

# ALEMBIC

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE



VOLUME XXIV

NUMBER 3

MARCH, 1942

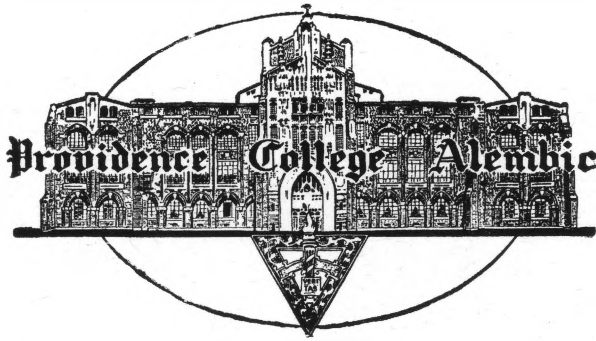
WRITING FOR THE ALEMBIC

THOMAS MULLIGAN, '42

THE NEW FLEET

JOSEPH O'SHEA, '43

# THE ALEMBIC



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

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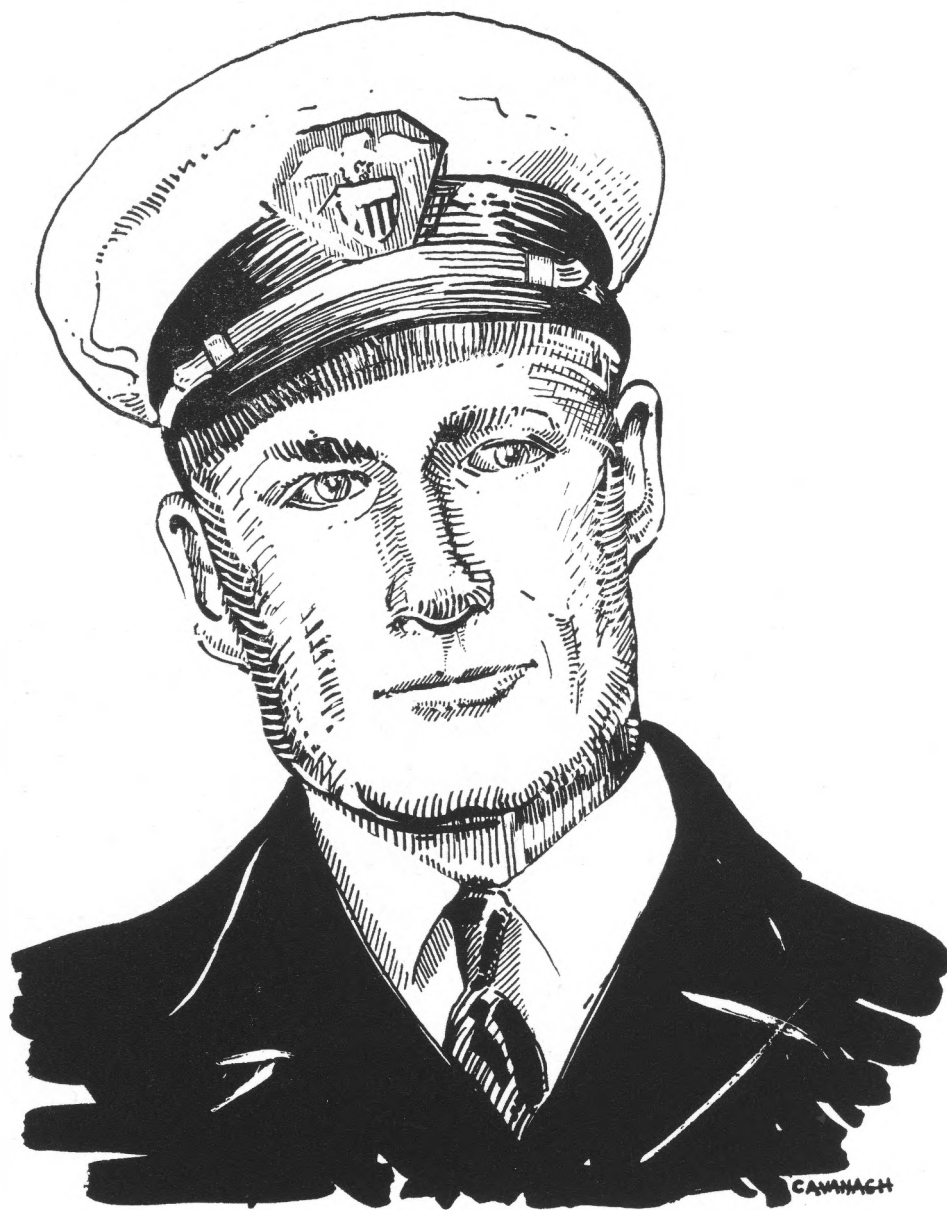
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CAPTAIN CHARLES E. ROSENDAHL, U. S. N.  
Chief of the Lighter-Than-Air Division, Bureau of Aeronautics

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## New Fingers in the Pi

WE daresay you will find this a pretty spicy issue. But before you go jumping to any conclusions, let us explain. When we observe that this is a spicy issue, we entertain no notion of challenging the supremacy of *The Police Gazette*. We refer, rather, to the variety of the selections in the current publication.

In the first place, we have several new and promising contributors joining the fun.

Joe O'Shea, '43, makes his debut as an embryonic litterateur with "The New Fleet" on page 27. If this is a sample of what Joe can do, we have a good case against him for not chiming in with his two-bits worth long ago.

Kenneth Young, '44, our "gentleman from China", is another to take the bold plunge with his "The Chinese Language", devoted to dispelling the popular belief that the Chinese language is practically impossible to learn. If Ken keeps pitching we may all be speaking Chinese before long.

As for Tom Mulligan, '42, little need be said. His reputation is such that it suffices to say that his "Writing for The Alembic" rings the gong once more.

On the serious side, Ed Bracq, '43, really lets go with both barrels in "Liberal Education". Don't try to trip merrily through this one unless you're curious to know how it feels to pulverize your head against a brick wall. Read it fast and you'll go around for a week in a daze.

"Certitude", a short story by William McCormick, '42, is offered in proof of the contention that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Mac ought to know . . .

## Alembic Contest

**T**HE ALEMBIC at present is conducting a short-story contest open to both day school students and those attending the extension school lectures. The contest will end on April 15 and the winners will be announced on the 17th.

The author of the winning entry will receive a free ticket to the Junior Prom. Second and third prizes are tickets to the forthcoming musical comedy, "Tars and Feathers". In the event the winner of the first prize will find it impossible to attend the Prom for any reason, he may choose instead one of the tickets to the Pyramid Players production.

All entries must be submitted to THE ALEMBIC office on or before April 14.

Rules for the contest are as follows:

All entries must be typewritten, double spaced, on manuscript paper.

They must be a minimum of 2500 words, but must not exceed 10,000.

All entries must be submitted in a sealed envelope; the author's name is to be typed on the envelope and not on the manuscript itself;

Each entrant may submit as many separate compositions as he desires;

Stories will be judged on the basis of originality, clarity, style, and general effectiveness.

All entries become the property of THE ALEMBIC.

THE ALEMBIC reserves the right to use all entries for publication.



## Writing for the Alembic

By THOMAS A. MULLIGAN, '42

A COUPLE of weeks ago as I was ambling through the halls of Harkins Hall, on my way to some class, I forget which, I was awakened from my reverie—I had been, what with the draft and all, picturing myself as a gold-braided officer on the bridge of a navy destroyer, binoculars in hand, clean-cut, fearless, an officer and a gentleman; and I had just arrived at the spot in my naval career where I was saying in a defiant tone, "Damn the dive-bombers! Go——." I was awakened, I say, by a voice of authority. I stopped, adjusted my pupils back to reality, and saw before me none other than the editor of the ALEMBIC.

