

THE BARDIAN

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Twelve Pages

En Famille

Senior Project, by JUNIUS ADAMS

[ED. NOTE: This is an excerpt from "L'Enchantement de la Nuit," a novel by Jean Guirec, which Junius Adams is translating as his Senior Project.]

The moment he rang, his mother opened the door, grumbling, and immediately hustled him into the kitchen, where his slippers were laid out in front of a chair. She said, as she did every evening:

"Where have you been loafing all this time? If you were going to *Buffon* it wouldn't take you two hours to get home. That *lycee* of yours is a menace; your father will hear about this; there'll have to be an end to it! If you think this is the way to get into Polytechnique. . . . It's disgraceful!"

She was watching him take off his shoes. As soon as he was through, she pounced on them, and, holding them up to her face, declared:

"I can't imagine what you do with your heels. They're worn down to nothing again, a brand new pair. If you keep this up, I'll buy you wooden shoes. The other students can wear suede if they like, I don't care; we aren't millionaires. Your father wears rubber half-heels; it's a great protection; you're going to wear them too, do you hear?"

Marc seemed indifferent. He picked up his books:

"I'm going to study," he said.

"And about time, too! Where?"

"In the dining-room."

"There's no fire. And I don't intend to light one until you make it worth my while, until you start coming home earlier. Your father and I made the trip, just to see. Four-thirty is a maximum."

"Well, in that case I'll use Marie-Paule's room; it isn't as cold."

"Your sister's room!"

"Since I haven't a room of my own."

"All the boys in Paris sleep on sofas and haven't got rooms of their own when there are several children in the family. If you were at boarding-school, would you have a room of your own? When you're in the army, you'll sleep on the floor."

"I know perfectly well they have beds and mattresses."

"Oh, you know everything. If there was a war, you'd be sleeping in the trenches."

He let his books drop:

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College's Role In Post-War Planning

by LLOYD MARCUS

In its own gentle manner the newspaper PM urged, in a full-page editorial last year, that college professors "get up on their hind legs and fight!" The battle with which PM was concerned had to do with a "labor-baiting" drive, based, it said, on much misinformation; but the point of the editorial has a much wider application. Despite their professed knowledge of, perspective on, and interest in the affairs of men, members of the academic profession have made no united attempt to bring their influence to bear on public opinion and on the policy-makers of the nation.

In this they stand almost alone among the scores of occupational and interest groups that make up American society. Labor unions, commercial organizations, religious societies, consumers associations, etc., are well aware of the value of "pressure group" techniques and use these methods consistently and skillfully. Some readers will argue that college instructors have no special ends to serve which would warrant such public activity. However, this is true only if we fail to regard "the general welfare" as an end worthy of every possible effort. It would seem that the particular knowledge and viewpoint of the professor could result in a tremendous contribution to public affairs, if only the learned man would not confuse detached objectivity with civic apathy.

Even in the most nearly normal times it would be worthwhile for scholars to come out of their shells and help with world problems; nowadays it is imperative. With a United Nations victory probable within a very few years, current influences upon public opinion, particularly American public opinion, are vital factors in determining the nature of the post-war world and the chances for a lasting peace. For this reason, scores upon scores of post-war planning agencies, representing every conceivable interest, sprang up during the first year of the war began to spread their respective gospels. But still the academic world was silent.

Then, at last, in January of this year the gap was filled. An organization known as the "Universities Committee on Post-War International Problems" announced that, with the pledged co-operation of 187 institutions (Bard among them), it intended systematically to ascertain the opinions of college and university faculty members in regard to

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First In The Fair

by PETE KAUFMAN

Graveyard, Six-o'clock and I set out to be the first ones into the New York World's Fair. It was Friday evening and the fair was opening on Sunday. We had read in the papers of an old man with a loaf of bread and a jug of wine who had already set out the day before to be first in the fair, but we were nevertheless determined to do the very best we could.

After months of careful planning, the time had come! We arrived at the fairgrounds at about 7:00 P. M., and immediately inquired as to the best gate for being the first into the fair. We finally chose the North Corona gate. Graveyard and I were full of confidence, but we noticed that Six-o'clock's enthusiasm was beginning to wane. Six-o'clock went home at 7:30. We called him Six-o'clock because he was straight up and down. He weighed 110 pounds and was 6 feet 5 inches tall.

The departure of Six-o'clock presented an interesting problem. When we had started out, Six-o'clock was the only one who had any money; and when he left, Graveyard and I found ourselves with less than a dollar between us. The first night we spent the money on six ham sandwiches and a gallon of water.

The first thing we had to do was inform the daily newspapers that we were there. We called the Daily News and told them a long line waiting for the fair to open had formed at the North Corona gate, and they promised to rush over a reporter and photographer to cover the story. It was an unusually cold night, and the reporters did not arrive until after midnight. Even with an overcoat on it was bitterly cold and Graveyard had not even brought an overcoat. We took half hour turns wearing mine.

When the reporters arrive, they lent us a blanket which Graveyard wore for the next two days. They were a little disconcerted to find that there were only two of us waiting to be the first ones into the world's fair, but they interviewed us and took several pictures, anyway. One of the pictures appeared on the back page of the next morning's edition.

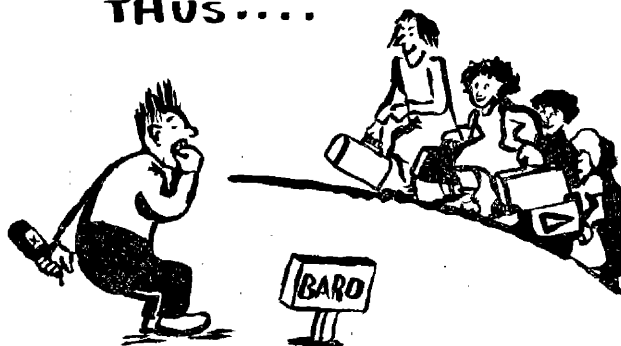
We got hardly any sleep. We had only the one blanket between us and the ground was cold and hard. The world's fair guards did their best to make us comfortable. They invited us in out of the cold, gave us coffee, and gave us a piece of corrugated paper to sleep on and a scarf for a pillow. We still didn't sleep so well.

