use all our resources, both industrial and human, because there is not enough work to go around.

A third responsibility of government is to provide those services which we cannot reasonably expect to be created by individuals operating on a profit and loss basis. We could not reasonably expect, for instance, that the Tennessee Valley Authority, calling for an investment of more than one billion dollars, could be created by private capital. Nor can we expect to control the waters of the Missouri, Arkansas, Columbia, St. Lawrence and other major river waterways with private funds.

For the same reason, we cannot expect private investors to finance the elimination of our slums, the building of modern parks and hospitals and recreation areas. There are many services in this broad field to which the American people are entitled and which are not yet fully available to them. It is the responsibility of our modern democratic government to proceed aggressively to provide them.

The fourth responsibility of government under our private-enterprise system must be to assure reasonable equality of opportunity to every citizen, regardless of race, creed, or color. Throughout our history, we have pointed with pride to those among us who have risen from poverty to positions of responsibility in government, business and the law.

And yet, any objective observer must admit that we are a long way removed from our ideal. The son or daughter of wealthy parents has opportunities in education, health, recreation and general development which are denied to the children of the lower-income groups. In competition for top-paying jobs and positions of responsibility, the dice are loaded from birth against the sons of the sharecroppers, the garment workers and the stevedores. The fact that some exceptional men and women, born in poverty, have risen to the top does not change the basic situation.

Our greatest single need, if we are successfully to meet the responsibilities of our modern world, is a higher

standard of public education. Two million boys were rejected by the army and navy because they were illiterate. Even in the richest states, our school system is inadequate. In our poorest states, it is a national disgrace. Poorly educated boys and girls in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama are a liability, not only to the states in which they live, but also to our entire democracy.

It is the responsibility of the federal government to see that a high standard of education is available to every boy and girl in the United States, regardless of the income of their parents. This must include a selection of students for college according to ability, not economic status. What has been so clearly right for young men and women of the armed services through the Veterans' Bill of Rights is equally right for their younger brothers and sisters.

WE must also establish a minimum standard of public health and this minimum should be a high one. The American Medical Association has been quick to label any such proposal "socialized medicine." This is a clear falsification of the program which has been proposed in such legislation as the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill. The best available medical care should not be denied to any citizen simply because his income or his savings do not enable him to pay for it.

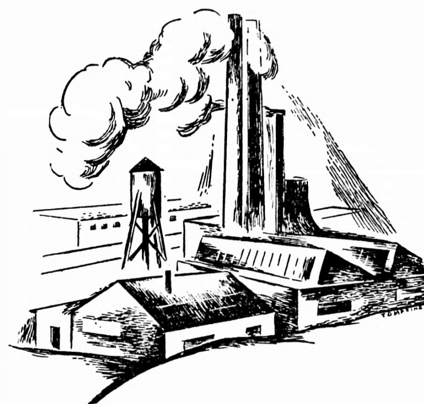
The medical data gathered by the Selective Service Boards gives us a drab picture of public health in America. It has been estimated that twelve times as much productive time is lost each year through illness as through labor-management disagreements which end in strikes. Much of this loss is avoidable. A comprehensive medical insurance program will call for the building of many thousands of hospitals and the training of tens of thousands of doctors, dentists, and nurses. But we are a rich nation, and our government, which belongs to all of us, cannot afford to shrink from this responsibility.

Closely coupled with the establishment of minimum basic standards of health is the need for a minimum standard of food consumption. As long as people are hungry or lack the proper balanced diets, it is shocking to talk about restricting agricultural production. The program proposed in November, 1947 by the Department of Agriculture calls for an all-out farm production program and the guarantee that all the food which our farmers produce will be made available to the people who need it. The Aiken-LaFollette bill, which was proposed in the Seventy-ninth Congress and which is a variation of the food stamp plan of the 1930's, provides a rational approach to this problem of a guaranteed minimum level of nutrition for every family in the country.

Our government must also act as the spearhead in the fight to provide decent housing for all of our people. It was estimated before the war that more than one third of all American families were living in dwellings which were grossly inadequate. The number today is far greater. The monopoly-ridden housing industry, with its featherbedding and politically instigated building codes, has fallen down miserably on its public responsibilities.

We are capable of building 1,400,000 homes a year. If we build fewer than that, we will have failed in one of our basic obligations to our people. Nothing short of a flat government guarantee that these homes will be built is likely to achieve our objective. A half million of these homes built each year will need to be directly subsidized by the government. The majority of the people who are most desperately in need of homes can afford only from $20 to $55 a month rental. Even if prices come down somewhat, it is impossible for a builder to build a decent home at a profit for less than a $75 to $80 monthly rental. As long as this is so, the government should not shrink from its obligations to pay the difference. The cost will be modest indeed compared with the gains which we will make in improved health, happier children and more closely integrated families.

Everything possible should be done to see that the remaining 900 million homes are built by private enterprise.



Quotas should be established for all communities where housing is needed. Only where private enterprise has failed to meet these quotas should government itself step in. But if private builders fail to move ahead, it should be government's responsibility to buy the land, let the contracts, buy the materials, and see that the houses are built. Single-unit dwellings should be sold by the government to individual home owners; multiple dwellings to insurance companies or to co-operative owners. Only a direct approach of this kind is likely to stir the slumbering housing industry from its lethargy.

As part of its program to provide a high minimum standard of living for all of our people, the government should broaden the coverage of the social-security program and increase its benefits, many of which are sadly out of date, particularly in view of present high prices.

It is also essential that minimum wage rates be raised to a level no lower than 75 cents an hour. Even this minimum wage level will provide only a minimum standard of living to those who receive it. In a country as rich as ours, we certainly cannot ask people to accept less.

The fifth responsibility of our government is so to integrate our export and import program that the work of relief and rehabilitation throughout the world will be pushed steadily forward.

OURS is the only major nation in the world untouched by war. We are rich in natural resources, in human skills and in productive capacity. The world in which we live keeps growing smaller.

There are some among us who still say that we have no responsibilities to the rest of the world and that our efforts should be concentrated solely on increasing the wealth of our own people. It is essential to our own welfare and that of the world that this viewpoint should be rejected. We cannot successfully build a palace for Americans in the midst of a world of slums. Unless the standard of living is raised steadily for all peoples, there can be no peace or security for ourselves or for our children.

The investment of from 8 to 10 per cent of our productive wealth every year in rehabilitation overseas would have a profound effect on world living standards within the next generation. It would be the soundest peace insurance that we could buy in a world that is tense and desperate and disillusioned.

If we are to raise the world's productive power and with it the security of the world's people, we must first modernize world agriculture. This is a fundamental challenge for the next generation. We must also help to build modern transportation systems, power developments, and basic industrial plants. The opportunity for American management skills is unlimited.

The European Recovery Plan is an imaginative start. But this should not be the limit of our efforts. It should be the beginning of a long-range program which can lead the way toward greater understanding, security and democracy in all parts of the world.

The Soviet Union and the Communist parties offer hungry people the hope for higher living standards and increased economic security. If we are successfully to meet this challenge it will not be sufficient simply to argue, however rightly, that communism means the end of political democracy. We must promote on a world-wide scale not only political freedom but economic democracy as well.

Such an effort calls for boldness of concept, for confidence and for economic skill. Clearly, its conception and planning must rank among the major responsibilities of our federal government.

The sixth and final responsibility of our government is to co-ordinate all of its policies in such a way that a market will be provided for all that we are capable of producing.

What I am urging is a flat government guarantee that the purchasing power will always be present to buy all the goods which our workers, farmers, and businessmen can produce each year. This is a basic responsibility of government if we are to maintain full production and full employment. Clearly, the more effective this government guarantee, and the more widely it is accepted, the less will be the positive action which the government will be called upon to take to make good in commitments. The more effective the guarantee, the greater will be the confidence in the economic outlook, and the more certainly will pent-up demand be translated into orders.

In so-called normal times, every businessman is forced to take two risks. The first is the normal risk of competition; the test of his ability to compete with other businessmen in his industry in producing quality goods at reasonable prices. This is a proper risk which every businessman who sincerely believes in our system of private enterprise must accept.

The second risk is the possibility that depression lurks just around the corner. A depression drives the efficient into bankruptcy along with the inefficient. The constant fear of depression leads businessmen to restrict their production, to curb their plans for expansion, to pile up huge reserves on which they may hope to survive during a period of hard times. This second risk, in view of all that we know today about the workings of a modern economy, is an unnecessary risk. It can and must be eliminated by intelligent, democratic action.

IF government aggressively fulfills the first four roles which I have outlined, it will go a long way toward guaranteeing that a market will exist for all that we produce. But the steps I have proposed are not in themselves sufficient.

We will need, first of all, to co-ordinate and to time the construction of public works. Every year, of course, there is considerable public building which cannot be delayed. But there are thousands of long-range projects which can be held up temporarily until the business indices suggest a need for larger government expenditures to make up for diminished spending on the part of either our business groups or all of us as consumers.

We shall also need to review carefully our tax and fiscal policies. The tax legislation under which we have operated for the past few years has grown like an old country house, with a wing added here, a barn there, and a tool shed somewhere else. It needs a thorough overhauling if our tax program is to contribute to full production and full employment.

The corporation tax, for instance, represents double taxation. Profits are first taxed as they are earned by the corporation. That part of the remaining profits which is paid out in dividends is then taxed all over again through the personal income tax. Over a period of time this double tax should gradually be eliminated. A major part of the resulting addition to net profit would normally be paid out in dividends. Much of this addition would be taxed in the higher personal income-tax brackets.

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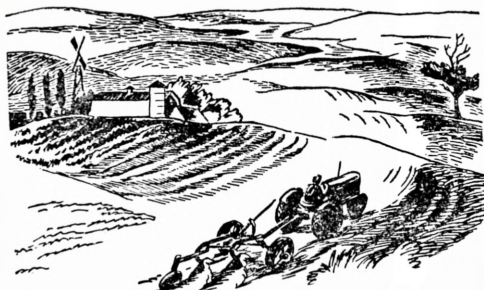
the Treasury Department. All profits not clearly set aside for planned expansion for dividends or as working capital necessary to finance a growing business should be subjected to a tax rate well in excess of the present corporation-tax level. Our modern tax program should also provide a high incentive for the development of new enterprise. New businesses should be allowed to balance losses in their early years against the profits they may make after they have turned the corner.

A tax program of this kind would force additional funds into the spending stream. It would serve as a powerful lever to induce businessmen to expand and modernize their facilities. It would penalize the hoarding of idle corporate funds.

We should also work toward the elimination of excise and sales taxes on all items, except those in the luxury class. These hidden taxes are, in reality, a tax on consumption.

If the government is to accept its proper role as the guarantor of the market for all that we can produce, we will need to modernize our political approach to the economic needs of our society. Most economists agree that the basic tax rates in any given period should reflect current economic conditions. In a period of rising prices,



taxes should be high. In a period in which under-production is threatened, taxes should be reduced so that purchasing power and incentives will be increased.

I would like to see the functions of the President's Economic Council expanded to give them authority, within specific limits, to move taxes up and down to meet the current needs of our economy. The council should, of course, operate on clearly established legislative authority and under sharply defined standards. This legislative authority might also include the right to expand or contract certain social-security payments—such as unemployment payroll taxes—to meet changing economic conditions. In normal times, when jobs are plentiful, these payments might be reduced. When jobs become more scarce, they could be increased.

A further possibility in this approach lies in the field of farm support prices. Theodore W. Schultz's proposal for stabilizing farm income deserves particular study. Under this proposal, we would eliminate all farm support prices in periods of full production and allow farm prices to seek their own level in a free market. When a reduction in purchasing power seemed imminent, the Economic Council would be authorized to put into effect a program of direct payments to farmers, which would serve as a guarantee that the total income which they would receive from their annual production would not be allowed to fall below a specified level.

What I am suggesting is an "economic brain" responsible to Congress, with the authority to increase or decrease the total flow of purchasing power as our economy tends toward inflation or deflation. I believe that we have sufficient economic knowledge to enable an agency of this kind to fill an important role in leveling out the business cycle.

IT would be a mistake, however, to assume that government by itself can solve all our economic problems under a private-enterprise economic system. Even greatly expanded government programs would amount to only a relatively small proportion of our total economic effort. The TVA cost only a billion dollars. For 12 billion dollars we could establish similar projects on every major waterway in the country. This expenditure would necessarily be spread over several years.

Two thousand schools can be built for a billion dollars, two thousand hospitals for an additional billion. On an annual basis, health insurance might cost a billion or two over current expenditures; a slum clearance program 500 million; a guaranteed college education for all those able to meet reasonable standards, one or two billion dollars. The total of all such expenditures in any given year would have a far more modest impact on our economy than the money which we now set aside for military and naval defenses.

Clearly, then, government expenditures, even though carefully co-ordinated, cannot make up for sweeping failures on the part of business, labor, and farm leaders to carry out their proper economic functions in a private-enterprise system. As long as we maintain our private-enterprise system—and surely we would be foolish to abandon it—the biggest impact on our economy will come from the decisions of individual businessmen, workers, and farmers, in establishing wages, prices, and profits and planning the expansion of our industrial facilities.

If we are to arrive at a rational solution to our economic future, we shall need responsible labor leadership. We shall need an end to featherbedding practices and a determination on the part of the individual workers that a full day's work will be provided in return for a full day's pay.

Our farmers will carry a heavy responsibility in providing increased food production at reasonable prices, not only for ourselves, but at least for the next few years for many millions across the seas. Agriculture must be constantly made more efficient. Laborsaving equipment must be used to the limit. The family-sized farm, fortified with co-operatives, must be encouraged.

But our businessmen will carry the heaviest responsibility of all. This is so because a private-enterprise economy is a business economy. It would be unfair to expect businessmen to follow business practices which are clearly unprofitable. Profits are the lifeblood of business. It is the hope of increased profit that creates the urge toward expansion and the modernization of equipment. It is the prospect of building a business for themselves that induces able and talented young men to risk their savings and to branch out for themselves.

But if our businessmen are to carry out their responsibilities, not only to themselves but to our economy as a whole, their approach to profit-making must be a long-range approach. Let us examine the key areas in which the tens of thousands of decisions which they make each year will sharply affect the health of our economy. Among the most important is the establishment of wages through collective bargaining.

There are only three ways in which wages can be raised. A business which is making a more than adequate profit can pay a higher wage, maintain its present price level, and still maintain a reasonable profit. A business which is paying substandard wages and making no more than a normal profit can and should raise its wages by raising its price. Where wages are substandard, there is every reason why this step should be taken. If employers cannot meet a minimum wage standard, they should not be in business. None of us as consumers has a right to be subsidized by substandard wages.

Finally, wages can be increased, prices either kept stable or reduced, and profits either maintained or increased through an increase in labor productivity. It is this latter approach on which we must largely depend for an increase in our standard of living. During the twenty years before the war, labor output per man-hour increased 4 per cent annually. In the three years beginning in 1920, the increase was 10 per cent per year. In the early postwar period, labor output per man-hour seems to have been reduced. But although accurate statistics are still unavailable, the indications are that a sharp upward trend is now in progress. This trend should continue upward. Far more comprehensive government studies should be made to determine, industry by industry, the changes which may take place from year to year in labor output per man-hour. These figures should become a basis for collective bargaining.

The increase in labor output per man-hour will result largely from improved machinery and facilities. To some degree, it will be the result of improved efficiency on the part of management and improved skill on the part of our workers. If management is to have the incentive to invest its profits to improve the efficiency of its plants, it has a right to expect part of the proceeds from increased labor productivity as an increase in its profit. But just as clearly, a substantial proportion of the increase in labor output per man-hour should be set aside for increased wages. If management fails to accept this view or if labor fails to present it forcefully, we will lack the increased purchasing power necessary to buy the increased output of goods. This is exactly what happened in the 1920's.

For a while, these profits were siphoned off into increased plant capacity, the building of hotels and resorts, casual loans to foreign governments, and speculation in Florida real estate and the stock market. But in the absence of wage increases, the purchasing power of the great masses of our people remained nearly stagnant. There was less and less ability to buy the extra supply of goods which our increased productivity had made possible. The collapse that followed was inevitable.

Business is entitled in a full-production economy to generous profits. Unless generous profits are forthcoming, let me emphasize there will be but little incentive for business to push forward. Labor and the public must accept this as one of the economic facts of life.

But just as clearly, exorbitant profits are a threat to the health of our economy. Beyond a certain point, the opportunities for constructive investment in any given year are limited. Funds which remain stagnant in idle reserves represent just that much lost purchasing power, which must be made up by either increased consumer spending or increased government spending if we are to avoid a depression. Such potentially idle funds, passed on to the people through lower prices or higher wages, will help keep our economy healthy and government activity at a minimum.

A third and all-important area in which businessmen under a private-enterprise system must make the key decisions is in the establishment of prices. Sometimes prices are set too high because of monopolistic influences. According to the theory of the monopolists, a high price set and maintained by a single monopolist or agreed upon by a group of producers will enable the demand for a given product to be spread out over a period of years. Clearly, this is not what even conservative economists mean by "free enterprise."

Some prices are also set too high because of haphazard factual knowledge. In many businesses, cost figures are arrived at by guesswork, with a few cents added here and there for safety's sake. In the war period, it was evident that even some of our best run industries had only a meager knowledge of what it cost to produce and distribute their goods. We need better accounting practices and a more realistic evaluation of business costs.

Another reason why prices are often set too high is because of the traditional worship of margins which has developed in many industries. Percentage margins have been established from raw-material producer to manufacturer to retailer over many years with much haggling. Once these margins have been accepted, businessmen are reluctant to change them, in spite of the fact that it is unit cost in relation to total volume that determines over-all profits rather than an arbitrary markup percentage.

As a corollary, some prices are also set too high because many businessmen, in all honesty, fail to appreciate the

opportunities for increased volume and increased profits which may result from lower prices.

In every section of American business, we have seen instances where a lower price has resulted in such an increase in volume that a generous increase in profits has been forthcoming. But without adequate research, it is difficult for a businessman to estimate how much additional volume he will get from a reduced price, or what will happen to his over-all profit figure. Under these circumstances, it is easy to understand his caution. There is urgent need here for imaginative business research which will enable businessmen more clearly to evaluate the profit opportunities which lower prices and greater volume may bring.

What I am urging in this essential field of private decisions is more enterprise, more imagination in labor-management relations, improved business methods and a clearer understanding of the long-range profit opportunities based on increased volume.

Government has an important responsibility if we are to maintain the markets and the purchasing power on which full production must depend. But the responsibility of our businessmen, our workers and our farmers, in setting wages, prices and profits, adds up to an even greater responsibility.

IF, for any reason, we fail in this area of private decisions, the government's role in our economy will surely increase. If monopolistic price-fixing continues to flourish, there will be an increased demand for government control and ownership. If labor-management disputes continue to develop into widespread disruptions in our economic life, there will be a demand for government control of wages, prices and profits. And once government in peacetime is forced to invade the territory which should be set aside for private decisions, then government controls will spread. One control will lead to another. This we must make every effort to avoid. But if there is no other way to eliminate monopolistic control of prices and production, our people will properly demand increased government authority over the day-to-day functioning of our economy.

If our system of free private enterprise fails to enable us to maintain reasonably full production and full employment, the best hope for the maintenance of our political democracy would be the development of a "combination" economy, such as that of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. Certain economic areas would be marked out for government enterprise, others for co-operative enterprise, and still others for private enterprise. The people of Scandinavia, through this approach, have developed a high standard of living and widespread opportunities for the individual citizen under vigorously democratic governments.

But, together with many millions of American citizens who earnestly believe in the private-enterprise system and who are distrustful of too much government, I hope it will be unnecessary for us to take the steps which they have taken. If we are forced into even limited government action in the field of production, prices, wages and profits, we may succeed as the Swedish people and the Norwegians have succeeded; or, because our economy is so complex,

our resources so much vaster, our effort may prove a failure. In that event, there is little likelihood that we would retrace our steps toward greater freedom of enterprise. Without question, we would move further and still further toward all-out government regimentation, with grave implication for our democratic traditions.

The task for those of us who believe that our best hope lies in the modernization and not the emasculation of our private-enterprise system, is clear. What stands in the way of accomplishment? Selfishness, bad economic habits, shortsightedness, greed and economic ignorance. And time is short.

In the nineteenth century, we were able to fumble along from generation to generation accepting thankfully whatever progress we might make. Those who ran into economic troubles at home could always move to a homestead in the west and a new chance to regain their bearings.

In the year 1948, we have lost the priceless asset of time. Ours is a dynamic world. Other systems and other ideologies are competing with our own for the confidence of the world.

Karl Marx wrote that inevitably the capitalistic economies would break themselves to bits through periodic booms and busts. The leaders of the Soviet Union are Marxists. A basic assumption of Soviet foreign policy is that the American economic system is soon destined to come apart at the seams. Unless we throw off our smugness and put our economic house in order, this assumption may be proved correct within the next ten years.

Dominant leaders in each period of history have stubbornly refused to accept change. They have fought bitterly to hold back economic evolution, and for a while they have succeeded. In each instance, however, their success has been shortlived. Eventually the pent-up forces—forces which a few years earlier might have been co-ordinated into constructive action—have broken loose. This was

true in Greece. It was true in Rome. It was true in the France of Louis XVI. It was true in Czarist Russia.

The dominant groups in America, and particularly our businessmen, have a golden opportunity now to change this historical pattern. If they succeed, they will have furthered the cause of human freedom in every part of the world. They will have furnished the basis for better understanding with the Soviet Union and with other foreign powers—a basic understanding on which mutual respect may grow and through which a lasting peace may still be secured.

In any event, the fight for economic, social and political democracy must go on. In the tradition of Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Wilson and Roosevelt, we must continue to strive toward the ideal of human freedom and opportunity in behalf of all of our people.

Our responsibilities are great. But so are the opportunities. Let us hope that we will live up to the future.

ANTHONY HECHT

DISCOURSE CONCERNING TEMPTATION

THOUGH learned men have been at some dispute
Touching the taste and color, nature, name
And properties of the Original Fruit,
The bees that in midsummer congress swarm
In futile search of apple blossoms can
Testify to a sweetness such as man
Fears in his freezing heart, yet it could warm
Winter away, and redden the cheek with shame.

There was a gentleman of severest taste
Who won from wickedness by consummate strife
A sensibility suitable to his chaste
Formula. He found the world too lavish.
Temptation was his constant, intimate foe,
Constantly to be overcome by force, and so
His formula, (fearing the world might ravish
His senses), applied the rigors of art to life.

But in recurrent dreams saw himself dead,
Mourned by chrysanthemums that walked about,
Each bending toward him its massive head
And weeping on him such sweet tender tears
That as each drop spattered upon his limbs
Green plant life blossomed in that place. For hymns
Marking his mean demise, his frigid ears
Perceived the belch of frogs, low and devout.

The problem is not simple. In Guadeloupe
The fer-de-lance displays his ugly trait
Deep in the sweaty undergrowth where droop
Pears of a kind not tasted, where depend
Strange apples, in the shade of Les Mamelles.
The place is neither Paradise nor Hell,
But in some subtle way, it is a blend;
It is man's brief and natural estate.

Confessions of a Playwright

WILLIAM SAROYAN

THERE are a good many writers who make no bones about the fact that they write for money. These writers generally fall into two categories: (1) those who actually write for money and have very little money to show for it, and (2) those who do not know how to write for money and have a great deal of money to show for it, but enjoy *saying* they write for money. George Bernard Shaw enjoys saying he writes for money. It is easy for him to say that. He is a rich man and most of his wealth appears to have come to him from his writing. It is out of the question, though, that he ever wrote anything because he hoped or believed it would bring him a great deal of money. On the other hand, it is inconceivable that he ever wrote anything which he did not try his best to make so irresistible in itself as to bring him an income.

In short, *after* the fact, a writer may truthfully say anything he pleases about why he writes.

There are two American writers whose fame in recent years has grown in a small and not especially significant area who betrayed (when I first met them) an intense preoccupation with the problem of writing in a way that would bring them riches. Both of them tried to write moving picture scenarios, and one of them tried to invent a comic strip, but these efforts failed. They then acquired the view that they did not write for money because doing so was beneath them, and it was after the cultivation of this view that their fame began to grow. They are now fairly famous, so to speak, and they do not have very much money. They have learned to write what they must, they have discovered that this writing does not bring them wealth, and they are resigned to it. These writers, in my opinion, are no better than the writers who actually write for money and never get very much of it. That is to say, their writing is not any freer than the writing of professional hacks, and they are, as a matter of fact, nothing more than professional failures themselves. The subject of their writing is failure, and the tone of their writing is a tone of failure.

On the other hand, there are fairly good writers who are terrified of failure and consequently go about their work in a safe and sane manner, consistently turning out fairly good work which almost always brings them a fair amount of ordinary notice and a reasonable amount of money. These writers have yet to produce anything more spectacular than a best seller or a Broadway hit.

To sum up the point here, we must acknowledge that it is not impossible to write well and earn money; it is not impossible to write poorly and not earn money; and finally, it is not impossible to fail to earn money by writing either poorly or well. If this seems complicated, it is so because the matter is in fact complicated.

Some writers are ashamed of their reasons for writing. They do not want to admit, for instance, that they write so that they will become better known and thereby meet a great many more people than they would be apt to meet otherwise; or, on the other hand, that they write in order not to be required to meet anybody they don't want to meet. There are writers who are ashamed to come right out and acknowledge that, insofar as they know, they write because they suffer from inferiority complexes, or that they are chronically sick and write for therapy. Some writers are even ashamed to admit that they write to show off.

Now, let us acknowledge at the outset that in one degree or another every writer in the world writes for one or another or all of the foregoing reasons, as well as for many others. Let us accept that it is possible that a man writes for the most astonishing reasons imaginable, and let us not be astonished, for it would not seem to make the slightest difference why any writer writes. All that any of us cares about is *what* he writes. Now, let us say for purposes of timesaving that there is a writer who writes for the noblest of reasons—whatever they may be—and that his writing *is* noble. Let us say that he is a truly good man, truly eager and faithful, and let us say that his writing is of a like order. Let us say that this writer achieves truth gracefully and creates beauty meaningfully. Let us say that his work is simultaneously art and a demonstration of his personal acceptance of a profound moral obligation toward society. Let us say, in short, that his intention is consistently good and that his effort to achieve his intention is invariably industrious and thorough. And

WILLIAM SAROYAN'S *latest book is* The Saroyan Special, *made up of stories he has written during the past ten years.*

then let us say that he is a playwright, and look into his problems, and hear his confessions.

A writer of plays intends and expects his plays to be performed.

Let us see what this means in our time, in our society. This matter is a complicated one, too.

A playwright in order to have a play produced in New York must be a member of the Dramatists Guild whether he will or no, as the saying is. What does this Guild do for the playwright? It deducts money from his earnings, and it receives money that is due him, and it sends him this money, after deductions. Sometimes the Guild takes a little time doing this, and sometimes members of the executive department of the Guild are on vacation when the playwright needs his money badly. The Guild does not help the playwright write better plays or any kind of plays at all; it does not give him $10 a day when he is writing a play and does not have $10 a day; it does not care what kind of plays he writes or what effect the over-production of inferior plays is apt to have on the future of the theatre or of playwrights. The Dramatists Guild provides him and play producers with a Minimum Basic Contract, and this contract is extremely minimum indeed, but absolutely not basic at all. The contract is very infrequently revised, and when it *is* revised it is revised in favor of everybody but the playwright. It is revised especially in favor of the Dramatists Guild. Here is a parent no playwright ever had, and yet no American playwright is permitted to refuse this preposterous parenthood. Let us be generous-hearted and let us say that the Dramatists Guild *is* a fine organization and that it does all playwrights a great deal of good. The fact remains that it is also an organization whose method is threat and intimidation. In my opinion, it is, therefore, an illegal organization. It has collected a great deal of money from my earnings and I haven't the slightest idea what it does with the money. I would like to know what it does with the money and I would like to object to anything it does with the money which I do not approve. I have not yet heard of its ever having staked a needy playwright, or of ever having financed the production of a play, or of ever having established a national theatre or a New York City theatre, or of ever having lent a helping hand to established playwrights of other countries who are in need. I would rather not be a member of the Dramatists Guild as it now exists, and yet I am a member. Early in 1948 I resigned from the Dramatists Guild but when I began to make plans for the production of a play in New York it was necessary for me to join again because I could not arrange for the production of a play unless I was a member of the Dramatists Guild. No producer is permitted to produce a play by a nonmember of the Dramatists Guild. No member of the Dramatists Guild may permit a producer who is not a member of the Producers Guild to produce a play. What is this but a monopoly? Why can't a man write a play and have it produced by anybody he pleases? Let us say such a man is offensive. Why can't he still write a play and have it produced by anybody he pleases? Is it not permissible for a man to be offensive and still have rights?

