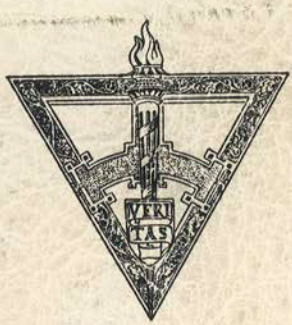
PROVIDENCE COLLEGE ALEMBIC



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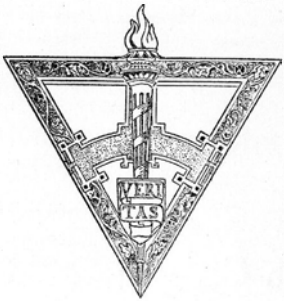
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Providence College Alembic

VOL. I FEBRUARY, 1921 No. 3

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Making Your World

THE liar said: It's a bitter world and its hard to get along,
Men don't play fair with their fellow men and they're cruel when they are strong;
They sneer and jeer in a vicious way and they hinder you all they can,
And there's no such thing as fellowship in the selfish heart of man.
Then I thought to myself—it is no doubt true that rough is the world and cold,
To the men who have bartered the truth for gain, and are known by the lies they've told.

The cheat exclaimed: It's a vicious world and nobody cares at all
Whether you live or whether you die or whether you rise or fall;
Let poets or sages write fine words, and sing of the joy of life—
I tell you the days on earth are fixed with hatred, scorn and strife.
And I thought to myself—it is no doubt true that little of joy you'll meet.
If your path is strewn with broken faith and you played the game as a cheat.

But the honest man, with his head erect, will tell you that men are fair,
That the world is peopled with honest friends who love him and really care;
That smiles await him wher'er he goes, and never there comes a day
But someone offers a friendly hand to help him along his way.
Oh, the world is hard if you lie or cheat, but it's gentle and kind and true,
If only you've loved and kept the faith as an honest man should do.

Francis J. Duffy, '23

THE FERRY VAGABOND

THE dense fog lay thick and heavy over the water-front. All manner of weird shapes and forms moved to and fro, shrouded in the clammy grayness. The end of the ferry-slip was barely discernible and beyond,—only God knew what was beyond, hidden by the gray blanket, but the shrill shrieks of whistles and the solemn warnings of bells told of the dangers and hazards that were lurking there.

I did not pay much heed to the small crowd of people who were waiting to board the ferry. I was impatient and anxious to get to the New York side of the river and back to my hotel. To add to my discomfiture I was cold, for I had been waiting quite a while and the fog had penetrated my clothing and chilled me to the bone. I buttoned my coat collar closer around my neck and waited.

"Say, Bud."

I turned. A huddled-up, scantily-clad figure confronted me.

"Say Bud, could you———?"

I speedily assured him that I could not. "You hobos all seem to pick me for an easy mark. I'm tired of being a meal ticket for every bum I run across."

"Ah, say, kid, you got me wrong, I ain't always been a bum. I ain't like the rest of them birds what nicks everybody they come across."

Same old line, I said to myself, same old line. It *was* the same line of bunk that every knight of the road employes when attempting to make a touch, but there was something peculiar in his voice, a certain liquid, musical tone that seemed incongruous with his shabby appearance. Perhaps he hadn't been a bum always, perhaps,——

"What do you say, cul, I'll pay you back when I gets on my

feet again, just slip me your name and number and I'll make it right with you."

Out of the mist the ferry boat was beginning to take form. The crowd was surging towards the gang plank. I moved away, pressing a coin into the palm of the man's hand. He clutched the lapel of my coat.

"Come across with your address."

I had waited a long time for the ferry boat and didn't propose to miss it because of the idiocyncracies of this persistent hobo, so to humor him I gave him my name and the name of my hotel, and boarded the boat.

The dock began to slip away from us and the Hoboken shore was soon enveloped in the gray, impenetrable shroud. From all sides shrieking whistles and dull sounding bells gave warning of the lurking dangers. Nothing but an all-engulfing grayness wherever one looked, yet on the other side, I knew, were the uniform rows of piers and back of them the tall majestic buildings. The river, seemingly so narrow on a clear day, now, due to the fog, had assumed the size and proportions of an ocean. What an awful responsibility, I thought, must rest on the shoulders of the pilot. So many lives at the mercy of his skill and his knowledge of the river.

After what seemed an eternity the New York shore loomed up through the gray curtain. The ferry eased into the slip, and it was with relief that I stepped onto firm ground again. A short ride on a cross-town surface car brought me to my hotel. I had put in a rather strenuous day so repaired at once to my suite and prepared for a good night's rest.

What occurred during the night is beyond my knowledge and imagination. However, when I presented myself at the desk the next morning the clerk handed me a letter. Of course there is nothing to excite alarm is being handed a letter, even by an hotel clerk, but what aroused my curiosity was the name neatly printed in the left hand corner, "J. Oliver Hammond," one of the most popular actors of the modern stage. Wondering why such a famous person should be writing me letters, I nervously tore open the envelope. I read—

"My dear Easy Mark,

We will not go into lengthy details. I was the 'hobo' who accosted you at the Hoboken pier yesterday. I have found that the best way to study a part is to try it out in real life, consequently the tramp make-up.

Please accept these seats in the Liberty Theater for the opening night of 'The Vagabond' and forgive the liberty I took with you yesterday.

Cordially,

J. Oliver Hammond."

Francis L. Dwyer, '24

Mother

WHAT earthly title is greater than
The gentle name of mother?
What word save this, can melt the heart
That's chilled to every other.