Saturday found us cold, tired, hungry, and broke, but still determined to go on. We had learned from the guards during the course of the evening that the old man who had been in the papers the day before had given up trying to be the first one in the world's fair and we now thought ourselves to be officially considered as the first in line. Suddenly all our illusions were shattered! When daylight

broke we saw another fellow next to us waiting to be first in line. We each raced madly about attempting to find witnesses who could prove we had been the first to arrive the night before. We were amazed to find that we had arrived at so nearly the same time that it was impossible to determine who was first. It was thereupon agreed that all three of us should go in first together. This other fellow—his name was John, I think—gave us some valuable tips on being first. He was an old hand, a professional first. He had been first through the Lincoln Tunnel, first on the Eighth Avenue Subway, and first on a new trolley line in Newark. He had also been last on the Sixth Avenue El.

John phoned the Journal-American which always took pictures of him when he was being first or last in something. He carefully explained that he was being first in

A BARDIAN'S NITEMARE, FOR CO-EDS WERE NEVER (?) THUS....



the world's fair and told them what he had previously been first in, and they promised to send out a reporter. He then phoned the New York Sun. But the Sun was backing another fellow who was rumored to be waiting at another gate. This other fellow was John's biggest rival, and the Sun always took pictures of him.

Later on John told us he had a big problem on his mind. He couldn't make up his mind whether to be first on a new bridge that was opening in Brooklyn that afternoon, or take the last ride on a ferry that was discontinuing that same afternoon. After long and careful deliberation he gravely chose the ferry, and called the Journal-American back to inform them of this fact. He then told us to be sure and save his place while he was gone.

In the meantime, the Daily Mirror reporters arrived. They interviewed us, took our pictures, and left.

While John was gone, Graveyard and I decided to call the Herald Tribune which we had hitherto neglected. Graveyard went to telephone while I waited in line. There was actually no line as no one else was trying to be first, but we thought it best to take precautions. I began to worry when Graveyard did not return and left our place

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On War and The Intellect

by ROBERT BIERSTEDT

The editor of this estimable publication has requested me to contribute a farewell note to the members of the Bard College community with whom I have happily lived and as happily labored during a period of almost three years. This, of course, is both an undesirable and an impossible task. It is undesirable because at the moment of writing the time of departure is unknown as is also the particular branch of the service in which I shall ultimately be enrolled. It is impossible because I have no intention of saying farewell to anyone at Bard. There is a note of finality attached to the word "farewell" which has little relevance to a change of residence. The American "so long" and the German "*Auf wiedersehen*" seem much more felicitously to express the sentiment which custom requires in times of such transition.

In spite of uncertainties, however, there can be no denying the fact that at least a temporary change of status is imminent for the two of us who came to Annandale and the three of us who now prepare to leave. In that we are not alone and constitute no special case. A temporary departure is imminent for most of us. The time has come, as we knew it would, when we must adopt another kind of life, one more consonant with the needs of a nation which is carrying on the enterprise of war. For the moment at least, and as a matter of civil necessity, we must enter into that temporary suspension of rationality which characterizes patriotic faith. By suspension of rationality I do not imply that it is irrational to participate in war, but rather that war itself, seen in its philosophic phase *sub specie aeternitatis*, is a non-rational activity of human beings to which they must perforce contribute because of the strains and stresses of an immature civilization.

If there is anything to say, therefore, it ought appropriately to concern civilization itself and not its transitory stresses. Surely we need no Plato, with his doctrine of the generation of opposites, to convince us that if peace is only a temporary interlude between wars, so is war only a transient madness between two periods of relative tranquillity. We need adhere to no absolutes to realize that some of the values of civilization, particularly those characterized by the educational process, remain serenely unaffected by political cataclysm. A modicum of historical reflection teaches us that they will also perdure through the catastrophe which afflicts our own generation. Among these values are the exercise of the liberal arts, the enjoyment of humane letters, and the pursuit of truth. Whatever be my status in a month or two, therefore, whether the dress be blue or khaki, whether the rank be commissioned officer or private, I shall try to keep these values in their own proper perspective in spite of the

neglect to which the exigencies of the moment would otherwise consign them.

These then, in my opinion, are the things we ought to remember, both as students working together and as soldiers fighting together: that no war and no series of wars can impair the pursuit of truth and of knowledge; that no war and no series of wars can reduce the enjoyment of the fine arts; and that no war and no series of wars can restrict the significance of the liberal disciplines. The wisdom of Plato and the logical penetration of Aristotle remain forever impervious to the results of battle. The philosophic poetry of Lucretius and Dante and Goethe, the synthesis of St. Thomas, the mathematical genius of Newton and Leibniz and Bertrand Russell, the epistemological acuity of Immanuel Kant, the methodical patience of Darwin, the scientific spirit of Mach and Gibbs and Planck and Einstein, the humanity of William James, and the social insight of John Dewey—to mention only a few examples—are values which no economic, political, or even military catastrophe can affect.

We ought to remember in addition that no force on earth or in heaven, neither the minions of Hitler nor the legions of Hirohito nor all the angels of darkness together, can spoil the sonnets of Shakespeare or formally convert an "A" proposition *simpliciter*. No bomb can splinter the multiplication table nor destroy the square of opposition. The Mark VI is powerless to crush the literature and science of England and the philosophy and music of Germany will similarly survive any onslaught from a General Grant. The spark of learning, the fever that is scholarship, and the spirit that is science will never succumb to an art which is neither liberal nor humane.