I will believe the Dramatists Guild is a fine useful sensible organization when it permits me to join or not join, as I see fit; and if I choose not to join, will not obstruct my work in the theatre. I would be willing to donate 25 per cent of my earnings in the theatre to needy playwrights if I were permitted not to be a member of the Dramatists Guild, and would not be obstructed. If need be, short of denying my family shelter, food and clothing, I would be willing to donate *all* of my earnings in the theatre to a fund for the establishment of a Playwrights Theatre. I sometimes bet the horses for money. I write because I am opposed to threat, intimidation, monopoly, unfair business practices, violation of civil and private rights, and for miscellaneous other reasons, all of which I am proud of.

So far we have glanced at an aspect of playwrighting which is *supposed* to be favorable. From here on in, the aspects of the problem grow more and more unfavorable.

The agent. Here is somebody whose very existence tends to establish the fact that artists are idiots and producers crooks. The agent is supposed to find a producer for the playwright's play, and when found, he is supposed to see that the playwright gets a decent deal; but no agent ever found a producer for a play unless there was a play in the first place and unless a producer happened to think the play would make him some money. Not having written the play, the agent is not hurt when a producer says he does not think the play will make him some money. The agent is not hurt when he fails to find a producer for a play, and he does not pay a playwright 10 per cent of his annual income because he failed to find a producer. He just sends the play back to the playwright. Agents are absolutely unnecessary, or only necessary for minors. If a play is good enough or seems good enough, a few producers are always eager to

try to make some money out of it anyway; and if it is not good enough or does not seem good enough, no producer wants to try to make some money out of it anyway. I have heard a good deal about the refinement, the culture, the depth of understanding of certain agents. These are irrelevant qualities in him, I'm afraid: his function is a business function and all he is set up for, and the only excuse for him, is to accomplish the impossible: that is, find a producer and get magnificent terms for a play that is no good at all. If an agent wants to demonstrate his refinement, culture, depth of understanding or anything else of that order in the theatre, all he has to do is write a play which leaves no room for doubt. If he wants to demonstrate his usefulness to playwrights on the other hand, all he has to do is make a good deal for a bad play. A good play by its very nature makes its own deal.

The producer. Here is perhaps the most preposterous mountebank of the lot. He takes a lot of time picking out a play he thinks is a cinch to make a lot of money, and then, instead of respecting his own judgment and putting his own money into the production of the play, he rounds up a group of people called backers and convinces them to put up the money for him. He gets 50 per cent of the production for being the producer, and the backers split the other 50 per cent among themselves for putting up the money. If the play makes no money he has earned a couple of months of excellent pay, and the backers have items for deduction from their taxes. This man frequently poses as an artist. He sometimes goes so far as to affect concern about social reform, eradication of injustice from the affairs of men, and the political education of the masses; but he never puts his own money into a production. He just doesn't believe in anything that much. The producer (especially if he has had a prestige success) frequently believes in himself to the point of fantasy—but of course he does not believe in fantasy in the theatre. (Can't understand it.) He is quick to notice that the last act of a play is "hopeless" and must be rewritten, and he can tell the playwright precisely how it must be rewritten. I have on occasion accepted the theory that the third act is hopeless and that the producer has precisely the right scheme to salvage it and thereby transform the play from a nothing to a smasheroo, as *Variety* puts it; and then I have had to explain that I myself could not possibly write the new third act, but since the producer is so clear about it, and since his financial interest in the property is so great, perhaps he would do us both a favor and write it, and invariably the producer has declined to do so. He has remarked modestly that he is a businessman; he has been in business twenty-five years; he helped Hamsun get a job running a streetcar when he came to America in 1910; he discovered Maggie McIntyre of silent film fame; he made a quarter of a million dollars in one year alone from the musical *Hot Ziggety;* he knows show business; only last night he was reading around in *Hamlet*, and there's a play for you; but he is not a playwright, he is a businessman, and the third act is hopeless and must be rewritten. Even a bad play by a man who *is* a playwright is better than any play rewritten for a man who is not a playwright. If O'Casey or Shaw or O'Neill wanted to tell me how to rewrite the third act, I know I would be deeply moved by their generosity, but I also know I would not rewrite it that way; and I know they would never take the liberty of trying to tell me how to rewrite it any more than I would take the liberty of trying to tell them how to rewrite the third act of one of their plays. Any producer would take that liberty, though, and then feel hurt if a playwright did not leap at the opportunity to pick up a little free education for himself. The producer takes his instruction from the backers, it would seem, and they take

theirs apparently from the latest hit, however great a failure it may be in reality.

The producer is forever trying to camouflage what he is doing, that is, trying to make money—by trying to pass for an artist. But in a showdown he will reveal his contempt for that breed. He is frequently eager for the artist to write for him because he cannot write for himself. If the playwright is so independent that even with the promise of a hit and a lot of money, he refuses to make a business deal unless it *is* a business deal—that is, a deal in which the playwright, all flushed with the excitement of all that money, tries to get himself a very reasonable share of the whole production—the producer swiftly and effectively switches the discussion from the realm of business to the realm of art, and remarks delicately, "Now, I want to tell you my wife read this play last night, and I have a lot of respect for her common sense, and she said to me, 'What does this play mean?' She's a well-read woman and if she had to ask that question you can be sure other people —the public, in fact—are going to ask it, too." Pause. "What *does* this play mean?" The playwright's goose is cooked anyway, so if he's smart he will reply, "I don't know." That is a stock question of businessmen when they discover a playwright who wants to talk business. They never want to talk business. They're not interested in money. They want to know what a play means. As a playwright, as a member of the Dramatists Guild, though

an unwilling one, I offer to all playwrights this stock answer to that stock question: "If you will tell me how much money you have in the bank and what it means, I will tell you what this play means."

The director. He is frequently a playwright, and I have little fault to find with him, although a good many of the mannerisms of the producer exist also in a good many directors, especially those who are not playwrights. The director is a conductor, not a composer, but there are few directors who are willing to accept this fact. Sometimes it is possible for a director who is not a playwright to stage a play as it was written to be staged, but that must be very rare indeed. I have never had such a director connected with any of my plays. I sympathize with the earnest director's problem, for he has no choice but to create, and it is not very likely that he may perfectly create that which the playwright intended. That is why I believe that whenever possible a playwright should either direct his own plays or be on hand at all times to help the director.

I KNOW I have found a lot of fault with the procedure of getting a play produced, but there has been a lot of fault to find. The situation is in fact a good deal worse than I have so far pointed out. A new development —without a doubt the most offensive of all—is the tryout in a private home before an audience of potential backers, men and women who have money to invest. As I write, on the last day of September, 1948, this procedure has brought to New York over one million dollars worth of plays: revues, musicals, farces, light comedies, fantasies, and serious dramas. So far only one of these productions appears to be scheduled for anything like a reasonable run. This procedure is in monstrous taste, besides being impractical. It makes a beggar of art, and if the custom continues we shall certainly see more and more expensive productions whose sole object being to earn profits for backers must do one of two things: drive the backers back to stocks and bonds or remove forever from the presentation of plays all ease, all freedom, and all fun. To my mind it is much more reasonable for a playwright to enquire of a potential backer where he got his money, how he got it, how much he has, what he has done with it so far, what his purpose has been in accumulating it, and so on, than for the backer to ask the playwright to put over his play in the parlor. In short, it is more reasonable for money to go on trial before art than the other way around.

The Critics. There is little to be gained for the theatre in complaining that the drama critics exert a great deal of influence: they do, and that's the end of it. Few of the drama critics of the daily papers are, as a matter of fact, critics; they are reporters, and they are pretty good reporters. They tell their readers that a certain play has opened, and they say a few things about the event. Sometimes they talk about the plot of the play, if it has a plot, but almost invariably they comment on outstanding or inferior performances of certain players; the scenery is frequently described; the direction is discussed; and the effect of the play on the audience, and its effect on the reviewer himself. Rarely is the play itself, as a play, as an entry in the playwriting sweepstakes, discussed. This is understandable. Readers of newspapers are not students of drama, they are people who expect to find out if a play is apt to appeal to them, or they are people who somehow enjoy reading about an opening, just as many people who are not in society like to read about the goings on in the social world. The newspaper reviewer's job is to write a review that will attract and keep daily readers. I have seldom had a haircut in New York during which the barber has not included among other topics the current theatre and remarked, "I see where another flop opened last night." Few critics need to be taken seriously. Their standards are properly Broadway, or success, standards. They cannot be blamed for this. It would be silly for a morning tabloid reviewer to discuss drama seriously. But it is impossible not to take them seriously as *judges*, and, for good or bad, we must understand that every opening is a court trial. It does not matter that the decisions of the judges are only the equivalent of yes or no, thumbs up or thumbs down. In the event that the greater number of the decisions are yes, everyone specifically involved is pleased and proud and does not complain that the decisions were reached haphazardly and came to pass in a most mysterious and accidental manner; but if the greater part of the decisions are no, then, of course, everyone specifically involved believes it is time to clean up on the critics.

I believe I am the only American playwright and producer who complained when a play was praised. Of course, I was willing to complain only by word of mouth, as the saying is. I did not write a protest, but I wasn't fooled for a moment. Just as easily as the critics had for the most part said yes, they *might* have said no, and they said yes most haphazardly and for the least pertinent reasons. The play was *The Beautiful People* which I produced with my own money—$11,000, as I remember it. I personally guaranteed the play, and I had money gladly refunded to any who wished to have their money back—for *any* reason—no questions asked.

Is there anything sensible to be done about the power of the drama critics? It would appear to be in order to have the first performance of a play—the opening—reviewed by *every* practicing critic. As it is, the magazine reviewers see the second performance, and certain reviewers for certain periodicals with limited audiences see later performances, if there are any. This is a foolish procedure. The same performance should be reviewed by all reviewers, so that a reasonable consensus of opinion may be immediately available to the management of the play; and for the purpose of having the more serious critics in the auditorium along with the newspaper reviewers. The management should arrange with the weekly reviewers to have copies of their reviews as soon as the reviews are

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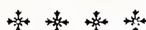
written. In addition to this, certain individuals who attend the opening should be encouraged to write short reviews of the plays, for use by the management if the comments are favorable. Who should the management approach for such reviews? I would go about the matter thus: *every person* at an opening would be handed, with his program, a card on which to write his opinion in one word, two, three, or as many more as space might permit. This should be followed by the person's name, age, address, profession, religion, political party, financial status, health, and opinion on the theatre in general. These cards would be deposited in one of many boxes placed in the theatre. The man who pays his way deserves to have his say. He is supposed to be the great critic anyway, and it would do no harm to make it possible for him to speak out at last. As the matter now stands, the theatregoer is a sheep which hangs its head and follows the goats anywhere they happen to go.

UNDER the foregoing circumstances, how may the playwright do his work, maintain his integrity, and manage to survive economically? I have already remarked that I sometimes bet on the horses. I should like to enlarge a little on this. Horse betters as such are generally regarded as fools, and it is proper to accept this view without embarrassment. They are especially foolish if they lose, and more often than not they do. But the virtue to the playwright of seeking to exempt himself from the urgent need of money by studying the races and occasionally making a bet is this: that it establishes more swiftly than any other activity the essential irrelevance and worthlessness of money, whether the sums involved are enormous or insignificant. This, in turn, re-establishes emphatically the profound relevance and worth of art, of integrity, of pride, of indifference toward material success or failure. In short, it permits the playwright to work as hard as he is able to work on a play *for its own sake*. For he knows that while it is not easy, it is nevertheless true that money as such, as money, *may* be abundantly obtained by so simple a process as believing one horse among eight or nine will run faster than the others, and backing up his belief with a bet. By the same token, he knows that much needed money may disappear that easily, too. Consequently, money by itself is seen to be so nearly meaningless as to be unworthy of any broader identification.

In other words, betting on the horse races gives the playwright the contempt for money which money must have in order for him to go about his work of writing plays in a free, proud, indifferent and sensible manner. It does not matter if he loses or wins, or loses more than he wins, or always loses and never wins. What matters is that he discovers, as he could discover by no other activity, that money is simultaneously phony and irrelevant, however profoundly it conditions the behavior of man, distorts his real character, and upsets his life. This discovery is a basic requirement for the playwright, and for that matter for all men who are concerned about the achievement of meaning and right in the affairs of populations, nations, governments and cultural systems. The one world will obviously be one world only geographically until the horse better's discovery that money is irrelevant becomes an accepted basic fact to those whose end in life seems to be to gather together as much of it as possible, whether individuals, corporations, or governments. Why, for instance, is it acceptable for a government to maintain a Department of War and not maintain a Department of Art? The Army and the Navy do not have to bother their heads, so to speak, about the cost in money (or for that matter in lives) of any project, however experimental or even impractical: they just naturally get the money, which again brings home clearly the horse better's intelligence of the irrelevance of money. No one, of course, has ever been able to understand or explain clearly why a government does anything.

The playwright, to continue and conclude, who expects to do his work with a free heart even though he has little money must simply arrange his life in a way that will permit him to survive pleasantly without very much money. He must cut down expenses and still live as extravagantly as the richest man in the world, or extravagantly as he likes. He must do without but at the same time never want. If he does not even have the very small amount of money he requires, then of course he must think about the matter very carefully and perhaps do something about it. To beg in the street anonymously, as a man who is in need, I regard as more honorable than to beg in a parlor as a playwright. To borrow (from anybody) is also all right, for there is no man in the world who may not someday be able to pay all his debts. To gamble, however, is the best procedure of all, for it simultaneously reveals his contempt for an unsound and foolish economic system, and provides him with either a clearer picture than ever of the fierce role of money in the affairs of men, or with enough of the stuff itself to keep him going for a while.



The Robin

GORE VIDAL

AT nine I was very much tougher than I am now. I enjoyed all sorts of unpleasant things: other people's fights (I was early an audience), automobile accidents, stories of suicides, and one particular peepshow at an amusement park near Washington where one saw, through holes in a tall imitation stockade, an immense plaster elephant goring a red-splattered, plaster Hindu. But best of all I liked the magazines sold in drugstores; magazines with pictures of young women entangled in giant spider webs on their covers and, inside, pictures of the most exciting torture scenes. I used to sit for hours on the tile floor of a certain drugstore and carefully examine all the magazines. Sometimes I even read the stories. I liked very much the directness, the naturalness of the style. I had long since become bored with the colorless fourth-grade reader and I hadn't yet discovered the Oz books which, at ten, helped end my tough period.

In the fourth grade I had one close friend: a thin pale-haired, pale-eyed, pale-skinned boy with unusually large feet. His name was Oliver Mason, and I suppose he has since grown up to be a lawyer or a realtor. Most boys from our part of Washington become either one or the other: a few of the sensitive ones go into the State Department. To my knowledge none have become movie stars or artists and only one ever became a radio announcer.

Oliver loved violence and torture as much as I did and, when he tried, he was almost as tough as I was, and that was very tough indeed. Our conversation was a mixture of gangster and nursery talk. We organized secret societies, encouraged gang warfare at home, and sometimes we went to grocery stores and stole.

All of us had elaborate dream worlds. I can guess now what Oliver's was probably like, and, as for my own, I can remember it vividly: the climate, the scenery and even various plots of my imaginary life when I was nine and depraved. I know that I had great physical strength and lived in a castle, wore a cloak and, very often, a crown. I was not only stronger than the other nine-year-olds, I was stronger than grown people too: the deep-voiced, rough-faced, ugly race of grown men. And in my world I invented all sorts of tortures for my enemies. The most constant and satisfactory victim was the fourth-grade teacher, a shapeless woman with bobbed hair, gray and untidy; her nose was thin with a pink, horridly translucent membrane. She always had a cold, always sniffed and always had a fever blister on her upper lip. She was stern, sarcastic and, in moments of anger, an arm-twister. She received her reward in *my* world.

About the middle of October, shortly after my ninth birthday, on a clear bright afternoon, Oliver and I saw the robin.

First, let me say that our school was what's called a country day school, several miles from the city. The school had broad, well-kept lawns where less imaginative boys resolved their violence in football and fighting. Oliver and I usually only watched, a bit aloof, a bit contemptuous of such simplicity. Sometimes we were forced to play, and when that happened I'd pick a part of the field where nothing much was going to disturb me and here would stand and daydream; in these dreams I was the actor, never the audience. I didn't like the school much, but since I'd always gone to school I was resigned to the drab world outside of dreaming.

For some strange reason, in the early nineteen-thirties a great many private schools were started in Washington. Considering that the Depression had only just begun, this was curious indeed. Most of these schools have since vanished.

"These are hard times," my mother said (or something like that; all conversations from that dark period of my history are vague).

I nodded (or, at least, that's what I should do now if someone made such an alarming statement). I nodded, looked serious, intelligent; pleased to be confided in, to be trusted with information about the world—the remote world of grown people, mysterious and faintly unattractive; loud voices, meaningless jokes, absurd kissing and, always in the early morning, after the odd

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creatures had been having a party, dozens of dirtied glasses and cigarette butts about the living room. I usually drank what was left in the glasses because I knew it was a wicked thing to do; the liquor was bitter but I drank it anyway because, for one thing, I was tough and, for another, I rather liked doing unpleasant things unforced. For instance, there was a large pig farm on the way to Glen Echo, the amusement park outside Washington. Often on summer afternoons, late in the day, we would drive—my mother, my father and I—to Glen Echo, and always at the same point in the road, at least a mile before we got to the pig farm, I'd become excited by the dreadful smell . . . but all of this was before the Oz books, before the robin.

I nodded again when my mother went on to add: "We don't have much money."

She was very beautiful. I remember her once in a white, full-skirted evening dress covered with what I knew were diamonds. She walked down the steps of our house, my father beside her: it was early in the evening and the sky was a queer green-gray, a twilight sky, marked with fireflies circling. The sky is like this only when one is nine; even the fireflies are never the same again. Never like magic again. I used to catch dozens and put them in a milk bottle. At night I'd put the bottle on the table beside my bed and I'd watch their flashing and their glowing until I slept. In the morning they were always dead and I could never find a trace of all their light.

A white dress covered with diamonds: I probably thought of something like this as she told me that, since we were poor, I shouldn't ask for presents or expect too much from anyone and then, to counterbalance this, she gave me a paint set: one of those water-color sets that come in a black, shiny oblong box. I was too moved to say anything. I was tough, of course, but I could, occasionally, be moved. I was now. I said nothing, and she commented a bit irritably on my lack of enthusiasm, of appreciation. This was how I learned about the Depression. I never touched those paints since they represented sacrifice.

Undeterred, however, the people who start small private schools went right ahead and started them, and boys like myself attended. I went to a different one each year for several years; in the third school I met Oliver and we saw the robin.

OUR school had been founded by an enterprising man who has since become, I am told, a successful public relations man; somehow or other, his school gallantly survived the Depression only to succumb at last to prosperity. This doesn't surprise me at all now, but I am sure I would have been very surprised at nine, for I was an empiricist then; I accepted absolutely the dogma of cause and effect; fortunately one changes an later there are fewer shocks, fewer phenomena.

This enterprising educator, however, was fortunately past the age of logic, and he had bought or, more likely, leased a large country home in Virginia some ten minutes by school bus from Washington. Here the school was installed. The house was what we, in that part of the South, call Georgian. Red-brick, with tall French windows on the ground floor and, inside, a curving, broad staircase. There were high ceilings, cracks in the walls and a sense of spaciousness, of centuries of Southern feudal life; actually the house was the relic of a rich Northerner who had come South with one of the more recent Republican administrations; he had built the house, imagined himself a squire, willed it to children, died, and they, like true heirs, promptly sold it.

To us, to the sixty pupils, the grounds were far more interesting than the house. The whole property was a wooded bluff overlooking the Potomac River. Green smooth lawns curved from the house to the line of woods where, between the thin dark trees, red and yellow leafed like the colors of the fool, one could make out the brown fast river which roared continuously, sea-like and faraway, a sad lonely sound.

The day of the robin was not much different from all the other days of autumn. I caught the school bus in front of my house and talked casually to Oliver on the way to school. I haven't the faintest notion what my conversations were like when I was nine. Rather humorous I suspect, considering always my lack of practical experience. I know that I talked a good deal more then than I do now, and I like to think I was something of a *causeur*, amusing, even witty perhaps.

I suppose that Oliver and I discussed our teachers, the other boys and the peculiarities of our parents. I do remember once turning to him and saying solemnly (this was a year later, after my mother's divorce): "We've gone through hell and high water together, my mother and I." You see, by the time I was ten I was quite sentimental and I talked almost entirely in clichés; I had also begun to show an alarming talent for moral poetry. A little later puberty was to make me austere as well as sentimental; I became pale and thin and wore white shirts and dark suits: in my mind I was a figure of El Greco's living on a fairly permanent basis at Wuthering Heights. In the fourth grade, however, I was more colorful, more desperate and certainly more original than I've ever been since.

We arrived at the school, entered the classroom and here my recollection ceases. I suppose something *must* have happened in those classes but I can't remember what. During the twelve years I spent going to schools, I can remember almost nothing that happened in the classrooms. I have only one clear memory of my first six years in school. For some reason we built a model of the Appian Way on a card table. And since, among my numerous talents, I had a gift for modeling clay, I was invited to make the figures for the Appian Way. After much work they were finished: excellent figures, beauti-

fully proportioned, clothed in togas of the whitest Kleenex. Everyone was impressed. Unfortunately the figures would not stand up, and the teacher, that thin-lipped terrible woman, squashed all the legs down to fat columns, completely ruining their classic symmetry. When I discovered this, I gave her such a demonstration of outraged sensibility that she, frightened, called in the principal, who soothed me by suggesting that with longer togas no one would notice the legs and that, besides, I should remember I'd been commissioned to do figures (very admirable figures they were, too) which could stand up in chariots.

Aside from this episode I might just as well have stayed home during my first six years of school and even the value of the one remembered episode is dubious.

But I do remember the afternoons: especially this particular afternoon in October. The sky was pale blue, and the clouds were heavy and white and they moved so slowly, changed shape so slowly that one was quite hypnotized watching the castles become elephants, and the elephants swans, and the swans teachers. There is a kind of clear hot-cool autumnal brightness that all of us know in school but seldom ever notice again, since we live mostly in cities or in motion, performing great affairs. It's not easy to describe just what one of these days is like. The air is cool and the sun hot and, standing in the sunlight, one is both warmed and cooled at the same time. Everything is seen clearly, sharply on such days. Even the bright leaves at the tops of the trees are clearly marked, edged with the sort of line Cézanne put about objects. And then there is the smell of leaves burning—this can't be emphasized, of course, for everyone who writes of fall mentions the burning of leaves. Yet that is the way it is, and that is the way it was this particular afternoon when Oliver and I strolled away from the other boys, the athletes.

We talked, I am sure, of some new instrument of torture he had invented. He was mechanically much more inventive than I, but he relied rather heavily on my plots; he never really knew how to use his machines of torture. His plots were banal and almost always involved young women who had been caught by Fu Manchu (one of our idols). Needless to say I found his stories not only tiresome but often downright distasteful. I usually kept young women out of my fantasies: they were much too sacred and too uninteresting to be used, and, besides, what on earth could one do to them?

We walked to the edge of the curving lawn. Behind us, on the top of the hill, was the house of the school surrounded by tall trees, much taller than the trees in front of us, the ones that bordered the lawn and clung miraculously to the cliff which dropped nearly vertically to the rock-filled river below. We stood in sunlight and color. Even the other little boys in their brown corduroy knickers looked less grubby than usual, their faces pink and streaked with black earth, their teeth white from parent-supervised brushing.

But we stood at the edge of the lawn, our backs now to the others, the house behind us, watching the river below; I began to make up a story and Oliver listened eagerly, flatteringly.

He noticed the robin first, I think. Yes, I'm sure he did, for in those days I was completely absorbed when I told a story.

"Look," he said, interrupting me, pointing at something in the grass. I looked and saw the robin. One of its wings had been broken and it fluttered feebly, trying to fly. Its breast was a dull red like the brick of the house behind us.

"What'll we do?" I asked. One always had to do something about everything that came one's way.

Oliver shook his head; he was no use. "It's hurt bad." We watched the robin fluttering in a small circle, still trying to fly; one leg seemed broken, too; it couldn't walk.

"Maybe we ought to take it home," I suggested.

"It's hurt too bad. It's not going to live long anyway. Anyway we wouldn't know what to do."

"Maybe we should get some witch hazel or something," I suggested; to this day I can be counted on to make suggestions like that at times of crisis. We decided against doctoring.

Then we made the decision. I don't know whose idea it was first; I hope it was Oliver's: we decided the robin must be put out of its misery; it must be killed. This was not too difficult to decide, but when it came to the actual killing we were both not only uninventive but a little frightened.

Thinking of Saint Stephen, I suggested it be killed with a stone. Oliver took the first stone (I'm almost certain it was Oliver) and dropped it directly on top of the robin. The stone bounced off and the bird, only hurt, fluttered its wings and chirruped. Then *I* took a stone and dropped it: I was no more effective, although now there was blood on the wings that fluttered in the bright air, that fanned the vivid dead leaves on the ground.

Then we grew frightened and angry and we took more stones and threw them as hard as we could at the robin, anything to stop the motion of those wings and the sound of pain. The stones fell one after another until the bird was covered except for its head at the top of the pyramid of stones: it wasn't dead yet; it wouldn't die. Oliver (I am sure now it was Oliver) took a very large stone and smashed it as hard as he could on the top of the pyramid, finishing the tomb. There were no more sounds. He left the stone where it was on the completed pyramid.

We stood there, not looking at one another; I was shaking, almost sick. We could hear the shouts of boys playing at the other end of the lawn. The sun shone brilliantly; nothing had changed in the world, but suddenly, without a word and at the same moment, we both began to cry.

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Hometown Revisited

8. Albion, New York

CARL CARMER

LIKE almost everyone who goes back after years of absence to a town where he has lived, I was going back to a time as well and expecting to find it waiting in the familiar streets. To pass the limits of Albion, and be the person I was forty years ago in that western York State village as it was then, I knew to be impossible, but something in me unreasonably demanded that especial and private miracle.

As it was four decades ago, Albion was big houses and deep tree-dominated lawns, heads of families—and families. South Main Street had begun with the town's beginning when those entrepreneurs who had planned to roll a man-made river from the western fresh water seas into the Hudson named quintuplet huddles of buildings along its unfinished banks Spencerport, Brockport, Newport, Middleport, Lockport. Albion was Newport on the Erie Canal and the bridge that connected the banks separated South Main Street from North Main Street, and "canawlers" howled at their mules along the north-side towpath and howled at each other in the south-side saloons. But there were other Newports—even in York State—and some lover of England got the name of the place changed to Albion, and perhaps the distinction of a classical name had at least something to do with the kind of a town Albion became.

There were other influences on the community's growth, and when a section of the region round about was officially designated a county and some lover of France got it named Orleans, these influences were at work to make the town the seat of the County Government. Having heard that the deciding dignitaries, before a promised visit, looked upon Albion with disfavor because of its lack of water power, these influences effected repair of two abandoned sawmills on Sandy Creek—a streamlet never watery enough for a good swimming hole—had its trickles efficiently dammed for some weeks before the arrival of the great men, and on the day of inspection gave their guests, in a fleeting interval between toasts to their health, such a vivid impression of log-laden wagons, shouting teamsters, whining saws, and roaring waters (just un-dammed) that conversion was instant, and Albion was County Seat and deserving of a courthouse before the immediate moment when the millrace ran dry.

