

THE ALEMBIC

To the members of the ALEMBIC Staff:

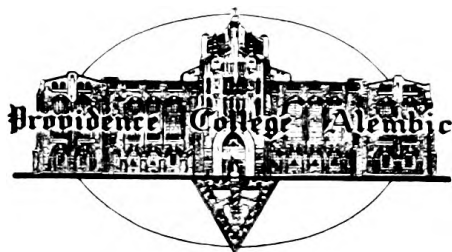
Would you kindly annotate this copy of the ALEMBIC -- denoting any errors in spelling, punctuation or printer's errors which come to your notice either in your own contribution or any other in the book.

Wales



MAY 1949

THE ALEMBIC



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

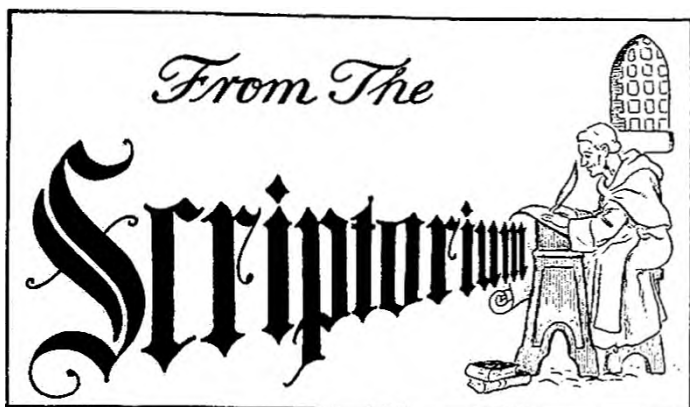
TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME XXVII

MAY, 1949

NUMBER 4

EDITORIAL	3
CRITICISM	55
AS OTHERS SEE US.....	55
<i>Andrew G. Fortin, '49</i>	
AN ISLAND TO HIMSELF.....	59
<i>William H. Plummer, '51</i>	
EXCHANGE	69
FICTION	
FRENZY IN FRISCO.....	7
<i>Raymond L. Scungio, '50</i>	
TO CATCH THE SUN.....	38
<i>Harold E. Fayo, Jr., '51</i>	
HILL-BOUND	48
<i>Walter J. Sharkey, '50</i>	
PRACTICAL JOKE.....	64
<i>George H. Cochran, '51</i>	
NON-FICTION	
THE ETERNAL TRIANGLE.....	90
<i>William H. Honnen, Jr., '49</i>	
VERSE	
SENESCENCE	27
<i>Clifford J. Brott, '50</i>	
LOST INNOCENCE.....	28
<i>Harold E. Fayo, Jr., '51</i>	
SIMPLICITY	29
<i>Clifford J. Brott, '50</i>	
A YEAR AGO TODAY.....	46
<i>Edward P. FitzSimmons, '51</i>	
AN INTIMATION OF PROPHECY.....	47
<i>George H. Cochran, '51</i>	
RECOLLECTION	63
<i>Clifford J. Brott, '50</i>	
SONG OF THE PRISONER'S SOUL.....	71
<i>Harold E. Fayo, Jr., '51</i>	



IT becomes readily apparent, even to the most casual observer, that a great portion of our educational system has become devoted to the theory of specialization. The youth of today is set in his ambition to be the engineer, the bio-chemist and physicist of a bright, new tomorrow. Therefore he specializes in engineering, chemistry and physics and completely forgets about the other important fields of education which generate a true liberal and social culture. Religion is gladly sacrificed for Business Management; Philosophy becomes secondary to Public Relations and the Fine Arts are discarded in favor of a concentrated course in Sales Planning. A new generation is springing up, well versed in the intricate theories of Economics and Science and completely lacking in the liberal cultures which are the mark of a fully developed man.

Now it cannot be denied that some degree of specialization is necessary in order that the college man may take his place in a highly industrialized and scientific world. The fruits of the Industrial Revolution and the extraordinary advances of the men of science are in concrete evidence. We cannot withstand the tide of progress but must fit ourselves to take our proper place at the level of our own choosing. However, we must never become so engrossed in our field of concentration that we allow specialization to assume a position of total importance to the exclusion of a liberal culture. Rather, the cultivation of liberal arts should permeate and be reflected in whatever field we choose for our life's work. A balance must be maintained between the requirements for the pursuit of a livelihood and the cul-

The Alembic

tural amenities necessary for a sound and pleasant life. It is through the maintenance of this balance, coupled with the constant realization of the Divine Motive behind our reason for existence and an acquiescence to the Divine Plan, that we will effect a basically sound groundwork for a decent civilization.

We are fortunate at Providence College to study under a curriculum which takes cognizance of the fact that the development of character includes not only a limited specialization but also a firm grounding in the cultural and liberal arts. We have in our educational environment a constant reminder of the supernal causes which constitute our *raison d'être* and give meaning and purpose to our endeavor in life.

Yet even in these ideal circumstances, there are many who would stint themselves of the opportunity to profit fully in the achievement of liberal culture. There are many who seem to fear that the gloss and polish which show forth on the cultured man will brand them as nonconformists in a materialistic world. Cultural attainments are considered to be in the field of the affected, the effeminate, the college professor, or that particularly useless breed commonly labeled the "smart set" or the "high brow".

There are entirely too many students who experience a sense of shame or embarrassment concerning the linking of their names with such "nebulous trivialities" as poetry, literary criticism and the critical analysis or appreciation of such things as painting, sculpture and music. Even the basically correct use of the English language seems reprehensible in view of the fact that it is easier to conform to the slovenly and idiomatic language of the group rather than to be marked or set apart by erudite and well expressed speech. An intimate knowledge of the great men of past decades, an appreciation of the achievements of these men in *all* of their respective fields has been thrown into the discard inasmuch as the student of today cannot properly correlate this knowledge with his idea of earning his subsistence in materialistic surroundings.

Yet even the gross materialist, the unrefined specialist, must accord respect to the fully developed man. The cultured gentleman stands out as an example to be emulated, a model to be copied. His mental possessions are, perhaps, intangible if we attempt to place a

From the Scriptorium

money value on them; they are the priceless ingredients of a full and gracious life when considered only in the light of their intrinsic worth.

Willfully to neglect the cultural arts is a form of intellectual suicide. Part of our educational training must equip us to live with others, to be the ready and able associate of our fellow men; the greater part of our education must equip us to live with ourselves. The mind is insatiable in its quest for knowledge. Its ultimate satisfaction on this earth can be measured to some extent by the diverse fields we allow it to conquer.

The modern student has a tendency to develop the specialized inner core, ascribes to himself certain specific technological knowledge, equips himself to become one of the contemporary mass, but neglects the cultural periphery. Yet as the rest of humanity approaches an individual, it is the periphery they observe first and upon which they base their evaluations without bothering to delve much deeper. The lack of cultural refinement in the materialist does not presuppose that he will not notice this same lack in another. Rather, being aware of his own failing, he will expect, even demand, evidence of culture in his associates.

It is difficult to ascertain the cause of this apparent lack of student interest in the cultural pursuits. Perhaps it can be ascribed to the milieu we exist in today. Perhaps it is due to the fact that the present large number of college students contains a proportionately large number of veterans. This group, agitated to feverish and unnatural activity because of the loss of valuable educational time, seems determined not to let what they consider superficialities interfere with their rapid accumulation of the requisite number of credit-hours for a degree. In so doing, they lay the major stress on the specialized subjects to the detriment of the cultivation of the liberal arts. Whatever the cause, we can see from the effects that it is basically wrong.

It is time to take inventory of ourselves, of our motives and of our expectations. If the recapitulation shows that we are excluding culture for the sake of materialistic achievement then we can record a threefold failure. We will have failed Providence College in not having taken full advantage of the curriculum designed to produce a fully developed man. We will have failed as the precursors of a more noble, moralistic and genteel civilization. But above all, we will have failed in attaining what we owe ourselves.

W. B. H.

THE STAFF

Editor-in-Chief

WALES BARRY HENRY, '50

Associate Editors

JOHN J. LYNCH, '49

ARTHUR R. POUTRAY, '49

CLIFFORD J. BROTT, '50

GEORGE L. EAGLE, '50

RAYMOND L. SCUNGIO, '50

Editor Functus Officio

ROBERT E. DOHERTY, '49

Literary Board

WILLIAM H. HONNEN, '49

THOMAS H. BONING, '50

GEORGE H. COCHRAN, '51

HAROLD E. VAYO, JR., '51

Staff Artist

EDWARD R. LEONARD, '51

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 16, 1926, 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.

Frenzy In Frisco

By RAYMOND L. SCUNGIO, '50

THE whole thing came to a head the day my novel was published. From past experiences I should have known what to expect, but, in truth, I was fully unprepared for what happened. That day in San Francisco—. Perhaps I should start at the beginning.

When the manuscript of *Thunder Over Trinidad* was burned in the chalet, my good friend, Frank Latourn, advised me to rewrite it in New York and then go to San Francisco for a long vacation.

The day I left New York, Frank took me to Grand Central to make sure I would get off safely. Knowing that I wanted a quiet departure, he went out of his way to see that no one accompanied us to the station. For Frank that was really a concession, surrounded as he usually is by a crowd of people. I was thinking kindly of him and was about to comment on his thoughtfulness, when he pressed a book into my hands.

"Here's something to read on the train, Rupert," he said.

"Why, thank you, Frank. That's very—"

"It's my latest book, you know."

"But, Frank, I read your latest only a month ago."

"Oh, no. You read *Last Summer's Madness*. This book only came out today. It's the best thing I've ever done. You're going to be crazy about it."

Knowing Frank's books, which I abhor, I said nothing.

We approached the car in which I had reserved a compartment, and stood there thinking of things to say. As we stood thus, a pale blonde young woman, dressed all in black, approached us. When she was abreast of Frank, she dropped her large handbag. She stopped, confused.

"Allow me," said Frank, retrieving the bag.

"Thank you, sir," she murmured, her voice bearing traces of a foreign accent.

After she boarded the train, Frank turned back to me.

"Hmmm. Wish I were taking that train, Rupert," he said, and winked.

"I know what you're thinking, Frank, but this trip I intend to stay in my compartment all the way to California. I'm not going to speak to anyone but the porter. I'm going to read your book, make notes for a magazine article, and sleep most of the time. And when I get to San Francisco, I'm going to rest, eat, and sleep. There'll be no adventures this trip, you can count on that."

Frank laughed.

II

In the dining car that evening as I was ordering desert, a timid voice caused me to look up from the menu. Standing opposite me was the girl with the pale blonde hair whom Frank and I had seen in the afternoon. She was still dressed in black.

"No, no. That seat isn't taken. Sit down," I said, and immediately regretted it.

"Thank you, sir."

"Uh, the—uh roast beef is very good," I said, by the way of conversation.

"It is? Perhaps I should try that. Would you write

Frenzy in Frisco

it for me, sir? I can never write when these trains are swaying."

"Of course. It is difficult. Do you wish coffee with your meal?"

"Yes, please."

When the waiter had taken the order, I asked: "Miss, I've been noticing. You have an accent just like Marlene Dietrich's. Did you know that?"

"Yes," she laughed. "But that is not strange. You see, I just arrived recently from Berlin."

"Oh, did you? Well, that's interesting. And are you going to the West Coast, too?"

"Yes. I have always wanted to see California. Oh, America is such a wonderful country. I should like to stay here forever."

"Perhaps you may, Miss. You never know."

She looked down at the table, and then across at me. She seemed suddenly saddened. "How true that one never can know."