Consider further that no purely political catastrophe, no military victory or defeat, can reduce the almost sensuous thrill which comes in the composition of a sentence in which every word is the right word. The creation of a sonnet or a statue or a symphony has meaning even in the midst of the tumult which is war. The logical analysis and the "precision plumbing" which constitute a scientific experiment reverberate above the shouts of the martial multitude, of friend and foe alike. No uniform and no military discipline however severe can completely regiment a mind familiar with the history of civilization. What are four stars to Isaac Newton, he who gathered all the stars of the firmament under a single principle? What is a stripe and a half to Immanuel Kant?

We ought to remember, in short, that our civilization has an intellectual history, and not merely a political history or an economic history. And we need to remember this in war as well as in peace. It may be argued, indeed it has been argued, by journalists whose wisdom varies in inverse relation to the number of words they write, that these are the values for which we fight, that their maintenance requires military victory. A casual glance into history suffices to refute so palpably absurd a proposition. It is true that the manner in which we indulge in

intellectual activities and the way in which we pursue these cultural values do depend, for the moment, upon martial success. But the activities and values themselves proclaim their independence of victory or defeat. Many other values, both social and ethical, obviously depend upon victory and everyone knows that freedom, for instance, in some slight degree at least, is necessary for the smallest participation in the life of the mind. But the ends themselves remain, as invulnerable to political and economic disaster as to sidereal and seismologic disturbance.

These are the things, then, which I would say and think as I temporarily suspend my own activities in the fields of art and science and philosophy. They are propositions which I would commend to my friends in this community as they too go off to war. I suffer from no delusions of grandeur when I say that the things we do here at Bard are bigger than war and certainly more sublime. They are big enough to fortify us against the miseries and deprivations of war. Let us remember that though we become soldiers and carry rifles we are also men who possess intellects. As men of art and of science we have a tradition to maintain, a tradition that endures.

Ballad for Bierstedt or Critique of Sheer Treason

by TONY HECHT

Prelude

I choose
To abuse
The sensitive Muse
With a couple of gutteral phrases;
To curdle my throat
With a sour note
In singing assorted praises.
The time is ripe
For a little tripe
Of the type which is here unfurled—
For Bierstedt's a lieut.
With a naval suit,
And will change the nautical world.

Stanza Primus

Stand by the guns, and hard-a-lee—
He's off to refute the Enemy,
And wo betide
The opposing side
When he mans the battle-station.
For it takes a remarkably stable foe
To withstand a logician's subtle blow
And absorb the shocks
Of a paradox
Of double implication.

Chorus of Nominalists

Oh, fasten the funnel and poop the deck,
For today is Bierstedt's day.
He'll destroy the meat
Of the German fleet
In a syllogistic way.
He's meek and coy
When his little boy
Is reciting his "Nighty Nighties,"
But his method is mean
And far from clean
When he's armed with an old sorites.

Stanza Secundus

He expects to succeed in the final tussle
By brandishing books by Bertrand Russell,
And to vanquish the host,
Like Emily Post,
Without the slightest tremor;
To ruin the Germans' self-esteem
By means of a crushing enthymeme,
And when safe in port,
He shall have them caught
On the horns of a dilemma.

Chorus of Monads

So hoist the halyard, and trim the jib,
For tonight is Bierstedt's night.
He shall guide his ship
Without a slip,
By distinguishing left from right.
If a volume of Plato should chance to miss
Its mark on the Axis jerks,
His method, as stated, is simply this:
Let them have the selected works.

FIRST IN THE FAIR

to look for him. I found him asleep in the telephone booth where he had started to call the Tribune.

John returned and we resumed our wait. Graveyard and I had not eaten since the six ham sandwiches and we were getting hungry. Finally, I telephoned home, and everyone was so glad to hear from me, they promised to come out immediately with all sorts of food. While we were eating, Grover Whelan tried to sneak past us. Nothing else happened that night, and we were tired enough to sleep on the corrugated paper.

We woke up Sunday morning to find a small line forming behind us. We had to take turns going to the police barracks to wash and have coffee. The line grew bigger. The appointed time for the fair to open was drawing near. The big moment was on hand. The moment when the realization of our ambition was to be fulfilled. Then it happened! After having waited forty hours, we were the first ones in the World's Fair!

We went out the first exit and went home.

Elegy In a Country Ballroom

I remember, yes, I remember, the days when it was the easiest assignment on the BARDIAN. This writing a column of hate. Those indeed were the days. No one talked of coeducation, except on weekends. The aforementioned weekends lasted from Thursday till Wednesday with the night in between for sleeping.

But now, we have a demand for a column of hate, a column screaming of the intellectual type of sneer. It is pretty easy stuff to write if you have the one necessary ingredient. The people to hate. Who's left around the campus to hurl biting comments at? Sedgewick is gone, and with him the dear dead days of backbiting in the dining commons and anywhere else. Maybe though, it's better this way. The other system had its complications. The business of being vitriolic about everyone at Bard was more than a business, it was in deed and in fact, an art.

We started out to write this column by going over the student body to find someone to lash out at. But really there isn't anyone left to insult, worth insulting True, there a good number of jerks who might have fun poked at them but there is no real pleasure in all of that.

The fraternity problem is no longer a problem with one exception. That exception is actually a very simple one. The idea seems to be to sit back and let the boys in the little yellow house in the hollow fight it out amongst themselves. Our usually reliable sources bear out the wisdom of this procedure since it is rumored that "all of Gaul is divided into three parts." Hail and farewell to the frat problem at Bard. All of which may be very nice for the college community as a whole but it leaves a "hate columnist" minus a heck of a good topic to unload his excess something or other on.

