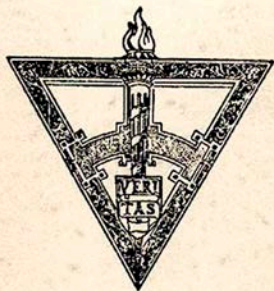


PROVIDENCE COLLEGE ALEMBIC



VOL. 3

FEBRUARY, 1923

No. 5

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Vol. III

FEBRUARY, 1923

No. 5

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Lenten Prayer

BE merciful to me, O Lord!
And grant me grace
Of honest penitence.
My sins erase.

Lead me from earthly lanes
To that Celestial Place
Where I may in rapture gaze
Upon Thy Holy Face.

—*Francis Eldy, '24*

IN SHEEPS' CLOTHES



HEN Hilaire Belloc read the two attempted refutations of his "Thoughts on Modern Thought" which were published in the March, 1922 issue of the *Yale Review*, I am sure that—unless he has a sense of humor—he must have felt aggrieved. I would console him by asking him to remember that no argument, even the most conclusive, is fool-proof. Belloc had said that there has been established no sound basis from which an attack on Catholicism may be launched. John Jay Chapman dissents, and contends that the following statements are sound bases for that attack: The church makes believers servants of a foreign power, and enforces a discipline contrary to the teachings of Christ. The correct re-statement of the first attacking basis is "the church makes believers servants of a spiritual power whose representative resides in a foreign land." As such, it is no basis for attack. The second attacking basis is a re-statement of the principal tenet of sixteenth century Protestantism and is not so new as to deserve credit for originality. The impartial historian, no less than the Catholic theologian, has long since recognized the absence of evidence of such an accusation.

We must allow for Mr. Chapman the claim of sincerity, though it is a sincerity which has its foundation not in a reasonable certainty but in a worn-out fallacy. To Mr. Belloc's other critic, Dr. Malcolm H. Bissel, of Bryn Mawr, I hesitate to allow any claim. Ignoring everything that Belloc had proved, Dr. Bissel denies that miracles are possible and that Faith is based on fact. To him the fifteen centuries directly after Christ are an illusion of history. But we all have our illusions, and I would leave Dr. Bissel alone in his, if there was no danger of it invading the minds of others. The gist of his refutation is found in the principle "any religion that does not accept evolution is hopeless." And his immediate interference is that the Catholic religion imposes this condition of hopelessness on its members. But even with the limitations thus imposed upon them by Mr. Bissel (not by the Catholic religion) they may still be able to recognize a condition more pious than their own. Hopelessness as such only blurs the prospectus of the future; helplessness

not only makes a future impossible but even incapacitates for present activity. If the condition of those who profess a religion which does not accept all forms of evolution is hopeless, the condition of those who unqualifiedly accept the doctrine of evolution is helpless. For by imposing on their minds a "set" or disposition in virtue of which they accept possible conclusions as established facts, and enuntiate as positively certain judgments which are impossible of verification, they destroy the very instrument which alone can enable them to properly interpret their own conscious experiences and the observations of others. Those whose condition is pronounced hopeless ask for the bread of proven fact; those in the helpless condition throw at them the stone of unproven assertion. The former ask for the wine of clear-thinking; the latter offer them the vinegar of fallacious reasoning.

It is at once fitting and inevitable that it should be a champion of the Catholic Church who appears as the champion of reason and his opponents who appear as its oppressors. The most impartial of the unfavorable critics of the Church points out as her cardinal offense the entrapping of man's reason. But he does not say, "This doctrine is wrong because it violates a philosophical principle." He merely says, "This doctrine is unreasonable." Undoubtedly the sincere Protestant still thinks that the reformers snatched reason from the very jaws of Superstition. But does he give a thought to what became of it when it was snatched from their jaws? Does he know that the Deistic contention that all Revelation is unreasonable is only a universal application of the Protestant contention that this or that particular revelation is unreasonable? that the pragmatic contention that reason cannot attain truth of any kind is a logical outcome of the Deistic contention that reason cannot attain divine truth? that the materialistic evolutionary contention that there is no such thing as reason (or, as they say it, that reason as it exists in man differs only in a degree from a power inherent in animals) is closely allied with the doctrine of pragmatism? Does the sincere Protestant know that in Catholic philosophy alone of all modern philosophic systems, reason is given its correct evaluation?

At any rate these things are true, and therefore it is inevitable that it should be Catholic philosophy which offers a solution of the origin of man consistent with reason (admirably stated by Mr. Belloc) and its opponents who advance a solution inconsistent with reason. For the Catholic philosopher does not say that if you believe in God, or in the

Bible, or in the Catholic Church, you will reject evolution. He says that if you believe in *reason*, you will reject evolution. By evolution he means the theory that the whole being of man is the production of a lower type of animal. The Catholic philosopher will admit that the body of man *may* be a product of some lower type. But until science has conclusively proved this, he denies that it is anything more than a hypothesis. In the meantime he sees no objection to the traditional hypothesis that the body of man was made *directly* from the clay of the earth. Furthermore, if you insist, he will prove from psychology that man has a soul essentially different from the animal soul by reason of its rational faculty, and therefore could not have evolved from it. Aristotle is still supreme among philosophers, if not among evolutionists.

