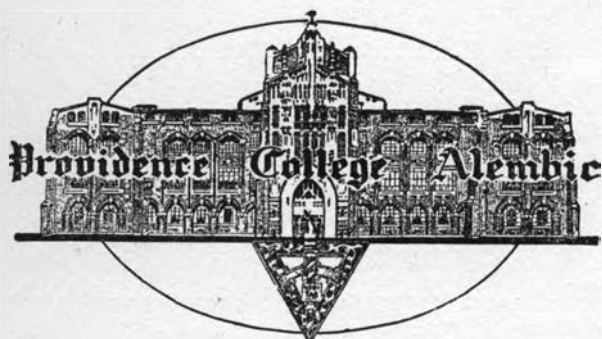


THE ALEMBIC



MARCH 1948

THE ALEMBIC



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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME XXVI

MARCH, 1948

NUMBER 3

ALEMBISCOPE	3
ANOTHER VINTAGE	5
<i>a short story by George Eagle, '50</i>	
"THOSE TENDER YEARS"	45
<i>a narrative by Clifford J. Brott, '50</i>	
"A STUDENT'S PRAYER"	52
<i>by Peter William Kurguz, '51</i>	
HISTORY'S LESSON	53
<i>a sonnet by Francis T. Meagher, '51</i>	
MODERN TRENDS	54
<i>an essay by John J. Lynch, '49</i>	
THE DIM RED GLOW	59
<i>a short story by Wales B. Henry, '50</i>	
\$64 QUESTION	63
<i>a poem, Anon.</i>	
MODERN POETRY AND THE NEW SLAVERY	64
<i>an essay by George Hunter Cochran, '51</i>	
MEMOIRS FROM BEDLAM	69
<i>verse, by Robert E. Doherty, '49</i>	
ILLUSTRATION	71
<i>Fantasy Weir</i>	
THINGS ARE REALLY RACY IN RIO	79
<i>a short story by Raymond Scungio, '50</i>	
FOOTBALL AND THE FRIARS	100
<i>a satire, Anon.</i>	
HEARSE-VERSE	104
<i>verse by George L. Eagle, '50</i>	
FROM EUROPE ABOUT THE MARSHALL PLAN	104
<i>a sonnet by Robert E. Doherty, '49</i>	



LOOKING through the Alembiscope our eyes light upon a fairly recent Sunday edition of the New York Times Magazine. In that section of "all the news that's fit to print", there is featured an informative but rather unprogressive article concerning college humor. This article appears informative because it tells the reading public that college humor has not advanced proportionately during the last fifty years. (There being noted but approximately three additional jokes which can be called "new".) The article does not seem to be progressive because it engulfs an unnecessary amount of space in order to report an obituary or print a dirge.

In consideration of the superfluous length of the feature we realize that collegiate athletics and humor certainly are offered an off-campus berth of notabilia. Is there then no faction of the public that might be even slightly interested in a feature describing the status of college literature?

Focusing the Alembiscope elsewhere, a few thoughts come to our minds. *Japan*: Our government has halted prosecution of War Criminals. Yet, the fiasco continues in Germany. *Thought*: In the event of any future war with Germany it might be prudent to remain uncommissioned. *Washington*: The Marshall Plan is still waddling through the House. *Thought*: If it doesn't start running it will need an alias, the Martial Plan. *Moscow and Washington*: There's a comparison to be had between Stalin's method in Prague and President Truman's speech to Congress. *Thought*: Stalin specializes in homicide and may be called a despot; the President specialized in suicide and might yet be called a martyr.

THE STAFF

Editor-in-Chief

ROBERT EDWARD DOHERTY, '49

Assistant Editors

ARTHUR R. POUTRAY, '49

GEORGE L. EAGLE, '50

WALES B. HENRY, '50

Literary Board

M. R. KNICKERBOCKER, JR., '48 JOHN H. O'BRIEN, '49

ALFRED BONING, '48

THOMAS BONING, '50

JOHN DEASY, '48

GEORGE H. COCHRAN, '51

JOSEPH V. SHANLEY, '49

Staff Artist

WILLIAM SILVA, '50

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.

Another Vintage

By GEORGE EAGLE, '50

WHEN he gave the number to the operator, Clayton began to hope that it would take a minute for Ruth to answer. It was peculiar, he reflected, that after two years of anticipation, suddenly he needed just another minute, time to compose himself, time to contrive exactly the right thing to say. But then someone lifted the receiver, the connection was made: he was back from Europe, the two years were over, and now there was no time to think.

"Hello, Ruth, this is Clate."

For a second she did not answer. The two years were over but he knew she needed another moment to think.

"Clate, when did you get in?"

"Look, Ruth, meet me at the Biltmore in half an hour. I'll tell you everything then."

He hoped she would not ask him how he was, or whether he was discharged yet, or how it felt to be back in America. When people could not say the important things, they said foolish things, believing that silence was worse than foolishness. He was glad that Ruth did not ask him if he were happy to be a civilian again or if he had put on weight, because he did not want to start talking about everything on the telephone. He would tell her everything at the Biltmore.

"Yes, Clate," she said, "in half an hour. I hope the army has taught you to be on time." She said it jocosely and Clayton knew she was trying to be buoyant.

It was usually easy for Clayton Farley to think in the subway, because its noise and impersonality seemed to shut him off from the other anonymous passengers. But now, on an uptown express, he found it hard to order his random thoughts, to plot what he was going to say. He hoped he would not be stiff, he wanted very much not to be gauche, and he wondered how he could be properly effusive without ebullience. Perhaps the occasion warranted ebullience, but still he did not want to act the whole thing out in front of all those people drinking cocktails in the Biltmore. There would be too many people in the Biltmore, and they would all be too attentive, if he and Ruth were ebullient. Perhaps it was a trivial thing to worry about, but still one thought of things like that when the separation had been long.

He got off at Forty-second Street and took the shuttle to Grand Central, and as he passed the shop windows in the street, he glanced at his reflection, adjusted his Eisenhower jacket with a quick tug and set his cap at a more jaunty and less official angle. It was June and New York was already hot, but he endured his winter uniform because he knew it revealed the trimness of his physique. He would wear it a few more days, until he had some civilian clothes, and then, he hoped, he would never wear it again.

All lights and sounds were muted in the Biltmore, and Clayton sat down at one of the little tables near the door, where Ruth would see him. Everywhere people leaned over their drinks in anxious little conversations, and in cages over their heads canaries chirped with detachment. His thoughts had become random again, and he had stopped

Another Vintage

wondering how he would greet Ruth, and then she came through the revolving door and stopped. Her eyes were scanning the lounge, but Clayton did not rise immediately, because after two years in Europe he wanted to appraise her again: she was a plain girl but she exercised a certain competence in bearing herself, a certain unposed gracefulness.

Later it was never possible for Clayton to remember exactly what they had said to each other that first moment in the Biltmore. He had taken her hand and had kissed her lightly, but he could not remember precisely what he had said until he asked her if she wanted a drink.

"Yes," she said, "I think I want one very much."

They sat for a moment in silence and the canaries were singing.

"Well—" They both said it together and then they both chuckled artificially.

"Go ahead," said Ruth. "What were you going to say?"

"Cigarette?" He opened a silver case and extended it to her. On its cover was a map of the Rhineland, cut from plated gold, and there were red enamel dots where his unit had been stationed.

"Thanks." She inhaled deeply and stroked the stem of her glass with her thumb and finger. "It's been two years," she remarked.

"In a way it seems like a long time, but then again it doesn't. I'm never very sure about things like that. Anyway, it's good to be home."

"But you liked Europe, didn't you? Your letters sounded as if you did."

"Yes, I guess I did, in a way. A lot of it was depressing,

but it was okay, all in all. Europe was all right, what I didn't like was the army."

"You didn't complain," she said.

He laughed. He was beginning to feel relaxed. "Not in letters, maybe, but I complained a lot, and so did everybody else."

She sipped her drink and then said, "Tell me, Clate, when did you get back? I wish you had told me the name of your ship, I would have watched for it in the papers."

He had not wanted her to examine the papers for arrival notices, he had wanted the first few days for himself: after two years, he had wanted more time to think.

"I got in Friday, the ship was a day over schedule, and on Tuesday I got my discharge at Dix."

She was looking at him evenly, and he knew she was going to reproach him with a feminine compound of severity and archness. "You've been in the country all this time and you haven't phoned me. It can't be true love."

He was startled by her words, until he realized that she herself did not mean them.

"There was a lot to do," he said; "I didn't have a chance to call you."

She narrowed her eyes and tightened her lips in an expression of mock chagrin, and then he asked her if she would like another drink. She nodded and smiled at him.

"This is—wonderful." Her remark disquieted him. He did not want her to say anything emotional. He hoped she would say banal things now, and things which meant nothing, but he did not want her to say anything emotional.

She said, "I suppose you're going to take a good long rest."

He did not think he needed a rest, but he was not sure

Another Vintage

what he was going to do immediately, and it was better not to sound too indefinite when you returned from the army. Writers had flooded the magazines with treatises on the problems of the returning veteran, and civilians were eager to recognize symptoms of war neurosis. He was going to calculate his remarks, because he did not want Ruth to sit there and be diagnostic; he did not want her to think he needed a rest to adjust himself to civilian living.

"I'll probably go to work as soon as I get some clothes. There's no point in hanging around idle. And I was thinking of taking some business courses at N. Y. U." He gave a little shrug of his shoulders.

"I didn't know you were interested in business."

"I'm not, but it's practical." He was not sure that the world needed more businessmen, and yet business was practical. He was trying to devise a question which would inevitably direct the conversation into the realm of her life, but then she said something that seized his attention:

"Clate, is everything back home here as you expected it, is it all the way you thought it would be?"

The waiter set their drinks before them, but Clayton did not take his eyes from Ruth. "What do you mean?"

"Well, you were gone for so long, you must have imagined what it would be like to be home again. I was wondering if things are the way you imagined them, when you were away . . . or if everything is a little bit changed."

He could not think of one intelligent thing to say. He felt that his expression was entirely vacant.

"Well," she concluded, "everything will be the same when you get started again."

In the army many of his friends had said that they considered their military years as time wasted, as years dropped

completely from their lives. They said that when they were discharged, they would continue their lives as though the army had never interrupted them. Those men had believed that they could forget their army years, that nothing of their influence would linger, and they believed that, once again civilians, they could deny the reality of their uniformed days. But Clayton knew that it was unrealistic to imagine that the continuity of time could be ignored; circumstances shifted, environments changed, but life itself was a succession of days and you could not abridge it to your taste. And now Ruth was saying that his life had ended when he had put on his uniform but that everything would be the same when he got started again.

He looked at his watch. "Look, Ruth, it's four o'clock and I've got to get to the stores before they close. I don't want to wait until Monday because I've got to start looking at some clothes."

"This is nineteen forty-six, darling: you don't look at clothes, you buy what you can find. And my blessings on you."

He caught the fragrance of her perfume as she stepped before him into the revolving door, and behind him in the lounge the canaries, in their unnatural habitat, were still singing.

On the street he signaled a cab. "Ruth, if you don't mind, I'll put you in a cab now, and I'll pick you up for dinner tomorrow."

He opened the door of the cab for her.

"Clate—"

"Yes, Ruth?"

"Why did you stop writing, when you were over there?" Her voice was uncomfortably plaintive.

"I didn't stop writing, Ruth."

Another Vintage

"No, you wrote puny little letters, maybe once a week. But you really stopped writing in June, and that was a year ago, Clate."

He handed the driver a bill, gave the address, and then he turned to her again. "Letters weren't the same, Ruth. It wasn't like being home here, and being able to talk to you." He could have contrived a more persuasive lie, if he had had a moment to think.

Walking toward Fifth Avenue, he knew that the encounter had gone quite well until that final moment: her reference to the previous June had been disquieting and so had been her assurance that everything would be the same when he got started again. He was dishonest in allowing her to believe that it would all be the same.

He turned into Fifth Avenue and walked to Forty-first Street, but so many thoughts were competing in his mind for attention that he hardly noticed the four-o'clock crowds pushing by. When he reached the haberdashers he stopped before the windows, arrayed expensively with suits and robes. He glanced at them casually, feigning an interest he could not feel. He did not want to go into the shop for a moment, because he was realizing afresh that he had been dishonest in allowing Ruth to believe that it would all be the same. It would never be the same, and he must have known it last June in France, when he first met Henriette.

II

Later, whenever he thought of it, it sent a little chill through Clayton Farley to realize that if he had stepped into another bus he might never have met Henriette on that pleasant June morning in Toulouse. It seemed to him, whenever he thought of it, that the really big things in one's

life happen by an uncomfortably light brush against the right circumstances. So much could have been lost by the easy possibility of his getting into another bus, on that June morning in Toulouse. But when his furlough group assembled at the station his section had been assigned to a particular bus among all that were parked in the plaza; and it turned out to be exactly the right bus, because in it he had found Henriette.

The train had arrived in Toulouse at nine, and the buses were already in the plaza, a girl assigned to each as guide. The men, as they stood in a milling assemblage, showed the pale and frowzy signs of a night on the train, but the presence of the girls animated them. As the director of the tour divided them into smaller sections, the men said jocular things and they said obscene things, because they knew that, after all, the French did not understand English.

When Clayton stepped into the bus and sat down by a window, he was beginning to feel an apathy which he could not repel. Through the windows he looked at the buildings around the plaza, at the hotel and the shops and at the trams, and everything looked conventional. The tour, now in its fourth day, had begun to pall, he had met no one in the group who interested him, and suddenly, on that June morning in Toulouse, he did not want to listen to a commentary on Renaissance façades and seventeenth-century mansions and medieval choir stalls. He was afraid that it was all going to fit into a pattern of which he had wearied; the European war had ended in May, and he was restless in Europe, he wanted keenly to go home. His friends in the unit were leaving, his work was beginning to seem tasteless and futile, and Ruth's letters were echoing his own impatience. He had begun to write to her in a tone of

Another Vintage

urgency, he spoke nostalgically of their relationship before the war, and frequently she said that it would all be the same when he came home and got started again.

The bus was almost full and someone was speaking to him: "This seat taken, Sarge?"

Clayton answered by edging over to allow more room. He was hoping that this corporal would not start talking. He did not want to listen to a narration of the soldier's military life, he did not want an itemization of his commander's idiosyncrasies, and he was not interested in his evaluation of the discharge program. He had too often before been constrained by courtesy to answer the obtuse and unoriginal observations of fellow passengers on troop trains, but now he wanted no participation in the babble, on that June morning in Toulouse.

But the corporal turned toward him with a smile. Clayton noticed now that he was older than most of the other men, a bit stocky and a trifle gray.

"Sarge," he said, "I left my cigarettes on the train, may I—?"

He took a cigarette from the case Clayton proffered.

"That's an unusual case. Are you stationed on the Rhine?"

Clayton said he was.

"You know," said the corporal, when he had drawn deeply on the cigarette, "those ruined cities on the Rhine are a tragedy to me, it was like a personal misfortune, their being destroyed." He paused and smiled reflectively. "I visited Bonn and Cologne and all those places when I came over before." He spoke without ostentation and Clayton felt that he was not merely reciting his experiences.

"You've been in Europe before?"

"Yes, I came over one summer when I was in school. It was in the thirties, and I guess everyone knew that something was going wrong, but young men in college are more taken by dreams than politics. I thought I had never seen anything so lovely as the Rhineland. I never thought it would all be blasted so soon."

Clayton felt flattered that this corporal, older and more knowing than himself, should be addressing him like this. He wondered if perhaps it would be the same if they were civilians on a train in New Jersey. He wondered if army life produced even in the aloof an alien loquacity.