"Have I said something that upset you, Miss? I'm very sorry, really."

"It is nothing," she said, her face brightening. "Tell me. Have I not seen your picture in a magazine or newspaper? There is something about your face I recognize."

"Well, maybe you have. My name is Rupert Lake. I'm a novelist."

"Oh, ja ja. *Ich erinnere mich*," she said, temporarily deserting her English. "Your books are *wunderbar*."

"*Danke, Fräulein*," I answered.

"Oh, and you speak German, too! To think that the author of *Briefly Blooms Begonia* can speak my language."

"You flatter me, Miss. Er—what did you say your name was?"

"My name is Frieda von Barnhelm. I am descended from the Hapsburgs."

"Really? My friend Frank is descended from the Bourbons."

"Was he the gentleman I saw you with in New York?"

"Yes. He's Frank Latourn, the author."

"Frank Latourn! Oh, he is such a wonderful author. I wish I could have met him. Such an interesting person he must be."

"Well, you might say that Frieda. But tell me," I said, changing the subject, "do you expect to be in California very long?"

"Well, that depends," she said evasively. "Once I reach San Francisco, there are many things I must do there."

"I'm stopping at the Mark Hopkins in San Francisco. If you have nothing to do some afternoon while you're there, look me up. I know Frisco pretty well, and I'll give you a personally conducted tour," I said, knowing that is what travellers say to each other, and thinking I would never see her again. I was wrong.

Later that evening, I was sitting quietly in my compartment. I picked up Frank's book, and shuddered when I saw the title. It was *Sex in Saxony*. As I turned to the first page, there was a timid knock at the door. Thinking it was the porter, I shouted: "Come in!"

When I saw who it was I jumped to my feet. It was Frieda, dressed all in white with gold trimmings, looking very French provincial and twice as fragile.

"Why, Miss von Barnhelm, Frieda. What a pleasant surprise," I said, because in a way it was.

Frenzy in Frisco

"Rupert, please forgive me for coming here to your compartment, but I must speak with you. I must!"

I could see then that she was on the verge of collapse and I helped her into a chair. I knelt beside her.

"Do you feel faint?" I asked. "Shall I get you some water?"

"No, *lieber* Rupert, I shall be all right in a moment. I just need someone to talk to. I have been alone in my compartment thinking and thinking, and suddenly I could stand it no longer. I wanted to throw myself out of the train."

"Frieda. Now it can't be as bad as that. Come on, tell me all about it. I can help you," I heard myself saying. "Come on, now. What's the trouble?"

"Will you?"

"Will I what?"

"Help me, Rupert?"

"Oh," I said, "why, of course. Sure."

"Rupert, Rupert. You are so kind, so generous. I am so fortunate to have found you. You don't know what a relief it is to know I have someone near, someone to rely on."

"Just how can I help you, Frieda?" I asked, feeling just a bit curious.

"It is nothing immediate, you understand. But when I arrive in San Francisco I have to see a man. It is then that I may need your help. It is just a small matter, and you do not have to worry. Just to know you are nearby will mean so much."

"Okay, Frieda, I'll be there. Now let's just forget the whole thing. I'll do everything I can for you," I said, before I realized what I was saying.

"Thank you, thank you, Rupert," she said, and her voice became a soft whisper.

"Er, ah, would you care for a drink?" I asked, stumbling to my feet again. "Something tall and cool?"

"*Jawohl*. Ring for the porter."

"Well, let's go to the lounge."

"But, why?"

"They have music there," I hedged.

"But you have a radio here, Rupert."

"Well, it's much brighter in the lounge, and you need the brightness to break that mood," I said, and skillfully got her out of the chair and through the door before she could protest again.

Much later that night as I lay in my berth trying to read Frank's book, I kept thinking of Frieda. I had determined not to become involved on this trip, but here I was already acquainted with a beautiful German girl. And what was worse, she expected to see me in San Francisco.

Oh, well, I thought, when I get to Frisco I won't see her again. She doesn't know where to find me. Oh, yes, she does, you fool. You told her where you were staying. Damn. Oh, well, I'll have the desk clerk tell all visitors that I am not registered there. That will fix Miss Frieda von Barnhelm. I refuse to become involved any more. This trip I'm keeping to myself.

With that I turned to Frank's book. I opened to the first page again, and began to read: "The brilliant, golden sun was beginning to descend majestically behind the gracefully-rolling jade-green hills as Naomi stood in the courtyard waiting for Randolph."

Starting to gag, I tossed the book in the corner, turned out the light, and waited for sleep.

The next few days I did as neat a job of dodging as any fencer. I stayed in my room with the door locked. My

Frenzy in Frisco

meals were sent in on a tray. When timid knocks repeated themselves at my door, I feigned sleep. Finally I told the porter to spread the rumor about that I was ill. This touch I thought particularly clever and told myself that not for nothing was I an author. I thought myself complete master of the situation.

When the train arrived at Phoenix, Arizona, I made my escape with the aid of the porters and much lagniappe. They were instructed to tell everyone, the next day and not before, that my illness was serious and that I had been removed to a hospital.

I went immediately to the nearby airport and took a plane for San Francisco.

III

The next afternoon I was sitting in the Top-of-the-Mark, sipping a Singapore Sling, and looking out over the whole San Francisco Bay area. It was restful and I was at peace. This was just what I had needed for so long. No manuscripts. No publishers. No Frank Latourn. No beautiful women with accents. Just relaxation in San Francisco. I was happy.

I planned the trips I would take to Monterrey and Carmel; the places I would dine in San Francisco; the friends I would visit. How was I to know that I would not do all these things alone?

One afternoon, a few days later, I was in my hotel room. I had been thinking of poor old Frank and his kind gift, and since I had nothing planned for a few hours, I decided to give his book a reading. It was the least I could do, I thought.

Picking up the book, I began to read: "The brilliant, golden sun was beginning to descend majestically behind the

gracefully-rolling jade-green hills as Naomi stood in the courtyard waiting for Randolph."

It was then that I realized I was out of cigarettes. I suppose that it was inevitable anyway, but that day I never regretted more the fact that I smoked. For had I not gone down to the lobby for cigarettes everything would have been all right . . . or such is my fond belief.

All I did was get out of the elevator, walk to the tobacco stand, and ask for some cigarettes.

"Rupert, at last," said a voice.

I whirled around, and there she stood, looking even more beautiful than I had remembered her.

"Why Frieda, heh, heh, I hoped I had—I mean, where have you been?" And I dropped my cigarettes.

"I was so afraid that I had lost you," she said, taking my arm. "You were a naughty boy for not letting me take care of you during your illness. *Ach*, how I was worried."

"Oh, it was nothing, Frieda. Just a touch of malaria that I picked up in the tropics," I lied, as she steered me towards the elevator.

"We have so much to talk about, Rupert."

"Er, where are we going?" I asked.

"To my suite, of course."

"Are you registered here, too?"

"Yes, you told me to stay at this hotel on the train. Remember, Rupert?"

"Yes, of course," I said, remembering no such thing.

"But, Frieda, it's time for cocktails, and I suggest that we go up to the lounge. You know, this is really one of the places to go in San Francisco, and I don't want you to miss it."

At this point I was determined to keep our relationship strictly a sightseeing tour.

Frenzy in Frisco

Inside the lounge, we took a small table close by the windows. I said very little until the second drinks arrived.

"Well, Frieda, there it is. The city, the bay, and the Golden Gate."

"It is really very beautiful. I love San Francisco already."

"Do you, Frieda? I've always loved it. It's my favorite city in the States. There's something about it that fascinates me. Oh, you're going to have a fine time seeing the sights."

"Yes, Rupert, we are going to have a wonderful time, you and I. I, exploring the city for the first time, and you, my guide, *nicht*?"

"Well, yes," I said, not knowing just what to reply, "I'll be your captain."

"Oh," she laughed, "Steve always used to say that." She stopped, plainly confused.

"Who was Steve?"

"Oh, someone I knew once in Berlin. But tell me, Rupert, where do we dine tonight?"

"Tonight? Well, I wasn't—I mean, The Ritz. Yes. The Ritz."

I was confused, and knew there was no way out of the situation save a hurried departure from San Francisco, which I refused to do. I was there for a rest and did not want to become involved with Frieda. And yet, as I sat sipping my third drink, looking at her, I began to wonder. There was something about her eyes that made me feel comfortable. There was something in the way she tilted her head when she laughed. There was something in the way her hand brushed back a lock of hair from her forehead.

"The food is good there?" she was asking.

"They have the best French cuisine in town. You'll enjoy it. And they have the most extraordinary wine cellar."

"Rupert, why are you signaling the waiter? You're not going to have another cocktail, surely?"

"Sure. Let's. We've got plenty of time."

"But, it's time to dress for dinner."

"Well, you go ahead down. I'll—"

"Won't you see me to my room, first, Rupert?"

We left the lounge.

The next few weeks that followed were spent in a whirl of sightseeing trips, dinner parties, and nights on the town. Frieda was always with me, of course, and being with her began to take on a certain charm, a sense of being at ease. My earlier resolutions gradually slipped away with the charm of San Francisco's early morning mists. To my surprise I found that I was enjoying myself.

The day finally arrived when my book was to go on sale. That morning Frank phoned from New York at the unearthly hour of seven o'clock. When the phone rang I was in bed, and thought it was Frieda calling. I picked up the phone.

"*Guten Morgen, liebchen*," I yawned.

"Hello. Hello. Is this Rupert?" It was Frank's voice.

"Yeah, this is Rupert. That you, Frank?" Obviously it was.

"Do you feel well, Rupert? You're not ill?"

"No, Frank." I sat up, trying to clear my brain. "Why are you calling me so damn early? Have they finally realized what a menace you are and jailed you? If so, you can stay there; I won't bail you out."

"Ha-hah. You're in fine fettle this morning, old man. That's what I like to hear. This is the big day, you know.

Frenzy in Frisco

That's why I called. The advance reports on your book are more than satisfactory. The Book-of-the-Hour Club wants to offer it as their next selection. Good, eh?"

"Sounds good, Frank. I'm glad you called. I had almost forgotten that the book was coming out today. I've been so busy here."

"Been busy? Doing what?"

"Oh," I said evasively, "getting around."

"Oh-ho, that little dilly who was on the train, eh? Well, good for you, Rupert. I knew you were too intelligent to let all that business with Danielle in Trinidad get you down."

"Who's Danielle?" I asked, just to show I was fully recovered.

"Good boy, Rupert. That's what I like to hear. And that brings us to the point of this call. I've got a little surprise for you."

"Well, let's hear it, Frank," I said, and crossed my fingers from experience, knowing full well Frank's little surprises.

"Can't tell you. But you'll be surprised, I assure you," he said, and laughed that phoney, stage laugh of his. "I've sent someone to San Francisco to see you. When that person arrives, you'll know all about it."

He wished me luck on my new book then, and after bandying a few mild insults back and forth, we hung up. It was a full five minutes before I realized that he had reversed the charges.

That is how the day began. Awakened from a sound sleep to listen to some obnoxious conversation from Frank Latourn, for which I had to pay. It was an innocent beginning, and I, who was only looking forward to having Frieda

by my side as I signed autographs in a book shop, could not know what that day held in store for me. In one way or another. I was to keep on paying the whole day.

IV

In the late afternoon, after a rather strenuous day of interviews, a radio broadcast, a book shop reception, and much autograph signing, I returned to the hotel with Frieda. We were talking of the invitation we had received for dinner that evening as we entered the lobby. Before we reached the desk, Frieda stopped and grabbed my arm.

"Something wrong, Frieda?" I asked.