Of late there has arisen in this country a movement to prohibit the teaching of evolution in the public schools. The Catholic has no objection to the placing of evolution in its proper place in the curriculum. The proper place for the teaching of evolution is, however, the college course in the history of philosophy, where it should be studied together with the various other solutions which have been offered in regard to the origin, activities, and destiny of man. Surely, it is unfair to attempt to drill into a child attending a public school in the United States a knowledge of a theory to which at least one-quarter of the people of the country (the Catholics) object. The state forbids in public schools all religion which is a matter of dispute; why not all science which is a matter of dispute? Is it to be a rule of the people or a rule of the "scientists"?

Undoubtedly it was to many an unwelcome surprise to read a newspaper article in which the American Association for the Advancement of Science (an apparently reputable body of men) was quoted as declaring that any limiting of the teaching of the doctrine of evolution would be "a profound mistake" because "no scientific generalization is more strongly supported by thoroughly tested evidences than that of organic evolution." I wonder if these learned gentlemen ever heard of the Biogenetic Law that living things originate only from living things. Apparently they have forgotten it; and so I recall it and affirm that as a scientific generalization it is more strongly supported by thoroughly tested evidence than organic evolution.

That I have just contradicted the declaration of an apparently reputable body of scientists is a fact; but the fact demands an explana-

tion. President Hadley of Yale has pointed out that within the last century our system of education has changed from one that taught men to think to one that teaches men what others have thought. And so it is to an imperfect system of education that we must look for an explanation of the ready and general acceptance of the hypothesis of evolution as a proved theory. For, contrary to the assertion of the same group of scientists that the theory of evolution is "one of the most potent of the great influences for good that have thus far entered into human experience" I affirm that from a purely materialistic point of view the discovery of fire, the invention of writing, and the development of the use of iron were far more potent for good than any theory, while from the intellectual or spiritual standpoint the statement is surely extravagant. Just what good has the application of the hypothesis accomplished? It proposes to tell us what has happened. Has it a prevision of what will happen? The literature on this phase of the hypothesis is even more confusing; the views advanced, even more problematic; and the issues, even more uncertain than those which are concerned with man's historical development. A scientific law admits of no uncertain application; the diversity of conclusions reached by the application of the evolutionary hypothesis is sufficient evidence to justify its removal from the sphere of scientific laws.

To illustrate how the conclusions drawn are considerably wider than are warranted by the premises, I shall quote an extract from the article, "Evolution," in the *International Encyclopedia*:

"Man has in his body about 70 vestigial structures which appear to be of no use to him; some, as the caecal appendage, a positive menace; all these afford the strongest possible circumstantial evidence of his descent from an aboreal ancestor."

In the first place the structures are termed vestigial. Vestiges of what? Of organic evolution, of course. The question under discussion is already answered. In the second place, these structures appear to be of no use to man. It is quite an intellectual gymnastic to conclude from our inability to definitely determine the functions of certain organs and certain structures that these organs and these structures serve no purpose. It is possible that these men have exhausted the intelligibility of the human organism. If they have not, they are rather hasty and presumptuous in making the transition from "I do not know" to "It is not." Some of the precursors in the field of organic evolution were no

less certain of the functionless character of the pineal gland, the thyroid gland and the thymus gland; but more recent investigators are very strongly of the opinion that these glands are not without their purpose in maintaining physiological equilibrium. May not the physiologists of the future learn that the caecal appendage in the normal man, far from being a menace, really promotes his general well-being? Finally, the author asserts that all these establish evidence of man's descent from an aboreal ancestor. Why an aboreal ancestor? Do not some of these "vestiges" more closely resemble animal structures other than the aboreal?

Perhaps the most important thing (for the evolutionist) that appeared in Mr. Belloc's article was his statement that there are three courses open to the mind when it judges a statement: to affirm, to deny, or to remain in suspense. The last is the only logical course in regard to the organic evolution of man from an aboreal ancestor.

Never before has the Catholic Church been thrown into clearer light by the flares of her various opponents. Against them she is aligned with everything man values. Against the advocate of birth-control she contends for the right of man to live; against the State for the right of man to family life; against the rich (her ancient enemy) for the dignity of labor; against the Socialist for the right of possession; against the imperialist for the right to national freedom; against the Prohibitionist for the right of individual liberty; against the Federalist for the right to learn to pray, and against the evolutionist for the right to learn to think. It is of her teachings only that any group of scientists can truly say that to limit them "cannot fail to injure and retard the advancement of knowledge and of human welfare by denying the freedom of teaching and inquiry which is essential to all progress."

James F. Keleher, '24

Cave Men



HERE shall we spend on honeymoon,"

She asked her fiancé,

Unknown to her, the richest man

Along Four Hundred Way.

He said, "We'll sail to foreign lands,

Where grand and lovely views

Of palaces and castles rise

From out the morning dews.

Where city streets are water filled,

Gondolas sail along

In which we'll glide with carefree joy

And hum a sweet love song.

And when all Europe we have seen,

To India we'll go

And see the ancient cities there

That flourished long ago.

We'll ride atop of elephants

In Persia's sunny clime,

With Hindoos, Brahmins, camel trains,

We'll spend a pleasant time."

Her girl friend asked at work next day

About her classy friend:

"Where do you think that he asked me

My honeymoon to spend?

He was so cheap he wanted me

To marry him, and sure

To go to Coney Island for

A blooming wedding tour.