What earthly title brings the smile,
Or causes tears to flow?
None other than the one you coo'ed
In the cradle long ago.

What earthly title did Christ love,
With tenderness divine?
None other than the one you bear
Oh, gentle mother mine.

Harold F. Boyd, '24

LAFAYETTE

THE recurrence, this month, of the birthday anniversary of our two great Americans, Washington and Lincoln, evokes the customary annual tribute to these great lovers of liberty and democracy. Indeed, well did they earn the plaudit now heaped upon them; their aspirations and accomplishments are worthy of perennial repetition; their greatness can never be exaggerated by even the most eulogistic praise. So splendid is the material which the lives of these two great patriots offer to writers that perhaps other lesser yet quite worthy defenders of our country are entirely neglected. In this connection it would seem to me unbefitting a generous and appreciative nation to allow this month to pass without honoring the memory of Lafayette, one whose aid, at the darkest moment of our Revolution, proved a fortunate inspiration to the struggling, poorly equipped colonists. Indeed, nothing could be more unbecoming the character of a great country than to overlook the opportune impulse which this man's arrival lent to our wavering fortunes. Furthermore, the inseparable companionship which sprang up between this ardent Frenchman and Washington naturally suggests the association of the name of Lafayette with that of the "Father of Our Country."

What could be more natural, more logical than this linking of the memory of the two men? They fought and suffered for the same ideal—Freedom. Consider the sacrifice that youth made in leaving his country, his family, everything that he loved and cherished, to risk his life in the service of a people he admired but knew very impersonally. We can observe a certain analogy in the heroic unselfishness of the American soldier in the late World War, who left family, relatives, and sweetheart to fight in a distant land where the customs, people, and language were strange, whither nothing really summoned him but the call of a common cause. Think how far apart the two races are in character and social makeup even today; try to imagine how far they were in those early days of slow communication and intense provincialism. Just magnify the difficulties of the American crusader of 1917 a dozen times, and you will have some idea of what confronted Lafayette. The times in which he lived were extremely unsettled; the rela-

tions between England and France were strained to such a point that a movement such as the Frenchman was contemplating could have easily plunged his country into a disastrous conflict. For, was not Lafayette from one of the noblest families of France? This reason compelled the king to forbid his departure lest it arouse the suspicion in Britain that the French government was behind the movement. Everything that could possibly be done to deter him from his purpose was done. When it was found that he was still undaunted, a warrant for his arrest was issued. Capture then meant the Bastile.

The determined youth was not awed by these threats, though they came from the most despotic monarch in Europe. The innate love of liberty was so great in him that such threats only increased his determination to follow out his plans. Even the servile condition of the lower class about him, as contrasted with the freedom of the same class in England, rooted more firmly into his kind, sympathetic nature, the already irresistible desire to devote his life to the defense of the oppressed. The American Revolution afforded him an opportunity to put into practice the principles which governed his thoughts, and permeated his whole being.

The Battle of Lexington had hardly been fought when the news of it reached his ears. From that moment his heart and soul were enlisted in the great cause of the valiant Americans. Being very wealthy he planned to fit out a fleet and to transport a regiment to America, but his efforts were vain for the reason, as we have already mentioned, that the king for diplomatic reasons, opposed his action. It became necessary for him to proceed with the utmost caution. Having succeeded in outwitting his pursuers he set sail, with a few friends, in a vessel he had purchased. All during the voyage he applied himself diligently to the study of the English language. After several weeks had passed at sea, American soil was at last reached. His dangers were by no means ended. He barely escaped being captured by the British frigates which were patrolling our coast. He evaded them, however, and landed safely. His first night in America was spent at the home of the Huger family in South Carolina.

With his customary energy, the young nobleman immediately took steps to enter the army. Congress, whose duty it was to consider his application, was at first reluctant to accept him because of the digusting conduct of most foreigners already in the American forces. These

adventurers, it appears, had come here simply because they had nothing else to do. They were always clamoring for high ranks at the expense of our countrymen. But Lafayette proved his motives were different from theirs when he expressed a desire to serve without pay in any capacity they would designate. His zeal for the cause he had espoused so pleased Congress that he was accepted. He became Washington's aide, and in a short time was one of his most trusted advisors.

Lafayette took part in several engagements during his first year in this country and won the high regard of his chief by his coolness and prudence. Although his age was a drawback, the young Frenchman was more than once entrusted with important positions or sent on difficult campaigns. He was the idol of his soldiers and his love of harmony made him instrumental in smoothing over difficulties which arose between French and American troops. Perhaps he might be fittingly termed the "*officier de liaison*" of the American Revolution. During the battle of Brandywine he was wounded while attempting to rally his disordered forces. We can judge of the affection Washington had for him when we read how he ordered that particular care be taken of the Marquis. When Lafayette recovered he received leave of absence and returned to France to visit his wife and child. He would have been arrested had not Franklin interceded for him at the court. Instead he was reprimanded for his disobedience.

His stay in France enabled him to again exert his influence to have troops and ships sent to America. Although he ultimately succeeded in this he did not realize another dream he had cherished. It was his ardent desire to make an attack on England in conjunction with a Spanish naval and military force. The procrastination and jealousy of the Spaniards prevented him from carrying his plan into execution. The best that he could do was to return to America. It was during this stay that the surrender of Cornwallis took place.