"Of course," the corporal was saying, "it's not very stylish just now to sympathize with the Germans. And yet even when I was here before, I don't think it was the German people I admired so much, it was just something in the place itself. She's rather an unusual-looking girl, isn't she?"

Clayton averted his eyes from the corporal and glanced ahead to the door of the bus. A girl had entered and she was saying something now to the driver. Her hair was very straight and she wore a light summer dress that accentuated her lithe form. The simplicity of her appearance was beguiling.

"Yes," said Clayton, meditatively. "Not Parisian, but unusual."

The bus was moving now, out of the plaza and along the boulevard and through tortuous narrow streets. It stopped before a large building with an elaborate façade. Clayton could not identify the period or the style because his knowledge of architecture was primitive.

The girl rose, turned toward the men, and in a voice which she tried ineffectually to amplify, said, "We shall go in here. This is considered a fine example of—"

Another Vintage

Everyone was pushing out of the bus, and the men were grouping about her in the street. It was hard to hear what she was saying.

"It's construction was begun—notice the upper windows—part of the wing—"

Her English, spoken with a flavor of French, was charming. Inside she led the men up a few steps of the elaborate staircase and then turned again to face them.

"You will notice especially the walls and ceiling, whose detailed decor was executed by the celebrated—"

Upstairs they looked at magnificent chambers rich with gilt and mirrors. They went to the high windows and looked out into the city. Always her halting, uncertain voice went on, saying memorized things about history and architecture. She apologized for her English. She tried to be thoroughly explanatory. She listened to all observations, sincere and loutish. She answered all inquiries, the intelligent and the most patently puerile. She was charming.

Outside in the court, Clayton found himself standing beside her. He wanted very much to say something but could think of nothing. He tried to fashion a reasonable question but could think of nothing.

They were in the bus again, and then they were all standing on the cobblestone square before the basilica of Saint Sernin. The girl was facing them again, her hair auburn in the sun. Clayton was trying to contrive some device whereby to learn her name. He did not want to ask her directly, but he felt, as though intuitively, that he must learn her name.

"This church," she was saying with calculated exactness, "was begun in the eleventh century and Romanesque

elements predominate in its style. It was not completed until the thirteenth century."

"How about another cigarette, Sarge?" whispered the corporal. "I'll give you a pack on the train."

That was when it occurred to Clayton how he might learn the girl's name. "Look, Corporal, when she finishes talking, how about taking a picture of us, right here, in front of the church?"

"Sure."

The men were going into the church, and suddenly Clayton was standing there before her. She smiled, prepared to tell him the age of the altar or the depth of the crypt or the circumstances of the Albigensian heresy.

"Mademoiselle," he began self-consciously, "will you stand with me in a picture? I'd like to have a souvenir of Toulouse."

The corporal photographed them, standing there in the square before the basilica of Saint Sernin, which was predominantly Romanesque in style, which was begun in the eleventh century, and which was probably the most beautiful church Clayton had ever seen.

Clayton drew a small address book from the pocket of his jacket. "I'll send you a copy if it turns out," he said.

She smiled in gratitude, unabashedly sincere. When she had written her name and address in the book, Clayton realized how simple it had really been.

They sat together at lunch in the Hotel Regina and looked out at the plaza, brilliant and hot in the June afternoon.

"Sergeant, do you like Toulouse?"

"Very much, I'll never forget it."

"Where do you live in America?"

Another Vintage

"In New York—my name is Clayton Farley." It sounded to him, when he said it, like the self-introduction of a child.

Then she told him that she expected to go to New York the next year, that it was difficult to arrange, but that she was corresponding with the embassy. However clouded the prospects might become, she felt somehow certain that she was going to New York. Clayton felt an elation he hesitated to reveal.

He said, "I'm glad, you must look me up." It was absurd to talk like that. It was strange how the most sincere sentiments might sound perfunctory and artificial when they were cast in speech. "You'll like New York, I think. Of course, it's ugly, not at all like Paris, but I think you'll like it in a way."

"I have never seen Paris, but I shall go there in September, to teach . . ."

Their conversation went on like that until the men, leaving the wine bottles void upon the tables, began to drift across the plaza toward the station. In a moment the train would arrive and they would board it for Limoges. Outside it was very hot, and at their table in the Regina, Clayton watched Henriette with amusement as she spoke ingenuously in her unpracticed English. Her guilelessness and sincerity captivated him. Peace settled through his consciousness like a fragrance, but it was somehow incomplete, because he realized poignantly the fleetness of this hour.

They rose and walked through the doors which opened wide upon the sidewalks, and they stood there for a moment in the shade of the canopy.

"Thanks, Henriette, for telling me everything about Toulouse. I'll see you in New York."

Her smile seemed to Clayton a trifle wan. "You are so certain, Sergeant, Americans are so certain."

"Why don't you come to the train?" he suggested.

She hesitated briefly but then they walked together across the plaza. It was crowded with American soldiers and French civilians. Clayton recognized some of the girls who had been guides.

"Good-bye, Henriette."

"You will send me a picture?"

He nodded and watched her as she crossed the plaza in the sunlight, her steps graceful and sure. He felt a sudden fear that they were separating forever, that she had been a guide and he a tourist and now, after a pleasant consideration of Corinthian influences and the beginnings of Gothic, they were turning off in irrevocably different directions. But he felt with determination that he must see her again. People kept saying that it was a small world, but of course they were wrong. It was a big world, a very big world, and not at all like a carousel: you might never in all time return to the same place again.

III

Clayton left the haberdashers disappointed. He had taken two suits which did not satisfy him and which would not be ready for ten days. The only shirts obtainable were colored and striped, and the ties he selected were commonplace. He still needed shoes and a hat, and with their purchase his mustering-out money would be nearly exhausted. He was learning the truth of what Ruth had said about this being nineteen forty-six.

In the shop he had not been able to dispel the mood induced by his reflections on the encounter with Henriette,

Another Vintage

on that sunny June morning in Toulouse. His mind was given over to it and he could think of nothing that was immediate. Depression was gripping him, he knew it was irrational, but he could not resist it.

He was not hungry but felt he should eat before returning to his apartment. He made his way to Broadway. It was thronged. Crowds were pushing into the theatres and bars and restaurants. He stopped before a bar whose large doors were open in the warm evening. His attention had been arrested by the brassy voice of a woman singing on a platform behind the bar. She was dressed in a blue sequined gown, draped from one shoulder and dipping under the other arm. The melody was inherently cheap, the lyrics were infantile, her voice was blatant. She had the ruined countenance of a dissipated woman. A blowzy matron at the piano accompanied her with a mechanical and muscular competence. Men and women stood at the bar, which was all blue mirrors and glass brick. The sickly orange light of neon was diffused over the entire scene. The spectacle was grotesque, and Clayton turned from it to walk on. Everywhere theatre marquees glittered with their white and red and green lights, their announcements spelled in letters which now sparkled, now flashed. Shop windows advertised latest sheet music, any novel for a dollar, and the complete line of Elizabeth Arden; and barkers cried that there was immediate seating in the balcony or only a short wait in the orchestra.

The crowds, as they jostled and babbled, were vexing Clayton, and his mind was sour. He thought of Henriette in the quietness of Paris, and he wondered what disillusionment she would suffer when she found herself in an atmosphere of such vulgarity.

He thought of Henriette . . . Once more he saw her crossing the sunlit plaza toward the Regina, and once more, standing there in the station, he heard the voices of the soldiers as they boarded the train for Limoges.

He shared his compartment with only one other, a private who was reading one of the paper-bound novels distributed by the army with more profusion than discretion. Clayton sat by the window, gazing without interest at the French landscapes through which the train was speeding. He repeated to himself everything that Henriette had said, his imagination reconstructed every gesture, his memory echoed every intonation. The hours in the train passed, and when it reached Limoges, he began his correspondence with Henriette.

The next afternoon he was with the group in a china factory, which was being explained to them by a middle-aged Frenchman whose dapper grooming contrasted with the shabby apparel of the workers. Clayton knew that his interest in the tour had been spent, and he listened inattentively. The guide in suave English was lecturing to them with delicate little gesticulations:

"The clay," he was saying, "is compounded of scrupulously exact proportions of the three ingredients which you saw in the bins downstairs. Then a quantity of it is placed on one of these wheels. Now, as we pass along the line you will see it being fashioned into plates, saucers, cups, bowls, and dishes of all kinds. When we have seen the designs applied, we shall go below to inspect the furnaces, which achieve a temperature of—"

Clayton felt someone tap his arm. He turned about suddenly. It was the corporal, smiling.

"The pack of weeds I promised you," he whispered.

Another Vintage

Clayton was curiously glad to see him. "I lost sight of you, where did you go?"

"Are you interested in clay spinning on wheels?"

"No."

"Then let's go to a cafe and talk."

It was pleasant to be away from the tour group and to be sitting there in a quiet cafe in the late afternoon. A girl was singing a plaintive French song at the piano, in a soft, insinuating voice, and a few couples sat drinking and chatting, and the atmosphere was serene and leisurely.

The corporal tasted his aperitif. "I remember this cafe, I was here once in the thirties. That girl wasn't here of course, but there was someone just like her, and I suppose there always will be. Do you understand French?"

"No."

"Neither do I, and I think it's good. You can be fascinated only when you don't fully understand."

For several moments they gazed reflectively into the streets, without talking. The cafe, with its glass doors folded back like a screen, was at one with the street. A few vehicles passed, and a few pedestrians, but the afternoon was quiet. Occasionally a girl walked by on high platform shoes, her summer dress stirring gently about her legs.

The corporal's voice was low. "You're thinking about the girl, Sarge."

Clayton nodded. "Don't call me Sarge, my name's Clate Farley."

"Fred Leslie."

"New York."

"Philadelphia."

"Everything's easier when it isn't military."

"You know it and I know it," said Fred, "but some people don't know it. I know your name's Clate Farley but some people think it's an eight-digit number, and they think your service record is your biography, and they think the army oath is your creed. Those people will eventually blow up the world because they're more statistical than we, and their arithmetic is better."

Clayton gestured to the waiter and he brought them another round. Then Clayton said, "You sound bitter."

"I'm not bitter, I'm realistic," said Fred. "It's better to look at things straight; maybe that's what they call sophistication. I have a theory that sophistication is like a raincoat—it's not comfortable but it's protective."

Clayton smiled. It was pleasant, being there in the cafe in the late afternoon. He was looking at Fred evenly, and he was glad that there had been an empty seat next to him on that bus in Toulouse.

Three American soldiers came into the cafe talking jocosely, and Clayton recognized them as members of the tour group. They sat down at a table and ordered cognac. Their conversation passed mainly between two, with the other making only occasional interpolations. He was trimly groomed and had a cheerful and ingenuous face and Clayton noticed that he was a bit smaller than the others.

"Do you see those men over there who just came in?" asked Fred. "I know them, they're from my outfit."

"What about them?"

"Look at the small one."

Clayton looked at the small one, and then Fred said, "He listens to people."

"What do you mean, he listens to people? I don't know what you're driving at." Clayton was still looking

Another Vintage

at the three men, who were tasting their drinks and lighting cigarettes.

Fred planted his elbows on the table, resting his chin on his merged fists. "I don't think I'm driving at anything in particular. Something occurred to me, when I saw the little one. His name's Bailey, he's a good egg."

He stopped talking and Clayton was wondering if he would continue. His remarks sounded irrelevant to Clayton, but it did not matter, when you were in a cafe on a quiet afternoon. Conversation was often desultory, but it did not matter, and now Fred was saying that Bailey listened to people.

"He has a sound mind," Fred was saying, "a quick intelligence. But he's uncomplicated—you know, all blacks and whites. He's constant, always the same, completely dependable, never ill-humored. He's a good egg." Fred finished his drink. "You know, Clate, maybe it's a good thing there are people like Bailey; they do things. If everyone saw the shadows and the nuances, no one would ever do anything."

"Maybe Hitler was uncomplicated. But he did things."

Fred smiled wryly. "Touché. Another drink?"

"I'm beginning to feel it, so I guess it's a good idea."

They were silent until the waiter brought their drinks, and then Fred asked, "Do you think you'll see her again?"

"You mean Henriette? She said she was going to Paris in September. She's a teacher, she has a job there beginning with the new semester. Maybe I'll be able to swing a pass, I don't know."

"It looks like you'll be going home with a French bride."

Clayton tightened his lips. "It's not that easy, I'll have to go home first and settle something."

"Engaged?"

"Sort of. Girl I knew before the war. I thought it was real but it wasn't like this."

Fred proffered his cigarette case. The cigarettes were black, tipped with gold. "I picked these up in Scotland, of all places—Edinburgh." He exhaled the smoke slowly. "Well, Clate, it's a great big problem and it's all yours. I worked it all out years ago, when you were in high school."

"You're married, Fred?"

Fred nodded.

When they had had another drink, Clayton knew that he was getting drunk. He had miscalculated the potency of the aperitifs, but now he did not care. Fred had stood up and he was saying that the men must be back from the factory.

"Let's go to dinner," he said.

Now they were in the street. "Where did you go after you took our picture yesterday," Clayton asked. "I was looking for you."

"I went into the church and the bus left without me. I had to walk back to the Regina, and by that time you'd eaten."

"You mean you missed lunch?"

"I had a K-ration on the train."

Clayton's mind was ungovernable, he could not keep his thoughts on one thing. He was thinking of Henriette, he was thinking of Ruth, he was thinking of Fred, and he was thinking of Bailey, who listened to people. He wondered if it had been foolish to leave the china factory: after all, he might never have the same opportunity again; he wondered

Another Vintage

if he should have inspected the basilica in Toulouse and its crypt; he might never return to the same place, because the world was very big and not at all like a carousel.

"Fred, why did you go into the church?" Fred was walking too fast. He wished Fred would break his pace.

"Because I admire Romanesque, and maybe because I'm a Catholic."

"Are you a Catholic, Fred?"

"Yes."

"Why are you a Catholic, Fred?" It was not his voice, it was too loud and it was not saying the things he wanted it to say.

"Because I'm so small."

"Fred, I want a drink, let's stop here and have a drink."

Fred stopped and faced him. "I think you need some dinner."

"We'll have dinner but first let's have a drink, Fred."

They sat down at a little table in a cafe near the park. "You're going to get sick," Fred said.

"What do you mean, you're so small?"

They had finished their drinks before Fred answered. "Think of the war, and think of Henriette, think of your job and your future, think of New York and Limoges and the wide Atlantic, and then ask yourself what you can do about it. Perhaps then you'll come up with the answer."

It was not until they were at dinner, with the soldiers all around them in a large room, that Fred spoke again: "Maybe that's why I liked the Rhineland, it was easy to feel small there. It's hard for a man to feel small, the hardest of all things to do, because there's so much yeast in his nature. But on the Rhine many generations have built

cathedrals and cities and have grown vineyards on the hill-sides, and many generations are buried by the Rhine. It was easy to feel small there, it was easy to focus things."

"You're abstruse."

"You're drunk."

They laughed.

IV

Clayton was finishing his dinner and he signaled the waitress for his check. He was in a restaurant on Fifth Avenue, and it was designed in the décor of a colonial mansion in Virginia. The lights were shaded with frosted glass, and there were hunting prints on the walls. The diners were people enroute to the theatre and middle-aged men just out of downtown offices and a few students who were going to evening lectures at Washington Square. During dinner his equanimity had returned and he was even beginning to feel contented. He remembered that he had promised to call Ruth, and he went to the phone in the men's lounge.

"Hello, Ruth, this is Clate."

