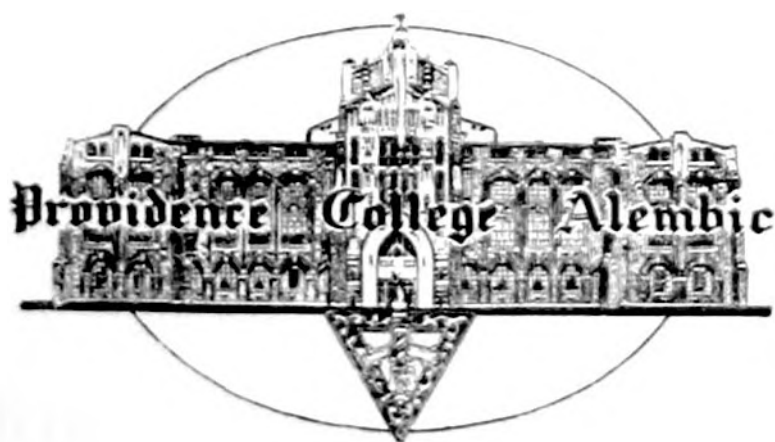


THE ALEMBIC



DECEMBER 1948

THE ALEMBIC



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
BY THE
STUDENTS OF PROVIDENCE COLLEGE.
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BY an imaginative twist, the Alembiscope comes to focus upon my relation with this publication since that time, two years ago, when I assisted my predecessor, Max Knickerbocker, to revive it. The view afforded by the Alembiscope under such circumstances is both introspective and, to an extent, productive of sentiment.

"Words. Words. Words!" raved Hamlet. Ah, yes, but what priceless gems are words. They, the written expressions of thought, record the history of the world, describe the progress of civilization, the architecture of all philosophies—and, all things considered, resolve themselves into the vital role of being the *sine qua non* of society.

It was a privilege and a source of pride to have been, in a way, a "captain of words." Indeed, it has been a capacity that has not passed without my deep and sincere gratitude. Such an honor it was that I fear that I can not properly express my appreciation for it until I become much more clever and adept in my use of these "gems."

However, although I am too selfish to bid a fast "goodbye" to the ALEMBIC, I am not at all hesitant to express my gratitude to past contributors and staff associates without whose pens and patience I could not have endured. To my successor I wish "good luck" and would remind him that the role of editor demands the possession of a strange alliance—an indeterminable degree of humility and an inestimable stock of convictions. I have often found it difficult to exercise these editorial instruments and hope that those instances where I have failed shall serve to direct him upon a better course—thereby they shall not be such grave losses.

R. E. D.

THE STAFF

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ROBERT EDWARD DOHERTY, '49

Assistant Editors

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Literary Board

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THOMAS H. BONING, '50

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GEORGE H. COCHRAN, '51

Staff Artist

WILLIAM SILVIA, '50

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Editors Also Know Despair

By ROBERT E. DOHERTY, '49

WHEN the associate editor of the *Cibmela*, a college literary quarterly, walked into the publication's office, he thought for a moment that there might be some work to attend to. It was the sight of the editor's body hunched over a desk like an elongated question mark which suggested this possibility. However, it was no manuscript upon which the editor was wielding his pencil feverishly. The first question that the editor asked described the nature of his preoccupation.

"What's a seven-letter word for 'futility'?"

"Wouldn't *Cibmela* fill the bill?" The associate smiled. He was occasionally noted for wit and shady short stories.

"Quite so", the editor frowned, "but that is not the word."

"Anything new?", the associate inquired. He could often be catty in a coy-like manner.

"Not unless you've finished your masterpiece. Have you?"

The associate breathed upon his fingertips, brushed them upon his lapel (shaking loose some fragments from "the last supper" in the process) and then extracted a lengthy manuscript from his briefcase. "Surprise!", he exclaimed as he handed it to the editor. "Finished it last night."

It was evident that the editor was relieved. Counting his own contribution, this one ran the total to two.

"What's the title?"

"I call it **THINGS ARE QUAINLY QUIXOTIC IN CUBA**", the associate beamed.

"Bet I can call it something more descriptive", the editor mumbled.

"You say something?", the associate demanded.

"Just thinking aloud", the editor fenced. "Incidentally, did you lux this thing?" He pointed delicately to the new manuscript.

"What do you mean!", the associate exploded.

The editor laughed cruelly. "Come now", he said, "don't play innocent. You know damn well what I mean. You've tried to pass off unexpurgated scripts on me before, you know."

The associate blushed furiously. "Don't worry, it's clean."

Swinging around in his chair toward the desk again, the editor attacked the cross-word puzzle with fresh vigor. Meanwhile the associate transferred the notes that he had taken in history from the back of a postage stamp onto the blank side of his social security card.

At a certain point in these proceedings, they were interrupted by a knocking on the door. Quickly the editor adjusted his tie and swept the crossword into the wastebasket, taking care, however, that it would remain retrievable. The associate whipped a red correction pencil from his pocket, stared censorously into the Freudian recesses of his own manuscript and cried "Come in"!

Neither of the staff members knew the entering student. Immediately they judged him to be either a freshman or one of those ghost-students who flits between classrooms on padded feet, never says anything in class and then surprises everyone by photographically appearing in the yearbook with the graduates.

"Have you time to look over a verse of mine?", he inquired of them.

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The potentiality of the circumstance almost stripped the editor of his integrity. Had not the associate maintained a restraining grip on the editor's trousers, the contributor might have been raped of his verse then and there.

Taking the single-sheeted manuscript from the newcomer, the associate and the editor appraised it hopefully. The contribution, it seemed, was a limerick. But while the staff members were reading it, they suddenly felt rather closed in, as if the office had turned into a crowded locker room. The associate excused himself and retreated to open a window while the editor himself, a more enduring fellow, began to re-read the limerick. It read as follows—both times:

"I know of a fellow named Moses
Whose mouth, you'll note, never closes.
That's not only bad,
But it's terribly sad
For the fellow has got halitosis."

Calculating that the Cibmelans had had enough time to form an opinion, the potential contributor asked for their comments.

"Well, I don't know——", the editor stammered.

"Its subject material isn't too noble", the associate mused.

"Rather primitive in a way", the editor added.

"Nothing extraordinarily elevating about it", the associate continued.

"All right. We'll accept it", the editor declared. He just recalled the lamentable brevity of the coming issue and desperation was his motive.