"No, Rupert, no," she said, quickly composing herself. "But do you not see that man over there near the news stand?"

I looked across the lobby at a well-built young man in a dark blue suit. He was smoking a cigarette and scowling in the manner of the current Hollywood heroes. I turned back to Frieda.

"Well, what about him, Frieda?"

"Rupert, he is Mr. O'Malley, the man I told you I had to see in San Francisco. I didn't expect him to find—I mean, to see him today."

"Well," I asked, puzzled, "don't you want to see him? Is anything wrong, Frieda? Something you haven't told me?"

"No, *lieber* Rupert, everything will be all right. Just wait here while I go speak with him."

As Frieda walked across the lobby, I had every intention of waiting for her and keeping an eye on the proceedings. However, just as I was about to light a cigarette, I heard a familiar voice behind me. Turning, I saw the back of a shapely blonde-haired girl in a blue travelling suit disappearing into the elevator. I could not believe what I had seen. It could not be possible, I told myself. And yet—.

Frenzy in Frisco

I rushed over to the desk, and only after struggling to control my voice did I manage to obtain the desired information from the clerk. She was here. The girl I had last seen under trying circumstances in Rio. Olivia Pollito was in San Francisco!

A few minutes later, with my heart still pounding, I knocked at the door of Olivia's suite, which happened, by chance, to be across the hall from Frieda's. After a moment, the door opened and there she stood. I wanted to speak, but her look of puzzled surprise caused my courage to dissolve. I just stood there, waiting.

"Rupert," she said, at last, "this is a surprise. I didn't expect to see you so—. I—"

"Hello, Olivia. May I come in?"

"Oh. Forgive me. Please do, Rupert."

I walked in and immediately took a seat. Olivia remained standing. There was another uncomfortable pause, during which I realized that things were not as they had been in Rio. Here in San Francisco we were almost strangers.

"Er—I read that your latest book was going on the stands today, Rupert."

"Yes. Yes, it is," I said.

"Congratulations, Rupert. You are now very famous, no?"

"Well, sort of, Olivia."

"Then you must be very happy, Rupert. That is what you always wanted."

"It hasn't made me happy, Olivia," I said, "and that isn't all I wanted. I haven't been happy since—"

At that moment, the door, which Olivia had neglected to lock, flew open and banged against the wall. Olivia turned, reached a hand to her throat, and screamed: "Carlos!"

Standing up, I faced the doorway. There stood a short, dark man looking very Latin and very melodramatic. As he walked a few steps into the room, I almost expected him to fling a cape over his left shoulder.

"So," said this little man, who was obviously Carlos, Olivia's husband, long thought dead, "at last I catch you up, you two."

"Carlos," said Olivia, shaken by his sudden entrance, "the plane crash in the Pyrenees, the cablegram to Lisbon, I thought—"

"It was all a mistake. And the minute my back is turned, you begin seeing this skinny author, who writes books about you. Don't think I do not know what has been going on."

"But, Carlos, how could I know—"

"Really, Señor," I interrupted, "you can't blame your wife. How was she to know you weren't dead? And where have you been all this time?"

"That is none of your affairs. You Americans think that a man can not go on an extended business trip, no?"

"Frankly, no," I said, deciding not to be bullied by this comic character, who like many Latins was apparently prone to dramatize.

"You insult me! You call me a liar!"

I laughed and turned away from him. It was Olivia's voice which made me realize the gravity of the situation.

"Carlos," she screamed, "no! No! Do not shoot him!"

I whirled around, and said: "Hey, now, Carlos, Señor Pollito, take it easy. Put that thing away. Let's talk this over."

Frenzy in Frisco

"I am going to shoot you," he said. "*Villanchón. Necio. Estúpido yanqui!*"

Olivia screamed, "Carlos," and the gun went off.

As I lay bleeding on the beige rug, Carlos and Olivia hurled piquant Spanish phrases back and forth. They were interrupted by the arrival of Frieda and her Mr. O'Malley, who doubtless must have been in Frieda's suite to have heard the gun shot.

"What's going on in here?" demanded O'Malley.

"Target practice," I said, with an effort at levity.

"Rupert," Frieda screamed, and rushed to help me into a chair.

"Oh, so that's the Rupert guy, eh? Looks like somebody beat me to it," O'Malley said.

Carlos suddenly became all animation again. "Frieda, *liebchen*, you said Paris. I waited—"

"Carlos," said Olivia in surprise.

"Frieda," he continued, "you said in Berlin that I should go—"

"Hey, shorty," interrupted O'Malley, "just a minute. This is my girl you're talking to. Take your mitts off her."

"Steve, be quiet," said Frieda.

"Oh," I said, "so this is Steve!"

"Yeah, I'm Steve. But what's with you, Carlos?"

"Be quiet, stupid one," said Carlos. "I have known Frieda a long time. We have much to talk about. No, *liebchen?*"

"Oh, so you're the guy that's been beating my time, eh? And all the while I was blaming this Rupert character. Well, my apologies, Rupert. But maybe I can do you a favor." And with that O'Malley removed from his coat what looked suspiciously like a German luger.

"Steve," cried Frieda, "Carlos is just an old friend—"

"Get outa my way, baby," said O'Malley.

"Carlos, run," said Frieda, and threw herself against O'Malley.

Carlos bolted through the small crowd that had formed at the doorway and was off down the corridor. O'Malley shoved Frieda roughly aside and was soon after him. Frieda looked wildly at me for an instant, and then she, too, followed suit. Gun shots and Frieda's screams echoed along the hallway, and gradually faded away.

"Olivia," I said, weakly, "I think you'd better call a doctor."

With tears in her eyes, she knelt beside me and put her arms around my neck. Her embrace increased the pain of my wound, but I was very happy.

V

By the following afternoon, I was on my feet again. Thanks to the padding of my suit coat, the shoulder wound was only superficial. The doctor said that with a few hours rest I would be well enough to go about my business.

While I stayed in bed that day, Olivia brought me a basket of fruit, some magazines, and the San Francisco papers. She was so kind and solicitous that it was like old times.

I was anxious to see the newspapers because the police had questioned me the preceding night about my part in the affair, and from past experiences I was expecting the worst. However, the accounts in the papers were more than heartening. In fact they added to the new-found happiness I felt at my reunion with Olivia.

The accounts read that after I had been shot, one Stephen O'Malley had chased one Carlos Pollito into the hotel lobby. There a brawl ensued while a blonde girl, one

Frenzy in Frisco

Frieda von Barnhelm, ran about alternately aiding both men and screaming for the police. Eventually, O'Malley killed Carlos in self-defense. But something Frieda had neglected to tell me was that her visa had expired and she was in this country illegally.

It appeared that she had met O'Malley while he was with the army in Berlin. She had promised to marry him, but after he obtained her entry into this country, she refused and left him to hunt for a man with more means. O'Malley pursued her. He found Frieda in Frisco, and discovered that she had had clandestine meetings with Carlos in Berlin at the very time that Steve was asking her to be his wife. It was all too much for Mr. O'Malley.

Frieda was taken into custody by the State Department to be deported. O'Malley, although exonerated in the shooting affair, was being held for questioning by the War Department. It appeared that the luger with which he shot Carlos was contraband, and the authorities suspected that because he owned it, he might possibly be the man they were looking for. To wit, the operator of a notorious black market system who had slipped through their hands some months before.

The one bright spot of the whole affair was that for once I was considered absolutely blameless. Moreover, I was receiving praise from both the State Department, for the apprehension of Frieda, and the War Department, for the apprehension of Stephen O'Malley. Also, I might add, the San Francisco police had determined that this time Carlos was definitely dead. That now left Olivia free to marry me.

And so it was with a light heart that I strolled into the lounge at the Top-of-the-Mark that afternoon to meet Olivia. She was sitting at a small table by the windows, looking out toward the ocean.

"*Buenas tardes, querida*," I said, sitting down.

"Ah, Rupert, you are looking much better. No, don't signal the waiter. I've already ordered for you."

"What did you order for me?"

"You'll see. Here's the waiter now."

The drink I was served was a Singapore Sling. She had remembered.

"That is what you were drinking the first day I met you, Rupert. Do you remember?" she asked, in her soft, melodious voice.

"Yes. But I didn't think you would, Olivia," I said truthfully.

"Oh, but I did, *querido*. I remember so much about the past."

"So do I, Olivia. But let's not talk about the past. There are so many things I want to tell you now. So many things about the future. I don't know just where to begin."

"Rupert, say what you wish. And when you have finished, there is something I must tell you."

"Well, Olivia, I want to tell you that I intend to change my ways. I'm going to stop listening to Frank Latourn. Nothing would happen to me if I'd only live my own life for a change instead of letting him run it for me. I've been thinking of going abroad to live."

"That sounds wonderful, Rupert. It reminds me of the Rupert I first met on a cruise to Rio. You were so different then," she said.

"I'll be that way again, Olivia. Finding you again has made me realize a lot of things. And that's what I want you to know. I can't do these things alone. I need someone. I need you, Olivia. No, no, don't interrupt me. I tell you this

Frenzy in Frisco

with all sincerity. I love you, Olivia. And now that Carlos is no more, you're free. I want you to be my wife."

I was speaking earnestly, and I meant every word I said. That is why it surprised me to see her turn away, and look out again at the ocean. The fog was starting to roll in and the light was fading.

"What's the matter, Olivia?" I asked.

She turned back to me then, her eyes moist. "But, Rupert, I can't marry you," she said.

"Why not, Olivia?"

"Because I'm going to marry Frank Latourn," she said.

My world collapsed like a house of cards, and it was several minutes before I could speak.

"Olivia, is this a joke?" I asked, hoping it was.

"No, *querido*. It is not. I became engaged to Frank last week in New York. He sent me out here to tell you. He thought it would be better this way, if I spoke to you."

How can I explain how I felt at that moment? There was a strange burning in my chest. I wanted to shout. I wanted to tell Olivia: "Frank isn't the way you think he is. Your life with him will be a confusing excursion through his snobbish social circle. You'll hate it. You'll end up hating Frank. You'll long for the serenity and stability of your home in Rio. He'll never be able to conceive that you don't enjoy his kind of life, that you're not happy. I can make you happy. I'm the man you should marry."

Aloud, I said. "Congratulations."

"Are you not going to wish us happiness, Rupert?" she asked, tilting her head to the side.

She seemed to be pitying me, and I didn't want her pity. As much as I hated the characters in Frank's books who are

"always being brave about it," I made an effort at bravery myself.

Raising my glass I said, "I wish you and Frank every happiness. I'm sure you're marriage will be a—a success."

"Thank you, Rupert," she said.

We said goodbye then, and I left her.

I went down to the travel desk in the lobby, and through a stroke of luck found that there had been a cancellation on the next morning's flight to Honolulu. I took the reservation, and made arrangements for my luggage. I was determined to put as many miles as I could between myself and Frank and Olivia. Honolulu was only the first stop. From there it would probably be Australia, Manila, or even Shanghai. I had once been very happy in Shanghai. Perhaps I would go there eventually.

That night after a morbidly lonely dinner, I returned to my room. It was strange, I thought, that on the day my novel was published, so much should happen to me. And just when I was receiving praise from government departments for once in my life, I was to lose the one thing I wanted most in the world. In my shining hour, I was crushed.

In my room, I packed my suitcase for the morning, showered, put on my pajamas and robe, and then sat down for a cigarette. I noticed Frank's book on the table. I picked it up, and as I did so, thought of the many kindnesses I had received from Frank. All bitterness gradually left me. Perhaps this is what I have needed, I told myself, to go away and make a new start. Toward Frank and Olivia I held only kind thoughts. Even the thought of Trinidad and Danielle only made me smile.