What glitters is not always gold

Nor yet a precious gem,

Men's promises are empty as

A hollow cave. Can 'em!

—Leo Boppell, '25

A SOUTHERN SHEIK



R. SAMUEL TYLER BROWN was disconcerted. In other words his composure was disturbed. The tranquility of his life had of late come to an abrupt end. Exactly one month ago he had, in due course, taken to himself a wife. And to his surprise, Mr. Samuel Tyler Brown found that his vision of an ideal married life failed to become a reality. So as he morosely sat upon the door-step of an unoccupied house and gazed wistfully upon the big black cat that lay stretched out before him in perfect repose and contentment he shook his head in resignation to his fate.

"Ma'iage is sure a lottery. Yas sor; some men draws blanks an' odds draws blankety blanks. I guess I'se got one of them fo' sure."

As he looked up the street his eyes glistened as he saw the familiar figure of Thomas Jefferson Henry approaching him. I say Samuel's eyes glistened because Thomas Jefferson Henry always had a proposition worth considering, and just now Samuel was hungry, out of funds and incidentally, accidentally—call it what you will—out of a home.

"'Lo Thomas, where is you gwine this heah mawnin'?"

"Howdy, Samuel; where is I gwine? Brother, I'se contemplatin' a mos' propitious prop'sition. An' I'se just gwine to ma' domicile to figger it out jest right."

"What does you 'spect to do, Thomas?"

"Samuel, I has hopes of accumulatin' much money."

"Money? Thomas Jefferson Henry, tell me, man, does I hear you—money?" Samuel asked, rising with alacrity.

"Mos' assuredly you does, Samuel."

"What you—how much does you 'spect to make, Thomas?"

"Oh, I wouldn't be surprised, maybe lots."

"Go on, man," Samuel chided.

"I sure does, brother."

"Says which?"

"I sure does 'spect to make plenty."

"Thomas Jefferson Henry," Samuel said, coming close and becoming very confidential, "does you anticipate the procurance of a new pair of shoes fo' your 'lustrous offspring?"

"Tut, tut, brother. Nuthin' like that, sar. I'se somethin' better."

"Samuel, I'se gwine to be famous," he continued."

Samuel blinked hard a few times and diligently scratched his head.

"Says which?" he asked.

"I'se gwine to be a boxin' managar." With that Thomas Jefferson Henry stood off and swelled with pride.

"Who—whose you gwine to manage?" Samuel asked incredulously.

"I don't know yet. This mawnin' I meets Lemuel Harrison, an' he jest done tol' me he had signed fo' sure the champeen of New Orleans to meet all comers."

"Huh, what's——"

"Jest wait a minute, Samuel, take yo' time. As I was saying, Lemuel an' me gits talkin' real chummy like, an' the result is I'se gwine to be a managar."

"Who is yo' gwine to be a managar fo'?" Samuel asked again.

"Dats fo' me to say. I'se to select the man I wants, but brother, to save ma life I can't fin' a man to fight!"

"I sure am, sorry, Thomas, I wishes I could help you'," Samuel said, as he patted his friend on the shoulder.

"You help—whee—" Thomas Jefferson Henry exploded, "Samuel you am eleted."

"Says which?" Samuel asked, surprise marking his dusky countenance.

"Samuel, shake hans wif yo' manager," Thomas said, extending a large knotted hand.

"Me—I—Thomas? a fighter? Excuse me jest a minute, Thomas, I suddenly 'member of an appointment which I has to keep," Samuel exclaimed as he moved away.

"Wait a minute, Samuel; I can sure make it very interestin' to yo," Thomas said as he grasped the departing Samuel.

Five minutes passed of heated discussion. Five more passed, and Samuel's arguments grew weaker and his remonstrance less. He stood there enveloped in a fog of doubt, uncertainty. Suddenly he grasped at the last straw, his wife.

"But Thomas, how 'bout ma wife? I'se ma'ied; I can't forget that."

"Shucks man," Thomas began unabashed, "yo' is de boss. Do as you like. Did—didn't you're wife promise the Reverend Schofield to love and obey?"

"Tha's jest what she said," Samuel began, "but she done forgot it quick."

"Samuel I'se surprised at you. Does you mean to tell me that is the truf?"

"Suttinly I does, Thomas; it's the truf."

Thomas removed his hat and cautiously scratching his head stood abashed for a minute.

"I will see your wife fo' myself. You wait head fo' me 'till I returns."

About three minutes later Samuel, becoming rather restless, followed in his wake. That is, to his wife's gate.

As yet he heard no noise, strange to say, so he reclined against the fence and watched the children playing across the street. Suddenly a door opened and was slammed. There was a clatter of hurried feet on the steps and walk. As he turned around with his heart in his mouth, Thomas Jefferson Henry flew past him. Fearing consequences, Samuel was not far behind him in his retreat. As they turned the corner they halted.

"Why, Thomas, what am the matter?"

But Thomas Jefferson Henry would not or rather did not answer. His breathing apparatus had temporarily deprived him of speech. Finally he caught his breath.

"Samuel, yo' sure has a terrible wife."

"An' brother I knows it. Please don't you remind me. Did yo' git her permission?"

"Samuel, it sure am a wonder that ma life war spared. Dat woman ain't got no spirit of love in her 'tall.

"Why, man, her spirit of love is terrible. It done rise like a champagne bubble, but doggone it, it drops like a fireman sliding down a greased pole," Samuel replied as he turned away.