This creature went on to ask me if I would attempt to write something for the forthcoming issue of his pet project. "Well," I started to say, assuming the air of a harried author. But I got no further, as he continued on to imply that due to a dearth of material he was forced to seek me out. Evidently he believed that anything was better than nothing. Poor fool, he was little aware of my ability to write anything which could be worse than nothing. Always willing to contribute to the downfall of the college in the world of letters, I said I would do my best to write an article worthy of publication in the ALEMBIC. Without further waste of time, no thanks, mind you; he ordered me to get the work in vitement, pronto, and get on the ball. And away he went, the onerous task completed.

I hurried home ere the sun had dipped, full of noble intentions. That very night I dusted off the old typewriter, and I do mean old. It all but prints old English letters. Anon the telephone rang. I reached it a length and a half ahead of my



sister who breezed out of her bedroom at a flat forty m. p. h., but slowed down in the stretch under a handicap of falling hairpins and a trailing housecoat.

I picked up the phone. "Hello," I said in my special dulcet tone, reserved for the fair sex. But it was only a partner in crime, agent 71 reporting, and could I go out tonight? No, I could not go out, conscientious soul that I was, I had some composition to do. He said he was going to some roadside place for the evening. No, I told him again. He was taking his girl friend and she had a girl friend, and he wanted to make it a double date. Well, I said, well, no, I really can't. Then he used a line that has been breaking me down lately. You'll be in the army soon, maybe dead in a year or so, why waste time studying? Enjoy what little life you have left. Well, I said, I don't know. How's the girl friend's girl friend. She's nice. Okay.

To make a long story longer, I didn't work on anything literary that night. However, virtue will out, and the next night I began to write my masterpiece. Ensconced before my typewriter, I sat and waited for inspiration to come upon my fertile mind.

Now, what should I write about? What would the student literati of Bradley Hill enjoy, besides a steinful? What were they in the mood for? Perhaps now was the time for a rousing war story. A story of raw courage, of blood and iron, of fire and sword. Yes, that was it. I would give them an up-and-at 'em epic, men die but the regiment live on, keep 'em flying, remember Pearl Harbor, and all that sort of stuff. The words flowed:

Sergeant Jim Lansing of the United States Marines Corps lay on the floor of a small stone hut, a forty-five in his hand. For two weeks the Japanese had been attempting to conquer this strategic island of Onaholu. The four hundred marines stationed there had been subjected to shell-fire, bombings, tank attacks, and the overwhelming fire-power of 10,000 Japs, until only Jim Lansing remained alive of all that gallant band. Dead tired, smoke-filled, and wounded in the head, he waited for the Japs to come. They came, twenty little yellow men rushed up the hill outside. Lansing hurled a grenade squarely in their midst. Only one Jap reached the hut and he

## *Writing for the Alembic*

was felled like an ox by a forty-five bullet. But others surged upward and gained the entrance. Lansing's gun spoke twice and two Japs dropped before Lansing was literally blown to bits by the remaining Japs.

That day the flag of the rising sun was raised over the little hut. They had won, but they had paid dearly. And their days were already marked for thousands of Jim Lansings of the Marines Corps were now on the march, sworn to avenge their fallen comrades of Onaholu Island.

But no, I better not hand this hell and fire script in. I can see it being read with avid interest and mounting patriotism by the students. "What men these marines." Immediately they rush to call their local draft boards. "Hello, draft board 61? If I am drafted, is there any chance of my ending up in the Marines? No? Thank you." And so, a sigh of relief, and back to normalcy.

I shall leave the marines to their own methods of recruiting. I ponder. Perhaps a good mystery story would be the thing; something gory, sudden death, a thrilling whodunit. But now, time out for refreshment. I brew some coffee, bring it to my desk and sit down. One spoonful of sugar, two spoonfuls of sugar, and—I slide over to the window, lower the shade, return, cast a furtive glance about, and there—three spoonfuls of sugar. Now, as to this mystery thing, it must be different. The murder must not be accomplished by means of a "blunt instrument," the crime must not have "far-reaching political and international ramifications," the body must not be "discovered," the law must not be "baffled," "the foul deed" must not be "the work of an ingeniously fiendish mind," no retired sleuth, "known and feared by the underworld," must be persuaded to aid the perplexed police. In short, my story would be unique and would prove for once and for all that crime does pay. And so, without further ado, we enter upon the scene.

The killer crept along the darkened hallway toward the room of Howling Cuthbraite. Already three grisly murders were laid in the wake of this killer who had sworn to erase the family of Cuthbraite from the earth. Cuthbraite's wife and two children lay now in eternal sleep, blood bubbling from deep gashes in their white throats. And now Cuthbraite himself was the prey of this maniacal slayer. Softly the killer opened the

door upon his slumbering victim. The very air seemed charged with evil. A feeling of horrible terror filled the room. Cuthbraite stirred, as though trying to shake off this diabolical atmosphere. The well-whetted knife of the killer, gory with the blood of its innocent victims, was poised for a brief second over the prostrate form of Cuthbraite. Then it was plunged into the yielding softness of his neck. At that moment a blood-curdling scream of sheer horror rent the night. The killer turned, and there, standing in the doorway, was the maid of the household. Too paralyzed to move, she remained there, like a small animal frozen by the weaving hood and beady eye of a king cobra. The killer glided toward her, knife outstretched—

God, what was that? I step over to the door and listen. Oh, foolish me, just a neighbor putting away his car. I laugh nervously, turn on all the lights in the house and go back to work. It would be better I decide to write this story some other night when all the family would not be out.

Hastening to the other extreme I promptly begin to type out a love story, something light and lovely, dreamy and beautiful.

Gwendelyn and Paul sat in the arbor at the seaside home of Gwendelyn. A soft, full moon glistened through the trees. A delicate breeze caressed the leaves and flowers. Paul held Gwendelyn's hand as though it were a fragile petal. He spoke, "Dearest one, will you marry me? I cannot live without you. Every moment away from you is like an eternity. Every waking hour I think of you, every sleeping hour I dream of you. Oh darling, how I love you!" He stopped suddenly, amazed at his own boldness. Gwendelyn, sweet and lovely in the moonlight, whispered, "And I love you too, Paul." Paul thought his heart would burst, as the blood coursed wildly through his veins. He gently enfolded the lovely Gwendelyn in his arms. In a voice tremulous with emotion, Paul breathed the words, "You and I dear, forever and ever." Gwendelyn raised her beautiful head and his lips met her fresh young lips in a long, soul-embracing—

Oh nuts! Why do I have to remember Ethics 401 at this critical moment? But there it is, and there are precise and discouraging rules on osculation. So what now? Maybe I'll have better luck in the realm of non-fiction. I could try my palsied hand at autobiography. Let those rich P. C. kids see what a self-made man looks like, give them the stirring, heart-rending saga of my trials and vicissitudes through my years in the public school system of Providence, R. I. I too have had my joys and sorrows, petty jealousies, little triumphs, hates and loves. I have walked

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two miles to high school every day through rain and shine, snow and sleet, because I knew that one day I might write an autobiography and that item would appear quite laudable therein—me and Abe Lincoln. But any valid autobiography demands the whole story of my life, no facts left out; an objective viewpoint, bad deeds as well as good ones. But again I am thwarted by the teachings of Ethics. Some things are not for public print.

Well, next I could adopt a Peglerian attitude and blast away at everything within the precincts of the P. C. campus. I'll write a sweeping indictment of the persons and things around here. I'll bring to light bits of information gleaned from various diatribes enunciated in the cafeteria. I'll dissect the student leaders, unearth their odious backgrounds. The administration will be thoroughly overhauled, and the crimes of the high and mighty uncovered. A new deal, a square deal, will be demanded. The faculty will be castigated, their inefficiency condemned, their methods ridiculed. As for the student body in general, I shall leave them looking like a combination of the inmates of an 1800 slave ship, the Parisian rabble during the reign of terror, and the patients of the psychopathic ward at Bellevue.

But, ah my readers, do you not see how impossible it would be for me to chastise everything at P. C. First, I am part of that scheme of things; second, I have some friends here, though they do not publicize the fact; and third, I would like to graduate from these sacred portals, a feat which, when one has incurred the wrath of the administration and the faculty, is highly difficult to accomplish.

