

ALEMBIC

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE



VOLUME XXV

NUMBER 2

DECEMBER, 1942

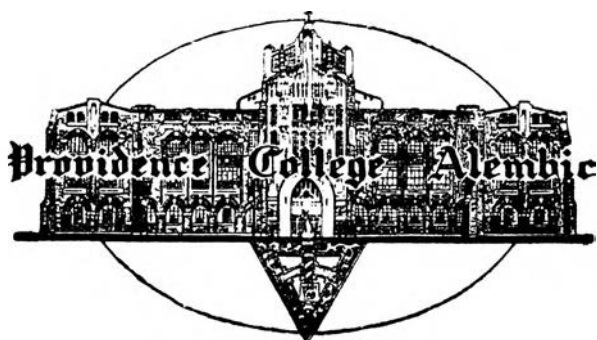
IN GOD WE TRUST

EDWARD A. LEE

SAROYANISM AND SURREALISM

FRANCIS A. STADNICKI

THE ALEMBIC



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
BY THE
STUDENTS OF PROVIDENCE COLLEGE
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME XXV

DECEMBER, 1942

NUMBER 2

FINGERS IN THE PI	3
IN GOD WE TRUST	5
<i>By Edward A. Lee</i>	
ON ETIQUETTE	14
<i>By Jeffrey Gorman</i>	
BEFORE THE WAVE	16
<i>By John H. Davitt</i>	
SAROYANISM AND SURREALISM	21
<i>By Francis A. Stadnicki</i>	
RAUSCHNING HAS THE ANSWER	27
<i>By James F. Shiel</i>	
CHECK—\$50,000	35
<i>By Conrad Fournier</i>	
BLUEPRINTS FOR A JUST PEACE	41
<i>By Joseph C. O'Shea</i>	
BY THE WAY	45
<i>By The Editor</i>	

Fingers in the Pi

CERTAINLY, it has been seldom that as finely chiseled a short story as Ed Lee's *IN GOD WE TRUST* has appeared in any collegiate publication. Upon the basis of critically sharp physical description, Lee has built up around the tragic figure of Jed Stone a rather beautiful story. The sympathetic blending of the trust and despair in the heart of an unjustly condemned negro is the high point in an excellent job of characterization. We definitely recommend it.

Francis Stadnicki (Stad to most of us) has finally levelled off on *the* Saroyan and his *SAROYANISM AND SURREALISM* is an evaluation of that controversial fellow along dramatic lines. Since Stad is an accredited playwright himself, his critique carries with it a good deal of authority.

Conrad Fournier, however, in a rather remarkable production, *CHECK—\$50,000*, gives positive evidence that Saroyan has a following among college students. It might be well to explain that the skit weaves into one strand the peculiar influences of Alexander Pope, Veronica Lake, and Mr. Saroyan. Conrad was apparently profoundly irritated by Miss Lake's offer to sell that lock of hair for some fantastic figure to help the war effort. There is a definite moral; as in all genuine Saroyan, however, the moral is elusive (to put it mildly).

James F. Shiel contributes *RAUSCHNING HAS THE ANSWER*, an article based on a midnight interview with the Doctor. It is a solid presentation of facts in the objective Shiel manner, and as such makes good, worth-while reading.

J. G.

THE STAFF

Editor

JOHN GERHARD

Associate Editors

FRANCIS A. STADNICKI

JAMES F. SHIEL

Business Manager

JOSEPH C. O'SHEA

Advertising Manager

JOHN BRADY

Circulation Manager

JOHN GOULDING

The ALEMBIC is published bi-monthly by the students of Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office, Providence, Rhode Island, December 18, 1920, under Act of March 3, 1879. Subscription \$2.00 the year. "Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103. Act of October 3, 1917; authorized April 9, 1932." Printed at the Oxford Press, Providence, Rhode Island.

In God We Trust

By EDWARD A. LEE

AN ancient yellow lamp swayed and reeled drunkenly from an iron yardarm in the courtyard. Each gust of wind that whipped over the low, two-story block to the west jerked it into crazy motion and then left the lamp to follow its own erratic arc until it had subsided to a slow pendulum swing—like a dead man on the end of a rope. Its feeble light washed through the tiny window nearest it—one of a monotonous series of tiny windows—and illuminated the iron cells within. In one of these cells a man sat on the end of his cot and stared unseeingly into the distance, his big, awkward frame hunched uncomfortably, his black face buried in his black hands.

The man in the next cell tossed uneasily in his bed. Further down the corridor someone was strumming a melancholy tune on a rusty Jew's harp. The tune pounded its way through the black man's fingers to his ears, and insinuated its doleful twanging into the black chaos of his brain.

The negro shuddered and wrapped his long arms closer about his head. Unconsciously his body began to sway to keep time with the music. He caught his shadow swinging gently on the opposite wall, to all appearances, in mid-air. He sprang suddenly to his feet and shuffled quickly across to the grated doorway, his felt slippers making a sibilant rasping on the stones. Putting his big fists around the bars he pressed his face close

between them. In the dim light of the corridor the whites of his eyes were shot with dirty yellow and a pasty fear mottled his skin.

“Who playin’ dat song?”

The man across the corridor left his window and stuck his long, slender nose out into the draft of the corridor.

“What’s the matter, nigger, got the jitters?” He laughed unpleasantly and squinted at the negro from under curious eyebrows. “You ain’t turning yellow, are you, black boy?” And he laughed again, delighted at his sarcastic humor.

The negro rolled his eyes toward him for a frightened moment, and then strained them back in the direction of the Jew’s harp.

“Doan go playin’ that song, Mista”. His voice thickened and became coated with pleading. “Don’ yo’ play dat,—don’ play dat any mo’.”

The twanging ceased long enough to allow the hidden musician to curse all critics in general and the negro in particular. He spat deliberately, and noisily, in the general direction of the negro. A short pause for breath and he commenced again, with renewed vigor and still less melody.

The negro trembled and broke out into a quick sweat that pasted his cotton shirt to his back. With a low moan he dropped his head to his arms and rubbed his face against the rough comfort of his sleeves.

He had known from the first that he didn’t have a chance. The moment they had ushered into that horrible little kitchen where George Sanders lay stretched out on his face with an axe buried brutally in the back of his skull, he had felt the presence of disaster hovering over his shoulders. Sanders had been a harsh man to work for, but no man was harsh enough to de-

In God We Trust

serve a death like that. He knew what was forthcoming when Sol Kenyon looked meaningfully around the circle of horrified spectators and said slowly,

"No white man ever done that."

From then on he never had a chance.

He sank to his knees, his hands slipping down the smooth surface of those cold iron bars. The long, inquisitive nose across the corridor misinterpreted his movement.

"Yeah, you better pray, nigger. You better pray. But it ain't gonna do you no good. Your goose is cooked. When you step off that platform you're gonna swing right out over hell."

The negro jumped to his feet, his rage for the moment mastering terror. His yellowed eyes glared balefully, not so much at the taunter as at the taunts that he spoke.

"Pray! Wha' fo' Ah wanna pray? Wha' fo'? Who goin' hear me?"

Suddenly he lifted his head so that he could see a glimpse of the sky. He stared angrily at it with the sweat steaming off his face and the veins in his throat standing out like whipcords.

"Hey God up dere!"

The Jew's harp was suddenly and strangely silent. The man across the corridor licked his lips with excitement, and had the uncomfortable sensation of experiencing a dream wherein some black Satan stood up in Hell and screamed at God.

"Yo' listenin', God? Wha' fo' yo' gonna kill me? Wha' da matter wid yo', God?" He raised his huge fist and shook it threateningly at that mute patch of sky. "Yo' nigger-huntin' too, God? Don' you know Ah din' kill Mas' Sanders? Don' yo' know dat, God, way up dere?" His voice rose to a sobbing screech and cracked. "Blind! Dat's wha' yo' is! Yo' blind, God!"