"Brother, youse am right," Thomas said as he carefully brushed specks, real and imaginary, from his clothes.

"Tell me, Thomas, jest what did that Amazon have to say?" Samuel asked.

"What did she have to say? She done have everything to say. In the furst place, I asks her jest like one gent'men to anodder if she was Mrs. Samuel Tyler Brown."

"Yas, an' what did she say, Thomas? Tell me," Samuel begged.

"Samuel how is it she done take sich a bad likin' to you? And yo' is only ma'ied one month."

"Neber mind, Thomas, tha's a long story. Tell me what else yo' said, like a good fellar."

"Wal," Thomas began, "she done look me ober from haid to feet 'fore she said anythin'. Then all 't once radder sudden like, she hollars like as if a mouse war in the room. An' brother, I don't blame a mouse to run fo' its life, 'cause I knows how it feels."

"Yas, yas that's jest like ma woman," Samuel said as he nodded his head.

"Then I tells her our proposition. An' when I starts to talk 'bout money an' you in the same breath, she jest couldn't believe me. But I convinced her that it was so. An' so she agreed——"

"Holy sufferin' mackeral, ain't that jest like that woman? She wants this head carcass to be mutilated an' cast to the four winds," Samuel exploded.

"She agreed," Thomas continued, "to let yo' fight, but that's all she agreed wid me. When I tells her how much yo' is to git, she gits mighty angry, an' demanded that yo' receive in payment of your services five hundred dollars. She said she see whar a man got that in a fight in the newspaper. An' that ain't all. She done have the nerve to ask me fo' one-half of your price in advance. At that, I gits sore an' asks her if there war anythin' else she would be likein' to have. She jumped up wid a funny little light in her eyes. An' being wise an' a lover of good health, I extricated ma'self with immediate and hasty precision."

"Brother yo' war wise, 'cause if yo' didn't move the Reverend Schofield would be able to pay his grocery bill an' could preach the gospel on Sunday honestly."

"Samuel, I reckons you're 'bout right. I think I will now eat fo' the excitement of this head morning has effected me terrible."

"Jest a minute, Thomas. You say you're ma managar?"

"Yas, yo said it brother," Thomas replied.

"An' a managar is to take care of the boxer?"

"Yas," Thomas answered suspiciously.

"Well then, Thomas, since yo' is ma managar, and since yo' is to take care of me, where do 'we' eat?"

"Ain't yo' got no money, Samuel?" Thomas asked. "Not a cent, brother, not a cent," Samuel answered in utter abjection.

"Come along then; let's go to Archie's."

Two days later while partaking of Archie's cooking, three men walked into the dusky establishment. One of them had all the earmarks of a pugilist. A minute later he introduced himself as "Kid Breeze," of New Orleans.

Such an introduction might have been pleasing to a great majority of those grouped about the tables, but not to two in particular. The look of agony that filled Samuel's eyes was equalled by the sadness that filled Thomas Jefferson's, for he saw his end of the purse flying swiftly from him. Samuel quietly rose and departed from the place by the nearest door. A minute later Thomas joined him. They walked along for a block without a word.

"Thomas," Samuel began, "did—did yo' git that gent'man's name?"

Thomas nodded.

"So did I," Samuel groaned. "An' did yo' git a good look at the brute?"

Again Thomas nodded. They both groaned.

"An' to think I was foolish enough to bet my end on you without seein' him," Thomas exclaimed.

So much engrossed were they in their trouble that they did not notice the large truck draw up to the curb, and it was only when a lusty voice hailed them that they awoke.

Well, holy sufferin' mackeral, if it ain't Harry Lee," Samuel exclaimed.

A minute later Thomas Jefferson stood before the stranger dumfounded.

* * * * *

The day of the big fight arrived at last. For two days Mrs. Samuel Tyler Brown had tried in vain to be admitted to Uncle Joe's barn where Samuel was training. Becoming more angry as the days

passed she resolved to make one more attempt to see him and bring him home by the ear. But she was met at the door by a man who curtly told her she was not wanted there. At that she lost her temper and struck him across the mouth. But Mrs. Samuel Tyler Brown received an unexpected surprise, for the blow was returned, and when she awoke later outside the barn she found herself the possessor of a large lump on her right jaw. After spending her anger by beating upon the door she returned to her home to await the fight.

The cluster of lights shone down and glared upon the roughly constructed square of stained and soiled canvass. The nearest rows of seats, already well filled, shared the radiance of the strong lights. Smoke rolled in white clouds across the square, and circling upward disappeared in the pitch blackness. Roars of laughter and a ceaseless rumble of conversation filled the place. Everyone was in good humor.

Amid a storm of applause the rotund figure of Archie appeared in the ring. Immediately the storm was increased as Kid Breeze clambered into the ring, and after bowing to the applause, walked indifferently to his corner.

He was hardly seated, when the atmosphere was rent with shrieks, for the local favorite as he climbed over the ropes, and without a glance either way took his corner. Having called the principals together and giving them their final instructions, Archie waved them to their corners. Then he introduced them in his officious way.

Suddenly the clang of the bell broke the momentary silence that had settled upon the dusky crowd.

Like a flash Kid Breeze sprang from his corner and proceeded to pummel the lighter man unmercifully. They fell into a clinch. As they broke a short stab to the kid's wind halted him.