And so, what is there to write about? Unable to think of anything colossal, I pound out something like this, and carry it to the office of the ALEMBIC editor. As casually as possible I flip it onto his desk. "What's this?", he growls, as though I had just flung a crossword puzzle at him. "It's the article that—" He interrupts, "Yeah, yeah, I know." And then, with the look of a

faithful public servant about to perform a necessary but distasteful function, he commences to read it. He goes through the whole article with that same pained expression frozen on his physiognomy. Hell, it couldn't be that bad. Or could it? Ah, he's finished. He looks up, looks at the waste receptacle on the far side of the room—as though calculating the throwing distance—then he looks at me. The oracle speaks.

“This is dog-meat.”

He allows that remark time to sink in. “We're hard up for material, yes. But not this hard up,” he says, indicating my work with a fling of his hand. “But I'll do some rewriting on this thing and, if nothing else shows up, I may use it.”

I exit. My future is in his hands. Until the day when I scurry down the hall and snatch a copy of the *ALEMBIC*, I am made to wonder if my efforts have been all in vain. I love that rewriting crack he made. The re-write artist seems to find me peculiarly adapted to his handiwork. I once composed a short story for the *ALEMBIC* which I modestly thought was simply superb. It had everything—love, courage, pathos, in short, a true slice of life. I was told that it had to be rewritten. Okay, a few grammatical errors, a more precise selection of certain words, every story has to be checked for these. The *ALEMBIC* arrived fresh from the printer's. I saw my name in the table of contents, and I looked for my story. It was hard to find. In fact, my name was the only thing left of the original manuscript which I had entrusted to the *ALEMBIC* editor. The plot was changed, the characters were different, the descriptions were not of my making, even the title had been changed.

My literary growth was severely stunted by this foul act, and I have not been able to scale the heights of fine composition since that sad day. You see me as I am today, a broken-down hack-writer, a literary has-been. And now you have it, such have been my experiences in writing for the *ALEMBIC*, God bless it.

## “ ---God Bless Them ”

When she says, “Why, not at all, Tommy”,  
And you settle back inside,  
Glad she took the news so calmly,  
Smiled serenely, never cried.

Will you ever know, my laddie,  
If she meant it, if she posed?  
Was her heart an empty thing now?  
Life a book just rudely closed?

Back of *her's* a horde of females—  
Wallis, Cleo, Delilah, Eve;  
And before *you* fell the heroes—  
King and general, strong man, plebe.

Does she care it's Ann you're taking  
To the Freshman Hop?  
Will she spend that night a-weeping?  
Or turn up there with an enemy Soph?

F. M., Extension School.

## “Liberal Education”

By EDWARD BRACQ, '43

WHEN man has finally reduced education to animal training and the renunciation of objectivity, one is compelled to condemn the ultra-liberalist school for what it is—a monster destroying its Frankenstein and turning its proponents into bewildered mental slaves, bedecked with altisonant degrees and educational titles.

What a joke it has become when eminent educators will advocate absolute doubt as the fundamental tool with which to approach the educational problem, and please themselves to picture the train of learning being remarkably stepped-up under the throttle of skepticism.

Pick up any work of the so-called leaders of education in the American school system—not the teachers but the intellectually aloof like Martin and Russell—and learn the aims of modern education. Faith in anything must be recognized as cowardly obedience to the unknowable and consequently destroyed and the inevitable void remaining to be augmented by the consoling knowledge that one has “liberated” himself from its bonds. Religion, the result of an aristocracy of echoing priests who render the intellect a serf to dogma with its confining demands on a gullible people must be destroyed as a practice, but tolerated as a sustaining theory to appease the commoner’s quest for some type of stability. Certitude, an impossibility, must be ignored as the claim of an arrogant intellect that will not recognize the



## *Liberal Education*

futility of the human undeveloped mind to grasp reality, with any degree of satisfaction. What mockery. By attempting to free man the modern schoolman actually reduces him to the level of an animal, conscious only of the fact that reality surrounds him and that he is totally incapable of piercing to its ultimates. Thereby he plunges man into confusion, disorder is the only possible fruition of a philosophy that is determined by false doubt and skepticism.

Of course, the educational benefits of a moderate doubt and an honest skepticism that only seeks to avoid the absurd and contradictory cannot be denied. Being moderately skeptical is a necessary stimulant to the learning process, else "education" becomes mere memorized book knowledge and a systematic recall of philosophical formulae, the comprehension of which is not deemed necessary. Also evident is the need for honest doubt about existing theories and speculative arguments that are founded upon opinion, since complete acquiescence militates against any possibility of either destroying it, if it is false, or modifying and bettering it, if proven true. Knowledge would be perpetually static if existing knowledge were accepted as the paramount, and obeissance the finest means of preventing its decay. When a man thinks he has exhausted, as far as it is finitely possible, the mysteries of life and its aspects, it is then that knowledge has begun to crumble.

Yet, reason demands some concrete objective truths that time, place, or person, cannot honestly manipulate so as to feign a relativity of knowledge, which theory is so vital to our "progressive" educational leaders. If discipline were recognized in earlier days of education as a necessary sanction of pupil activity, and has proven successful, one cannot help but wonder under what pretense of justification modern educators radically abolish it by saying that to discipline is to "stunt and pervert the individual ego".

Note that the main objection to this reasoning is not due essentially to change of method—methodic changes in education being often necessary due to circumstances which might render variable or plastic theories unsatisfactory—but to the absolute destruction of a practice, possibly a well-established one, on the presumption of a new theory's efficacy. It would be unreasonable not to admit the discovery of a new system that might produce a better student, but it is more outrageously unreasonable to abolish pre-existing systems and completely establish one that is in the formative stage, merely to supplant the old with something "different".

When a supervisor will reprimand a teacher for a disciplinary problem which should be alien to an efficient teacher, it is time to tear aside the blinding veil of wishful thinking that would make every pupil a misunderstood personality who is only trying to express himself. Self-expression, yes; self-assertion, God forbid!

If the progressives would relinquish their untenable position that newness alone is the only criterion of a theory's potency, they might realize educational moderation is the goal of advisory activities. Readily admitted is individual difference but, conversely, iconoclastic individualism must be thwarted. Psychological aspects of teaching must be appreciated but not worshipped as a fetish.

The incompetence of the "progressive" system to produce real students is evidenced by the predominance of unstable and bewildered graduates who are unable to pin anything down in its proper sphere, and who consider themselves learned and liberal because they are tolerant of all ideas. Error is not because another man thinks it is true, and his opinion is as worthy as the next man's. Apparently everyone's opinion is valid and true even when two people opine contradictorily. Self is the sole criterion for truth!

### *Liberal Education*

It is beyond one's reason how the absolute freedom given young children as personality development can be reconciled with the existing system of state punishment of crime, and of our entire system of reward or punishment. If personality is to be freed of "inhibitions and prudish checks", then let law and law enforcement crumble; if the child is only in need of understanding and is incapable of immoral activity then let religion and all moral codes crumble; if life is but a series of conditioned reflexes, then let the progressives give up fighting the problems of life and resort to animal living.

America deserves better than this! It was largely through America that the practicality and feasibility of common education became recognized. Theoretically, our system is without a parallel; practically, with the distortion of values as now advocated and indoctrinated by eminent leaders, the system of public schools, which really is directed by educational iconoclasts under the guise of pioneers in their field, is fast evolving or rather degenerating into a simpering joker in the court of Skepticism, the Sovereign of modern thought.

## Certitude

By WILLIAM McCORMICK, '42

OLD Pope Grayson was in his glory. It was the first day that he had been out with the "boys" since he had had that last attack of rheumatism. The conversation was, as usual, about the good old days until Bill Maher turned it into a discussion of "nickel philosophy".

"You know," says Bill, "that we can't be absolutely sure of anything".

"How come", interposes Pop.