It dawned on me suddenly that I had not read Frank's book. I opened to the first page . . . "The brilliant golden

sun was beginning to descend majestically behind the gracefully-rolling jade-green hills as Naomi stood in the courtyard waiting for Randolph."

Suddenly there was a rapid knocking at the door. I laid the book aside, walked across the room, and opened the door. There before me stood a pale wraith of a girl in a paroxysm of terror. She looked fitfully over her shoulder, almost on the verge of collapse. With her hair dyed black, it took me a few moments to recognize her.

"Why, Danielle," I said, "I thought you were in Martinique. What are you doing in San Fran—"

"Sssh," she said, pressing a finger to her lips, "let me in—quick!"

Senescence

By CLIFFORD J. BROTT, '50

Leaves of Autumn slowly turning,
Slowly falling towards the ground,
Gusts of wind are gaily churning
Falling leaves around and round.

Twilight's dim on me descended,
Ever nearing, close to day;
Moonlight beams must follow searing
Beams of sunlight passed away.

Thus, my life is nearly ended;
Autumn's leaves are nearly gone,
Twilight's dim is ever nearing,
Heralding eternal dawn.

Lost Innocence

By HAROLD E. VAYO, JR., '51

She dwelled among the gardens of my heart.
Her voice was as the whispered breath of Spring;
Her step, the dulcet thrill of Heaven's part;
Her love, the love of Angels for their King.

The flowers bloomed beneath her tender care,
Their fragrance filled me with unbound delight.
She smiled at me and bade me ever share
Her joys, the everlasting purge of Night.

One day, a shadow fell across her May:
A monstrous, shapeless, hideous, squalid thing.
The blossoms wilted, crumbled, died away;
She saw it, turned, and fled its fatal sting.

Then thunder thrashed through my quaking soul
And lurid lightning lept across th' obscure
That used its precious burden to enfold
And cherish every movement: dovelike, pure.

Some day may she return, and come to stay
Ere life 'comes living death, and love: decay.

Simplicity

By CLIFFORD J. BROTT, '50

Scudding wisps of fleecy cloud,
A perfumed breath of Autumn's breeze,
Claps of thunder pealing loud,
All spell to me Simplicity.

Gurgling brooks that fill with charm
The aught-else browned and begging sod,
Birds winging high, aloft from harm,
Convey to me the thought of God.

The wind-songs, filled with melody,
To me are hymns by angels sung;
The sunset's golden quality
The knell to mortal day has rung.

While I, a mortal placed on Earth,
These passing beauties do adore,
I long for sweet eternity
Where they might pass away no more.

The Eternal Triangle

By WILLIAM H. HONNEN, JR., '49

IT was a cold, blustering winter's night. When we came out of the movies, Helen and I decided to drop into the Cafeteria for a cup of coffee. The murky nectar of a mug of java warms my frame and soothes my spirit as a heady cordial might delight the epicurean.

Personally though, I prefer a beverage which has its effect before it reaches the cranium.

Anyway, we planked ourselves down on a couple of stunted stools and ordered. I soon sank into a stupor, induced by the high temperature within the building, the intoxicating aroma of the coffee, and Helen's soporific comments on the silver screen's latest stinkeroo, which I had unfortunately been inveigled into seeing. How these dames can become so captivated by the mediocre histrionics of some hammy matinee idol like Rudy Montaigne is beyond my comprehension.

An un-anticipated prod in the ribs shattered my reverie. I turned apologetically to the wife who had probably been engaged in a cozy monologue for several minutes, only to discover that a shabby news vendor had presumed to disturb my tranquillity.

"Buy a paper, Darling," cooed the "better half", realizing full well how strenuously I objected to investing even a few paltry pennies in such a putrid scandal sheet. But she was well acquainted with my litany of vituperation concerning tabloids, so I suppressed a subconscious urge to rant against the lurid sensationalism of yellow journalism and purchased a copy of the rag.

The Eternal Triangle

While my spouse was scanning the theatrical section in order to ascertain how many "stars" the movie reviewer had been paid to give the saga we had just witnessed, I reflected on my craven abandonment of principles in buying the paper. As far as I was concerned the only "hot" thing about the journal was the torrid copy it featured. As I studied the smudge of fresh ink which had soiled my hands I couldn't help thinking that it was symbolic of the way in which its contents similarly tainted the minds of its readers.

After silently concurring with the three and a half star appraisal of the critic, Helen began rattling through the paper in reverse, in a desultory fashion. I ordered another cup of "Joe", primed my briar, and awaited repercussions from page two . . . the SCANDAL section. Suddenly there was a little gasp as she speechlessly held up the sheet so that I could peruse the breathtaking tragedy etched in sensational type about three feet high.

DOMESTIC TRIANGLE TAKES TRIPLE TOLL

Jealous Wife Slays Mate and Companion

Turns Gun On Self

My eyes left the garish headlines and wandered down the column, where the sordid details of another typical version of marital infidelity were recorded for the edification of the reading public. It was just another boudoir tragedy in which the wife had surprised her husband in compromising circumstances. After shooting him and his companion, she had turned the gun on herself. My blood simmered as I scanned the pornographic details designed for lecherous minds such as those involved in the scandal.

By this time Helen had sufficiently recovered from her initial shock to glean more of the lurid details over my shoulder, which elicited from her a typically incongruous feminine observation.

"You'd never be unfaithful to me like that, would you Billy?" It was one of those remarks which made me itch with irritation as I speculated on the hypothetical possibility of woman's rationality. I stifled an inclination to express some livid remarks on that subject, however, since I had learned from experience that while women were often illogical, nevertheless their emotional sensitivity gave them an insight which at times almost seemed to transcend reason.

Anyway I had a healthy respect for my wife's point of view. I realized that this was merely the preliminary sally of a discussion containing many provocative aspects. As a matter of fact it was just such a diversity of opinion in the early days of our acquaintanceship, which served as a mutual bond of attraction to bring us together . . . often at sword's point. Now after several years of courtship and marriage, we still preserved a healthy respect for each other's opinions. We had discovered that intelligent discussion helped us to arrive at a communion of thought and temperament without foundering on the treacherous reefs of misunderstanding.

We found that while our marriage may have been made in heaven, still neither of us possessed that perfection of angelic nature to comprehend one another's actions, without resolving our differences through mutual discussion and concession. In such a way are tragic episodes like the account in the paper avoided. They say it takes a lot of living to make a house a home; by the same token it takes oceans of patience and forbearance to make a man or woman a good husband or a good wife.

The Eternal Triangle

"Who do you think was to blame for the deaths, Billy?" Just another interrogation to goad me into action for she knew darn well how I'd dispatch that query.

"After all, Honey, how can we judge who was in the wrong unless we know all the circumstances involved? One thing you can be sure of though: the defection is hardly ever a one sided affair.

"In most cases such as this you can trace the cause back to a complete misconception of the vital purpose of marriage. Too many marriages these days are hastily contracted and are just as quickly terminated once the novelty of the situation wears off and the sexual appetite is satiated.

"If more young people realized that Christian marriage—any lawful marriage for that matter—is a solemn contract sanctioned and blessed by God, whereby a man and a woman give and receive certain permanent physical privileges in order to perpetuate the species and to allay concupiscence, then they might think twice before hastily assuming such a serious obligation. The kids who dash off to a Justice of the Peace to get 'hitched', find that the wedding bond is a slip knot which unfortunately parts the first time a strain is applied to it. It would be far better if they were 'spliced' properly at the altar, since the woven strand is as strong as the knot is weak.

"Modern marriage is too often founded on pleasure, consummated in blind passion, and terminated in the divorce court on such spurious grounds as mental cruelty or incompatibility. There is only a brief interlude between the solemn pledge 'I Do', and the 'Adieu' of separation. As one Priest succinctly expressed it; the 'moderns' place their confidence in *Mr. Anthony* rather than in *Saint Anthony*.

"Our code of jurisprudence, instead of using the divine and natural law as a basis of interpretation, dispenses the mar-

riage contract on the slightest pretext. This usurpation of divine authority and patent disregard of the common welfare is an ominous sign of a decadent society."

* * *

One thing I admire about Helen is the fact that she is a wonderful listener. She makes me feel that it is worthwhile probing into a sticky question like marriage, and naturally it's good for the old "ego" to have an attentive audience. Although I enjoy a good discussion I usually have to be drawn out before I warm up to the subject. With my wife, however, I just pull out all the stops and let the notes fall where they may. That is, until I strike a discordant bar in her mind. Then she gently injects herself into the conversation while I gasp some more air into the old bellows for another aria.

Once I'm primed for a spiel, I spout like Moby Dick, despite the barbs of convivial adversaries. In the early days of our romance, Helen and I were quite adamant in upholding our personal opinions, and were extremely sensitive to criticism.

At times it seemed to me that her principles were rooted in a mire of secularism; and I guess she had me pretty well pegged as a biased and uncompromising boor. From the number of altercations which took place between us on subways, busses, in restaurants, on the street, and at home, you'd never suspect that we were falling in love.

And while such arguments sometimes reached exaggerated proportions, I am convinced that only by thrashing out differences during courtship, will a couple know whether they can make the adjustments and sacrifices necessary for a satisfactory marriage relationship.

* * *

"What a horrible thing to be involved in a love tri-

The Eternal Triangle

angle like this one, Billy. Remember how Enoch Arden came home after many years of separation from his wife and finding her happily married to another man, he touchingly disappeared again. Gosh! What a hard choice to make."

* * *

"Listen, Honey! If he wasn't such a jerk and knew his marital rights he would have walked right in and booted out the interloper without trepidation, since Canon Law requires actual proof of the demise of one party before re-marriage can take place. But maybe Enoch made a wise choice at that! However, since you posed the question of philandering I'm afraid I have a confession to make which may startle you a bit."

* * *

You should have seen those beautiful diamonds of hers dilate when I nonchalantly slipped in that bombshell. I've always teased her in such a fashion: most likely just to see the jealous reaction which indicated that the old torch was still blazing for yours truly. And of course she also has her cute tricks for gauging the intensity of my heartbeat. Perhaps the look of injured innocence which she assumed now was just a ruse; but I didn't have the heart to continue the deception at her expense.

* * *

"Don't get alarmed, Sweetheart; there's nothing clandestine about my affair. You've been aware of it since we first met. As a matter of fact I believe every married couple should be enmeshed in an "*Eternal Triangle*" . . . not the seamy, sordid kind of proposition which reduces marriage to the mating level; but rather a pyramid of lofty ideals which has God as its apex and man and woman as its base.

"A marriage which courts the grace of God as well as

the attention of one's partner; which adores the Creator of Life as well as 'worships' the ground on which she treads; a union that seeks its love in the love of the Savior. Such a marriage constitutes an *Eternal Triangle* which is not a shameful, but glorious liaison."

• • •

It was good to see the doubt in Helen's eyes give away to a loving concurrence as I made my "horrible" revelation.

"Do you know, Bill," she said: "If people who contemplated matrimony generously included God in all their plans and dreams, why their happiness would be magnified, and their trials would be more bearable.

"Today men and women enter the nuptial state expecting to get something for nothing. They desire pleasure and seek conjugal happiness, and all the physical and spiritual joys which go with matrimony, but they are unwilling to practice the virtues of patience and self sacrifice which are the cornerstones of real domestic harmony.

"Remember, Billy, how we used to bolster each other's morale before we were married, by offering one another a mutual assurance of prayers for the resolution of our difficulties?"