"Come on there Kid, hit him, hit him!" a shrill voice cried.

"Go git him, Sam. Stay with him, bay; you've got him groggy."

"At's the way; hit him harder."

Evidently Sam knew the kid's weakness, for he kept working his left into the Kid's face.

"God Lawd, Jackson, whar did Samuel learn to fight? I neber heard of him fightin' 'fore."

"Neider did I, boy, but it ain't what he wasn't, man, it's what he is now what counts."

Such seemed to be the general manner at Sam's ability to fight. In the excitement no one cared.

"Will yo' look at that boy fight?" exclaimed one burly chap.

"Jest look at him lay those punches along the champeen's meridian. Oh, baby, look it, look it," he screamed as Sam twisted his head aside just enough to escape a wicked uppercut.

"Say jest a minute thar, yo' big stiff," a small dusky gentleman exclaimed as the big fellow nearly pushed him off his seat, "how do you git that way?"

"Who? Me? Now listen here, honey, I advises yo' to keep youh mouth closed as tight as youh jaws will let yo'. Understand?"

"What does yo' mean, keep ma mouth shet?"

"Brother, I means what I said."

"Well, let me tell you, big boy, you can——"

The howl that rose cut short their conversation. Sam lay on his back. Above him the Kid stood glaring. Archie had counted six when the bell rang.

Upon the sounding of the gong signaling the start of round two, the Kid once more sprang from his corner and started right in for a knockout.

The house shook with the shouts and cries of the audience. Suddenly the Kid went limp and slid to the floor "prostrate," as one "cullud" boy said later in telling the story.

No one had noticed the bulky figure march up to the ring and wave a large fist at the referee. Getting no response she clumsily climbed into the ring, and just as Archie had proclaimed Sam as victor, she grabbed that one by the ear and led him to the ropes. But Sam had something to say, and after several vain attempts he succeeded in loosening her hold on his ear.

Then began the greatest scrap the town ever saw. And one the town will long remember, for she shook him like a dog would shake a rat, but he lost his temper, and the poor woman was put on the defense. But from somewhere a figure jumped over the ropes and pummeled her attacker. Archie pulled them apart and—as if by magic the whole house ceased its laughter. For of the two men held apart, which was Samuel Tyler Brown. Both were alike as peas in a pod. But Mrs. Samuel Tyler Brown was the first to awake to the situation.

"Yo' poor honey darlin'," she purred as she approached the one

clad in the fighter's garb, "yo' come right along home wif youh little wife."

"Go 'way from me, woman; I ain't youh husbin'," he said, drawing away from her. "Tha's youh husbin' over tha," he cried, pointing to his double.

"Doan yo' think I knows ma own husbin'," she bellowed in anger.

"Samuel, what ails yo', anyhow? Tell youh wife I ain't her husbin'. Tell her yo' am," he pleaded.

"What yo' talkin' 'bout, man?" the other replied. "Ain't yo' shamed of yo'self, tryin' to deceive youh wife. Anyhow if yo' ain't what yo' want to identify me fo' yo'?"

"Samuel Brown youse lyin'. Yo' knows I'se youh cousin, Harry Lee. What—what yo' want to say that I'se not myself an' yo' is me, when yo' knows it ain't true?"

"Come now, honey," Mrs. Samuel began, "tha' there cullud boy from New Orleans done mix youh brains up so's yo' doan know wedder yo' is what yo' done think yo' was."

"Go 'way from me," he cried, as she attempted to put her arms around him, "I ain't youh husbin'; ask him if he ain't."

"No I ain't, brother. Yo' is now, I guess," the other replied, as he climbed over the ropes and hurried up the aisle.

On the following morning as he slumped down in his seat and admired the rising sun as it spread its first rays over the waking world, from the rear of a speeding truck he laughed uproariously.

"The fellar that done wrote 'bout the tamin' of the shrewd must ha' knowed that woman's ancestors. There's an old sayin' that woman is a frail craft on the sea of life. The older she gits the craftier she is—well, I suttinly hopes so, 'cause she done have a robust Petruchio what will learn her what an odder fellar done said was the truf that 'Love is a wood nuymph frolickin' 'round a maypole. Jealousy am an imp hidin' in the bushes with a pea shooter.' And this Petruchio ain't got no weak lungs, nohow. Ha! Ha!


Howard J. Farrell, '24

A Barbarous Epic

CRIM," I said in tone quite meek;
"Shave," added the barber sleek.
Lathering my forehead, eyes, and mouth,
He scraped my features from north to south.
He carved and cleft with skillful art,
To make my face a graphic chart.
He slivered my nose with painful slash,
And cut in my chin a bloody gash.
I rose from out that barber's chair,
And spoke to him in serious air.
"Abuse if you must this old bald head,
But spare yon single hair," I said.
A gleam of joy suffused his mask.
"Shampoo?" I heard him boldly ask
My sterner nature within me stirred.
To life at that barber's cruel word.
"Touch you that hair on this bald head,
Die like a dog! Shave on," I said.
Shave on he did—just as before,
And cut me in twelve places more,
Then gazing at my naked head,
"Too late for Herpicide," he said.