The drama group is long gone from our midst and the remnants of the bunch are, with one or two exceptions, a pretty sad looking lot.

We hear of one suggestion for the improvement of the campus that is sure to incur the wrath of various sections of the faculty but we submit it to the student body as a matter of democratic principle. The idea is to turn the library into a swimming pool in summer and a skating rink in winter. The suggested life guard had better not be mentioned at this time. Although the plan does have its drawbacks even its most bitter opponents have had to admit that it would be a good selling point for prospective students.

We can see Mr. Currie swimming from Willa Cather to Karl Marx, all the while selling Bard to a prospective student, perched up near the diving board, next to

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From Bard Hall

by ABBOT SMITH

The first concert of the spring term provided us with a very agreeable evening of piano-playing by Mrs. Wolff, for whose talents the community has reason to be grateful. The program was unusually well chosen and interesting. First came a Prelude and Fugue in D major, written for the organ by J. S. Bach and arranged for piano by Eugene d'Albert. This composition is by no means in Bach's most exalted vein, and is in fact a brilliant show piece for organists, who are given a chance to astonish the vulgar by the speed and accuracy of their pedaling. D'Albert made it into a vehicle for displaying the virtuosity of pianists, and Mrs. Wolff whacked it out in resounding fashion, as was right and proper. Unfortunately, the finest part of the piece, musically speaking, is the main section of the Prelude, which wholly misses fire in the piano arrangement.

Some of the best playing of the evening was in the Thirty-two Variations of Beethoven. These present a formidable test to the musicianship of any performer, for the diversity of mood and manner in each section must be disclosed while at the same time the unity of the whole composition is carefully maintained. Mrs. Wolff succeeded very well in this task.

The G minor Ballade of Chopin formed the third principal item on the program. Its performance suffered from a tendency to force both tone and tempo, which leads this reviewer to comment from his own sad experience upon a pitfall which awaits pianists in Bard Hall. When an audience is gathered in that small room its acoustics are of course wholly altered. The pianist, upon striking his first chords at a concert, is horrified to discover that they sound dead and colorless, and no amount of struggling or pounding or holding down of the pedal seems to help. For some inscrutable reason, however, the deadness is not apparent to listeners, though any forcing of tone is, and more than one performer in the past has unmercifully and unnecessarily belabored the instrument and the ears of his audience. Mrs. Wolff was far from this extreme, but she yielded to the extent of playing her *fortes fortissimo*, and her *pianissimos* merely *piano*.

Among the lesser numbers on the program were a delightful old sonata by Johann Christian Bach and an unfamiliar Gavotte by Prokofieff, most charmingly played. The concert ended with a sturdy rendering of the March from the Love of Three Oranges, and Brahms's E flat Intermezzo as an encore. We shall hope to hear more of Mrs. Wolff's playing in the future.

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The Human Comedy

"The Human Comedy" is the latest of William Saroyan's works, and probably his last for a while. At this point, it might be well to review briefly his literary career, and to see if any tentative conclusions can be drawn on the burning question "whither Saroyan?"

Saroyan had his first story published by Story Magazine in 1933. It was indubitably the work of a fresh and original writer. This piece, "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze," and those that followed, were brash, bumptious, glib, and often first-rate. In each of his early stories, Saroyan gave a piece of himself; the fun he was having, and endearing traits of the curious and charming people he knew. The stories were written in an easy offhand manner, an effect which most writers slave to create, and which he could achieve without effort.

At their best, these stories seemed to have a complete reality, but on a level different from the usual conception of reality.

In 1939, after dashing off some hundreds of these, Saroyan turned to another medium, play-writing. His first play, which he insists he wrote in three days, was called "My Heart's in the Highlands." It is one of the finest fantasies ever written, and his greatest achievement.

For the next two years, he wrote plays almost exclusively. "The Time of Your Life" which came next, was given the Pulitzer Prize. (It is typical of the Committee that it should give its award to one of the poorest of Saroyan's plays.) His plays, good and less good, were the best things on Broadway during these years. His latest is a one act play entitled "Hello Out There," which would seem to be, with the exception of some of O'Neill, the best one act play ever written. Here again Saroyan has found his mood; nostalgic, wistful, and out of this world.

A year and a half ago, he wrote his first group of short stories in some time. They were published under the

title "My Name Is Aram." They were obviously written to sell, and sell they did. Despite the fact that some of them were insufferably cute and some contained forced and silly situations, they were pretty good. But in these stories, there were the first obvious signs of the direction in which he was going. Previously, his stories had contained a large element of wide-eyed interest in and enjoyment of the world about him. But in this collection, that trait began to be crystallized into a definite conscious effect. He evidently felt that if people liked impersonalized love in small doses, they would like it even more in large ones. Instead of it just being he who was in love with life, it became everybody. All the people in his stories began to soliloquize about the beauties of the world, and about how glorious it was to be able to go to the grocery store and buy a quarter's worth of salami.

In addition to this violent love, he began to make his characters and situations somewhat forced. The people who previously had populated his stories were eccentric and quite unlike people we know, but their eccentricities were not so strange as to keep them from being recognizable as human beings. In "My Name Is Aram," Saroyan created some characters who were daffy for the sake of being daffy, and who ceased to be human and became only a mass of unexpected and peculiar traits. This is not to say that he ever made a deep search into the depths of personality. His people were always, as has been pointed out, a piece of himself. But here he took those pieces and enlarged their unconventional aspects so much as to make his characters often ridiculous instead of appealing.

In the spring of last year, he decided that he needed some money for the purpose of feeding his relatives, and producing his numerous unproduced plays. So he went to Hollywood and got fifty thousand dollars for writing a script for M.G.M. called "The Human Comedy." The picture and the book which he adapted from it both came out recently, and the book is his most unsuccessful piece of work to date.