He was not surprised that her voice was chill. "I didn't expect you to call tonight. Have you eaten?"

"Yes."

"You should have come over, it wouldn't have been any extra trouble. Did you get your clothes?"

"Yes, but not what I wanted. I'll tell you about it tomorrow, we'll go somewhere for dinner. What time do you want me to pick you up?"

For a moment she did not answer. "Well, why don't you take me to Mass. We'll go to Saint Patrick's late, and then go on to dinner."

Beginning the day in an atmosphere of incense and mumbled Latin was a prospect for which he had no taste,

Another Vintage

but now there was no reason to be unpleasant. "All right, I'll be over at eleven. Good night, Ruth."

Her voice was faint. "Good night, Clate."

When he replaced the receiver, he knew she was being diagnostic: he knew she was telling herself that, after all, he had just come back from the war, and that he would be all right when he got started again.

The next morning at eleven they went into the Gothic coolness of Saint Patrick's Cathedral and took seats near the back, close to one of the columns that sweep up to the vaulted ceiling. The faithful came in slowly, genuflected perfunctorily, and kneeled a moment to pray. The sharp tap of women's heels on the smooth floor was incessant, and everywhere votive candles were blinking on. Clayton wondered whether these people really believed they were going to live forever.

And later he wondered exactly what it was in Saint Patrick's that morning that reminded him of Henriette, but there he was, growing oblivious to Ruth at his side. He was thinking of Henriette and of that evening when they had gone up to the Sacré Coeur and had looked out upon Paris as it lay in the splendor of the setting sun. They stood looking out over the city without speaking. He had never beheld anything so beautiful, it exhilarated him. Presently she took his hand and led him up the steps into the church. Inside the votive candles sparkled in the half-light. They walked toward the altar, conscious of their footsteps in the silence. There she lighted a candle, dropped to her knees silently, and blessed herself. Clayton momentarily forgot his customary disdain of religion, and with the light of the candles flickering upon Henriette's face, he felt an inexplicable enchantment.

Outside she turned to him. "You did not pray?"

"I'm not a Catholic, Henriette." The subject passed; they never mentioned it again.

It was dusk. The Metro took them to the Place de la Concorde, and they walked along the Champs-Élysées in the sweetness of the evening. The flame under the Arc de Triomphe hardly quivered in the warm stillness of the summer night. Clayton saluted.

And then he and Henriette were in a shadowy recess of the arch, feeling very small in its bigness, concealed in its darkness. He was kissing Henriette, he was kissing her as he had never kissed Ruth; he was kissing Henriette, and he knew he would never kiss any other girl that way.

V

It was several weeks later when Clayton went to Washington Square to matriculate for business administration at New York University. He could not summon the interest for it that he felt it demanded, because he was in a condition of anxiety. He had not had a letter from Henriette since his arrival in New York, and his evenings with Ruth had been tense and artificial. It seemed that his entire life lacked definition. When he wrote to Henriette he spoke of nothing but her coming, but her replies became progressively indefinite. He wondered if the obstacles had overwhelmed her, or if perhaps her determination were waning. He thought of her continually; a perfume advertisement, a Paris news dispatch, was sufficient to excite in him an elaborate reverie. He was miserable for not hearing from her.

He had begun to study French. When he sat down in the bus to Washington Square, he opened his grammar, but his efforts to study were perfunctory. He knew that

Another Vintage

his interest in the language was entirely sentimental, and just now conjugations and word sequences were unimportant. He leafed carelessly through the pages. And then he saw a picture of the Rheims Cathedral. It was one of those glossy prints that are intended to reflect the life and culture behind the language.

He remembered a personnel truck which had rumbled along the broken road to Rheims eighteen months before. It was late afternoon in January, and a timid winter sun was disappearing beyond the meadows of northern France. Twelve men were huddled in heavy coats in the truck, wondering if their discomfort would be adequately rewarded by the entertainment they were traveling so far to see in Rheims. A company of American comedians, dancers and singers were to perform in the theatre near the cathedral. Clayton was wishing that he had stayed in the dingy caserne where at least he would have been warm.

At the edge of the city the truck met traffic and stopped. It was entirely dark, it was dismal and cold. A little band of children ran up to the rear of the truck, and in their shrill voices they pleaded for cigarettes and chocolate. They were incredibly ragged, and their legs were spindly. The men tossed to them little packages of cigarettes and candy which had been packed in their rations, and the children darted about for them, and squabbled, and pleaded for more, and dug with emaciated little fingers in the crevices between stones where cigarettes had rolled. His many months in Europe had not immunized Clayton against pity and now it engulfed him. Depression settled through him like a yellow London fog, and even in the theatre, bright and warm and filled with soldiers' badinage, he could not dispel it.

The orchestra struck up a loud medley. A gray-haired

man with a flushed face and wearing a checked jacket bounded out upon the stage. The music subsided reluctantly.

"Well, well," he began, with synthetic joviality, "I see we have a full house tonight, thanks to a lot of big-hearted C. O.'s." The hoots and obscenities which he sought issued stridently from the audience, and the M. C. waved his hands and laughed. "Well, boys, I have three gorgeous little girls here that have worked up a dance number especially for you, and I think you'll love them. Yes, you're going to love them. But first I want to tell you something that happened on the troop ship we came over on . . ."

Clayton went to the lobby and smoked a cigarette. It was empty. Children were pressing their noses against the steamed glass doors. Intermittant laughter issued from the auditorium, and then a blast of music. He could hear the sharp tapping of the dancers' feet, and once all the men whistled.

He stepped out into the dark street, buttoning his coat at the neck. Only a few lights shone dimly from shaded windows in the night and the fractional moon was faint, but it cast over the buildings a gossamer glow. Clayton was unfamiliar with the city, he walked without purpose, and it happened so suddenly that it shocked him: he was standing in a square and the cathedral rose high into the moonlight. It was all paleness and deep shadows, there was something awful in it. Bags of sand had been banked at its base, and they enhanced it with an eerie significance. He was standing still and the night was very quiet.

He stood there in the square a long time looking at the cathedral, his imagination reaching back into the ages which had built it. He thought of the masons who had raised its stones toward heaven, and of goldsmiths who had

Another Vintage

fashioned chalices in the days when men lived out their dreams. He thought of brides who had stood chaste before the altar, and of ancient suns that had sent their golden strength through the great rose window, and of infants baptised at the font so very long ago. He thought of priests in vestments that glistened in an age when men's hopes glistened too, and which shone lustrous when the dreams of man were high. He thought of monks who had purchased eternity with early morning chants, and he seemed to smell the pungent incense that centuries before had stolen through the great cathedral like the very promise of heaven.

He thought of the children who clamored in the gutters for a taste of sweetness, and he thought of the gray-haired man in the checked jacket who was sure that the boys would love his gorgeous little dancers. He thought of noses pressed cold against the glass, and eyes peering into an alien warmth. He looked at the cathedral with its deep shadows, its huge dark window, and its spires in the moonlight, and then he looked into the sky and wondered what vision another age had seen.

VI

A clerk at the university told Clayton that a copy of the fall bulletin would be sent to him when it was published and that any information given now would be necessarily tentative. He listened to this with no particular disappointment because he had not entirely dispelled the mood of his reverie. It was noon but he was not hungry, so he decided to sit for a moment in the square.

Sitting there on a bench, he felt relaxed, and his restlessness abated. The quaintness of the buildings, the whiteness of the arch, the faintly Continental aura of the

square seemed to calm him. He watched the students in anxious little discussions, he watched the pigeons and the vagrants, he watched the young women wheeling carriages, he watched the pedestrians who strode across the square with purposeful gait. The noon sun was inducing a drowsiness in Clayton which he did not wish to resist.

"Are you back with us again?"

Clayton looked up sharply. Professor Zeiger stood before him, his ample Jewish features alight with an easy smile. He was a small man, but very erect and trim, and he was carrying a briefcase. He sat down next to Clayton.

"Professor Zeiger . . ." Clayton was very glad to see him. He had not been thinking of Professor Zeiger but now he was very glad to see him.

"I remembered your face when I saw you sitting here, but I can't remember your name, it's been several years."

"Clayton Farley."

"Clayton Farley, that's it."

"I'm flattered you even remembered my face, I haven't been here since forty-two."

Professor Zeiger was packing tobacco into the bowl of his pipe. "Well, I guess I remembered you because you turned in some pretty good stuff." Clayton admired the gentle modulation of his voice. "I was sorry you didn't come back for my course in creative writing, I think you could have done a lot with it. But," he said smiling, "I suppose like many students at the time, you were momentarily distracted."

"Army."

"I hope you had a good assignment."

"An easy one." Clayton lighted a cigarette and drew on it deeply.

Another Vintage

"Nothing is easy when it looks as if the world is falling apart. But now I suppose you're ready for the even harder chore of education." Clayton knew that those things would have sounded sententious spoken by someone else, but when Professor Zeiger said them they did not sound sententious.

"I came this morning to see about getting into business."

Professor Zeiger arched his brows with the impact of stating an opinion. "Someone has to add up numbers, but there are a lot of other things that have to be added up, too."

Clayton wanted to divert the conversation away from himself. "I suppose most of your students are veterans, the men, I mean. What is your impression of them?"

Professor Zeiger reflected a moment, holding the pipe in his hand. Nearby an old man was scattering crumbs to the pigeons. "Well, the veterans are doing some good writing, but there's a general infatuation with incident. They're writing about the war, as is to be expected, but they're writing about the spectacular things, like dangerous missions and narrow escapes. I wish they'd say something important, but most of them don't."

A small girl pedalled by on a tricycle.

Professor Zeiger went on: "I thought that when the men came back, perhaps they'd look at things against the background of their experience. But too many of them are still talking about things that happen, instead of things that are. They're saying the same things, they're using different words and different incidents, but they're saying the same things."

Clayton squashed the cigarette with his foot. "Well, Professor, maybe people really don't change. Maybe they

become cleverer and more subtle, and maybe they become less sincere, but maybe they don't really change."

"Anyway," said the professor, "they write like older people. Their prose is more lucid and compact, even if their thinking isn't."

He said this with his easy smile, because he was not really cynical. He was disappointed, and he was puzzled, but he was not really cynical. When he stood up he said, "If you can fit it into your schedule, why not take another writing course? Take your business courses, but remember that there's more to it than that." They said good-bye and then Professor Zeiger was walking away, toward the university.

Clayton went down into the subway, stepped into a booth, and called Ruth. He asked her to meet him for lunch at a small Italian place on Forty-fifth Street. When he met her there, he knew that he had never seen her so chic. She had arranged her hair in a coiffure that was almost dramatically stark, her lips were a very deep red, and she stood on high slender heels that shaped her legs alluringly. She smiled at him warmly and linked her arm in his.

But when they had ordered, there seemed to be nothing to say. He began to regret the engagement. His conversation was plainly contrived. Finally he asked her what she had been reading.

"Novels mostly. I'm reading everything by Waugh, he fascinates me."

Clayton could think of nothing to reply. At length their entree came.

"You're not a very talkative kid, are you?" she said. She had tried to invest her remark with humor but her voice was thin.

Another Vintage

"I don't know what's the matter," he said; "generally I can't keep my mouth shut."

"This is the first time I've seen you in civilian clothes since you came back."

"I don't like this suit much."

"It's hard now to find what you want . . . You looked good in your uniform."

"It was convenient, same thing every day."

There was another long pause, and then Ruth said, "Clate, let's have some wine, it would go well."

The waiter bought chianti, and when Ruth lifted her glass, it glistened darkly beneath her scarlet lips. She held the glass close to her mouth without tasting the wine. She was looking at him levelly.

"Clate, do you remember a few nights before you embarked you took me to a play?"

"Miriam Hopkins or somebody, wasn't it?"

She nodded. "We both said afterwards that the first two acts were too elaborate, there was too much in them, and the third act didn't pan out. Remember?"

Clayton gave a short little laugh. "I remember, I remember our saying that."

"Well, that's the way it is, isn't it, Clate?"

He looked at her dumbly, but all he could see was the wine. All he could see was the glass of wine, and his eyes followed it as she replaced the glass on the table. He did not know why it reminded him of Henriette. On that June morning in Toulouse she had said she was going to Paris in September to teach, and when September came he was in Munich and fortuitously obtained a pass; but he did not know now why the wine reminded him of Henriette.

VII

When his train arrived in the Gare de l'Est, it was already noon, but he set out immediately for Henriette's apartment in the Avenue de la Bourdonnais. The landlady was ironing a dress in a tiny room off the foyer, and he asked her for the number of Henriette's apartment.

Her English was primitive: "Mademoiselle is not in her rooms, she will be back from the lycée at six."

He had five hours to wait for Henriette. He went to the Colisée for lunch, an elaborate cafe on the Champs-Élysées. It had been designed for a stylish clientele, but the American army was using it now, and the olive drab uniforms were incongruous against its fashionable décor. Clayton sat alone at a small table near a window, watching the Parisians pass along the boulevard. The place was noisy with raucous yankee chatter. A soldier sat down opposite Clayton and smiled at him broadly. His uniform was unkempt, without insignia, without chevrons, and his face was boyish. His hair fell before his forehead in a blond shock.

"Hello, Clate."

Clayton set down his cup. "Dale Emory . . . What are you doing in Paris?"

"I'm doing everything one customarily does in Paris, I'm not missing a thing. I think they call it life. Quite a trick, our meeting like this, isn't it?"

"Yes, we couldn't have arranged it." It was strange, the things you contrived in the absence of sincerity. He had not seen Dale since high school, he had never liked him, but now there was no reason to be unpleasant.

"High school seems a long way off, doesn't it?" Dale was saying.

"It is." Clayton offered him a cigarette, and Dale

Another Vintage

inserted it between his flaccid lips. Clayton noticed that his nails were gnawed to the quick, and his fingers were stained amber with nicotine.

Dale opened his shirt at the neck. "Damn that school. You know, Clate, it was hell, I hated it. They gave us a completely emasculated notion of life."

Clayton smiled artificially. "I suppose you've corrected that notion since."

"You correct a lot of notions in Europe, you can't help it. These people are more at the core of things than we are."

Clayton was wondering what reasonable excuse he could make to say good-bye to Dale. He did not want to spend the afternoon with Dale, but still there was no reason to be unpleasant.

"Look, Clate, I want to send home some Chanel—why don't you come with me while I buy it?"

"Where are you going?"

"To the Rue Royale. I know a cafe there, we'll have a drink."

It would at least give Clayton time to devise an escape. There would be no need to pass the afternoon with Dale.

"All right," he agreed, trying to infuse enthusiasm into his manner. "You can tell me what you've been up to since high school."

Dale laughed. "I'll give you an expurgated version."

They took the Metro to the Place de la Concorde, and Dale led him to a canopied cafe near the Madeleine. They sat down at one of the little iron tables on the sidewalk.

The waiter came and Dale said to Clayton, "What are you having?"

"Burgundy."

Dale turned to the waiter and said with posed nonchalance: "Burgundy and cognac." Then he looked at Clayton. "When did you arrive?"

"Today at noon."

"Lucky dog. I'm leaving on the three-o'clock train." Clayton was delighted. "I'm hoping I'll get back before long. I think I can swing it because my c. o. is an imbecile. Officers are all right when they're stupid, it's only when they're intelligent that you have to worry."

"I don't know. I've known a lot of stupid officers and they can certainly gum things up."

"That's not because they're stupid—it's because you don't know how to exploit their stupidity. What are you thinking of, why are you laughing?"

"I'm thinking how much the same you are, you haven't changed."