"That's the stuff, black boy!" The man across the corridor howled. "Don't you crawl to nobody!"

"Blasphemers! Oh, you infamous spawn of Satan!" A new voice was added to the din. With a contemptuous glance the newcomer dismissed the tormenter and turned all his attention to the negro. "You there, Jed Stone,—get down on your knees and repent your sins. Confess and be ashamed, and rise up in the forgiveness of the Lord!"

"Wha' fo', Mista Preacha? Wh' fo' Ah gonna confess? Wha' fo' Ah gonna be 'shamed? Ah din . . ."

"Take refuge in the Lord, brother. Unburden thy soul of thy terrible crime. Pray the Lord."

Jed rolled his head in despair and mumbled hopelessly.

"Ain' nobody know, — ain' nobody b'lieve me". He raised his haggard and yellowed eyes to the flashing, righteous ones of his exhorter. "Mista Preacha, — Ah din' kill Mas' Sanders. Ah din' kill him. Doan nobody unnerstan'? Ah din' kill him!"

"Do not attempt to deceive the Lord, brother, — do not attempt to deceive the All-Wise. Get down on your knees, Jed Stone! Confess your sins and repent!"

With these words, he left the negro, who staggered back to his cot, moaning to himself. Throwing his body down on the cot, he hugged the narrow framework with his long arms. As he lay there the whole nightmare came back to him.

. . . Mas' Sanders spread-eagled on his floor. People standing around four deep, gasping in horror and running outside to spread the story that George Sanders' nigger had murdered him and then had tried to run off with his money. Sol Kenyon, who had hated Sanders like God hates sin, slouching by the store, white as a sheet, and saying in that soft smooth voice of his, "No white man ever done that!"

. . . County jail,—and a dull, angry murmur continually

In God We Trust

buzzing outside, like a hive of angry bees. The courthouse, with that sea of white faces, and the machine-gun questions. . . .

"Weren't you cutting wood the morning of the murder with that very axe? Didn't you try to board a train at Bartow's Corners shortly after the hour when Sanders was murdered? You say that he gave you the money to buy seedlings, yet you admit that Sanders never before had sent you on an errand involving money?"

"You testified that when you left the house you went by the front door and took the main road into town. We will now call a witness to testify that he saw you leave by the back door and strike out through the fields in the direction of the railroad tracks,—Mr. Sol Kenyon . . ."

" . . . We, the jury, find the defendant guilty of murder in the first degree. . . ."

" . . . This court hereby sentences you, Jed Stone, to be hanged by the neck until dead. And may God . . ."

Jed rolled over on the bed and pressed his head against the cold stone of the wall. Across his vision the body of George Sanders floated continually. Jed slid off the cot and onto his knees.

"Mas' Sanders, why doan yo' tell Him . . . ?"

This brief appeal to Mas' Sanders brought a faint comfort. Recollections too. Sanders had been a gruff, harsh man, with a heavy hand when provoked, but a temperate and religious man at his best. Jed had been well fed and well clothed, and of late years had been taken more and more into Sanders' confidence. There was that cool mountain retreat high up on Gaspee Point, where Sanders used to go periodically to hide himself for days at a time. No one ever knew why, least of all Jed. Sanders was supposed to be a little queer.

Then, one day, Sanders took Jed along with him. His heart felt strangely home-sick as he recalled the cool, quiet beauty of the place, with its sweet-smelling ferns and the music of the water and the breezes. It was that day that Mas' Sanders had told him the reason for his mountain visits.

"Jed", he had said, in that heavy voice, "Jed, you wouldn't understand if I told you. Darkies aren't like that." He had looked around at the green hills and up at the blue sky in a way that Jed had not understood. "I come up here every once in a while, Jed, to straighten myself out. A man hasn't much time to be thinking about his soul down there in the fields or the mills. I come up here to pray, Jed. I, well, I reckon that this place is just about as close to God as anyone on this earth can get."

Jed stiffened at his bedside. Something that was almost akin to hope flared feebly in his breast. For the moment, the wild plan that he could escape these walls and reach that mountain fastness presented itself as plausible. He would be about as close to God then as anyone on this earth could get.

Steps cracked crisply down the corridor and then stopped at Stone's door. The warden peered in.

"Don't try any funny stuff tonight, now Jed. I'll put a man in here to watch if you do."

Jed raised his head and looked hopelessly at the round, florid countenance of the warden.

"Ah ain' tryin' nothin', Boss. Don' put no man in heah,— Ah just wan' ta be lef' alone."

The warden glanced cautiously up and down the corridor and then put his head close to the bars.

"Psst, Jed, come here."

The negro pulled himself hopefully to his feet and shuffled to the door.

In God We Trust

"Tell me, Jed,—just between you and me,—". He drew back, looked furtively around, and then bent closer and whispered.

"Did you really kill Sanders?"

"Wha' fo' just between you an' me, Boss? Ah din' kill Mas' Sanders." His swollen eyes fastened on the warden's and held them frozen. "Ain' nobody believe me, Boss. Ah din' kill him."

The warden pulled at his lower lip in unfeigned amazement.

"By God, Jed, I believe you—almost. Yes sir, maybe you didn't kill Sanders after all!"

The negro pressed against the bars and tried to grasp the lapel of his coat. The warden stepped nimbly back and watched him from a safe distance.

"Can' yo do somethin', Boss? Can' you get me outa heah? Yo' know Ah din' kill him,—Yo' won' let me swing."

The warden shook his head and fingered the ring of keys at his belt.

"You know I can't do nothing, Stone. You've been found guilty and sentenced by a court of justice. It's only my job to see that that sentence is carried out. My personal convictions can't enter into it." He swallowed uncomfortably under the dumb, incomprehensible stare of the negro.

Jed continued to stare at him in mute confusion, his arms clutching the bars high above his head. The warden cleared his throat hurriedly and tried to keep any undue sympathy out of his voice.

"Don't you have any letters you want to write, Jed? Ain't there nobody you want to say goodby to?"

The negro shook his head bleakly. The terror in his eyes had settled to dull resignation.

"Ain' nobody care about me, Boss,—ain' nobody Ah cares about.—Ceptin' Him." He looked up at the windowed sky in dull reproachment. "He don' see an' He don' hear, way down heah. He think Ah done it, too, dat Ol' Man. Why don' He know?"

"What the devil are you talking about, Jed?"

Something bright flashed across the negro's vision and put the scent of sweet ferns and the music of water and soft breezes about him. He licked his thick lips slowly, then swallowed.

"Say, Boss . . ."

The warden looked at Jed patiently.

"What is it, Jed?"

"Too late to be scared, Boss. Ah know'd dat all along. Too late to be saved. Ah knows. But Ah got a letter to write, anyways. Too late to help any, Boss,—but it'll let somebody know."

"Sure, Jed." He looked at the negro queerly. "I'll get you some paper."

The warden hurried back with the paper and pencil and watched curiously while the negro wrote.

"Where'll I send it, Jed?"

Jed looked up, with his pencil poised over his paper.

"Yo' don' send it, Boss,—yo' gotta take it."

"Take it? Where?"

"Yo' know Gaspee Point, Boss? Where Mas' Sanders used to go? Yo' gotta take it up dere, Boss,—an' knife it to a tree. Will yo' do dat, Boss?"

The warden scratched his head imperceptibly.

Why, why sure, Jed, I'll do that for you. Knife it to a tree."

Jed's hands were trembling with excitement. "Can yo' do it before Ah swing?"

In God We Trust

A chill started at the base of the warden's spine and ran icily up his back.

"Well, I don't know, Jed,—tomorrow morning ain't giving me much time." He swallowed his words hastily and nodded his head in reassurance. "Why, sure, Jed, I can take it up early in the morning. Sure, it ain't far."