"Well, let me show you. You have a son haven't you?"

"I have", says Pop.

"Are you sure that he's your son?"

"What do you mean, 'am I sure'?" offers Pop obviously puzzled.

"Well, how do you know someone when the kid was born didn't switch kids? He's got yours and you got his. That's what I say, you can't be sure. It's all in my nephew's book,—he goes to college—under 'Certitude' or something like that".

Pop couldn't answer that. All he did was stand there and say: "Damn funny", and "Damned if maybe he ain't right". With these solemn meditations in mind he bid the boys good-night and went home to think it over.

For two hours Pop, seated in his comfortable armchair, was absorbed in his philosophic dilemma. Many and varied thoughts ran through his mind: "Maybe the nurse'd know, but who's the nurse? It's almost twenty years since the kid was born. Maybe she's dead. Hate to lose the kid, but I'll be damned if I'll feed that perpetual excavation of his if he ain't mine". And

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so it went on. What had started out to be a simple hypothetical illustration was being turned by him into an actual belief. How strange are the minds of men.

Nellie couldn't stand it any longer. It had been a long time since she had seen her husband in such a "moody mood". The last time, she thought, that he had overworked his "gray-matter" was after their last marital battle six years ago when he had had that meditative look of "I wish I were a bachelor" written all over his face. That was their last fight she thought, they had been fortunate in being able to govern the family and themselves peaceably.

"What's the matter with you tonight?" she suddenly shot at him, "Trying to figure out your income tax in that little brain of yours?"

That was all that Pop needed, someone with whom he could share his problem.

"Nellie," and he looked up questioningly at her, "Are you sure that Ted is our son?"

Nellie's reaction to that one was somewhat peculiar. She didn't think that her husband had gone nuts. She didn't know whether or not he had been out drinking, but to her this seemed to be the most logical explanation for such a condition of mind for that husband of hers to be in. She never thought for a moment that he really had serious doubts as to the heritage and genus of their son, Theodore. As a matter of fact Nellie had always taken that for granted. After all, she was there when the boy was born. Yes, sad to say, her husband must have been out drinking. So disappointedly she said:

"James Grayson, do you mean to tell me that after three years on the wagon you've started drinking again? You ought to know better than that."

"Now Nellie I haven't been drinking," and he told her the whole story.

"What do *you* think?" he asked her in conclusion.

"Oh, Jim, that's foolish. Don't believe such stuff. It's crazy. Who'd ever think of switching children in a maternity ward. It's absurd. Besides, Ted's our son. I've never doubted it and never will doubt it. He's the splittin' image of you when you were a boy."

In the midst of all this, in walked Ted. He didn't need a course in Psychology to know that he was being carefully scrutinized from head to foot by his mother and father. He heard Pop say:

"His mother's eyes", and Mom: "His father's lazy gestures". That was all.

"What're you going to do, auction me off in the slave market?"

"No, it's nothing at all. We've just been discussing a few of your characteristics—Nothing at all. By the way, better get in the pantry and wash the dishes", was all Mom said.

"Wash the dishes? What am I, a man or a chambermaid?"

"You do as your mother tells you", shouted the boy's father, ready to quote the laws of discipline in *his* house.

"Listen Dad, I've been washing the dishes in this house ever since I've been strong enough to hold a plate. It's about time you discussed *that* characteristic and did away with it. After all, I pay my board into this house and it's about time some consideration was shown me."

Pop was tired. His brain had been working overtime that night and when Pop was tired he was usually grouchy. That night he was extra tired and consequently extra grouchy.

"Nellie", was all he said, "that boy's our son all right. He's got that damn stubbornness and that thick head of his from your side of the family. They're all the same way."

And that is how the second marital battle in six years started.

# The Chinese Language

By KENNETH YOUNG, '44

*There is nothing especially complicated about the language. Far from this being the case, its construction is fairly simple, much more so than that of a scientific language, German for instance, and in the matter of the expression of simple wants there is nothing difficult whatever.*

Sir Walter Hillier, KCMG, CB  
Professor of Chinese,  
King's College, London.

FOR many years, Western Civilization has overestimated the difficulty of learning the Chinese Language. If we accept Sir Walter as an authority much of this misunderstanding may be banished.

It is not easy to learn a language without encountering a few difficulties; this is true even of the mother tongue. It may be proportionally easier to learn a language which is the source of the native tongue and derived from original literature and foreign adaptations than one radically different but the latter has to its advantage the interest, profit, and entertainment arising from its study.

Since the clerk of the court of King Hsuan, 827 B. C., recorded his master's deeds upon a piece of stone, later found and deposited in the Confucian Temple at Peking, written Chinese has been known and studied. For nearly thirty centuries, the original formation has been scientifically improved and at the same time recorded Oriental civilization.

In English, a word is recognized by the Greek, Latin or Teutonic root; in Chinese, a word is recognized by a knowledge of the original character. This formation of Chinese characters



is comparable to English in that prefixes and suffixes are added to the original word to produce another meaning. Not found in any of the alphabetical tongues, the beauty derived from the Chinese word form was early appreciated by the ancient Chinese scholars. At present, the most learned Chinese agree to the following six classifications in the composition of a Chinese word:

1. *Pictorial Form.* The most primitive way of Chinese word formation are these free hand sketches of objects. Celestial things, animals, utensils and everything that can possibly be expressed in pictorial form were developed by the ancient Chinese about four thousand years ago. Through the years, these symbols have been improved for rapidity and simplicity in writing and finally they developed into the forms used today.

2. *Indicative Form.* These characters are formed by indicating the major features of a thing so as to reveal its idea. There is only a slight difference between indicative and pictorial form. The former inspires thinking and to aid this process, expresses itself pictorially. Examples of words in this group are the prepositions above and below.

3. *Suggestive Compounds.* Suggestive compounds are imaginary compositions which take advantage of the relationship existing between figures. Found chiefly in verbs, the suggestive compound is a combination of the pictorial and indicative form.

4. *Defeated Characters.* These are represented by bending symbols. Defeated characters are best represented by the adjectives, right and left.

5. *Phonetic Form.* Corresponding to onomatopoeia in English, the Chinese have symbols representing the sound of objects. This phonetic form combined with other symbols gives meaning to the word to be portrayed.

6. *Synonymous Characters.* These characters have the same use in Chinese as they have in English; they are used in place of words having the same meaning.

## *The Chinese Language*

Pictorial forms are guides in the Chinese language. Original symbols for familiar things can be used as the root sign. For example, using the word *water* as a root, other symbols may be added to form the characters *river*, *ocean*, *sea*, *stream*, etc. Additions to the word *gas* will form *nitrogen*, *hydrogen*, *oxygen*, etc. Every character has its own family, that is, its own original root. There are some characters which are both arbitrary and traditional as some words in English have obscure origins. Of the root characters there are about twenty-five in daily use and about fifty in total number. With the addition of miscellaneous characters, these independent characters are easily systematized for the compilation of a Chinese dictionary.

A complicated Chinese word is always expressed by at least two symbols, the phonetic indicator and the idea indicator. The former gives the sound of the word and the latter its meaning. With this ideographical writing, it is easy to understand intricate words with the aid of a few simple characters. Chinese vocabulary is progressing to keep pace with modern requirements and scientific words are conventionally termed by combining two or three independent characters.

The written language of China is constant but, as in America, the manner of expression is dependent upon the locale; Mandarin is the chief dialect.

Occidentals who lived in China, even for a short time, have no trouble in learning the language, if they so desire. In Hong Kong there are many Americans and Englishmen who speak fluent and beautiful Chinese although their sojourn has been brief. One American physician, whom I met, named his daughter *Li-pai* which in English means *pretty shell* thus expressing his full appreciation of the Chinese culture which he had met.

# In the Land of the Shamrocks

By JAMES J. MURPHY, '42

IT has been wisely said that the appeal of Eire does not rest solely on its traditional fiddle and accordion players, its enjoyable jigs, its slow jaunting cars, its countless thatched roof cottages, its pretty, roguish colleens, its love of sports and games, nor on the universally acclaimed sense of humor of its sons.