• • •

Yes, I remembered well enough, and it made me proud and happy to know that as my "girl" and as my wife she had cultivated such a lofty conception of matrimony. But I had to smile inwardly, for it had not always been that way.

There was a time early in our courtship, when the association of the term "sacrifice" with the married state, was anathema. Not that Helen was the least bit lacking in the qualities of sacrifice; as a matter of fact her innate generosity often put me to shame. But in her little social strata, marriage

The Eternal Triangle

connoted pleasure and material success: a cute apartment, a new car, a dazzling wardrobe, a roundelay of cocktail parties.

Everything was designed to escape from the responsibilities and heartaches which marriage implied. Naturally birth control was fashionable since it enabled two people to cohabit without the danger of an "accident" of birth, which would drain finances and limit one's social activities.

A child born of such a union was unwelcome and unwanted, instead of being the joyful answer to a parents' prayer. And when I imprudently challenged these "Planned Parenthood devotees" by observing that in reality "Birth Control" meant "no birth and no control", they directed pitying glances at Helen, as if to say: "Poor Dear! You certainly made an unhappy choice in that character!"

* * *

Those disagreeable days seem far distant now. Thank God I wasn't shaken in my convictions, and thank God that the girl who was to be my wife hadn't been completely duped by the false philosophy of the ultra-moderns. Her subsequent conversion to Catholicism was the logical consequence of the infusion of God's love into a heart created for Him. And what a privilege it was to watch virtue take root and flourish in her soul.

Thou hast made us for Thyself O Lord

And we find solace only in Thee!

From observing the effectiveness of grace in Helen's soul during our courtship; and because of the happiness with which our married life has been blessed—despite the normal trials which beset all of us—I am convinced that more people would respect the sanctity of marriage and the home, if we Catholics not only set a good example in our own personal lives, but also made a sincere effort to help others see the true purpose of matrimony.

To Catch the Sun

By HAROLD E. VAYO, JR., '51

"And other seed fell among thorns."

LUKE 8:7

"DAMN!" he grumbled to himself, scrambling to his feet again. "Someone ought to do something about this road—vines and ruts and boulders all over the place. It seems almost as if they were put here on purpose. I wish to hell I had a lantern."

An astigmatic moon shone faintly through the veil of mist which obscured its vision, and vaguely silhouetted huge, scraggly trees against the sickly, black background of the night. A winding dirt road, staggering and reeling blindly into the darkness, was the only evidence of this region's ever having been penetrated by man, the defiler of Nature's virginity. It was a well-travelled road; yet wild grasses had long since begun their long and arduous task of erasing the scar left by the invader, and stones, moved by the rains of countless summers, offered a formidable obstacle to any mode of travel except foot.

At the beginning of this road was the City; and at the end a high mountain, the highest in all creation, was faintly visible on a clear day. An ancient legend held that it was from the top of this mountain that people used to catch the Sun as it rose from the sea beyond. It was a trip which many started but few completed, for the journey was difficult and the hardships were many. No one who had reached the mountain had ever returned, and there was much speculation as to what awaited the wayfarer at the end of his travels.

"Why did I ever start out on this trip?" he thought.

To Catch the Sun

"I never would have let myself be talked into this by anyone else but Fran, and even she couldn't have done it if it hadn't been for that damned wine. Oh, well, I can't turn back now. Wouldn't I be the laughing stock! They all said I'd be back before sundown with a headache or some other lame excuse. They're going to be mighty disappointed, though. When I say I'm going to do something, there's no power on heaven or earth can stop me!"

Thereupon, he retrieved his walking-staff and once more began to tread his way along the road—cautiously, lest he trip over another rock or become entangled in a vine. As he proceeded he became increasingly skillful in avoiding these impediments by using his staff as a feeler, and in a short time he was moving at a pretty good pace.

"I wonder what I'll find on the top of the mountain when I catch the Sun," he mused, not breaking his stride, "For certainly there must be something else up there. Perhaps it's just a feeling of accomplishment. But then, why has no one who reached the summit returned to tell about it? It may be that life is pleasanter up there."

Just then there loomed ahead of him a fork in the road. The bright branch was a continuation of the same road that he was on, and gave hint of becoming even more difficult than it already was. The left, on the other hand, was smooth and well kept, and offered no obstructions to the traveller. Instinctively he realized that the right branch was the way to the mountain.

"Both of these roads seem to lead in the same general direction," he argued, attempting to convince himself, "So why should I make it hard for myself? What if it does take me longer to get to the mountain on this new road? It will be a lot easier. Why take the chance of falling again and

maybe really hurting myself? I'll take the easy road. It's the smart thing to do."

And he turned to the left.

"This certainly is much better. It was a rough stretch back there. Not everyone could have gone through it as well and as quickly as I did. My knees aren't skinned as badly as I figured. A little iodine and—"

He stopped abruptly, for it suddenly dawned on him that he had passed out of the haze and almost total darkness into a clear, cool, moonlit night. The vastness of the nocturnal sky awed him completely, and he stood in reverential silence. The stars were just beyond his fingertips. Quickly recovering his composure, he chuckled to himself, saying, "Now wasn't that the fool thing to do! Another minute and I'd have been writing poetry. That would really be something for a well-balanced adult to do. Poets—pah! Thank God I'm practical enough to see their stuff for what it is, a malodorous heap of overripe adjectives and wormy green images surrounding a leprous tree of inspiration."

He had been climbing steadily upward for some time, and rounding a sharp bend, he found himself on a bluff overlooking a wooded valley, which was cut in half by the road. A winding stream, quicksilver in the moonlight, fed a small, star-filled lake. On the shore of the lake, in a clearing, was a brightly lighted mansion, and ripples of laughter and merry-making floated through the crisp, quiet night. He stood there, contemplating the scene before him. A door opened and a couple, arm in arm, slipped out and melted away into the shadows at the edge of the clearing.

"I'll be damned!" he exclaimed aloud. "What is a mansion doing in this wilderness? It would be a wonderful place to spend the night. I think I'll go down and see what it's all about."

To Catch the Sun

He descended into the valley, turned off the road at a point opposite the mansion, and then proceeded through the forest to the clearing. After a moment of indecision, he strode boldly across to the steps leading up to the panelled door, mounted them, raised the bronze knocker, and let it fall. Almost before the sound had died away, the door opened and before him stood the loveliest maiden he had ever seen. Soft waves of honey golden hair broke gently on her ivory shoulders. Her eyes were round and like a baby's, and they danced constantly. She was clothed in a loose-flowing robe of shimmering white silk. A single tearful pearl hung at her throat.

"Come in! Come in! We've been waiting for you." She smiled invitingly, and two dimples played elusively at the corners of her mouth.

Recovering his seldom-lost composure, he returned her greeting and followed her into the reception hall.

Inside, she turned to him and said, "You must be tired and dusty from your journey. Perhaps you'd like to freshen up a bit." Without awaiting a reply, she continued, "I've already taken the liberty to have your bath drawn and if you'll follow me I'll take you to your room."

She extended her arm, motioning for him to take her hand. They ascended a short flight of stairs, turned left down a corridor and proceeded into a high-ceilinged bedroom. The walls were hung with a magnificent tapestry which depicted the myth of Daphnis and Chloe. The bed was large, and its posters, ornately carved with delicately wrought figures, supported a light blue canopy from which cascaded billows of filmy gauze and veils of fragile lace. It was the room that he had dreamed about ever since his childhood, when a wealthy uncle had taken him to the palace of a neighboring duke, and shown him the splendors of nobility.

"Pretty nice place you've got here," he said. "Whose room is this?"

"It's yours," she replied, smiling again.

"Mine? By God, there's something mighty peculiar going on here! When you greeted me at the door you said that you had been expecting me, and now you say that this is my room!"

"But it is. It's been waiting for you many, many days. Now don't ask any more questions. Your bath is through that door. I'll be at the foot of the stairs when you come down. And don't take too long. We have much to do and see, now that you have finally arrived."

With that she turned and left the room, amid the enchanting rustle of her garments, and closed the door behind her.

After his ablutions, he re-entered the room to find a robe of aquamarine silk, a sash of golden cloth, and a pair of sandals. He dressed and viewed himself critically in the high mirror at the far end of the chamber. He was pleased with what he saw.

She was, as she had promised, at the foot of the stairs when he descended them.

"Now that you are one of us in dress," she said, taking his hand, "You must meet the Host. He's quite anxious to meet you."

"Host? What Host!"

"I'm sorry. I thought you knew about him. He is our master. And a kinder, jollier, friendlier master never lived. His only desire is for you to find complete happiness in his hospitality. It is he upon whom we are utterly dependent. He is our lord, and it is by his grace that we remain; but he has never been known to turn anyone out—that is,

To Catch the Sun

except once. It seems that this certain newcomer was a reformer. The Host's hospitality didn't suit him, and he let everyone know about it. Soon he was called into the Host's private suite. Several moments later he was on his way down the road. That's the last we ever heard of him. But now, come. He awaits."

She led him into a great hall. Banquet tables laden with every imaginable type of food and wine, and at which reclined fair youths and nymph-like maidens, extended its entire length on either side. A huge crystal chandelier was suspended from the ceiling. The light from its numberless candles enveloped the room in a warm, sensuous glow. And at the far end, at the head-table, reclined the Host, alone. He was a pudgy little man, with a round, red face, an infectious smile, and a youthful twinkle in his eyes that belied his age, for his hair was snow-white.

Two empty couches stood at his right. "Those are for us," she whispered.

When they entered, the hall, previously bubbling over with merry-making and light-hearted feasting, became suddenly still; and as they approached the Host's table, their footfalls padded softly on the marble floor.

"Welcome! Welcome, my son!" said the Host, extending his hand and beaming benevolently. Then, "Friends! Friends! Arise and let us drink to our new member!"

"To our new member!" echoed the revellers. They raised their goblets to their lips and drank heartily.

"And now," said the Host, "You shall recline by my right hand, for tonight you are our honored guest. Friends! On with the feast! May the dawn never arrive!"

With that they once again reclined on their couches and the feast continued with increased gaiety. As quickly as

dishes were emptied, they were refilled. The wine flowed as if from a miraculous fountain.

After some time had passed she leaned over and said to him, "The moon must be very lonely tonight, beloved. Why don't we take a walk down by the lake and keep it company for a while?"

"A walk by the lake for our guest?" boomed the Host. "A splendid idea! But don't catch cold. It's chilly down there."

The two got up and, accompanied by the good-natured laughter of their fellows, slipped out of the door and into the moonlight. Arm in arm they walked along a narrow footpath and down to the water's edge. The moon spread a silvery carpet across the lake.

"Beloved," she murmured softly, "I have waited so long for you to come. Oh, it has been so long! But now you are here, and we are together, and you will never go away and leave me."

"Now look here!" he exclaimed, "That was a very pretty speech, but you must have me confused with someone else. I'd like to be your beloved, but, damn it, I can't do it under false pretenses. I never laid eyes on you before tonight."

"Silly, of course you haven't. I've watched you from here, though, ever since I arrived. We keep a close watch on the city, you know, for we like to be prepared for new arrivals. It's terrible to be unprepared when someone is coming, especially a permanent guest."

"Permanent guest? I'm afraid you're on the wrong track. I merely came to spend the night here. Tomorrow I must be off bright and early. The mountain is still a long way off, and the sooner I get there and discover its secret the

To Catch the Sun

better I'm going to like it. You and the Host have been very nice and all that, and I'm sorry if I've given you the wrong impression, but this is not the end of my journey."