The contributor was delighted. He thanked them over and over again and finally, just as he was about to leave without giving them his name, the associate asked him for it.

"Can't tell the author without a by-line, you know", he laughed.

"The name is Abner McGuire", the stranger replied. And then the door closed and he was gone.

The two Cibmelans looked at each other for a moment and then rushed to the open window. Here they inhaled of the fresh air deeply, and then, feeling sufficiently revived, they began to converse.

"What happened in here?", the editor asked.

"Darned, if I know", the associate replied. "I only remember being suddenly overcome by something stifling. Maybe we've been smoking too many cigarettes."

"Yes, maybe that's the reason", the editor agreed.

"Did you notice the clothes that fellow wore?", the associate inquired. "Damn expensive, I'll bet. Looked as if he just stepped out of *ESQUIRE*."

"And how!" the editor replied. "Some people's fathers have money, I guess."



About ten minutes after the new contributor left, the editor and his associate were again hosts to another visitor. In response to the knock on the door, the associate opened that portal only to come face to face with the most moronic looking character that he had ever met. This stranger wore his hair matted over his forehead, and, his hair being black, he sported fingernails to match. These features, coupled with the idiotic stare of his eyes and the fact that he drooled from an open mouth, sent shivers along the spines of the Cibmelans.

"Yes?", the editor asked.

"I gotta pome", came the response. And when the stranger pronounced the last word the associate editor, who was standing next to him almost keeled over.

Immediately the editor sized up the situation. "Is your name by any chance Moses?", he asked.

The moron's face brightened incredibly. "Yas. How-jaknow? Have we met before?"

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"No. No, I don't think we have for I can't place your face." (But the breath is definitely familiar, the editor added to himself.)

Vacancy resumed its space in the eyes of the stranger. "Yawanna see my pome?", he asked again.

The editor was thinking fast. Out of the corner of his eye he could see that the associate was sinking fast. "We're terribly busy right now", he parried, "why don't you leave it here and we'll get word to you if we accept it. O. K.?"

"O. K.", said the stranger and, depositing his "pome" in the hands of the swooning associate, he mercifully took his leave.

The sound of the closing door and the associate's falling body rang simultaneously in the editor's ear.

Without a moment's hesitation the editor rushed to the unconscious body of his associate. Here he extracted the "pome", another limerick, from the yielding hands of his com-patriot and read:

"I admire the aspiring attire
Of Abner McGuire, Esquire.
But he'd be more famous
Like his kid brother, Seamus
If only he didn't perspire."

"How desperate can I be", the editor wondered as he placed the contribution among those other three listed as "next issue". Then, remembering that his associate had passed out, he applied a match to the sole of his shoe, ignited that match with another and waited for the "Great Awakening".

* * * * *

An hour after the second stranger's visit the editor and the associate (he had revived in the meanwhile) were still idling away in the *Cibmela* office. For a half-hour now they had been engaged in a philosophical discussion in which the

editor defended the affirmative side of the question as to whether a man could kill time without injuring eternity. The discussion had become so interesting and edifying that both students had cut philosophy class. In the end these two scholastic *cymini sectores* decided that the answer to the question depended solely on the precise meaning of the terms involved and their compatibility with the inner-workings of the ego as differentiated from the libidinous sub-stratio of the higher subconscious in the present indicative.

At this point they were visited for a third time by a potential contributor who desired with a fierce intensity to see his essay published by the magazine.

"What is the subject of your essay?", the editor asked.

"I have two essays", the stranger informed them, "they might be somewhat radical but they *are* essays. They certainly express opinion. One of them is entitled ON THE SUMMATION OF PHILOSOPHY and the other is ON COLLEGE SPIRIT."

The editor was interested, "What do you say about philosophy?"

"Plenty", the essayist stated. "This is my opening sentence, listen—*Philosophy is the black-board upon which is recorded the various and divergent findings of men of genius or abnormal curiosity. More precisely, it is the front trench in the struggle for Omniscience and, as a trench, it is occupied by sages who shout back to the common people that everyone can be absolutely positive of uncertainty.*"

Here the essayist paused. "Like it?"

The editor nibbled on the eraser part of his pencil. "I'm not sure that I agree with you, but after all an essay is an essay with or without concurrence of opinion."

It appeared that the essayist was disappointed. "I know. I know. It isn't politic to agree with me so you don't. That

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reminds me of my second essay which explains why I am not surprised to find the lack of college spirit around here."

"What do you mean?", the editor asked. He hoped the conversation would fall into profundity.

"This is what I mean", the essayist began. "I mean that there is a lack of school spirit around here for many reasons; but one great reason in particular is the fact that the students at this college are greatly restrained from expressing their spirit."

The editor showed great interest so the essayist continued. He was a radical fellow but, having something of the intellectual radicalism about him, he sized up the editor mentally and decided to be elementary in order to get his point across.

"Let me take you and this magazine as an illustration", he said. "You and your contributors can't write about anything. You are restricted. Limited. Am I right?"

"Not exactly", the editor answered. "All publications have policies of some sort. Ours, or at least, one of ours, is that we don't accept literature (and I apply the expression loosely) of the stark realistic school of thought. We believe that everything is not fit material for literature. We permit a student to be naughty but never obscene."

"I believe in that opinion myself", the essayist declared. "However, neither of my essays is obscene and I'll bet that you won't publish them. Or, if you do publish them", he added with haste, "it will be because some member of the faculty has sanctioned them."

"What if that does happen? I don't see what it proves?", the editor retorted.

"It proves that as an editor you are not an editor. It means that you do not accept or reject every manuscript which is submitted to you. It means that you are only the front-man

and that there is a higher authority, that that authority is of the faculty, and since a member of the faculty has the ultimate say concerning what is or is not published, the *Cibmela* is not a student publication."

For a moment the editor mused. The associate was already convinced that his boss was in a fix and, in a vain attempt to offer him assistance, the associate was frantically turning over the pages in his philosophy texts. He was only an average philosophy student, however, and therefore, since he couldn't understand the texts, he was of no help at all.

"All activities have moderators", the editor declared.

"That which is ultimately managed by the faculty is only relatively operated by the students", the essayist smirked.

"Now we're back into philosophy", said the editor.

The insolent smile still flickered over the essayist's face, "You and I have been here four years, my friend, and we have never emerged from philosophy during that time."