True it is that Eire has not gained its place simply because of the Lakes of Killarney, the Shannon River, St. Patrick's Stone on which the kings of Munster were crowned, Cobh Harbor, the Abbey Players, Maynooth, the Book of Kells, Killarney Castle, and fable-producing remains of great monuments.

Not alone on the sacrifices and fervor of men of the calibre of De Valera, Collins, Emmett, Hugh D. O'Neill, Grattan, and a host of others has the worthwhile heritage of the shamrock-studded isle been formed.

Rather, the true glory of the Emerald Isles can be explained only by first understanding the strong Catholic spirit that has inspired its people and for fifteen centuries has played such an important role in every phase of the Irishman's makeup. This spirit, tested by the years and strengthened by numerous bitter persecutions, has been, and is still today, indomitable, powerful, and encouraging. The sieges of a Henry the Eighth, an Elizabeth, and a cruel Cromwell, aptly referred to as "the Devil in disguise", could not destroy it. Hamper it they did, but only to have it spring back more solid, more unshakable than before.

*In the Land of the Shamrocks*

But this ardor, this intense belief was not always with the Irish. It was planted and fostered by a staunch figure who should not be ignored in any sensible discussion about Eire or its particular problems. This man was St. Patrick.

In 432 when Patrick returned as a priest to the land that he had learned to love in captivity, he encountered a civilization steeped in pagan practices. However, he did not deal with an ignorant populace. The culture of the Gaels and their advances in art and music were well known by their contemporaries. There was a mythology whose appeal and extensiveness could worthily challenge that of any nation. The ability of the valorous Gaelic warriors in battle and their prowess in games were factors that even Caesar had reckoned with and had recognized. Into this atmosphere the renowned missionary brought a plan of life which was not to stifle the prevailing enthusiasm but was to increase it and direct it to proper goals. Through his preaching, miracles, and activities the hardworking harbinger of Truth laid the ground-work for the liberty that comes from sound Catholic beliefs and that has been characteristic, at home and abroad, of those who claim the Old Sod as their birthplace.

From that noteworthy Easter Eve in 433 when the eager Apostle of Ireland defiantly kindled a fire on the north bank of the River Boyne and thereby challenged the authority of the Druids and pagan chieftans, the flame of the Faith has never ceased to burn with intensity in the generous hearts of Irishmen and be spread by them in every section of the globe. History, the unerring witness, has testified that the fervor of Saint Patrick in making converts and establishing churches and monasteries has not been in vain. His years of effort in the Provinces of Leinster, Connaught, Ulster and Munster were rewarded. For on March 17, 465, the beloved Bishop of Erin, then seventy-nine years old, expired at the Monastery of Saul with the satisfaction of knowing that the hundreds of places of worship resulting from

his zeal were flourishing and that his pupils were carrying on his work.

So ended the era of birth of the real Eire. So also began the era of growth, marked by joys and sorrows, that has stamped the confident Irish as energetic, determined, cheerful and religious. And underlying the whole era is the influence of the meditative captive shepherd boy who came to be the leader of men and who has been exactly portrayed by the historian who wrote: "He loved God and he loved his fellowmen and he loved the Irish race above all mankind. His great heart throbbed for the pagan Irish and he loved to give them that liberty which the Gospel brings to the inner man."

## Martial Value

By EDWARD BRACQ, '43

I HEARD a news flash today. You know the type. The interrupted band program, the startled and interrogatory glances of the listeners, the awful silence of a fearful wait—then the excited and hurried voice:

"An attempt was made today on the life of Sir Roger Chadsey, one of the leading figures in the Allies' war cabinet. It was reported to be unsuccessful however when the would-be assassin fired wild. He was immediately seized by police."

A pause; the matter-of-fact climax: "An unidentified bystander was struck and killed in the attempt."

The orchestra resumed, the listeners audibly relaxed, and conversation began anew.

I wondered who he was.

# The New Fleet

By JOSEPH O'SHEA, '43

TO the familiar cry of "Up Ship!" new naval blimps are released from their moorings at the Lakehurst Naval Air Station, and slowly ascend. As the nuclei of a new U. S. fleet, three blimps are operating from this area as training apparatus. Only recently having been given the opportunity to prove their utility as weapons of war, the blimps have already been vouched for by America's outstanding aeronaut, General Mitchell.

It was in 1940 that the United States Navy was finally convinced of the practical value of the blimp. Besides the ability to conduct its activities at a great distance from its home base, the blimp can perform many of the duties of both surface vessels and naval planes.

As a scout, the blimp can navigate in "dirty" weather; it can maintain a stationary position for thorough aerial investigations; it has greater speed than a surface vessel, and its cost and operating expenses are proportionately much less than those of a ship of the fleet. These facts, plus the valuable work of blimps in World War I, when they were used to convoy merchant ships, to war on the submarine, and to locate free and uncharted mine fields, probably were the most effective inducement in the navy's decision to inaugurate this phase of operations.

Captain Charles E. Rosendahl, one of the few with sufficient courage and foresight to argue for retention of lighter-than-air craft in naval service, has been recalled from active duty with the Pacific fleet to take command of the new venture. As commander of the Lakehurst Air Station he witnessed the sorrowful catastrophe of the Hindenburg in May of 1937. Despite the unfavorable public reaction he continued to impress upon his chiefs

the tremendous advantage offered to America through the medium of the blimp. Having in her possession the inert, incombustible gas, helium, the United States enjoys one of the most vital monopolies and one of the most important raw materials in the world. Yet it has been only in the past year that we have done anything to avail ourselves of this advantage.

From the historical point of view, the modern blimp is but a direct descendant of the common, ordinary balloon. The balloon was the first step taken to satisfy man's desire to fly and its use first gained attention through the activities of four Frenchmen. Two sets of brothers, the Montgolfiers and the Roberts, engaged in a duel to see which could construct the balloon that would stay aloft longest. These balloons were crude affairs, being merely huge bags constructed of any material which would prevent the escape of gas or air. The Montgolfiers used hot air to inflate their balloons. The bag was opened at the bottom with a large hoop holding it in shape. Attached beneath was a large basket in which stood the balloonist and his passengers. The Roberts brothers, however, used hydrogen, and succeeded in attaining far greater heights than their competitors.

Finally, to extend their flights, the Montgolfiers erected on their contraption a grate upon which they placed hot coals. The heat emitted from the coals kept the hot air warmer for a longer time. Later, when the balloons were transporting passengers, the duration of the flight could be controlled merely by regulating the heat of the coals.

But if these four were responsible for the new prominence of the balloons, they were by no means the first to think of invading the skies by means of a lighter-than-air craft. On October 15, 1783, Pilatre de Rozier, historian for the king of France, made the first ascent in a captive balloon. So delightful was the experience that de Rozier and a companion, the Marquis D'Arlandes, set off in a free balloon. The ride was apparently a wild one in-



asmuch as the fabric of the bag was ignited several times from the sparks of the coals.

Early ballooning was not without its humorous side. One of the more interesting flights during the period of experimentation was that of Lunardi, an Italian living in England, who added a set of sails and oars to his balloon. The sails, he thought, would increase his speed; with the oars he proposed to control the direction of his flight, hitherto at the mercy of the winds. His plan, it need hardly be added, was unsuccessful.

Jean Blanchard, a Frenchman, studied with interest the activities of balloonists and began experiments himself. Ridiculed by his countrymen when several of his experiments were dismal failures, he left to continue his efforts in England. There he met a Doctor Jeffries, an American, who sponsored Blanchard in the first successful trip from Dover to Calais, across the English channel.

Blanchard later came to the United States where he made several ascents for the pleasure of a curious public. His first ascent and the first recorded in the new world was held just outside Philadelphia early in 1793.

Other courageous pioneers in the art of ballooning were James Sadler, William Cowper, Charles Green, and John Wise. Wise was the first American aeronaut; he had even formulated plans for a jaunt across the Atlantic ocean and had approached Congress for an appropriation when the Civil War broke out.