At the mention of the mountain she broke into peals of melodious laughter. "Going to the mountain? Do you mean that you believe those old wives' tales they tell about it? Perhaps you're also looking for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, or the Fountain of Youth, or some such absurdity. There's nothing on the top of that mountain but a few oversized rocks and undersized trees."

"Then why does everyone in the city seem to believe these stories?"

"Because they simply aren't satisfied. They're looking for something better; something they can strive for and look forward to. It's only a dream, only an unreal, fanciful dream. But you, beloved, have found what they have sought for so long, and more. Look about you. Here are natural beauties that defy description; food that an emperor would give half his empire to enjoy. And besides all of this, you have me. What more could you want?"

"Maybe you're right. Yes, to stay here seems to be the smart thing to do. After all why take a chance? If what you say is true, and it probably is, for the Host seems like a pretty nice fellow, I'd be a fool to leave. Idealism is all right for starry-eyed adolescents, but I'll have none of that nonsense."

She had turned and was now facing him, and her eyes told him what only the unspoken language of love can tell. He embraced her passionately, and his searching lips easily found hers.

A slight breeze was coming in off the water as the lovers slowly wended their way back to the mansion.

And there, where she had stood on the soft, moist,
lake's edge, the imprint of a cloven hoof stood out starkly in
the moonlight.

A Year Ago Today

By EDWARD P. FITZSIMMONS, '51

A year ago today . . .

A day dedicated

With the hope that it can be relived

As once it was.

But it is different . . . if we care to admit it.

How we take days from our brief life,

For the living of what once we lived,

For the loving of what once we loved.

Though always and all ways we shall love it, we shall never
live it, again.

A year ago today . . .

We see that day clasp us hard to its memory:

Never shall we escape it . . .

Two years.

Five,

Ten,

Until so often shall it pass, that it will be again

A year ago today.

An Intimation of Prophecy

By GEORGE H. COCHRAN, '51

I

The near-night box stands stone in adamantine,
That men like mad adore;

And when the seal is burst
Come Lust and six sly more,
Pallid faces all shot-torn with scarlet streaks.

Long the bacchanal, riot-revel
Paints the sullen scarscape
Where madmen sport dull death's head joys.

II

A cold Congress sits in shouts
Against an Atom Bomb,
While Seven rape the soul.

A simple Senate sounds firsts first,
And passes bills of great renown:
Soon, time-light tarnished gold.

Dim-drab and loud-bright in turn
The gold glare of Things important vacillates.
First things first; but not the First.

III

And calm cynics read an Empire's degradation
In blood-red-bound texts;
Not seeing what they read.

Hill-Bound

By WALTER J. SHARKEY, '50

SALLY KERR was a lonely girl. Living with her father in the dismal, hilly mining country for all of her nineteen years had made her so. She had no interests in common with those of her own age; indeed, she felt no ties with any of the miners or their families. The constant dullness of her daily existence had bred in her a sense of mingled fear and rebelliousness, but even above these was a sullenly powerful feeling of loneliness.

On Wednesday nights, Old Mike Kerr went down to the weekly meeting of the miners, and Sally was left more alone than ever. Occasionally one of the girls from a neighboring family would come in to talk, but this was worse than the solitude. The girls were thick, staring, cow-like creatures, and Sally was always glad when they left. She would open the windows, and the clean night air of the hills would purge the room of the heaviness. Then Sally would sit down and wait for her father to come home. It was at such times that she felt the hills crowding and pressing and pushing together, enormous bulks of earth and stone that separated her from everything she wanted. She would have read, but the few books that she owned had become so many words that she had heard before. So she sat in the quiet of her home, imagining she was somewhere, anywhere but in the hills.

It was on one of these Wednesday nights that Joe Kosrelki came to the Kerr home. It was a sullen night, with a strong rain coming down from the north, but Old Mike had

Hill-Bound

religiously gone to the meeting despite the weather. Sally, sitting near the fire, darning some of her father's clothes, heard the crunch and crack of gravel on the front path, and then a knock on the door. Surprised that any of the girls would come over on such a night, she moved quickly to open the door. Joe Kostelki stood there, his collar tight around his neck, and a soaked miner's cap in one hand.

"Hello, Sally," he said. "Is your Pa at home?" His voice was slow, with an awkward huskiness.

For a moment, Sally didn't answer. Surprised as she might have been at any of the girls coming to the Kerr house that evening, she was considerably more surprised to see Joe Kostelki. He was the son of immigrant Poles, a young miner who worked in the same section as her father. As he was but a year older than herself, she had known him slightly for some time, but never intimately, and never had he come to the Kerr home before.

"Why no, Joe, he isn't," she answered. "Tonight he went down to the meeting. He goes every week."

Joe nodded. "Yuh. That's right. I forgot. Well. look. I got to see him tonight. I got to talk to him about somethin'. Can I come in?"

"Why—yes—I—guess so. It's pretty wet, isn't it?" She wondered what her father would say.

He came in, shaking his coat. "Yuh, it's a bad night, all right. I ain't seen a night like this in a couple of months. How soon will your Pa be back?"

Sally took his coat and hat. "Go in and sit down. Joe. In there. I don't know exactly when he will be back. Sometimes he comes in a little later than others. It all depends on what they have to do, I guess."

She carried his wet coat into the kitchen, making a

small trail of water on the hall floor. The coat was heavy, shabby, an all-weather affair. He was a big man, almost as big as her father. She hung the coat up and went into the parlor. Joe was sitting in front of the fire.

"This ain't a bad fire," he said, "it's pretty warm."

"We always have a fire when the weather is like this," Sally replied. "A cold rain gets everything in the house damp, unless you have something to take the chill off."

She walked over to the fireplace and moved the grating slightly. She wiped a smudge of soot off her fingers, and came back to her chair. Joe was sitting tightly in her father's rocker, folding his hands, one on top of the other. Sally noticed that his hands were large and clumsy, with a few rugged blue veins along their backs.

"Whatever you want to see my father about must be very important to bring you up here on a night like this," she said, smiling forcedly.

"Yuh, it's pretty important. About the mine." He lifted his head and looked at her for a moment, and she saw his strangely pale blue eyes. She remembered that she had read somewhere that most Poles had light blue eyes.

"Would you like some coffee? There's some in the kitchen. I'll just have to heat it a bit," she said, embarrassed both by the unusualness of the situation, and the awkwardness of her guest. She wished he would stop folding his hands like that. A hot stream of anger flamed through her, anger at having to sit in the same room with Joe Kostelki, at having to witness his clumsiness, at having to listen to the same dumb silence. If he would only talk, say anything, not just sit there and stare.

The blue eyes lifted again. "No, thank yuh." He looked briefly, and she felt his eyes, deep blue circles, staring

Hill-Bound

straight at her. As he saw that she noticed his stare, he flushed slightly, and got to his feet.

"I guess maybe I won't be waiting for your Pa," he said. "Maybe I can see him before work tomorrow morning." He started to walk out into the hall.

"Oh, wait a minute, please!" Sally jumped from her chair and followed him into the hall. "I'm sure he'll be back in just a short while. If it's as important as it seems, perhaps you'd better not take any chances on missing him." Realizing suddenly that she was actually urging him to stay, she hurriedly told herself that it was because she feared that she was the cause of his hasty departure, that she had perhaps offended him in some way.

"That's right, I guess," he answered doubtfully. "I might not get to see him."

"Besides," Sally continued, "it's raining worse than ever now. Even with that big coat, you'd get soaking wet. Sit down for a few minutes, and wait until it lets up. I'm sure my father will be back."

He grinned loosely. "I don't guess it would be too dry out there at that, right now. I might as well wait for a few minutes more, if ya don't mind."

The two walked back into the parlor, Joe a little hesitant, Sally with a slight feeling of triumph. She stood in front of him, fairly forcing him to sit down.

"Now," she smiled widely, "you must let me get you some coffee. I'll be just a moment. I have a few books here, not very many. Would you like to look at them? I'm afraid there isn't very much else to do."

He shook his head negatively. "I don't think so. I don't much care for readin'. I'll just wait."

"All right then." She smiled again, and went towards

the kitchen. While the coffee was heating, she wondered why she had stopped him. She was certain that she disliked him, that he possessed all the disagreeable qualities of the hill people. He had the same squareness and dullness, and acted passively towards her. But he probably did have something important to tell her father. Her father might have been very angry if she had not invited him in. She thought of Joe, sitting in the parlor, probably folding his hands, looking at the floor. She wondered excitedly what he would be like if she could shake him from his passiveness. The coffee boiled angrily, and she removed the pot from the stove. It would be interesting to see what might happen. Those blue eyes of his might get some life, and his ruddy face would probably turn red. She resolved to have a try. Pouring the coffee, she took leave of the kitchen into the parlor.

He rose clumsily as she came in. "That didn't take yuh so very long," he mumbled.

She paused in front of him, not quite sure in her inexperience just how to begin. As she handed him the cup, she drooped her eyelids, pushed her full lips into a semi-pout. "Did you hope it would take me longer?"

Joe looked bewildered, "Huh? Oh, no. No, I wasn't meanin' that at all!"

Sally sat down in the chair next to Joe's, and began to talk, punctuating her conversation with gestures which she fancied alluring—little wiggles, fetching lip movements, swinging her well turned legs back and forth. Joe's verbal response was negligible, but she observed with some satisfaction that he was impressed. She talked more animatedly, her dark blue eyes boldly exciting. Little dark red circles appeared over Joe's heavy cheek-bones, and he seemed uneasily taut. Sally felt a sharp tingling thrill at her success, at

Hill-Bound

her ability to make Joe restless. She was conscious of a sense of superiority, of a sudden awakened maturity. As she paused, absorbing this happily, she noticed for the first time that the room was much colder, that the fire was almost out. Rising from her chair, she looked down at Joe.

"My goodness," she laughed, "you'd think we were a pair of Eskimos! Look at that fire! I'll just see if I can't get a little heat into this room!"

She walked swiftly to the fireplace, and, with an old fashioned bellows, attempted to fan the fire into a blaze. Realizing that more wood was needed, she turned to the rocker, intending to ask Joe to help her. He was standing directly in back of her, so that in turning she bumped into him.

"Oh, my!" she breathed, "I didn't know you were there. I was going to ask you if you'd help me get some more wood."

He stood there, heavy, silent, his face alternately red and white, his flat lips thick and damp. Sally stepped back, frightened.

"Why Joe," she began, "Don't you—"

"I—" he interrupted, broke off suddenly, and grabbed her. He stopped again, bent over quickly, and kissed her. She felt his fleshy lips smearing hard over hers. His strong breath aggravated her nostrils; she grew weak. She attempted to scream, but she was held so tightly that she had difficulty breathing. Then, quickly, the pressure was released and she was standing alone. Joe was on one knee on the floor. Her father stood over him, big husky, dripping water. She began to cry.

"Keep quiet, lass," her father said. He turned to Joe. "You get out o' here, Kostelki. You'll get out and yu' won't let me catch ya around here again." He spoke thickly, his face scornful, and hard lined with deep smoky eyes.

Joe got up and walked a step or so backwards, wiping his mouth. "I—I got ta—" he began.

"Ye'll get out now, Kostelki," warned Old Mike, "or I'll not be responsible. It's your father that told me what ye came up here for. Ye should have left when ye saw I was not in."

Joe stopped and looked sadly at Sally. She was standing still in the center of the room, watching her father. He turned and walked awkwardly to the hall, put on his coat, and left the house. She started to cry again. Old Mike came over and held her.

"Ye'd best go to bed, lass," he said. "Ye shouldn't have admitted him in the first place."