Jed wetted his lips again and nodded his thanks. He turned his attention to the paper before him, and creased his brow in thought. Satisfied with the words, he hitched the pad into a steadier position and bent low over the paper.

Slowly and laboriously, in a large, crude hand, he scrawled his opening halfway across the page,

"Dere God,—"



On Etiquette

By JEFFREY GORMAN

EATING is obviously a necessity. Yet many people do not know how to eat, or if they do know how, they conceal the knowledge with facility. When people eat at home they may eat as they please, comparatively speaking. With impunity they may pursue the elusive pea all over the kitchen and even into the bedroom; they may cool their coffee in saucers; they may transport the mashed potato mouthward via the knife; they may shovel in the vitamins with the alacrity of a stoker deep in the bowels of a sluggish freighter.

But if people may comport themselves thus at home, they may not carry their domestic barbarism into the public restaurant. Here, polite manners and delicacy should be virgin and revered. Yet in the restaurant, all too often one encounters the boor who will invade this sanctum of polite society. He will seat himself with finality and in a voice pregnant with pugnacity demand, "uh plate uh soup". Then expectantly he will sit drumming fiercely with his soup spoon until the timorous waiter reluctantly creeps up with the demanded soup, puts it as near as he dare to the battlefield and ignominiously retreats.

Under the baleful glare of the executioner, the poor soup, already anemic, loses all semblance of self-possession. The brute, after addressing the liquid concoction with a fiendish "Ah!", grasps his weapon in a vicious half-nelson and attacks.

But the soup slurper is not alone. There are others for

On Etiquette

whom one must be prepared. Though their blitz lacks the ferocity of the soup slurper, its sudden ambush is completely unnerving.

I refer to the coffee slurpers. These fugitives from a Brazilian typhoon lurk everywhere and their disguise is impenetrable. An unsuspecting-looking chap may saunter in and sit down beside you. He will comply in every respect with Mrs. Post's formal stipulations and his proper call for coffee leaves one totally unprepared for the subsequent agony.

With the inconspicuous arrival of the coffee, he will pour in the desired amount of sugar and cream and then, depending on the number of patrons in the restaurant, he will adopt one of these two stratagems:

After furtively glancing around, he will guiltily pour a portion of the steaming demi-tasse into his saucer and then, adroitly elevating the saucer, will gargle the coffee down. Thus triumphant, he replaces the cup on saucer and with a naive smile, convinced that no one has witnessed his deception, he awaits a favorable opportunity to repeat the manoeuvre.

This is by far the more preferred procedure, but should there be a crowd in the restaurant, rendering the above method too crude and obvious, he always has a second, if less impressive trick. He calls for an order of doughnuts with his coffee. At the awed customers he leers in defiance. Dunking the doughnuts in high glee, he vociferously imbibes the saturated doughnuts and the coffee.

Perhaps some day some clever benefactor will devise a sound-proof device that will muffle these juicy manifestations of ecstasy. If not, the sales of cotton throughout the country will boom.

Mortal man can endure only so much.

On Etiquette

whom one must be prepared. Though their blitz lacks the ferocity of the soup slurper, its sudden ambush is completely unnerving.

I refer to the coffee slurpers. These fugitives from a Brazilian typhoon lurk everywhere and their disguise is impenetrable. An unsuspecting-looking chap may saunter in and sit down beside you. He will comply in every respect with Mrs. Post's formal stipulations and his proper call for coffee leaves one totally unprepared for the subsequent agony.

With the inconspicuous arrival of the coffee, he will pour in the desired amount of sugar and cream and then, depending on the number of patrons in the restaurant, he will adopt one of these two stratagems:

After furtively glancing around, he will guiltily pour a portion of the steaming demi-tasse into his saucer and then, adroitly elevating the saucer, will gargle the coffee down. Thus triumphant, he replaces the cup on saucer and with a naive smile, convinced that no one has witnessed his deception, he awaits a favorable opportunity to repeat the manoeuvre.

This is by far the more preferred procedure, but should there be a crowd in the restaurant, rendering the above method too crude and obvious, he always has a second, if less impressive trick. He calls for an order of doughnuts with his coffee. At the awed customers he leers in defiance. Dunking the doughnuts in high glee, he vociferously imbibes the saturated doughnuts and the coffee.

Perhaps some day some clever benefactor will devise a sound-proof device that will muffle these juicy manifestations of ecstasy. If not, the sales of cotton throughout the country will boom.

Mortal man can endure only so much.

Before the Wave

based. The validity of such a theory seems never to have been questioned. The result of such a policy is a matter of history. As if guided by a timepiece, nations have, every twenty or thirty years, following the imposition of a harsh peace, found themselves again at war with each other. Is it not about time that we realized that a peace based on such principles is bound to failure—that “to the victor do *not* belong the spoils.” The victor has but one office at the Peace Conference—to mete out justice. This phrase seems to hold a multitude of meanings. To one nation it means revenge; to another, the destruction of the conquered peoples; to a third, economic prosperity for his nation at the expense of the vanquished. To the Christian it can have but one meaning! Justice must be based upon the principles of Christ and His Church. It means fairness; it means charity.

To the peoples of England, Poland, France, and the Balkans this is not an easy saying. Those who have experienced the force of Nazi oppression, who have been bombed, who have felt the hand of death reach into their own family, will hardly feel inclined to mete out justice to the German or Japanese. But, experience has taught us that a peace based on anything other than justice cannot and will not endure. We must, then, rise above our emotions. We must make use of our rationality. Only then can we have a permanent and enduring peace.

But, unfortunately youth's problem does not end with the peace. In the past quarter century there has been set in motion an entirely new system of politics and living. This new force seems destined to replace the system of life under which we have been brought up. It is descriptively referred to as “the wave of the future.”

The “socialistic wave” has already engulfed the peoples of Russia, Germany, and Italy. The young men and women of

America and England have already felt its reverberations. In the past ten years our country has moved steadily toward Socialism. The N. R. A., the A. A. A., the W. P. A., and all the other alphabetical mistakes have been socialistic in nature. The assumption of broad powers by the President, even before we were at war: promulgation of anti-trust laws; Social Security; price stabilization, etc., have hastened us along this road. It seems inevitable that sooner or later we, too, shall be completely "engulfed by the wave." Mindful of Pius XI's admonition that "no one can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and true Socialist", Catholic youth must soon prepare its defense.

At this point I believe it would be well to distinguish between the various forms of Socialism, for the term admits of no universal definition. No two socialistic systems of government are the same—(I could almost say no two Socialists.) It might be distinguished as radical, less radical, and least radical. (I here use the term radical, not so much in its popular sense, but to mean a departure from the established political pattern.) Thus for instance, in Russia today we have Socialism in its most violent aspect. Denying to the individual any personal rights other than that of a cog in the vast wheel of collectivism—this, the most radical of the Socialistic systems, sweeps along with it in its mad death plunge all spiritual values held sacred by Man. Briefly it entails complete government ownership of all forms of enterprise, rule by a dictator,—subject to no one, and a system of collectivism by which everything is (in theory) held in common.

Less violent is the National Socialism of Germany and Fascism of Italy. The major distinction between these systems and the former is that private enterprise is permitted in the latter. While denying to the individual the "right" to exercise control over large trusts, corporations and public utilities, it nev-

Before the Wave

ertheless, admits of private ownership. Further, while attempts have been made to extinguish spiritual values, it still *tolerates* religion.

A good example of the third and least radical form of Socialism may be found in Sweden. Ruled by a limited monarchy and a premier, Sweden represents the most successful example of a Socialistic state. In fact there is nothing contradictory between socialism in this form and Catholic doctrine. Thus it is apparent our Pontiff's condemnation referred only to that form of Socialism as represented by Russia, Germany, and Italy. Rev. John A. Ryan writing on "The Church and Socialism" makes the point clear that there is nothing inconsistent between Catholic doctrine and true socialism or Social Justice—as it is referred to in Catholic circles.