The building of a courthouse, white pillared and white domed, meant the coming of attorneys and magistrates, new units in the growing number of professional men who were giving the town an air of solidity and dignity. These citizens looked to be men of judgment and proved their appearance undeceitful by investing their savings in a company that was building a toll bridge of the suspension type at Niagara Falls, thirty miles west, and in a company which was manufacturing small cameras called

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kodaks at Rochester, thirty miles east. While the men of Albion were making these satisfactory transactions, the farmers of Orleans County were discovering that the sandy loam of the coastal plain of Lake Ontario on which they lived was particularly suited to the growing of apples, and they had covered thousands of acres with low-spreading trees that offered wide seas of bloom in the spring, and in the fall millions of hanging juicy spheres red-stained and shining, Baldwins and Northern Spies, Rome Beauties and Ladies Blush, Ben Davis and McIntosh. A man might make a fortune if he had two good successive harvests on an orchard of two hundred acres, and some men did, and sold their farms and went to live in Albion.

The houses of South Main Street, paid for by tolls, canal trade, dividends, and apple profits, were set apart, each on a spacious lawn. Those that were of wood were dark green, clear white, brown that was the color of a winter leaf, and pumpkin yellow. They were elegant but there were greater elegances—that of red brick which turned a weathered pink, that of cut sandstone, deep rust at first but paling with age. Porches were piazzas and verandahs and they were wide and railed. Windows were tall and panes were large and some of them were of plate glass, shimmering with reflections like a clear pool. Cupolas sat on the roofs of many of the frame houses giving them a height sometimes not at all suited to symmetry. Towers rose along the corners of the brick houses and sometimes shot up above the roofs. The most admired house in town was brick and painted baby blue and its towers wore an intricate wrought-iron crown. In its front yard rising from the center of a small round pool was a liver-colored fountain—a boy and girl under a spread umbrella—and from the end of the shaft of the umbrella water spouted a few inches and fell like rain.

The men who were the heads of families living in the big houses desired to be known as heads of families and citizens of worth even while still young. Unlike their sons who, having passed their thirtieth birthdays, pathetically indulged themselves in college boy follies as the twenties sped them into middle age, these men wanted to be considered mature as soon as possible. Once twenty-five, they affected long mustaches or short beards, bought Prince Albert coats, stretched gold chains from gold watches in pockets to the left of their waistcoat buttons to gold toothpicks in pockets to the right. They spoke judiciously and they walked in a portly manner—even the thin ones. Churches and secret societies gave them the high offices which satisfied their thirst for prestige and they were deacons and vestrymen and members of the session and Sunday School superintendents in their denominational associations, while at the same time potentates, shriners, archons and knights templar in fraternal orders.

The men were the owners of the usual shops of a town of five thousand people or they were associated with one or another of the few industries in Albion. The very quiet business of buying apples and holding them in high windowless "cold storages" until prices proved advantageous was the most profitable, but sometimes prices did not reach the height expected and then the owners, having waited too long, lost great sums. Quarries just outside of town furnished the sandstone from which some of the big houses were built. A small factory was buying and canning peas. A stamping company had once established itself in a big brick building by the railroad depot, but it had failed and thus provided a high-ceilinged hall for high school basketball games.

The wives of the heads-of-the-families took little active interest in their husbands' businesses or in town affairs. They spent the mornings at their housekeeping duties and attending to the children, their afternoons at duplicate whist, their evenings for the most part in the family circle.

They oh'd and ah'd at concerts (which were rare) and they hung reprints of Watts's "Hope," Landseer's "Stag at Bay" and Reni's "Aurora" on their walls. They talked a great deal about friends at the moment mercifully absent, about high society as reported by the Rochester papers and about recipes for cooking special dishes. Many of the latter they tried out on an expectant public at church suppers and once every few years the ladies of one denomination or another would put their recipes together and have them printed in a cook book. Before the idea of a book club had flashed into the brain of a publisher they had established their own, buying the books most favorably recommended by *Harper's Magazine* and the *Atlantic*, passing them among the members, selling them at a reduced price to the ladies who, having read them, wanted to own them.

These ladies were, for the most part, virtuous. (It would seem hard to imagine how they could be otherwise and maintain their schedules), but there were a few who received lovers after making such elaborate arrangements for secrecy that the town was aware of their liaisons as soon as they had been established. It was the code of Albion society to reserve delicious conversations on such subjects for intimate moments between friends or spouses, and in public to make self-conscious pretense of a complete ignorance of them. No strong social pressures were brought to bear upon the erring ones and their *affaires d'amour*, if they lasted for a long time (most of them

did) came to be recognized as part of the town pattern and regarded with tolerant though sorrowful acceptance.

As for other sexual unconventionalities, they were few. Though the one girl generally known to be a prostitute was by far the prettiest in the community, she came both literally and figuratively from so far below the tracks of the Niagara Falls branch of the New York Central Railroad that most of her patronage came from her own neighbors and I never heard of her associating with any of the South Main Street blades or their fathers.

The ladies of South Main and their friends who lived near them felt themselves socially a cut above their sisters who lived in other areas, and many cuts above the wives of "Polack Town" whose husbands worked in the quarries and whose daughters "hired out" to work in the better kitchens, and the wives of "Little Italy" or "Dago Town" whose husbands sold fruits while their daughters worked in the stores but never the kitchens. The prejudice against the Irish (born during the building of the canal) was wearing thin though many of the older townfolk still spoke of them with disdain as "Shanty Irish." The Albion men, however, even the rich and the well born, held no snobbish ideas and often profanely denounced their wives' pretensions.

Many of the men were college graduates, the largest body of alumni being that of a small and not distant institution with classical traditions—Hamilton—and they and their wives were serious in their desires to follow intellectual pursuits. They read "papers" on subjects of the day to the Historical Club and the Conversational Club before the hostess's best recipes were tested, they listened to Sunday sermons with the airs of connoisseurs, they attended "lectures" given for respectable fees by such well-known figures as Elbert Hubbard—Fra Elbertus—the sage of near-by East Aurora, and Thomas Motte-Osborn, warden of the state prison at near-by Auburn.

IN politics the town was like most of up-state New York, strongly Republican. Theodore Roosevelt passed through, stopping long enough to win the heart of my mother and all other Republican ladies with his irresistible "Dee-lighted." Governor Charles Evans Hughes made a point of visiting us to make a speech in favor of his bill to outlaw gambling on horse races and, since our gambling on horses consisted of an occasional quarter risked on a trotter at the county fair, we pledged him our support there in the largest auditorium in town—that of the First Presbyterian Church. But when Eugene V. Debs spoke from a baggage truck down at the depot, only a dozen men stood about listening embarrassedly as the tobacco-stained teeth flashed on the lean, jaundiced face and taut ideas tumbled on the air—twelve men and a small boy who had come to see how a man could be a man and at the same time such a monster as he had heard described.

When matters of importance to the bumbling Republican machine of the town were voted on, a slick politician who had the knack used to deliver as many votes as were necessary to swing the election, marching voters of doubtful eligibility up from Polack Town and paying each one a dollar after his ballot had been cast. When the question of local option on the sale of alcoholic liquors came up, however, no bribes were necessary. I was in high school then and as a horrified watcher for the anti-rum forces heard the last vote counted, heard the great roar in the town hall, saw the bottles tilted as the celebration of the drinkers began.

The formalities of holidays were the town's favorite recreation, and there were many holidays and the formalities always ended in a baseball game. It seems to me now that every long-awaited morning of celebration began with the massing of dark clouds just beyond the white dome of the courthouse and the soft feel of anticipated rain. By eleven o'clock, though, irregular spots of blue would appear behind the curving gray masses above and the squeal of a fife and the beat of a drum were an irresistible call to the courthouse. I cannot remember the fifer or the drummer because, towering between them and lifting the flag of his country far above his own incredible height, a white-bearded old veteran looking like Michelangelo's Moses in a blue brass-buttoned uniform was marching up the steps as steadily as ever he marched with the same banner up Missionary Ridge and all eyes were inevitably upon him.

A quartet sang "Tenting Tonight" and a frightened little girl recited the Gettysburg Address, and then the town's lawyer-orator, corpulent and elegant in his best blue suit and white waistcoat, stood on the platform and with calculated deliberation began his patriotic oration. Twenty minutes later his rich deep voice was pouring out his devotion to his country and his flag with all of the poetry and rhetoric born in his Irish soul and his audience was spellbound. When he had ended his concluding paragraph, we all stood and sang the first and last stanzas of "My Country 'Tis of Thee," and as we roared out "Great God Our King" the fife had suddenly taken up "The Girl I Left Behind Me" and the snare drum was imparting a great bounce to it, and the tall old flag-bearer was lifting his feet right smart.

Down across the canal bridge we marched and there on the baseball diamond the visiting team was warming up with the snap and grace of a team in the Eastern League. They had arrived at the depot that morning early in their special car which bore their name printed in gilt letters. They were often the Cherokee Indians or the Cuban Giants or, best of all, The Bloomer Girls. The Cherokees emitted war-whoops and did Indian steps around the bases, the Cubans were screamingly funny but in dialect more influenced by Alabama than by Spain, and the Bloomer Girls shocked us by being hard and businesslike and playing winning ball as soon as their girl-pitcher had been relieved by a man at the end of three innings.

I WAS going back, as I said, and I have been trying to suggest what the town and the time were like forty years ago in order to say how they have changed. I chose midsummer for my return because when I begin to think of the town I think of it as it was in midsummer when the maples in full leaf arched over South Main Street and blobs of sunlight dropped through them to the dark asphalt. When I drove over the top of the hill that slants into the street, I saw a black water tower—we all called it the standpipe—that used to rise above a net of gnarled and lichened limbs woven by an apple orchard, but now it was standing in the loneliness of no trees. Wondering if this were an omen, I was cheered by the sight of the maples still sifting the sunlight and encouraged to believe that the time I was remembering was waiting for me after all. It was not until I reached the four corners where East and West Avenues meet South Main that I knew that this was not to be. South Main had

been a symbol of the town, and those corners, austere in the dignity of massive houses set back on green and level lawns, had been the symbol of South Main.

But East and West Avenues are a part of a brick-paved pike, called the Million Dollar Highway, and where Swan House once stood serene in the assurance of its red-brick towers, lies a wide cement-covered yard decorated only by the garish protuberances of a gasoline station. Across the street the dark green Bruner house, elegant with piazzas, bay windows and staring cupola, has disappeared except for its foundations which seem pathetically small for the edifice that rested on them. The Sheldon House, a brick box, is a reminder of things as they were, but on the spacious yard of the huge white-pillared Burrows house a sign announces "Small Apartments for Rent."

Among the other big houses I found that the Sawyer house, once distinguished by striped awnings outside and darkly gleaming "Nubians" within, advertises for "Overnight Guests," the Waterman house is a cafeteria, the Dye house is a funeral home, the Cornell house still boasts a lovely Georgian-colonial shell but shelters equipment of a food company's laboratory. The Wage house is gone and its big barn which once sheltered the first horseless carriage in town, to the dismay of the new occupants of near-by stalls, is now a restaurant and night club known as Marty's. Here a chromium-striped modernistic bar welcomes the patron, and behind it, dimly illumined by concealed but lurid red and blue lights, a huge booth-lined dance hall resounds to glittering juke boxes by day and name bands by night. Looking into its dark depths I remembered a party I had attended only a few yards away when, after a rich old lady had died and left her money to her daughter, the daughter and her husband moved in and gave a ball that was rumored to have cost a fabulous thousand dollars. White crash had been tacked down over the precious carpets and, though others had employed them singly, it was the first time that both Teall's Caterers and Dossenbach's Orchestra had been imported from Rochester for the same affair. The guests had danced until four in the morning and all the children of the neighborhood had come the next afternoon to eat up the leftovers and dance to the gay fiddles of the Luttenton Brothers who played behind the same palms which had partly concealed Dossenbach's tony musicians.

Perhaps that party was the beginning of Albion's metamorphosis; perhaps the change of the town's collective mind came later. Whatever the date of its origin, the differences, which must have occurred gradually, struck me with sudden force as such alterations always affect the returning who, aware of it or not, are seeking the good old days.

The time I was going back to meet and had probably idealized, perhaps even constructed from my affectionate imagination, was not waiting for me. It had died with the big houses. Albion had been contented, busy, but not ambitious. It had been easygoing, moving comfortably, stopping at times for the joy of contemplating itself with a not-too-smug narcissism. Separated from the nearest cities by long miles of fertile earth, it lived a rich independent life of its own. Today those same miles are short. Albion had been a country-minded town. Now it is a city-minded town.

You can tell the difference in many ways. The tailoring firm that once displayed dark and sumptuous serges and broadcloths for men's suits is no more. Rochester is forty minutes away by motor and a suit by a city tailor has prestige woven into it. The select shops of Rochester's East Avenue sell certificates of respect from one's neighbors to the Albion matron who buys their wares. Grass grows on the half-mile track at the fairgrounds of the Orleans County Agricultural Association where the hooves of trotters and pacers used to beat a fast tatoo and where the county farmers tried to beat each other in the "hitch-up and once around" races. The city of Batavia is only a half hour away and the crowds that speed every night of the summer season to pour dollars into the pari-mutuel windows at Batavia Downs include a surprisingly large percentage of Albion's population. The County Fair—great folk festival of my youth—is now only a memory of a blaring midway filled with joy rides and tent shows, of dignified slow moving cattle parades, of the "art department" filled with painted china and canvases depict-

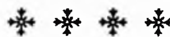
ing winter sunsets and forest fires, and trays of big apples polished until they blazed with light.

When the citizens of Albion cannot be lured into the cities, the cities come to the town. Some of the men who would in the old days have owned their own stores now work as employees of chain stores controlled in distant metropolitan offices. The canning factory, once owned by a man we used to see every day on the streets, is now a tremendous frozen-food "operation," property of a generous and paternalistic nothingness, a composite of many John Does—mostly cityfolk. The Saturday night gatherings in the drugstore at the corner of Bank and Main, where a man could get a sampling of his neighbors' opinions on matters that influenced their lives, have adjourned to the Town Club where amid comfortable appointments ("like those of a city club") and the jangle of those gambling machines known as "one-armed bandits" the same kind of talk goes on.

Albion is a boom town now, alert, progressive, dynamic. It is about the same size as it was forty years ago, but it believes in growth as it never did then and it will grow. It has a local "Committee of Economic Development," which was sponsored by the Albion Chamber of Commerce, and that committee has been working hard and with intelligence and foresight. Aided by the ladies of the Auxiliary of the American Legion, it has made a survey of the postwar desires and plans of its citizens. Of the 600 families (out of a possible thousand) interviewed, 390 want automobiles, 336 want electric refrigerators, 225 want washing machines, 85 want to travel. A fifth of the factory workers would prefer to do something else. Popular vocations are office and construction work, owning one's own business, keeping house. Farming is losing in favor. The survey indicates that two-thirds of the people are dissatisfied with the stores of the town. One out of every seven persons interviewed expressed a wish for a new industry in Albion.

The town has lived through a crisis. It saw death on the way as swift transportation, radio advertising, recreational opportunities drew its people to the cities to buy. On the way to its own funeral, its hearse met the triumphal coach of returning prosperity as city industries decentralized and moved out to the towns.

There are disturbing factors. School attendance is reported by the survey to be losing in popularity. The Conversational Club has died and only the Historical Club, with but thirty members, remains. More than a third of the town's families are not sure that they want to continue to live there. The people are less interested in cultural activities. And the aisle of the arching maples, which was the place where all could see the life of the town parading, is lined by fading ghosts of big houses. They are the symbols of the end of an epoch. They are now a liability, a handicap. The old shells must be replaced with ranch-types and pre-fabs, more business must come with more money, a new cycle must be well begun, before the town can have time and inclination to build for itself another and a different cultural pattern.



RAYMOND KRESENSKY

THE HAND MUST PAY

Embrace illuminated hills
  Enfolded to the fiery skies.
Reach for the bursting bomb that fills
  The air with flame, then flutters, dies.

When silence comes the earth will stand
  Broken and bent, and torn a little.
Time will heal it. The wounded hand
  Of man, the fingers, light and brittle,

Must break to dust, must decompose.
  Now let all men go, unafraid,
Consumed in fire and flame that grows
  From little heaps their fingers made.

I'll Take You To Tennessee

EVAN S. CONNELL, JR.

LOGOS JACKSON'S grin kept on growing until it almost slid off his face. "Sure," he said, "sure we can have a picnic." He unwrapped his big bony hands from the pump handle and grabbed Roy and Dutch-rubbed him, and all the kids piled onto Logos, laughing and shouting. And all the while Logos kept grunting and grabbing an arm or a leg and threatening to have them all thrown in jail for picking on him.

"Picnics—" said Logos, "—ugly kids!" He stood up, shaking them off. "Go on. Go away."

"Come on, Logos! You said you would—you said you would!"

Logos wagged his head, but then the grin crept back. "Eleven o'clock," he said. "Now get. I got work to do."

Roy was the first to get back to the shed where Logos lived with his three Tennessee hound-dogs. Roy got there just before ten-thirty. He hugged the two-by-four that propped up the porch and yelled for Logos to come out, but Logos didn't answer. The other kids got there pretty soon and they all yelled and banged on the door so much that finally the door opened a crack and Logos' big hand shot out and grabbed Boulton Polk by the britches. Everybody yelled and jumped off the porch while Boulton screamed as he was dragged inside. Everything was quiet. But then Luanne giggled, so they all ran up on the porch again and began to beat on the old plank door.

Logos poked his head out and the crooked scar around his neck stretched. He blinked like one of the possums he was always telling them about. "What you all want?" he asked. He saw Maxine Crowe standing in back of the gang. Maxine was almost sixteen. She wore sandals and a dress with a Mexican belt.

"Picnic! Picnic! Come on, Logos, you said you would!"

"Picnic?" said Logos. He sneaked out a long stringy arm and grabbed Betty Su by the ear, and Boulton wiggled out through the door. "What picnic?"

But they all yelled again and poured in to rescue Betty Su, and Bert Rice announced he was going to pry off the hinges of the door with his sheath knife, so finally Logos turned her ear loose. "Come on," he said, "perch ain't going to bite all day." He lifted the rust-covered shovel from behind the door and ambled out of his shed to the dumping ground.

"Naw," he complained, "dismals come back. Can't go. All wore out." He stuck the shovel in the ground and reached down to lace his white canvas sneakers.

"Worms!" shouted Roy. He grabbed onto Logos' belt and tried to swing from it. "Worms, worms, worms, worms—"

"Yea, get us some bait, Logos!"

"Yea!" And Georgia Lee Small hopped around, hitting Logos in the ribs and back. "Yea, yea, yea—"

So Logos grinned again, showing his good teeth, and without saying anything else he began to spade up the dump for worms.

Logos had been born in Tennessee, way up near Three-Forks-of-the-Wolf, he used to say, way high in the Tennessee mountains. He'd been raised there. He'd worked a little place, but it was so rocky that the crops wouldn't grow much, so one day Logos had just called his hound-dogs together and they'd walked south and west until the rocks and the hills and the lightning storms had drifted back out of sight. They'd walked to the edge of a plain where there were farms, cut through with creeks and hollows, and a river and a town. There the sun was a long way off. Logos had stopped. That had been eight years ago. He was forty-three now; two of his hounds were buried behind the shed.

Usually in the afternoons, when the sun had cooled and the tree locusts were scratching, the kids would straggle over to Logos' place for a story about Tennessee. They'd squat and sprawl in the dust in front of his porch, sharpening their pocket knives on their pants, or frogging

EVAN S. CONNELL, JR., *a native of Missouri, is a twenty-four-year-old graduate student at Columbia University. He attended Dartmouth College for two years, served with the Naval Air Force during the war and received his bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas. Mr. Connell has also done graduate work at Leland Stanford University, and it was while a student there in Professor Wallace Stegner's writing course that he wrote this unusual story. It has never appeared in print before, but it has already won the $500 first prize in the Edith Mirrielees Contest and the $100 second prize offered by the Midwestern Writers' Conference. It has been selected as the number one story for Professor Stegner's volume,* Stanford Short Stories, *which will be published this spring.*

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each other on the arm while Logos leaned back against the two-by-four and settled himself. When he'd begin to talk, the boys would stop pretending there weren't any girls in the gang and they'd all fall quiet, listening. He'd lean against the timber on his rickety porch and squint out into the red sun, like he was remembering a million years ago, and he'd tell stories in his Tennessee voice that somehow hadn't ever learned that folks don't care much about the handyman in a dusty little southern town.

He'd tell about the gimpy nigger who'd worked the place in back of his, and the Pentecostal baptisms in the river with the preachers spelling each other sometimes, yelling and ducking the sinners. He'd talk about sitting on a hilltop at night, listening to the dogs chase a fox over the ridges. Sometimes he'd talk about how lightning broke in the hills, or how everybody tried to raise a good mule. A good mule would bring three or even four hundred dollars, Logos said.

Evered Evans liked to hear about the tobacco barns, so almost every evening Logos would have to tell him about

the hickory fire leaking smoke through the cracks in the roof. Boulton Polk wanted to hear about the smokehouse and how side meat was hung. Ella wanted to hear how potatoes were heled in and dug up when winter came.

"Tell us about the trees," would say Luanne. "How do the trees feel when you touch them?"

So Logos would have to tell her all over again about the white oaks and the gray cedars, or the dogwoods with their rough checkery bark. And to the gang it seemed as though Logos Jackson was at least a million years old. They'd tell him he was a million, but he would just laugh. "I'll take you all to Tennessee someday," he'd say.

The rusty shovel glinted once or twice in the sun as Logos spaded up the dump. The sweat began to smell and his blue shirt with the sleeves cut off got limp. He'd turn up a spadeful of the dump and Roy and Boulton Polk would each jump for it, pulling out the worms and dropping them into the can.

"We got sixteen," whispered Betty Su.

"I can't put worms on the hook," said Luanne.

"Logos, why do we have to take girls on the picnic anyway?" asked Sidney Thomas.

"Got to like girls," said Logos without looking up.

Maxine smiled. "Why?"

He wiped the sweat from his mouth and chuckled. "Account of you came from my rib, honey. We're all God's children."

"We only got sixteen worms still," said Roy. "Get some more."

Maxine played with her hair. "Don't you like me, Logos?"

"Sure, I like you. Like all you kids—all you ugly kids."

"I don't mean that. I've grown up. I'm a woman."

Logos turned to his shovel. Maxine watched the muscles of his shoulders bunch and slide under the wet shirt.

Boulton Polk looked up from the worms. "Phooey!" he said.

"How many we got?"

"How many we got, Betty Su?"

"Twenty-three," answered Roy.

"That's enough."

Georgia Lee wiped her hands on her jeans. She grabbed for the can. "Let me carry them."

"You'll spill them," decided Sidney. "I'll carry them. Girls always spill things." He pushed a worm back.

"I get to carry them part way," said Boulton.

Logos stuck his shovel in the dirt and grinned.

Georgia Lee wiped her hands again and looked at the can and then at Sidney. Logos headed the gang toward the path that zigged through the dirty brown weeds.

"Are we going to catch perch today, Logos?"

"I brought a sandwich, Logos."

"What part of the creek are we going to, Logos?"

THAT'S no way to string a worm." Logos took Luanne's hook in a hand that was almost as hard as the barb. He threaded the worm and dropped the line into the sunny pool. Luanne studied the cork. She crouched on the bank with tense wrists.

"Now you let him get a hold before you jerk him out of there."

Luanne nodded quickly, never raising her eyes from the cork.

Roy ploughed through the briar patch. "I got one, Logos! I got one! I got one!"

Logos inspected the catch. "Throw him back. Too small to eat."

Roy unhooked the tiny perch and laid it carefully in the shallows. "Whillickers!" he said.

"Logos, will you put on my worm?" Maxine seated herself on a log where she could watch as Logos adjusted her tackle. "I hate worms. They're so slimy."

Logos grinned down at her. His hands moved quickly, the fingers throwing shadows. Maxine watched. Her wide mouth smiled, thanking him.

"Lay off that fire, Mr. Polk. Cooking fire's small."

Logos reached into the can for another worm. "You catch us a mess of fish; I'll fix that fire." He handed a line to Boulton and pulled a stick from the fire.

Maxine's hand closed over Logos' on the stick. "I'll fix it. I don't care about fishing." Then she said to Boulton, "Go on. You heard what Logos said." She stooped and poked at the blaze, moving her knees away from the heat.

Luanne jumped back, whirling her bamboo stick. "Logos!" she shrieked, and ran to bend over the sunfish flopping on the bank.

"That's not so big," observed Sidney. "I've caught bigger ones than that."

Ella poked interestedly.

Maxine spoke: "Kill it."

They all turned around and looked at her.

"Hit it on the head." She rocked forward. "—or do you want to eat it alive?" She tossed a branch toward the group.

Sidney picked up the branch and looked down at the little fish, squirming in the dust and dry beardgrass. He

shifted the branch to his other hand and doubled up his fist.

"Well," said Maxine, "go ahead. Smack it."

Sidney spit on the ground and mashed his toe in the spit. "I will," he said. "I will okay."

She stood up, placing her palms deliberately on her angular hips.

Sidney mashed the spit again. He dropped to his knees and took hold of the fishing line. The fish wriggled. Sidney put down his branch. "He threw water in my eyes. I can't see."

"Kill it!"

"Well—*you* kill him."

Maxine picked up the branch and stunned the fish. She ripped the hook from its mouth, and turned to find Logos staring at her.

Evered Evans came around the bend with a turtle. Bert showed up with a perch and another one that Logos said was diseased. Georgia Lee didn't catch anything, but Logos told her that if it hadn't been for her [illegible] they couldn't have cooked the fish with bread [illegible] The fish were just right.

After dinner Roy asked for a story.

LOGOS poked at the fire and grinned and said he know any more stories, but Roy grabbed his [illegible] and curled up his knees and said he wasn't ever let go until Logos told a story. So Logos said all [illegible] because he sure didn't want such a dumb ugly [illegible] roughneck swinging on his arm all the rest of his life. He sat down on a patch of turkeyfoot and told the gang to get settled because they were making too much rumpus. They spraddled out flat around him, mostly on their stomachs with their chins in their hands, except Maxine. She walked across from where Logos was facing and sat on a log and drew up her legs to get more comfortable.

Logos started off by saying he was so old that when he was born his mother couldn't think of anything to name him, because way back then nobody had names. All the gang laughed except Maxine. She smiled and leaned on her hands. She asked Logos how old he was. Logos looked up, but he couldn't see her face behind the fire. He rubbed his long thin nose. Then he grabbed a chip of wood and tossed it at her and the kids laughed again, only Maxine took the chip and dropped it down the front of her blouse. Logos looked into the fire for a minute and broke a stick, but finally he went on talking. He told all about a fox hunt, the best fox hunt they'd ever had in the Tennessee hills, and how when they skinned the fox he was eleven feet long.

Maxine leaned back on her hands again. When the kids had stopped yelling and booing she said she wished she could find a man that big. She ran her tongue over her upper lip and sucked in her breath until the blouse stretched tight. Logos went on talking, only sometimes his stories wandered. Roy asked him what was the matter.

Bert and Evered whittled. "How big is the jockey yard?" asked Evered.

"Tell me about Mule Day in Columbia," whispered Betty Su. She sat with her ankles crossed under her in the dust. Her solemn gray eyes seemed even bigger behind the thick glasses. "Do the ladies really ride the mules in the parade? Do they ride the real mules?"

Logos pushed a finger down inside one of his sneakers and popped out a twig. Then he told how the pretty girls jumped on the jackasses and rode in the big parade when Columbia had Mule Day back east in Tennessee.

"Tell me about the revivals in the strawpens and the cunjur doctors."

So Logos told Ella about the revival meetings back in the hill country, about the niggers getting baptized; and why you should always plant a garden in the full of the moon.