—James J. Lynch, '25

"SAID THE WALRUS TO THE CARPENTER"

HE editor of a Catholic weekly takes the view that the study of bygone heresies is wasted effort. He emphasized particularly Père Denifle's *Life of Luther* as a useless lifetime effort. He asked why the average man of the present day should care to get at the mind of that dirty fellow. He classes embryonic theologians as average men. They might be, however they are specializing. Moreover, cancer is a horrid disease, yet doctors spend lifetimes in investigating and seeking a cure. History is made up of "purple and black patches." It would be a rather flat story if only the good in the ancients was recorded. We would have no criteria. Luther died, but what Luther stood for has endured. It has grown and has been distorted so much that Luther himself might be somewhat surprised at the result of his break with orthodoxy. True, the study of Luther is not for the non-initiated. It is for the "more intelligent," who seek to avoid the hidden snags in the course and to pilot others. Denifle's book was not written in a spirit of "Go and do thou likewise," but it is a warning, besides being a scholarly and scientific account of the life of that infamous heresiarch. And as for his (the Editor's) contention that the Church answers heresies which have long since died. But have they? A certain modern pulpiteer is strikingly unoriginal in his heretical effusions. Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch antedated him by several years. And why will not the same arguments clinch here? Must we reopen the discussion for each puny denier? If the Rock of Peter shows no sign of erosion from the tidal waves of heresy, surely there is nothing to fear from the ripples. The Romans built many roads and they all lead to Rome. The original stones and bulwarks are still holding out.

* * *

You know the type of man who says, "I'll do it or perish in the attempt." There's a man for you. He generally succeeds—in perishing. He stands right up and utters his war cry and then he sits right

down and waits for something to happen. He stands and delivers with more or less monotonous regularity. Each time his cry is louder. Each time he sits down harder. Napoleon didn't say, "I'll conquer the world or perish in the attempt." However, he perished in the attempt. Every day in every way men succeed. But they are not the do or die type. They are the doers. The former growl in the football game of life and they expect their opponent to lie down and play dead. The latter smile engagingly, thus disarming "ole" man success, and then they proceed to take their man out thoroughly and efficiently. Did you ever hear of a saint who said, "I'm going to be good, willy nilly?" No, but you have heard of saints who prayed and meditated that they might be good. And then they went about doing good. Auto suggestion began when the first prayer was uttered by man. With God there is no alternative. It is "Be Good." Why should we presume to create one. Don't "Do or Die," "Do."

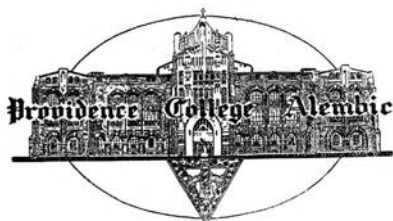
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An assassin does not attend a Roman holiday for recreation, but he must needs gambol through the sylvan glades barking at the dog-wood trees or knocking over butter cups. All of which is apropos of saying that an ambassador cannot be expected to embass for pleasure. He must take his diplomatic work seriously, but it is too much to expect him to be serious at all times. No matter if St. James is near Greenwich, a little more latitude should be allowed Mr. Harvey in his after dinner speeches. Longitude is a negligible quantity with the Ambassador. So much todo was raised about his little talk on American doughboys and also that slip that women have no souls. Some people have no sense of humor. Both speeches went great—in England. Mr. Harvey came back to the Land of Tar and Feathers. Perhaps he returned to tell Mrs. Harding that presidential company was excepted from that soul stuff. While the ambassador was here he collected, no doubt, a few "good ones" to bring back with him. If you have any stories you might send them to Mr. Harvey for consideration. However, do not, please do not send any of the "is Mary Garden related to Madison Square" type. Something more intellectual, if possible. Every day in every way Mr. Harvey gets better and better. It is too bad that the banquets are held at night. Outside of that it seems that any raconteur with ambition can be an ambassador, but after all you have got to be born a left-handed pitcher.

We note with horror that school children are still singing or singing still, take your pick, the *Star Spangled Banner*, in spite of what Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson has written about it. It seems that the author, Francis Scott Key, was an Irishman, moreover, he was a Catholic Irishman. But hold, there is a more potent objection: the music to which the anthem is sung is that of an old drinking song, the Anacreontic hymn. Horror of horrors! Liquid notes! Mrs. Stetson is not talking through her hat. We hope that Augusta will also prevent prohibition agents from destroying seized liquor by pouring it into New York harbor. If we are to be consistent, the Statue of Liberty should be surrounded entirely by water.

* * *

It is a matter of controversy whether Columbus used a hen's or a duck's egg in his famous experiment. After all, an egg is a matter of conjecture until it is hatched. But the salient feature of his experiment was that the egg stood on its end. The method employed was so startlingly simple that the nobles and semi-nobles were quite put out when the solution was forthcoming. "We could have done that." Coué's system of auto suggestion is too simple for words. Most any one who dabbled in psychology (dabbled advisedly) knew all about it years ago. But they didn't say anything about it, thereby making themselves eligible for the Ancient and Hard-boiled Order of Eggs. They will never seriously interfere with Mr. Coué's fame. But exploitation and grasping agents will interfere greatly with what good work Mr. Coué might do. The fiasco at Woolsley Hall in New Haven was a single instance of it. This sort of thing has happened before. Dr. Lorenzo was held to be a thaumaturgist until he was exploited. It may happen again and Mr. Coué's good work come to naught.