"Just how radical are you concerning philosophy?", the editor inquired.

"Moderately so", the essayist replied, "although there's no doubt that a good many around here would think me an extremist. The only thing that annoys teachers of philosophy in this college is the presence of a philosopher in the classroom."

"You are a radical aren't you?"

The essayist laughed knowingly, "See, I knew how you'd react. Do you remember that I told you that the title of my first essay was ON THE SUMMATION OF PHILOSOPHY?"

"Yes", said the editor, "I remember."

"Then wouldn't you be interested, even if only for curiosity's sake, to know what I conceive to be the summation of it?"

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"Why yes, I would."

"Thank you," said the essayist with a slight trace of sarcasm. "Well, to me since philosophy studies all things in the light of their ultimacy, the summation of philosophy is Faith."

"So?", the editor questioned. He wasn't sure of whether this conversation was profound or absurd.

"So this. I had Faith when I came here. I had good Faith. I wasn't confused at all. I believed firmly that God created man. The notion of man creating a god was entirely foreign to me. There were all sorts of confusing questions concerning man and God that I had never heard—until I came here. Then when I did come across these questions I became interested. Sometimes when I desired to understand completely the basis on which these questions were answered, the logic with which they were refuted—I was shut off. Usually the professor gives you the impression that it is so elementary that you are a bone-head if you don't understand the "absurdity" or the "repugnance" of the non-scholastic objections at first glance. Consequently, not wishing to exhibit myself as a bone-head, and along with many other students, I keep silent and turn the page to the next objection." Here the essayist paused for breath, then he added, "What about you? Have you understood everything?"

"I don't ask to understand", the editor replied. "I believe."

The essayist laughed. "That's the point of my argument. You and I believed before we came here and we'll believe after we've left. But what about all the time consumed by our philosophy courses in the meantime?"

"Well", the editor began, "not all of those courses were a waste of time—"

"Not all of them did you say? Then some of them were."

"I didn't say that", the editor replied indignantly.

"No," the essayist smiled, "you didn't say it but that's what you meant."

"What about Logic?", the editor asked.

"Very good course", the essayist replied. "Very good. I liked Logic and I liked Metaphysics, too. But from there on, for my part you can let Cosmology and the rest of the world roll by."

The editor lit a cigarette. The hell with this he thought. Too involved.

"Any more objections or gripes?", he asked.

"Plenty", the essayist answered. "They're all minor in themselves but 'off limits' around here. They'd only appeal to spirited people. European students would take to them", he mused. "American students would too, I guess. But not here. Too restricted."

"Don't you have any desire to learn as much as you can about God?", the editor queried.

Again the essayist laughed. "Fellow", he said, "I learned more about God and my fellow man in two months on Iwo Jima than I could ever hope to learn in four years here or anywhere else on earth."

The editor tried not to be biased and told himself that what his visitor declared might be possible.

"Well, you leave your essays here and I'll let you know about them in a few days. Is your name on them?"

"No", the essayist said with the same old smile. "I'll drop in sometime to find out. Wouldn't want to be expelled with such a short time to go, you know. I'll give you my name if they're printed. So long.

* * * * *

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With little more than one day to meet the dead-line, the editor was becoming more and more nervous. So far he had his and the associate's contributions, two un-noble limericks and two definitely radical essays. That made a total of two, the first two, upon which he could rely.

"What about George Beagle?", he asked the associate.

"He's finishing his thirteenth draft now. It's the final one. You'll have it tomorrow. It's good. All about a fellow who studies art in Paris for three years, meets a girl in Italy, marries her and lives happily ever after as a chimney sweep in London."

The editor stroked his chin. "Sounds interesting."

"That's only half of it", the associate continued. "That's Part One entitled **STILL ANOTHER VINTAGE**. Part Two is better yet. It's the story of the offspring of those two characters. He begins as a chimney sweep in London, meets and marries a girl from Italy and lives happily as a great painter in Paris. Beagle calls this part **MORE OF THE SAME VINTAGE**."

"I'd love to get my hands on it", the editor stated soberly. "What's the over-all title?"

"**STARVATION BY HUNGER!** Doesn't it sound great?"

"It sounds superb!", the editor cried. "And how I can use it! Is it long?"

"Just about average for Beagle", the associate replied; "It'll take about 70 pages in the *Cibmela*."

The editor took time out to say a private prayer to whomever might be the patron saint of student editors. Time was running out on him and he was feeling more desperate with the passing of each minute. Still, even though he would

have to remain uncertain about Beagle, there *was* another hope.

"Whales Hennery—what about him?"

The associate hesitated. He hated to relieve the editor's mind. There had been a certain undefinable but fiendish joy that he had derived from the editor's problems so far.

"He'll come through," he replied. "I saw him last night, he's written up an incident he once experienced years ago. It's quite intensive. Tells of what happened when a gang of fellows to which he belonged got lost on an overnight hike one winter."

"Tell me more."

"Well", the associate continued, "the gang decided that they were lost a little after twilight. Then it started to snow, and they moved into a huge clearing. Having ingenuity, they built a bonfire to keep themselves warm."

"That was clever", the editor interrupted.

"It was to serve as a signal too", the associate explained. "However, to get on with the story, just before dawn the earth seemed to give away beneath them. Seeing everyone being swallowed up by the ground, Hennery, undigested as yet, made a run for it."

The editor clasped his hands in supplication. "Heavens, tell me that he escaped."

"Yes, he made it in a way", the associate answered. "But the ground collapsed underneath him too, although he wasn't engulfed by it." Now the associate paused teasingly. "Want to know the climax?"

"Of course."

"Well it seems that when the gang moved into that clearing they actually located themselves on the surface of a frozen river. Naturally the fire that they had nursed all night

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had caused the ice to melt. When it collapsed they all drowned.”

“All but Hennery”, the editor supplemented.

“Yes, all but Hennery. When the ground gave underneath him, he, fortunately, was not far out on the ice. When it collapsed he was not in a depth that was over his head. As a matter of fact he was only 12 yards or steps from shore. And that, incidentally, is the title of his contribution.”

“What is the title?”, the editor asked for he was slightly confused.

“THE TWELVE STEPS is the title. It’s sub-titled PERPETUATION OF ETERNITY. He tells of what he thought about while he took the twelve steps. Claims he knew that he wasn’t doomed. That he would survive to commit the event to posterity.”