All the signs of the gradual prostitution of his art became fully evident here. The excessive love, the over-written characterization, and the quaint and heart-wringing situations were all there, and there in great abundance. It is almost like a parody.

"The Human Comedy" is the story of the Macauley family: the mother, Bess, the sister, Ulysses, the four-year-old, and Homer, the older brother. The story hinges on Homer, who is a messenger boy at a telegraph office, and who is having growing pains, which are evidently due to the fact that he is forced to deliver telegrams announcing soldiers' deaths. The family is held together by the wonderful character of the mother, who is too much like the florists' ideal for comfort. There are endless pages of conversation between Homer and his mother, and endless sentimental remarks and reflections by Homer, the telegraph operator, who was evidently written in because the Studio needed a part for Frank Morgan. "The Human

Comedy" has a number of fine spots, but they are overshadowed by Hollywoodish symbols, and cloying sentimentality which he employs in order to create the Universal Family.

There are two possible explanations for this last. The optimistic one is that Saroyan knows just what he's doing, and has purposely written his recent stuff for mass consumption, and has included those things which would appeal to the notoriously sentimental public. The other explanation is that he is being influenced by movie conception and popular ideas of what constitutes his literary worth to such an extent that he is incorporating these into his work. This is probably an over-pessimistic view, for Saroyan wrote "Hello Out There" after he had written "The Human Comedy," and "Hello Out There" displays no traces of his recent retrogression.

It is probably too much to think about any further maturation of Saroyan's talents. But we have a right to anticipate a continuation of his funny, original, and wholly delightful work. We hope we have a justification for expecting that Saroyan will not be permanently harmed by his months in Lous B. Mayer's fold.

Two Fables

by BEN SNYDER

FABLE I

Bongo, the Neurotic Cocker Spaniel

Always talking. That's what they said about him. Told everyone his troubles—talked, moaned, cried, made sad eyes—and talked. Now for quite some time, people—and dogs too, hadn't really been paying much attention to what Bongo's noises meant. He'd no sooner start in than grins and snickers would go around. There'd be a stifled laugh. Bongo sensed all this—it hurt him—and his eyes grew sadder.

Then Bongo had an idea!

He would say nothing!

First they asked him if his stomach hurt, while quietly and without a word he ate his meals. "Do you have a headache, dear?" To be answered by a mournful frown. "We'd better call the Doctor, Bongo's sick." He only scratched his fleas.

Of course, they found nothing wrong and the Doctor went away. For days and days the spaniel never said a word, even when he yawned. Bongo, in his glory, did the grinning now. For hours at a time he would sit and ponder what to say for the first word when he should speak again. It should be important, and what is more—profound. It should be spoken with the air of a great sage—Confucius like. It should have a touch of humor, Bongo was sure of that. Yet the more he thought the harder it became for him to decide. "Love" had been his first choice but he'd given that up long ago—on two

counts—it had been his first choice—and second, no one would understand him.

To make a long story short, Bongo never talked again. Toward the end he was neglected—his mind, overcrowded with cryptic epigrams, began at last to break, and wandered. He died three years later, and with a broken heart.

FABLE II

Otto, the Elephant with the Inferiority Complex

Now Otto was big, had red ears and white tusks, and could make the earth shake when he sneezed. However, Otto never did sneeze, even when he had a cold, for Otto was afraid to. Besides, he was self-conscious about his red ears, and all that noise made people look at him. No—Otto, rather than sneeze, would tie his trunk around his tusks, hold his breath, and cry. Pathetic beast, he would sit and wipe away the tears with his knees—covering his simple face with dirt, soon to change to mud.

One spring morning, as Otto sat disconsolate, stifling a sneeze, a particularly well-groomed elephant came up and asked him if he was Otto. Snuffling, in a nasal tone, Otto said he was. And then a strange thing happened. This dapper individual told Otto that the Association for the Advancement of Elephant Industry had chosen him, Otto, as their candidate for President of the country.

"No, thanks," (still in a nasal tone) said Otto, shy as ever.

The dapper individual smiled, shook paws (if elephants have paws) and answered coolly: "Congratulations, we'll keep in touch with you as the campaign proceeds," and left. A blow, a *coup d'etat* to say the least. Poor bewildered Otto thought of hanging or of gas, but didn't have the courage and so was quite alive when many days later this individual from the A.A.E.I., followed by a great crowd, a throng, brought the news.

"Congratulations, Mr. President." There were wild cheers.

Otto was so surprised, for a minute, that he forgot to tie his trunk and—sneezed. He closed his eyes. His brain was dizzy from the impact of the air.

Awed, lost in admiration, the crowd stood humbly there and waited for another sneeze. This was no ordinary president. He, at last, was the iron elephant they had all been waiting for. They waited, waited quite some time. Even waited while Otto, eyelids shut, tied his trunk—but when he cried, they left.

And Otto, still sitting in that corner with his eyes closed, stifles imaginary sneezes.

Commissioner Blackstone Says:

Without even a keg of beer—standard equipment in most fire stations—to celebrate the occasion, we quietly observe the first anniversary of the college Fire Brigade.

One day during a T.M.C. discussion, the idea of a brigade burst forth spontaneously. Soon the idea, now transformed into action, found recruits among the student body until it eventually claimed one fourth of the college community. The initial plans for the Brigade were scrapped in the early stages of organization when it was found that two men from each dormitory weren't sufficient. A general alarm was sounded for outside help resulting in a welcome response. Fire fighting then became a fight in earnest with tactics outlined in mimeograph. Then, to insure heavily against another catastrophic loss, meetings were held weekly. Besides the theory learned in these meetings, outside drills taught the practical side of fire fighting.