The War had its effect on ballooning, a good effect. Surprisingly enough, lighter than air craft were employed by the army of General McClellan in the Potomac Valley. McClellan secured the services of one Professor Lowe, who was already planning the establishment of a United States Army Aeronaut Corps. Lowe made over three thousand observations on the Confederate troops while assisting the Union armies.

During the Civil War, a German officer serving with the

Union Army, realized the value of the balloon. This officer was Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin. Returning to Europe, Zeppelin fought in the German-Austro and Franco-Prussian Wars. During these encounters he conducted numerous balloon ascents which proved of inestimable value to the army.

Following the Civil War ballooning made great progress. Throughout the world those interested in this type of flight conducted an unofficial but intense rivalry. Soon official altimeters were placed on the balloons to record the exact height to which they rose. Several expeditions were made to the stratosphere and valuable scientific data was compiled. The sport became an established yearly event in America in 1906 when James Gordon Bennett, a prominent American sportsman, donated a trophy for the winner of an annual balloon race.

These yearly contests stimulated interest in the new aeronautical sport not only among sportsmen but scientists as well. Professor Jean Picard, the now-famous balloonist explorer, made several notable ascents into the stratosphere where he correlated data on the mysterious cosmic rays. In 1935 the National Geographic Society sponsored a stratospheric expedition in which Captains Anderson and Stevens of the U. S. Army reached the incredible height of 72,395 feet. This however was the last flight of any importance with the balloon. Since 1935 ballooning has become a lost art.

Perhaps responsible for this loss of interest is the popularity that the dirigible has achieved during the same time. The dirigible is of German origin. It is the result of a life-long struggle by Count von Zeppelin who inaugurated its construction in 1898 and by whose name it is frequently identified. After his death the Germans continued work on the dirigible and they alone have enjoyed signal success with it.

The United States acquired its first dirigible after the World War. This was the Los Angeles, which has just been

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scrapped at Lakehurst. Three other dirigibles were built in America, the Shenandoah, the Akron and the Macon. The Shenandoah met an untimely death over Ohio, the cause of the disaster never being ascertained. The Akron, a naval ship, was destroyed in a storm off the New Jersey coast. The destruction of the Macon was due to structural damage.

But our experience with dirigibles was not a complete loss. From the construction of these ships, naval officials made studies of the other forms of lighter-than-air craft, particularly the blimp. These studies are paying dividends today.

Lakehurst is today the center of blimp activity. At the Air Station, under the command of Commander George H. Millis, officers and men of the "new fleet" are learning the ways of the blimp. Those training for blimp service are hardy men, chosen for their agility, speed, and ability. They must all have passed the Naval Air Corps examinations and are sent to Lakehurst after preliminary training in heavier-than-air craft.

The first difficulty experienced at Lakehurst is handling and navigating balloons. The successful navigator of a blimp must possess a knowledge of balloons. The blimp when its engines are not functioning or when damaged must be operated as a balloon. Vital to the officer and seaman on a blimp are the ability to think and act fast, and speed to carry out duties. One careless mistake by any member on board may mean the death of all on board.

Only after he has completed his apprenticeship on balloons does the applicant merit service on a blimp. There is a tenseness in the air as the elevator man sets himself; the crew man their stations and the cry, "Up Ship!" echoes from the control cabin. The officer on the ground quickly slips the hook holding the blimp to its moorings, and slowly, silently, the ship of the "new fleet" weighs anchor.

"Up Ship!"

## Alembichords

By FRANK MAGUIRE, '42

RADIO acquaints you with music, but the phonograph makes you real friends. There is no better way to appreciate the masterpieces of music than by hearing a good recording; especially is this true in regard to the symphonies, overtures and concertos of the great masters. With the discs you not only can hear the music you want when you want it but as *many* times as you want it. The thrill that beautiful music gives, heard only when Serge Koussevitzky is in town or when we have to wait on the good pleasure of N. B. C., is too transient and sporadic.

Classical music once had but a small audience in the concert halls of the nation. Radio multiplied enthusiasts for good music by the hundred fold. The phonograph not only gained more converts to such music but encouraged more critical listening. America is music loving today as never before. This is evidenced by the demand for more and better interpretations by the best artists. Farm dwellers as well as city people are no longer satisfied with poorly rendered or trite music. Those who have heard and re-heard a Tschaikowsky overture or symphony on the discs interpreted by Koussevitzky or a Beethoven masterpiece directed by Toscanini no longer condone a false chord or a half-hearted crescendo. The best is none too good for them, and the result is better music.

Mention of *better* music instantly brings to mind Tschaikowsky and his work. The music of this great Russian thrilled the world for years but particularly in 1940, which year marked the 100th anniversary of his birth. Three of his Symphonies—

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the *Fourth*, *Fifth*, and *Sixth*—his famous Overtures—*Solennelle* and *Romeo and Juliet*—, and his *Nutcracker Suite* are fullsome in melody and inspiration.

Of these, our favorite is the *Romeo and Juliet Overture* and Victor lists the best recording. *Victor Red Seal Album*—DM 347; performed by the *Boston Symphony Orchestra* and directed by *Koussevitzky*. \$3.50. It is a good set to start with for we are all familiar with the Shakespeare story of the two lovers who found respite from their warring families only in death.

The tragedy is well described by this great tragedian of music. Do not let this sombre note scare you away. A sense of forboding disaster runs through the piece like a subterranean river, but even the deepest rivers rise to the surface and have their moments of sparkling light as they are exposed to the dazzling sunshine while on their inevitable route to the ocean; so this masterpiece, too, has its interludes that dazzle the ear and imagination. In contrast to the tumult and clashing armor of the warring families—the Montagues and Capulets—we find the love theme tender and peaceful. This most beautiful theme is known to many but no one can appreciate its whole beauty when it is separated from the body of the Overture. Introduced early in the piece, it follows both the solemn church music which is the *leitmotif* for Friar Lawrence and the jolting clanging dissonance of the cymbals and trumpets describing the strife of the families. This all subsides ever so slowly into a tantalizing transition as the first note of the love theme is heard. Violas and the English horn softly vie with each other to produce one of the most beautiful themes in all music. It is an eloquent passion, both pure and solemn. You can almost hear the lovers' hearts beating as one. The tempo increases into a marvelous crescendo and ejaculation of sound but such happiness is short-lived. Family pride and honor would not allow such a morganatic union, vile to both their houses. And so the love theme is drowned for

a time by the growing conflict of brasses and horns until it ends in a cacophony of clanging cymbals. When this boisterousness of hatred itself dwindles, love again holds the stage. Tender and melancholy, the melody quavers in. Then, reassured, it grows in volume and intensity into a triumph which is an inspiration to those attuned to this beautiful love story and its victory over hatred and jealousy that could be had, not in the world, but in the quiet of the tomb.

Our second favorite is Tschaikowsky's *1812 Overture* or *Ouverture Solennelle*. The Marseillaise of France and Russian National Hymn are intertwined to depict, musically, the defeat of Napoleon, in 1812, by the Russian winter. Of course, the Russian anthem, with clanging bells and cannon shot, prevails. With this, the scope of the phonograph is limited for, to be effective, the 1812 Overture requires volume, volume, and more volume. When first performed at Moscow in 1882 to commemorate the anniversary of the victory over Napoleon, an orchestra of one thousand pieces participated and real artillery volleys were used to punctuate the colossal interpretation. This past summer at the Berkshire Festival at Pittsfield something similar was done. Three musical groups—The Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Berkshire Music Center Orchestra, and the Army Bands of the 26th Division—combined into a gigantic orchestra of over 400 pieces directed by the enthusiastic Koussevitsky. We are sure you will enjoy and appreciate this stirring Overture. *1812 Overture, the Boston "Pops" Orchestra directed by Fiedler; Victor Album M 515. \$2.50.*

Please do not gripe at our predilection for Tschaikowsky. Positively there are other composers, perhaps of greater stature, but for simplicity and tunefulness his music is incomparable. Yet we have enjoyed the experience of some growth toward understanding the more intricate music in Cesar Franck's works.