Once the American Revolution was over he went back to his native land in time to take a long-needed rest before entering actively into the French Revolution, which occurred about eight years later. His life so far had been one long sacrifice for that liberty which was to be so beneficial to mankind. He had abandoned wealth, leisure, everything, that his rank could offer him in worldly pleasures and happiness, to assist us in our struggle. This trait of his character endeared him to the common people of his own land to such an extent that he exercised a

great deal of influence over them. He was one of the very few aristocrats who were liked by the peasantry, a class whose deeds proclaim loudly enough the fact that they had little use for any noble. Yet we must not think everything went smoothly between him and the rabble because such is not the case. More than once he seemed to stand in the very shadow of the guillotine. He constantly opposed the lawless policy of the mobs, and did all in his power to establish a constitution similar to that of the United States. He tried to restore a respect for law and order, but he could hardly expect such a reform from a populace whose only propensity was to kill or destroy everything that savoured of aristocracy. Its ferocity and sanguinary disposition melted away with time.

Just as a storm is inevitably followed by fair weather, so also, after this period of blood and terror, came happy days under the rule of Bonaparte. Lafayette as soon as he was freed from prison, where his political enemies had sent him, began to work again to pay the debts he had incurred. During the stormy days of the Revolution his property, except a few strips of land which had been overlooked, had been confiscated. However, these vicissitudes of fortune did not compel him to retire from the arena of public life.

In 1824, shortly before his death he made his last visit to America. He was received with great enthusiasm by the younger generation as well as by the few friends who survived since the American Revolution. The reception accorded him was at the time the most magnificent granted any visitor in the history of the republic. He was present at the dedication of the Bunker Hill monument and heard Daniel Webster deliver his famous oration prepared for the occasion. During his tour of the country he paid a visit to the tomb of his friend, Washington. When he returned home he again took up his political duties, but was soon obliged by illness to retire into private life. He died at the age of seventy-seven, but in American hearts he will live forever, and his memory will always be fondly connected with that of Washington.

Albert Dubuc, '24

WILLIAM KAY GOES ON A JOURNEY

HE was lying on his white bed, when the summons came. Long had he known that the command would come and he was prepared. Anticipation, however, never dulls the advent of such a summons. His mother and father and his friend, the priest, and others whom he knew not were gathered to bid him goodbye. The actual moment of parting was easy. Bidding goodbye was an ordeal never to be forgotten, a treasured memory for those left behind. Going down the road recalled many scenes of childhood days: brook, fence, barn. And Pete was there—ever such a faithful dog. It was Pete who romped with him long ago through yonder field; now bear, now Indian, now Redcoat, always companion to the Argonaut of the cornfield. Then Lillian's house. Lillian was the girl he loved. For her he would fight and conquer, but now....

Then he looked back. Why, what had happened? Everyone seemed to be looking at some object stretched before them. Only his mother, with face upturned, smiled. You have seen your mother smile through her tears; it is God's sunlight after a summer shower. The shower is balm to the parched earth; the smile of the sun is its life. Bill smiled in return. A low sing-sing murmur came to his ears. The lights grew dim. A strange exultation was upon him. Again he looked behind. His mother's face was all he saw. That was the last time Bill turned his eyes. Now he must go on.

He came to a river's edge. Upon a rock near the water edge a Man was seated. Bill addressed Him and asked the way. He in return questioned Bill concerning that which he had left behind. His voice was kindly but so very strange because of its very familiarity. He had heard it often. But where? Just then the keel of a boat grated on the pebbly shore and three men stepped upon the beach. The Stranger addressed them as Patrick, Michael, and Paul, and He requested them to return with Bill as all was well. Bill entered the boat with the others and then they glided out from shore. The water was extremely calm and the sail hung limp from the mast. Nevertheless the ship forged straight ahead cleavnig the glossy surface. The gloom

increased, and now his companions were but shadows huddled together in the stern. Then suddenly the opposite shore loomed into view, cool and inviting. The very pebbles seemed to glow with some interior light. The sky overhead was by this time shot with a beautiful violet hue. Bill thought that if an artist ever dared paint such a picture, he would be derided as a dreamer of unnatural things. They disembarked. Then the guides leading, they proceeded through a pleasant grove.

Suddenly there rose up before them a huge wall which radiated an unearthly brilliance. Bill looked up and there upon the wall was a Lady, slowly pacing to and fro, as if awaiting someone. In her hands she held a large key from which was suspended a curious chain. Suddenly she espied them and dropped the key and chain to the foremost guide, Michael.—Strange how like a Rosary was that key and chain.—They approached a gate which Michael opened with the key. Then Bill understood. There stood the Stranger who was not a Stranger. Now he recalled where he had first heard that voice. It had been on his First Communion Day.

* * *

Patrick, Michael, Paul, will you guide me to the King?
Lady of the Key, are you watching for me?
Stranger on the Shore, make me to know you too.

Paul J. Redmond, '24

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

TWO years have passed since the signing of the Armistice, and yet there is no peace. To the nation as to the man true peace must come from within. In our country at present there is a total lack of this internal peace. Militarists are blood-thirsty; Capital stabs the heart of Labor; crime waves are engulfing the large cities; the smoldering plots of Socialism belches forth in the eruptions of Bolshevism. Finally, the very prop of the nation totters. Undesirable amendments fostered by the few gradually weakens the respect and reverence due the constitution by the many. Never was there greater need for God-fearing, American men. With such conviction in mind, then, it is most appropriate to reflect on him, whose trust in God and American principles, made him the keystone of the Union.