There were two reasons why this group was organized; one has to do with Civilian Defense, and the other has to do with definite need. The former reason is precisely indicated by the government which insists that "Fire fighting is America's first line of defense." The other reason always starts an argument, as a con inevitably shows up every time a pro gets nicely going. Frankly, I can't argue with unbiased opinion, so I'll be progressive and leave it up to you. If you are still undecided after a hot argument, get from my desk someday Pamphlet No. 27, National Board of Fire Underwriters.

During the past twelve months members of the Brigade have, in three instances, quenched the demon flame. True also are the facts that they once flooded the art studio, tripped over their own doings during a blackout incident, and lost all manly courage at the sight of the 40-foot ladder. Still vivid in my mind is the night when one of the new firemen innocently asked why they distinguished hose connections as male and female. But no one gave up hope.

Moreover, with a little political pull, we managed to augment our 57 extinguishers with a stand-pipe system in all the hazardous buildings. Four hydrants were conveniently installed. Twelve axes, 10 pike poles (or boat hooks, if you must), 500 feet of garden hose, 3 smoke masks, and an electric siren were purchased. Recently the B and G boys built us a box for storing some of the above equipment plus 700 feet of 1½ inch hose.

Now we are high pressuring the administration for another exit from the balcony of the theater and for the installation of hydrants in and about Faculty Circle, as a good many hazards remain up there.

To the members of the Fire Brigade and to those persons who made the organization possible, I extend many thanks.

ELEGY IN A COUNTRY BARROOM

the Readers Guide to Periodical Literature. There you have progressive education in its simpler form. Minus rabbits and the like. Now we begin to tread on dangerous ground. But, we can't help it. This corner can-

not help feeling that the reference to us as rabbits was definitely low humor and an intended smack at the theories of propagation of the race that some of our college mates hold.

Surely guinea pigs deserve better than that. After all, they made a movie out of Yellow Jack. The least they can do is to leave us to our own methods, isolated in Indian country as we are, with only a gallon and a half of gas.

We can always turn to insulting the faculty but that isn't a wise course. With the trend of things to come shaping up as they are the near future may find some of us at the mercy of our former instructors as our superior officers who won't be held back by the limits of progressive education or whatever the Dean calls what's happening to us here.

Here we are then at the end of the column and so far we have found no one worth insulting. The critics of this feeling will point out that there are still a few around that keep up the old tradition but we say the hell with 'em. One young man stated that Father Dan was still about informing people that they are maladjusted at best but this character is no longer amusing to us. We also have been reminded that we have a leftover from the drama group in the person of the poet-lareate of the Potter latrine, but minus the other half of the heavenly twin combination the bitter noun and lashing verb have gone from the scene.

We could always insult Nail Yewman if we wanted to get our heads bashed in with a medicine ball. But why should we, after all, what's he done to us except build us up? We could remark that a playboy without a car just ain't a playboy anymore and point to one particular horrible example, but what's the use? So we say, the hell with it. The old days are gone. Make way for the day of the female and the era of sweetness and light. There just isn't anyone left to hate.

N. M. B.

COLLEGE ROLE IN POST-WAR PLANNING

issues of the peace settlement, and to apply these findings wherever they would have the most effect. With funds from the Rockefeller Foundation, a staff from the World Peace Foundation, and the brains of some of the leading educators in the country, they set to work distributing outlines of problems to the "Co-operating Groups." At present, Ralph Barton Perry, of Harvard, is Chairman of the Central Committee, and the Presidents of Yale, of Princeton, and of dozens of other universities have given their official blessing to the plan.

It is certain that these distinguished gentlemen would flinch noticeably on hearing the Universities Committee terms a "pressure group." But this is only another way of saying what is set forth in the initial statement of the organization: "In this task (of discussing post-war issues)

American scholars . . . have a special responsibility and a unique opportunity. They are especially qualified by knowledge, training, and perspective to contribute to the clarification of the crucial and difficult issues involved; and the formulation and publication of the results of their co-operative study and reflection may have a significant influence on general opinion and on the action of the government." Utilizing the work of the Co-operating Groups, the Central Committee purposes "to prepare a series of systematic memoranda or monographs on the major questions concerning the organization of the post-war world; . . . to secure a wide distribution of these publications, and to bring them to the attention of the agencies of the Government."

Thus, the scholar has stepped into the arena of public opinion. We may hope that this bold gesture marks the end of academic aloofness from current social and material destruction, for the grand folly of national, institutional, and personal isolationism.

* * *

The Universities Committee Co-operating Group at Bard is called the "Faculty-Student Post-War Problems Group." The idea of having students participate in this work was not suggested in the original plan, but Bard's innovation seems to have been accepted cheerfully by the Central Committee. Meeting for an hour-and-a-half's discussion once every ten days, the Bard Group devotes two sessions to each of the main problems posed and outlined by the Committee. Then, after the issues have been examined from various points of view, a summary of all opinions expressed and any conclusions reached is sent to the Committee for future use.

We include here a sketchy, unofficial resume of the topic discussed at the first two meetings—the peace-making procedure.

The "how," as well as the "what," of the settlement that follows this war will have a tremendous effect upon future history. Are the United Nations alone to assume responsibility for planning the new world, or should non-belligerent states, the occupied countries, or even the defeated "enemy" nations have a say in the deliberations? What sort of organization is to be set up for this purpose—a peace conference, special expert commissions, a permanent international government, or what? Lastly, should a general solution to all the basic problems be attempted as soon as the war is won, or should there first be a long transition, or "cooling off," period before the final peace-making begins? The importance of these issues is apparent.