Vol. III

FEBRUARY, 1923

No. 5

Francis Lucien Dwyer, *Editor*

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On looking over the previous numbers of the *Alembic* the thought strikes us that we have been guilty of preaching. **LENT** We duly and humbly apologize if an apology is due, but nevertheless this little talk is about Lent.

On Ash Wednesday the Church began the Holy season of Lent, that short period which is set aside every year by Holy Mother Church so that each one of us may hold a mirror up to ourselves, take a good look and try to do better, spiritually and otherwise. On Ash Wednesday we all went to church and had our foreheads marked with ashes as a sign of humility and a reminder that from dust to dust is man's mortal destiny. Also on Ash Wednesday many of us gave up cigarettes, candy,

attending the theatre, and what not as a sort of self-imposed penance to be observed during the Lenten season.

To be sure, some of us will smoke and eat candy and go to the first good show that comes along, but anyway the intention was good. And another some will carry out their self-imposed sentences until Easter time. It's to these some we're talking, but others may listen.

You who have given up attending the theatre and dances and all that sort of thing will probably find yourselves with plenty of time on your hand, especially in the evening. This is merely a suggestion; it may not be original; maybe you thought of it yourselves, but it's good nevertheless. With all this time on your hands there is the possibility of killing an unlimited number of birds with the same stone, so to speak. Why not, as a penance, inflict upon yourselves a few hours of honest-to-goodness study every day? Data secured from several sources attests the fact that this would be a penance to many. There is one object attained. Better application of time, improvement of the mind, and better marks in the college courses would follow necessarily. Sounds so good we'll try it ourselves.

Some time in the near future there will be given in one of the downtown theatres, under the auspices of the Senior class, a musical comedy, *The Pirate's Daughter or Captain Cross-Bones*. The funds realized from the performance will be used in erecting a memorial to the class of '23.

This is practically the first public presentation of Providence College talent. Let's get behind the show and put it over! All that is needed to make it a successful comedy instead of a miserable farce is a little coöperation. Tryouts for the cast are now being held. If you sing or even think you can sing, go and see Father Dawkins. He'll do the rest.

If Nature hasn't blessed you with a silver throat, and it's nothing against you if she hasn't, don't think that your services are not needed. You could be used to manipulate the strings that work the curtain. Or if you're afraid of blistering your hands the least you might do is purchase a pair of orchestra seats and applaud the efforts of the cast.

Those of us who had the good fortune of attending the classes conducted by Father Brady received the news of his appointment to the Priory of St. Joseph's with mingled joy and sorrow. We were glad that one:

THE PIRATE'S DAUGHTER

FATHER BRADY

of our friends and professors had been accorded such a signal honor, but we were sorry to be obliged to forego the pleasures of his classes.

Now, while we're about it, we extend a cordial welcome to his successor, Father O'Neil, and anticipate many delightful hours in his English classes. Last, but not least, we hope for his material aid in making the *Alembic* a magazine worthy of the College.

So Am I

I'M sick and tired of the Winter.
Give me a balmy breeze
In place of the chilly winds.
I'm sick of stark naked trees

Crying out for new green buds,
As the eternal feminine cries for new duds.
I'm sick of the brown-spotted whiteness
Covering the ground.
Give me a patch of green with flowers
Growing around,
Smiling up, like a smile I know.
Oh! I'm sick and tired of the cold and the snow!

—Francis Eldy, '24

JUST THEORY

EVERY day brings the birth of some new theory. A gentleman with long hair and short foresight steps from the ranks of the hoi polloi into the front pages of our newspapers by the simple process of admitting that he is the sole parent and guardian of a theory, the materialization of which will revolutionize our present mode of existence. He informs the reading public that it is his divinely-given duty to better the condition of stupid man and his stilted, hidebound world, and he usually proceeds to his mission by giving 125 lectures in 125 days at several hundreds of dollars per lecture. As an illustration let us hearken to the wails of the brain-child of a certain professor in one of our Eastern colleges.

This learned pedagogue boldly announces to all that a very large percentage of eminent men are endowed with big noses. He very positively asserts that a big nose is really an indication of superior mental powers, and to prove his contention he furnished statistics showing that kings of industry, astronomers, orators, and college students possessed noses compatible with their mentality. In other words, the more intelligence the more nose. In his dissertation he also stated that Napoleon selected his generals by their noses, only a soldier with a large nasal appendage being eligible for the office of general. Here the professor's theory weakens. Why did not Napoleon choose his battle fields by their physical features, as he chose his generals? If he had, he probably would not have had to spend his vacation on an island. Doubtless the professor is sincere in his endeavor to populate our fair land with a race of intellectual giants whose noses would be in direct ratio to their mental development, but I fear we would soon resemble a nation of swordfishes. I have a notion that the professor originated his theory in self-defense, for undoubtedly the professor's visage is decorated with a very large, protruding sort of nose, and being sensitive about it, he naturally sought justification for its presence, hence the theory.