“But what about the actual story of the gang, the fire and the ice and all? Doesn’t that appear?”

“Oh, sure”, the associate replied. “But that’s all in the preface. It explains the reason for the twelve steps.”

“Oh”, said the editor.

* * * * *

George Beagle, Whales Hennery and the other associate (the one who had been with the editor all along in order to stop him from noticing that his story was shady) were in the *Cibmela* office. The editor was at a place called Bradley’s guzzling a yeasty sort of nectar.

“What’s Dherty written this time? Another sequel to World War II?”, Hennery asked the associate.

“You guessed it”, the associate replied. “BOXCAR BIZERTE is the title.”

"Can't he write about anything except the war?", Beagle asked.

"He can't even write about that, if you ask me", the associate replied.

"Are we sure he's a veteran, at that?", asked Hennery.

"Oh, I suppose so", said Beagle. "Probably the only survivor of the Second Mess-Kit Repair Battalion. Got shot in the fanny by a can of C-rations one day and never quite recovered."

"I suppose he's harmless though," the associate remarked.

"Yes, he's harmless", they all agreed.

They became silent as they heard the editor fumbling with his key outside the door. When he entered the office they were all wearing smiles.

"Hello, fellows," he said. "George, Whales, I trust you have your manuscripts for me."

"Right you are", said George and Whales.

The editor sat at his desk. He was all smiles and beer-breath. "Well that makes everything perfect. Again the *Cib-mela* meets the deadline. For a while there I was almost on the verge of worrying. Boy there's nothing like working with a group where cooperation is the common denominator."

And then they all sang "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" —in unison.

GOOD NEWS

MY FRIEND

THIS IS

THE END

Sonnet to Beauty

By GEORGE HUNTER COCHRAN '51

When in the first full bloom of youthful love
I sought to woo Thee with my untrained mind;
When with a flaming word I vainly strove
To chart a Comet's course, I could not find
Thee in the adolescent words I penned.
Yet, as with youth, I sought Thee, hung'ring still
For all that warmth you have been wont to send;
I knelt, and from thy fountain drank my fill,
And thus consumed to my own heart's content
The bounty offered from a vault unchained
By limitation; then to sight was lent
A first true glimpse of Thee, not now restrained.
I cannot sing a song sublime to Thee;
Let *this* then be a shadow born of Thee.

Reunion

By CLIFFORD J. BROTT, '50

THE early morning sunlight poured through the open window forming a square on the floor at Marietta's feet. Marietta was washing the dishes. It was her fifth anniversary and her husband was coming home.

Outside the window, secure within the leafy branches of an elm tree, a bluebird was singing happily. On the window ledge slumbered a yellow cat which interrupted its sleep occasionally to stretch and to purr its appreciation for the warming rays of the sun.

But Marietta was oblivious to these attractions of nature. As she washed the dishes and placed them in the drying rack over the sink, her thoughts concerned her wedding day and the happiness she had known. John had been a handsome groom and their honeymoon was like a dream. To think of it now, it seemed fragile and delicate as if each day, each incident, had been planned and executed with intricate precision. Each moment was filled with a precious memory and each event seemed fitted into the whole with the exactness of a mosaic.

They had spent their honeymoon at the seashore. Marietta remembered vividly the moonlight sails and the swims in the early morning mist. She remembered afternoons of relaxation of the beach and evenings spent dancing at an open air cafe.

And then they had returned from their honeymoon. She remembered how John had carried her laughingly up the

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flagstone walk to the cottage which was to be their home. He had carried her across the threshold gallantly and they had embraced within like two lovers. Their married life might have been patterned after that of a story book for they were so happy. And then John had gone away.

Marietta sighed as she finished the dishes and hung her dish cloth on the drying rack. Through the open window wafted a soft morning breeze laden with the scent of flowers and the smell of newly mown lawns. It brought to her the shriek of a train whistle and from the distance came the faint playing of a band.

Marietta began her dusting. She dusted the piano, the bookshelves, and the mantel on which were placed her wedding picture and a photo of her husband. As she caught a glimpse of her reflection in the mirror above the fireplace, she noted with concern the change wrought in her by the last five years. There were shadows under her eyes and her face no longer possessed the bright expectancy of youth.

She was plunged again into reverie concerning her courtship, her marriage, and her happy wedded bliss. She remembered week-ends spent in the country and vacations enjoyed at the seashore. She remembered the first happy years of her marriage which had passed swiftly like a fleeting dream. And she recalled the loneliness that engulfed her when John had gone away.

The agony of that parting had been intense beyond description. Each day had passed with slowness. There had been joy upon receiving letters from her husband and sorrow when a day passed without mail. Then, suddenly, it was over; there were no more letters; and today, John was coming home.

Marietta had decided not to go to the station. She was tense and afraid that her strength might betray her.

She bestirred herself about her work. On the table were magazines which must be returned to the rack. The writing desk must be tidied; and there was a newspaper on the floor in front of the large arm chair. Marietta took a thimble and spool of thread from the desk and dropped them into the table drawer. Her eyes passed slowly over its contents. There were pipes belonging to her husband, buttons, papers, a telegram, and various household articles for which no formal place existed.

She closed the drawer slowly and went on with her work. She arranged the magazines carefully and opened the windows that the living room might be aired. The band was still playing and, as the breeze blew stronger, the beautiful strains of "America" reverberated throughout the room itself. To Marietta, it seemed suddenly as if the music were pursuing her; it struck at her ears and pierced her very soul. She glanced wildly at the mantel, at the photo of her husband in his uniform; and, bursting into tears, flung herself into the big arm chair.

She buried her head in her arms and her body was racked with sobs. Her long hair fell over her shoulders and tears came streaming down her face. They fell unheeded to the floor, falling on the paper whose black headlines revealed that it was Tuesday and that the war dead were arriving home.