"How do I catch a husband, Logos?" asked Maxine.

Logos grinned and spit through his teeth. "First [illegible]

of May hold a mirror over a well."

Maxine smiled, tangling her hair with one finger. "I'm grown up. I don't want to wait on my honeymoon that long."

Logos tried to grin again. "Sleep with a beef bone under your pillow—" He threw another stick of wood at the fire.

"Aw, whillickers! Cut out that mush. What's a cunjur doctor, Logos?"

Then Logos told about the cunjur doctors selling "hands" and "tobies" to the niggers to ward off spells and to catch witches.

"What about the cunjur doctor with the three birthmarks on his arm?"

"Father and Son and Holy Ghost," Logos answered, but he didn't seem very interested in telling stories any more.

"I got a wart," announced Georgia Lee.

"Black calf lick it three times on three days."

"What do they do in the revivals, Logos?"

"Oh, jump, roll around, wrestle with the Devil," he answered, poking at the fire.

Luanne cried happily,

> "I'll tell you who the Lord loves best—
> It's the shouting Methodist!"

And Roy countered:

> "Baptist, Baptist, Baptist—
> Baptist till I die.
> I'll go along with the Baptists
> And find myself on high!

Isn't that right, Logos?"

"Do you go to church, Logos?" asked Maxine.

"They don't have his church here," said Evered.

"I belong to all churches that knows the Word of God," he answered.

Maxine slipped off her sandals and squeezed dust between her toes.

"Maxine's got a dimple in her knee! What does that mean?"

Logos chuckled and his good white teeth showed again. "Means there's the Devil in her," he said. But nobody laughed.

The sun was going down. Maxine ran her tongue over her lips and rubbed the outside of her thin thighs. She looked at Logos across the firelight. She turned around to look at the sun, and the fire reflected the color in her hair.

"Maxine's got pretty hair," said Roy, "for a girl."

Evered snorted and looked sideways at Bert.

Maxine stood up in back of the log. She stretched her arms until her blouse pulled tight again. "I've lost my fishing tackle. Don't you reckon I better find it before it gets dark?"

Logos didn't say anything.

"I can't recollect exactly where it is. Maybe—you better come along. I might get lost."

"You can find it."

"All right," said Maxine. She eased her palms down over the bones of her hips. She opened her mouth to say something, but then just licked her teeth. "All right," she said at last. She left her sandals on the log and turned and wandered off into the darkening hollow.

"She didn't lose no old fishing tackle. She didn't even go fishing. She said worms are slimy." Sidney appealed to Logos for confirmation.

"Maxine Crowe," said Roy. "Ugh! Maxine Scarecrow."

"She sure has got pretty hair," said Bert. He glanced over at Evered.

Sidney pulled up his socks. "I don't like her."

"Neither do I," said Ella.

"She is a lamb lost in the wilderness," murmured Logos into the fire.

Night drifted in over the farmlands and the smoke faded from black to gray-blue. Beyond Jess Phillips' land the weak yellow lights of the town popped through the darkness, one by one. A breeze sneaked across the creek and wiggled the smoke, but there weren't many leaves to rustle. Down the field an owl screamed and a dog barked. A train whistled over somewhere near the sun. A mouse ticked a dry branch, and the sky changed from red to purple and finally died.

"Sing us a song, Logos."

So Logos hummed for a while, and sang words, but they weren't connected.

When he had finished the gang didn't talk. Bert remembered to pick up the stick he had been whittling on, but he didn't cut any more. He laid it down softly.

The night was quiet; the fire didn't crackle very loud.

"Reckon I better go find her," said Logos at last. "She's been gone a long time." He roughed Roy's head and stepped over Ella and wandered off toward the dark hollow.

"Maxine!" they heard him call, and heard it drift with the wind. "Maxine, honey!"

A star began to shine over in the east just above the briar, but there weren't any other lights. A branch snapped down in the hollow and another dog barked way off over the black fields, and then they couldn't hear any more.

"Whillickers!" said Roy sleepily. "He's been gone a long time."

"Yeah."

"Think we ought to go after him?"

"No," said Evered. "We'd just all get scattered out. We better wait."

Ella and Betty Su and Luanne sat close together. "Put some sticks on," said Betty Su.

"You're afraid of the dark," said Sidney disgustedly.

"So are you."

"I am not!"

"Are so!"

"The moon's coming up—"

"Shh!"

"What's the matter?" hissed Ella.

"Shh!" Bert peered into the night. "No, I guess it's nothing."

"What did you hear?"

"Nothing. I thought I heard them."

"Put some more sticks on."

Roy pulled out his knife and thumbed the edge. "I bet this is the sharpest old knife in the world." He jabbed at the ground, popping up little chunks of dirt.

"I had a knife sharper than that once."

"You did not."

"Did so!"

"Shh—"

"Are they coming?"

"Can you hear them, Bert?"

"I don't know. There's something." Bert stood up. "Push that big branch on." He walked to the edge of the circle of light and squinted toward the hollow. "Logos! Hey, Logos! Is that you?"

Evered stood up. "Hey, Logos!"

Luanne bit her lip. "I don't think he's ever going to come back." She coughed and ground her fists in her eyes. The owl screamed again and she took Betty Su's hand. "He's not ever going to come back."

"Oh, cut it out." Boulton stood on the log, smacking his fist into the palm of his other hand.

Luanne began to sniffle. "No, he's not. Something's happened."

Roy sat staring into the coals with his knife balanced on one knee.

"Poke it up."

"Oh, who's cold?"

"I'm not, but poke it up anyway. I can't see."

Roy pushed a branch farther in with the blade of his knife. He rubbed his forehead.

Bert ran out into the night. "Logos! Yea, Logos!"

Luanne and Georgia Lee jumped up and stared into the dark. "Logos?" called Georgia Lee.

Maxine walked into the light of the fire. She was crying. Logos followed her in. He carried his blue shirt in one hand.

"Hey, Logos," exclaimed Evered, "we thought you'd got lost yourself!"

"I have lost myself, boy."

"Gee, Logos, what's the matter? You look funny."

"Put on your sweater, boy. You all pack up."

Luanne began to cry.

They collected their pocket knives and their shoes and their rubber gun pistols in silence. Logos stood by the fire with his eyes closed, the red light of the flames deepening the scar around his neck.

"I guess that's everything," said Bert.

Logos scattered the sticks of the fire and walked heavily on the embers until there was just moonlight.

"You didn't even go fishing!" blurted Roy. He turned around and kicked at Maxine's sandals.

Maxine put her fingers in her mouth.

They all went home. Logos opened a can and ate. Then he filled his pockets and called his hound-dogs and started walking.

American Music Must Grow Up

GEORGE ANTHEIL

If I were asked, as an American composer, to identify the sorest spot of contemporary American music, I would point to the smug conviction with which most of us regard America as being musically progressive. For, despite our many splendid symphony orchestras and our increasing number of highly talented performers and composers, we steadfastly remain one of the most backward of musical nations. As a composer, I am greatly interested in this situation because the problem of the American composer, or at least his problems within the society in which he is forced to operate, are almost insuperable.

One of the most frightening aspects of our composer situation is the lethargic pace at which it supposedly progresses. And the reason for this, again, is our acceptance of ourselves as an already progressive musical nation.

In 1922, when I was a young composer of twenty-two, I left the United States for a short stay in Europe. Once there, I remained for eleven years. I stayed, first of all, because my money would last longer in postwar Europe. I knew that before I could evaluate myself as a musician I would have to do a great deal of writing, and to accomplish this I needed time and unhampered energy. My American dollar would go three or four times farther in Europe. Secondly, I knew that European publics were more advanced than the American publics of that day, and that I could look for and receive more sympathy from them.

Today the situation in America has not changed very much for me, personally, or for most of my fellow composers, many of whom (Roy Harris, Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson) followed me to Europe in 1925 or 1926 for the same reasons that I stayed there. If it were not for the fact that I have found a comparatively easy means of livelihood in Hollywood, and that a number of men, such as Walter Piston, Thomson, Samuel Barber and William Schuman, are fighting the good fight with me, I might do exactly as I did back in 1922—return to the continent and stay there.

For, musically, America has changed hardly at all since 1924. We have thirty fine symphony orchestras now, whereas then we had only five, and our radio networks now often broadcast American works to the whole country. But, on the other hand, during the past twenty-six years—except for the short P.W.A. period—our government has not attempted to help the desperate lot of the serious American artist one iota. Unlike practically every other major nation on earth, we do not possess a ministry of the fine arts. We believe that we have many fine symphony orchestras, more perhaps than any other country; yet, during the time I lived in Paris, I could go to a symphony concert every night in the week and never hear the same orchestra twice! Moreover, we have no premium on fine symphony orchestras; one night I went to hear the *Orchestre National* of France under Charles Muench during its recent tour in America, and it is, in its own way, the equal of any American orchestra. We are enormously proud of our Metropolitan Opera Company; still, I have heard second-rate companies in Italy and Germany give better performances. Moreover, during my stay in pre-Hitler Germany that nation boasted eighty-six state subsidized opera houses running full seasons! We are proud of our great radio networks occasionally playing American contemporary works, but I have been personally assured by the director of music for the French radio system that *Radio Paris* alone broadcasts exactly fourteen times as much contemporary music as all of our American radio networks together!

I am told by my friend, Hans Heinsheimer, who recently returned from the Continent, that Europe is artistically in ruins, and that it will take several decades for it to recover. Perhaps, from the business point of view, he is right; but, I was told by Darius Milhaud, also recently, that Paris is brimming with new young composers, all of them off in new directions, all of them obtaining more or less important performances. This is corroborated by what the director of music of the French radio system told me. Milhaud also said that the influence of Stravinsky, which had absolutely paralyzed the musical imagination of the French capital from 1920 to 1935, had now passed entirely; most if not all of the young composers are

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anti-Stravinsky. The situation in England is, to my mind, amply represented by the brilliant young composer, Benjamin Britten, who is one of the truly great creative talents of this age, comparable to Prokofiev or Shostakovich. His growing number of opera and symphonic works are produced both in England and upon the Continent. Most important of all, he is untouched by the two "masters" of the last thirty years, Stravinsky and Schönberg, who appear to have soaked up the musical imagination and impetus of two whole generations of composers. Because of recent political squabbles, people are inclined to dismiss Russia, but it would be difficult to find composers today who match the clarity or the creative effort and direction of a Prokofiev or a Shostakovich. After three or four generations, during which the art of music has become quite diffuse, these two Russians have attempted to write music of the stature of a Mahler or a Brückner, or even, to go back further, of a Brahms or a Beethoven, while other composers of the present and immediate past have been content merely to give us works which are little more than personalized statements.

TO compare the musical situation in Europe with that in America is extremely important because, in the final analysis, the greatest problem of every creative artist is first of all to gain a public and, secondly, continually to enlarge it. The composer, for example, has very few personal and artistic problems which could not in great degree be solved by becoming the first, second, or third most frequently played composer in the United States. But he cannot achieve this if the spiritual attitude of a country is against him.

Let me illustrate. I have stated that when I left America in 1922 in order to stay in Europe, I did so not only because Europe was cheaper but also because it was more sympathetic. Those who remember the early 1920's in America may also remember that the imagination of the American musical public had been captured almost entirely by the musical impressionists: Debussy, Ravel, and composers whose techniques were rather allied to those of Sibelius, Bloch, Scriabine and the Stravinsky of "The Firebird" and "Petrouchka." Basically, they loved Debussy; and if American critics of the period spoke longingly of finding an important American composer, one knew also that they were longing to find that composer emerging out of the Debussian milieu. At that early time in my life, I had become excited and stimulated by the last works of Stravinsky and Schönberg. I was only twenty, and I had to have some great contemporaries to look up to. Since 1916 I had been sending to the Library of Congress for the latest scores for study. My works of that period, particularly the published "Second Piano Sonata" and the "Five Songs after Adelaide Crapsey" reflect this point of view. As soon as I emerged with these ideas upon paper, I encountered the greatest resistance all about me. I realized finally that what the American public of that period wanted was an American Debussy, someone who could take our folk songs, our modern jazz idiom, and combine it with the harmonies and aesthetic of Debussy. I could not. Debussy, in my eyes, was ten to twenty years too late to be an influence. So I went to Europe, where they looked upon Debussy as I did. Paris was then full of *Les Six* and Stravinsky, who were fighting musical impressionism tooth and nail. There I found sympathy and performance among people of importance who thought as I did. I blossomed. I stayed eleven years.

In the meantime America found its longed-for composer in George Gershwin, who superimposed American jazz motives upon an essentially Debussy-Ravel harmonic technique. By 1928 he had been acclaimed—at least by our American public—the greatest American composer in decades, and even Ravel did him the honor of imitating him in his last works. Of course, since then, we have discovered that Gershwin was and is perhaps the most overrated composer in our history; but that is a matter of small import. More important is today's duplication of this same pattern; although, this time, I believe the composer in question is a man of much greater stature than George Gershwin.

I speak of Aaron Copland and his remarkable resemblance to Stravinsky. On the surface, of course, Copland is no more like Stravinsky than Gershwin was like Debussy. But the aesthetic, the method, the technique is similar. Most important, the philosophy is similar.

The culminating success of an American Stravinsky in the early 1940's would be as logical as the culminating success of an American Debussy in the early 1930's. It follows out our rather discouraging pattern of developing the artistic impulses of Europe ten to twenty years later. This is fortunately now gradually ceasing to be true, as witness Thomson, Schuman, Barber, David Diamond, Piston (and, I hope, myself). I do not begrudge Aaron Copland his success, any more than I begrudged Gershwin his success: my only fear is in the American public's inclination to become so completely trapped by *one* tendency, and very often a tendency which already has become passé to the true radicals and revolutionists attempting to create a really new pathway. In short, we in America are still conservative as far as our art is concerned. We tend to stick to the accepted; and the later neo-classic Stravinsky has been accepted over here for at least the last fifteen years.

Music today may be departmentalized into three distinct categories. Two of them, the Schönbergian and Stravinskian, have existed since 1911, and of these the latter has been completely accepted by the public. But neither of them are, to my way of thinking, of great importance any more. This is because they have both pounced upon music, which is a great emotional language, and divided it into diametrically opposite halves. Stravinsky, for example, is tonal, which means that he remains in and around a given key in each musical movement. Schönberg, on the other hand, starts to modulate from the

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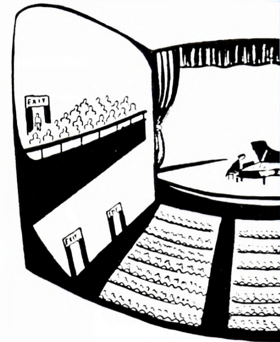

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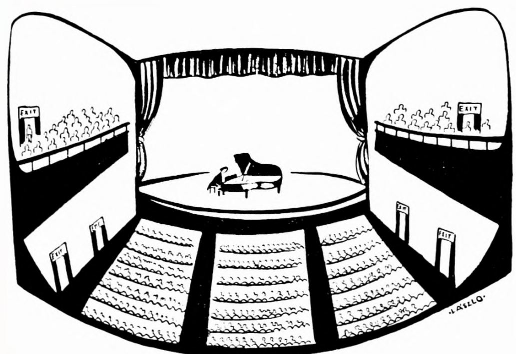
first bar; hence the word "atonal." There is nothing wrong in that, for many composers of the third group are also "atonal" in the statement sections of their sonata-allegro forms, and they often become modulatory and "atonal" in their development. What is wrong with Stravinsky and Schönberg is that they violently divide what should belong to all music, and give the impression over the years that neither is a composer of ideas but writes music solely to illustrate and prove a system.

In Los Angeles, where Stravinsky and Schönberg live, this antagonism and split in music is literally brought to the ridiculous. Neither will speak to the other in public and each has his group of supporters, pupils and devotees. Both groups, which include our major newspaper critics, go to every concert of contemporary music; and I have learned to recognize members of each cult by their comments. Naturally any composer who falls completely in



one of the two schools gets loyal support from its adherents. But it becomes a little more difficult with a work by a man like Honegger who approaches the tonal or atonal with equal mastery. After the Honegger "Second Symphony" I maneuvered through both groups and listened to their remarks. Amongst the Stravinskyites I constantly heard the rebuke "too chromatic" (chromaticism being the first step toward atonality). Among the Schönberg followers I frequently heard the words "too modal" (meaning tonal). Honegger can be classified as a member of that third group of composers who, discarding both Stravinsky and Schönberg, attempt once more to make music a human language, comprising not one but many techniques.

Copland is the beloved of the Stravinskyites, looked upon with gravest suspicion by the Schönbergites. That is not extraordinary since, like Stravinsky, he revolves within a given tonality and does not break out of it except to return within the shortest amount of time. Like Stravinsky he depends upon rhythmic rather than any other sort of development, and he is prone to take a few motives (his followers laud this "economy") and literally beat them to death over the course of a short movement. His pages, structurally, look so much like Stravinsky's that it is difficult to tell them apart at first glance. Over all of this he imposes his own orchestration and a fragmentation of American and sometimes Mexican folk song. As the Stravinskyites are at present in power in America, he is the answer to our national prayer. None of this is meant to belittle his powers as a musician. Indeed, the latest Stravinsky works are beginning to sound more like Copland than Copland sounds like Stravinsky.

As I have stated before, the basic problem of every artist is to create for himself a public. Copland, coming at exactly the right moment in our rather ultraconservative musical history, has been able to achieve this: he has been able to keep his public, and expand it. This has solved almost all of his personal problems. Hans Heinsheimer has pointed out that the royalties from Copland's "Third Symphony" will not be more than a few thousand dollars over his entire lifetime. But from this he erroneously draws the conclusion that serious composing, for Copland, does not equal the income of an equally successful writer, John Steinbeck. It happens that Copland wrote the motion picture score of Steinbeck's *Red Pony* for Republic Pictures. At present he is at Paramount, writing the score for another important picture. Because of his prestige, he undoubtedly commands top scoring prices, which range between $10,000 and $20,000. (Milhaud received $15,000 for *Belle Ami.*) If to this is added money from various concert appearances, lectures and articles, his net income a year should compare respectably with that of Shostakovich or Prokofiev ($40,000 a year) or, perhaps, even Steinbeck. It is quite true that a serious American composer cannot live upon concert royalties alone; *but one can live upon the by-products.* This, however, does not disprove my original point that composers, particularly such men as Copland, should be able to live from their concert royalties as did, for example, Ravel.

Some years ago the French government passed a law which requires every program given in a French concert hall to include at least one work by a living French composer. Of course, this has not worked out very well for the unsuccessful French composer, for he is omitted from French concert programs with as great an indifference as before the law was passed. But it does work out very well for the successful composer. During the time I lived in France, for instance, it would have been difficult to pick up a concert program which did not contain the name of Ravel. Ravel, thus, was able to accumulate a fortune in what corresponds to French ASCAP royalties. If America had passed the same law, Copland, too, could live upon the royalties from his serious music, and live well, as could perhaps several others of us.

THE fact that no serious American composer can live directly from performance royalties is one of the most discouraging aspects of our national musical scene. It is a smug error to assume that we have achieved a national music capable of carrying our banner over a lifetime, not only to our own people, but to the rest of the world as well. There is only one way that we may, eventually, accomplish such an end. Our serious composers, known

and unknown, must be allowed to write a great deal of music, and a great percentage of this music must be allowed to come to public performance and judgment. One of our first problems, therefore, is somehow to permit every American composer of proven talent to write through his given pile of manuscript paper, and then permit him to be listened to with an open mind. And, also of utmost importance, we must permit the unknown talents to become known.

Let us examine the proved talents. Walter Piston is, in my estimation, one of the most important. Unlike Stravinsky's or Copland's, his symphonies are true, developed symphonies, and show a tremendous grasp of the highly sophisticated art of musical composition. His "Second Symphony" is one of the finest works in this form. He is a professor at Harvard where, daily, he teaches classes in advanced musical composition. His output during these past years has been extremely meager, albeit extremely fine. Recently he wrote me a letter excusing himself for not having answered one of mine earlier. He protested that he had been so busy teaching that he hardly had time for his "other full-time job, composing." I can well believe that: I have taught at Stanford, and know it to be a full-time job. The job of a university teacher is also a very social one and I found myself almost more exhausted by the rounds of necessary teas and faculty parties constantly in session than by teaching. If I have to live a political life, I'd rather do it for big money in Hollywood. The life of a college professor can be an exhausting one; and, evidently, Piston finds it so.

Another proved talent is that of William Schuman. Originally oriented from Roy Harris and Aaron Copland, he now veers neither to easy Schönberg nor slick Stravinsky, but takes the rocky road down the middle. His more recent works are, I believe, of utmost importance. Yet Schuman is forced, most of the day, to be a big businessman: he heads the Juilliard School, and is also acting head of Schirmer's publishing department. Either one of these would be a full-time job in itself. Recently he sat across from me at dinner, and told me about his various activities, none of which was musical composition.

"But, Bill, when do you get time to compose?" I protested.

"I don't," he said sadly.

I do not know David Diamond personally, but I do know the records of his beautiful "Romeo and Juliet" suite. In it he has cast off the inevitable Copland influence and has composed a score of tremendous expressiveness and subtlety. I am told that Diamond, for considerable periods, earned his bread and butter by working as a waiter in a New York restaurant. One may do such a thing for a time, but one cannot continue to do it year after year. Musical composition needs physical as well as mental strength: the strength which one brings home at night after a day's trekking about in a restaurant is not adequate for the tremendous labors of musical composition. It is to our shame as a cultural nation that we force a man of Diamond's caliber to work as a waiter in a restaurant.

As to the unproved talents; if I were today a young, unknown composer, I would recognize the fact that America is smugly conservative, following twenty-year-old European trends. I would ask myself if I could fit into that pattern as it slothfully crawls into the future. If I could, well and good; I would take my young music to those in power most apt to be sympathetic to it, and see what happens. If I could not, I would go to Europe, just as I did before. Or, perhaps, I might band together here with a group of young men, who think as I do, that we might face and fight the brutal issues together.

For there is no doubt whatsoever that the issues are brutal. This is all the more tragic when one recognizes

the enormity of the job to be done, and the tremendous start which the European composer enjoys today. However, if these issues are faced by both composer and public—especially the critics—great progress can still be made. The main problem of the American composer of serious symphonies, operas and sonatas is to get these pieces down on paper, not just one or two sonatas, but a lot of them, each one progressively better and nearer to the eventual American-music-to-be, a music which can be recognized everywhere as being essentially although not ostensibly American. At present American composers aim mostly at personal style, not realizing that style is not an end, but a result: Beethoven did not achieve his style through weeding out mannerisms of previous composers, or superimposing his "style" upon the adjacent style of an already accepted composer. He achieved his style through wishing to express something especially compelling to himself alone, and through being willing to write not two or three sonatas but hundreds of them, not one or two early awkward symphonies but seven or eight great ones to follow. The problem, essentially, resolves itself to more time and more effort, and less kidding of ourselves by ourselves. This includes the public and the critics: we must, all of us, realize that we still have a long way to go, and that no amount of fatuous yapping about the tremendous progress we have *not* made will help us one iota.

THE American music public should get behind a movement to obtain a national ministry of the fine arts. Once that is done, something must be done about direct subsidy to the composer, as it is done in Finland or Russia; or else indirect subsidy, as is the case in France. State and city opera houses should be encouraged, for a successful opera is the most satisfactory way for a composer to obtain sufficient revenue from his serious musical creations. (And it is also the easiest way for him to obtain a public; eye shows the ear and heart what the composer is after.) Opportunities should be created for the young unknown composer to write as he wills, not as he is forced to if he is to be heard through the good will and prestige of some older composer whom he must imitate and pay homage to. Something should be done in some kind of an organization to copy out a composer's parts for him: the parts of my "Fifth Symphony" cost me $400: I can just barely afford it; but who is to pay for the young, unknown composer's symphony parts or, for that matter, for David Diamond's? How are conductors to look at works by new composers when there is only one existent manuscript copy lying at the bottom of some conductor's pile of unlooked-at scores? American music publishers should become as alert and forward-looking as are European publishers, particularly those of England and Russia. Our critics should be willing to keep up with new works, new directions, and not fall into the easy habit of accepting one school and damning everything that does not accord with it. (There are many such critics, although, fortunately, most of the top-flight critics are open-minded enough.) They should also be willing to recognize that we are still far from our eventual goal, and attempt to be helpful guides to the public as well as public watchdogs. Mainly, we must not be smug.

America is a great country. It deserves a cultural place among nations. To help music creation here, and now, might raise our stock among other nations more than the Marshall plan. The average cultured European has small respect for us as a sensitive art-loving nation. Yes, he will admit that we have fine symphony orchestras—"but you buy them outright, as you buy everything else," he says. He would change his point of view if we produced one emphatic culture, say a musical culture. I venture to say that Russia's Shostakovich, Prokofiev and Khachaturian have produced more good will for Russia in America than their combined embassy and consular services. Russia is not much of a painter's country, and her contemporary novelists are seldom translated here, but with music alone she has accomplished miracles.

The world is passing through a period of spiritual flux and change. The young composers who come to me with their embryonic compositions feel this. They are frightened by it. They all would like to dodge into some little safe prison and close the door. The atonal system of Schönberg is one of these prisons: "Just follow the system, and you'll be sure to produce something that sounds like music; moreover, your group will support you, while nobody on the outside will be able to criticize you, for they won't be able to understand it. They'll be impressed anyhow." The tonal-rhythmic system of Stravinsky is a similar prison. Neither of these two schools is emotional; Stravinsky is outspoken in his dislike for any kind of human emotion translated into music; he makes a point of stating that his music is not supposed to express anything more than "just music." (Imagine Beethoven or Bach saying that!) Stravinsky even dislikes any kind of dynamic marking other than *mezzo-forte*, "medium loud."

To the young composer of today I would like to say emphatically: *Do not wall yourself up!* Drop the systems. Avoid the schools. Become yourself. Have the courage to go out into the world to express yourself. Do not aim to become an intentional minor composer, try to be like Beethoven, or Bach, or Brahms, powerful and great. It doesn't matter who. You may lean on them in the beginning, but, as you study and absorb them, you will gradually become yourself. Do not be afraid of either discord, or concord; nor must you be frightened of appearing, in some measure or another, like another composer. Beethoven did not create the world anew in the beginning, nor did the Mozart he first imitated create the world anew with the Haydn *he* first imitated. You will eventually develop a style through not looking for it. But you must work, work. You must not be afraid of the word "facile." Beethoven was facile. Mozart wrote a hundred symphonies. God knows how many works the great Bach wrote.

Above all, *try to make your music a human language*, make it *your* language and that of your fellow human beings about you. Then it must follow that sooner or later you will accumulate a public—assuming that our country now takes some step upward out of its smugness —and most, if not all, of your troubles will be over.

Can Writers Teach Writers?

GRANVILLE HICKS

A COUPLE of years ago, I discussed in these pages the question of the teacher as writer and the writer as teacher. After examining the advantages and disadvantages of the academic life for a writer, I reached the conclusion that teaching and writing could be combined, although there would always be difficulties of adjustment. I also concluded, with somewhat greater conviction, that writers, if the circumstances were propitious, could make a substantial contribution to the educational process.

Since writing the article, I have participated in an experiment in the teaching of writing that lies quite outside conventional academic activities. Last summer, as a lecturer at the Pacific Northwest Writers' Conference, I discovered a type of mass adult education that I had never encountered before.

The oldest of the writers' conferences is that which has been held at Bread Loaf, Vermont, under the auspices of Middlebury College, for the past twenty-three years. The first of the western conferences was held at Boulder, Colorado, in 1934. The Pacific Northwest Writers' Conference, sponsored by the University of Washington, has now been in existence for four years. The Utah Writers' Conference held a session in 1947 and plans another for 1949. The University of Kansas conducted a conference in 1948.