To appreciate more fully the renowned liberator and statesman, Abraham Lincoln, let us, in spirit, pay a visit to the little log-cabin in the wilderness of Kentucky. It is the 12th day of February, the birth-day of the future president of the United States. But there are no unusual celebrities, no bands playing, no bugles sounding, as might be expected at the arrival of such a distinguished guest. Nothing but the mournful tone of the forest trees which so generously shelter the Lincoln family. Nowhere is there to be seen the sweet comforts of home, but poverty everywhere. It would seem that God wished to honor the future Liberator, by permitting him to share in the sweet humility of His own little Home at Bethlehem. And even as years pass, and the child becomes the boy there still lingers with the pioneer Lincoln the familiar companion of the struggling backwoodsman, poverty. In order to become the leading figure in the American Commonwealth, young Lincoln had to travel a long and thorny path from the log-cabin in Kentucky to the Executive Mansion in Washington. Yet he did it, and the way in which he accomplished this hazardous task is and will be, while free nations exist, the admiration of all.

When we recall that the entire school education of Lincoln extended through only one year, we are ready to look upon him as a

superman or one gifted with an intellect little less than divine. On the contrary, however, "Abe" Lincoln was very human; his intellectual gifts ordinary. But one gift he possessed common to us all, though in many of us latent—the aspiration for higher things. To develop the gift he lost no opportunity; he hesitated at no obstacle; he feared no handicap. He realized that education meant years of patient toil, but he faltered not. He was at all times a willing worker. He was ambitious as far as ambition is a desirable characteristic; he was generous beyond the limits of his big heart; and he possessed even as a boy a spirit of perseverance that prudently led him to a good end in whatever he once attempted. Perceiving in him such a disposition we are not amazed to see him chop wood for three days in order to possess a much desired book; to see him carry on his back a wretch whom he found on the roadside, staying with him all night until the poor unfortunate had recovered; to see him rock the cradle with his foot, while from a book his eager mind drinks in the coveted draughts of knowledge. With such zeal, coupled with a firm honesty, did the young backwoodsman climb the ladder of fame. At times the rungs seemed weak, the height unsurmountable, but the grim determination to accomplish the right as he saw it, "with malice toward none, with charity for all," spurred him to the goal. As a poor boy he was the ever ready helper to any one in distress; as a man and a distinguished lawyer he was the willing and able defender of his beloved common people.

No one was so poor or so despised, black or white, that "honest Abe" would not take his case, and having once taken it, he would not pause while there was a stone left unturned. His criterion, as a lawyer, was not the pecuniary value, but the degree of truth and justice in the case. In this way did Abraham Lincoln make many faithful friends, endearing himself to all classes, to rich and poor alike. And in this way did all who loved their country and the traditions of their country, rally to his standard, the glorious emblem of the Union, when President Lincoln proclaimed his "paramount object" to be, "to save the Union," "the Union as it was."

Much as he dreaded the idea of war—for he was at all times a man of peace—he was now forced to take the sword. In vain did he appeal with all his magic eloquence for the return of the Sister States, and for the prevention of bloodshed. In vain did he address his "dissatisfied fellow-countrymen": "You have no oath registered in heaven

to destroy the government, while I shall have a most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it." All was in vain. For already the long threatening storm has burst forth and the first flash of lightning has struck Fort Sumter. A flash that was the signal of a war, a Civil War, that was destined to bind with a stronger tie the greatest and grandest Union of the world; a war that was destined to free forever the colored race in America; a war destined to be the bloodiest of its kind recorded in history; and a war, alas! the termination of which was to mingle with the rejoicings of a victorious nation the wails of a fatherless people, for behold!—the great Leader, Defender and Emancipator is dead:

When the civil strife was ended,
  And the noble work was done;
When the Union was defended,
  And the glorious victory won;
Oh, then, great Liberator!
  Was the saddest hour of all:
When the bullet of the traitor,
  Caused our greatest man to fall.

John P. Walsh, '24

DEMOCRACY

DEMOCRACY has been from its birth the most desired form of government. Our forefathers some hundred and fifty years ago established on our shores the foundation of the greatest governmental structure of all times. The existing environment and the refreshing atmosphere of the new world were factors which impelled the Pilgrim to make such rapid strides. The presence of the vast wilderness was a silent and compelling appeal to him, a fair blank page on which he wrote a new chapter in the story of man's untiring struggle for a free country. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, there lay stretched out before him, the richest gift that man has had placed before him.

To the immigrant from the Old World, born in social strata, solidified by centuries, and bound through life by the chains of caste, America offered, through its democracy, an escape to a free life, one full of the bounties of nature, a life amidst resources that demanded earnest exertion, and which gave in return the chance for indefinite ascent in the scale of social advance. Democracy offered gifts to each one proportionate to his determination. Never before, and perhaps never again, in the history of man, will such an opportunity come. Such an opportunity was unique.

From the time of our Pilgrim Fathers, America, the greatest of all democracies, has been the goal of idealists. The influence of idealism was not limited in its application to the founding of the new government. Farmers and city builders came under its influence. It gave to them a restless energy, an astonishing capability of freedom of opportunity, and a strong resistance to the domination of one class. It infused into the individual atoms of this democratic mass a vitality and power, impossible for them to achieve in their former environment. Inspired by democracy, the pioneer easily conceived the foundation of a new society based on the proposition that all men are created equal. So by his efforts he established a democratic state embodying a liberty that would be enduring.

America is, in truth, the melting pot of the world. The democracy of America has been affected to a great extent by those ideals of immi-

grants from the Old World. They left a Europe bewildered by aristocracies to come to the land of plenty, where there was room to move about and breathe. They left it full of race and class hatred, war and pestilence, for an America, where opportunity was plentiful, where class sentiment was weak and men had no peerage to which to aspire, where even the wealthiest were not entirely independent of public opinion, nor disdainful of the approval of their fellow-citizens. America meant to them, as to the American pioneer before them, the opportunity to destroy the bonds of social caste that held them down at home.