If you want a profound and deeply sincere masterpiece,

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turn to Franck's *Symphony in D Minor*, his first and only symphony. Franck had a life of penury and hardship that comes to many an unrecognized genius. It is said that he sought the solitude of the organ loft in Saint Clotilde, Paris, in order to escape his overbearing wife. In spite of this we are inclined to picture him as a deeply religious man, talking to his God through his music. To substantiate this, we recall his *Panis Angelicus*. There, he could indeed have struck that "note from the soul of the organ", but in his *Symphony* his *own* soul is trying to speak of its God. His troubles and temptations, his joys and triumphs are all spread before his Lord. The forces of evil from without are seeking to stifle his goodness within. There is conflict and harmony, but the harmony which is concord with God's will finally achieves victory over the forces of evil and discord. The marvelous predominating theme flowing throughout and intermingling with others may be voiced in those words of pure devotion: "My Lover, I love Thee. My Lover, I love Thee." Although reminiscent of the blasting crescendoes of the *Romeo and Juliet Overture* these musical surges are a different kind of passion—fleshless and mostly spiritual. But see, or rather listen, for yourself to this great *Symphony* and be convinced and enthralled. *Symphony in D Minor, the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra directed by Stokowski; Victor Red Seal Album—DM 300; \$6.50.*

## Futility

HE held her waist tightly,  
As they stumbled  
Up the rock-studded path  
Which ended at the hilltop.



*The Alembic*

The glow of morning  
Rose to meet his gaze.  
And then diffused  
Into the scene before him:  
Tiny sloping hills  
With sheep grazing.  
Neat white farmhouses  
Serene within the sweep  
Of mountain forests,  
Purple in the hazy distance.  
And something of himself  
Merged within the vastness,  
And returned again,  
But no longer his entirely.

He felt the hardness  
Of his fingers.  
Wished he'd been born an artist.  
Or if not, a poet,  
To record his dream forever!

SHE looked with wonder  
At his muscled arms,  
Which held the throbbing drill  
Aloft the steel giants  
That rose high above  
The City streets. The City!  
If only she could be a part  
Of the surging crowds,  
Noise and lights!  
Why couldn't he know and understand?

By LOUIS S. ROSEN, '42

## The Enchanting Young Ghost

MISS TWILLER was short, dark and ill-tempered. Although young, she was definitely the type you didn't look back at. In Local Board No. 66, where she clerked, Miss Twiller was officious. Whenever a selectee appeared she became Miss Selective Service and managed, by looks and words, to convince him that he was a 1942 Benedict Arnold. This kept the Board from unnecessary questioning but in doing it, Miss Twiller assumed responsibility which was neither hers to have nor ours to give her.

We members had enough to do; our job was to see that no one who should be in the army was out of it. While doing this we had no time to referee quiz programs but we didn't wonder that the hallway rang with uncomplimentary references to Miss Twiller, her manner, her appearance, her parents, and her sex-life—if any.

One afternoon, shortly before the war, a young man came into the office; the Board called the type, "Miss Twiller's Delight"—just an ordinary young man who wanted a little inside information about one year of his life. I was working at my desk and expected the clerk to take care of him. She did.

It was Miss Twiller's "pause in the day's occupation." A cigarette hung from her lips; she filed her nails; she hummed *Good-Bye, Dear, I'll Be Back in a Year*; she was a very busy woman. Miss T. made approximately one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month; the young man, now waiting, helped to pay it. He coughed to attract her attention and Miss Twiller sailed into action.

"Well," she said, "what do you want?"

He seemed surprised for a minute and then murmured apologetically, "I'm twelve hundred something, I thought you could tell me what number the board had reached."

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"That is no excuse for not being a gentleman, Mr. Potts." And starting for the files, she continued, "I hope the board will remember this incident if he appeals for leniency."

Grunting a reply, I went back to work. For the rest of the afternoon, Miss Twiller hammered viciously at her typewriter; her customary professional manner was shattered. As she typed, she hummed and the tune was a continued repetition, *Oh! he's 1-A in the Army, Oh! he's 1-A in the Army*; I knew he was 4-F in her heart.

About a month after this the war started. Miss Twiller wore a V-for-Victory pin and hummed her latest song hit, *We've got to go and slap the dirty little Jap*. The Board worked practically day and night. Any young man standing on a corner in the vicinity of No. 66 either caught the street car there or ended up in the army. One day, I paused long enough to notice that we had scooped twelve hundred something; a week later he was gone. Miss Twiller lost her haggard look.

As the war progressed, I had no idea of time; everything dated from events. A tailor replaced our draft-board physicians; Miss Twiller worked overtime, without pay, to revenge herself on the male element; I registered in the 36 to 45 age-group.

One morning we received a telegram; number twelve hundred something had been lost at sea. He was our first casualty so we played it up in the papers; on a warm Sunday afternoon, the board adjourned to a small square nearby where a memorial sign was erected. The next day it was forgotten and we went back to work.

By the time the Japs had reached Probolinggo, there was a change in Miss Twiller. She became very nervous. This was especially noticeable when she was typing or taking dictation and seemed connected with the word *appeal*. Mere mention of the word made her shudder. When you consider just how often *appeal* is used in draft board correspondence and conversation

you will realize that Miss Twiller soon resembled a whirling dervish with St. Vitus. Things finally reached a stage wherein we could only suggest the word and give dictation like this: "Number 1453 *uh-huhed* today. His *uh-huh* was based on total blindness. 66 is sending this *uh-huh* to the State *uh-huh* Board."

We were about to ask Miss T. to resign when she told me everything. One day, shortly after closing time, Miss Twiller remained in the office. She seemed anxious to say something and suddenly exclaimed, "Mr. Potts, do you believe in ghosts?"

As I had watched several hundred young men leave the neighborhood for various war zones, this question was hard to answer, so I countered, "Young or old ghosts, Miss Twiller?"

"Please!, Mr. Potts, this is no laughing matter . . . But since you ask, it's a young ghost." She started to sob. "I wouldn't mind him smoking the cigarettes, or leaving the seaweed, but he never knocks when he comes in; it just can't go on!"

I presumed this was the crisis in her sickness and hustled her to a chair. Before sending for a doctor, I tried to calm her, but she talked on. From the conversation I gathered that her nervousness was due to the visitations of a ghost who resembled twelve hundred something. He smoked Miss Twiller's cigarettes and brought her bouquets of sea-weed. In an attempt to prove this, she drew from her pocket-book a piece of dried-up spinach and a few cigarette stubs. Miss T. was evidently in a bad way, but she refused to see a doctor and finally made me promise that I would go to her apartment and check the story. This was easily arranged; I would visit at the next showing of the ghost, who, it seemed, always played second feature to *appeal* day.

The following Tuesday, after the appeals had been decided, I met Miss Twiller and accompanied her home. On the way she told me a little more about her ghost. Twelve-hundred something was appealing his case and wanted to see the President. He desired that Miss Twiller be the intermediary and the

## *The Enchanting Young Ghost*

sea-weed represented bribes for this purpose. When we reached her apartment, I was convinced that our clerk was slightly on the tapioca side of life's menu, but decided to humor her by seeing the thing through.

Miss T. invited me to sit down while she made some coffee. I glanced around; the most noticeable things were the pictures in the room. They were all of Miss Twiller and, looking closer, I found that she had publicly participated in every sport with the possible exception of wrestling. It was easy now to understand why she was unafraid of our 1-A prospects. She was the Y. W. C. A. welterweight champ. A possible solution to our problem came to me; Miss Twiller could be punch-drunk.

I heard her coming in with the coffee; as she entered, she stared past me, dropped the tray and gasped, "Mr. Potts, he's here again!"