Herein, then, lies the problem of Catholic youth. Faced with the advent of Socialism in this nation, which continuing on its present course cannot finish up Christian in nature, he must determine his course of action. He must view the social revolution for what it is: a good in itself, an evil unguided. Directed it is the closest thing to pure democracy; undirected it can make for the complete mental, moral, and physical destruction of the human race.

Catholic youth can meet the challenge! Our strength lies in more than material weapons. Embued with a spirit which transcends this world, we cannot fail. As we turn to the future, let us remember the unheeded warning of our Pontiff to German youth as they faced what we soon shall face—

"No one has the intention of obstructing . . . youth . . . on the road that is meant to bring them to the realization of true popular union, to the fostering of the love of freedom, to steadfast loyalty to the fatherland . . . But, we call out to

The Alembic

youth: Sing your songs of freedom, but do not forget the freedom of the sons of God while singing them . . . He who sings the song of loyalty to his earthly country must not, in disloyalty to God, to his church, and to his eternal country, become a deserter and a traitor."



Saroyanism and Surrealism

By FRANCIS A. STADNICKI

LAST week as I viewed for the second time an exhibition of modern French paintings, I attempted to strike a parallel, or perhaps a justification, between Surrealism in painting and formlessness in playwriting. I wondered whether William Saroyan, as the foremost champion of formlessness in the American theater, could be honestly called a playwright. His works have been the cause of so much controversy that for a moment I thought his symbolism was too deep, too heavy, for the theater-goer to understand. But if an audience can't understand a play is it symbolistic? Has its end been achieved?

Many have claimed that Saroyan has originated a new art. They haven't a name nor a classification for it yet, but they do insist it is a new art. Contrary to that belief however, Saroyan's works are always advertised as plays. Plays to be acted on a stage by people who use make-up and speak Mr. Saroyan's words. Plays to be seen, appreciated, and enjoyed. What the followers of Saroyan fail to realize is that art was never stagnant. With each oncoming age new ideas, new modes of interpretation were developed to produce artistic values. Some were accepted, others were rejected, but despite the various new accidental changes the individual art forms remained fundamentally the same. In painting the work of the impressionist differs from that of the surrealist but essentially the purpose of both schools is to present a *picture* upon a limited flat surface. The impressionist aims to be scientific. He seeks to describe a scene

just as he saw it during a certain time of day. The surrealist knows the external world as a bundle of symbols and presents what he sees through his inner vision or the subconscious. Both artists however, use lines and color, brush, canvas, and paint to accomplish their results. Mr. Saroyan, using the tools of the theater—acts, dialogue, characters—can write nothing but a play and the controversy does not center about the question whether Saroyan's plays ARE plays but rather, are they *good theater*.

The analogy I have drawn in the first paragraph between painting and the theater has illustrated that just as Cubism, Expressionism, and Post-Impressionism at one time dominated painting so have Realism, Naturalism, and Symbolism experienced their hey-day in the drama. The radical or the fantastic can always prove enjoyable when it is written with real artistry. The success of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, and his recent piece, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, attests to the fact that theatergoers do not blindly insist upon conventional forms. Sometimes such ordinary dramatic essentials as plot, scenery, and stage props are forsaken by the playwright in favor of a central dynamic force, such as a character analysis, without injury to the play's appeal. These plays are accepted as good theater without difficulty. Saroyan's formless plays on the other hand, are always accompanied by a storm of dispute. Our problem's solution lies in the answer to the question: Are Saroyan's plays good theater? In other words, are they art?

Before an attempt is made to answer the question, we must define the term "art" and try to understand a few of the difficulties connected with it. Art is defined by the Scholastics as the creation of beauty designed to produce aesthetic pleasure in the beholder. It is realized of course, that this appreciation of art is to a certain degree subjective for no two minds will

Saroyanism and Surrealism

react the same way to beauty. But this does not mean that our own particular taste will make the final pronouncement. Obviously prejudice and the personal element of liking and disliking would make such a judgment completely unreliable. Beauty and art, being objective, are bound by laws as stable and immutable as those of chemistry and mathematics. The appreciation of beauty embodies both mind and the *objet d'art* in a sort of intimate relationship which varies in intensity from person to person, from race to race. Though we perceive the beautiful through our senses, beauty is not primarily a sense perception. Intellectual knowledge is a requisite and a foundation for aesthetic pleasure. Neither our intuition nor our senses are able to make us appreciative of art. Very young children possess intuition, as do the savage bush men of Australia, and yet, their emotions are not stirred by a great artistic masterpiece. Their senses are as perfect as ours and yet, they remain uninspired. Man, to be conscious of art, must call upon his highest faculties: senses, imagination, emotion, intellect, and will.

Let us now, with the facts of the preceeding paragraph, attempt to justify Saroyan's plays as art. Since all his plays are written in the same manner and style, we may consider any comment made concerning one applicable to all. In his preface to the text of *Across The Board on Tomorrow Morning*, Saroyan confesses the play "was quite shocking, and nobody seemed to know what it was all about." To put it differently no one understood it, it was not appreciated, there was no aesthetic pleasure derived, no beauty, and therefore no art. As far-fetched as this conclusion may seem it is quite rational. We must remember that aesthetic pleasure of the beautiful is not evoked by something in the mind independent of the play and vice versa. There must be a connection between both and

since, judging by the audience reaction, there was no such liaison in this case we must conclude the work was not real art. The objection that his symbolism was too deep to be grasped by the audience must be rejected since a symbol must be capable of being immediately understood, of suggesting on the instant the idea it means to express. If the symbol can only be understood after much thought on the part of the beholder, the work has failed as art.

With surrealism in painting we have a completely unparalleled case. The drama, a human experience imaginatively interpreted, has been established as an objective art medium. Painting, which is merely representing objects by delineation and color, may be subjective or objective. An artist may paint things as they really are or he may paint them as he envisions them. In painting, the appeal is made directly through our sense of vision and not, as is the case with the drama, to the intellect through the senses and imagination. Even though we do not grasp the idea behind the painting our desire for knowledge is not frustrated because the artist is only expected to present a *picture*. Beauty in painting does not lie in identification. If we examine a clever surrealist painting with an open mind we experience a certain sort of exhilaration. The pleasure is produced by the rich color, the form, the harmonious blending of objects, the premeditated design. We perceive order rising from a seeming disorder and our minds accept the suggested reality. Draw up closely, within a few inches, of a post-impressionistic canvas and all that is perceivable is modulation of tone, color after color, shade upon shade. Draw away and immediately the colors blend, like soldiers rushing into formation, and we see the scene as one unified whole. Just as the vantage point is all important in getting a full view of the post-impressionistic painting so is the open mind, free of any

Saroyanism and Surrealism

forced ideas, essential in understanding a surrealist work of art.

Unlike the surrealist artist, a playwright may at no time forget the audience, that powerful jury, which will determine the success or failure of his drama. Mr. Saroyan, as far as his playwriting is concerned, has been conscious of no one but himself. Disregarding the dramatic rule of objectivity he walled himself within his own ego and ignored the people for whom he was writing. Self-consciousness has no place in the drama. The audience, sitting in our theaters, demands conformity to this law. Saroyan, however, believes that he, just like mother, knows what is best for the child and so he continues to emotionalize personally through the robots he calls stage characters. In fact, his characters are so unhuman that recently in producing one of his own plays, Saroyan, instead of engaging actors to play the roles, went outside the theater for men and women to portray on the stage what they were in real life. Thus to instill that essential human element into his characters Mr. Saroyan hired a hat check girl to play a hat check girl, a bar tender to play a bar tender. Not even this stunt however, could save the play.