Methods vary from conference to conference, but every conference seems to be in part a school for writers and in part a vacation with cultural trimmings. The Bread Loaf Conference, which is in session for two weeks, limits its enrollment to 125, and has two classes of students, contributors and auditors, with the latter, who do not submit manuscripts, usually in the majority. The Rocky Mountain Conference, which lasted for three weeks in 1948, neither limits the enrollment nor divides the enrollees into sheep and goats, but it does build its program around the various workshops for practicing writers. The Pacific Northwest Writers' Conference crowds its sessions into five days, with the emphasis on lectures rather than workshops.

At Seattle, and no doubt at the other conferences, the enrollee gets a lot, quantitatively speaking at any rate, for his money. Last summer, the Seattle day began at 8.40 with a symposium in which local authors and critics took part. Lectures on nonfiction and drama followed. After a luncheon at which visiting editors and publishers spoke came the lectures on fiction and poetry. There was a tea every afternoon, and every evening there was either an open meeting or a seminar. Conscientious members—and conscientiousness seemed to be a common virtue—were talked to for approximately seven hours every day.

Although I was glad of a chance to cross the continent and eager to see a writers' conference in action, I approached my Seattle assignment with a fair share of misgivings. Skepticism was intensified when I saw the crowded program and learned that an attendance of more than two hundred was expected. It seemed to me certain that there would be too many people and the wrong kind of people: people who thought it must be such fun to write, people who had been told they wrote lovely letters, people who had been given an "A" in college or maybe high-school English. And I anticipated, in addition to all the well-meaning amateurs, a certain number of not-so-amiable professionals, who had sold bits of verse and prose and were convinced that they could break into big money if they only knew the password.

Worst of all, I was dubious about the very aims of the conference. Quite possibly, it seemed to me, the country would be better off if conferences were held for the discouragement of writers. Anyone who has worked on a magazine or has read manuscripts for a publisher has some idea of the vast amount of manifestly unpublishable stuff that is written every year, much of it because nobody has had courage enough to tell its perpetrators the truth. And, of course, a great deal of what does get published is unadulterated trash. To hold a conference for "writers," I felt, was to cast much too wide a net: most of the fish one caught should, by rights, be thrown back.

None of my fears was unwarranted, and yet I soon came to feel that the conference was worth holding. Every conference, as I have said, is something more than a

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course of instruction for men and women who are or want to be writers, and the Seattle conference is in a peculiar degree this something more. It is, in fact, a kind of cultural field day; for some members, even, a cultural binge. As I had anticipated, there were only a few talented, serious, hard-working writers at the conference, and there were many persons, most of them amateurs but some of them professionals in the more derogatory sense of the term, who might well have been thrown back. What amazed me was the discovery that many members were writers only as almost any literate American is, at least potentially, a writer. Probably most of them had ideas—a subject for a biography, a theme for a novel—but they had not really been bitten by the bug. They had come to the conference, not because they expected to learn how to write or wanted to learn how to sell, but because they were eager for intellectual stimulation.

If I had been told all this in advance, I should have been even more dubious about the conference. What I learned on the spot, however, convinced me that in large measure the conference was justified because it was a field day. For one thing, the persons who had come for cultural stimulation were often intelligent, well informed about literature, and much less narrow in their interests than those who itched to be published—anywhere, anyhow. And in the second place, I perceived that these persons were getting something at the conference that they wanted and needed.

THE situation becomes comprehensible as soon as one really learns to appreciate the cultural isolation of the Pacific Northwest. A Chicago poet, exiled for a time in Seattle, pointed out gloomily that the city has the highest suicide rate in the country. "It's the last thousand miles," he said, "that does it."

I became conscious of the problem, to begin with, in practical ways. In the seminars devoted to nonfiction, there were the inevitable questions about selling ideas, being commissioned to write articles, and so on. I explained that I didn't live in New York and went to the city rather rarely, but there was no denying that I went when I needed to, and I soon realized that I could offer no substitute for personal contact with editors. Even the most talented of these people were handicapped, not hopelessly so, but handicapped so long as they stayed in the Northwest. "How can I get published without an agent," one of them would ask, "and how can I get an agent if I haven't been published?" "How can I do any book reviewing that amounts to anything when all the influential literary journals are published in New York?" "If you have been asked to revise a manuscript, doesn't it help to talk things over with the editor or publisher?" It was easy enough to say that these difficulties had from time to time been overcome, but that didn't mean that they didn't exist.

I came to see, moreover, that the problems of practicing writers were merely symptoms, and I began to wonder how eastern authors would feel if London were still the publishing center of the English-speaking world; if every manuscript had to cross the ocean, and if its fate depended not only on publishers but also on critics who were three thousand miles away. Some writers wouldn't mind; some writers—William Faulkner is apparently one of them—thrive on isolation. But others, probably the majority, would have an unpleasant sense of helplessness. They would feel that they were second-class citizens in the republic of letters, the underprivileged of the literary world. Nor would writers alone be affected; anyone who cared for literature, unless his devotion was of the purest and most abstract kind, would feel and resent his remoteness from the center of intellectual life.

Because this is a large country, and because publishing is concentrated in the East and specifically in New York City, there are vast areas that have just such a sense of isolation and consequently of inferiority. Attempts to build up regional centers of culture have failed. Regional magazines seldom last long, and the publishing houses that spring up here and there in the West cannot compete with the New York publishers. It is true that several New York houses have set up editorial offices on the Coast, but, naturally, in California. That is a lot better than nothing so far as California is concerned, but it doesn't help much in Colorado, Utah, Washington, or Kansas. To be a thousand miles from the sub-capital is about as bad as to be three thousand miles from the capital.

Obviously this is why the writers' conference has not only thrived in the West but has tended to take on a new form. Although writers' conferences have not initiated regional revivals, as some persons hoped they would, they have served a real purpose. They are not an answer to the cultural concentration in the East, but they are in

some degree an antidote. They do not wipe out the isolation of the West, but they may mitigate some of its consequences.

It was in this light that I learned to judge the Pacific Northwest Writers' Conference last summer and came to regard it as a success. Looking first at the conference's stated purpose, I would say that it couldn't possibly have done writers any harm and should have done them some good. If there was among the two hundred members one playwright of promise, he must have profited greatly by John Van Druten's candid and vivid analysis of his own experiences. If there was a poet, a real poet, he must have responded to the integrity of William Carlos Williams, even if he quarreled with Williams' whole conception of poetry. And I know, from talking with some of

them, that the people who were trying to write fiction acquired a new respect for the job from the hard-headed craftsmanship of Allan Seager. None of these men gave any comfort to slovenly amateurs or mercenary professionals. They talked seriously about serious matters, and they had the serious attention of their audiences. If these audiences contained men and women of talent, they must have been gainers.

If, however, not one person became a better writer as a result of the conference, which seems to me altogether unlikely, I still say that it was a success. My own engagements made it impossible for me to attend all of my colleagues' lectures, but I listened to each of them at least once, and to all of them with profit, if not as a writer, then certainly as a reader. They talked thoughtfully and candidly about what it is a writer tries to do, and it is good for any reader to hear that kind of talk. Whatever else they were doing, they were creating a more intelligent, a more perceptive appreciation of literature.

So striking was the value of the conference on this, the appreciative, side that I found myself wondering whether it wouldn't be a good idea to forget about writers' conferences and simply hold conferences for readers. But such a gathering might easily get lost in generalities, whereas the Seattle conference was given a definite focus, both for the lecturers and for the members, by the assumption of a common interest in problems of writing. Robert Penn Warren has said that the only way to teach people how to write is to teach them how to read. Perhaps the contrary is true and the best way to teach people how to read is to teach them how to write—or, at least, how to think about writing as a writer does.

The conference was not merely an intensive course in the appreciation of literature; it was also a cultural event, and it was quite right that it should be. A couple of hundred persons, some of whom were or hoped to be writers, had an opportunity not only to see and hear but also to meet writers who have a certain standing in the literary community. They also met, in addition to the imported authors, various residents of the Pacific Northwest who have overcome in one way or another the Northwest's handicaps. They listened to editors and publishers, and even if the publishers gave bad advice, as I think most of them did, they were there in the flesh, emissaries from the cultural capital or its California branch. Finally, each member was in daily association with persons who had interests like his own. For a week Seattle became a kind of literary center.

Admittedly there is something artificial about all this, but so is there something abnormal about the concentration of literary activity on the eastern seaboard. In any rational scheme of things Seattle would be a literary capital in its own right, but since it isn't and isn't likely to be, drastic measures are justified.

And this particular measure does work. One hundred enrollees filled out a questionnaire, and all of them said that they had found the conference valuable enough so that they would recommend it to others, and all of them said they hoped to come back next year. They spoke of the lectures, the talks with editors and publishers, "meeting people also interested in writing," the teas and the all-day cruise, "the wide variety of interests represented," the "helpfulness of everyone," "the friendly atmosphere," and so forth. A particularly enthusiastic member wrote to the secretary of the conference: "If I had to scrap all the weeks of my life except one, I would hold on to the one of July 19th to 24th."

PERHAPS it will be granted that writers' conferences do have value for their members, but it may still seem extraordinary that so many distinguished authors have been willing to co-operate. During the fifteen years of its existence, the Rocky Mountain Conference has built up an impressive list of lecturers, among them Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost, Sherwood Anderson, Dorothy Parker, Thomas Wolfe and Robert Penn Warren. J. Donald Adams, Robert Van Gelder and Eudora Welty have taken part in earlier Seattle conferences. Allen Tate, Caroline Gordon, Eric Bentley, Mark Schorer and William Carlos Williams served on the staff of the 1947 conference in Salt Lake City. The fees that the various conferences pay are not high enough to explain the presence of these writers, some of whom customarily receive more for a

single lecture than a conference pays for a week's or even a fortnight's labors. What does attract them?

I would not suggest that every teacher at a writers' conference is motivated by pure idealism. Many of the lecturers must be attracted, as I was, by an opportunity to see an unfamiliar section of the country. Lecturing at a conference is no vacation, but it is a change, and for my part I was happy to have an excuse for crossing the continent.

On the other hand, I don't know that one should look merely for selfish motives, in the narrower meaning of that phrase. Most writers have a sense of public responsibility, and some have a kind of missionary zeal. One of my colleagues last summer, William Carlos Williams, made it quite clear that he believed in the importance of poetry and in the rightness of his conceptions of poetry. I think he differs from other poets, and from other serious writers in general, only by being less cautious and self-protective than most of them.

The average author has a natural desire to pass on what he has learned about his craft, if only so that he can help others to avoid his mistakes. Now any author is very fortunate if he finds disciples of promise at a writers' conference, and I gather that some visiting lecturers have been acutely disappointed on just that score. On the other hand, even one really able student can make a teacher feel that his time isn't being wasted. Furthermore, many participating writers must come to realize, as I did, that they aren't merely offering instruction in a craft but are also participating in a cultural experiment.

Most eastern writers do know that the cultural concentration in New York City is unhealthy, even though it works out to their immediate advantage. They don't, I am sure, have any smug feeling that it is their duty to go out and enlighten the heathen of the West, but when a letter comes along saying, "You could be of great help to us," many writers must say to themselves, "Well, if I could be of help, I'd like to be." Then they add, "Besides, I ought to know what's going on out there."

The fact that several eminent and hard-working authors have taken part in more than one conference does seem to indicate that they find the experience rewarding. Certainly I did. Speaking personally, I would place first on the list of rewards the pleasures of association with my colleagues, certain members of the University of Washington faculty, and a couple of native authors of the Northwest. It sounds paradoxical to say that what I enjoyed most when I traveled three thousand miles to Seattle was association with other writers, since that is just what is supposed to be available in the East. The explanation, however, is simple, for even in New York—and none of the four lecturers actually came from that city—writers need solitude if they are going to write, and such social life as they have is usually confined to narrow circles. Easterners have the advantage in that literary contacts are available when they need them, and therefore they don't feel isolated; but they can still take pleasure—or at any rate I can—in making new acquaintances.

In the second place, I gained new perspectives. As a decentralist of sorts, I have long been conscious of the evils of cultural concentration, and I did not have to journey to Seattle to learn that New York is not America. Yet the fact is that I have lived in the East all my life and been pretty smug about it. Though I knew the problem existed, it looked different when I saw it from the West Coast end. I have from time to time lamented the detachment of the urban intellectuals from the world of the nonintellectual majority. I am now ready to confess that horizontal or geographical detachment is a bad thing too—the detachment of eastern intellectuals from the world that lies beyond the Alleghenies. I profited, and I think the detached urban intellectuals would profit, from the concrete realization of all that lies, geographically and spiritually, between the coasts.

It was also good to be teaching again, and I renewed my conviction that part-time or intermittent teaching is valuable for almost every writer. Writers seldom formulate their principles and their methods except under the kind of pressure that is created by the necessity to teach. Your ideas take on a different look when you have to explain and defend them, and you begin to wonder about a lot of things that you have taken for granted. When you know your listeners are testing what you say by what you have written, you have to be sure that you are telling the truth, without any fancy generalizations, and the truth isn't always what you believed or hoped it was. The experience is chastening, and yet at the same time it is fun to talk and be talked back to.

There is, I gather, considerable variation among conferences, and maybe I was just lucky, but I did feel all through the week that I was taking part in an event of some significance, and it still seems to me that the conference was a happy expression of the vitality of American culture. Of course there was some ballyhoo, some pretentious talk, some blatant commercialism. A few of the customers, I am afraid, were dull-witted, and others were just plain silly. The planners of the conference, however, deliberately hit a high level, and most of the members were able to stand the altitude.

Every noon, as I have said, there was a luncheon at which publishers and editors spoke. Some of the publishers seemed to be intoxicated by the fact that they were talking to a lot of beginners, who would presumably give their shirts to break into print, and they were more than commonly frank. They sang the old song about printing costs, and they said that authors had blame well better be co-operative, co-operation being defined as an obliging nearsightedness when contracts were being drawn up and a lofty indifference to royalties. Worse than that, some of the publishers—not all of them—directed the beginning writers to give the public what it wanted and even outlined specifications.

I cannot be sure that these publishers made no impres-

sion, but at least they did not go unanswered, and, as a matter of fact, the conference itself was a refutation of their commercialism. It was not high-brow, to be sure, in any esoteric, *avant-garde* sense, but it did operate on the assumption that literature is different from and more important than the comics, say, or radio serials. Without ignoring the economics of authorship, it stood squarely for literary values. It was, in short, the sort of thing that the Pacific Northwest, because of its isolation, peculiarly needs, but any region in the country could have profited from such a conference and could have been proud of sponsoring it.

JOCELYN BROOKE

THE EMPTY HOUSE

THE house is empty at last:
  Sunlight and sea
Foreclose on their ancient mortgage,
  And sudden, fancy-free

The wind like a prying bailiff
  Explores with restless fingers
Each empty, desolate room
  Or, furtive, lingers

To stir the ribboned paper
  Hanging from the blank wall,
Or the leaf blown in from the garden;
  Or rattles the tall

Blind windows, bearing once more
  Into swept and barren rooms
The breath of wallflowers, the sour
  Hot scent of geraniums.

No ghosts walk in these rooms:
  There is nothing here
For a ghost to feed on, only
  The blank and sudden stare

Of a face in the cracked mirror
  Distracts the woman stealing
With a lost air through the void
  And hostile spaces, feeling

The past fused with the present;
  And strained to apprehend
The faint and marginal noises
  Of the exploring wind.

But now the shattered mirror
  Reflects no face, and only
The stealthy sunbeam forces
  An entrance, and the lonely,

Strayed leaf is stirred again
  By the soft, prying claws
Of the bailiff-wind, an intruder
  Beneath closed doors.

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The Shriek of the Gull

PETER DE POLNAY

SOON after the second world war I traveled on a small, dirty Greek ship in the Mediterranean. She was no more than two thousand tons and from a distance she must have looked like a minor sunrise on account of her rusty sides. She was ample proof of the void caused by the tonnage sunk during the war: in normal conditions nobody in his right mind would have traveled on her. I went on her from Marseille to Beirut; it was late November, winter gales blew, and the day we sailed the hot water system broke down. So said the captain, but probably it was a story he put out at the beginning of every voyage. On the other hand, the food was excellent which, after wartime England, made one almost ready to forgive the many inconveniences.

The passengers were somehow like the ship herself. A rusty lot of middle-aged people who shivered and complained. They included two know-all Egyptians who laid down the law and cadged drinks. There was also a Lebanese lawyer. He had discovered Anatole France and spoke of him and his writing the whole day long. The moment the ship left Marseille, the third-class passengers began to make free use of the first-class deck and lounge. There was nothing wrong in that, provided one was willing to forget that they had the same advantages, whatever they were, at half the price. Most of the shivering, rusty first-class passengers refused to forget that. The voyage I should soon have forgotten, with all its nuisances and the bad weather, had a man called Fred Trevor not thrown himself overboard on the second day out, that is to say, in the Malta Channel.

He was a third-class passenger of the timid kind who came only seldom into the first, and if he had not gone into the cold sea, my memory would have remained blank where he was concerned. But men have that thing about them that they become alive, pathetic and quite unforgettable once they are dead. So, when I heard of his jumping overboard, I recollected that he had been around forty-five, insignificant, with a reddish face but a nice smile, and that he used to wear a raincoat of a thin material which made him look as if he would freeze any minute. We had twice exchanged words, for, although he hardly ever used the first-class lounge, he spent plenty of time on the first-class deck, which was a small, sordid affair, and near the lifeboats there was no railing at all. The words we had spoken were of no significance. Not even death gave them ulterior importance. True, he had told me it was a good thing that the war was over, but that became a contradictory remark when it became known that he had not fallen overboard as the steward who told me of the accident suggested, but had thrown himself into the sea. Why, I wondered, should a man who was glad that the war was over take his life?

There was on the ship a Mr. Freemantle. He was thin, pale and sported double chins which did not go well with his lean face. Mr. Freemantle had become the hero of the ship, since it was Mr. Freemantle who saw Trevor throw himself overboard. The double chins were forgotten and quite forgiven, if one thought of them all. The two first-class stewards had been full of the story the morning after Trevor's jump, and it was only at breakfast that Mr. Freemantle delivered himself of the tragic tale. He made it sound almost picturesque, and while he told it he seemed to insinuate that he, the mere spectator, deserved praise because of his mere presence on the scene of the tragedy. He was a traveler for a Yorkshire firm of boiler makers; he was smug, unreservedly admired himself, but wasn't bad at telling a story. I felt certain that when he returned to Yorkshire he would tell of Trevor's death at every gathering of the local Rotarians.

He had, so he said, gone to his cabin around eleven o'clock in order to undress and lie down to rest. That took some time in telling. When he had undressed and was on the verge of getting into his bunk he discovered he had a slight headache, so he decided to dress again, put on a coat and a scarf round his neck, and go into the fresh air. He didn't think much of aspirin, which was a form of dope too, but he was devoted to fresh air. (He drank a little coffee and we waited in suspense.) He came on deck, a sixty-mile-an-hour gale was blowing, but he was a good sailor and was on friendly terms with the elements. A few clouds were in the sky; so was the moon too. Generally speaking, it was a spooky night, not that Mr. Freemantle believed in spooks. (He spread marmalade on his bread.) He took a deck chair which he placed

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behind the chartroom facing one of the lifeboats as it was comparatively calm there. He sat, thought, smoked his pipe; the moon rode in the sky and the ship on the high waves.

"And just then," said Mr. Freemantle, leaning forward and the three chins hanging like three shriveled bags, "Trevor came up. I heard somebody coming, but I thought it would be some seaman of the watch or something. But it was Trevor, in his raincoat. He ran past me, stopped for a second beside the boat, and then shouted: 'Aurelie, I am coming.' Then he jumped. You can all imagine how surprised I was. Steward! Another cup of coffee please! I was petrified, but not for a second did I lose control of myself. I ran to the boat, looked overboard, but saw nothing. Only the waves. Then I ran to the officer of the watch. I must say they were all efficient. Of course, I did all I could to help. The ship turned round, they put out a boat. I wish I'd gone with them, because I have very good eyes in the dark, but I didn't. Anyway they never saw him again." He rambled on about himself for quite a while.

"Tell me, Mr. Freemantle," asked a Mrs. Miller, who was elderly, read a novel a day and had a husband in oil in Bagdad, "what was that shouting like? I mean, what did it sound like?"

"It sounded," said Mr. Freemantle, for once forgetting himself, "like the shriek of a gull."

Later, on deck, I asked him whether he was absolutely certain that Trevor had called out the name Aurelie, which was rather an uncommon one. "Positive," he said. "In thirty-eight I backed a winner called Aurelius. So the name was familiar."

BY the time our floating Greek wreck reached Beirut I knew as much as there was to be known of Trevor. The captain, who was worried about his owners' reactions, probed deep into Trevor's past life. Everything he had possessed was examined carefully. As nowadays one is a walking pigeonhole of the file of one's own case history, a certain amount came to light. He was a natural born British subject, forty-six years old, born in Bolton, Lancashire. His paybook, which he'd had with him, said he had served with the Ninth Army most of the war, had been twice in hospital, campaigns two, conduct very good. He was discharged as a staff sergeant nine months before his death. He also had a French identity card according to which he was domiciled in Marseille, lived in a street behind the station, was married, had two children, and had been a resident in France for many years before the war. His prewar job was to represent a Marseille ship chandler on board English and American ships that came to the port. In fact, he was a ship chandler's errand boy and interpreter.

I had to agree with the captain, who knew such things inside out, that a man who could come aboard, as Trevor had done, from a small boat, in heavy seas, with only a rope ladder dangling from the side of a rolling ship, could not have fallen into the deep by accident. His sea legs must have been as good as those of any seaman. He went overboard because he wished to; but why did he wish to?

Trevor had made friends among some of the passengers and told them he was going to Bagdad, where he had been during the war and had many pals, one of whom had promised him a job. His family would follow if the job came through. There was no future for him in Marseille, he was sick of the place, and, in any case, he had fallen in love with the Middle East. What with his being glad that the war was over, and his being sick of Marseille and now luckily away from it, there was truly no reason for him to have given himself to the sea. And

because there was no reason, everybody tried to while away the tedium of the voyage by inventing one.

According to the Egyptians, who knew everything, he had fallen in love with a woman called Aurelie, and she having repulsed his advances, he preferred death to a broken heart. The uncle of one of the Egyptians had had a similar experience. He fell in love with a cabaret girl in Alexandria, she preferred a richer man, he jumped into the shallow sea at Casino Santo Stefano, was fished out and spent a week in bed. Mrs. Miller and the old folk were of the opinion that Aurelie was the name of his wife, who had left him for another man. The usual story: he came back from the war, found his wife living with somebody else, thought he could get over it by going far away, but couldn't. That theory was popular till we anchored off Pyraeus, but by the time we reached Alexandria a different conclusion was reached. It was Mr. Freemantle's, and since he had, so to speak, a stake in Trevor, it was accepted as final. Trevor, on the threshold of a new life, had lost courage. During the war his mind was made up for him by his superiors, sense of initiative had left him, his old Marseille life to which he longed to return was no longer there, and now on his way to start anew his nerve went and he committed suicide while the balance of his mind was disturbed. Probably he recovered in the cold water, but it was too late. With the three double chins wet from the Middle Eastern sun, Mr. Freemantle knew he had made out a good case.

"But where does Aurelie come in?" I asked.

"The name of his wife, who after all he did desert when he went potty, or it might have been that horse after all. You know Aurelius? Won the Cambridgeshire just before the war. A good horse. Perhaps he backed him too. Was so excited before he jumped overboard that he must have mispronounced his name."

Mr. Freemantle was pleased with himself, and two days later I went ashore in Beirut, leaving behind me not only ship and passengers but Trevor too.

ON my way back to England in the following summer, I became stranded in Marseille owing to a railwaymen's strike. No trains were running, planes were booked up for weeks ahead, and all there was for me to do was to wait for the strikers to resume work. The first two days were comparatively amusing: on the third day, however, boredom set in. One hates to be in any town against one's will, and under such circumstances one refuses to make plans—in short, one has no intention of enjoying oneself. I stayed in bed in the mornings as long as I could, read the papers, but took interest only in the strike news. When I went out, I sat down before the first café, and, bored, watched the people in the street. I chose a restaurant at random, but didn't enjoy the food. In the afternoons I returned to the hotel; I tried to sleep, but found it too hot. Toward the evening, I walked the streets, which were dusty, and the atmosphere was close. Each street looked the same because I carried my boredom and impatience into each of them. On the fifth day, the concierge of my hotel told me that the strike was over and, though no night trains were running as yet, rail traffic would start again the following morning; thus, I could leave Marseille. Marseille suddenly became an enjoyable town for me.

I went for a long walk, taking interest and delight in the people, the houses and the streets. I didn't know the town well and my local geography was hazy; therefore, I was surprised when, entering a street haphazardly, the name of the street appeared familiar. As I looked at the name, I saw before me a French identity card with the same name. Frederic Trevor on top of the card. Facing me was the house he had lived in. I had nothing to do, the whole late afternoon and evening were before me, and the insignificant man in the thin raincoat became fresh in my memory; and fresh too was his death, and the many theories and arguments of my fellow passengers on the rotten Greek ship. I went into the house, which smelt of cats, and asked the concierge, who was fat and dirty, if Mrs. Trevor lived there. She told me to go to the third floor and her door was the second left in the corridor. The concierge hardly looked up from her paper while she delivered herself of the information, then returned to it avidly as though it had been a sacrifice to look up from it even for a moment. The house was a sordid building, and when I came out on the open iron corridor which went round the courtyard, I at once saw a lot of noisy children, plenty of washing and people shouting at each other from opposite ends of the corridor. The heat of the town seemed to be sitting motionless between the walls. There was no need for me to knock on Mrs. Trevor's door: it was open and it was the door of her kitchen. A plain, fat woman in a dirty apron and slippers stood in the kitchen, trying to peer at me, which was difficult because the sun was behind me. She was untidy, though evidently she'd had a permanent wave not long ago, for her gray hair was almost starchlike. The nose was long and the face mean and weak. If she were Aurelie then it was completely inexplicable why Trevor had thrown himself into the sea. I knew I should never dare to ask her for her Christian name. It was better to hope it wasn't.

"Mrs. Trevor?" I asked.

"Yes," she said. Her voice was soft and her English was that of the expatriate. Once it had been Lancashire.

I told her I had traveled with her husband on the Greek ship and how upset and sorry I was when he was drowned. I used the word drowned, as it sounded neutral and was in an inverted sense innocent of tragedy. I felt a fool while I spoke and ashamed too, since I had no business to call on her and it wasn't fair to come to her in order to satisfy my curiosity. Mrs. Trevor took a different view.

"It's very kind of you to come and see me," she cried. "Come into the parlor, sir. I'm so glad you've come."

She spoke quickly, yet carefully, choosing her words. There was forced refinement in her soft voice. She must have been a schoolmistress, I suspected, before she came to live in Marseille. The parlor was extremely untidy. There was much children's underwear on the two decrepit, oilcloth-covered armchairs. There were two prints on the wall: one was a view of Buxton, and the other a hunting scene, which, on closer inspection, had been cut out from a Christmas number of the *Illustrated London News*. Mrs. Trevor had already taken off her apron and pushed it under the sofa, with the children's underwear following.

"Isn't it lucky," she said, "that I came home so early from the office? I'd have been ever so sorry if I had missed you. I am working in an office, doing the *correspondance anglaise*. I'm very lucky to have that job; it isn't easy to get jobs, and the children of course need me because poor Freddie left nothing. Mind you there was nothing to leave. I was here, you know, during the Boche occupation. The Boche didn't arrest me. Nobody knows why they didn't, but it was really because my neighbor, Mme Fermi, was so helpful. I don't know how I'd have got on without her, and now she's such a help too. Takes the children with her when she goes to the *marché* in the mornings, she does my chores too and now she's out with them too. I'm so very sorry but there's no wine here. I never drink, I'm sure you're thirsty. It's ever so kind of you to have come."

"Not at all," I said.

"It was such a terrible shock when the ship's agent came to tell me that poor Freddie had been washed overboard. It must have been very bad weather. I was always afraid of the sea. I used to hate the Channel crossings too. When the *Maréchal* made the armistice with the Boche, or perhaps it was a little before that, the consul here said we must all evacuate, but I stayed here because I'm so afraid of sea crossings. Besides, they weren't *drôle*, those bombings in England, were they?