In its vast and receptive wilderness, America took to herself these men and women, their institutions and ideals. By her teachings they were adapted to the conditions of the New World, to the creation of new institutions to meet their new needs. As Democracy was setting up for them on our shores a society superior to that of the Old World in social and industrial forms, as she caused them to lose faith in their native institutions, she inspired them with democratic and true American ideals.

Lest they lose faith in democracy, America, the new giant republic of the western hemisphere, proclaimed to the world that it stood in the fore ground of the nations of the earth as the precursor of civilization. It heralded the voice of the new era of mankind in which "Government of the people, by the people, and for the people," is to ultimately encircle the gliobe and rest upon the peoples of the earth. America aided them by her material treasures, her influence, her love of freedom; encouraged them, by giving them the confidence and strength of her sacred ideals, the result of her hard struggles to establish and maintain herself firmly. She gave to all a spirit of hope that is boundless, a faith in God, and in mankind. She gave to all a strong rugged will and power that equipped them to grasp every opportunity and turn it to her own needs. As are the individuals of the nation, so is the nation. The people rich, strong, healthy and powerful as they are, only reflect the bounties of democracy.

Democracy met its test; it survived the vicious attacks, both within and without. Democracy will ever stand, because of the valor, endurance and self-sacrifice of its people. These traits are the factors that will support it to the end. Whatever may attack us, fortified with these principles, we will survive. No mortal strength can prevail successfully against the inexorable law of Freedom and Progress. America will stand forever under the protection and guidance of democracy, for she

is a country in which everyone has some stake and some taste of its promise. With minds well informed of our rights and hearts aglow with love of freedom for ourselves and our posterity, we shall rise up against those demagogues who seek our destruction, and ever advancing under the protective folds of democracy's banner, we shall be a firm, united and a contented nation.

Howard Farrell, '24

The Season's First Snowfall

THE roseate hue of Autumn's sun
Is faded into gray,
A veiling mist enshrouds the earth
In solemn silent way,
The trees bereft of Summer's dress
In lifeless form now stand,
While awful stillness nature sways
And penetrates the land.

Softly falls the wandering flake,
Alone from his snowy height,
Revealing to the soul of man
The landscape's robe of white;
And soon as down from Angel's flume,
Drop the straying crystals all,
A masterpiece from the artist's hand
The season's first snowfall.

M. S. Hope, '24

QUO DUCIS?

IN his sesquipedalian "Plea for Words" published in the January number of the *Alembic*, Mr. Skehan depicts for us most vividly the beneficial results of a large vocabulary and the terrible consequences of the lack of one. Indeed Mr. Skehan is so persuasively loquacious that if the contents of his article were transmitted verbatim to the Egyptian Sphinx, I am sure she would immediately withdraw her opposition to Hermes of the golden tongue. But the eloquence of heretical reformers is traditional—John Calvin, for instance. And inadequate as are my resources for combating the views set forth by Mr. Skehan, my sworn allegiance to the ancient and honorable cult of Contempt for Long Words compels me to make an attempt however poor to destroy the force of his argument. It seems to me that the best refutation consists in a representation of the various horrible examples which the adherents to his doctrine offer. The most infamous of these are, of course, the writers. The actor can always shift the blame to the playwright, and the actor always acknowledges the scribe his master. Also, it is in the English language especially that we find the greatest confusion of Mr. Skehan's "sesquipedalian" words. Even in Greek the many compounds are easily recognized. It is only in English that the mixture of Greek and Latin, Teutonic and Romance, Hebrew and Celtic has produced that

> " , ... Cerbonian bog
> Betwixt Damiata and Mount Cassius old
> Where armies whole have sunk."

Therefore we shall confine our comparison to the English writers. Let us take under discussion the case of the first man addicted to the practice, of whose life we have any definite knowledge—Geoffrey Chaucer. *There* was a man who had every opportunity to lead a useful and honorable life. He could have been a serviceable member of the body whose successors have had the honor to be clay in the hands of the greatest liar since Julius Caesar stuck his head in a hole in the graveyard wall to keep the wind from blowing on his back—the

Welshman at Westminster, Lloyd George. But what did Geoffrey Chaucer do? He began to write verses about roses with romances, books belonging to duchesses, bird congressional conventions, and two lovers who died before they were married. He ended by writing about a woman who was five times married and gave promise of never dying. The result? He was borrowing money from his brother-in-law all the times, and lost his dignity and self-respect to such a degree that now everybody calls him "Dan."

Edmund Spencer was another addict to the pernicious habit. He was so deeply enmeshed in its venomous web that he tried to write twelve books about a fairy queen. He acquired enough sense while writing the first six to stop when he had finished them. Nevertheless after a lapse of time the habit reasserted itself. He wrote a prose article calling for the utter destruction of the Irish people, on account of which his castle was destroyed and his wife and child burned to death during an uprising in the vicinity. Later he died in abject poverty.

Then there is the case of Shakespeare, to whom Mr. Skehan ascribes a vocabulary of 15,500 words. If we are to believe the men who are in the same trade in which wordy Willie was, he is still the lodestar of his profession. Perhaps he is. At any rate it is a doubtful honor. My point is that he made a mistake, a big mistake, when he took up the profession, if such it may be called. Instead of remaining an actor at a good salary and in favor with the queen, he began writing plays. Unfortunately they pleased the public, which, being the public, wanted more. He continued to write. He made a comfortable fortune, of course, and was able to spend his old age in ease. But he acquired enough enemies to keep him busy during his life avenging his injuries. After he died they stirred up such a lasting ill-fame against him that now whenever anyone makes a remark that attempts to be deep and witty, some ones cries "Shakespeare, Shakespeare," and the incident is closed.