"Don't be a fool, of course I've changed. All of us change, we're always in flux. Tell me, why is everyone always so quiet at breakfast?"

The question amused Clayton. "Because they're still half asleep."

"That's a conclusion of the most naive variety. They're quiet because they're trying to figure everything out. At breakfast a man has to plot a whole new philosophy, at lunch he talks about it, and at dinner he chucks it. Everything's okay after dinner, he takes in a play or goes dancing and then he doesn't have to think. But next morning at breakfast it starts all over again."

Clayton laughed, but he could not invest his laughter with mirth. He wished he had not gone to the Colisée, but now there was no reason to be unpleasant. Dale was still prattling in his absurd aphorisms, but at three o'clock he

Another Vintage

would be taking the train out of Paris, and there was no reason now to be unpleasant.

Dale read his watch and gulped the cognac. "I've got to run along and get that Chanel." He stood up and shook Clayton's hand. "Glad I ran into you. I envy your staying in Paris another two days. Remember, don't pay too many francs."

"Perhaps we'll meet in New York soon," Clayton said thinly.

"Maybe, but I'm thinking of taking my discharge in Europe. I'm in love with the place. Look, you haven't touched your wine."

"I know," said Clayton. "I don't care much for it."

Dale arched one brow critically. "But you should drink it, Clate," he said. "It might even make you happy."

Clayton watched him as he darted across the street through the traffic.

At six o'clock he rang the bell at Henriette's apartment, and then she was standing there, her hair hanging straight and very lustrous to her shoulders, a simple gold clasp at the neck of her blouse. He could not remember ever before being so happy to see someone.

"Clate! When did you come to Paris, what are you doing here?" She was talking as fast as her English would allow.

"I came today, and I came to see you, there's no other reason. Let's have dinner somewhere, there's a lot to talk about."

They took the Metro to the Concorde and then for a long time they stood on one of the graceful white bridges that span the Seine. It was Paris in the gray and violet and crimson hour. Henriette suggested that they go to Saint Denis,

where Clayton would see another facet of Paris. When they arrived, they stepped into a cheap little cafe with the tariff scrawled in soap on the window. There were still some vendors in the street with their carts now nearly empty, and there was melody in the babble all around them.

Clayton laughed. "This is an inspiration," he said, but he knew she did not understand him.

Her hair shimmered with the emphatic colors of the waning sun as it slanted through the doors behind her. Clayton knew he had never seen a girl of such uncomplicated loveliness. Even in Paris she retained that provinciality which he had found so charming in Toulouse.

Then he said something so guilelessly it startled him: "I love you, Henriette, I began loving you when you said Saint Sernin was built in the eleventh century."

She said nothing for a moment, and when she spoke her voice was faint, investing with an alien poignance one of the practiced phrases she had used in Toulouse: "The choir is eleventh-century, the church was completed in the thirteenth.—Come, I'll show you a newer church. Have you seen the Sacré Coeur?"

That was how they came to visit the Sacré Coeur, in the tranquillity of that September sunset. Now, in an Italian restaurant on Forty-fifth Street, Ruth was looking at him very evenly, a glass of wine lifted to her lips.

He searched his mind for something to say. "By the way, Ruth, I was talking to Professor Zeiger this morning. Do you remember my mentioning Professor Zeiger?"

"You had him for something at N. Y. U., didn't you, before the army?"

"Composition. I went down this morning to see about getting in again, and I ran into Zeiger in Washington Square.

He complained that the veterans are still saying the same things they said before the war."

He wished he had not mentioned Professor Zeiger, because she would not understand. He had lifted it out of a context with which she was not familiar, and he wondered exactly what that context was. Ruth was looking at him across the table, all about them people were talking, and waiters were clattering dishes. And he was trying to determine exactly what the context was, and then he remembered something that Fred Leslie had said to him in Limoges.

"Maybe that's why I liked the Rhineland," he had said; "it was easy to feel small there, it was easy to focus things."

And then immediately Clayton remembered a remark that Dale Emory had made in that cafe on the Rue Royale: "You correct a lot of notions in Europe, you can't help it. These people are more at the core of things than we are."

But there was no reason to broach all this to Ruth. She would dismiss it, she would say that everything would be the same if he just got started again.

"Care to go to a movie, Ruth?"

He could see that she was pleased by the prospect of being with him for the afternoon, and he regretted having been so negligent of her since his arrival in New York. They went to a comedy at the Paramount, but it was a puerile film, and it depressed Clayton to realize that all those people in the theatre were giving that part of their lives to the contemplation of something so patently vulgar. They left before the end, and Clayton told Ruth that he would phone her. She seemed not to share his dejection, she seemed, in fact, more cheerful than she had been at lunch.

On his way home he wondered, as had become his

habit, if there would be a letter from Henriette, and he was delighted to see her close script on one of those flimsy blue envelopes she used. But the Brussels postmark perplexed him.

"Dear Clate," she said, "I know it is long since I wrote, but so much has happened and now I must tell you. I was married last month in the church of Saint Sernin in Toulouse. My husband is a Belgian and we are living in Brussels . . ."

He read it again and then sat down for a long time at the window. He thought of Ruth and with a wry smile felt a sudden gladness that he had never told her of Henriette. Finally he tried to read, but his attention was volatile, his mind was capricious. The night was hot and for an hour he walked in the noisy summer streets, and it seemed to him that all the restlessness which he had controlled for weeks was now in rebellion. He went to bed, slept badly, awoke at dawn; his single desire was to board a train and escape New York for the day. Having shaved and dressed, he walked through the pale morning streets to Pennsylvania Station. It was still empty of the crowds who would throng it later. When the train left the station he went into the dining car and ordered breakfast.

He asked the waiter, "What time do we arrive in Washington?"

The waiter told him eleven o'clock. He welcomed the long wait for breakfast, and when it came he idled. When the train stopped at Philadelphia, he looked out at the city and tried to imagine Fred Leslie having breakfast somewhere in that dense agglomeration of buildings. He bought a paper in Baltimore from a boy who came barking through the cars, and when the train arrived in Washington he was feeling quite relaxed.

Another Vintage

In Union Station he purchased a pack of cigarettes and then sauntered into the glare of the July sun. He walked to the Washington Monument, hardly aware of the distance, and then he sat for a time on one of the benches spaced along the avenue. He spent a perfunctory hour in the National Gallery, and when he left it, he continued to stroll until he found himself in a district of shops. A gold-lettered sign in one of the windows stopped him: it was mounted among gossamer drapes and it pictured an urn-shaped bottle of perfume, allegedly "the very soul of France." Clayton was amused.

But as he sat by the fountains near Union Station he thought of that sign again. It was absurd, of course, to believe that France could be bottled and sealed and sold on American counters. It was absurd, and yet people were always trying to infuse something of France into the newness of American cities. They opened Parisian salons on Fifth Avenue, and in Chicago they gave to tiny restaurants French names and French menus. It was absurd, because so much of France was in her sunlit meadows and misty dawns on the Meuse, and the flower carts in the plazas of Rouen. So much of France was in the grandeur of the Pyrenees and in the quiet strength of Dieppe against the madness of a Channel storm. So much of France was in the faint mustiness of her cathedrals and in the evening chime of many bells and in Paris streets gray with January. So much of France was in the crisp-curtained windows of provincial hotels and in the earthy pungency of old villages. So much of France was in a sip of wine. Yet people believed that the fragrance of France could somehow be inhaled on an alien shore, and Clayton knew now that he had believed it too.

He was walking to Union Station very briskly. New

York would be the first stop, it would only be the first stop; and he knew that when he reached Le Havre everything would be the same again.

In the station he phoned Ruth. As he waited for the connection, it occurred to him that it was going to be very hard to explain this to Ruth. As a woman, she could have understood about Henriette, but this was going to be harder.

"Ruth, this is Clate. Do you remember in the Biltmore you told me that everything would be the same if I just got started again?"

"Clate, all I meant—"

"I'd like to talk to you, Ruth. Can you meet me at nine-fifteen in the New Yorker?"

"I can meet you right away if you want."

"I'm in Washington, my train doesn't get in until nine."

"Clate, what on earth are you doing in Washington?"

He did not want to start talking about everything on the telephone. "I'll tell you everything in the New Yorker," he said.

As he walked toward the train gate, it amused Clayton to realize that he was thinking of Dale Emory, and of that afternoon in September when they had said good-bye in a cafe on the Rue Royale:

"Perhaps we'll meet in New York soon," Clayton said thinly.

"Maybe, but I'm thinking of taking my discharge in Europe. I'm in love with the place. Look, you haven't touched your wine."

"I know," said Clayton. "I don't care much for it."

Dale arched one brow critically. "But you should drink it, Clate," he said. "It might even make you happy."

"Those Tender Years"

By CLIFFORD J. BROTT, '50

I WAS seven the year that we moved to Wyoming. That is the year which stands out in my memory as the beginning of life. Beyond that, I have only vague remembrances of a huge, pretentious, old house with shades drawn and shadows inside. I have vague recollections of a small, withered, old man with a black bag who used to visit me often and who made weekly examinations of my chest. I remember a day when he seemed more anxious than usual and how, after examining me, he and my father walked into the parlor with heads bowed, conversing in low tones.

I remember, as vividly as though it were yesterday, how I retreated to my playroom. It was filled with all sorts of toys: muscle building mechanisms, hobby horses, marbles, and all the other items dear to the heart of a little boy. Only, to me, in those foggy years, they had little appeal, for my only desire was to mingle with the children whose shouts of merriment and laughter could occasionally be heard outside. But my entreaties for liberation were in vain, receiving always the same polite refusal from my nurse: "I'm sorry, Little Cliff, but you're not able. The other children have stronger chests than you and the doctor says you're not to exert yourself."

But this very day my disappointments and longings were to reach a conclusion for my father soon returned and

placing me on his knee, with my mother hovering near, gazing at us with her eternally sad eyes, he spoke to me. "Little Cliff, how would you like to live in a far off western land, beyond where the sun goes down at night, away out by the Rockies where there are Indians and buffalo? Perhaps, even, you might have a pony just like Silver here," and he placed his hand upon the neck of my hobby horse tethered to the arm of the chair in which we were sitting. "Perhaps, even a collie dog to guard you and be your friend. Would you like that, my boy?" His hands, squeezing my shoulders, were tense; and there was an intent look on my mother's face as her eyes were fixed on mine awaiting my reply.

"But Daddy," I said, "what's wrong with St. Louis?" And without waiting for a reply, "may I take my tricycle with me?" The tenseness went out of my father's hands and a wan smile touched my mother's tired face.

I have more vague memories of scattered phrases overheard now and then when my father and mother were oblivious of my presence. There was discussion about closing up affairs at the bank and talk of instructing Uncle Hugo to prepare the ranch for our coming. And then, one bright sunshiny day, our carriage drew up at the St. Louis railway station where an excited crowd was attending the departure of a west-bound train. A few minutes later we were aboard, and I, like any boy of seven, was pressing my nose flat against a Pullman window, hungry for the adventure which lay ahead.

I remember vividly our arrival at Cheyenne and with what gladness I descended to the railway platform in the arms of my father. I can still feel the crisp air which awakened us from our lethargy by replacing the fetid air of the train with the sweet fragrance of sage. A tall man met us at the

"Those Tender Years"

station. He was bronzed from the sun and walked with the confident step peculiar to those of the plains. Other than that, he might have been my father for the resemblance between them was very strong. He greeted my parents warmly, then looked deep into my eyes with his which were the brilliant blue of the western sky. "I'm pleased to meet you, Cliff," he said, "and I hope you'll be happy here."

Such was my introduction to Uncle Hugo. Early the next morning, he bundled us into the big four-horse carriage which was to carry us two hundred miles north to the "Lazy B" cow ranch situated on the banks of the Niobrara river.

It was here that my doctor and parents had placed their hope for my recovery and it was here that I met Susan who entered my life with the stillness of a shadow and who left it in shambled ruins behind her. She was a pretty little girl of about my age, possibly a year older, or perhaps a little younger. Years mean nothing in childhood; but even then, she seemed like an angel. She didn't question my fragility as had my few acquaintances back in St. Louis. She welcomed me, rather, in excited spirits and in the sweet comradeship of innocence. She was the only child of the foreman and she, too, was lonely for a playmate.

My first summer on the ranch was like a dream: long walks, hand in hand with Susan through the lushness of sweeping valleys; or fishing with a small boy's hope at some foaming water fall; or, perhaps, rolling and tumbling playfully upon scented mounds or new-mown meadow hay. The days were filled with adventure and the nights were spent in fairyland. I slept in a little room under the eaves and at times I fancied that angels were singing me to sleep. A little, square window was located by the head of my bed and through this wafted soft evening breezes laden with the scent of clover

blooming in the meadow and permeated by the croak of bull frogs inhabiting the meadow pond. As I lay in my enchanted bed, listening always with bated breath to these wonderful sounds of the evening, my gaze would wander upwards, taking in the little patch of sky made visible by the window at my head. My soul would wander through the sky, resting for a moment on each of these countless stars which seemed close enough to touch. I remember searching for the Little Bear but I never discovered the location of this elusive creature for, always, it seemed, as my gaze was wandering through this myriad of stars, the sandman would steal in and fill my eyes with sleep. Thus passed a beautiful summer of joyful days and fleeting nights.

It was approaching fall when my father succeeded in obtaining a pony suitable for my inexperienced handling. It was a beautiful pony with a golden body and a long, silver mane and tail. It was with perfect taste that Susan and I named her Silver for the sunbeams glistened from her beautiful mane as from a molten sea.

And then, that same week, Collie arrived. After a deep consideration of names, we could select none other, perhaps because his coming had been so long anticipated and the words, our collie, spoken with such awed reverence that any other name seemed inappropriate and irreverent. So Collie his name remained and the rest of the summer and early fall were spent in an inseparable foursome composed of our pets and ourselves.

I saw a change come over my parents that summer. My father's sallow mien took on a new fullness and a healthful tan as he assisted Uncle Hugo's men in the hay fields. And my mother's habitually sober face was more and more often possessed of a happy smile. It was as though my parents had

"Those Tender Years"

again found their youth which had seemed irrevocably lost. As for myself, my frail bones had become strong and nimble and father grew prone to boasting that he would match my sturdiness against that of any boy two years my senior in all St. Louis.

Then one day a boy came out from town. I cannot explain the premonition of sadness which came over me when I saw him ride up. The words "Western Union" were printed plainly on a little yellow band which streamed across his cap. He asked for my father; and after he left, my father walked to and fro in the parlor speaking with my mother. They were too engrossed in conversation to notice that I was standing in the doorway.

"But John says that the business slump is becoming a reality," said my father. "He needs me at the bank to help protect our investors. I know just which men to deal with and all that, you know; but still I wouldn't trade Cliff's health for all the money in the world. And you, Mary, and I, we're all different people out here. Perhaps that is just the reason, getting away from the financial worries of the bank."

My mother's voice stilled the tension of the room. "Let's go back, Harry, dear, and when this affair is over we'll sell our interests in St. Louis and return here for always."

I listened to no more, but ran tearfully to Susan who was playing in the hay. "What's the matter, Cliff?" she asked, placing her little hand on my shoulder wonderingly. "You're crying."

"We're going home!" I cried; "father and mother are taking me back to St. Louis."

I remember how our afternoon was spent in planning for the future and devising all sorts of schemes for persuading my parents to leave me at the ranch. However, father, plan-

ning to return to the ranch soon, anyway, remained firm and our entreaties were in vain.

"Cliff," he said, "I know that you're having the best time of your life and I don't want to seem cruel, but we'll be in St. Louis for only a few months and, then, we'll return together to this place we love so much. Now, won't you agree to that?"