Saroyan may be trying to say things of great moment but because he has allowed his egotism to master the artist in him, he has proved incapable of saying anything at all. Maxwell Anderson in his preface to *Candle In The Wind*, states, "A play is not required to make ethical discoveries. It is only required to have a meaning, and a sound one. One, that is, which is accepted as sound by its audience."

In view of what Saroyan himself has said about the audience's reaction to one of his typical plays, how can we possibly discuss the acceptance of a sound meaning? Yet every play must have a meaning, for the purpose of the drama is to

uphold, for all to see, the admirable in the human race. Contrary to the surrealist, Mr. Saroyan has violated the rules of his artistic medium. Not having reached his theater audience, he has failed to achieve a work of art. Meanwhile knowing that he is capable of good theater, the theatrical world patiently hopes that he stops trying to revolutionize the drama and falls into step with the other playwrights whose purpose as the greatest dramatist said, "both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature."

And Shakespeare knew what he was talking about.



Rauschning Has the Answer

By JAMES F. SHIEL

DR. HERMANN RAUSCHNING knew Hitler. For several years the former president of the Danzig Senate was a confidant of Hitler. He belonged to the revolutionary Nazi Socialist clique and submitted reports of the Danzig political arena to der Fuhrer in his Olympian chalet at Berchtesgarden.

We were going to talk to a man who knew what is behind the Nazi system, when we asked the genial Dr. Rauschning for an interview in the Crown Hotel during his recent visit to Providence. The former Nazi comrade, now rated as the best informed critic of the Nazi Party alive and at liberty outside of Germany, made our hour and a half stay enjoyable and informative. (Beer, the *sine qua non* of German conversation, prevented any parched throats.)

Hitler patterns his vegetarian habits in accordance with rules set down by Richard Wagner; the German general von Brauchitsch willed revolt against the Fuhrer in 1934; and Catholic Youth in Germany with the coöperation of the clergy is waging a successful war in stealth against Naziism. These were a few of the more important and unusual facts Dr. Rauschning revealed.

"Hitler is a vegetarian and follows books on eating and magic written by Wagner", Dr. Rauschning said. "There is a Houston Stuart Chamberlain, an Englishman, who married a daughter of Wagner and went to live at Bayreuth. He wrote,

Die Gross en Märchen des Neunzehntenjahrhunderts concerning Wagner, which has had a profound influence on Hitler."

Dr. Rauschning mentioned two lines of influence on Hitler. The one was Wagner, Chamberlain, *Rosenburg, Hitler. The other comprised Nietzsche, Rosenberg, Hitler. In the course of the conversation on the influence of books on Hitler, Dr. Rauschning said that Hitler has a collection of over 16,000 books.

"He reads not like a pedant, but skips around", Dr. Rauschning said. "He studies military strategy and reads these books intensely. He does not have in his bedroom desk drawer only pornographic literature. A lot of that is just a story."

Hitler was described as abnormal. Dr. Rauschning said Hitler has had no real romance, but is often surrounded by a group of elderly ladies between forty-five and sixty-five who see in the Fuhrer their ideal lover and hero. Their affections appeared to be a union of the mind resembling a Platonic love dream. In his lecture at Hope High School, Dr. Rauschning stated that several of these ladies were present during one of his meetings with Hitler in the great room at Berchtesgarden.

"I might strike a parallel between Hitler and Robespierre", Dr. Rauschning said. "Robespierre was a dirty man without real courage. He was insignificant, but got the admiration of the French women. This was his means to power".

Hitler's only regard for women is insofar as they can further his political aims and power. Hitler knew that a politician needs ladies and used ladies whenever needed for securing political favors. Dr. Rauschning cited an instance where in his presence, Hitler advised one of his friends to secure the protection of French ladies in order to secure political power.

---

*Alfred Rosenberg, Head of Party Foreign Political Office.

Rauschning Has the Answer

The part the Catholic Church is playing in Germany to combat the influences of National Socialism was another topic on which we found the former Danzig president well informed.

"The priests keep the German Catholic Youth faithful", he said. "They maintain a silent opposition, not open, for the Nazis would kill it. Especially in Westphalia, Bavaria, and the Rhineland are they active. Hitler fears the power of the Catholic Church and needs the help of the Catholic Church."

We inquired about the opposition offered by Protestants in Germany, especially the Niemoeller group. A Protestant himself, Dr. Rauschning did not speak with a great deal of confidence in Protestant resistance as a barrier to further Nazi tyranny.

"Die Bekannte Kirche, the Confessed Church, are opposed to Hitler", the ex-Gauleiter leader said. "Their motto is: 'Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's'."

Although opposed in theory to Naziism, this group does not put its principles into practice. It fails to see the connection between the Church and State. From the interpretation of their slogan, Hitler could order mass murders as a government measure and they would be prone to agree because that would come under his government authority. The case is one of failing to see that government authority must be in accord with the law of God.

"An honest man cannot separate religion from civil life", Dr. Rauschning said. "Protestantism is not so effective as a resistance to Hitler."

The other groups classed as effective forces of opposition, though silent, are the old functionaries of the Social Democrats and the educated aristocrats who still favor a monarchy. Dr.

Rauschning mentioned Otto von Hapsburg as a possibility in case the latter form of government is adopted in Germany.

Dr. Rauschning's press release had him listed as the only German who has ever been invited to address the Commonwealth Group of the British Parliament in the House of Commons. Dismissing such distinctions as part of the American idea of ballyhoo, Dr. Rauschning said that is something you would not find in Europe.

"You are a great man today and you are forgotten tomorrow", he said.

"People do not come to hear what you have to say, but to see what you look like. I did not speak in that holy seat of democracy in Great Britain, but in an independent part of Parliament belonging to the Commonwealth Group in the Commons".

Dr. Rauschning came to America in October of 1941. Before that time he had spent 1½ years in France and 1½ years in Great Britain. He told how during the war between Germany and France his fellow German exiles protested to the French government that he was still a Nazi. So prominent were the rumors that an editorial appeared in the French paper, *Le Temps*, entitled "The Case Against Dr. Rauschning".

He witnessed the bombing of London during his stay in England. He said that three attempts were made on his life and that he was threatened by the Chief of the Secret Police of the German Army with assassination. He knocked on wood as he said he got away in time on every occasion. One of his many friends among party members warned him.

Getting back to the present setup in Germany, we asked the Danziger how did the late General von Hindenburg feel towards National Socialism once it had begun.

Rauschning Has the Answer

"Hindenburg was disgusted with Hitler", Dr. Rauschning said. "Hindenburg was a monarchist and his real aim was the restoration of the monarchy. He was deeply disappointed with National Socialism. Hindenburg knew National Socialism was revolutionary and violent, but thought it would be so only at the beginning as was any such government. Hindenburg's greatest mistake was to dismiss von Bruening as head of the Reichstag".

Hindenburg would have come out publicly against National Socialism if he had lived one-half year longer. Dr. Rauschning told of Hindenburg's last will being found, in which the German president said he was disappointed with National Socialism and that the only hope for German salvation was not through the National Socialist regime but "durch König und Altar". The German Propaganda Department published a falsification of the will.

Hitler himself has a magnetic personality the Doctor related. Dr. Rauschning told of a Former German Finance minister and the present head of the Bohemia-Moravia Protectorate, Baron von Neurath, shaking and trembling in Hitler's presence during a Gauleiter meeting. He himself was impressed and carried away by the Fuhrer's magnetism during his time in the party. He would go to his home and ponder why he paid attention to Hitler at a party meeting. Yet, in the latter's presence, he was powerless.

"He had a heavy weight upon my soul", Dr. Rauschning declared.

"I feel enlightened, I have new ideas, he is really a great man", *Hjalmer Schacht would say after listening to Hitler. It was emphasized that even the educated Germans were taken off their feet by the power of Hitler's personality.