"No, they weren't," I said.

She rose, went into the kitchen and came back with a packet of cigarettes. She offered me one and we lit up. She took three deep puffs: she was enjoying her cigarette.

"But I was very lucky," she said. "When the agent came, I cried so much that he was sorry for me and said he would help me to get a job, because I needed one as I was now my children's only support. He was a very kind Greek gentleman and he got me my job."

"How many children have you, Mrs. Trevor?" I asked. I remembered she had two, but I didn't know quite what to say.

"Two. A boy and a girl. Didn't Freddie tell you?"

"Oh, we never discussed personal matters. You know," I said, with a vague gesture, "what it's like on a ship."

"It's incredible," she said. "He was so proud of the children. He always showed their photo. He was very proud of them. He often told me, when he came back, that during the war it just broke his heart to be away from them. He joined up at the beginning of the war. He'd no reason to join up, but he was a patriotic man and a bit restless. Did you notice that he was very restless?"

"Perhaps I did," I said, and wished I had known Trevor better. Anyway, he must have been pretty restless when he threw himself overboard.

"That was his trouble," she said. "Restless. He was always like that. I often used to say to Mme Fermi, who'd come to live here at the beginning of the war, so they didn't meet till the war was over and he was demobbed, that my only complaint against my husband was that he was restless. He could have got a job here, but no, he must go to Bagdad and get one there. I didn't want him to go, but Mme Fermi said to me, if a man wants a thing one must let him have it. Her husband was killed by the Boche. She's such a stand-by. Look, here they come."

Mme Fermi was a fat woman, taking up almost the entire space between wall and iron railing as she progressed toward the parlor. The children were around twelve years old. The girl looked a bit like her father. Mrs. Trevor, in unbelievably quick French, explained to Mme Fermi that I was a friend of her late husband and had been on the ship from which he was washed overboard. I had by then a certain respect for the tactfulness of the Greek agent. When her mother finished, the girl burst into tears; Mme Fermi took her in her arms and after a few seconds the tears stopped. The small room was now crowded and all I wanted was to be gone.

"Monsieur is surely very thirsty," said Mme Fermi. "I will get him a glass of wine."

"Please don't bother," I said. "I must go."

"First you must have a glass of wine," Mme Fermi said.

She was a calm person, and, while she was fetching the wine, she must have known that I wouldn't leave in the meantime. She moved unhurried. While she was gone, Mrs. Trevor asked me several times to sit down. I ignored that. The children gaped at me, which made me feel uncomfortable. But Mme Fermi returned with a bottle of wine and two glasses. She must have known that all Mrs. Trevor's glasses were dirty. She poured out the wine which was cool and harsh.

"She thinks of everything," said Mrs. Trevor.

Mme Fermi turned to me: her face was fat, red with health and the lipstick was generous on her large mouth. Her forehead was smooth and her eyes were calm and beautiful. They were light brown: almost hazel.

"*Alors*," she said, "monsieur was on the ship?"

"Yes," I said.

"It was so very good of him to come and look me up," said Mrs. Trevor. "It's such a consolation."

"Monsieur," asked Mme Fermi, "there was a very big storm, wasn't there, when he drowned?"

"Yes," I said. "Very heavy seas."

"So when he fell into the sea he must have drowned at once?"

"Oh, yes," I said. "He must have drowned at once."

"I always told you that," said Mme Fermi to Mrs. Trevor.

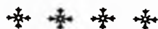
"I knew he didn't suffer."

"She's such a help," said Mrs. Trevor. "I don't know what we'd have done without her."

"I got," said Mme Fermi, "some fish. It was difficult to get it. So I'll give it to the children, and you can go to the cinema. I'm going to put it on. Good-by, Monsieur."

"It's such a good film," said Mrs. Trevor to me. "At the office, I was told it's simply *passionnant*." I had risen and began to take my leave. Mrs. Trevor turned to Mme Fermi, who, with the glasses, was making toward the open door through which came the continuous bursts of the courtyard's noises. "Thank you, dear Aurelie. what would one do without you?"

I said good-by, Mrs. Trevor thanked me for having come till I reached the stairs. The concierge was still reading vehemently. Across the street was a wine shop into which I went and gulped down the first drink that came to hand.



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NIGHTLIFE AND DAYLIGHT

HAROLD CLURMAN

THE MARCH OF MEDIOCRITY

I HAVE never altogether understood why people admire the kid in Hans Christian Andersen's tale who cried out that the emperor was naked. What else could she do? The emperor *was* naked. Far more extraordinary was the populace that could assert that the emperor was clothed. They not only made the assertion; they were able to describe the magnificence of the clothes.

There are people who maintain that we have a theatre. They do more than that: they find no difficulty in expatiating on the fine productions we see at frequent intervals (twice a month presumably), the fabulous acting, the amazing feats of imagination that our directors, designers and producers are constantly displaying. Do not imagine that the capacity to say these things is due only to ignorance. No, it bespeaks hope, kindheartedness, a will to believe. Such hearty optimism and good will deserve applause.

Of course, we find it necessary to be careful where we dispense our faculty for enthusiasm. Let an Experimental Theatre do a Brecht play and many of the professional boosters become chary of praise. Let a struggling group of youngsters put on a revival of a play like Cumming's *him* and only three or four reviewers will take the pains to see it. We are eager to encourage movie stars whose names alone guarantee a play an advance sale of $150,000. A Bergman (lovely lady!) is saluted as if she were a new Duse.

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First there was Bobby Clark in *As the Girls Go*. Bobby Clark is a highly gifted clown. He has a scampish humor. He manipulates a cigar, twirls a cane, pops in and out of odd corners with a zany grace and an off-beat precision the like of which has become rare in these days when there is no vaudeville to serve as a training ground for the art of buffoonery. Bobby Clark's scalawaggery is typically American. Very few of our playwrights express so many of our native habits of mind as this cartoon of a man.

Bobby Clark presents the hilarious, and to me slightly frightening, image of the small town businessman on a drunken spree—a combination of Harry Truman and Mickey Mouse. He is the proper little salesman grown bold, devilish, obscenely impertinent. He has roamed away from his (and our) respectability to disport himself with cunning looseness so that all may see what we would be like if we were all given our freedom and had run away to join the circus. He is the life of the party at our small bars, Pullman parlor cars and hotel conventions.

What do such men do, and what do they dream? They play high jinks with the propriety to which they are ordinarily expected to pay tribute; they dream of cavorting with foolish abandon in a world wholly inhabited by the voluptuous females that decorate our lewder advertisements for soft drinks, ladies' wearing apparel and inexpensive soaps.

Michael Todd has seen to it that such a feminine constellation—emblem of the small businessman's imagination—should be provided by *As the Girls Go*. It is a leg show with Bobby Clark. I admire Bobby Clark and I like the legs which have been abundantly supplied by the management to go with him. I even think it rather honest of the producer to have eschewed all shilly-shallying in the way of book, songs, dancing—and come to the point. But I think $6.60 is too high a price for a burlesque show. And reviewers should stop pretending that what they saw at the Winter Garden is a new musical comedy. After all, Bobby Clark, though always welcome, and, tall, trim, smooth girls in bathing suits, though perennially delightful, are not altogether a novelty.

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I will not quarrel with you if you enjoy Moss Hart's *Light Up the Sky*. It is in the tradition of such plays as *The Butter and Egg Man, Room Service, Once in a Lifetime*. It is not as deft or funny as the latter show (*Light Up the Sky* is about "legitimate" show business, not about the movies), but that is no great matter since *Once*

in a Lifetime is dead and gone, and *Light Up the Sky* is here. The tradition is a permanent one in the American theatre and there will always be a place for it. I do not believe, however, that *Light Up the Sky* is a genuine comedy, a satire or a commentary on anything. Not that it has to be: it is frankly an entertainment for those who relish that sort of thing—and obviously their number is legion. Moreover it is well done by an able cast. My point is that there is no need to take it seriously as a piece of theatre—even of the lighter sort.

Since this may sound much too hoity-toity for some tastes, I must pause to explain myself. *Light Up the Sky* is a partly "straight," partly farcical account of the behavior of people who put on an "important" play in New York. The producer is a not unamiable racketeer with a genius for money and a sneaking respect for art and beauty. His wife is a tough but honest Philistine who has made a fortune as a skater. Then there is a silly-ass director full of phony attitudes about the theatre, a slut of a star accompanied by a nincompoop husband and a colossally vulgar mother. These people surround a sensitive, sober and thoroughly real young man who has written his first play—supposedly something of genuine merit. *Light Up the Sky* tells how these professionals all but destroy the spirit of the young author until they are obliged to co-operate with him because his play may prove to be a hit, while he in turn learns to forgive them.

The compulsion to make this story a smash hit, to pepper the material with gags rather than to let the comedy emerge from the basic life of the situation deprives the play of any intrinsic truth. There can be no question of satire here, because in satire you must be forthright about the thing you hate. But if the characters in *Light Up the Sky* were portrayed as hateful, audiences would cease to laugh in the unthinking manner demanded of a hit show.

If we are to love the play's characters despite their failings, they would have to be real people, which means people complex enough to have particular qualities and talents aside from those that make them easily recognizable stock figures out of the gossip columns. We should have to believe that the producer really is a man of true flair; the director somehow an artist (albeit a spoiled one), the actress something more humanly creative than just an inane fraud. Such characterizations might lead us to believe that despite their foibles these people were capable of lighting up the sky—even somewhere off Broadway. But this is beyond the scope of the author's intention, which is simply to put his show over by pleasing the kind of audience that leaps from the first gushing notice to the nearest ticket broker.

As a matter of fact most show folk of any standing are people of talent, and talent is a manifestation of vital experience, a quality of love, an ingredient of goodness. More than this: most show people have a sense of devotion—almost a heroism—that can nearly always be aroused through an appeal to these qualities by other people of talent. A good director or producer who approaches his company with a desire to help it exceed itself and a feeling of genuine warmth toward it will find no more eager and even idealistic people anywhere in the busy places of the world than in the theatre. . . . Many authors are as guilty of selfishness, exhibitionism, egomania, ruthless money-grubbing and cheap pushing as the most conspicuously corrupt "ham" (hideous expression!) that they scorn and deride.

I am certain Moss Hart knows this as well as anyone, and would agree with this interpretation of the human aspect of the theatre. But in *Light Up the Sky* he wrote a play the aim of which excludes the possibility of actually dwelling on these considerations. No one who sees *Light Up the Sky* is expected to ask fundamental questions about the true nature of the material with which it deals.

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Goodbye, My Fancy is a little comedy about what its author, Fay Kanin, must conceive of as a serious subject, to wit, freedom of speech in educational institutions. She is for it. The heroine of her play, a beautiful congresswoman impersonated by Madeleine Carroll, is also for it.

She is so ardent a champion of free speech that she decides not to marry the college president with whom she has been more or less in love for six years, because he has almost become a timorous stuffed shirt who is ready to permit the trustees to cancel the showing of an antiwar picture at a college function. Instead she marries a rugged young *Life* photographer who presumably photographs what he wants and makes even the most reactionary editors publish his photographs giving them the interpretation he desires.

This story is told with good-natured right-mindedness. It is pleasantly done, and it provides an affable evening in the theatre, like a visit among amiable liberal acquaintances who are resolved not to annoy each other or themselves with any untoward argument, but to remain smiling, alert, humorous and fair. What has put the play over as a definite success is a good cast (Shirley Booth, Bethel Leslie, George Mitchell, Sam Wanamaker) and the effulgent good looks of Madeleine Carroll who transported all the reviewers to the seventh heaven because she not only is as attractive and appealing as you wish your best girl to be, but because she seems such a nice person and she gives you no cause to worry about her ability to handle her assignment in *Goodbye, My Fancy.*

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The best of the recent plays (up to December 4th) is surely *The Silver Whistle* by a new playwright Robert McEnroe. It is an engaging comedy, not in the negative sense that it gives no pain and perhaps a little pleasure (which is beginning to be considered sufficient cause for complimentary comment), but in the sense that it has an idea, wit and a touch of imagination.

The Silver Whistle is the story of a tramp with the gift of gab and a lively fancy (he once taught English literature) who cheats his way into a home for the aged, and brings cheer to the drooping "guests" there. He is only forty-five or so, but his playful mind makes him wonder what it is like to be seventy-five. Is there any possibility of pleasure at that age? He proves that there is even to those at the home who had virtually given up all hope of hope.

The central notion of the play is kept alive by little sprightly characterizations of the old folk, a rather refreshing saltiness of writing and a general mixture of sentimental charm with a certain cynical tartness. Even where the author's vein runs thin, and one begins to feel the strain of his attempt to make his idea run the full two hours of theatre time, his actors are able to pull him through. The cast is very good as a whole, with special mention certainly due to Doro Merande and William Lynn.

José Ferrer as the fast-talking tramp is the magnetic force of the production. His chief talent is that of the intellectual *farceur*—something like one aspect in the acting of the Frenchman Louis Jouvet. I mention Jouvet because Ferrer too has a certain Latin dryness, both in his thinking and in his delivery, that is most effective where you need to keep an action—that is largely mental—going with a feeling of comic *brio* and dash. A good deal of the time, Ferrer sounds as if he were an entertaining faker selling a practically nonexistent object, which we are willing to buy for the sake of the peddler's amusing patter rather than from any belief in the article sold.

Ferrer's acting is a form of gay elocution combined with the light clowning and dexterity of a sleight of hand artist. He rarely impersonates in the sense that let us say Marlon Brando in *A Streetcar Named Desire* tries to do. He rarely becomes his character. He demonstrates it with intelligence, aplomb and amiable conceit. He is inventive, witty, even thoughtful at times, and a little cold. He is ambitious, which may cause him to grow. He needs to realize that his present performance should serve as a springboard to deeper efforts.

Being an admired mountebank is not the same thing as being a great comedian. Ferrer's objectivity and sense of easy command in *The Silver Whistle* makes that vehicle rattle along in a jolly fashion. It also makes us aware of a trickiness which prevents the evocation of a mood of genuine romance or lyric freedom.

Careful consideration of acting has become important because of the looseness of judgment which prevails even among people who should know better. Any performance that shows marked ability on the part of the player with an attractive personality is likely nowadays to be hailed as "great." Of course, this is just a manner of speaking, but I should like to point out in passing that though I have seen many of the best actors of our time both here and in Europe for over thirty years, I doubt whether I could name more than a dozen performances that I would call great.

Charles Boyer is a good actor, and his presence in the cast of *Red Gloves*, the play that Jed Harris and Daniel Taradash have extracted from Sartre's *Les Main Sales* (Soiled Hands) is its only saving grace. It is not a great performance, or even, in fact, a very good one, because for one thing the part he plays has been so severely cut by the adapters that not enough remains of it to make it particularly interesting.

What is true of the part is true of the whole. Sartre's play (a success in Paris and London) is probably his most completely satisfactory writing for the theatre. It is a philosophic melodrama which employs the atmosphere of political intrigue in central Europe as a medium to convey a point constantly reiterated in the French existentialist ideology. The "psychology" of an act may be construed in various ways, so that no act isolated from our will and sense of responsibility for it has any independent meaning.

The young hero of *Les Mains Sales* commits a murder after much hesitation, but it is not clear to the assassin himself whether his crime was political or personal: whether, in other words, he killed the leader of the "Proletarian Party" because he disagreed with his policies or because he had momentarily become insane with jealousy when he saw his wife in the embrace of that leader. If his action was a crime of passion, Sartre's hero would not have to pay for his crime beyond his two years of imprisonment; if his action was political he must die at the hands of the party members. The hero decides that he believes in the political rightness of his action, even though those who ordered it have since changed their policy. He decides to die for it. He has given his action and his life significance.

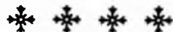
All this is told with intense theatrical excitement as well as human plausibility in Sartre's play. In the American version of it, it is unintelligible, uninteresting balderdash. Seldom have I seen such fascinating and pretty nearly sure-fire material rendered into such lame nonsense by a director too vain to follow the lead of the play's original author. In *Red Gloves*, Jed Harris has murdered Sartre—for reasons, I believe, more personal than political.

The play will have a good run, of course, because of Charles Boyer who plays the once juicy role of the party leader. People want to see the famous screen star—in the flesh! What they will see is a man with a fine mask: thoughtful, sad eyes, sensitive, virile, intelligent. Boyer has a good voice of limited register, and the impression he makes generally is of a person who has lived—off as well as on the stage. It is certainly a pleasure to contemplate such a person on the stage where such qualities are rare. But they do not by themselves make a performance. They do not constitute acting—only the stuff to be used for acting.

What is this party leader—Hoederer—whom Boyer plays? In Sartre's play he is a man of great power forged from the experience of a hard and dangerous life, the kind of power that results from suffering that is mastered and turned into the hard metal of a doctrine and an immutable way of life. In the casual scenes, Boyer suggests the man capably enough, just as a writer might who wants to indicate with a few words of description the nature of the character he is going to introduce in a novel before he actually reaches the crux of the action.

In the big scenes, Boyer plays with almost the same boyish fervor and idealistic emotionalism as his young adversary. This is not necessarily due to any failure of understanding on the actor's part: he has not been directed moment by moment to realize the difference between an introspectively delicate person like himself and a type like Hoederer in whom self-discipline and training have served to transform thought and emotion into a sharp instrument to affect the outside world.

The problem of the director with an actor as sincere and gifted as Boyer is precisely this: to shape a concrete interpretation of a part which—in this kind of a play particularly—is not only a person but an idea bent to the purposes of the playwright's meaning. Because Jed Harris seemed to have only a feeble notion of Sartre's purpose or a desire to disregard it, the play, the part and the actor come to little account—save from the viewpoint of box-office receipts and "rave" notices for the actor.



PETER VIERECK

THE GOD AND THE GODDESS OF LOVE LAND AT MANHATTAN

WHAT landing hovers here?
Strange traders?
Are lost rovers here?
Invaders?
Our waves know better what
white girl today
Sprouts like rose-stalks on them
(she is love's heart),
What dark man walks on them
(love's spirit-part)

Can such soft breasts rise again,
foam-flower-crowned by us?
Can such tired eyes again
bless though disowned by us?
Did ten—five—even one
of us stay true to these?
Down to your knees, New York,
your knees, your knees!

THE RECORD SHELF

JOHN BRIGGS

Rise, O days, from your fathomless deeps

AFTER two years of preparation, the Columbia Recording people have come up with a politico-social document as striking in its way as Frederick Lewis Allen's "Only Yesterday," as exciting as a Hitchcock movie and boasting what is easily the most distinguished cast of characters ever assembled in a single record album.

The album is called "I Can Hear It Now." It is a cross section of the years 1933-1945. It begins with Will Rogers' broadcast observation that "you hold the distinction of being the only nation that ever went to the poorhouse in an automobile," and ends with the voice of General Douglas MacArthur, aboard the battleship "Missouri," saying, "Will General Wainwright please step forward?"

In between are a treasury of historic moments, commentary by CBS newscaster Edward R. Murrow. The whole brings to life a crucial era of history with the impact and clarity of detail possible only to the twentieth-century miracle of recording.

It is probably true, as the Chinese proverb has it, that one picture is worth a thousand words. But one record is more lifelike than a thousand photographs. Who of us has not experienced the rapidity with which a half-forgotten tune, the intonation of a voice, can summon up instantly the mood and the emotional texture of a past experience? The complete works of Albert Halper do not call back the terrifying world of the Great Depression so vividly as a single sentence in the twanging voice of the cowboy philosopher.

Will Rogers is followed by the voice most familiar to our generation, that of Franklin D. Roosevelt. It is first heard in the inaugural speech of March 4, 1933, in which President Roosevelt assured his countrymen that "we have nothing to fear but fear itself." President Roosevelt is heard continually throughout the album. His final appearance is as dramatic as that remarkable newsreel of the thirties which showed the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia. Audiences knew the king would be dead in a matter of seconds after he first appeared on the screen. Similarly, the late president's final appearance, before a joint session of Congress on March 1, 1945, following his return from the Yalta conference, reveals in its labored, at times almost incoherent utterance, the voice of a dying man who would succumb to a cerebral hemorrhage less than two weeks later.

The suave, persuasive voice of Huey Long, the Louisiana Kingfish, reminds us how nearly we escaped having a "man on horseback" of our own. A pleasanter echo of the thirties is the high-pitched, cocky, belligerent voice of Fiorello LaGuardia, declaring that he can beat the ward heelers "running on a laundry ticket." And the deep, rumbling bass voice of John L. Lewis, in high-flown oratory that will remind the irreverent of Fred Allen's Senator Claghorn, castigates the enemies of the "House of Labor."

What is known in the broadcasting trade as "spot news" receives its due share of attention. Joe Louis' knockout of Max Schmeling, "Iron Man" Lou Gehrig's retirement from baseball, and other important sports events are recalled. One of the most remarkable spot-news items in the album is a broadcast from the scene of the "Hindenburg" disaster by Herbert Morrison of WLS, Chicago, the announcer becoming almost hysterical as what began as a routine news assignment turns into a terrifying calamity.

But from September, 1938 onward, "I Can Hear It Now" is preoccupied with world events. There is Prime Minister Chamberlain's report on the Munich pact. It is always easy to be wise after the event; Chamberlain's thin, tired-sounding British voice carries us back so swiftly and completely to the world of 1938 that we are able to comprehend, if not to sympathize with, Chamberlain's obvious conviction that he had done a good day's work in the interest of preserving peace.

Remember when American neutrality was a hotly-debated issue? When Franklin D. Roosevelt told Amer-

ican parents "again and again and again" that their boys would not be sent to fight in any foreign wars? Those far-off days return; among other things, the Midwestern accent of Charles A. Lindbergh is heard, telling America Firsters that we have nothing to gain by participation in the war.

The actual outbreak of war is narrated by Elmer Davis. The voices of Hitler and Mussolini are heard by short wave. Premier Paul Reynaud pleads for U.S. aid as the Nazis overrun France. The French surrender at Compiègne, in the historic World War I railroad car, is broadcast by the German radio. Winston Churchill makes his first appearance as Britain's wartime Prime Minister. And the voice of Joseph Stalin is heard, in what is believed to be the only available recording of the Soviet leader.

Where were you on the afternoon of December 7, 1941? Possibly, like millions of Americans (including the writer, who was reviewing a concert the easy way), listening to the New York Philharmonic-Symphony broadcast. The concert is interrupted by the voice of John Daly of CBS, with first word of the Pearl Harbor disaster.

After that the narrative skips to June 6, 1944. The calm, firm voice of General Eisenhower announces the invasion of Normandy. There are messages from General Charles de Gaulle, King Haakon of Norway and others. A nation-wide radio audience has an opportunity to hear the Liberty Bell, as it is reverently tapped by Mayor Bernard Samuel of Philadelphia. There is an excerpt from George Hicks' remarkable on-the-spot broadcast from the invasion flagship "Ancon," already a classic of wartime radio reporting.

In 1945 the Roosevelt era reaches its tragic conclusion. Arthur Godfrey's account of the funeral procession in Washington is charged with pathos. (Oddly, for one listener it is the single item of the album which does not quite ring true.) President Truman faces a joint session of Congress for the first time. At the beginning of the record there is an amusing *sotto-voce* exchange as Speaker Sam Rayburn whispers: "Just a minute, Harry—wait till I introduce you."

Then, on August 9, 1945, President Truman announces our successful race for atomic energy, and the Age of Innocence is over.

ALTOGETHER it is an exciting account of thirteen strife-torn years, done in workmanlike, professional style by Mr. Murrow and the Columbia Recording Company. A captious listener might perhaps wish for less of Mr. Murrow and more of the famous voices of the time. Nevertheless, Mr. Murrow's narration is straightforward, and he and his associate in the undertaking, Fred W. Friendly, announce themselves as desolated at the amount of striking material which had to be omitted from the album. The two men listened to more than five hundred hours of news broadcasts, finally selecting one hundred to be transcribed on magnetic tape. It was from these hundred hours that the forty-five minutes of the album were distilled.

Some of the voices were brought to life in more complex fashion. The recording of General MacArthur's voice at the surrender ceremony has, apparently, never been available until now. Murrow and Friendly discovered it in the National Archives in Washington. The record was cracked, and Columbia engineers performed a miracle of dexterity in putting it into playable shape again.

Altogether, the album, and the voluminous material from which it was extracted, will doubtless be a priceless source of information for future times seeking an evaluation of our own. Recordings share with photography the virtue of precision. The painter's imagination and the historian's recollection are selective. They are plagued by the artist's impulse to prettify, to clarify, to tie up the loose ends in orderly fashion.

The value of "historical perspective" is perhaps exaggerated. What the picture gains in perspective it loses in clarity. One is charmed by Froissart's antique prose: "And when the French king saw them, his blood changed, and he bade the Genoways go before and begin the battle, in the name of God and Saint Denis." Froissart's account of Crécy is a far cry from the businesslike voice of George Hicks aboard the "Ancon": "There's a lot of flak going up around here . . . Something's on fire over there . . . Can't tell if it's one of ours or not . . ." At the same time, one reflects that Froissart's is a synthetic account, confected on the basis of hearsay evidence long afterward; Hicks' is, within the limits of comprehension of the human senses, actuality.

It may be, indeed, that the much-photographed, copiously-recorded twentieth century marks the end of romancing. All through recorded history can be traced the impulse to preface every story with, "There were giants on earth in those days." One can see for himself that this is an over-flattering appraisal of the late age of chivalry by inspecting the Metropolitan Museum's vast collection of plate armor. Virtually the only suit large enough for a six-footer is the splendid black-and-gold enameled creation once worn by Anne de Montmorency, Constable of France. Yet the workaday deeds of mayhem wrought by men-at-arms, thanks to the selected work of memory, acquire the patina of romance and become the exploits of a Roland or an Oliver, or the prowess of a Sir Lancelot, who "brast iron bars asunder" when the occasion demanded it.

It is nearly impossible to get at such a figure as Washington; the selective process of memory began soon after his death and has continued unremittingly ever since. The living man soon became a bronze statue. There is, moreover, the factor of historical evidence filtered through the consciousness of the historian, and colored by his personality. Artists with bony fingers, Leonardo da Vinci pointed out, have a tendency to draw large-knuckled

subjects. Similarly, one may recall Theodore Roosevelt's characterization of Washington as bold, energetic, decisive in speech and action; whereas Coolidge pictures the father of his country as a transplanted New Englander, cautious, conservative, and given to weighing his words and actions carefully beforehand.

We are not even certain, except in a general way, how Washington looked; the portrait painters of his own time transmuted their subject according to their several inclinations much as did Roosevelt and Coolidge. With the spread of photography in Lincoln's time the picture comes into focus. We are aware of such things as warts and baggy pants. And with the addition of sound, the picture gains another dimension. We have no idea, for example, how Washington pronounced English. No such doubt exists in regard to Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"I Can Hear It Now" is real. It is the history of a turbulent period but not done up in the cellophane of a romantic historian and tied with a big pink ribbon. Hearing the album, one re-lives the violent, strife-torn years, and at the end is conscious of wonderment, almost of incredulity, that some of us have somehow managed to survive. Yet life goes on. The future is menacing. But, the new Columbia album reminds us, it was no less menacing during the 1933 bank holiday, during the Sudetenland crisis, in the dark days of the Battle of Britain. The future always looms before us, dark and unfathomable. It has always been like that, and perhaps always will be. And as Alfred North Whitehead, in *Science and the Modern World*, puts it so admirably: "Why should it not be? It is the business of the future to be dangerous."

FRANCES FROST

HOMECOMING

In the moon-and-witchgrass-colored country, alien
to all except the crushed blue mountains, stranger
to all except the dark spruce-pointed hills,
I walk my childhood in a wind of danger

more perilous now that I can say: I worship
the god upon the mountains, in the roadside
yellow and dusty weed, who is the same
as yours beneath the narrow steeple, only

his head is in the stars as he walks lonely
the hogback ridges of the northern name.
To tell you this, and you lean with suspicion,
is dangerous, for you who swear you love me
nail my love on the crossbar of your hate.