* * * * *

66th St., East of Broadway

By THOMAS H. BONING, '50

CROWDS are varied; each has an atmosphere of its own. And there is none with a more distinct aura than the lusty, brawling mob that attends prize fights—those raucous, savage, partisan fans who thrill to the drama of physical combat. They are paradoxical, an enigma. One moment they are bathed in racial bigotry, the next, oddly democratic. Steeped in a peculiar sense of self-righteousness, they are at times brutal, and yet often sentimental to the point of mawkishness. Unfathomable they remain, collectively as well as individually; easily swayed and ridiculously fickle they are only partially understandable at best. In whatever manner they may be depicted, though, the fight mob can never be interpreted as being petty or small. Cosmopolitan to the core, they include every stratum of the social order, from banker and priest, to knaves and scoundrels of the worst sort. Indeed, every row in itself is a rung in the social ladder, from the sleek, sophisticated socialites close to the silvery-blue light of ringside, out to the darkened recesses and corners where squat those who come, not to be seen, but to see! From the very dawn of history they have been attracted by the prospect of witnessing the **FIGHT!**

“Go down to one of the smaller clubs,” they said. “There you will see a throwback to the days of the London Prize Ring. You will see it as it has remained almost unchanged throughout the centuries.” So down to the arena I went one weekday night.

Patiently I sat through the preliminary bouts. I watched the crowd, nervously tolerant of the inept efforts of the novices who were there only to whet the appetite of the fans. The crowd had come to see the featured bout—to see those who had long ago mastered the art of physical destruction. I watched them applaud mechanically to the almost endless introductions and formalities, cheering the names of those who had given them their “money’s worth,” jeering others who had failed to satisfy. This fight mob seemed to be a rather serious lot, given to gaiety and laughter only at infrequent intervals. It is a crowd with a pulse and tempo all its own, one that beats ever-more rapidly towards the climax of the evening—the knockout! Loud yells and wild cheers predominate, though some laughter can be heard—usually strained, self-conscious cackles. (A macabre thing is this laughter of the crowd.) These devotees of the prize ring are very much a part of what they come to see.

With the entrance of the featured performers, the turbulent throng drops all its pretenses and inhibitions. At this moment, as at no other time, the mob acts as itself with no airs nor affectations. With one mighty and throaty roar they seem to lift the brightly-robed figures onto the canvas and silhouette them in a fog of man-made smoke. The pugilists toss their robes into the waiting arms of their seconds and handlers. And the crowd thrills at the sight of the two superbly-conditioned athletes. Awaiting the struggle the fighters appear rather grim and pale under the harsh white light.

The ox-blood gloves are placed on taped hands, and the pugilists reward close friends and admirers with a nod or half-drawn smile. The house lights dim, and only one patch of light remains, which, at a distance, makes the scene appear not unlike a jewel set in a sea of purple velvet. The

crowd quiets in hushed expectancy as the bell clangs, sending the pugilists to the center of the ring. For a full minute the reverberations of the bell haunt the arena. They vanish, however, as cries of encouragement break from the lips of some. Others offer words of advice, And a few sit tight-lipped and intent. Cautiously the boxes wait for the one moment when they can find an opening. Once they begin to land their punches the crowd roars its approval—a savage roar that might have been heard when civilization was at its beginning.

Looking into the face of my nearest neighbor, a poorly dressed worker, I fancied I could guess what he was thinking as he gave words of encouragement to his favorite. He was so intent it seemed quite certain that he saw in the boxer a reflection of himself—a boy destined by all the rules of society to be a laborer or cab driver—but this reflected image had refused to settle for this meager handout, and had told himself “there must be more.”

Rounds pass. Suddenly it happens! One of the fighters, the shorter of the two, lands a hard punch with a sickening thud on the blood-spattered mouth of his opponent. His foe falls into an inert heap, lying motionless, a broken and discarded puppet. The crowd is on its feet almost as the knockout blow lands, as if they somehow had been warned beforehand. Photographer's bulbs flash. The victor's hand is raised aloft amid a bedlam of excitement and noise. Policemen swarm into the ring as seconds and handlers jump up and down with glee. In a few seconds the pugilists are in their bright robes, out of the ring, and down into the crowd where they are lost in a swarm of people.

For a full five minutes the crowd stands around looking at each other and talking in a steady hum. This is it! This is what they have come to see—the knockout! What is

more final and complete? Yet, they continued to stand around waiting, waiting for something I knew not what. I have since asked myself what had been missing that had caused them to stand and stare at each other minutes after the fight had ended. Perhaps, if I return some day I shall find out. Yes . . . oh, yes . . . I am quite certain that I shall return . . . you see, I am one of the fight crowd.

The Felon

By GEORGE EAGLE, '50

The dream sings low in silence, in the dark:
No melody can overcome the din
Of day; no candle will defy
The blinding noon.
The lyric heart lives in the hush
And withers in the cry;
The flame illumines midnight
But flickers in the sun.
Midnight . . . It is the treasure's guardian,
And dawn the ravager. Sigh now, weep evermore:
Dawn is indeed the spoiler of the dream.

Timpani in Tom-Toms

By WALES B. HENRY, '50

AN eerie quiet held the room, keeping it somewhat apart from the noise of the Paris streets where ragged-clad newsboys hawked their latest editions of *Paris Soir*. It was a large room impressed with the vacancy of an assembly hall when the assembly has left. The room was dark and yet again it was pervaded by a dull light that encompassed everything in a vague manner. It was the hour before midnight and the moon was full and inserted its light through the windows. White things were grey as moonlight makes them. Wooden things had lost their lustre and the corners of the room were lost in moonlight shadow.

Then, there materialized in the midst of the darkness five murky shapes. Slowly, like wisps of smoke that hang on the humid summer air, the wraithlike forms took on the likeness of human things—and became as men. They moved to the center of the room, quietly—smoothly—unhurried—and stopped. The room, and all in it, remained dark and vacant—but the apparitions were there now—alone.

A gust of wind came from nowhere—and life came with it. Life came to the creatures of nothingness and transformed them into corporeal matter. They talked and coughed and laughed like humans do—and yet the room remained quiet. The five shapes were dressed as soldiers, but each wore a different uniform. And each spoke a different language—but they all seemed to understand each other perfectly. And if they

did not speak, their eyes spoke for them or their thoughts were communicated to each other in a look that needs no words.

They were sad of countenance and if they laughed, it was a bitter laugh. When they talked, it was a hollow sound that was never heard on this earth.

One was an American.

One was an Englishman.

One was a Russian.

One was a German.

And the small one was Japanese.

AND THEY WERE ALL DEAD.