Sally stopped crying. "Oh Dad, he didn't—it wasn't what—" She stopped, afraid of her father.

Old Mike had not heard her. "Ye can trust none o' them, lass," he muttered. "There, go up to bed as your father has said." He kissed her lightly on the forehead.

She said nothing. Hugging her father briefly, she ran up the stairs. At the top, she turned to look at him. He was standing in the same spot, staring into the fireplace. She went to her room, undressed, and got into bed. There she began crying once more. She felt sick, sick with fright and guilt, but above all, she had a sense of shame, a shame of mistaken superiority, the shame arising from her own reflections.



The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the attitude of the ALEMBIC Staff. However, Andrew G. Fortin has given us a concise critique of his evaluation of contemporary literature and detailed criticism of the ALEMBIC itself. We present it to our readers in the hope that it will provoke thought and further comment.

W. B. H.

AS OTHERS SEE US . . .

TO attempt an evaluation of the modern literary trend, one must resort to theology: not that criticism is in itself theological, but that the modern writer insists upon making it so. Argumentatively speaking, it is apparent to anyone confronted with such artistic tenets as: "Art for art's sake"; "Art for my sake"; "Art for our sake". Principles of this nature are based on the assumption that the individual is supreme, and as such the sole creator or author of all art. Such an assumption usurps divine prerogatives and ignores the artist's analogical participation in God's creation. It is due time that artists, and even artistic dilettantes, return to the Author and Creator of all things in order to guide their creative talents, which are implanted in their souls by Him. The *dictum* "Art for God's sake", which Chesterton postulated should take precedence over the fallacious subjectivism and materialism of our time.

Christ, the Author of truth, must take His rightful place in literature: especially in the literature of Catholics. They, more than anyone else, claim rightful possession of the truth. They profess that He is God, believe in His doctrines and His Church, assert that they love Him and that they want to possess Him, then turn completely about and serve an agnostic literary school with their minds. Are they not forgetting that it was their God Who said: "He who is not with me is against me"? There is no middle ground permitted by these words: they are clear and definite. Catholicity, therefore, exacts from its writers an embodiment of their beliefs in all their writings: whether it be the novel, the story, the poem, or the essay. This does not signify that they must concern themselves only with religious affairs, but that they must concern themselves with all affairs religiously. Why, then, do Catholics act contrarily?—It may be that "the will is strong, but the flesh is weak", or that the desire for wealth, honor, or fame, which are the fruits of literary talents in our present society, is stronger than the love they confess to their God.

With this basic idea in mind, we might consider wherein the *ALEMBIC* has succeeded or failed. Here is a publication in a Catholic college in which the proposition enunciated can and should be found. Surely something more is expected in a Catholic publication than the mere outpouring of student talent.

It is not sufficient that a student write with skill. Structure is an instrument to express an idea, not an end in itself. If one has an idea which he holds to be true, then he must endeavor to express it. The words, sentences, literary technique are only the manner in which this idea will be adorned.

Our attention focuses upon the subject-matter which has appeared in the *ALEMBIC* since its post-war revival in

As Others See Us

1947. Inspecting these issues with our principle in mind, we discover that the Christian spirit has been more fully realized in verse than in prose. Those poems of George H. Cochran embody attitudes which reflect the spirit of Catholicism. Even Robert Doherty's more extended "Thoughts on New York", because of its desperate picture of moral vacuity, reveals a certain religious awareness. Although Wales Henry touched upon a meditative Christian theme in "The Seven Sins", this poem lacked ethical perception and intellectual refinement, advancing, as it did, primitive moral suppositions. Like his prose "The Dim Red Glow", it was almost entirely a distillation of emotional impressions.

The fictional contributions in the earlier issues were characterized in many instances by an immoderate morbidity. Edward Gny's "Chaos" and Robert Doherty's "The Beast" elucidate this point. However, this is perhaps ascribable to the release of war-pent emotions. It is to be remarked, in passing, that Christianity at heart is a happy state and the fulcrum of emotional stability. To be unduly pessimistic, then, is to be unchristian.

John Slain revealed stylistic competence in "R.S.V.P.", a story almost completely amoral in tone. It illustrates our principle that technical perfection is not a guarantee of intellectual perspicacity. This same talent turned to a worthier theme would be more rewarding in the spiritual sense.

The tone of George Eagle's narrative essays, "A Stranger in Strasbourg" and "Moment of Vision", revealed a deeper impression of war experience than a mere observation of European surfaces. It is unfortunate that the lofty aims of the previous contributions lost themselves in the superficiality of the modern trend. Reference is made particularly to the latest story, "Embers in the Mist", which completely ig-

nored Christian attitudes and values. It implicitly supported the intellectual and moral vacillations of an agnostic society. A precursor of this last contribution can be detected in "Another Vintage", which revealed a puzzled mind rather than firm conviction.

James Daly's recent "Miller's Reputation", exhibits a certain moral integration which approaches the principle that Catholicism entails. Perhaps more attention should be given to contributions of this nature. The manner in which Daly treated the evil in one of his characters did not in any way deviate from the principle which we invoke. The vice which he pictured was resolved by the practice of virtue: in the denouement compassion literally conquered vengeance. Although Eddy recognized the villainy of Miller and compensated for it in his kindness toward the Austrian family, he nevertheless treated Miller with patience until Miller's actions made moral decision inevitable. Daly managed in "Miller's Reputation" to write an interesting narrative without making overt reference to religion. Religion in no way sacrifices the entertainment to be derived from any literary work.

On the other hand, we find in Clifford Brott's work an explicit exploration of religious relationships in nature. Through the medium of the personal and reflective essay, he has described the pleasantries of nature with a constant insinuation of religious meaning.

But how can this integration be realized by the Catholic writer? It is well to criticize—but far more difficult to act. The answer lies in our ability to see all things oriented to God and to incorporate this vision in all activities, particularly (for our purposes here) in the literary work of the student. This reorientation is not a mere deflection of sympathy from Mammon to God, it is not a pietistic whim: it is

An Island to Himself

rather a sincere and exhaustive effort of the will commanded by a revived intellect. It is real activity possible only "through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ."

By ANDREW G. FORTIN, '49

AN ISLAND TO HIMSELF . . .

THE popularity which the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J., enjoyed during the war years seems, to a certain extent, to have declined since then. One may still read an occasional essay on him or, when reading the latest poet, be struck by the evident influence of Hopkins on the writer, but his work is no longer discussed as it was a short time ago. It would be too bad if this loss of interest should continue. Such poetry is not meant for the initiated alone.

At first glance Hopkins may appear difficult, which may explain why the general public has dropped him. Consider the opening lines of his sonnet "To what serves Mortal Beauty":

"To what serves mortal beauty—dangerous;
does set dancing blood—the O-seal-that-so fea-
ture, flung prouder form than Purcell tune lets
tread to?"

or of "Tom's Garland":

"Tom—garlanded with squat and surly steel
Tom; then Tom's fallowbootfellow piles pick
By him and rips out rockfire homeforth—sturdy
Dick; . . ."

One asks what the writer is saying, or attempting to say. Yet what he is saying is very clear, much clearer, perhaps, than what is said by others who present no difficulty. His method of combining words—"fallowbootfellow"—or of coining new ones on occasion, was not, as it might seem, unusual

but a common practice among Victorian poets. The chief difficulty lies in his use of sprung rhythm instead of running rhythm, his use of counterpoint and outriders (extra syllables in a line which are not measured). Running rhythm is the common rhythm of English verse and consequently a verse which does not conform to it seems rough and unfinished to the ear. The author himself had this to say in explanation:

"Sprung rhythm is the most natural of things.

For (1) it is the rhythm of common speech and of written prose, when rhythm is perceived in them. (2) It is the rhythm of all but the most monotonously regular music, so that in the words of choruses and refrains and in songs written closely to music it rises. (3) It is found in nursery rhymes, weather saws and so on; because, however these may have been once made in running rhythm, the terminations having dropped off by the change of language, the stresses came together and so the rhythm is sprung. (4) It arises in common verse when reversed or counterpointed, for the same reason."

Since it is natural rhythm it should not be anymore difficult than running rhythm.

Yet, to say it is not difficult to understand is to oversimplify. It is not difficult to understand Donne or Vaughan. Since, however precious or extreme the metaphysical poets may sometimes seem, they can be understood, if not in their words, in their emotions. So it is with Hopkins. He had his own peculiar insight and manner of expression. His language is sometimes obscure, his rhythm may jar or his impressions be over-strained, but what he wished to say is perceptible to anyone who cares to read.

An Island to Himself

It was not in his verse alone that Gerard Manley Hopkins was obscure. From all reports he undoubtedly spoke very much as he wrote, that is in a Jacobean manner which was strange to all with whom he came in contact, from Mayfair to Liverpool, at Oxford and in Ireland. His apparent failure in everything he undertook to do may have been, in great measure, due to his inability to make himself understood by those around him. His superiors cannot be blamed (although both they and the Catholic religion have been blamed) for Father Hopkins' misery and final breakdown. It is evident that his Order tried to find work for him suited to his talents and temperament. But he seems to have shared with Cardinal Newman that peculiarly English, one might say peculiarly Anglican, delicacy of mind and manner which caused even the saintly Cardinal to be neglected for so many years, until the publication of his *Apologia*. It must be admitted, however, that his superiors used very bad judgment, although their intentions were good. At Farm Street he once shocked and amused the fashionable congregation by comparing the sacramental Church to a cow with full udders inviting the needy stranger to milk it. He must have been completely incomprehensible to the workers of Liverpool and Glasgow. After his experience in those two hells (the degradation of the Glasgow slums, in particular, was a byword throughout the world) he wrote of himself to Robert Bridges. "as in a manner . . . a Communist. Their ideal, bating some things, is nobler than that professed by any secular statesman I know of . . . Besides it is just.—I do not mean the means of getting it are. But it is a dreadful thing for the greatest and most necessary part of a very rich nation to live a hard life without dignity, knowledge, comfort, delight, or hope in the midst of plenty—which plenty they make." In a later letter to his

friend Dixon he wrote: "My Liverpool and Glasgow experience laid upon my mind a conviction, a truly crushing conviction, of the misery of the poor in general, of the degradation of our race, of the hollowness of this century's civilization." He was not successful as a parish priest and was appointed to Stonyhurst, where he taught Greek and Latin, and later to the chair of classics at University College, Dublin.

But Father Hopkins was as unsuccessful in the classroom as he had been everywhere else. Considering his proficiency in classical studies—Jowett had called him "the star of Balliol, one of the finest of its Greek scholars"—one cannot but think it was the classes which failed rather than the teacher. The only record of his teaching is, as usual, a report of eccentricity: he once dragged a student around the room by his heels to show how Achilles had dragged the body of Hector around the walls of Troy.

He was ill when he left Stonyhurst for Dublin and the situation in Ireland, the growing feeling of hatred and revolt against England, the very difference between such an Englishman as Father Hopkins and the lusty Irish, did not help matters. It was a bad move. The strain of overwork; the lack of refinement in those around him, although he was, in his own words, "warmly welcomed and kindly treated"; his extreme patriotism which must have caused him to feel always as in the midst of an enemy—on one occasion he very pointedly left a college function when the Lord Lieutenant was insulted—all aggravated the already perilous condition of his nerves and he broke under the burden. His death, in 1889, was a greater loss to the world than was then realized.