Among the contemporaries of Shakespeare, who owe at least one misfortune to the evil habit in question, may be mentioned Sir Philip Sidney, who was a means of making Spencer famous, and whose sonnets were one of the causes of Alan Seeger's erotomania; "'Kit" Marlowe, whose writings involved him in a fatal brawl; and Ben Jonson, who fell into such disrepute that in "L'Allegro" Milton made a comment about the quality of his socks without fear of censure.

John Milton is another to whom we owe a great debt of execration. Imagine a man who would have the consummate heartlessness to give forth a world already overburdened with differentia of its genus lengthy works like "Paradise Lost," "Paradise Regained," and "Samson Agonistes," together with other shorter compositions on all kinds of topics ! He knew that some people at least would read them and, like a new convert to Socialism, would endeavor to inflict upon others the evil they themselves have suffered. That is an example of what this one practice, more than the seven deadly sirens, does to the heart of man.

Some of the contemporaries of Milton were worse than he. One, Jermy Taylor, wrote a volume entitled "Holy Dying" that is too humorous (save the mark!) to be holy. Another, Samuel Burton, dissected the "Anatomy of Melancholy" in a "sesquipedalian" treatise that was supposed to be witty and failed singularly in its object. Another, John Donne, was a recusant from the Roman to the Anglican communion, whom all critics praise as a mystic because the meaning of his verses is a mystery. Abraham Cowley, who also lived at this time, is a typical example of the manner in which poets in general interpret life. He wrote one book in which he related as true a number of imaginary amours, although he himself never in his life spoke a word of love to a lady. Undoubtedly some young men of his time took the contents of the books as a sure guide, acted on its principles, and left those whom they beseiged still votaries to Diana.

During a digression on William Cowper Mr. G. K. Chesterton wrote that it was Cowper's practice of literature which lengthened his life and his belief in predestination that caused his death. This typically Chestertonian remark is an instance of the manner in which the litterateur is forever trying to defend his past and present partners in crime and increase the future supply of such criminals.

Did you ever stop to consider of what untold and indescribable agony Thomas Gray made a beginning when he stood in a churchyard and let his thoughts run wild? Did you ever realize how many high school pupils have been subjected to the baneful influence of the didactic essays of Addison and Steele, how many collegians have racked their brains in an effort to imitate the ryhme-guided verses of Dryden and Pope, how many adults have been forced to read the result of Defoe's application of journalism to modern science in order to be considered

cultured? Truly there are many warnings of the end which awaits those of us who are heedless enough to travel the path which Mr. Skehan points out as the means to the attainment of our desires !

The one thing for which Dickens, Thackeray, Scott, and Cooper are to be thanked is that their tediousness precludes much possibility of any red-blooded youth ever reading past the first chapter, unless he conceives it his duty to do so. The profligacy of Byron, the marital relations of Shelley, and Carolyn Wells on Keats effectively prevent the aforesaid youth from ever being exposed to any of these enervating influences Wordsworth's stilted verbosity, Browning's enthusiastic obscureness, and Tennyson,s maudlin piety insure all sane persons against their harmful effects. The illogical philosophy which permeates Mathew Arnold's entire works is a sufficient impediment to their extensive perusal by any reasonable man. The same may be said of the rationalistic morality of George Eliot, and the nerve-racking flights of fancy in which Mrs. Browning occasionally indulges, while the titles of Jane Austen's books react violently against the aesthestic sense of anyone who read Horatio Alger, Jr., during his boyhood. A microcosm of nineteenth-century literary England is contained in the two extremes of Macaulay, who wrote untruths beautifully, and Carlyle, who wrote the truth uncouthly.

Washington Irving's chief claim to infamy is his introduction into America of the nefarious practices of Addison. His "Rip Van Winkle" is a perfect specimen of a good "old wives' tale" gone bad. The essentially Puritanical viewpoint of Lowell, the rural redolence of Whittier, and the dreary transcendentalism of the Emerson coterie are too bitter a draught of "home-brew" for the most loyal American. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a fine man personally, a good husband, and a kind father. But the manner in which he made his living remains an ineradicable stain upon his escutcheon. To be brief, he was a poet. If each of the American poets and essayists had followed or preceded the example of Thoreau, turned recluse, and remained engaged in some suitable manual labor till death, the nation would have been left to bear only the disgrace of her Spanish and Mexican Wars and her Tammany Hall.

Surely the evil effects of a continued adherence to the vitiating habit are plainly manifest to-day. Modern literary research has revealed fully the many dark places in the lives of those whom Mr. Skehan holds

up to us as models. Those who have failed to heed the warning have themselves become as beacon-lights of danger. Bernard Shaw's solution of the Irish question, H. G. Wells' recent attempt at history, Chesterton's fiasco in philosophy—these are cases in point. A list of the various incompetents with their various incompetencies would be profitless and wearisome. But of one thing we are sure. Sesquipedalianism is doomed. In its last stages it has assumed a form which even its progenitors would disown. In the senseless vaporings of Edgar Lee Masters, John Fletcher Gold, and Amy Lowell, we find ample assurance that the power, which has ruined more lives, wrecked more homes, and filled more bread lines than John Barleycorn ever hoped to ruin, or wreck, or fill, that monster of iniquity, that fiery-eyed Moloch, that creation of the Prince of Evil has at last come to naught. And as the bells throughout the land burst forth in harmony upon the anniversary of the birth of the Father of his Country, we are sure that their assonance will resound: "Sesquipedalianism is doomed." *James Keleher, '24*

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EDITORIALS

LENT

On Ash Wednesday the Church began the penitential season of Lent, the forty days of mortification during which we are expected to meditate and pray. We say "expected" advisedly because we realize that although Lent in a special manner belongs to God, yet because the world is too much with us, it is difficult in our weakness to turn from our daily occupation and amusements, to give up our frivolities and practice self-denial.