---

*Hjalmer Schacht, former head of the Reichsbank.

Dr. Rauschning said that the German soldier has spoken against virtually every official of the Nazis with the exception of Hitler. Rauschning stated that the German army and people know that Hitler is sacrificing himself for the fatherland and for an ideal. At the same time he lives the simplest life of any man in Germany. Although he enjoys the highest income, he neither smokes, drinks, nor eats excessively. He is sacrificing his whole life for an ideal until he becomes the "saviour of the world".

The present head of the German army, General von Brauchitsch was said by Dr. Rauschning to be willing to revolt against Hitler in 1934. He told of a politician's conversation with the general.

"I cannot do this alone", von Brauchitsch said. "The army will not repeat the mistake of the last war when von Ludendorff had to do everything. It is your job (that of the politician's) to make order in the civil sector. If you get a civic leader, the army will support you".

The Hess affair came into our discussion. Dr. Rauschning had a very interesting theory.

"I think Hess came as a plenipotentiary of Hitler himself", he said. "Hitler had not yet resolved to go against Russia. There were two schools of thought in Germany, one of which wanted an alliance with Russia; and the other which wanted a preventative war with Russia. Hitler thought that Russia would be a great danger for the future of Germany. Germany wanted to destroy the Soviets."

"Hess really wanted to come to peace with Great Britain. I think Hess wanted to present Hitler with a *fait accompli* and to get the English people on the side of Germany. Hess was sin-

Rauschning Has the Answer

cere in thinking that he would do a service to Hitler and Germany by securing a peace”.

Dr. Rauschning further stated that he believed that Churchill had a hand in the affair and may have promised to come to terms with Germany. Otherwise, he said, Hess would have been surely used by the English for propaganda purposes.

Dr. Rauschning was optimistic for the future. He said the breakdown of German morale was nearer than any one thought. He mentioned the complaints against rationing in the United States, which has been going on only for a few months, and contrasted it with the ten years of continual rationing the German people have undergone. He stated that the best chance is for a “negotiable peace”.

He advocated “keeping the British Commonwealth together” because he believed that with the help of the United States, machinery could be started in motion for a global community, a United States of the World.

“I believe in a new global league of nations and a federation of free nations that can build up a free market economy. Legal framework is necessary and a free market system is absolutely necessary”, he concluded.

Born in Thorn, West Prussia, Dr. Rauschning received his education at the University of Munich and the University of Berlin. He is not inherently a politician, but a successful farmer. He fought for a German-Polish understanding and had frequent quarrels with Hitler. When he recognized the destructive force of National Socialism, he broke with Hitler in 1935 and was forced to flee from Germany.

Dr. Rauschning has written three books on the present world crisis titled “The Revolution of Nihilism”, “The Voice

of Destruction” and “The Conservative Revolution”. He has four daughters and a son, all of whom are in this country with his wife.

His son is on a farm in Oregon. Dr. Rauschning is very exuberant over American farming methods and hopes to settle in Oregon himself.



Check---\$50,000

By CONRAD FOURNIER

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Mike	Uncle
Sam	Judge
Girl I	Jury
Girl II	Voice I
Veronica	Voice II
Girl IV	Voice III
Father	Voice IV
Boy Friend	

Time: Present

Place: Hollywood, U. S. A.

Mike: Money. Money. More money.

Sam: What are you going to do with it?

Mike: Buy.

Sam: What?

Mike: Hair.

Sam: Horsehair?

Mike: Just human.

Sam: All kinds?

Mike: No!

Sam: No?

Mike: No!

Sam: One kind of human hair.

Mike: Yes. Feminine.

Sam: Feminine hair.

Mike: Locks of hair.

Sam: Blonde?

Mike: Yes.

Sam: Brunette?

Mike: Yes—and red, and auburn.

Sam: Jet black, too?

Mike: Yes. Silky, strawy, shiny, dull, wiry, oily, gummy.

Sam: All kinds of feminine locks. Right?

Mike: Right!

Sam: What are we going to do with hair?

Mike: Walk on it.

Sam: Is that all?

Mike: Sweep it up.

Sam: What else?

Mike: Put it in the waste paper basket.

Sam: Anything else?

Mike: Scatter it on the floor. Walk on it.

Sam: Sweep it up. Put it in the basket. Scatter it. Walk on it. We can go on and on.

Mike: That's right.

Sam: That'll be fun. When do we get started?

Mike: Now. (Dials phone.) The Editor? I want to place a want ad—Wanted—Yes. Feminine hair. All kinds of feminine hair.

(Hangs up.) Open the doors.

Sam: This door, too?

Check—\$50,000

Mike: Yes. They'll be coming in bunches.

Sam (Opens doors) : And now what?

Mike: Go out and buy some scissors.

Sam: Where's the dough?

Mike: Charge it.

Sam: O. K. (Exit) .

Girl I (Enters) : You want to buy some hair?

Mike: Yes.

Girl I: Which lock do ya want?

Mike: This one.

Girl I: That's the biggest one I got.

Mike: Ten dollars. No more.

Girl I: For ten dollars, take what you want.

Mike: I got no scissors.

Girl I: Tear it out.

Mike: Let me grab a hold.

Sam (Enters) : Here's a half dozen pairs.

Mike: I'm pulling this lock—

Girl I: Ouch!

Mike: Out!

Girl I: You threw my lock on the floor.

Mike: I'm stepping on it. Step on it, Sam.

Sam: This is fun.

Girl I: Not much respect—

Mike: Here is your money. Ten dollars.

Girl I (Jubilant) : Good enough, screwball. (Exit)

Girl II (Enters singing) : De, De, Dum.

Mike: You sure you want to sell it?

Girl II: Oh, yes! How much?

Mike: I'll clip a lock.

Sam: I will, too.

The Alembic

Girl II: You each clipped a lock. That's two.

Sam: You get double price.

Mike: That's right. Ten dollars. Five apiece.

Girl II: That's different.

Mike: Here you are.

Girl II: But he's stepping—

Mike: Good-day. (Exit Girl II.)

Veronica (Enter): I will gratefully do my bit to help out. Clip this lock. It's beautiful isn't it?

Sam: It dazzles the eye.

Mike: Captivating! Step right up. There!

Veronica: You took half of my coiffure.

Mike: You're getting paid.

Veronica: Oh well! It is so little to do. My check book. Sign here.

Mike: I pay cash.

Veronica: A check would be better.

Mike: O.K. Say, sure you don't want too much.

Veronica: My golden hair is worth—

Sam: I'm stepping on it. Sweeping it. Putting it in a basket.

Mike: My standard price.

Veronica: Ten dollars? It's an insult to my hair. I am an unusual blonde.

Mike: So are the others, sister.

Veronica: My hair. (Faints)

Mike: Next.

Girl IV: (Enters).

Veronica: (Coming out of faint.) You'll hear from me. (Exit)

Sam: I'll help you, Mike. (They both clip hair.)

Check—\$50,000

Girl IV: I thought you said a lock. Look at me. I'm bald.

Sam: Thick lock.

Mike: Here is your pay. Ten dollars.

Girl IV: For that money, I don't care about the hair.

Sam: There is a line five blocks long. They are all blondes.

Father (Enters) : Let me by. Show me the cad.

Veronica: There he is.

Father: Cut my daughter's hair for ten dollars. (Socks Mike.)

Mike: (Out) .

Sam: Water! Water!

Father: Your hair—

Veronica: On the floor. They stepped on it.

Father: All that—

Veronica: They mixed it with unworthy hair.

Mike: Oh— (Regaining consciousness) .

Sam: Up on your feet—now.

Boy Friend (Enters) : Where is he?

Veronica: He's the one.

Boy Friend: Raped her lock. (Socks Mike.)