Gerard Manley Hopkins' poems were not published in his lifetime, which must have appeared to be yet another failure, but his friend Robert Bridges brought out a posthu-

An Island to Himself

mous edition of them in 1918. Their influence on younger poets has been noted. In view of the moribund condition of English poetry in the latter part of the last century and until the first World War, not forgetting the able poets who wrote in that period, one should not be blamed if he gives Hopkins more credit than may be due him for the freshness and strength, the rebirth, it might almost be said, of poetry in our day.

By WILLIAM H. PLUMMER, '51

Recollection

By CLIFFORD J. BROTT, '50

Today, a rose fell on my path;
The morning dew, it could not bear,
Its slender stem not strong enough
To hold the rose aloft in air.

It made me think of you, dear friend,
And of our walks of yesteryear.
Thoughts of roses gathered then
Bring back to me remembered fear
That we should part, just as we did,
And each should go his way,
To think of other naught, unless,
On some momentous day,
A rose should fall upon his path,
And with its petals stray
Beyond the thoughts of present time
To those of yesterday.

Practical Joke

BY GEORGE H. COCHRAN, '51

JIM BURNETT never took a vacation. That was one of his boasts. Work was his only pleasure, and the success of Burnett Mills his only goal in life.

But there was one flaw in the well-constructed armor with which Jim Burnett surrounded himself—fishing. The lure of a blue lake holding in its lap a silver horde of fighting fish was to Jim as a magnet to steel. When he would read or hear of the exploits of a big game fisherman coursing the ocean in pursuit of the lordly tarpon, Jim would pause to think. Not since the carefree days of his youth—days which Jim Burnett remembered with a tolerant smile—had he yielded to the call of a whirring reel.

There came a time when the temptation proved too strong. With an effort, he surrendered. Carefully arranging several stacks of reports in a metal filing case, Jim reached for the phone. For a moment he hesitated. Then, casting doubts aside, he dialed.

Arrangements were soon completed. Everything would be attended to. Yes, the guide could meet him in Miami. Yes, he would stake his reputation on the success of the expedition.

Relieved, Jim placed the phone back in its cradle. A sigh escaped him. The tense lines around his mouth relaxed. It was too late to back out, now. Jim Burnett never backed out of anything. It was one of his boasts.

Miami was taking its daily sunbath when he stepped

Practical Joke

off the plane. A taxi, a short ride through busy streets, and he was striding to meet the outstretched hand of his guide.

Joe Kelly was a good fisherman. One of the best. He assured Jim of this fact several times as they looked over the boat and planned a course of action. A course designed to bring Jim fishing success. Jim Burnett was always successful. That was one of his boasts.

The inevitable sun beamed bright when Jim Burnett and Joe Kelly left Miami in the "Aspar." Jim basked in the sun while Kelly handled the wheel. A smile of satisfaction spread across Burnett's face. It broadened into a grin, then exploded into a carefree laugh. It was good to go fishing. Yes, he promised himself, no more vacationless days for me.

That morning the fishing was perfect. Success of every kind followed Jim like a shadow. But it was natural; he expected it. It was one of his boasts.

Jim had missed the first strike, a bonito. By noon, the memory of it was gone. Bonito and grouper alike had succumbed. Now he wanted a tarpon. A big fish, something to take a picture of. Something to show the boys. They continued the hunt. Toward late afternoon, Kelly began to look dubious.

"Don't look too good, Mr. Burnett." The guide's voice broke the calm.

"You mean the chances of getting a tarpon?"

"No. I mean the weather."

The guide's leathery face was turned skyward, his eyes glued to the gathering clouds. Burnett looked up. He had not noticed it before, so deep had been his concentration. He turned to the guide.

"Better head in, eh?"

"I reckon, Mr. Burnett. Looks bad."

Kelly turned the boat toward the unseen shore. Jim Burnett relaxed. He'd get that tarpon tomorrow. Or the next day. The thought of failure never entered his head. He never failed.

Soon, drops of rain began to spatter the deck. The storm was sudden, and the small boat caught its full force. Wind-whipped, the light craft floundered crazily in mountainous waves. Burnett staggered to the cockpit.

"What's wrong, Kelly?"

"Motor's gone, Mr. Burnett."

"Gone?"

"Yeh, she went out. Can't get her started again."

Burnett blanched. His white face was outlined in the storm's darkness.

"Can this boat stand that pounding?"

"Not for very long, I reckon. If the storm don't stop soon, it'll tear her to pieces."

As if his words were a signal, the cowl around the cockpit was sheared away. The craft rose, her bow pointed to the heavens as if in supplication. For an instant she poised there, then plunged. For what seemed like a lifetime to the two men, their small boat lay at the mercy of wind and water.

When the storm abated, she drifted aimlessly, hopelessly crippled, her motor dead, great holes torn in the cabin.

"Kelly, is there any type of communication system in this craft?"

"No, sir."

Burnett's eyes widened. "Surely they will find us." It was more of a question than a statement. Joe Kelly's sun-burned face was set.

Practical Joke

"Maybe, maybe not. Depends on how fast we drift and how quick they miss us."

Burnett stared at the vast expanse of water, his head bent in defeat, the guide's words echoing in his ears. Suddenly, he turned, his eyes flashing with the old light of victory.

"Put a message in a bottle!"

"What?"

"You know, an SOS. Cast it afloat!"

Burnett's voice was pleading in its intensity. Great drops of perspiration stood out on his forehead.

"It's worth a chance!"

"Yeh, I reckon anything is. We ain't got much choice."

The two men turned to their task eagerly, grasping desperately at this one thin straw of hope. A bottle was soon found. Kelly charted their position.

Almost affectionately, Burnett enclosed the message and hurled the bottle over the side. Caught in the waves' embrace, it bobbed up and down. Jim Burnett and Joe Kelly watched until they could no longer see it. Burnett shuddered.

"Our only chance. Hope someone spots it."

Night fell and a pale moon rose, casting its rays of light in staggered formation across the water and the small boat with its two occupants.

The following morning they were greeted by a merciless sun. Burnett and Kelly huddled in the broken cabin.

For days it was the same. No longer was the sun a symbol of joy to Jim Burnett. It had become an instrument of torture. The two men lost track of time. Aimlessly, the boat drifted, its two occupants clinging desperately to the hope that somewhere, someone would find their message.

And in another sunbeaten spot, miles from the wreckage of the "Aspar," it was found.

John Marlow, aged fifteen, and his younger brother, Tim, found the bottle in the pounding surf. The keen eyes of the younger boy saw it first.

"Hey, Johnny! What's that out there? See it? Looks like a beer bottle!"

The older boy shaded his eyes from the sun.

"Yeh, it's floatin' in. I'll get it."

He waded into the water and soon returned with the bottle.

"Open it, Johnny!"

The boy fumbled with the homemade top Burnett had put on the bottle. He drew out the faded message.

"What's it say, Johnny?"

Carefully, Johnny unfolded the paper and read what Burnett and Kelly had written. His voice shook.

"It's an SOS, Tim!"

"Somebody lost in the ocean?"

"Yeh, but I don't know—"

"What's the matter, Johnny? We better show it to somebody!"

"Oh, Tim, don't be stupid! People don't do things like this anymore. It only happens in books."

"But you've got the message right in your hands! What about that?"

"Don't you see? It's somebody's idea of a practical joke. If we turn it in, they'll only laugh at us."

He tore the paper in strips and cast them into the wind.

The two boys walked up the beach, the older whistling, the younger silent.

A hundred miles away, in the cabin of the battered "Aspar," two men clung to a faint hope of rescue.



WE are sorry to state that there has been little response to our proposal in the last issue relative to a mutual acceptance and giving of constructive criticism through the media of Exchange columns of the various publications. But there is little misapprehension on our part, since it is commonly agreed that by the mutual barter of issues, criticism is not only to be accepted, but is even desired. However, our purpose in requesting permission was merely to ascertain the opinions of our confreres in other colleges and universities, and in the process, create a solidarity and spirit of friendship among the colleges concerned.

It goes without saying that every publication entering this office is well perused and criticised among the staff of the ALEMBIC. Our purpose here is not only to compliment the authors of these publications, but to point out, for the benefit of those who may have overlooked them and to congratulate the writers whom we consider to have done a masterful job in their literary efforts.

* * *

Let's All Become Extinct, by James G. O'Brien, editor of *The Stylus*, December, 1948, appears to us to be one of the best pieces of satire that has been printed in college literary publications for some time. In answer to Sir John Boyd Orr, former Director-general of the United Nations Food and

Agricultural Organization, an apostle of the well-circulated Malthusian theories, Mr. O'Brien completes the doctrines of "limited birth control" by advocating a complete elimination of "the dangerous problem of reproduction". Terming diapers, cribs and the like "seditious materials", he shows that the only way to decide the fate of the world, and to insure lasting peace, is to allow the human race to become extinct, and his description of its gradual disintegration, with the resulting changes in the mode of life, is both refreshing, thought-provoking, and at the same time, worthy of notice. *Let's All Become Extinct* is the most refreshing, yet forceful argument against the Planned Parenthood Organization and the disciples of Malthus that we have seen in some time.

• • •

This year has witnessed the production of a new publication in the field of college magazines *Pavan* of Saint Peter's College, Jersey City, N. J., one that we think will go far in the production of well-written and wholesome articles and short stories. The Winter issue features *The Malted Falcon Caper*, by William E. Gilmartin, alias Dashing Hamlet. This story is a new twist on the highly deductive methods of the modern "private eye" as presented in motion pictures and on the air, with more good wit and satirical situations than we usually find in collegiate work.

Not to detract from the work of Mr. Gilmartin, we especially wish to recommend *The Babes in the Wood*, by Richard Hayes. Here we are exposed to the innermost thoughts of Lonnie, a sensitive and yet not overly-bright student. Plagued by Sister Constantine because of his non-conformity, and punished for something that he had not done, he arouses in our hearts a feeling of pity, while at the same time, we reflect on the past, and consider that we, too, in some

Exchange

manner or other, also have experienced many of the feelings that are confronting Lonnie. Just as we have outgrown the past, so we are tempted to tell Lonnie that with the coming of maturity, he too, will overlook that day, that all his problems will be resolved.

* * *

Ours has not been the attempt to cover the whole field of literary criticism, nor have we tried to appraise every article or story that we have perused in the past. Our attempt has been to point out those articles that we deem worthy of note, and we hope that other members of literary boards will be able to read them, digest them, and in following the example of their authors, unconsciously give them the reward and merit that they so richly deserve.

J. J. L.

Song of the Prisoner's Soul

HAROLD E. VAYO, JR., '51

Just look, Mister Warden, on yonder cot!
There's nothing to fear or dread.
Where the shadows are black and thickest, Sir,
My body lies cold and dead.

Gray shadows,— and bars,—and walls of stone.
Outside,—the drizzling rain.
My cell was damp, and it breathed of death
And I longed for life's last pain.

The Alembic

The rain oozed in through the mouldy rock,
And dripped like a mourner's tears.
And there, in the corner, I saw the things
You wardens call, "Prisoners' Fears".

They said I must stay in this rotten hole
'Til my life should cease to be,—
That the days and months and years would pass,
And each leave its curse on me.

They said it was justice to put me here
To rot, in this murky hell.
They told me 'twas just as the Lord would do.
I knew that they lied,—but well.

'Twas here I must sit 'til Judgement Day,
And wait for another trial,
And the shadows and bars would mark the hours
That led to my funeral pile.

But pray, Mister Warden, why are you pale?
And why do you gasp and stare?
I'm only a soul on the way to the goal
That innocent prisoners share.

And now I can laugh at the judgments of men!
They chained me, but I have fled.
And there on my cot, in a heap of rags,
My body lies,—cold and dead.