Well—not really dead, because is a ghost dead or alive? They were ghosts—the ghosts of men who had died in war. They did the things that humans do—little things—like scratching the head or twisting a ring on the finger. Indeed, they seemed quite natural and not a bit out of place in the scheme of things that happen on this earth. It was hard to tell that they were not of the living as we know them—but of the dead as we cannot realize. There is only one difference between a living body and a dead one. Something is missing. Something they call a soul. Perhaps these were bodies looking for a soul. Or perhaps they were souls looking for a body. Or they might have been just memories of what used to be.

The Russian ghost was smoking a cigarette—a Lucky Strike. The English ghost sat down in a chair. The American ghost walked around to one of the tables and looked at the sign that was there. The Japanese and German ghosts just stood and looked around. They were not hurried in their actions for they had plenty of time to do as they willed—they had Eternity before them.

They were all in the Security Council room of the United Nations.

Timpani in Tom-Toms

The room was in the Palais de Chaillot.
It was the year of Peace, 1948.
It was Fall in Paris and a mist hung over the city.
It was Fall on earth and gloom hung over the world.



This is a small world; small enough so that somewhere at some time a crisis can be reached in some heated conflict, while on some other portion of the globe the uncertainty of anti-climax is setting in; and in some other place the pot of hate is beginning to boil—all at the same time. Peace is a local blessing and is transient.

This is a big world; big enough so that somewhere people cannot see over the horizon and are content—while a fire rages not too far distant: but they cannot see the smoke because the sun shines too brightly overhead.

Everywhere there is greed and malfeasance.

Everywhere there is courage and benevolence.

Everywhere there is will and emotion.

Sometimes the greed is punished—sometimes it is not.

Sometimes the courage is rewarded — sometimes it is not.

Sometimes the will overcomes the emotion—sometimes it does not.

The things that a single person cherishes are often lost to the mob—and yet, a mob is composed of many single persons, each with their own desires for happiness and peace and the contentment of a righteous life.

Every large conflict is composed of innumerable small ones and it is here that the greed and malignancy are most apparent as also the courage and light and the emotions and will. The path of human destiny is composed of many incidents as the chain of many links and the saw of many teeth, unimportant by themselves but vital to the whole. And peo-

ple get themselves involved in so many incidents. And then states do. And then nations. And soon the whole world is involved in an incident — and the little people usually get crushed in the rush.

Listen! You can hear the tom-toms beating, beating, beating. Political tom-toms, racial tom-toms, economic tom-toms, geographical tom-toms, geo-political tom-toms, atomic tom-toms, beating, beating, beating. *Dum-did-de-dum-did-de-dum-did-de-dum*—. They beat slowly in marked rhythm. They beat louder in hypnotic variations. They boom and thunder till no other noise is heard. DUM-DID-DE-DUM-DID-DE-DUM.

Tom-toms are beating and they magnify in volume till the muted crescendo becomes intermingled with the sharp crack of 155's and the roar of Bangalore torpedoes and the staccato snap of sub-machine guns.

Sometimes the noise is so loud that it covers the whole world.

Sometimes the noise is so faint that it can hardly be heard.

Good ideals and bad ideals come into conflict.

Good men and bad men come into conflict.

Nations come into conflict.

It happened before and the whole world knew it.

It is happening again.

Tom-toms tapping a torrid tympanic tune!

The goddess Pax sits in the midst of desolation; a queen ill-throned, with rubble in her courtyard and a diadem of tears in her hair.

When good is not rewarded and evil is not punished *on this earth* it is of little matter for the Hands that deal justice are not of this world and retribution will be forthcoming in another age. But we have always with us evil and good. Peace

Timpani in Tom-Toms

is good; war is evil. But the scales are delicately balanced and who knows in which direction they will weigh.

* * * * *

American ghost: "Well, gentlemen, this is it, just as I thought it would be—the circular tables, the fine chairs, papers scattered here and there—not the important ones of course, just the doodles and the little scribblings that the men leave when they are trying to gain their thoughts—or waste time. Look! Even the nameplates. The United States of America! This is where my boy sits, gentlemen. Yes, my boy—the guy that's going to make it safe for the old U. S. from Hoboken to Frisco. Why this guy can even make it safe for the whole damn world—if he's of a mind. Hummph!"

German ghost: "Ya, it is like you said it would be. Like every conference table since . . . since I don't know when."

English ghost: "Ha, but don't underestimate them. They make peace here, remember? They make peace, like a factory product. Turn it out in large quantities and hope all the seams join."

Japanese ghost: "It is a very nice building for such things."

American ghost: "Yeah, swell, but nothing like the one they are going to build. I saw the plans for that one. Right in the middle of New York. Bigger attraction than Madison Square Garden. Bar for the delegates, private lounges, banquet rooms—the works."

English ghost: "Perhaps these peacemakers spend too much time in their bars and lounges. Perhaps they ought to get a taste of the bar and lounge feeling you get when your cockpit is busting out in flame and you're five thousand feet over the channel and you can't bail out. They ought to suffer a little bit around these places. Sweat it out like we had to do. That's where you find out what

peace really means. Decorate their lounges with pretty murals—from Buchenwald. Refresh their memories for them."

German ghost: "Please, I asked you before not to mention that place. It does me no honor."

Russian ghost: "Once, before the war, when I was a student, I saw the building they had in Geneva. It was a beautiful place."

English ghost: "But it didn't last long."

Russian ghost: "The building did."

English ghost: "But not the occupants, my friend. Not the occupants. A great testimonial to a greater failure."

German ghost: "It is funny when I think of it. We lost that war too. Twice we tried—and twice we failed."

Japanese ghost: "In my humble opinion it did not matter much."

Russian ghost: "You are so right. There is not even much that should matter now. We are among the lost. We are the dead of every war—the ones that fell by the wayside and were too tired to get up again. The dead who cannot sleep the eternal rest."

English ghost: "But it does matter. You know it matters, this whole business of these who live gaining the peace. Else why should we come here as we have?"

Russian ghost: "Perhaps I came for shame."

American ghost: "No, you didn't come for shame. You came here for the same reason I came here—the same reason we all came here. We came for hope."

English ghost: "We know what they do in these places. Perhaps it was hope that brought us. I think it was a great desire to see what they were doing here for peace."

American ghost: "That is it my friend; to see what they are doing for peace."

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Japanese ghost: "But it seems so useless. What can we do? We have lived and we have had our chance for peace. Now we are of the dead. They must make their own peace."

English ghost: "Well, men, I'll tell you, perhaps it is not so useless, our coming here. It is true that there is nothing for us to see that we do not already know about—but—let's make our stay worthwhile."