I turned quickly. There on a chair sat twelve-hundred something. He had on a water-soaked army uniform; his hair was wringing wet, yet he wore a happy smile as he went through Miss Twiller's pocket-book. After extracting her cigarettes, he lit one, looked up and greeted us. "Hi, Miss Twiller," he said. "How is my muscle-bound mouthpiece? Hi, Pottsie!" he added, turning to me. "Time and a half for overtime?"

Now that the situation confronted me, I knew just how nerve-wracking it was to have a ghost sitting in your front room, smoking your cigarettes. Miss Twiller had not been having nightmares. After considering a dash for the door, I remembered that he was 1-A and decided to brazen it out instead. "Young man," I started pompously, "just why do you persist in annoying this young lady? Certainly there must be other persons, now within your reach, who could easily profit much more than she by your visitations."

"Give those crumbs to the birds, Pottsie." He blew a triangular smoke-form and continued. "Female draft-board clerks

are my special charges. By gifts of flora and, occasionally, fauna from the ocean, I shall bribe Miss T. into an interview with the President. I am appealing, you know."

"This is preposterous!" I said. "Do you know that you are interfering with a vital part of national defense? Suppose this happened in every draft-board; what would the country have? Chaos!"

"Not at all, Pottsie, only fewer gold-star mothers." He reached into his pocket and drew out a piece of dripping seaweed. For you, Miss T.," he said. "This is real *macrocystis*. Not every girl can have such a corsage. Next week I'll bring you another algal surprise . . . Now that it has been forced on me, I like the ocean. Do you know, Pottsie, that one receives more sympathy and understanding from a glassy-eyed herring than from any clerk in local board No. 66."

We had only one clerk, and to preserve both my sanity and hers, I played an ace. "If you have anything to say, which will throw a new light on your case, come to the appeal board next Tuesday and we will . . ."

"No chance!" he interrupted. "Not only would I have to face that officious wench but I'd probably be re-drafted and charged for my uniform. If you have no other propositions, I'll leave. There is another case to be attended to in Seattle."

Twelve-hundred something got up and stretched. He blew several more triangles, said "Boo!" to Miss Twiller and started toward the wall. As my chance to help her was rapidly disappearing, I made a final plea. "If you would like an equestrian statue of yourself on the Mall . . .," I started, but it was of no use. Twelve-hundred something went through the wall. Nothing remained but a haze of smoke, a piece of sea-weed, Miss Twiller and myself.

Miss Twiller, who was accustomed to this sort of thing, recovered first. "Well, Mr. Potts," she said, "*Now* do you believe me?"

## *The Enchanting Young Ghost*

It was no time to hedge; I would have believed a Berlin editorialist, but decided to play sagacious. "This is quite unusual, Miss Twiller. Perhaps if you moved . . ."

"I've tried that," said Miss Twiller.

"Perhaps we both need a doctor, or a psycho-an . . ."

"I've tried both," said Miss Twiller.

"Perhaps you need a drink as much as I do," I yelped, starting for the door, and as it closed behind me, I heard her say, "I don't drink, Mr. Potts." However, I did, and the bar was just around the corner.

Miss Twiller's shuddering continued for several weeks. We avoided each other for a long time. There was really nothing to say; my assistance had not helped her get rid of her ghost. Twelve-hundred something was still a problem. Eventually Miss Twiller decided things for herself. She resigned. There were relatives in Nova Scotia, she explained, whom she could visit. Perhaps the ghost would not bother her there . . .

Before leaving, Miss Twiller came to say good-bye. These pleasantries over, she started for the door. But just then a selectee appeared. He looked directly at her and said, "Is this where I make an appeal?" Miss Twiller shuddered, grabbed her suit-case and dashed down the hall.

We received word from Boston that she was taking the *Southern Star*. If you remember, it was torpedoed off the coast of Massachusetts; there were no survivors. Of course, it was just a coincidence, but newspaper reports stated that it sank in the one place so near the coast where the water was *twelve-hundred something* fathoms.

\* \* \* \* \*

Miss Hawkins is our new secretary and a very officious one. I could swear that she shuddered last Tuesday when I said, "Have any *appeals* been filed this morning, Miss Hawkins?"

## By the Way

By JAMES F. SHIEL, '44

“WHAT’S the use?”

During the past few months as we trudged methodically from class to class and imbibed some and ignored a little of the learning that was tossed at us from the desk in the center of the classroom, we have noticed this spirit of pessimism permeating all classroom discussion on world peace, post war reconstruction, and future economic policies. This spirit of pessimism is not just a defeatism produced by the reverses suffered so far by the anti-totalitarian allies, although defeatism is a concomitant of it. Rather this spirit of pessimism is a pessimism of ideals.

We are seeing the worlds of industry, finance, and politics being torn down before our very eyes by—to use a trite phrase—the forces of aggression. We see the old ideals of justice and charity being annihilated by vices. We are seeing kingdoms fall and things which we always thought stable crumbling. We see capital and labor again in the fray, we see or we seem to see vice triumphant over virtue. Quite a few of us think we should forsake the old ideals. Our dialectic is that they are not attainable.

We certainly would be foolhardy to say we could attain the beauideal. The possibility of making a perfect peace, of fashioning a perfect world, of making inevitable economic laws is well nigh in the realm of the wishful thinker. Man by nature is not fitted for the attainment of absolute perfection in the world. Perfect happiness is only to be obtained in heaven. But we can be relatively perfect, we can aim at perfection. On our aiming depends the degree we will reach. “What’s the use?” is not the shibboleth.



## *By the Way*

A capitalist before he becomes a capitalist is seized by the spirit of capitalism. The same rule applies in our search for peace. Defeatism and pessimism will never give birth to peace. We must first have the ideal, we must have the certainty that the ideal is possible of attainment up to a certain degree. We must at least be conscious that there is a possibility of getting to China before we start out for there. If we begin with the premise that China cannot be reached, then certainly we shall not try to reach it. So it is with peace, with reconstruction, with economics.

In a class the other day there was a discussion of these three post war problems or should I say present problems. The line of argument—and it was sincere—ran this way. We never have had perfect peace in the world. It is natural for men to fight. Why talk of justice in the next peace conference? Do you think we are going to give Germany her *lebensraum*? Do you think we are going to let Japan get her right to a share of the world's goods? And do you think we are going to give Germany back any of her colonies after we have beaten her? These were all some of the queries that were brought up. It is against human nature to do such a thing was the argument advanced.

Well, we will have to do these things. The ideals are there, we shall have to strive to attain them. No peace can be really attained unless it is a just peace. No just peace can be secured unless we give even to conquered nations the right to live and sustain themselves. A peace under any other conditions will not be a peace. It will be an ephemeral cessation of hostilities.

In the field of industry the laboring man will have to be given a just wage and the right to security conditioned by equitable labor. Capital will have to give up its present claim to the lion's share. It must give the working man a wage

sufficient to support and educate his wife and children. It must give him a wage sufficient enough to enable him to set aside a portion for his old age. Capitalists will have to give up one of their four cars to give the laborer an old jallopy. Capitalism must do this if there is to be peace within its spheres. Labor itself must recognize its duties and obligations. Labor must put in an equitable day's work. Labor and capital must realize that one needs the other for its existence. Both must aim for the ideal.

Where is the ideal to be found you may ask. We, who go to a Catholic college are given certain objective criteria in all our classes. In sociology, philosophy, and economics we are given rules and ways of attaining truth. Veritas is more than a stereotyped motto. We are given the encyclicals, and the Summa in an abbreviated form.

The ideals are then set before us. We are told what we must do to attain them. We are made acquainted with what is just and what is right. In other words we are given the map, all we have to do is to follow it.

We will never get there however, if we are fatalists from the start. We must have confidence from the beginning. We must have the ideal before us. We must know that the ideal is relatively attainable. We must admit that there can be a perfect peace. We must admit that capital and labor are not by nature in opposite camps but only accidentally. With these facts in mind we set out to achieve our ends. Each one does his job the best he can being governed by immutable principles. If we do this, the ideal will become a reality.

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