"But Daddy, I love Silver, and Collie, and Susan more than anything in the world. Why do I have to go back? Can't I stay at the ranch? Uncle Hugo will take good care of me."

"I'm sure that he would, Cliff," answered my father, "but we'll be in St. Louis for only a little while and then we'll all come back. Now, surely you'll agree to that."

And so, with the trusting confidence of a seven-year old, I bid goodbye to all I loved so dearly, entrusting my beloved pony and collie to the care of Susan and Uncle Hugo. Within a week, the dark, depressing streets of St. Louis had re-entered my life.

Father's business at the bank seemed to become no better, and then, one evening, with a gray, haggard face, he lifted me to his knee. My mother was there also, and her eyes were full of sadness as of old. "Cliff," my father said, "I'm afraid you won't be seeing your friends at the ranch for a little while longer than you were expecting." He knew the intense longing in my heart and feared to break the news too harshly. "You see, Cliff, there is a tremendous depression. I know that it doesn't mean much to you now, but it will some day; and Daddy is needed very badly here. I can't go back to Wyoming for a long while. Perhaps in a year or two, but not right away."

"Those Tender Years"

I started to cry as thoughts of my beloved companions coursed through my mind. My father devined the reason and spoke to me sadly. "I know you love your friends very much, my son," he said "and that is how it should be for a young man. I'm sorry that this sorrow has come to you but it will pass and there will be others whom you will love as much as these. Time is a great healer, son; that is the hope of these despairing days."

As the months passed and lengthened into years, the depression passed and it truly seemed as though time were a great healer. My father worked tirelessly, without sleep and without meals. The bank was saved, though it never regained its eminent position of 1928. I grew up, retaining, somehow, the vibrant health which I had gained in the west. Yes, it seemed as though time had left but few scars on the staggering wounds of yesteryear.

But now, as I sit before the flickering light of my fire, my thoughts are fleeting yonder among the green hills of Wyoming and my spirit runs hand in hand with my little playmate of long ago. Despite my father's statement that others would fill the breach in my young life, I cannot help thinking that, at best, these others are only substitutes and that the real heart of me was expended long ago. At times, I seem to see the face of Susan mirrored in the flames and then I know with certitude that my heart was given to my first love in my seventh year.

"A Student's Prayer"

By PETER WILLIAM KURGUZ, '51

Inspired by St. Thomas' Letter to a Student

O my God, Lord of wisdom and counsel, I beg your assistance in my studies that I may acquire the heavenly treasure of wisdom. Give me the grace to be ever persevering in my studies; direct me to the deep sea of wisdom, patiently, through the little streams.

Teach me to be slow in speaking and slower still to waste my time in idle conversation.

Grant me purity of heart and never permit me to fail in prayer.

Help me to be kind to everyone but give me prudence that I may not meddle in the affairs of other people.

Let me not attach myself too closely to any one particular friend, because I know well that it can lead to a foolish concern over him and become a distraction from study.

Free me from undue concern in the words and actions of those around me.

Help me always to strive in the imitation of good and holy men, today and every day of my life.

Bless my memory that I may retain everything good and useful no matter from whence it comes.

Give me the light of Thy truth that I may understand everything that I hear or read.

O wondrous Simplicity, may I never be confused by doubt.

"A Student's Prayer"

May I cease to worry about things that are beyond my understanding.

If it be Thy will, O Lord, then through the intercession of St. Thomas Aquinas, give me the grace to embrace Thy counsel to heart so that I may fulfill all Thy desires and may merit that heavenly reward which Thou hast promised to those who do Thy holy will.

May I, in all my thoughts, words and actions, however humble, glorify the most Holy Trinity, through the salvation of Christ Jesus Our Lord. Amen.

History's Lesson

By FRANCIS T. MEAGHER, '51

O China, look to ancient Greece and learn
The fruitless struggle of your civil strife
That has destroyed your nation and its life
Of progress. Can freedom's torch e'er burn
Or shall you quench its fire before you earn
The knowledge of democracy. This rife
Of hate and war is like a sacred knife
Self immolating growth with no concern
See Athens once gowned in culture and in charm
Breed trouble with her sister city states
Till she, reduced to poverty, became
A martyr to her former pride. Such harm
Creeps rust-like on till time obliterates
O mystic Eastern land! Is this your aim?

Modern Trends

By JOHN J. LYNCH, '49

IN THESE days when everything is being correlated, when facts are being compared in almost every field of endeavor, statistics has come into its prime as an overworked, and sometimes overquoted science. Students are given countless types of problems involving everything from the average number of Fords breaking springs on North Main Street to the average length of a discarded cigarette butt. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has become one of the busiest departments of the government, its tempo even more feverish than that during a conference between Senator McGrath and the southern governors. Dr. Frank Gallup is making a fortune, Hooper continues to draw irate remarks from dripping, towel-clad bathers, and the American Tobacco Company still makes its weekly sorties to record and sheet music vendors.

It seems that the field should have been exhausted years ago, but zealous statisticians still find new facts to correlate, new figures to compile. Their energy and imagination are unlimited, and they start new surveys with the drop of an idea. But, strange as it seems, these counters and graphists seem to have missed one trend which may or may not affect the future. This trend has taken place gradually, while most people's attentions were fixed on atomic energy, Russia, or ERP. Now it has assumed large proportions, and many people still fail to realize the number of veterans who have

Modern Trends

been keeping company with girls just out of high school and still in their teens.

When Japan capitulated and the veterans began to return home, everyone naturally thought that they would take up where they left off, that they would slide right back onto the same groove that had led them to maturity. But they were wrong, at least as far as women were concerned. Most of them dated their old "steady" a few times (if she were still available) but gradually began to play the field, then, when a suitable girl was found, began to see her alone. This, of course, is the most natural thing in the world, you may say, but look at the difference in the ages.

Before the war, when a boy became serious, it was almost always with a girl of his own age. A girl two years his junior was tolerable, but any greater difference than that was "cradle robbing". He was held up as childish, a vacillating character, unwilling to associate with his own age group. But now the story is different. And if you want proof, look around at the dances, and if that doesn't satisfy you, make a check of the jewelry stores, find out where the greatest market for wedding and engagement rings lies—24 year old fellows and 19 year old girls. The single girls of the "Class of '42" are losing their men to the "Class of '46", or even "of '47".

Interested by these observations, I have talked with not a few of these returned veterans who have been keeping company with the younger set, in an effort to discover their reasons. There are many, to be sure, and I shall attempt to enumerate them, without any intention to condemn or condone anyone or any particular age group or sex.

Upon their discharge and subsequent return home, many veterans renewed their old acquaintances, called on old

friends and found that while they were away, the world had changed. Accustomed to ponder and muse upon past events, they were surprised to find that things had not remained just as they had pictured them. To their amazement they found that most of their friends had already "rushed in where angels fear to tread", and that their dates and sweethearts of high school days had either snared a man before the draft board took him, or, listening to rumors, and swayed by the predictions of a future man shortage, had rushed those fortunate enough to come home on leave or furlough, and when he arrived home, proudly displayed his "ruptured duck", she congratulated him, and in the next breath began a piece-by-piece description of every furniture store window in town. Many of the fellows succumbed to the hints of those girls, and before long, many of the girls were married.

The low-point veterans, trying to return to normality were greatly hampered by these many marriages; they found the ranks of the eligible girls of their own age and acquaintance badly depleted, and the remainder, to a great extent, were either engaged or being rushed by several others. Many, unwilling to endure too much competition, turned to the teen-agers.

The all-out defense and war programs also had a great deal of influence on these trends. With stepped-up war production and 13 million men away, the manufacturers were forced to recruit female employees. To entice and hold them they were forced to pay wages greatly in excess of the standards by which women had previously been paid. \$50 per week was common, and many were earning \$80 and \$90 with overtime and bonuses. Filled with a desire to aid their country, and lured by the attractions of easy money, the girls flocked to the shipyards, plane factories and war industries.

Modern Trends

But with most of the men overseas, many of the girls formed cliques and began to make their own fun, a very natural procedure, if it had not been for the money so easily earned and so easily spent. Ignorant of the value of a dollar, and possessed by a desire for enjoyment, they spent lavishly on clothes and entertainment—furs and the Bacchante instead of woollens and the Waldorf. When the war ended and the boys came back home, the women went back to the usual female employment, but they didn't so easily forget the good times they had when they were earning high wages. Consequently, when they were dated by the veterans, who by now were hampered by the lack of necessary funds, they insisted on having a glorious and expensive entertaining. Of course, they showed the fellows a good time, but if they thought they could gain a husband or a fiancé by showing him that they knew how to enjoy the best things, they were only fooling themselves, and adding to the ranks of those who were less aware of the more expensive things in life, were satisfied with a movie and a hamburger, and who didn't in other ways drain an already depleted billfold.

Another cause relates directly to the boy's period of service, and the women that he encountered there. Even the most avid woman hater came in contact with them through the bull sessions in the barracks and the number of loose women that followed the troop trains and were in abundance just outside every base in the country. When he came back, he was pretty fussy about whom he would associate with, and wanted to be pretty sure, before he became serious with any girl, that she was a good girl. And these fellows weren't the only one who wanted the best when they settled down. Even the most generous candy bar dispensers, the fellows with the loosest morals, didn't want to associate with free women for

the rest of their lives. By this, I don't mean the run-of-the-mill wolf, but more especially, the fellow who used his period of service as an excuse for sowing wild oats, but upon his return home, returned to his pre-war habits and attitudes. Despite the fact that he had associated with all types of women in many different lands, he had always held the American woman up as an ideal. When, however, he found that they were not all that he considered them to be, when he became acquainted with some of those girls who considered themselves to be members of the so-called "smart set", he was disillusioned. And as it easily assumed that the rest of the barrel is like the rotten apple on the top of the pile, he turned from the girls of his age to the ones who were new to the world; who didn't act as if they knew everything, the latest jokes, how much liquor they could hold, and who acted in a free and easy manner.

During the war the bobby-soxers were held up to a great deal of criticism for their clothes, for their swooning and their jive talk. But despite the fact that they seemed to have empty attics, they are not completely senseless—if they were, they would not be enjoying the success that they are in capturing the hearts of men that the older, more blasé girls consider to be theirs. (But by their attitudes and habits, have lost.) They seem to have the necessary *savoir faire* that is lacking or misinterpreted in the actions of many of the older girls. On the average, they are purer of mind and soul than the members of the "smart set", and unless the latter watch their steps, they may be dated, but they'll never be married.

The Dim Red Glow

By WALES B. HENRY, '50

I WALKED through the city and it was night. Chill night is a lonely time, but it is a good time. Time to be alone. To think. To be undisturbed. The noise of families came from the houses along my way. There were warm families along the way. Why are families warm? Because they have the friction of daily contact to keep them that way. And they make noise. Some laugh. Some cry. Some murmur with mediocrity for they are mediocre. I walked through the city and it was night.

I came upon a little boy sitting on the curb in the circle of wet light shining from above him. He was lost there because he should have been with a warm family.

"Why do you sit there, little boy?" I asked.

He looked at me and did not answer and I became afraid. And what was I afraid of? I was never like this child sitting on the curb under the streetlight.

"Why do you sit there?" I asked and I knew that I must have an answer to dispel the fear that was in me.

"'Cause I play here all day and now there is no one for me to play with. They have all gone home and I am lonely," he said.

I walked through the city again. It is not good to be lonely and yet—who is there for company? Who will talk to you about loneliness? It is an unpleasant thing.

There was a place down by the river where I used to sail my boats when I was a child and I walked to it. The river is lonely at night. It is lonely because it is dark and the reflection of the moon on it cannot speak to it. And I looked into the river and saw myself reflected there and the ripples in the river broke and distorted me.

I walked through the city and my footsteps followed me noisily.

"Where are you going? Where are you going? Where are you going?" they said to me and half aloud I answered, "I do not know, I do not know."

I walked faster and faster and the night always followed me like a breath on my back. I could feel the night closing up the space behind me as I walked through the streets.

I remembered many things; days when there were lights and people and dancing and song—and it was good to remember, but I was sad with the thought that it had all passed. And as the memories faded away to where memories go—I was lonely.

I met a man standing on the street looking up at the sky. The fine mist wet his brow and his eyes were vacant from looking into the nothingness that was above him.

"Why do you stand there—alone—and look at the sky? What do you see there?"

He turned and looked at me but he did not see me.

"I am looking at the sun," he said. "It shines so bright in the heavens."

"But there is no sun," I said to him. "It is night."

"Is it?" he said. "I cannot know for I am blind—and lonely."

The Dim Red Glow

I turned and walked from him and stumbled on into the streets, half-seeing, for the fog was setting in over the city.

There are so many things that plague and worry us and to whom can we turn? Who will understand? Pillows absorb tears but they do it quietly and no one knows of it. If there were someone like me, who knew my thoughts and in whom I could confide. But there is no other *me*.

I came to a hill and started up it and my footsteps followed me and the night followed me and loneliness followed me. As I reached the top of the hill I saw a woman standing there. She was alone. And she wept as she looked over the fields before her for she and I were at the edge of town. The tears lined her cheeks and she did not look at me.

"Why do you stand here and weep?" I asked her. "And why are you alone?"

When she looked at me I knew her face for I had seen it before. But I did not know *her*.

"Why do you weep, woman? Why? Why?" I shouted at her. And fear and loneliness overtook me.

"Do you know what it is to be lonely?" she asked me.

I heard the quiet of the town behind me and the noise of the warm families and a voice that kept saying, "I gave you the moon—and I took it away again" and loneliness took me by the hand and pulled me to it.

"Yes. Yes," I answered. "I know what it is to be lonely for I have walked with loneliness these many days."

And the woman laughed but it did not sound like laughter.

"He came here with me when he was a little boy. He played in the fields here and he grew up. When he was a man he took me here as I used to take him when he was a

boy. Then one day he left me but he said, 'Have no fear. I will come back to you.' And I am waiting for him. Waiting. Waiting. And I am lonely."

"And what do they call you?" I asked her.

She replied, "Mother."

I turned and ran down the hill. I ran as fast as I could but my footsteps and loneliness followed me. The city devoured me again. The stone of the city was all around. And the steel. And the wood. And the shops. And the homes. And when I could run no longer I stopped.

The door was open before me and there was no noise within so I entered. It was a church. I walked down the aisle and loneliness held me closer. There before the altar I knelt and looked past the dim red glow that bathed the sanctuary. He looked down at me from His cross. And He was alone.

"Are You lonely too?" I asked. "Are You lonely too?"

In the dim red darkness I wept because I was alone and there was no one to know the tedious loneliness that had enslaved me.

"Are You lonely too?" I asked again.

"No, my boy. He is not lonely."

I turned to look at the voice. It was a priest.

"And why is He not lonely?" I asked of him.

"Because He is surrounded by the souls of men."

"But was He ever lonely as I am now?" I asked.

"Yes," said the priest, "He was lonely in the garden of Gethsemane where His friends slept and did not keep the vigil with Him."

And I thought of the little boy under the streetlight.

The Dim Red Glow

"He dispelled the loneliness of others by curing their minds and their bodies."

And I thought of the blind man.

"He even gave the widow back her son because he knew she must have been lonely."

And I thought of the woman on the hill.

I walked out of the red glow and down the aisle again and left the church. Outside the fog had lifted and the sun was shining and a new day was being born—and I was not lonely any more.

\$64 Question

When the madam doesn't use the car,
The chauffeur smokes a good cigar
And knows he's found his castle in the sky;

And the char-girl has a vision grand,
Of life, as only queens have planned;
And goes and takes a nip of Smither's rye.