German ghost: "Ya, it would be good if we could. But how?"

English ghost: "Well, this is just a thought, but it might be a fruitful one. We can write a note, just a few words, a few lines, to our representative here. Something for the man who sits behind the nameplate of our country. Perhaps we can—well, perhaps we can say something to them that will make them realize the enormity of their task—the job they have before them."

American ghost: "Swell idea, my friend, swell idea. What do we say? Five ghosts dropped in last night. Sorry to have missed you. Stick with it, boys. Ha."

English ghost: "No! No! Not at all. Tell them what *we* think about war. Tell them what *we* think about peace. Tell them *we're* the guys that got it the last time. Beg them not to let it happen again. Give them some impression of the trust that we left to them. Tell them we died in the name of peace and it is up to them to keep the peace we died for. From *us* it should bear weight. *We* are the dead, remember? We know. *We are the dead.*"

Russian ghost: "It is a good idea. It is a very good idea. I could tell my country so much. So very much."

German ghost: "But I have no one here."

Japanese ghost: "If I may mention it, we are the defeated."

American ghost: "We are all defeated, friends. We are all defeated and the cause we died for is lost unless they can keep the peace. Put your note on any table. They make peace here, remember, *all of them* make peace for everybody."



The English ghost, perhaps a bit disillusioned, perhaps wondering if, after all, it would amount to anything, went over to the conference table and took up a piece of paper and a pen. He paused, looked around him and a smile came over his face. This is what he wrote:

I am but a fallen leaf
From Britain's sturdy tree,
But 'ere Hate comes to Britain's shores
Oh! Please remember me.

Remember all the pathos
Of Britain's last, long strife,
And keep the everlasting peace
For which I gave my life.

For if you should plunge Britain
Into bitter war again,
My life, my death, my sacrifice,
Will all have been in vain.

The German ghost sat at the conference table and looked down at his green-blue uniform. He fingered the insignia on his collar and then he too began to write, and this is what he wrote:

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Once proud land, twice defeated;
The hell of war, twice repeated;
Land, without an end in view,
Again the struggle to renew?

Heal your wounds, repent your error,
Seek the Justice, damn the Terror;
Rise aloft to new found heights,
Respecting God and human rights.

Unless you would be blighted thrice,
Labor, pray and sacrifice.
Of all the things of God's creation,
There's none so great as peaceful nation.

And the Russian soldier-ghost came to the table and quickly dipping his pen into the ink he wrote:

Strive for Peace, oh mighty nation;
Hear the silent supplication
Of the tens of thousands of your dead.

Seek the light, confound the fiction,
Curse the wicked malediction
Found beneath the banner of the Red.

There is no nation so immortal
It can raise an Iron Portal
To hide the light of Truth that lies ahead.

Slowly, like a tired man, the Japanese ghost approached the long table. He paused and looked down the length of it till his eye came upon the place of the representative from

China. It was to this point that he stepped and hurriedly wrote these words in intricate symbols:

There was a woman
Who stood on the highway
And solicited a thousand stitches
For my samubari
To guarantee immunity
From Yankee bullets.

But I died my death
On a spit of coral.

To Chance, we can leave nothing,

Especially—
Peace.

It is a newborn child,
Conceived in pain.
Nurture it.
Care for it,
And let it grow until
The world cannot harm it,
Or else,

We will die again
In some foreign land.

And then the last of the five, the American, stepped forward. Surely here was one who had the most to say. Here was one who knew deep in his spirit-heart that the way to Peace

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might well be the doing of his great country. He stood there and it seemed that a phalanx of men stood behind him; men who had fought for liberty over the years. American men who had forged the great Columbia from the green forest and the endless plain, from sea to sea, from the great inland waters to the warm running gulf. Behind him stood men in sombre black, in forest buckskin, in Continental blue and buff. Here were the men who stormed the heights at Green Mountain; who broke through the forest to the plains, who sailed with Barry, who died at New Orleans, who fought at Tripoli and tread the halls of Montezuma. Behind him stood Lee's men at Spottsylvania and Grant's at Cold Harbor, the men who fell in Cuba and the men who cut their way across an isthmus. Here were the Marines of the Marne and Belleau Wood and the artillerymen of Bataan, the infantry of Salerno, the sailors of Leyte Gulf, the victims of Malmedy—a million strong—the defenders of American liberty—the fighters for peace. And this is what that soldier wrote:

Crimson tide—scarlet flood;
It is the dying soldier's blood,
Shed upon the field of strife
To give his country future life,

That such things have come to be
Are in a book called *Misery*.

Amid the mud and filth and grime,
Fallen prostrate in the slime
Of war, is a pale and stricken youth
Who died for country, home and Truth.

Who buried, lies in foreign land;
His flesh encased in foreign sand.

Who walked on desolation's road
And bore a weary mental load,
Who gave his all in all he tried
And failing this, he fell and died.

Who faced the fear of death and pain
Because he thought it not in vain;

Because in battle's foul debris
He fought to keep his country free;
Because in us he placed a trust
That far transcends a nation's lust.

His trust was Peace—a shining light,
A beacon flame of good and right.

We cannot fail that fallen lad
Nor violate the faith he had.
We cannot now put out the light
That is in Justice—not in might.

For o'er the earth there now is spread
The muted voices of the dead,

“Hear us, hear us, who have died
And do not let a nation's pride
Strip the Lamb of God of fleece
And abrogate the hard-won peace.”

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And now the final page is read
And we must listen to the dead.

* * * * *

In the morning the representatives of all the countries came and took their places around the conference table and prepared to begin another session of wrangling and argument and obstructionist policies; the counterplay of diplomatic protocol and well-chosen words. But of the writings that were left for them to read—they saw nothing.

There was no trace.

There was no sign.

There was no vestige of the spirit visitors.

All had vanished.

* * * * *

For the voices that will echo throughout eternity cannot be heard above the incessant beating of the worldly tom-toms.

One Rose

By GEORGE HUNTER COCHRAN, '51

One rose blooms eternal
In the garden of my heart;
One rose sings forever,
From all other songs apart.
One rose never withers,
Or can age e'er take its toll;
One rose pressed forever
In the pages of my soul!