Concerning the timing of the peace settlement, the chief argument in favor of an extended transition period (of, say, ten years) is that this interval would allow the passions of war to subside and hence make for a saner and better peace. It is also pointed out that the United Nations could use this time to rehabilitate war-stricken

nations, and by gradually restoring power to representative local authorities, could assure the re-establishment of stable, democratic governments. First of all, in proportion as the day of victory recedes into the past and the memory of the war years grows dim, so the United Nations may tend to quarrel among themselves and so will a trend to isolationism—a "return to normalcy"—increase. Secondly, the maintenance of order during such an era of suspended animation will require the military supervision of much of Europe and the Far East, and the army of occupation that does this job is sure to leave ineradicable hatreds in its wake. Thirdly, it is well known that theoretically temporary adjustments (e.g., "mandates"), such as would have to be made during a transition, tend to become part of the inflexible *status quo* and are not very easily revised. Likewise it will be almost impossible to soft-pedal nationalistic passions unless action is taken in this direction as soon as the war ends. Finally, private investments, which could aid greatly in the work of rehabilitation, will not be forthcoming during a period in which neither boundaries nor governments are likely to remain the same from month to month. Thus the case seems to be against the proposal for a long interval of transition between victory and the peace settlement.

In the matter of what type of agency should conduct the peace-making operations, several possibilities present themselves. One is the United Nations, which will be responsible for the Axis defeat and which will be in a position to take the lead in world rehabilitation and re-organization. Another suggestion is for a series of separate regional or topical commissions, composed of experts and operating in a somewhat rational and impartial manner. If a general peace conference is desired, we must compare the merits of a long and a short meeting of this kind. The long conference would remain in session until every international problem created by the war had been discussed and settled; thus, it would insure consistent and comprehensive action. A short conference, on the other hand, would decide questions of general policy, as well as those of immediate urgency, and then pass the remainder of the task over to a permanent international organization. This last plan has enormous advantages in relation to world opinion—the quick, decisive action of the peace-makers might well win public confidence, while the steps taken by a world government which really had a job to do might further strengthen public respect and support.

The question of whom to admit to a general peace settlement is a particularly difficult one. We might say that since non-belligerent nations would probably have little power to do harm, they should be invited, in the interest of good-will and world co-operation. (Some people also believe that non-belligerents will represent a "voice of reason" after the war, but the Bard Group expressed unanimous skepticism on this point.) On the other hand it does not seem desirable to have several

nations which did not contribute to the Axis defeat and which may have little to contribute to post-war reconstruction come flocking to a peace conference, only to play power politics and generally slow down the work. In the case of friendly states, once occupied by the Axis, the problem would be to find stable, representative governments which could send delegates to a conference. The same holds true for defeated enemy nations, even if, remembering that we have been fighting the Axis governments and not their subjects, the United Nations were to be anxious to have these peoples represented at the settlement.

In view of all the above considerations the following outline of a peace-making procedure appears reasonable to this author: As soon as the war is won, the United Nations should draw up the basic plan of the peace settlement. They should then initiate a permanent world organization to execute these proposals and to handle other international affairs. The membership of the organization should include the United Nations, the non-belligerent countries, and governments representative of the people of occupied and defeated nations, as soon as such governments are established.

The issues we have discussed are a sample of the crucial and complex problems that will soon face the American voter. To throw light on the importance and on the meaning of these problems is the role that colleges, working together, can fill as a practical contribution to a realistic, lasting peace.

EN FAMILLE

"If that's how it is, I won't study at all."

"Suit yourself, my boy," said his mother, turning back to her pots and pans.

An ancient alarm-clock, conspicuous on top of the cupboard, was ticking away with a sound like somebody tapping on a saucepan, and from time to time Mme. Fontanieres gave it a furtive glance. When its dial marked exactly six-forty, she exclaimed:

"Here comes your father."

And, indeed, in the seconds that followed M. Fontanieres entered the kitchen, without their having heard him open and shut the front door or go through the hall. He went immediately to the chair in front of which his slippers were placed, and attempted to undo the laces of his high-top shoes. But they gave him trouble, and he began to wheeze, despite his efforts to contain himself.

"Albert!" said Mme. Fontanieres. "You've made double knots on your shoes again. It's insane." She came over and knelt in front of him, skillfully untangling the laces and pulling off her husband's shoes. Then she gave him a poke in the ribs and grumbled:

"Instead of coughing like a consumptive because you've spent the whole day smoking at the office, you might at least be polite and say good evening!"

Marc snickered. His mother, who had a sharp ear, heard him, and called him an impolite ruffian with no respect for his parents. M. Fontanieres, taking advantage of the diversion, made an exit. He came back a few minutes later, carefully buttoning a jacket whose color clashed with the black of his trousers and vest. It was a much-patched garment, trimmed with an edging which probably covered many shabby spots; the elbows had been recovered with heavy, greenish cotton; the whole thing had the patina of writing desk, brush, and cleaning fluid. . . . The faded red ribbon of the Legion d'Honneur on the lapel seemed to have been forgotten there.

Mme. Fontanieres, who had been setting the table, considered her husband at length and declared:

"Now here's something worth while! You ought to tell your son to follow your example. Do you hear, Marc, why don't you change clothes, like your father does, when you come home? You've got plenty of house-coats."

"Your mother is right there," said M. Fontanieres, with alacrity. "Order is necessary in life. Therefore, it is necessary in clothing. If you were orderly, you'd classify your jackets as I do: number one, number two, number three, number four; that is, for formal occasions, for going out, for the office, for the home. . . . Your grandfather Fontanieres . . ."

Marc interrupted:

"If I have to undress completely when I come home, I'd rather go to bed immediately."

"All right," declared his father. "You'll regret it later on. Another thing: where are you in your courses? In mathematics?"

"I've already explained to you that you never got this far: these are the Specials."

"Well, so the parents can no longer follow the progress of their children! It's my duty and my right to know where you are in your studies. I repeat: in mathematics?"

Marc, balancing on the hind legs of his chair, recited:

"Exponential function, Newton's binomial . . ."

"Born in?"

"Integrals, factorials, determinants . . ."