These I think of, and I wonder
Whether Time can tear asunder
Dreams that live—when dreamers of them die.

Anon.

Modern Poetry and the New Slavery

By GEORGE HUNTER COCHRAN, '51

I

DEUS EX MACHINA—"the god from the machine." We of the present era have taken this theme almost as our principle of existence. During the long period of development from the uncivilized ages to the present "enlightened" centuries, man has constantly perfected ways and means by which he might make life less of a burden. Science is his god; the machine *was* his slave.

If man has become the servant and is now no longer the master, what questions can be raised concerning the cultural aspects of his progress? We shall do well to remember that the slave works the will of the master. And when the master dictates only that which is apparent and visible, the creative instinct is stifled; the flight of the mind is chained to the sight of the eye. Thus do we account for a general decline in culture. Man has lost the precious ability to see with his mind and think with his heart.

In the same breath with which we lament the passing of one golden age, we do not despair of the approach of another. Man is composed of both the cultural and the scientific. The ideal wished for is the happy marriage of the one to the other; and though one or the other of these two facts of man's nature were to lie dormant for any length of time, it would of its own accord surge forward again casting

Modern Poetry and the New Slavery

off the bonds imposed by narrow minds. For this is the natural way: that science and culture form an unbreakable union, each serving to enhance the other. We may yet hope.

As hope-inspiring as the foregoing may be, it fails as yet to be a reality in our own time. As indigestible as cold facts may be, we must face them. There is a considerable gap between poetry and nonsense, just as there is a marked difference between the writer and the author. The point in view is simply this: as time changes, man changes; and as man goes, so goes his art, his music, his poetry. On paper the explanation has a pleasing appearance. Upon analyzing it, we might well become disheartened.

In a vain attempt to adjust his poetry to fit the pace of a modern world, the contemporary poet has committed the fault characterized by the time-worn "haste makes waste." He has rushed forward with such impetuosity that he has tripped himself; and the object which he wishes to achieve has run ahead of his pen. He has tried so mightily to cast his art into the mold of the scientific outlook that he has only succeeded in creating lines of doggerel.

And so we might mourn on and on in a never-ending litany; but in the midst of a storm we look for the calm. All poetry is not caught within the encircling hand. Happy thought! We may yet look to the poet to lead us out of the shade. Ironically, this "moulder of winged words" is often called crazy. We question the sanity of the critic!

II

Let us consider free verse, the brain-child of our own times, the combination of the better qualities of prose and poetry. Insofar as we may judge at present, free verse represents the ultimate; for its form suits modern thought, yet at the same time does not clip the poet's wings.

Free verse as a medium of poetic expression is still in a period of growth and development. For this reason we may discern much that is lacking. The major fault lies with the poets themselves. Unless a man possesses that elusive quality of being able to think in terms of word rhythm, he will present poor form in the free verse field.

Word rhythm is that particular essence which distinguishes free verse from prose. That is, where rhythm and rhyme, the normal technical characteristics of poetry, are absent, word rhythm forms the crux of the free verse construction; it is a certain quality in the words used, as well as in the construction. Thus, free verse is distinguished from prose poetry in that the words are united in a construction of more poetic tenor.

Witness the exemplification of these qualities in the following perfect line from *Song for the Blessed Sacrament*, by the Trappist monk, Thomas Merton:

"The Child is sleeping in His golden house."

We may note that the words themselves are nothing more than ordinary prose words, boasting of no such poetic tone as Poe's "tintinnabulation", nor Coleridge's melodic use of "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan."

And in this respect the line is pure prose. When woven into the pattern, the words become poetry, and can be described only as such. They possess word rhythm because of line formation.

In an opposite example of word rhythm, we again meet Thomas Merton:

"We cried with voices dry as shot,
In Pilate's yard where pride of life
And love of glory laced Your brows in Blood."

Modern Poetry and the New Slavery

Here we see more rhythm in the words themselves: "voices", "Pilate's", "glory", the soft, slurred, "laced", the strong, bold "Blood".

The trend of the present day free verse artist is to create poetry smacking of a certain "earthiness". Not necessarily vulgarity, but more of a steady use of the vernacular. Lofty words and phrases are seemingly frowned upon; yet the lofty emotions which poetry should express can scarcely be described in other than those same lofty words and phrases.

Nor does the use of the word "lofty" necessarily mean an indiscriminate use of obsolete and outmoded words. There are more than enough living words in our own language to provide the poet with an ample supply. We have seen this evidenced in the few lines quoted from Merton. Now let us turn to the work of another contemporary, Byron Herbert Reece.

From Merton to Reece is a gigantic step; for, in making it, we move from one period to another. Merton is a modern free verse poet; Reece is a writer of ballads and sonnets. His form is old, but not so old as to be ancient.

If we gainsay a weakness, we must do it in his sonnets; for Reece stands second to none as a ballad master.

The ballad is intrinsically narrative in tone. The lyrical ballad is lilting and gay, dark and moody, as the tale demands. Note this concluding stanza from *Fox Hunters of Hell*.

"And any man who will go alone
When the day has come to a hush
Can hear the roofs on the clattering stone,
And the foxes break from the brush!"

The entire ballad carries with it a sense of hidden terror. "And any man who will go alone" is the climax; the reader is struck by the note of solitude.

And again, from *Bitter Berry*, what to me is one of the finest stanzas in contemporary American poetry:

"Death itself is mellow
When age has ripened one,
But death's a bitter berry
In the morning of the sun."

This lament for a youthful death is brought to a dramatic climax in the above stanza. Notice the comparison present in the third line: "But death's a bitter berry." Here Reece shows a power akin to the masters. If he were never to write another line, we would be grateful for these four!

III

We have touched but lightly on the work of these two men. Our purpose has been to establish the fact that modern poetry is capable of equalling that of past masters. But these are only two of the exceptions. The majority are poor, some in the extreme. And the saddest note in our dirge is that even the seemingly poorest can still peddle their wares to the world.

The decline of culture in literature and poetry is of the utmost concern to the world today. We speak of world harmony and peace, yet we blithely ignore the ever-evident fact that the greatest harmonizer of nations is the exchange of cultural ideas. Until poetry and its allied arts break the chains of the new slavery imposed by an exorbitant devotion to Science the god, true peace and world unity will remain merely a topic for after dinner discussion.

Memoirs from Bedlam

By ROBERT E. DOHERTY '49

PREFACE

These memoirs, dear reader, you'll readily see
Were written by persons other than me.
Or, *if* by me, then by other strange selves
Ranging from demons to innocent elves.
But rather would I that you do conceive
Them the products of inmates who really believe
That twixt the lines there exists expression
Of fright, of truth and even confession.

The first, (of a banshee),
By an ex-politician,
Is rather descriptive,
Of evil ambition.

The second was written
While under a spell.
(The author writes verses
On the pads of his cell.)

The third is more prudent,
Its author—a student.

The fourth one is parted
(As the lovers who wrote it),
And complains of heartbreak.
(Unless I misquote it.)

The four are not perfect.
Their meters don't fit.
Yet, more than on meter
They are graded on wit.

So read them together
And then ascertain:
Say the authors are clever
Or say they're insane.

(1) *Memoir of a banshee from cell 1-A:*

Of the trails that lead you to Heraldry
That which is least recondite
Is a treacherous ribbon of windings
Ascending to Infamy Heights.

This pathway is margined by woodlands
Of thickets and thistles and thorns;
Where a phantom lurks in the shadows
Tolling from wandering pawns.

Her throat is taut and twisted,
Her eyes bounce on her cheeks;
She feeds on minds of humans;
She screams—but never speaks.

She lurks the trail by twilight;
Selects her brains by brands;
She sobs within the forest
And wrings her gauntly hands.

A legend of the county
The topic of its tales.
Joked about at firesides—
But humor always fails.



"FANTASY WEIR"

The babies of the county
Are safely home in cribs
Lest she should get to craving
Some tooth-pick-baby-ribs.

This Banshee is more than a fancy,
I am proof of her poison and slime;
She stopped me en route to Heraldry—
She left me derangement and crime!

(2) *Memoir of a "twenty-sixth poem" from cell 5-B:*

Twenty-six poems in forty-eight hours,
That's not a bad feat, don't you think?
Some of 'ems long 'n some of 'ems short
And some of 'em—some of 'em stink!

Summon the Muses ancient of Greece.
They hide when I need them the most.
Send me some Polyhymnia
Or send me a relevant ghost.

Iambic, dactylic I've written.
(Pentameter also a bit)
But my rhyme is lacking in reason
And my meters just about fit.

Dahdidi dahdidi dahdah
Dahdidi dahdidi *dit.*
Dahdidi dahdidi dahdah
I think it's about time to quit.

Memoirs from Bedlam

(3) *Memoir of a "journey" from cell 7-C:*

Shrill the clarion! Eureka!
At last I've transversed the sphere
Of human mental dimensions
And visited *Fantasy Weir*.

'Tis the realm of fiends of learning;
Yes, it is Knowledge's belvedere.
It shelters genius and madness
And they call it *Fantasy Weir*.

A man who visits this region
Journeys direct from his bier.
Yet, I was whisked there from Study
And faced Solomon—grand vizier.

His voice came out of the shadows,
"My child, your mission's quite clear;
Here you will learn from the teachers
Who enspirit *Fantasy Weir*.

Study and learn—and remember,
The only feature that's queer
Is you will be the first one
To return from *Fantasy Weir*."

Then, having sworn to be patient,
Having vowed I would persevere,
I walked through the woods before me
And conquered the Forests of Fear.

Still, when the Ocean of Sorrow
Gradually came to appear,
I foiled its trying temptation
By shedding not even a tear.

And then in the Towers of Torment,
Old Timur-the-lame, commandeer,
Forced me to battle with Impulse
And prove my intentions sincere.

Next to the Mesa of Madness
Where I studied and stayed for a while.
When my lunatic tutor dismissed me
He claimed I was most versatile.

I topped the Mountains of Muses
Fatigued by a strenuous climb.
But Shelley, soft-spoken shepherd,
Endowed me with each of the nine.

Then in the Meadows of Music
Where the centaurs and elf-folk stayed,
Schubert and Beethoven taught me
While Schubert's serenade played.

On to the Land of Logic
Where I lent an attentive ear
To precepts of wise Aquinas
Whose reasoning soon became clear.

Memoirs from Bedlam

I then crossed the Abyss of Anger
By means of a blood-clot fjord
Where now I took up my studies
On the Isle of the Crimson Sword.

The lesson there taught doth follow:
"The mighty alone domineer:
The weak must fall by the wayside.
And pacifists felled by the spear."

Teachers who taught on this Island
Used blood in place of a bsalm.
Their names? Perhaps you remember?
They were Xerxes and Genjhis Khan!

Then I was taught many lessons
Where Lethe's lethargies flow
By Gandhi, Newton and Pascal
And Byron and Shakespeare and Poe.

But lo! My quest was completed
I'd studied for many a year.
Now I'll expound all the knowledge
That I learned in *Fantasy Weir*.

I'll sum it up in a minute
And I'll print the words extra clear
So you will know as you read them
That when spoken they should sound severe.

*"LEARNING CAN TANGENT CONFUSION:
LIFE IS A TRANSIENT YEAR:
FAITH IS THE PATHWAY TO HEAVEN
AND HEAVEN IS OTHER THAN HERE!"*

(4) Memoirs of their romance from cells 8-A and 8-B:

Part One—from him in 8-A

I must go back to Falmouth,
My New England by the sea,
For I often dream of Falmouth
And the girl who waits for me.

When the harbor lights were shining
We would watch the moonbeams play
O'er the whispering, waving waters
And the anchored sloops at bay.

Some sands were strands of silver
And reflected to the stars
And some were sunk where ebbings
Had etched the beach with scars.

To the rear of the beach were sand-dunes,
(Those filings of gold blown in mounds)
Where ivy and green bladed spear-grass
Stubbled symmetrical grounds.

How often we strolled down that sea-shore!
How youthful we laughed in that Past!
How futile we were not in knowing
How brief had that past to last.

Memoirs from Bedlam

I left you, love, in Falmouth
By Atlantic's briny breath;
I fear I left you weeping
As I went to duel with death.

Part Two—from her in 8-B

Never come back to Falmouth,
Your New England by the sea
Has suffered many changes
From the place it used to be.

The harbor hides in darkness
And the moon gives ghoulish light
Like fiendish, foggy fingers
Which would grip you in the night.

Some sands *are* strands of silver
But no nature put them there;
They fell, when in my anguish,
I tore my graying hair.

And the liquid lapping Atlantic
Is a monster gone insane
That butts against the bluffings
With all its might and main.

To the rear of the beach, the sand-dunes—
—those crystals of coast—give no clue.
For echoes of our youthful laughter
Have drowned in a deluge of dew.

I've looked up the beach at Falmouth
For traces of you and me
But ebbings erased our footprints
And swept them out to the sea.

There's nothing left at Falmouth
Of the place it used to be,
The sea-gulls claw at carrion
Midst the flotsam and debris.

You left me here in Falmouth;
You fought a duel with death.
Don't e'er return to Falmouth
While you've a mortal's breath.

But come back after Darkness,
When Falmouth's black as pitch
And I shall love a *phantom*
And you shall love a *witch!*

Things Are Really Racy in Rio

By RAYMOND L. SCUNGIO, '50

NOTHING would have happened to me had I only not acted on impulse. But, and I am loathe to admit it, I did not even think of the consequences when I said quite lightly, "Then I'll go to Rio." Perhaps I should explain how this happened.

My good friend, the eminent author, Frank Latourn, had been urging me for months to follow up with another book my recent novel, "Eternal Summer", which unfortunately rotted on the book stands. As he said one night over a Scotch and soda: "Rupert, what you need is to have your next book banned in Boston."

"Naturally, but how?" I quipped.

"Really, Rupert, sometimes you're unbelievably naive. Just write a story, pencil in an exotic setting, and add spice here and there with a liberal hand. *Voilà*, you have a good start! Then just leave the rest to Harpon House and me. We'll see that it gets banned from Beacon Hill."

"Well, I er . . .", you see at that point I was quite dubious.

"Nonsense, no wells or buts about it. We'll make you famous in six months. We'll put you in the higher income bracket."

"If you say so, Frank." I have always conceded to his superior intelligence.

"Good! Now I would suggest a Latin American setting. That would make it very timely . . . not to mention the international complications that may arise. (Think of the money, Rupert!) Let's see—hmmm—no—ahh, yes, that's it. Make the setting Rio. Rio by the sea-o. Yes, they say things are really racy in Rio. Now the only catch is that you know nothing about the place, do you?"

"Then I'll *go* to Rio," I said.

"Good! Good!" he shouted, reaching for the bottle of Scotch.

That is how it started.

I

It was cold and rainy the day I left New York. While waiting for the ship to depart, I felt miserable and was beginning to consider leaving the ship. Alas, before I could change my mind, Frank arrived on the scene followed by a retinue of photographers, reporters, and assorted literary folk—all carrying baskets of champagne.

Frank gave me no chance to leave the ship. The reporters interviewed me, but he answered all the questions. Then I was photographed. First, looking dramatically toward the ocean; then leaning casually against the rail filling a meerschaum pipe (supplied by Frank); then in the act of steering the ship with the captain smiling benevolently nearby; and finally a close-up of my face framed by a life ring.

After that we retired to my stateroom where the champagne flowed freely—perhaps too freely because the last thing I can remember about that wretched departure is standing on a hatch in the rain reciting, "Come down to Kew in lilac time, in lilac time, in lilac time." I remember a great mass of people and Frank's laughing face. Then it all dissolved.