Mike: (Out) .

Sam: More water! More water!

Mike: Oh— (Comes to, stands, is unsteady—) .

Uncle: So! This is the culprit. Will you make monetary amends for the loss of this poor girl's lock?

Mike: I will not.

Uncle: (Socks Mike.)

Mike: (Out) .

Uncle: This is a case for the Court. Come in jury.

The Alembic

Sam: The girls are impatient.

Mike (Revives) : Tell them to wait.

Uncle: They will have a long wait.

Judge: What is your verdict?

Jury: Guilty of Treason.

Judge: The penalty is death.

Voice I: Bring in the Chair.

Voice II: Strap him in.

Voice III: Now—the electrodes.

Voice IV: The Juice.

(CURTAIN)



Blueprints for a Just Peace

By JOSEPH C. O'SHEA

WAR is commonly appreciated as a fight for ideals and self-existence, but after the war these ideals and the necessity of self-existence as regards the conquered are abandoned because the ratification of such principles does not permit the victors to seize the spoils. The intelligentsia who formulated the slogans of war cannot allow themselves to believe them, lest they bury the roots of war and initiate a lasting peace.

The war, as far as the average individual is concerned, is merely a military expedition with politics playing the secondary role of gathering about the warrior more allies to assist him in his fight. The average man fights for a variety of things.

Sometimes it is for national honor or maybe for that certain ideal of which he has the vaguest notion. But, actually what does impress him is the loss of friends or the joy which he unwittingly experiences over the loss of his enemies.

Every war is popularized by new expressions, terms and different representations of the age old propaganda—do your patriotic duty, fight. And FIGHT is what they mean. But, what about the fight? What do they really fight for?

During the duration of the conflict those at home are bombarded from all sides with cries of post-war reconstruction based on justice, in order to assure a lasting peace. Where are the post-war ideals when the victory is won?

It is rarely that one has to look beyond the peace table for these lofty idealists, who now with reins in hands, are proposing some of the most malicious, ridiculous, fantastic, unchristian, unjust association of demands, more barbaric than their pagan ancestors. From behind the masks they come bare-faced forgetting that a few short months previous they were preaching and crying for a quick cessation of hostilities and a just peace.

Was God admitted to the Versailles Peace Conference? Anyone who gave a thought to the idea suddenly found himself on the outside looking in. It seemed as if all the noble sentiment of the post-war period and the just peace were a lot of "campaign oratory" as the politician would put it. Ethical principles, moral codes and Christianity were taboo.

Christian Ethics and Morality play no part in the minds of warped peace makers. To them anything Christian must be blotted out when the time comes to divide the spoils. That Christian Ethics has its place and that it plays an important role in the mental conditioning of the civilian they readily admit. Yet, they refuse to encourage it by their deeds.

Imagine what would happen to civilian morale if they definitely knew that this was not going to be the last war—that their friends and relatives had been killed just for the fun of it—that the war leaders did not really believe that there was a God—that the peace makers were going to demand their pound of flesh and to the devil with the rest—thus, sowing the seeds of another conflagration. What would happen?

What of the post-war today? There will be no change in the setup unless an earnest effort on the part of the individual

Blueprints for a Just Peace

is soon forthcoming to correct this situation. The outlook however is most heartening. Feeble efforts are being made here; other parts of the world are beginning to tire of war. A new order is definitely in the making, but instead of a Godless one it will be based on religion, on Christian principles.

There is great hope for the future. Transportation and communication have made tremendous advances during the past twenty years and the war has brought home to all that the world is not such a large place as it once seemed. The far remote corners of India are not much farther than Berlin from the United States. The difficulties experienced by the Indian, the Mohammedan, the Turk, or the Russian shall have serious effect upon us. Already we feel the pinch of our foreign relations. We have no rubber from Malaya, no silk from Japan, no tea from China and very little coffee from Brazil.

The political situation of these countries has been such as to establish a barrier between us. Military and political events in all the world now affect us intimately—our very existence as a nation, as a free people. Do we want to be free? If we do, these states upon which our existence depends must also remain free. Our charters guaranteeing freedom must not be to the exclusion of other races. These other peoples have a right to freedom and free enterprise just as we.

Shortly we will be forced to realize this. Our Godlessness, our unethical and superficial morality will have to be cast aside because it will no longer be employable on a people, a vast world that is deeply and in some cases fanatically religious. The teeming millions of Indians under the guidance of their Buddhist Priests, the millions of Mohammedans religiously faithful to

Allah, and the millions of Catholics under the guiding hand of the Holy Father must of necessity by their numerical superiority force ethical standards upon a non-Christian and today a world religiously more aboriginal than the most irreligious pagan.

Religious ethics must take hold of the world. Those who cannot accept this will find themselves out-of-step. God, no matter what one may choose to call Him, must be recognized and His Justice served. Failure to do so has produced evil fruits. Where God is not wanted evil lurks. Therefore, it seems highly feasible that the God-haters will have to get rid of themselves in a world where God is going to be a more potent factor in the life of the future.

Lack of knowledge and appreciation of the necessities has led the world into this chaotic situation and only a fuller blueprint based on justice will serve as an exit from this and similar promiscuous occurrences in the future. God and His Justice must be the sole principle of reconstruction both for the victor and for the vanquished. Christian Ethics and principles are basically just and no one can suffer from their application except the unjust.



By The Way

JOHN GERHARD

THREE years in a college that stresses philosophy have convinced me that a definition as a basis of logical discussion is an invaluable instrument. Somewhere along the line, however, it has been forgotten that a definition, of itself, is quite a useless thing. It has been forgotten that the definition is a mere verbal reflection of the reality, and that without the reality there would be no definition. It stands to reason that a mirror requires something to reflect. Somewhere along the line the definition has been enthroned as the reality itself and instead of the definition being the reflection of the reality, we now have a weird situation in which the reality is made to reflect the definition. The law of the mind has been made the law of reality. A thing exists as it is, not because it is, but because it has been defined. It is consequently apparent that in any given case where no one definition will satisfy everybody inutterable chaos must succeed.

In literature, I fear that this tendency of blandly formulating the definition and then jamming the reality brutally into the deified definition is the result of a too-strict adherence to philosophic principles of exactness and precision. When students of philosophy wander gaily into Literature, they discover to their genuine horror that things are in an appallingly unorganized condition. To them, Literature is in a pathological state which they are pleased to call libertinism: no formal definitions,

no absolute, inviolable laws of procedure; in fact, there is here no imperiously precise *modus operandi*. They are stunned. Fresh from their classical philosophy, glutted to the eyeballs with abject respect for Law and Regulation, it was inevitable that their discovery should profoundly move them.

And so, our philosophic Good Samaritans, like ardent C.I.O. organizers, set to work to lead Literature out of wanton and irresolute lawlessness into the promised land. The sweat of frantic fanaticism bubbles on their foreheads; they are going to civilize Literature. Oblivious to the amused tolerance of the venerable, easy-going literateurs, they bone and cram to learn something of this undisciplined monstrosity. For they must form their definitions. Always the first step is definitions.

One by one, then, in orderly parade, the definitions roll forth: Literature, History, Biography, the Essay, the Novel—all good, sound definitions. Progress is slow, painstaking, thorough. The venerable, easy-going literateurs, impressed by this intent labor, nod wisely and observe: "These fellows are not radicals after all. They are doing an excellent job of cleaning up this mess. Certainly, they will bear watching."

In truth, the young philosophy students were doing an excellent job in their new assault. They were bringing order to Literature. Perhaps it was because they were all students of Thomas Aquinas that they advanced so neatly, for the philosophical works of Thomas are remarkable in their clarity and orderliness. Perhaps to Aquinas should be given the credit for this New Order in Literature.

The definitions continued to roll forth until the entire task was finished. The Romance, the Drama and Poetry had all gone through the mill and had been duly "elaborated upon".