We may not assert positively that Lent can be traced back to the Apostles, but we know that some sort of fasting time has been observed before the great festival of Easter from very early days. It is mentioned by Tertullian and St. Irenaeus. St. Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, defined it as a fast of forty days. Rules concerning its observance were extremely rigid but widely practiced. It was a time of penance. The spirit of penance, however, no longer exists in its pristine rigor. Contact

with the world through daily occupation has changed our attitude toward many religious matters, and Lent seems to be one of the important periods that is ofttimes shamefully neglected. It is an opportunity that ever-thoughtful Mother church sets aside for reflection and spiritual renovation. Yet some of us fail to take advantage of it, deliberately depriving ourselves of the special graces and blessings intended to strengthen our spiritual life. We choose to continue in our worldly gaiety until it is too late.

The world was created for man. And man was created to glorify God. Lent is a particular time for this glorification by our preparation for a supernatural end—the end for which God created us. We are not asked to make sacrifices beyond our strength. We are asked to leave the attractions of the world behind us for this brief period and to be earnest and snicere in our devotions. The task is an easy one. In fact it is so easy that there is no reason why we should limit our observance of its rules to this particular season but in a modified form consistently observe them throughout our lives. This is but fulfilling our obligations to Him who made us that some day we may know Him.

THE NEW PRESIDENT

It seems but a few weeks ago when the entire nation was engaged in electing a new president, yet over a third of a year has passed since that memorable day—memorable for men as well as parties and policies, particularly certain well-known reservations—and now approach the day when amid the most solemn of ceremonies the elected take the oath of office for the ensuing four years.

From a political standpoint it is the first time in eight years that the Republican party has weilded the executive baton, and all eyes may be focused, first on appointments and then upon party success, but these will be of minor consideration to those familiar with the present economic state of affairs. True, much does depend upon appointments, but none of the offices either existing or created will function normally until there is a readjustment that will prove more effective than the reconstruction programme so thoroughly outlined yet so inefficiently executed that it is too ridiculous to be termed a farce. We have waited patiently after a brief aftermath for the tangible evidence of the peace, progress and prosperity portrayed by an ever increasing body of so-called optimists who, if we are to judge by appearances, despite the fact that they are sometimes deceptive, were more hypnotised than convinced by their own

argument. Perhaps we will continue to wait. The alternative is that the controlling party in whom the great majority have entrusted the machinery of government with the most sincere hope of accomplishment, will prove themselves capable of the responsibility.

Mr. Harding is not the first of our Presidents to assume office following a war in which we were involved. Washington was inaugurated as our first President after a war which left us commercially with practically no assets. Madison was president during our second war with England and it was during Polk's administration that the Mexican war of 1846 was waged. Lincoln was president during the Civil War, while during the reconstruction period which followed Andrew Johnson ruled. Conditions then were different, of course, but men and methods are the same. Initiative and ability depend upon the man. The time and place are but the opportunoities he has to exercise them. We assure Mr. Harding of our loyal support and constant coöperation in every undertaking for the betterment of our government, but we cannot refrain from stating that we watch with great anxiety the undertaking of the readjustment of our economic life to its pre-war basis. The task, is, perhaps one of the greatest ever confronting a President and it is fitting that during this month in commemorating the achievements of those who passed through the same period in the development of our country—both Washington and Lincoln—that we pledge ourselves to the loyal support of the President, having before us the motto of the Knights of Columbus in war and peace "*For God and Country.*"

COLLEGE CHRONICLE

THE opening of the new semester was marked by the reorganization of the Student Council. This reorganization was effected in order to insure a more uniform and efficient functioning of the body and at the same time to afford the students a certain amount of practice in judicial procedure. The clearest explanation of the new system can be given by quoting extracts directly from the new Constitution:

The Student Council shall consist of:

1 Judge
3 Associate Judges
1 Prosecutor
1 Bailiff

GENERAL STATUS

I. The Student Council is constituted for the purpose of enforcing the Freshmen Rules. It shall have the power to try freshmen charged with violating these rules, and to impose penalties upon those found guilty.

II. The Student Council is the agent of the Sophomore Class simply to enforce these Freshmen Rules. Any amendments, temporary suspensions, or individual dispensations can be made only by the Sophomore Class or by some group designated by the Class to act for it in such capacity. The approval of the Director of Studies is necessary to all such amendments, suspensions or dispensations. The Student Council itself is judicial in nature, and not legislative.

III. The personnel of the Student Council shall be determined by the Director of Studies. Any member is subject to removal by him at any time. The chief grounds for removal shall be: neglect of duty, unbecoming conduct while acting in an official capacity, failure in studies, or violation of college regulations.

RIGHTS OF THE DEFENDANT

IV. The defendant shall be notified of the charge at least one day prior to the day of trial and he shall be entitled to the aid of one attorney. He shall select this attorney from among the number of

Freshmen who shall be specially admitted to the bar by the Director of Studies.