Again there has been another odd theory brought to light by a prominent automobile manufacturer. This member of the automobile

industry fostered a previous theory; a theory which included the hypothesis that automobiles could be manufactured from tin. In some miraculous manner this theory proved to be practical—to a certain extent. Now this same gentleman announces that he intends to make automotive vehicles out of formaldehyde, gun cotton, and glue. Furthermore, he insists that he is going to stamp the parts out, the way housewives stamp out doughnuts. From the writer's viewpoint, this looks like hurling defiance at Heaven. True, the Detroit genius has already succeeded in crossing a mule and a bicycle, but if he attempts to put a cotton finish on his celebrated hybrid, woe will be his. Granting the realization of the theory, what awful consternation there would be among the junk dealers should be boll weevil destroy the cotton crop. Yes, it is a beautiful theory, but like many other beautiful theories, it is liable to die of malnutrition. Which inadvertently brings us to the theory of concentrated proteids and calories.

This novel members of the theory family has to do with "the feeding of the human race." Those are the words of said theory's fond parent. In a long interview given to the reporters of several of our largest dailies, he eloquently proved with almost absolute certainty, that he is the originator of a concoction which combines the nutritive value of sirloin steak and potatoes with the delicacy and frothiness of cream-puffs. It is a scientifically balanced diet of calories, vitamins, and proteids, and it is in pill form! That is the beauty of it. Instead of three square meals, three round pills, and presto! your gastric warehouse is overcrowded. By eating these pellets you are bound to feel better. They seem to contain the elixir of life, a little spice, and a flagon of water from the Fountain of Youth. Yes, sir, these little pills are going to put the restaurants out of business, thereby curing indigestion and making us Americans a nation of supermen; this clever theorist says so, and so it must be. Then again it may not. Maybe the poor deluded fellow is really convinced that his wild idea has a shade of practicability in it, but even though it has, who wants to forsake the blissful taste of roast turkey, or the delectable feeling that accompanies the total demolition of a large section of mince pie, for the empty pleasure that accompanies the acrobatic stunt of swallowing a pill-ful of compressed, dehydrated victuals. No, I am afraid that the Calories Theory is impractical, just as a number of its fantastic brethren are.

Theories of Relativity, Autosuggestion, Sunfluid, Rejuvenation,

Evolution, Revolution, Spiritism, Comunism! A marvelous conglomeration! It is the open season for theories, and the erudite theorists are shooting their theories—at the people. The poor, harmless, taxpaying citizen has ever been the sufferer, and if the newspapers do not cease printing enlarged accounts of the latest crazy theory and the latest crazy theorist, the resulting crisis will be terrible. The American citizen (the ordinary variety), used to be surrounded by the devil, the deep blue sea, and the landlord. Times have changed: he is now in the grip of Theory, Prohibition, and the Income Tax. Unless he is speedily released from the clutches of the demon Theory, he will rise up in all-consuming wrath and form a political party to fight the foe, and as the elephant symbolizes the G. O. P., so will the goat symbolize the Common Citizens, for has he not always been the goat? When he gets in power, our country will gloriously emerge from its slough of Theory.

J. H. Lynch, '23

Morpheus Mighty



LEEP, work, and sleep again!

That's about all.

Sleep, work, and sleep again

Summer and Fall,

Winter and Spring

Over and over

The same old thing,

Sleep, work and sleep and then—

Work—and sleep again!

—Francis L. Dwyer, '24

COLLEGE CHRONICLE

On Monday, February 5, the students of *Second Semester* Providence College entered upon the second semester of the scholastic year. The entire student body gathered in the Gymnasium Hall. An address was given by the president, followed by the reading of the rules.

It is the good fortune of the faculty to have *Faculty Changes* added to their ranks a distinguished orator and professor in the person of Rev. Francis O'Neil, O. P., Ph.D. Father O'Neil has been appointed to fill the vacancy in the English department caused by the removal of Very Rev. J. C. Brady, O. P., who was recently elected prior of St. Joseph's Convent at Somerset, Ohio. To Fr. O'Neil, the *Alembic* extends a warm welcome with the hope that his stay at Providence will be a pleasant one, and to Fr. Brady the sincere wish that his new undertaking will be blessed with great success.

There has recently been established in the *Student Council* college a student council. It is composed of ten men chosen from the various classes. It is the duty of the council to try students who may have been guilty of any misdemeanors and to punish them accordingly.

On Wednesday, January 24, the *P. C. K. C. Initiation* Providence College Knights of Columbus Club held their annual initiation. The degree was conferred upon fifteen candidates before the faculty and members. It was on this occasion that Fr. Brady gave his farewell address. Speeches, musical selections, and a lunch completed the program.

At a short business meeting following the initiation, plans were completed for a social which was held on Monday, February 12. A large attendance was on hand to enjoy the good time that is always characteristic of the Providence College K. of C. affairs.

The Senior class is at present working diligently to bring to completion the plans started for *Senior Activities* a musical comedy to be given in the spring.

Enigmas

I AM always in right, but I live in the wrong
Though I'm always in ruin, I stand very strong.
I am much with the razor and raze all around,
And yet I am hid in the depth of the ground.
—*J. C. Conlon, '25*

I am last in the door but first in the room,
Tho I'm always in trouble, I never feel gloom;
I am much in the river and live on its shore
And now I am seen at the end of the floor.
—*John Nugent, '25*

Winter Comes

THOUGH slow, yet certain,
The wintry curtain
Comes down on Autumn's
Domains of gold.

The scenes are shifted
And the curtain lifted
On gold, all covered
With crystall'd cold.

Leo Boppell, '25

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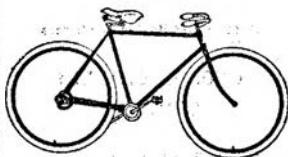
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