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

When I awoke the next morning, the ship was far out at sea. The weather was bad, and I remained violently ill in my stateroom for two days thereafter. However, after finding that death would not overtake me in my stateroom, I made an effort to pull myself together. On the following day, I was able to walk out on deck with the assistance of one of the crew. By that time we had entered the Gulf Stream, and the weather was warm and bright. Now, I told myself, I shall rest and bake in the sun all the way to Rio. But when I made this decision, I did not know Señora Pollito.

* * *

I had been sitting in my deck chair sipping a Singapore Sling and reading Frank's latest novel, "Confession in Paris", (which he had made a point of depositing in my stateroom) when I heard a soft throaty voice. Looking up from the book, I found myself staring at an attractive blonde dressed in a polka-dotted sun suit. I tried to stand up, but my legs became caught in the deck chair. Gulping like an adolescent school boy, I managed to say, "I beg your pardon?"

The smooth voice with just a trace of an accent said: "I would like to know, are you Mr. Rupert Lake, the author of 'Eternal Summer'?"

"Why, yes. Yes, I am."

"Well, Mr. Lake, I am so happy we are on the same ship. You see, I read your book."

"Yes?" I said, expecting some sort of comment.

"I found it interesting," she said, and smiled.

"Why, thank you, Miss . . . er . . . Miss? —"

"My name is Señora Pollito. I'm on my way back to Rio."

"How interesting. That's where I'm going too. You

know I once studied Spanish, but I can't seem to remember what your name means."

She laughed at this. "It means 'chick', Mr. Lake."

"Oh, yes, now I remember. Er . . . Señora, would you care to join me in the bar for a cocktail perhaps?"

"I should be delighted, Mr. Lake."

I took her arm and we started walking toward the salon. Before we reached it, I tossed Frank's book over the side.

* * *

That night we dined in the main dining room. The roof had been opened and cool breezes kept the atmosphere wonderfully balmy. The orchestra played dinner music softly in the background. For a while we just sat sipping our drinks. She watched the other people in the room and I watched her. Finally she turned to me with a trace of a smile.

"Rupert, don't you think we should order our dinner? That is your second Sling. I'm afraid if you have any more of them you'll start reciting poetry again."

"Poetry again?" I asked, snapped out of my reverie.

"Yes, like you did the afternoon we left New York. You gave a beautiful recitation of that poem, how does it go now? 'In lilac time, in lilac time'."

"Oh, lawdy, don't tell me *you* were there?"

"Why, yes. The whole ship was there."

"Let's order dinner," I said motioning for the waiter.

After we had ordered and the waiter departed, I asked:

"Olivia, do you and your husband live in Rio?"

"I do, Rupert, but not my husband. Carlos was killed in a plane crash in the Pyrenees. I inherited a large estate from him, although I did not need it. I am financially comfortable in my own right."

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

"That's very interesting, Olivia," I said because it was.

After that our dinner arrived, and we did little talking until the coffee was served. Then she leaned toward me and spoke softly in that pleasant voice of hers.

"I am very glad we are on this boat together, Rupert. The trip could have been so boring. But now, I'm sure it will be wonderful."

"Why, Olivia," I said, trying to light a cigarette, but not being able to hold my hand still. Finally, I put the cigarette back in the case.

"Perhaps we should take a walk on deck," she said. "You look rather warm, Rupert."

We left the salon.

* * *

Later that night we danced to the music of the ship's orchestra. Between dances we walked along the decks. The stars were out, and the cool night breezes were exhilarating. Several times we stopped in at the bar for a cool drink. Then back to the dancing. Finally, the music ended, and it was time for the salon to close. With that elegance of her speech which I couldn't quite get used to, she said: "Rupert, you may see me to my stateroom, if you wish."

We walked along in silence until we approached her cabin. To my surprise, it was just two doors beyond my own.

"Well, isn't this pleasant," I said. "We're neighbors."

"Just like the Yankee Good Neighbor Policy, no?" she laughed.

"I *hope* we'll be good neighbors, Olivia."

"On a long trip like this under the tropic skies, what else could happen, *querido*?" And she looked up at me with her beautiful eyes, her perfume coming in waves like anesthetic. She was very close to me.

"I wouldn't want anything else to happen," I said.

She leaned back against the door looking thoughtful. "Isn't it strange, Rupert? Just a few days ago I was reading your book, and now here we are on a ship bound for South America."

"Did you like my book?"

"Well," and she frowned. "It is a hard thing to say."

"You didn't like it?"

"In places, Rupert, it was very good. However, the main character, Natalie. To me that was not a true picture of a woman so in love with a man that she would give up everything for him. No, she did not seem very real to me. And the love scene, Rupert. They were too, what you call—stilted?"

"Oh," I said. And I thought to myself that considering the fact that I had lived all my life in New England, it was not so strange. She interrupted my thoughts.

"Oh, but, Rupert, I have hurt your feelings. Please do not be sad. This is just one woman's opinion."

"You know, Olivia, that is exactly what my Aunt Clara said."

"Your Aunt Clara is a woman of the world, no?"

"Well, I guess you could call her that. She used to be a Latin teacher, but one morning she quit in the middle of a class, broke her engagement for the twentieth time, and moved to Hollywood. She's an individualist, that old girl."

"I think I like your Aunt Clara," said Olivia and she seemed amused. "I had better say good night now, Rupert; it has been a long day. Will I see you tomorrow and the next day and the next?" She leaned close to me.

"I —," was all I could say, when she stood on tiptoe

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

and her lips brushed mine. "*Buenas noches, querido,*" she whispered and slipped into the stateroom.

By the time I recovered, the door was closed. I mopped my forehead with my handkerchief. Hmmm, I thought, and I haven't even reached Rio!

II

The ship was scheduled to stop at Panama and at Bahia before it reached Rio. The next few days before our arrival at Panama were ideal. Olivia and I had long walks together out in the sun. We swam in the swimming pool on the deck. At night we danced, and then took long walks on deck under the stars. I wished we would never reach Panama just so the even flow of days would not be interrupted. And in the light of what happened there, I still wish it.

We arrived at Panama in the morning. The passengers were to have the whole day to visit the American settlement, Cristobal, and the Panamanian city of Colon. It was a typical day in Panama. The sun was bright, and the weather promised to be hot and humid.

Olivia did not go ashore with me, and as things turned out, I should have waited for her. But I was anxious to get ashore, and she was determined to have her hair done aboard ship. She waved me off promising to meet me at the George Washington Hotel at 4:30 for cocktails. Then we would just have time for dinner before the ship sailed.

It was nearly noon when I left the ship. In crossing the railroad tracks, I left the American Zone and found myself in Colon near the foot of Front Street. I don't quite know what I expected to do. I know I wanted a genuine Panama hat. Outside of that the only thing that appealed to me was absorbing atmosphere for a future book.

I had not walked beyond the first store on Front Street when I heard a hiss behind me. Turning about I saw a young man, hat in hand, grinning broadly.

Remembering my Spanish, I said, "*Buenos días.*"

"How do you do, señor," he answered. "You are looking for a guide perhaps? My name is Alfredo. I will make you a very special price."

This seemed like a good idea to me. I knew very little Spanish. He was a native of the city, and could probably show me around the city easier than I could show myself.

"Well, Alfredo," I said. "Do you know where the George Washington Hotel is?"

"Yes, señor."

"Good. I have to be there at 4:30 this afternoon, but until then I want to see Colon. Just make sure that you have me back there at 4:30, *comprende?*"

"Sí, señor. What would you like to see first?"

"It's about time for lunch so we'd better eat first. Now, I want you to take me to a typical native cafe. None of these tourist or American spots for me."

"But, señor —" he protested.

"No, now that's where I want to go. Either you take me or I'll get another guide." At this point I was stubborn.

"The tourists do not go to those places, señor. The only Americans who do are the sailors. It would be better if . . ."

"Alfredo, I'm an author. It's necessary for me to go to these places for my writing."

"Oh, señor is a writer. Well, then, we will go to a native cafe. There is one just a short way up the street señor. We can walk to it. The taxis are too expensive."

That sounded like a thoughtful thing to me and I prided myself on finding such a thrifty guide. Also I made

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

a mental note to give him a good tip at the end of the day. We walked up Front Street by the many shops whose windows displayed wares from all parts of the globe. Curiously enough, I found all the buildings painted light pastel shades, making them look like the stage scenery for an operetta.

We passed one narrow cross street. The doors to most of the buildings were open to the street. For ventilation, I thought to myself ingenuously. Here and there on a doorstep sat a group of women dressed in gay colored clothes. As we passed, they waved and shouted something in Spanish which I did not understand. I waved back to them.

"The people here are very friendly, Alfredo, aren't they?"

"You Americans are always making jokes," he laughed delightedly.

We walked on up the street. I wondered what I had said that was so humorous.

In front of a dubious-looking building hung a sign that said simply "*Cantina.*" Alfredo stepped in front of me, and flung the swinging doors open. I followed him into the cool dark interior, as he shouted: "Make way for the famous American author, Señor Lake! Make way for Señor Lake, the greatest American author!"

Fortunately, the cafe was not too crowded. There were a few couples here and there at round tables. Some men lounged at the bar. At one end of the bar sat a rather attractive girl with dark hair. A huge juke box in the corner was silent.

I sat down as quickly as possible at one of the tables, my face still burning at our entrance. Alfredo, however, had other plans.

"No, Señor Lake," he said pointing to a table in the

center of the floor, "over here." What could I do but obey him?

We sat down and the bartender himself came to our table. It appeared that he owned the cafe and would be honored to serve us himself. Would we care to have a drink before our meal?

"What do you usually drink, Alfredo?" I asked, determined not to order the wrong thing now that I had gone this far.

"A drink that is the specialty of this bar, señor. It is called the *Tres Hermanos*."

"Oh," I said to show that I knew some Spanish, "the Three Brothers, eh? Well, that's what I'll have. Okay, Alfredo?"

"Oh, sí, señor."

The proprietor departed. In a few minutes he returned with two tall steaming glasses that contained a multi-colored liquid. I tasted mine. It went down smoothly enough, but left a strange burning sensation in my chest.

I asked what it was.

"Three varieties of rum, señor, lime juice, and just a little Mexican tequila. It makes a good drink, no?" was the reply.

I kept on drinking.

In a few minutes two of the men from the bar had drifted over to our table. One of them, a short dirty character, said:

"Señor, you write books, no?"

"That's right," I said, wondering what was coming.

"Which books have you written, señor?"

"My last book was called 'Eternal Summer' but it hasn't been translated into Spanish yet," I lied. "So far it

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

is just on sale in the States." Actually it was the only book I had ever had published besides a few short stories for the pulp magazines. I thought this would stop him, but it didn't.

"What other books have you written, señor?" he persisted.

"Won't you sit down and join us for a drink, señor?" I hedged. "Alfredo, order some more drinks for all of us."

The drinks arrived and this little man continued:

"You were saying señor, about the other books?"

I took a long drink from my *Tres Hermanos* and began my saga. All I could think of were some of Frank's books which had been translated into Spanish and were very popular.

"Do you remember 'Last Week in London'?"

"Oh, sí, señor, I remember that very well. It was what you call 'hot stuff,' no?"

I overcame my natural repugnance for anything Frank writes and managed to say weakly, "Yes."

"But, señor," said Alfredo, looking perplexed. "That book was written by Señor Frank Latourn, was it not?"

I could cheerfully have pushed in his bright little face. Instead I laughed with what I hoped was amusement, and said:

"That is my nom de plume. Authors in the States very seldom use their own names, you know." I hoped that would stop them, but I should have known better.

The proprietor who had just returned with another round of drinks which I do not remember ordering, heard the last remark and shrieked:

"Señor Frank Latourn, the American author! Oh, what a great day for my miserable *cantina*! Look everybody, Señor Frank Latourn!"

The die was cast. The girl who had been sitting at the bar looking bored suddenly rushed over to our table.

"I have always want to meet you," she said in passable English. "Oh, you are wonderful. Your books, oh . . ." She stopped, apparently having exhausted her vocabulary.

Alfredo invited her to sit down with us, and she did. I thought for an instant of Olivia, but illegitimate though it was, the glory was going to my head. Or was it only the glory?

The cafe became crowded. The juke box was started, and it played the loud jangly Latin tunes. Many people came into the cafe. Everybody was talking. Many *Tres Hermanos* were being consumed.

The rest of that afternoon is not too clear to me. When the home of the *Tres Hermanos* became too crowded, Alfredo and I made a quick unnoticed departure. We visited several more cafes, and the same process was repeated. (I never did get to buy the Panama hat.) There are two things after that which stand out in my memory.

The first is when I bought the *maracas*. We were seated in another cafe when I noticed a small pair of *maracas* hanging behind the bar. I offered to buy them, but the bartender insisted that he be allowed to give them to Señor Latourn. I graciously accepted, and hung them around my neck by the cord that held them together. Just at that moment, a buxom señorita drifted by in a tight fitting white dress. She laughed when she saw them and said "*Ah, las maracas par' la rumba.*"

"Sí," I answered, in flawless Spanish.

From across the room came the voice of her companion yelling, "*Maruja, Maruja, veng' acá!*" She waved back at him, a disdainful gesture, and sat down at our table.

The boy friend approached us, spoke in rapid Spanish to Maruja, and stormed out of the place. We continued to drink. There was a small band in the place trying to play

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

American swing. More and more people came in. All stopped by our table to congratulate me on Frank's books. I was starting to feel vague.

It all happened at once. The boy friend was there screaming something in Spanish. The room was suddenly silent. Everyone was looking at me. I couldn't understand what he was saying until he shoved a book under my nose. When my eyes focused on the dust jacket of the book, I understood. There, standing by a map of South America, grinning like a tooth paste ad, was Frank.

Maruja, eyes narrowed to slits, began a rapid commentary in Spanish. Alfredo looked shocked. Then fists started flying, glass started breaking, and everyone was shouting at once. I was knocked to the floor immediately as the *mêlée* started. As I was crawling along on my hands and knees, Alfredo dragged me to my feet.

"Señor, quick! Follow me. Run, run for your life! They are going to *keel* you!"

The rest is not clear. It seemed we were going up and down alleys. Police whistles were shrilling. I fell several times. Alfredo's voice sounded very weak and distant: "Señor Lake, get up, the police are coming!"

The next thing I knew, we were in front of a door. Alfredo was yelling, "Maria, Violeta, Anita, *ven pronto!*" The door opened and we were pulled inside. It was quite dark. Many female voices were all speaking Spanish at once. My nose felt wet, and I was getting sleepy.

Alfredo half dragged me up into a long, long hallway. It had doors on both sides like a hotel corridor only much narrower. One of the doors opened and a girl was standing there looking frowsy and half-dressed. They spoke in rapid Spanish. It sounded like an argument. I was feeling very

tired and wanted to lie down. I tried to say as much, but my mouth would not form the words. Then a great commotion occurred. Rushing down the hallway towards us were three green-garbed Panamanian policemen followed by an angry mob.

That's all I remember.

III

The next morning I awoke in what could very easily have passed for a medieval dungeon. I was lying on a dirty canvas cot. The walls around me were of stone. The only window was a small barred affair high up on one wall.

With a great effort I managed to sit up. From the feeling in my head I was sure it had been crushed. A more rational view of things showed the following: my white suit was torn and grimy; my tie was missing; there was dried blood on my nose; my left cheek felt very sore, as did a lump on my forehead; and my wallet was missing.

The police did not leave me much to brood over my state. With surprising alacrity, I was led into the office of the chief or whatever he was. Sitting beside his desk was Olivia.