V. Appeals from the decision of the Student Council are to be made to the Director of Studies.

Appeals can be made only on the following grounds:

1. Illegal procedure at trial.
2. Illegal sentence imposed.

Appeals that are sustained shall entitle the defendant to a new trial. Frivolous and dilatory appeals, or appeals brought without sufficient grounds shall incur liability to a doubled sentence.

OPERATION

VI. The Judge and the Associates shall hear the case, make the decisions, and determine the sentences.

The Judge presides, makes rulings on objections, and does the speaking for the bench.

VII. The Associates cast a vote equal in value to that of the Judge, provided, however, that when there is a tie, the side supported by the Judge's vote shall prevail.

The Associates have the power to interrupt the trial for the sake of questioning the attorneys, defendant, or witnesses. They cannot, however, make rulings or official pronouncements.

VIII. One Associate shall be designated, who, in addition to his judicial duties, shall also act as the Clerk of the Court. He shall keep an accurate and comprehensive record of every case, read the indictment, pledge the witnesses to the truth, and fulfil such other duties of a court clerk as may arise.

IX. The Prosecutor shall procure cases, draw up the indictments, procure the evidence and the witnesses, and argue the cases before the court. He shall endeavor to secure perfect observance of the Rules by indicting all offenders.

X. The Bailiff shall act as the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Court, keeping order and expelling disorderly persons from the court room when so directed by the bench. He shall announce the entrance of the judges, call the court to order, and be entrusted with the custody of the defendant.

He shall also act as the enforcement officer of the Court, seeing that all penalties are carried out in exact accordance with the decisions of the judges.

He shall keep a record of the penalties completed and shall fill

out the proper blanks certifying this. These blanks are to be returned to the Clerk.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

XI. The Court shall convene at 2:10 every Wednesday afternoon that classes are being held.

XII. The presence of the Judge and two Associates, or the presence of the three Associates shall constitute a sufficient number on the bench for a legal trial. In the absence of the Julge, the highest ranking Associate shall act as Judge.

XIII. In the absence of the Clerk-Associate, one of the other Associates shall act as Clerk.

XIV. The Prosecutor may, with the permission of the Director of Studies, appoint two Assistant Prosecutors. The Court must be officially notified of such appointments. In the absence of the Prosecutor, one of these assistants shall act as Prosecutor.

XV. The Bailiff may, with the permission of the Director of Studies, appoint such regular or temporary deputies as may become necessary. Whenever the Bailiff shall be unable to attend a court session, he shall arrange that one of his deputies shall be present and shall carry out the duties of the office.

XVI. All trials conducted by the Student Council shall be held in open session, provided, however, that the court may clear the room of boisterous or disorderly persons. No spectator shall be permitted to speak, applaud, or in any way interfere in the proceedings of the court.

XVII. Special closed sessions may be held by the Council, when it may see fit, to discuss the state of the system, the general situation regarding the Freshmen Rules, and internal affairs of the Council.

In addition to the foregoing, the Constitution of the new Council also contains articles regarding: the maximum penalties that can be imposed; the penalties for contempt of court, and the schedule or form of procedure which is to be observed at trials.

The personnel of the new body is as follows: Judge, Charles Ashworth; Associates, Charles Brady, Leo Slattery, and Paul Skehan; Prosecutor, Raymond Roberts; and Bailiff, Joseph O'Gara.

RESOLUTIONS protesting the passage of the proposed Smith-Towner bill for the centralization of education were unanimously passed at the last session of the Providence College Knights of Columbus Club. Harold Boyd of Pawtucket delivered a brief address previous to presenting the resolution. He advocated that each member urge the passage of similar resolutions when attending meetings of the various councils.

* * * *

Within the week announcement will be made of the date of the next meeting of the club, at which it is expected that the applicants of the past three weeks will be accepted as members. The ceremony of initiation is now being prepared by a ritual committee, and from present indications the voyage of Columbus will be tame in comparison to some of the sword-swallowing stunts that this committee proposes to inaugurate.

* * * *

In the brief history of the college no social event is recorded as being held at the institution which equalled the informal event at the gym on Thursday evening, Feb. 4. The affair broke all records for attendance, and the comment was unanimous that the club established an unusual reputation for a hit-smash event. It would take a clever publicity man with a great accumulation of adjectives to describe the affair in the manner that it merits being recorded. Paul Skehan headed the committee. His ideas, coupled with the coöperation of a hard working group of assistants resulted in the transformation of the gym into a gorgeous floral garden. Peter O'Brien is to blame for the decorative idea, admittedly the best of any arranged in social functions held at the hall in over a year. A few of the lively musical interpreters from our neighboring city had charge of the orchestra.

Members of the committee were: Paul Skehan, chairman; Newman Forestal, John Affleck, Edward Doherty, Dennis Doherty, Harold Boyd, Joseph A. Fogarty, Robert Turbitt. The assistants were: Paul

Redmond, John Dillon, Walter Martin, Peter O'Brien, John Cheney, and Vincent Dore.

* * * *

"What's next?" someone remarked when departing from the hall at the informal social. We regret that we cannot tell for at least a week or two. The plan is to hold an event at which many more than those attending the premier affair may attend. The task will require not only the coöperation of each member, but of every student in the college. Should we succeed with our tentative plans we will announce the idea immediately and then you will understand why the P. C. K. C. Club is the liveliest organization in the college. In any event there will be a "next," and it will be soon after the lenten season. Keep your eye on the P. C. K. C. activities ! Regardless of what is undertaken it is sure to be a landslide as far as success is concerned. Which means that to be absent is to cut a good portion of enjoyment from the brief span called life.