BOOKS

POETRY MODERN AND ANCIENT

LORD DUNSANY

IN writing of poetry of today, I intend to write rather of the tendencies of modern poetry than of the actual poems that are appearing from year to year in books and magazines; for I am warned by the failures of others to make an exhaustive estimate. Too often, when such an attempt is made, there are oversights, sometimes through jealousy and often through honest ignorance, that make the estimate valueless through the omission of one of the best, and though I am not influenced by the first of these failings, the second is so general in the recognition of poetry that I long ago realized that the ignorance about the poets writing when I was young would one day extend to myself, and that there would come a time when I, as once my elders were doing, would incline to say, "There are no poets nowadays," though such a remark was never true in England. Those were the days when Masefield and De la Mare were writing, still unrecognized, and Stephen Phillips was still alive, and William Watson and many other poets. I am not including the poems of Masefield or De la Mare in my estimate of poets of today, but am only mentioning their names as a warning to any who would too lightly turn from the poetry of our time, because people were doing the very same thing when they and I were young. Stephen Phillips, incidentally, had the opposite fate to that of most poets, for he had great fame in his life and is neglected now. Another contemporary poet with those I have mentioned is Lady Wentworth, whose poems I do not include in those of today, because she is not writing poetry now, though she recently published a book on the Arabian horse. At the same time, those who live today and who take any interest in the work of our time should recognize that an organ-voice of poetry, a voice that can speak in the grand manner of the English poets, is still with us. There is no mistaking such voices unless a deaf ear is turned to them, as a deaf ear was turned to Lady Wentworth's book *Love In A Mist* when it appeared in 1900, nor has it received any recognition since; but, for all that, there are many lines in that book that could be placed without any incongruity whatever among those of Shelley or Keats, or of Byron, who was her great-grandfather. These are some of the poets about whom I am not writing, for they are not the product of this time; nor am I going to write of the younger poets of today, but of the poems of today, if I am able to see a trend that is at all common to most of them. One may perhaps look first at their ingredients, which are somewhat strangely assorted, so that we find in them rhythms, and even phrases, of Tennyson and the older poets, with the technicalities of modern trades and sciences. Not that there is any reason whatever why a poet should not use the technicalities of any trade or science that he has followed: his knowledge of them will make them so vivid that he will force people to understand him; but when he uses the technical jargon of any other avocation his appeal is at once limited, for the technical jargon of any calling is naturally only properly understood by the comparatively few that do its particular work; and even the effort to understand other people's technicalities only spreads out our understanding onto insecure ground where we can no longer call it knowledge. Kipling, who wrote of so many different human activities, never exhibited to us any of their technicalities without making us understand them, which his genius was able to do; but many modern writers expect us to understand technicalities borrowed from a dozen different trades, and readers attempt to do so and accept these technical phrases without quite clearly understanding them, which means that a poet's message is not quite clearly given, so that gradually

the feeling arises that it does not quite need to be. Again, a similar effect is sometimes produced by the use of phrases of dead poets. These are so sanctified by the judgment of the ages that it seems they must be accepted, and yet a phrase, or half a phrase, borrowed from some great poet of the past will not necessarily have meaning in a modern sentence, and may only have the effect of a pair of trousers patched with a square inch cut from a ruined tapestry. There is no harm in using gorgeous phrases that may have been used before, but they must have their clear meanings; and it is not enough to expect the reader to suppose that they must mean something because they are gorgeous phrases. Reading, then, is one of the ingredients of modern poetry; and, though poetry is fresher when it comes from personal observation of the hills and the streams, or whatever may lie round the poet, yet one certainly cannot bar reading as authentic material of poetry, because so many of the great poets have been scholars. Yet this reading should be perfectly assimilated; that is to say, felt, and of course understood. But I think that some poems today have come not only to be written, but accepted by the public, through the incomplete understanding of some accepted poetry which may have required more time to understand completely than may have been actually given to it. There are lines, for instance, in Browning and Francis Thompson that may require a second glance before one is quite sure what the poet intended to say; and, if that second glance is not given, the erroneous impression may get abroad that in those particular lines they did not actually say anything definite. And from that mistake may have arisen the mistake of supposing that a poet need not quite say anything definite; and when readers and writers are to be found holding this heresy, we get bad poetry. The wilder and more fanciful the flight of a poet's imagination, the more necessary is it for him to make the description of what his imagination has seen as clear as possible to all readers, and, for choice, in words of few syllables. Let me give an example of the error I mean. Francis Thompson writes:

The hunchèd camels of the night
Trouble the bright
And silver waters of the moon.

Suppose this is read in such a hurry that one does not see that hunched camels troubling bright waters is a very fair metaphorical description of dark clouds going past the moon: then one might think that, since lines which would then have no particular meaning have been accepted by a generation, it might be reasonable to expect the acceptance of such lines as:

The bright pillar boxes of the morning
Trouble the bright
Motorcars of my desire.

And, if anyone did write that, I have no doubt that he would find a certain public (I don't know how large) to accept it.

I believe that one should not only make one's meaning as clear as I have said, but that one should guard so far as one can against the possibility of anyone thinking that any other meaning could be intended. A poem, in fact, should be written as clearly as a check. Yet the other day I found myself arguing, and in public, with a man who held that one of the merits of modern poetry was that it might mean one thing to one man and another to another; in fact, just what one wanted. But I do not feel that a poet has told one much if the interpretation has been left to oneself. If I wrote a letter to anyone, in which a single word was illegible, and if it were accepted without comment, I should worry myself wondering what I might be thought to have said, unless I did not know that the word was illegible. And I have the same feeling about poetry. I should not like a statement signed by my name to mean anything that I did not intend. The reader, of course, has the reader's duty to read with moderate intelligence; not more than that, for poetry is not an intellectual puzzle. And the writer has the writer's duty of making his meaning as clear as the difficulties of meter and rhyme will let him. I recommend that to all writers. And to readers I recommend that they should accept only what they can understand, and not to fear that someone will think them not clever enough if they say openly that a line has no meaning to them. If they should sometimes miss thereby one fine thought, they will still have the great consolation of knowing that what they have accepted has really become the property of their understanding. I never knew the exact dividing line, in business, between real estate and all other estates; but in the domain of thought I would suggest that there is no better description of lines in one's memory which one has understood than "real estate," a possession one really owns; while for lines with which one has stored one's mind without quite understanding them, I would leave someone more modern than I to describe with one of those phrases that I probably am too old-fashioned to be able to coin myself.

But let us turn from what poetry is not, to the light that blazes from poetry in its perfection.

If we look at most of the callings that men follow, we find, as we should expect, little and crude beginnings that the ages have slowly developed; between, for instance, a modern doctor's prescriptions, and a newt's tongue eaten with toads' livers by moonlight while saying a rhymed spell, there is a difference all in favor of modern practices. But in the literary art, if we turn to the earliest originals that Europe knows, we find progress unaffected by the lapse of three thousand years, and the art appears to begin with entire perfection. So Homer emerges out of the mists of time, as fresh and simple as a daisychain made in Eden by Eve on the first morning. About five centuries passed and great heights were attained again, by the Greek dramatists, and after a thousand years by Vergil, though Vergil is but the moonlight reflected from Homer's sun, and there passed another millennium and a half before he was equaled by Shakespeare, since when he has not been approached, unless perhaps by Milton. In his clear vision of heavenly things, Milton saw, no doubt, with a sight as vivid as Homer's, and both were blind; but in the affairs of men, what they did and exactly how they did it, and even the sounds that were heard going up from their work, Homer is unapproached except by Shakespeare. For Milton to have competed with him, he would have needed the collaboration of Kipling, and something of the innocent simplicity of the earliest ballad singers. For Homer has the simplicity that is almost childish and yet staggering in its vivid revelations. Take, for instance, his description of the goddess Dawn coming to Olympus to utter a prophecy to Zeus and to all the gods: there are writers in our complex, intricate age who would guess for hours what she had come to prophesy: she had come to foretell the daylight. Childish, some may say. But what a pic-

having led his allied forces to triumph, his account of that success should now provoke a minor storm in British and French circles. Certainly there seems to be little or nothing in the pages of this book to justify the roars of rage that have risen from the adherents of Field Marshal Montgomery, General De Gaulle and others. In evaluating the accomplishments and personalities of those officers, he strives to treat them objectively, but fairly. He speaks, for example, of Montgomery's "eccentricities of behavior," but he also pays tribute to his ability as a battle commander who "has no superior in two most important characteristics. He quickly develops among British enlisted men an intense devotion and admiration—the greatest personal asset a commander can possess. Montgomery's other outstanding characteristic is his tactical ability in what might be called the 'prepared' battle."

Although Eisenhower may have lacked the daring, dash and imagination of the great military men of history this book reveals him as a shrewd and sound strategist. The Battle of the Bulge is an example of a carefully calculated risk. Contrary to general opinion, the German counteroffensive did not take the Allied high command by surprise. Eisenhower categorically states that he and General Bradley *invited* the attack by weakening their lines at that point. "Bradley felt," he says, "that we were in the best possible position to concentrate against the flanks of any attack in the Ardennes area that might be attempted by the Germans . . . Bradley traced out on the map the line he estimated the German spearheads could possibly reach, and his estimates later proved to be remarkably accurate, with a maximum error of five miles at any one point. In the area which he believed the enemy might overrun by surprise attack he placed very few supply installations. . . . We remained on the offensive and weakened ourselves where necessary to maintain those offensives. This plan gave the German opportunity to launch his attack against a weak portion of our lines. If giving him that chance is to be condemned by historians, their condemnation should be directed at me alone."

General Eisenhower's attitude toward an even more vital aspect of modern war—the close interrelationship between the military and political—is unfortunately much less clear and decisive. At times he seems to have been rather confused in his own mind as to the boundary between the soldier and the statesman. In discussing Churchill's proposed plan for a Balkan invasion, designed to secure a beachhead along the Danube against later Communist penetration, he declares, "For this concern [for the future of the Balkans] I had great sympathy, but as a soldier I was particularly careful to exclude such considerations from my own recommendations." This is the classic, academic point of view as to the soldier's function, utterly divorced from political considerations. Yet later he refers to the "age-old truth that politics and military activities are never completely separable," a far more realistic conception and one better suited to this day and age. That he should have any doubts about war being an extension of diplomacy strikes one as rather curious and startling.

To the military historian, *Crusade in Europe* must be a work of permanent and large value, and it will be required reading at West Point, Sandhurst and St. Cyr. For the lay reader, however, it may prove disappointing. I have a suspicion that for him there is too much of the general and not enough of the man in it. Only infrequently and almost accidentally is the reader permitted to glimpse the warm, friendly, simple human being underneath the uniform. Now and then Eisenhower tosses off a casual anecdote or an offhand comment that reveals the real man. As, for instance, when he tells how he accompanied Marshall and a covey of brass to the Normandy beachhead on D-plus-6. He describes the "heartening" effect it had on the troops and how important such visits by the high command are in boosting morale. "The soldier has a sense of gratification whenever he sees very high rank in his particular vicinity," he says, and then adds slyly, "possibly on the theory that the area is a safe one or the rank wouldn't be there."

Unfortunately, however, such glimpses are rare. In reading *Crusade*, one has the uneasy feeling that the general is holding back, that he might have said much more, if he had wanted to. In addition, I fear that the book's heavy burden of "militaryese," its tedious detailed accounts of military movements, its often heavy tone of official autobiography, may prevent many from reading it through. And this is a pity, for there are many fine things in the book, things that desperately need saying in this year of grace.

Doubleday, $5.00

YEATS: THE MAN AND THE MASKS
by Richard Ellmann
Reviewed by Mary M. Colum

THIS book has been extravagantly praised by the reviewers and with a certain amount of justice. One can easily admit the intelligence, industry and trained research quality shown in it, but *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* does not make credible the poet Yeats was, the man he was, or the leader he was. The author, Richard Ellmann, an intelligent young man of about thirty, was given access by Mrs. Yeats to about fifty thousand pages of material, Yeats' literary remains, for which I may say some of the Yeats scholars and enthusiasts would have given years of their lives. But a young American naval man in the beginning of the war buys a volume of Yeats' poetry, reads it—one hopes aloud as Yeats wanted his poetry to be read—drops over to Dublin on leave, has tea with the poet's widow, who shows him the material, and finally allows him unrestricted access to it.

Of the interest of the material there can be no doubt, but the public uncovering of certain parts of it, so soon after the poet's death, might be said to be of more gossipy than vital interest. Even a dead genius who might have wished the details of his life to be known to future biographers has some little rights to privacy for an interval, and Yeats is not yet dead ten years. The material, except for a letter or two and some experimental versions of poems, was known to his circle, and was touched upon by Joseph Hone in his official biography. Yeats had a couple of love affairs, not nearly so many as several other poets; the great one which formed him never reached the point of physical intimacy; one which did reach this point had certainly some importance for him, but obviously not a great deal. He wrote the lady a few poems which read like the transference of an emotion from Maud Gonne, who was his great love, a spiritual and intellectual love. The lady and he planned an elopement, but the plan miscarried in the most trivial manner. The poet went out to

buy cakes for tea before her arrival at his flat. His mind on Maud Gonne, he forgot his keys so that he could not get back into his rooms with the cakes, and so the elopement was frustrated. A modern psychologist could have explained why without much trouble. Yeats seems to have had another physical affair or two of a somewhat sordid nature. Why biographers make so much of these incidents is a good deal of a mystery, for their influence on the poet must have been imponderable. Finally, in his fifties, Yeats married a lively young woman who presented him with two children, an agreeable home life, an income and leisure to work, and this proves, maybe, that solid domestic life at some period in his career is the best background for a poet. Mrs. Yeats devoted herself to automatic writing, which Yeats claimed formed to some extent the basis of his occult book, *The Vision.* It is far more likely that his early intensive and seldom-interrupted studies in theosophy, magic and kindred esoteric pursuits were the real basis. The ideas in the book were, in essence, always his, and few people in Dublin took the spirits, the frustrators, communicators and so on with any seriousness. The present reviewer, on a visit to Dublin, was at the meeting of the Hermetic Society at which Yeats disclosed these revelations that had somehow come to him. In answer to a question, he frankly acknowledged that the communicators might have been "created beings," by which he meant creations of his mind and imagination.

The strength, originality and depth of his later poems came undoubtedly from the fact that he had acquired leisure and some financial security. He had given up his active work in the theatre and in the Free State Senate; he had an increase in his royalties; he had received the Nobel prize, and was free from the worry of making a living: he was able to do what he had always wanted—settle down in Ireland with his family and friends, the *Sturm und Drang* of his youth over, and create a style of his old age as did Beethoven and Goethe. At this period he wrote the finest poetry of his time in any European language; the poet nearest to him in accomplishment, Paul Valéry, had a mind not unlike his, but his whole emotional equipment was less abundant, his muse less spontaneous. What Yeats had from birth was rare in the modern world: the advantage of a national mythology and a racial inheritance, the richness of which was unexpected. The writer of *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* frequently goes astray when he tries to assess these two possessions. When, for instance, he tries to interpret the Ossian legend, he shows that he does not really understand its meaning.

Then the poet's personality—that of a man of action and a man of dreams combined—and his great intellect and imagination demand for their comprehension qualities of mind and experience that, at this stage of his life, Mr. Ellmann has not attained to. To describe a man of Yeats' known fighting power as timid is to get the human equation all wrong. The fact that he did not have an academic education had no such lowering effect on him as Mr. Ellmann imagines: almost none of the Irish writers of his period had an academic education: for an artist, a man of letters, Yeats had the best education that could have been, and he knew it. Of course, he had a humble admiration for men of distinction in any walk of life, but the men of mere academic learning he would pass by. However, we can accept *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* for what it essentially is—an interesting and intelligent piece of research backed by a young man's enthusiasm for the work and career of a great poet.

Macmillan, $5.00

JOURNAL OF A VISIT TO LONDON AND THE CONTINENT BY HERMAN MELVILLE, 1849-50. Edited by Eleanor Melville Metcalf
MELVILLE'S BILLY BUDD Edited by F. Barron Freeman
Reviewed by Edward Wagenknecht

HERE are two more important contributions in a field where enthusiasm and comprehension have not always, unhappily, gone hand in hand. The *Journal* is the third (not, as the publishers state, the second) of Melville's diaries to be published: *Journal Up the Straits* (1856-1857) was edited by Raymond Weaver and published by The Colophon in 1935, and *Journal of a Cruise to the Pacific Ocean, 1842-1844, in the Frigate "United States,"* was prepared for the Duke University Press imprint by that greatest of all Melville scholars, C. R. Anderson, in 1937.

The motivating force behind Melville's 1849 journey was his desire to secure a British publisher for *White Jacket.* In London he interviewed Bentley, Murray (who owned such a "despicable pair of sheepshanks" that the American wondered how he dared display them in public), Longman, Moxon (who was "at first very stiff, cold, clammy & clumsy," but whom Melville "managed to bring . . . to . . . by clever speeches"), and Chapman. The unsatisfactory copyright situation caused great difficulties, but Bentley finally agreed to do the book.

Melville, however, was not concerned wholly with business. All through the trip he kept his eyes and ears—and his mind—open, as an author should. On the voyage over, he talked religion and philosophy with a German, "Mr. Adler," and vainly tried to save a madman who had jumped overboard: "I was struck by the expression of his face in the water. It was merry." He landed at Deal, reminding himself that "a person called Julius Caesar" had once jumped ashore at about the same spot. In London he witnessed the execution of the Mannings—"What a change from the time they stood up to be married, together!"—bought many books and maps (more than he could afford), and ran the gamut of the theatres from Macready to the dens where the admission was one penny. (He did not care for Macready, who "panted hideously.") He heard a sermon by his namesake, The Reverend H. Melvill, and most reluctantly declined an invitation from the Duke of Rutland because of his desire to return to his family as soon as possible. On one occasion he was cheated in the purchase of a breastpin: "God forgive the girl—she was not very pretty either, which makes it the more aggravating." He met the insufferable Lockhart, "in a prodigious white cravat (made from Walter Scott's shroud, I suppose)," and having saluted Queen Victoria in her carriage, felt like recommending Rowland's Kalydore for her complexion.

Perhaps we learn nothing very new about Melville from these pages, but we certainly "see him plain." And we are aided in our understanding by Mrs. Metcalf's very extensive notes which, although poorly arranged and sometimes unnecessary, make, nevertheless,

absorbing, supplementary, reading.

In Dr. Freeman's book we get an authentic, carefully transcribed text of Melville's last novel, based upon a complete study of all the *Billy Budd* manuscripts. Here, for the first time, the original form of the story, "Baby Budd," which is 12,000 words as against the final 36,000, is disentangled and printed by itself. Dr. Freeman has also written a 125-page introduction, which constitutes not merely the most elaborate critical study of *Billy Budd* that has ever been made but one of the most elaborate surely that have ever been made of any novel.

Melville students will, I think, derive considerable satisfaction from Mr. Freeman's book, for it is not often that a "modern" writer is edited with such loving care. Mr. Freeman is especially good in his interpretation of Claggart, the villain of *Billy Budd*, and, according to later-day exegesis, a homosexual: he considers every aspect of the problem and, at the same time, resists the temptation to interpret a great work of art in terms of a psychology unfamiliar to its author. Like his predecessors, he sees reconciliation as the keynote of *Billy Budd*: "Tragic nobility and defeat are the keynotes of the closing pages of *Moby Dick;* hope and triumph in death form the final ascendant notes of Billy's tragedy." He does not discuss the question of whether the "defeat" in *Moby Dick* is due to a lack in Melville or merely in Ahab; neither does he specifically consider the validity of the solution of the problem of evil—if indeed it is a "solution"—in *Billy Budd* itself. But one study of Melville cannot say the final word on a writer of Melville's stature. Dr. Freeman's, however, is one of the best.

Harvard University Press, $3.75, $5.00

THE SHAME OF THE STATES
by Albert Deutsch
Reviewed by Eileen J. Garrett

DOCTOR THOMAS PARRAN, former Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, once said that mental illness is a "number one health problem," a statement that takes on added meaning when one reads Albert Deutsch's camera-documented survey of conditions within our public mental hospitals. The author, a courageous and skillful reporter in the medical and scientific fields, visited more than thirty state mental institutions and this is his graphic account of what he saw.

Mr. Deutsch reports that not only were all the hospitals he visited overcrowded and understaffed but that he encountered numerous instances of shocking mistreatment and neglect of the mentally ill. Filthy wards, bad food, ignorant attendants and obsolete methods of treatment complete the appalling picture. Here, for example, is Mr. Deutsch's description of conditions in Pennsylvania's Byberry Hospital:

"I was reminded of the pictures of the nazi concentration camps at Belsen and Buchenwald. I entered buildings swarming with naked humans herded like cattle and treated with less concern, pervaded by a fetid odor so heavy, so nauseating, that the stench seemed to have a physical existence of its own."

Everywhere the background was the same—inadequate appropriations, political chicanery and public indifference and ignorance. If Mr. Deutsch's exposé serves no other purpose but to shock the public out of its complacence, he will have rendered a great service to the nation and earned the gratitude of the thousands of honest physicians, nurses and administrators who are trying to do a good job against such hopeless odds.

For those readers who are aroused enough by this book to want to do something, I would point to the existence of the National Mental Health Foundation, an organization founded by a group of young men who served as attendants in state mental hospitals during the war, wnose purpose is to remedy the conditions exposed in *The Shame of the States*. They, like Mr. Deutsch, have had the courage to bring this tragic problem out into the open and demand a change.

Harcourt, Brace, $3.00

BLACK ODYSSEY
by Roi Ottley
Reviewed by Adolph E. Meyer

THIS work might aptly be called the Story of the Negro in America. Beginning with the introduction of the first Negro slaves to the American mainland in 1619, it relates the record of the Negro's varied experiences from the very beginning to the present day. The author, a young Negro journalist, had no intention of composing a scholarly history of his people. Such a record, he feels, would be too barren to give us a true representation of the Negro's life in America. Hence, although Mr. Ottley has endeavored to be as impartial and accurate as the most scrupulous professional historian, he has avoided the clinical mood. Not only is his study filled to the brim with the essential facts and with many that are not so familiar, but, by giving attention to the intangible psychological factors in which his subject abounds, he has been able to fashion a story which is vivid and real. His account takes on a warmth and a flow which is not found in the more conventional history.

Mr. Ottley points out that the Negro was not always deemed inferior and that he was not always discriminated against. Indeed, slavery had been declining steadily until the advent of the cotton gin. Its invention shifted the emphasis in our agriculture from rice and tobacco to cotton. In the new economy, plantations with immense acreages became the vogue. Assuming some of the characteristics of mass production, the large plantation was in essence something of a rural factory. In its operation, what remained of the personal relationship between master and slave dissolved into one which was not only impersonal but also harsh and even brutal. Under it the slave became a beast of burden with neither moral nor legal safeguards to protect him. It is not without irony that when the southern masters were finally compelled to justify their system, they enlisted the help of both science and the church. The former proved the Negro to be inferior racially, while the latter saw nothing morally inconsistent in the enslavement of human beings.

Nor is it without interest to record the well-known fact that our anti-Negro attitudes are not the monopoly of the South. One of the first to fall in the cause of the American Revolution was the Negro, Crispus Attucks, who was killed in the Boston Massacre. However, as late as 1851, we find the Massachusetts legislature refusing a petition to erect a monument to the memory of this first American martyr. It was not until 1880, more than a century after the massacre, that such a monument was erected.

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American's prejudices against the Negro and the horrible forms into which they are translated in actual practice, Mr. Ottley is optimistic about the Negro's future. Contemporary Negro leaders like A. Philip Randolph, Walter White, Charles S. Johnson are not only intelligent; they are also hardheaded, realistic men whose concern is not so much with dreamy and theoretic ideals, but with the actual day-by-day improvement in the Negro's social, economic and political status. Experienced in modern methods involving organization, propaganda and fund-raising, Negro leadership has become essentially pragmatic, testing the effectiveness of their programs by the practical results they attain. Another factor contributing to Mr. Ottley's high hopes for a better Negro future in America is the fact that the Negro problem is no longer strictly an American problem. With America in the international spotlight, its claims on behalf of democracy as a way of life cannot stand up under the close scrutiny of non-Americans who have no difficulty in perceiving the apparent gap between our ideals and practices when it comes to our treatment of the Negro. Why do Americans hate the blacks? Why do Negroes live in ghettos? And why did the Army attempt to introduce Jim Crow in the island of Jamaica, a place where it never existed before? Such are only a few of the questions which Europeans are raising, and which America, of course, must answer. The United States, Mr. Ottley feels, will be forced to a showdown. To justify our democracy to the skeptical foreigner, we will, as he says, "have to put up or shut up."

Scribner's $3.50

PURSUIT OF THE HORIZON: A LIFE OF GEORGE CATLIN
by Loyd Haberly
Reviewed by Herschel Brickell

IN this, the first full-length study of our most interesting painter of Indians, author and subject are happily met, and the result is a book glowingly alive, delightfully written, and as moving as it is readable.

Loyd Haberly, already recognized as a poet and gifted producer of hand-made books, as well as an authority on medieval English paving stones, has long been a student of Indian civilizations, and his successful effort to rescue Catlin from the relative oblivion into which he has fallen is plainly a labor of love.

Besides his superhuman efforts at preserving Indian types and customs in his paintings, drawings and book illustrations, Catlin left priceless written records of his firsthand observations to which we owe much of what we know about our predecessors. And his lifelong and unswerving devotion to the cause of the abused and mistreated Red Man, by no means a popular attitude, ranks him with our most notable humanitarians.

As for the place this extraordinary man deserves among our artists, Mr. Haberly points out that the tragic scattering of his tremendous output makes a final judgment difficult. But after examining some two thousand examples of Catlin's work, he is of the firm opinion that we are in the presence of "one of our great native painters."

It was the lifelong dream of the

artist to have the United States Government purchase his collection and place it on permanent exhibition as a memorial to the Indians he loved and admired. But circumstances were always against the realization of the dream, although there was a time when a single vote in Congress defeated the project. The man who cast it was Jefferson Davis, who had known and liked Catlin during the Black Hawk war!

Mr. Haberly tells us as much as can be known of Catlin from available sources, and it is plain that his research has been done with all possible care. If the man, always enthusiastic and hopeful in spite of the batterings of fate, had done no more than to get on canvas his unequaled record of what he saw in this country with his own eyes, he would have had a most remarkable career, but at fifty-seven, and not in the best of health, he went all the way to Tierra del Fuego, and from there to Alaska.

The person who sent him to South America at a time when the tides were running strongly against him, after a considerable period of success in Europe with his shows of painted and live Indians, was none other than Baron von Humboldt, that indefatigable traveler and observer, who had a hand in everything even remotely approaching his field, or fields. The Baron liked and respected Catlin, another tribute to his perspicuity.

Mr. Haberly writes with full appreciation of the irony implicit in much of his material. The chapters that contain the comments of some of Catlin's Indians on English civilization, including its drunkenness and black poverty, two of its principal nineteenth-century features, are wickedly amusing, and the humor is that of smiling understatement. The Indians were popular figures, especially with the ladies who seemed to have a proper appreciation of their primitive virility.

Perhaps Catlin's feeling about the Indians was not entirely without the romantic coloring of the period—the Noble Savage, etc.—but he made it perfectly clear why he liked his friends of tepee and wigwam, those people who in general fitted so well into their natural environment, and mastered the lesson of living comfortably with Nature, the Great Mother, leaving her as they found her.

A more expensive volume would have supplied some of Catlin's paintings and landscapes in color, but the black-and-white reproductions give an excellent idea of the firm vigor and honesty of his work and show, too, what a striking variety of types there were among the Indians.

Also, they whet the appetite for more, and arouse anew the hope that something resembling Catlin's dream may yet be realized. Or, if not quite that, he may receive at least a greater measure of appreciation, however belated, from his fellow-Americans.