"Señor," the chief addressed me. "I am releasing you in the custody of Señora Pollito. She has promised that she will have you out of the Republic of Panama within 12 hours. If you do not leave the country in that time, we of the Colon police will not be responsible for your welfare."

On the way to the airport under a police escort, Olivia told me all about it. Trying to locate me after I failed to appear at the hotel, she had missed the boat herself. She searched Cristobal, and then with the aid of the police

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

searched Colon. It was only after they had covered the city that they found I had been locked up hours earlier.

The police had booked me for impersonating a famous author, drunk and disorderly conduct, and inciting a riot. Also, they charged me with the damage done to the cafe where the riot occurred. Because Olivia was an influential Brazilian, they had agreed to release me and do their best to hush up the story. She was now taking me to the air field. By plane we could beat the ship to Bahia.

Feeling rather ashamed of myself, I declined comment. We rode along in silence for a while until she said:

"Rupert, I can see now that we musn't leave you alone anymore in these Latin cities. It is much too dangerous."

I said nothing.

"You know," she continued, "I thought that you were a quiet, gentle person. Even that night in New York I blamed the champagne. But now, I'm not so sure. You suddenly appear to me in a new light. As a rough adventurous Yankee; one who must not be aroused; a dashing lover!"

It was flattering but completely untrue. She rested her pretty head against my dirty coat sleeve.

"*Querido*, just wait until we get to Rio. We are going to have a wonderful time, no?"

I was too weak to say anything.

* * *

In Bahia things were pleasant. We stayed close to our hotel most of the time. Before long the ship arrived, and we went aboard. Other than the looks we received from some of our fellow passengers, nothing happened on the last lap of our journey.

At last we reached Rio. It will always remain for me a completely fascinating city. Its modernness has not de-

stroyed the sheer beauty of the place. The parks, the wide streets, its urbaneness, and the friendly people I took immediately to my heart.

Olivia had insisted upon our arrival that I should not stay at a hotel in the city.

"*Querido*," she said, "you must come stay with me. I have a very large place out at Copacabana. With a swimming pool, too."

"But—" I started.

"My mother and father will be disappointed if you do not come."

Under these circumstances I thought it would be all right for me to stay at her home.

The next few weeks rushed by. In the daytime we went horseback-riding, swimming, or sightseeing in one of Olivia's cars. At night we were always invited out to dinners or social events of some kind. Between times we enjoyed Rio's gay night life—the clubs, jai-alai, dancing. There was always something to do and we were living at a terrific pace. I was seriously thinking of giving up my struggle for success in the States and entering business with Olivia's father. I was going to settle down in Rio. But it didn't work out that way. The fates were at work again.

One day I rode into the city with Señor Ortega, Olivia's father, to visit a tailor. I had to go for a fitting. While we were there, Señor Ortega met a business acquaintance. they conversed in a rapid mixture of Spanish and Portuguese. Then, he rushed over to me.

"Ruperto," he said, "I must go with this man on some urgent business. It is very unfortunate, but I must go. I will pick you up at the Club at 3 o'clock. *Hasta luego!*"

He rushed out leaving me to look after him stupified.

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

Fortunately, the tailors spoke English, and the fitting was soon over. I left the establishment and walked out onto the busy street. It was a bright day, and I thought I would do a little shopping for souvenirs. I started out happily with a spring in my step.

I had not gone far when I felt someone tugging at my sleeve and hissing. I turned around and was confronted with the grinning face of a young man.

"You would like an English-speaking guide, señor?"

This should have rung a bell in my memory, but it didn't. I engaged him and off we went to hunt for souvenirs.

Two hours later, having tired of purchasing native handicraft, we dropped into a small cafe to rest our feet and enjoy a cool drink. There was a small band in one corner that seemed rather bored with the place. That is, until the dancing girl came out.

Her introduction was in rapid Portuguese which I did not understand. My guide informed me that she was Elena, one of the best dancers in Rio, in his opinion. Well, I told myself, we will see.

She came whirling out onto the dance floor wearing a red flaring skirt and one of those off-the-shoulder white blouses. (It is easy to see why they are called "off-the-shoulder.") Her long black hair hung down loosely, and made her look rather wildly beautiful.

The dance was a typical Latin number. She whirled, twirled, and in general did her best to throw her vertebrae out of place. However, as I sipped the tall drink, I thought that somehow she was superior to the entertainers usually found in these places.

When the number was over, I sent the guide to ask her to join us. He returned shortly followed by Elena. She

had thrown a pale blue shawl over her shoulders, and seeing her close up, I was rather awed by her bold beauty.

"Señor, you do me a great honor," she said, and her voice was gay and musical.

"Not at all, Señorita," I said. "You dance very well. I enjoyed it very much. Would you care to have a drink with me?"

She said she would and soon we were chatting over two tall icy drinks. We finished them and soon had another round. We had been talking of trivial things, but Elena suddenly became very grave. She leaned across the table and looked directly into my eyes.

"Señor, are you a *brave* Yankee?"

"Why I think so, Elena," I said, bolstered by the three drinks. "Yeah, sure I'm brave."

"Oh, I am so happy I have found you."

"And I'm happy I found you," I said, getting silly.

She laughed. Then casting a mean look at the guide, she said: "Get rid of him. I want to be alone with you."

I paid the guide and he departed. Elena stood up and motioned me to follow her with a twist of her shoulder.

We went to the back of the cafe, through a screen door, and into an alley. There was a black sedan parked there. A man, evidently the chauffeur, was standing beside the car polishing the hood.

"Get in," Elena said. And to the chauffeur, "Pablo, *vamos, vamos, pronto!*"

He complied and soon we were speeding through the streets. I settled back in the car and put my arm around Elena.

"You and I are going to be very happy," she said. "But

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

first," and she skillfully disengaged my arm, "we have work to do."

The car stopped with a screech of brakes. I noticed we were in some sort of an enclosed courtyard. Elena motioned me to follow her. We stepped out of the car.

Immediately we were surrounded by a group of men. They looked like pirates to me, but thinking they were friends of Elena, I said nothing. She soon dispersed them with what could have been a few well chosen words in Portuguese. Then she turned to me.

"Come with me, 'brave Yankee'."

We went across the courtyard, through a door, up a flight of stairs, and down a long dim corridor. We stopped before a door. Elena took a key out of her bosom and unlocked the door. I followed her into the room.

It was obviously a bedroom, but had the air of an office about it. Quite inconsistent with her personality, I thought. There was a small table near the door with two chairs. I sat on one of them. Elena soon produced a tall bottle and two glasses.

"And now we talk, eh?" asked Elena, pouring the dark red wine.

"Okay, Elena, I'm listening."

"Have you ever thought about what it is like to live in a country ruled by despots? To be constantly suppressed? Never to enjoy the freedom you have back in your own country? Have you never thought about these things?"

"Why, no, Elena," I laughed, refilling my glass.

"Señor, please, there is not much time. Do not joke with me. You know what the plans are, do you not?"

"Your plans are my plans, Elena," I said, tossing the glass over my shoulder and grabbing the bottle.

Elena was alarmed. She pulled the bottle from my lips before I could empty it. "Stop! you will be in no condition for the fireworks."

"Fireworks? I'm all set," and indeed I must have been, for I began stalking Elena around the room. She protested, but I continued until her back was to the wall.

"Señor," she said, "this I do not want to do, but it is the only way or our plans are ruined." With that her fist struck me on the jaw. I stumbled backwards knocking over the table.

Then there was shouting and gun shots. Elena looked at me on the floor and her eyes narrowed. Picking up a lamp she screamed:

"Filthy Yankee traitor!" She let the lamp fly.

I blacked out.

* * *

The next morning the headlines read: "AMERICAN AUTHOR CAUGHT WITH REVOLUTIONISTS; PLAN TO OVERTHROW GOVERNMENT". The smaller type read: "Found in Room with Woman Leader." And below that: "Yankee Duped by Dancer."

Before long, I was exonerated and released. However, I was being deported, and the police escorted me to Olivia's home in Copacabana for my clothes.

Señor Ortega, enraged, ordered me to leave his home immediately. At least Olivia, I thought, would believe that I was innocent. But she stared at me with cold eyes. What more could I expect?

"Rupert," she said, "I loved you, but this—this is too much to ask me to bear. I overlooked that trouble in Panama. But now, this!"

She left me. I packed rapidly with the aid of the police. They hurried me down to the waiting car. We drove

Things Are Really Racy In Rio

off. I looked back at the house, and for an instant I thought I saw her face at a window, but I was not sure.

* * *

When the ship entered New York Harbor that grey day, I was so despondent I could have jumped overboard. Since the water looked cold, I reconsidered. All I could think of was the mess I had made of my trip to South America. There were bound to be repercussions from the F.B.I. when I docked, too. And then I thought of Olivia. Beautiful, sweet, cultured Olivia! I'd never find anyone like her again.

These thoughts kept running through my mind. By the time we docked and were ready to disembark, I was seething with rage.

I walked slowly down the gangway to the pier.

"Rupert, Rupert!" shouted a voice.

I saw Frank at the foot of the gangway. He was waving wildly and showing his white teeth in a huge grin. Behind him stood photographers and reporters, as usual.

Suddenly it all became clear to me. *He* was the cause of all my trouble. *He*, Frank Latourn!

I stormed down the rest of the gangway. Frank extended his hand as he saw me coming. When I reached the foot of the gangway, I punched him right in the mouth.

IV

Time has passed and Frank and I are good friends again. Although he would have been perfectly justified, he did not sue me for assault with intent to kill. Instead he urged me to write another novel drawing freely from my experiences. I did and it has been banned in Boston. At Frank's suggestion, I am now at work on another. It too, he assures me, will be banned. I have everything now. Fame, fortune, everything . . . but Olivia.

Football and the Friars

Dear Sir,

Of late I have been most annoyed by a report that the student body of your heretofore noble institution has raised the cry for a football team. Believe me, I extend my heartfelt sympathy to those students who, as true intellectuals, have remained impervious to this wave of mass hysteria. Furthermore, I hope you will inform those juveniles who comprise the radical faction that I am disappointed and disgusted.

For forty years I have despised that savage manifestation which the public hails under the guise of "sport". Some forty years ago, while playing for dear old Harvard, I sustained an assortment of injuries which served to make me a deliberate hater of football and all that it represents. (The injuries, though too humiliating to describe, may be enumerated. They were, namely, a ghastly looking hang-nail, an inverted proboscis, a nauseating case of athlete's foot and a hammer toe.) And there are those who share my conviction regarding the uncivility of this "sport". Collectively we are known as the B.H.S.F.T.C.B.* You may have heard of us.

Ever since you terminated your gridiron encounters we pointed to you and the other too few similar sensible institutions, (C.P.P.** and F.H.C.E.***) with pride.

We were elated to realize that some colleges possessed enough common sense to restrain from participating in repulsive, gladiatorial farces and to establish a policy for the maintenance of an atmosphere purely edifying.

* *Beacon Hill Society for Termination of Collegiate Barbarisms*

** *College of Pharmaceutical Plumbers*

*** *Federal Hill College of English*

Football and the Friars

As I say, our society was well pleased with you. Naturally we were aware that you preserved the minor barbarities—basketball and baseball. But we understood that there is always present in any group a certain faction which demands the opportunity to flex their biceps and to ventilate their minds. However, as I say, on the whole we were very proud of you. Very, very proud.

Actually, we were on the verge of expressing our favor by offering to your institution the financial means to create a most enviable accumulation of recreational facilities. We had previously assisted the students of the aforementioned institutions. To wit, today they have access to four hundred sets of building blocks, four hundred sets of modeling clay, five hundred and forty erector sets, (king size), a laboratory complete with all the accessories for a Water Color club, one thousand tricycles (plus fifty bicycles for the faculty) and three hundred swings—just to mention *some* of the treasures which our support has made possible. Well, as I say, we were on the verge of offering you the same support until we heard the report that you might re-establish a group of gridiron representatives.

And now, alas, is the whim of an uncultural segment of students going to force us to drop you from our roster? Heaven forbid!

After all, what benevolent results can possibly be attributed to football?

Let us, in the light of unadulterated logic, attempt to ascertain the folly of this college-sponsored mayhem.

In itself a football is a large bladder inflated with air which is enclosed in pigskin. From such composition whatever can result to justify the clamor and applause of rational beings?

The benefits arising from the elimination of football are evident.

First, by eliminating the manufacture of footballs the rubber that is necessary for the bladder can be conserved. This is most appreciative when nations are at war. That is to say, always.

Second, since the great expansion of modern industry pollutes the air with its incalculable smoke-stacks, and since modern construction companies, by virtue of illimitable erections of various edifices, take up more and more space—it would be prudent to do away with footballs in order that they can no longer pent-up air that is becoming more scarce by degrees.

Finally, and here our society has the whole-hearted support of all vegetarians, should colleges expel football, the number of unfattened hogs that it is necessary to slaughter in order to provide footballs with pigskin exteriors will be lessened considerably. Therefore, livestock may be preserved for more sensible usages. This point is definitely commendable when we consider things like famine and public relief measures.

Yet, no matter how readily we may perceive that no great good can be established by football, the fact remains that the very existence of the football warranted the development of a football team.

Therefore, let us trace the genealogy of the football and the "team". The first football and football team was conceived in this manner:

Many years ago a very fierce tribe of nomadic savages, the Cleatfootgoths, ran wild over Asia Major, Minor and Jolson. The two most prominent members of this tribe, Ath, the chief, and Letic, his right hand man, disputed over

Football and the Friars

the cleaved-off head of a prisoner. Although Ath was chief, Letic had slain the victim and both argued as to which of them had the most right to take it home as a trophy.

Despairing of argument, Letic summoned those of the tribe who sided with him to his side. Ath did the same. Since the greater balance of the tribe was out hunting for wild fig neutrons, only ten warriors supported their respective favorites. So, dear editor, you have the picture. Twenty-two of the most perfect exponents of savagery were divided equally into opposing factions. Letic had possession of the head. He ordered his supporters to charge for the door. However, before Letic could plunge his way over the threshold of the tribal grounds—his progress made difficult by the slippiness of eyeballs on the ground—Ath tackled him.

Suffice it to add that this enactment of chaos so appealed to Ath's sense of savagery that he established what we might call the Embryonic Football League. (All this is reported in Taciturn, the Roaming historian.)

Of course, since that era the game has been subjected to incalculable modifications . . . The first came when Ath's successor, Guzzle the Fifth of Bourbon, substituted a clump of baked clay in place of a prisoner's head. However, the game still owns to the Cleatfootgoth tradition of savagery.

So, please, dear editor, show this letter to all that may be interested. Deny football and we can offer your students the recreational facilities that are compatible with their calibre.

La-de-da, now

_____*

*Editor's note: author's name withheld on request.

Hearse-Verse

By GEORGE L. EAGLE, '50

Should I write verse,
What could be worse
 Than measured rhyme?
If it has beat,
It's obsolete:
 Stanzaic crime.
Once poets sang:
Their lyrics rang
 With metric chime;
But how remiss
They are in this
 Prosaic time!

From Europe About the Marshall Plan

By R. DOHERTY, '49

Patience! Patience! Let me learn
Though I've much to criticize.
Doubtful embers still do burn
Behind these war-worn eyes.
 Show me Kindness yet endures!
 Refute my strong conviction
 That lust and greed and war obscures
 The Savior's crucifixion!
Teach me *quickly*, teach me true
Till this fettered brain we free—
Force thy precepts, force them through
This clotted mind-war's debris.
 I'll not deride thee, nor rebel
 But learn of Heaven—fresh from Hell.