The philosophers, however, perhaps a trifle uncertain of the validity of their new definitions, said: "Understand now, we

By the Way

don't maintain that these things are definitions. Surely '*Perfection in creative writing*' cannot be termed a definition of poetry. What we say is that these succinct observations are only aids in the understanding of the different species".

Let us look closer at these "succinct observations". One of them reads like this: *The Novel is an extended fictional narrative which selects some complex pattern of life to embrace and to simplify.* So. Do we not have here the two essential elements of any definition: approximate genus and specific difference? Is not the entire elaboration of the Novel based inexorably on this "succinct observation"? Take any other of these observations: *The Short Story is a coherent narrative which selects an intense incident or two of human experience to unify into a single impression.* Or, *The Essay is a brief literary species which in a conversable manner expresses the author's opinion on a world of things.* Are these not definitions? If these philosophers were to compile a textbook, would they not grade their students on the students' adherence to the text? These "succinct observations" must be definitions, then, for the elaboration given to each species must have the bed-rock foundation of a coldly formal definition.

To the philosophers, most important of all and what was the apogee of their endeavors, was the triumphant completion of an exhaustive analysis of Literature. Literature, the fine art, had been smashed, atom-like, into the philosophic Genera, Species and Form.

To give them their due, the philosophers admitted that any air-tight partition in the Genera was impossible. With regard to the Species, however, an air-tight partition was not only possible but was a *fait accompli*. Thus, no blending of species was possible.

If then, History, Letters, Biography, and the Essay are classified under Factual Literature, and if Romance, the Novel,

the Short Story, the Drama, and Poetry are classified under Imaginative Literature, a blending of one species of Factual Literature with a species of Imaginative Literature is absolutely impossible.

A blending of Biography with the Novel is unthinkable because the two species are mutually exclusive. "Biography is the authentic account of a man's life; the novel is frankly fiction." Magnificent! In theory, this is flawless. But, when a reader encounters Franz Werfel's *The Song of Bernadette* immediately difficulties pop up—impossible difficulties.

For, what is the book to be called? A novel? A biography? A history?

Here is the beginning of the real trouble. When our philosopher-literateur gives the species of *The Song of Bernadette*, he must substantiate his verdict by a reference to his definition of that species. But see what happens. He considers *The Song of Bernadette* and decides that it is a novel. Fine. Now, then, what is his definition of the novel? *The novel is an extended fictional narrative . . .* We need go no further. That word *fictional*!

The Song of Bernadette is not based on a fictional happening. The miracles were real, Bernadette was real, Lourdes was real, and still is. If the novel is "fiction pure and simple, its characters and situations are candidly fictitious", then, *The Song of Bernadette* is not a novel.

This is the sort of thing that the philosophers must meet. Their own definition has hamstrung them. They tried sincerely to put Literature in a straight-jacket and they found that Literature just would not be put in a straight-jacket.

Having defined the various component parts of Literature, they find themselves forced desperately to jam and squeeze these parts to fit their sad definition. They are trying to

By the Way

freeze hot water. Theirs is an unenviable position. Theirs is a hopeless position. What was begun in sincere benevolent earnestness is abandoned in despair.

The philosophers failed, I think, because they were too much absorbed in cataloguing, in pigeon-holing literature. They were concerned too much with names and not enough with creative art. They insisted that Literature could be fractured into Genera, Species and Forms, a la Logic, and they recognized their error only when they were drowning in the backwash.

Nevertheless, it would be a tremendous error and a tremendous injustice to assume that the Thomistic Invasion of Literature was completely futile. For one thing, its failure proved that Literature cannot be regimented, that Literature cannot be made to conform militarily to philosophic standards. Literature is a volatile, flowing, swelling, breathing, vibrant thing that will defy cold abstractive analytical processes.

The philosophers must be credited with recognizing an opportunity to clarify the multiple confusing aspects of Literature. That they failed cannot detract from the nobility of their intentions. For the philosophers did exactly what so many other reformers have done: they swept to the other extreme. Where Literature had been somewhat complex, the philosophers oversimplified. They lined everything up in neat little rows: they made Literature a glorified schema of Genera, Species, and Forms. The philosophers climbed to the top of the mountain and then fell off.

Had the philosophers given the predominating characteristics of the literary species, showing the essential differences, so that the student of literature would know and appreciate the distinction between, say, the essay and the novel, then they would have established the first run in a program of Literary

Appreciation which would have included every high school and college student in the land.

The philosophers, however, were not content to point out the differences between the species; they insisted on dictating to others how they should label literature. Names are not so important as the philosophers tried to make them. Is it such a terrible sin to call *The Song Of Bernadette* a biography-novel?

It is so easy to criticize. We must not become vindictive; we must not cavil. We shall congratulate the philosophers for having the courage to try. We shall hope that someone else, or some other group, will profit by the philosophers' failure and will offer a remedy that is not worse than the disease.

Meanwhile, the venerable, easy-going literateurs sit back and nod sadly. Another clarification, like another Summer, has bloomed and then died.

And Literature sails serenely onward.



**Rugged, Warm Herringbone
Cheviot**

HALLBROOK OVERCOATS

\$24.⁵⁰

Carefully tailored, this fine Hallbrook overcoat has all the earmarks of good tailoring, good cut and fine detail. Single and double breasted styles.

The **OUTLET**

RHODE ISLAND'S LARGEST DEPARTMENT STORE

**home of famous hallbrook
and clipper craft clothes**



What Can You Do with \$1.50 a Month?

You can easily let \$1.50 slip through your fingers each month. Just as easily, you can apply it toward the purchase of an Old Colony Short-Term Share.

In about five years, that small regular payment will bring you back \$100. Part of that sum will represent accumulated savings; the rest will consist of regularly compounded dividends.

Any Old Colony representative will gladly supply you with complete details and informative free leaflets.



**OLD COLONY®
CO-OPERATIVE BANK**

58 WEYBOSSET ST., PROVIDENCE

Pawtucket, Woonsocket, West Warwick, No. Providence

PATRONIZE OUR ADVERTISERS

ADVERTISEMENTS

THE OXFORD PRESS

Printers of This Book

All Classes of School
Publications

Book and Commercial
Printing

Phone DEXter 5463

100 South Street Providence, R. I.

High School Seniors!

On January 27, Providence College will admit a new Freshman class. High school graduates and high school seniors who have completed half of their senior year and are recommended by their principal for college study will be admitted.

Prepare for professional service or, at the very least, have a year of college to offer for officer candidacy. Complete Freshman year from January to August, 1943. Expenses the term: Tuition, \$125; Board and Room, \$250.

Apply: The Registrar, Providence College, Providence, R. I.

Shepard

MEN! SHOP OUR
MEN'S STORE FOR ALL
APPAREL and FURNISHINGS
NEEDS

Street Floor

Compliments of

Delta Epsilon
Sigma

CATHOLIC NATIONAL HONOR
SOCIETY

THETA CHAPTER

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

McGLINCHEY Hardware and Paint Co.

Locksmithing	Garden Tools
Window Glass	Mazda Lamps
Paint Supplies	Roofing Supplies
Household Supplies	Electrical Supplies

420 Smith Street

DE 5674

Compliments of

Joseph Marcus, & Co.
INC.

Established 1906

184-194 North Main Street
Providence, R. I.

Quality furniture at lower prices

PATRONIZE OUR ADVERTISERS

More than
ever
It's Chesterfield

...the milder, better-tasting,
cooler-smoking cigarette

Again Chesterfields are out front with their bright and unusually attractive *Special Christmas Cartons*. Send them to the ones you're thinking of... their cheerful appearance says *I wish you A Merry Christmas*, and says it well... and inside, each friendly white pack says *light up and enjoy more smoking pleasure*.

They Satisfy