Mr. Haberly's biography is thorough enough to take its permanent place on the shelves devoted to the lives of great Americans, and there are fine passages in it which should be noted by future anthologists who aim to show what life was like before the white man's coming wiped out the old cultures, many of them much farther advanced in some respects than those that supplanted them.

Macmillan, $5.00

My Favorite Forgotten Book

JAMES GORDON

IT is unusual to find a book which inspires simultaneous feelings of nostalgia and vertigo. Yet it is precisely those feelings which are aroused in me by *The Cry for Justice*, an anthology edited by Upton Sinclair, published in 1915 by the John C. Winston Company. The copy which I have is a second printing under Sinclair's own imprint. A note at the beginning of the book explains that the plates and copyright were "very generously" purchased from the publisher by a Dr. John R. Haynes in order to make possible the publication of the new printing.

That slightly pathetic acknowledgment makes it easy to guess what sort of book it is, but the editor sees to it that there can be no doubts about its content or mission. The title page is crammed with subtitles which hammer in the point both with noise and weight. AN ANTHOLOGY OF THE LITERATURE OF SOCIAL PROTEST: "The writings of philosophers, poets, novelists, social reformers and others who have voiced the struggle against social injustice"; SELECTED FROM TWENTY-FIVE LANGUAGES COVERING A PERIOD OF FIVE THOUSAND YEARS: "With an introduction by Jack London"; ILLUSTRATED WITH REPRODUCTIONS OF SOCIAL PROTEST IN ART.

It is difficult for me to believe that this book was published only at the beginning of my own lifetime. It seems incredible that we have come so far in so short a time; that our ideological and artistic bases have shifted with such apparent speed from Jack London and the I.W.W. to Sartre and Stalin.

The whole style of the book reflects its time and the woolly approach of the pre-1914 reformers and radicals. Sentimentalism is mixed with pity, corn with cussedness, while for the most part the "social protest in art" is unadulterated emotionalism. In fact, "the struggle against social injustice" seems to be a struggle to wring the reader's heart, to bring forth tears.

It is undoubtedly for this reason that the book has been forgotten. It was aimed at the public of its time, although I have no doubt that Upton Sinclair thought he was creating something which would be imperishable. It is no fault of his that the first world war affected the hearts and heads of all mankind; people no longer shed a silent tear and give their pennies. They take up guns and fight it out.

Sinclair didn't and couldn't know that war would have this catalytic effect; that it would be useless to appeal for pity. The paradox of this book is that it describes hardship of a kind which no longer exists, and in effect Sinclair says that once you wipe out material misery you have the millennium. Time has made a fool of him, yet the illusion which he fostered was a noble one. The world has lost something which was very good. Where now would you find this kind of writing among radicals and reds?

"In defending the Bottom Dog," wrote Robert Blatchford, "I do not deal with hard science only; but with dearest faiths, the oldest wrongs and the most awful relationships of the great human family for whose good I strive and to whose judgment I appeal."

The biographical notes under the names of the writers and artists in Sinclair's book give one the same sort of feelings as might be evoked by a lock of grandpa's hair in great-grandma's locket. For example, there is Charlotte Perkins Gilman "(America's most brilliant woman poet and critic; born 1860)." Nowadays only publishers' blurbs would dare commit such a statement to paper.

It is because Upton Sinclair was determined to include in his grab bag everything which could remotely be called social protest that he constructed this curious monument to a period. For this reason too, the book at times seems to have been the product of a girl's high school. Take "The Wolf at the Door," a poem by the above-mentioned Charlotte Perkins Gilman. The last four lines of the first stanza run:

There's a whining at the threshold,
There's a scratching at the floor,
To work! To work! In Heaven's name!
The wolf is at the door!

And now Lanny Budd is sowing Dragon's Teeth in California.

Yet in spite of all this, the book has life. Not so much for what it purports to be, but because it represented, to one man at least, a cause which holds good even after many of the evils it describes have ceased to exist. It is an expression of indignation by Upton Sinclair, as though he said to himself; "I can't find words to express my pity for the Bottom Dog or my hatred for the Top Dog. In spite of my score or so books, I still haven't said enough." He explains his passion in his preface:

"I have spent with it [the book] the happiest year of my lifetime: the happiest, because occupied with beauty of the greatest and truest sort. If the material in this volume means to you, reader, what it has meant to me, you will live with it, love it, sometimes weep with it, many times pray with it, yearn and hunger with it, and, above all, resolve with it."

And so on to the end of the page.

Its very ingenuousness and enthusiasm is that of youth unblemished by disillusionment or cynicism. The 1914 war did something to the shining radicals; they were soon forgotten and their literature was replaced by the new kind of social protest of people like Dos Passos, Hemingway and Farrell. "It's a helluva life boys, but there's still liquor, women and guns." The new generation wouldn't quote Christ at you except as an oath.

That is an awful lesson to have to learn from a book published in 1915, which isn't so very long ago. If the first world war made the amateur revolutionaries lose their place to the professionals, the last war will make the professionals look like the Band of Hope. It is too early to assess the influence of the last war and at the moment we seem to be lost in a morass of cynicism and existentialism, but if *The Cry for Justice* was true of its period, our children will not have—or give—a pleasant time. What answer will they find for the atom bomb and the unpleasant truths of Sir John Boyd Orr? Upton Sinclair's generation was still thinking

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GOLDEN OPINIONS, by
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In a sense, *The Cry for Justice* occupies the same place in radical literature as *The Birth of a Nation* does in the film. It belongs to the same epoch of high collars, side whiskers, narrow trousers and sentimentalism. Jack London sums up the whole illusion in the last paragraph of his introduction:

"To see gathered here together this great body of human beauty and fineness and nobleness is to realize what glorious humans have already existed, do exist and will continue increasingly to exist until all the world beautiful be made over in their image. We know how gods are made. Comes now the time to make a world."

REVIEWS IN BRIEF

NO PLACE TO HIDE, by David Bradley (*Atlantic-Little, Brown,* $2.00). This is the story of the Bikini atom bombing tests (Operation Crossroads) by a doctor who was on the scene. The author's description of the careful preparations and the actual bombings are vivid and detailed, but the most absorbing part of the book, by far, is the account of Dr. Bradley's own tour of the scene with the Geiger counter. The Bikini bombings may have been, as Dr. Bradley admits, immediately "unspectacular," but the aftereffects, although slow to appear, were horrible and deadly --the sea water, the atmosphere, the ships, all animal and vegetable life in the area were touched, to some degree, by the poisonous radioactive waves. Apparently Dr. Bradley wants to shock his readers into some awareness of the fatal and frightful consequences of atomic warfare as he saw them. His reporting is cool, matter-of-fact and remarkably free from editorializing. Except for a mild comment that nature never intended we should tamper with her radioactive elements in the first place, the facts are allowed to speak for themselves. The journal is sufficiently nontechnical to encourage wide reading, but, unlike John Hersey's *Hiroshima,* it has neither the human interest nor the dramatic touches to stimulate the concern it deserves. The most valuable portion of the book is a short appendix explaining the dangers of radioactivity in simple, layman's terms.

GOLDEN OPINIONS, by Richard L. Tobin (*Dutton,* $3.00). A collection of twenty-two highly informal incidents from the experiences of a young newspaperman. "Bless Thy Little Lambs Tonight," a fascinating anecdote concerning a sadistic schoolmate of his boyhood, is perhaps the best thing in the book. Other recorded high spots in Tobin's journey from Michigan school-days to a newspaper job on the New York *Herald Tribune* and comfortable suburban life in Connecticut are: "The Durable Malloy," the now familiar story of the notorious drunk who seemed immune to death; "Grass," the frightening tale of a starving jockey who goes berserk; "St. Patrick and the Wedding," in which the author starts a riot by simply inquiring as to the whereabouts of St. Patrick's birthplace, and "I'll Fill You in," a neat satire on the perfidious politics of the radio business. Like most books of this category, *Golden Opinions* is only partly successful. Some of it is too familiar. Some of it is just dull. But, at its frequent best, Mr. Tobin's book is a delight.

A HISTORY OF NORWAY by Karen Larsen (*Princeton University Press for the American-Scandinavian Foundation,* $6.00). This is a panoramic view of Norway from the Iron Age to the Iron Curtain, which begins at her northernmost frontier. Professor Larsen devotes more attention to the country's past than to modern and contemporary history. She treats Norway's history in the broadest sense, including significant cultural developments which reflect the *Zeitgeist.* The book was published in 1948, but must have been completed almost immediately after the war, as it contains practically no information about postwar developments, which are highly important and very little noticed in the outside world. The book is scholarly and should prove highly useful to specialists in the field.

THE QUEST FOR LOVE OF LAO LEE, by Lau Shaw (*Reynal, Hitchcock,* $3.00). A novel about modern marriage in China. The central character, a sensitive young clerk, is married by parental arrangement to a practical peasant woman. Their personality differences reduce the marriage

BOOKS

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FREIGHTERS

If you don't quite run to the Queen Mary, get "Travel Routes." It packs a wealth of information for planning trips on passenger carrying freighters to all parts of the world; tells ports they visit, length of voyage, prices; briefly describes accommodations, names the lines. For comfortable, lower cost travel, wrap up 35c and mail for your copy.
HARIAN PUBLICATIONS
151 Blvd., Greenlawn, Long Island

to failure, but Lao suffers in quiet resignation until a beautiful and intelligent woman comes along and provides the opportunity for a more desirable marriage. This critical situation forces Lao's entire family to consider the problem of divorce and its disastrous repercussions in a society that is such a complicated interweaving of the old and the new. Lau Shaw writes about both generations with sympathy and understanding and an acute awareness of their strange world in transition. His characters are not quaint print-types, but are presented in a manner that helps make their problem quite real to the American reader. The book is intelligently translated by Helena Kuo.

TOMORROW CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editors of Tomorrow:

Your twelve-page article in the October issue of Tomorrow entitled "The Rumor Racket" must be wine to advertisers; but it is definitely a "racket" to many millions of patient consumers. The contortions of guilty but priggish manufacturers, pilloried by "malicious rumors" are certainly amusing. I refer to the story on page 14 about the Toronto bakery disturbed by a "rumor" that a mouse had been found in its bread. As the housewife who found the mouse, I find it hard to believe that "the first time the bakery heard the story was when the driver reported it!" Certainly the Bakery Manager had his tongue in his cheek when he gave Mr. Jacobson this prize bit of copy: for not only did I send the mouse, in the loaf, in the wrapper, by registered mail on December 6th, 1944 to the Toronto City Health Authorities, but I received their courteous assurances that the matter had been investigated at the Bakery concerned, the millers, and the sack-makers. Incidentally, another sidelight is thrown on the fascinating ways of manufacturers when the defenses in this particular case are heard: The Bakery blamed the millers; the millers blamed the sack-makers; the sack-makers admitted that due to wartime shortages they were obliged to use paper sacks instead of jute—but they laid the blame squarely on the vermin-exterminators, with whom they had a contract that nothing of this sort should happen!

Joyce Lambert
Toronto, Canada

To the Editors of Tomorrow:

We confess it is hard to tell when a story is true or when it is a pure rumor. For one thing, most of us believe only the things we want to believe. We hear only the things we want to hear. What's more, we want others to believe and hear only these same things.

Then, too, even the most intelligent cynic must agree that a rumor often sounds as plausible as the truth. For example, consider the experience of finding a real dead mouse in a baker's loaf of bread in December of 1944. Next, consider the reaction of the Toronto housewives we wrote about. In March, 1936, rather than having the actual experience, they merely heard rumors about the mouse turning up in a local baker's bread.

Surely, the story sounded plausible enough to be true, and the women reacted accordingly, without knowing that these stories were being circulated by a professional rumor-mongering organization in order to undermine this business.

That's why we fully agree with Mrs. Lambert: rumors are heady stuff! Not only do they implicate "advertisers," but frequently they make "many millions of patient consumers" tipsy as well.

David J. Jacobson
New York, New York

To the Editors of Tomorrow:

I very much enjoyed R. V. C. Bodley's article, "In Search of Serenity," published in the November, 1948 issue of Tomorrow. It is gratifying to know that there are people who have found this serenity in the neurotic scramble that modern life has become. But the formula that Mr. Bodley prescribes is, unfortunately, not available to the vast majority of people, most of whom are shackled and bound by responsibility. The author states that he did not begin his search till the age of thirty, at which time he gave up both income and career, something, he states, which anyone else could do. But at that age most men are married and have families. A bank clerk, with a wife and two children, might very well feel that happiness for him can lie only in a life at sea or on a farm. But though he may be perfectly willing to count the world well lost for spiritual freedom, it is at least doubtful that he has the right to confer this glorious sacrifice on three other human beings. In the struggle between his belated pursuit of happiness and his children's tummies, the tummies are liable to win.

Arthur P. Wilson
Youngstown, Ohio

To the Editors of Tomorrow:

It is unfortunate that with all the daily papers in Manhattan, each with its individual reviewer, one should have to wait for a monthly periodical to encounter a reviewer who is not blindly moved to uncritical enthusiasm by one of the greatest evils in our contemporary theatre. On the other hand, it is fortunate that there is such a reviewer at all. I refer to Mr. Clurman and his ability to recognize that a star interested only in projecting his (or her) own peculiar personality, regardless of the conflicting interests and intentions of the playwright, may be a great commercial asset to the producer, but a sad and expensive thing from the standpoint of truly *legitimate* theatre. Because of his professional intimacy with the theatre, one might expect Mr. Clurman to be the least objective of reviewers—most cautious of bruising the temperaments of The Great. Instead, he alone had the courage to emphasize what a disastrous, cheapening and grotesque thing Tallulah Bankhead is now doing to Noel Coward's *Private Lives.* He even dared to suggest that Mr. Morley's monotonously keyed burlesque, though amusing, might be one of the most limiting influences upon what might have been a quite civilized play—his own *Edward, My Son.* I await anxiously and hopefully for him to point out that Jose Ferrer's caricature is not the salvation of *The Silver Whistle* but, contrarywise, that when he and his character step onto the stage, a wryfully humorous and original idea is sold down the river of audience pandering and box office prostitution.

Kenneth L. P. Wagner
Yonkers, New York

To the Editors of Tomorrow:

I would like to take issue with a statement made by André Visson in his article "As Europeans See Us" (Tomorrow, December, 1948). He says: ". . . American men and women tend to work at a lesser tempo than many men and women in Europe, and know better how to relax." From my experience in living on both continents, I would say that the reverse is true. Most Americans work at a break-neck speed with their eyes fixed on the next step up, a natural result of our more competitive society. Europeans, on the other hand, are not brought up on the Horatio Alger tradition, and look upon their jobs less as a means of moving up from one economic stratum to another than simply as a livelihood. As "relaxation" from their work, Americans turn to various forms of external entertainment: movies, night clubs, etc. This country has per capita more places where people go to be "entertained" than any other in the world. But whether this is "relaxation" is doubtful. To me it seems to denote, more than anything else, an inability to relax in the real sense of the word. And I cannot see that it compares favorably with the European's method of enjoying himself, which is most likely to be in his own home among his family and friends.

Grace M. Harris
Salt Lake City, Utah

To Thoughtful Parents of Creative Children... Ages 2-6, 7-11

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ARE you one of those thoughtful parents who realizes that a love for music is as natural in little children as their love for play? If so, we offer your child a Young People's Record *absolutely free!* You are not required to pay for the record nor return it. We make this offer to introduce you to an exciting new way to teach your child to enjoy and understand good music. A plan which regularly brings to your home music created with a sincere understanding of children . . . music to play to . . . music to listen to . . . music to sing and dance to . . . and, most important, music your child can *grow with!*

YOUNG PEOPLE'S RECORD CLUB was organized by educators and musicians who understand children as well as music. For the first time, they have created a program which provides children aged 2-to-6 and 7-to-11 with an intelligent and enjoyable approach to the appreciation of good music.

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FREE for Children 2 to 6

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Every record is superbly recorded on unbreakable 10-inch plastic, permitting even the youngest members to handle them without supervision. Record jackets, delightfully illustrated in color, contain complete lyrics and descriptive notes useful to parents and children alike.

PLEASE ACCEPT ONE OF THESE FREE RECORDS FOR YOUR CHILD

Help your child to a lifetime enjoyment of good music—simply mail the coupon now. We will promptly send your child the gift record you select, plus a copy of the Club magazine "Record Time," absolutely free. At the same time we will reserve a membership for your child. If your child is not delighted with the record, simply send us a postcard within 10 days cancelling the reservation. Otherwise, as a Club member, your child will receive a new, unbreakable record every month, and we will bill you monthly for only $1.39 plus 6c postage. Whatever your decision the gift record is your child's to keep — ABSOLUTELY FREE. Give your child the music he needs and deserves by sending the coupon NOW!

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YOUNG PEOPLE'S RECORD CLUB, Inc.
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☐ The Waltzing Elephant

☐ The Concertina That Crossed The Country

Please send the Free Record checked above, and reserve a membership in the Club for the child whose name I have indicated. Unless I cancel the reservation within 10 days after receipt of the free record you may send the child a Young People's Record every month and bill me monthly for only $1.39 plus 6¢ postage. In any case, the Gift Record is ABSOLUTELY FREE.

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Child's Name..

Address..

City and State..

Age..................Date of Birth..........................

My Name..

Address..

City and State..

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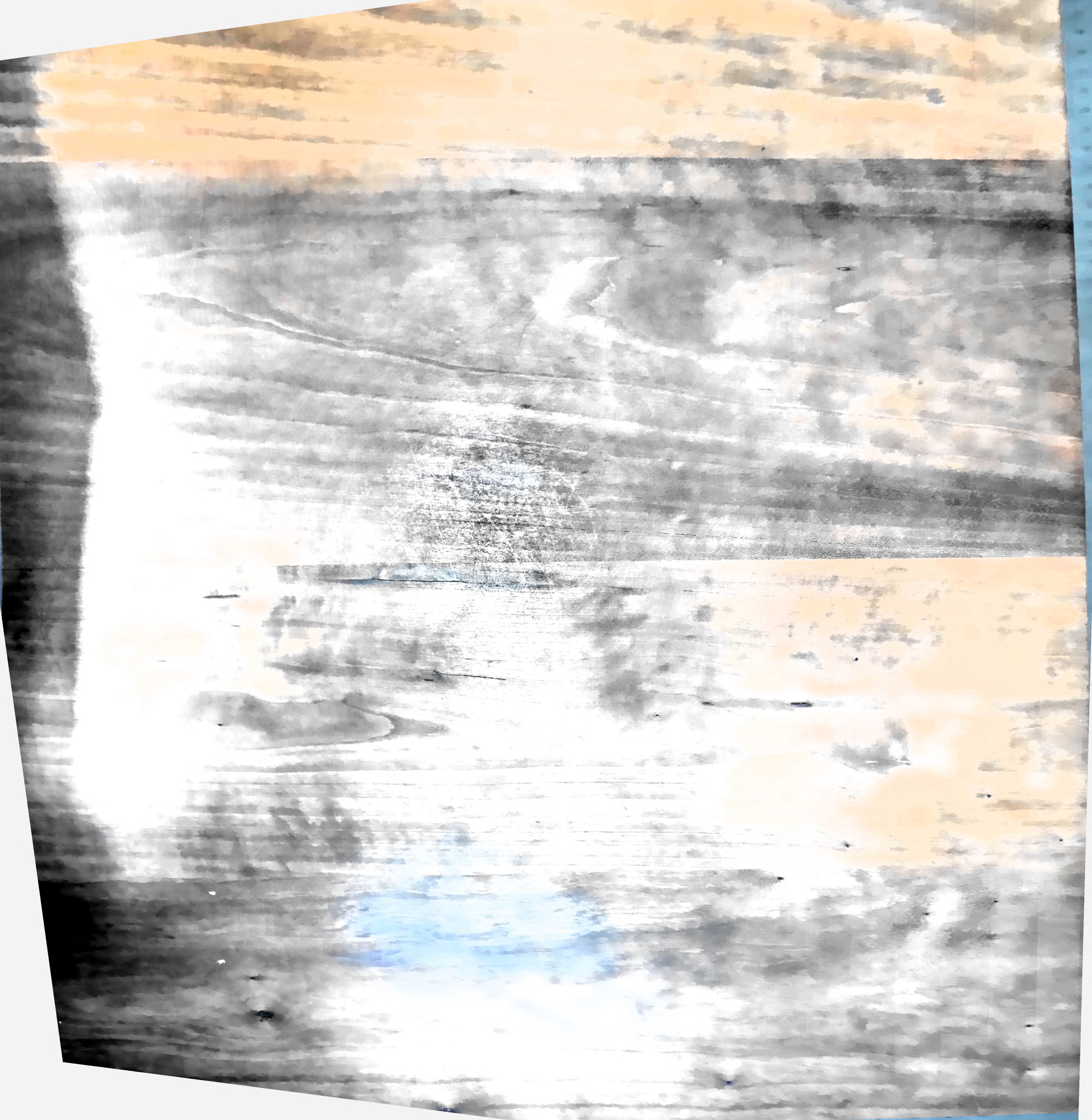

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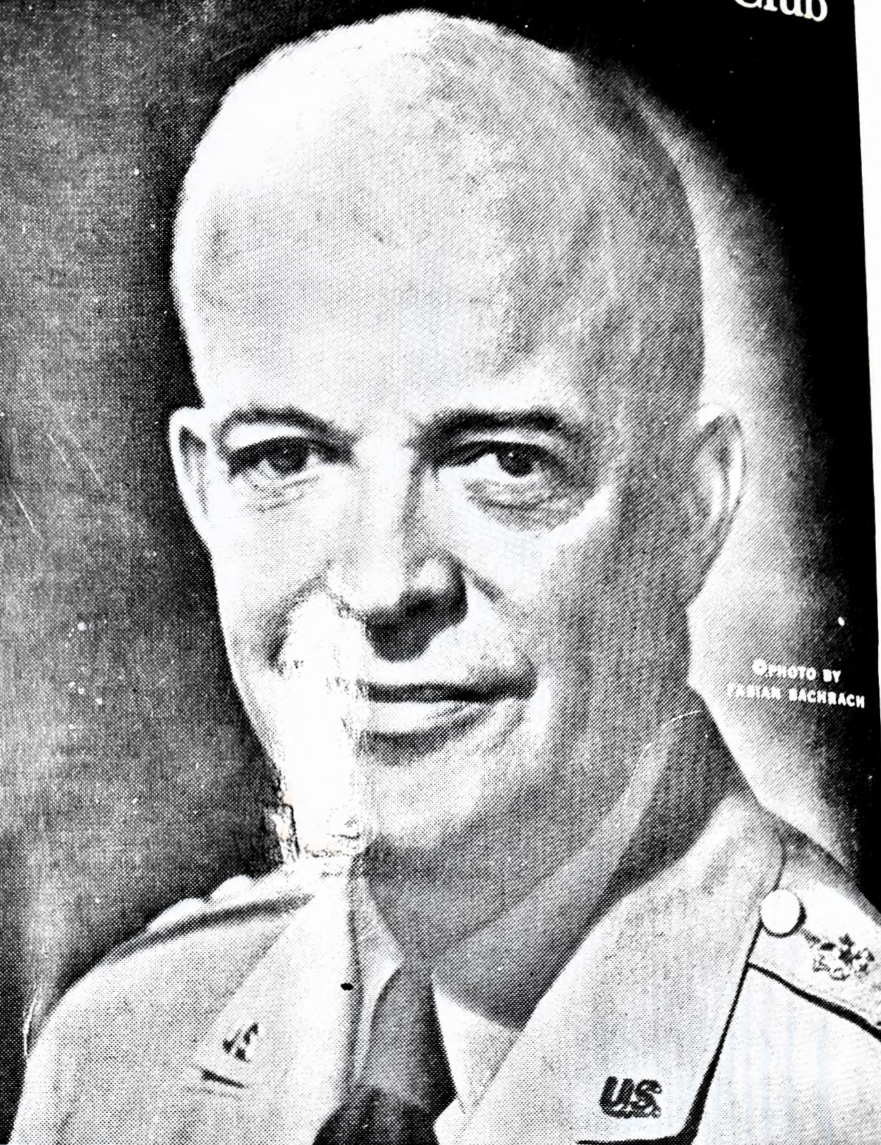

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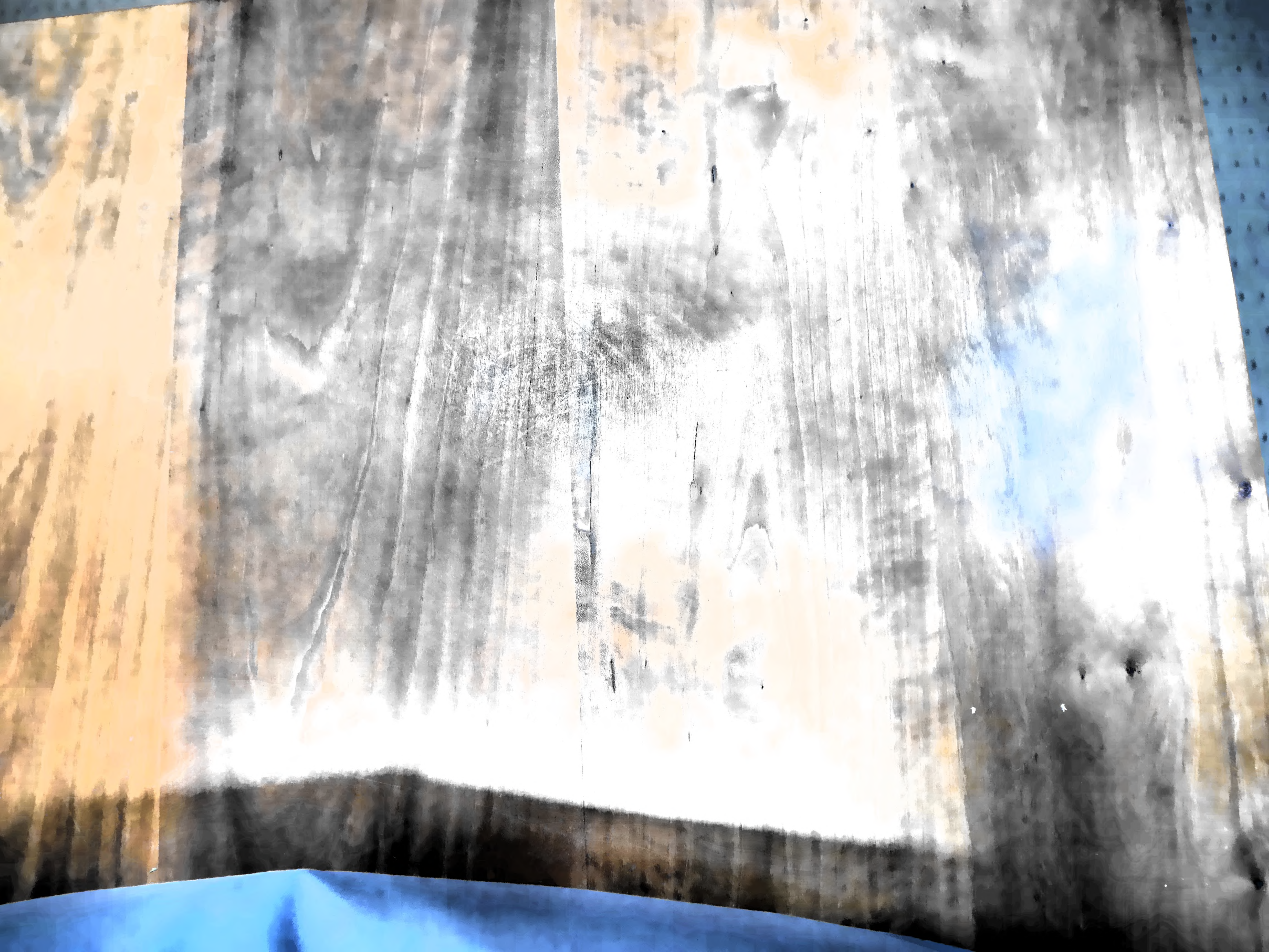

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