"Yes, yes, but you still don't know the date, my friend. Newton: 1642-1727."

Mme. Fontanieres, a saucepan in hand, turned around, astonished, and said to Marc:

"Your father really learned something at the *lycee*, he did. Newton: 1642-1727. . . . An Englishman, wasn't he, Albert?"

Marc had turned his head. Ostensibly, he was winding his wrist-watch. His mother started, looked at the alarm-clock, bent over it and listened twice over to make sure it hadn't stopped. Finally she announced, as if it were a major disaster:

"Marie-Paule is already twenty minutes late."

"Let's eat, that'll make her come," suggested M. Fontanieres.

"That will complicate matters," objected the mother. "I'll have to use up gas keeping her food warm. You can wait a while, Albert, you who always take a bun to the office for an afternoon snack."

Marc said defiantly: "As for me, I'm waiting for Marie-Paule until midnight if necessary."

"Until midnight!" exclaimed M. and Mme. Fontanieres together.

They both showered their son with questions: "You know something? You know where she's gone? Is she working extra hours again? Well, where is she?"

"I suppose she doesn't have the right to do whatever she pleases," replied Marc.

"Look what time it is," declared his mother.

"Yes," chimed in M. Fontanieres, "you can count on Marie-Paule for everything except being on time. She's very undisciplined in that respect."

"The girl is a gypsy," exclaimed the mother. "I'd like to know where that temperament of hers comes from. Not from our family. All the Guedons were always on time."

"In our family, too," said M. Fontanieres. "My father used to run his classes right to the very second. He even used to designate a pupil to watch the time. This pupil was responsible for all the movements of the class: recreations, beginnings, ends, and what not. My father would give him an enormous watch, from which the child never took his eyes. . . . Ah! what discipline and order they had in those days. . . . As soon as the pupil had announced: 'Sir, it's time,' my father would ring the bell on his desk, or, if it was outside, would blow a horn. Inspector General Binanquet, the author of the famous grammar, used to say to my father: 'You are a model teacher. You have on your side Science and Punctuality'."

"Science and Punctuality," repeated the mother. "Do you hear, Marc?"

Engrossed in his subject, M. Fontanieres continued:

"As for my grandfather, Theophile Fontanieres, he was a kind of policeman you never see nowadays. At the station, he used to command his brigade with a megaphone. It was magnificent! . . . He should have commanded a battle-cruiser, my grandfather . . ."

Mme. Fontanieres, suddenly vexed, stopped her husband:

"Albert, dear, you're jawing my ears off with those ancestors of yours. Everybody has ancestors. At home, we used to have a gong to ring when dinner was ready. . . . I'm worried about Marie-Paule. And you sit there and do nothing. Well, get up, do something! You behave like an oaf!"

Marc, who had not budged during these tirades, got up nonchalantly and said: "I'm going to telephone her office."

"That's it," said Mme. Fontanieres, "so that if she isn't there, it'll look as if we have to go chasing after our daughter!"

"No, it's out of the question," agreed the father. "Respectable parents usually don't have to go looking for their children at dinner-time. It's only among the gypsies that you see such things. After all, I'm not going to go inquiring about Marie-Paule at the police station!"

"Maybe she's had an accident," said Mme. Fontanieres.

"She's probably just had enough of the life around here," said Marc.

"What did you say, ungrateful wretch!" exclaimed his mother.

"I said that Marie-Paule is probably sick and tired of the whole thing. She works like a slave. She's next to nothing: typist, stenographer, cashier, telephone operator, that's all. Just like the janitor's daughter. It's disgusting! And I tell you it's your fault."

His parents stood facing each other, looking into each others' eyes as if something dreadful were about to occur. The alarm-clock ticked ominously. And the cover of one of the pots on the stove jumped up and down as it allowed the boiling soup underneath it to escape; it was as if some evil spell had been cast on the house. Marc was aghast, thinking that he himself had precipitated this catastrophe. . . . Everyone stood still and speechless until the soup, pouring over, put out the gas; M. Fontanieres ran to turn off the burner, saying:

"It stinks of gas in here."

At the word gas Mme. Fontanieres pulled herself together and got a rag to wipe up the soup, which had dripped down to the floor.

"I'm not going to make any more. You can go eat at

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the nearest slop-house, if you wish. When a man has no more authority than you have, my friend, he should never marry. Your son insults us right and left and your daughter keeps the whole family waiting. A fine mess!"

M. Fontanieres' jaw muscles twitched in exasperation; he donned his spectacles and examined the clock. Without a word, he drew up a chair to the table, sat down, unfolded his napkin, and began to break his bread. Finally, he spoke:

"Marc, you are a good-for-nothing scoundrel. And your sister, for a Christian gentlewoman, is unforgiveably late; she acts as if we were running a hotel. You may serve now, Antoinette."

Mme. Fontanieres obeyed. When she had filled all the plates but her own, she stopped and watched her husband and son eat their meal with solid, whole-hearted application. Her eyes became a little cloudy, for she was thinking of her life, which always had been humble and worried; she sighed:

"I'm really worried about Marie-Paule. Perhaps she isn't as happy as we think she is. She used to be interested in poetry, in music, but you always discouraged her, Albert! . . . And that office is no place for her."

The men listened to her without looking up from their meal. M. Fontanieres had remembered that he had neglected to lock the cabinet where he kept his notes on

the personnel and his own diary and journal. "Tomorrow, I'll have to be the first at the office." Marc was thinking of the last meal he had had at the house of his younger sister Suzanne, whose husband was making money without her having to pass examinations or waste the best years of his life in classrooms. They had eaten in a dining-room that was used exclusively for meals, and the wine and the water had been served in separate glasses. . . . Mme. Fontanieres continued:

"The one time that Marie-Paule is late, we might at least have waited for her."

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