The Way a Friend Would

By GUY GEFFROY, '52

MRS. BRONYA KOVALSKI saw the gentle snowflakes begin to float earthward past her newly-curtained window. Soon, a steady white flow obscured the three-story flats across the street, and made her feel all the safer in her steam heated room. She was preparing supper. On her small oil stove, onion soup was in the making. As she was about to set the table, she heard a noise at the door—someone unsuccessfully turning the knob: "It's me, Mama," a child's voice pleaded.

"Oh, David! Come in, come in. I forgot. I shouldn't have locked the door." A small, blond, red-faced boy promptly trampled in.

"Mama, snow is falling—do you see? I didn't know—"

"You didn't know it would snow in America. Well, it does, darling, but the snow is good. You can play in it and when you come inside you feel warm and happy."

Bronya stood there smiling at her six-year-old son. She was a strong, sturdy woman, with handsome features, black hair, and deep-set, gray eyes, which sometimes gave her entire being and air of sadness. But she did not look sad now. How wonderful it was, she thought, to be able to tell David that snow was good! That "inside" it would always be warm!

Before this day, snow had always meant cold, hard, bitter suffering to the Kovalskis—Serge, Bronya, and David. For they were enjoying their first stay in America after years of struggle in Poland, years of misery in Germany, and long

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months of waiting in a D. P. camp. They were one among hundreds of Jewish families from their camp who were now in New York City, U. S. A.

Serge's distant cousin, Robert Koval, had agreed to give him work in his shoe-repair shop and had obtained a furnished living-room-bedroom-kitchen for the immigrant family. Already Serge had received his salary three times, and in January, next month, David would go to school and learn to speak English.

Bronya watched David as he slowly and carefully hung his newly-purchased overcoat in the closet. He seemed to hate to part with it, so comfortable did it feel. He was confused about all these new things, Bronya said to herself, but he was so happy!

"Did you enjoy your walk, David? Tell me all that you saw. I hope you didn't go any farther than I told you you could."

"No, Mama. I crossed only two streets. I had a good walk, but I wish I could understand what people say. I wish I had a friend."

"Soon you'll go to school and have many, many friends."

"Oh, Mama, all there is to see! It's so different. And I saw something I didn't see the other days."

"What did you see, David?"

"On the houses around here, there are green circles made of branches and tied with a big, red ribbon. What are they for?"

Christmas wreaths! Bronya thought. And Christmas is tomorrow! Oh, no! Up until now David had only lived among Jewish fold, and the problem of explaining, or, rather, dismissing Christmas as something alien to David, had not pre-

sented itself. And here in America David would be tempted and charmed by the holiday mood. If only she knew what to say. "Serge will help me," she whispered to herself.

At last Bronya answered her inquisitive son: "Those wreaths with the big red ribbons are to make people feel gay when they approach the front door."

"Could we have one?"

"No, dear, no. The outside door does not belong to us since we live upstairs."

"Couldn't we put one on this door?" David inquired, pointing with a small finger.

"Well, David, you see—oh, listen, I hear Papa at the door."

Bronya and David rushed to the door and gayly admitted Serge Kovalski, whose broad grin brightened his lean features. David grasped his father by the neck and began an evening's endless prattle, as Bronya in vain tried to interrupt to greet her husband.

Serge passed a big, long hand through his pale hair: "My head is moist from the snow. Bob tells me that this is the first snow of the year in New York."

"Yes, the late December snow. Come! Good food is waiting for you two! Hurry!", Bronya exclaimed.

Soon the three were seated at the small, round table near the window. They had not lowered the window shade completely, for they wanted to see the falling snow shining in the glow of the street lights; they wanted to watch the automobiles and busses cautiously steering by on the blanketed pavement.

"David, tell me all that you did today," smiled Serge.

"Oh, Serge, why did you ask him? Now he will never finish telling you," laughed Bronya.

The Way A Friend Would

"Anything my son has to say, I will listen to," returned Serge who noticed David's impatience. And, so, David began:

"I helped Mama hang the curtains this morning and didn't I really help you, Mama? And then I looked at the pictures in the magazines you bought. Oh, Papa, they are so beautiful! And . . . and, then—Listen, I hear some singing."

"It is probably a loud radio. Never mind it. And then, what did you do, David?", Serge asked.

"I still hear the singing. Oh, Mama, look, all those people are under the street light, singing. See?" David insisted proudly. A smile lit up his pert face.

Silent night, holy night;
All is calm, all is bright.
'Round yon Virgin Mother and Child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,

Bronya's eyes met Serge's; and their thoughts were identical. These carolers would only add to David's curiosity about all that pertained to Christmas. They must treat this as if it were not important—at least for the present.

"Oh, look! The singers are moving on. Do you think they will stop under our own window?", David happily wondered.

"Of course not, David," replied his father. "Come, now, you've eaten a good supper and you surely must be ready for a long, long sleep."

"Yes, Papa. Wasn't that singing beautiful? And those singers looked so friendly. They were happy," David added.

Later, when David's eyes had shut firmly and she was certain he was fast asleep, Bronya seated herself at Serge's feet and anxiously gazed at him. He quickly laid down an American magazine and bent down to put his arm around her shoulders, as if he knew she would need comfort.

"Oh, Serge, David is asking questions about Christmas."

"How can he help it? In this neighborhood the holiday is celebrated by nearly everyone."

"Well, what can we tell him? We have a problem unlike that of the American Jews, for they have had to cope with the situation gradually. It falls upon us all of a sudden. What can I say to his questions?"

"We will simply have to explain as best we can to a six-year-old—explain that this is not *his* holiday; that these people are wrong in celebrating. Tomorrow morning I work at the shop. We will not do any repairing, but we expect many to come to have their shoes shined either on their way to or from the two Catholic churches. Since I would like to explain to David myself, let us tell him about Christmas after dinner—after I get home."

"Yes, that is best, Serge. I'll try to keep him in our room as long as possible until you get home."

• • • • •

Christmas morning was bright and cheerful—even in the room of the Kovalski family. Sunlight streamed through a frosty window pane and fell upon a joyous and lively David who was playing with a large rubber ball. He had been so playful almost ever since he had arrived in America! However, David soon grew weary of the same toy.

"Mama, may I go out? When I asked you before you said I could 'later'. Now it is 'later' isn't it?"

"But Papa will be home quite soon."

"Then maybe I can meet him on the street, or maybe I can make a friend. I wish I could have one before I go to school."

The Way A Friend Would

"All right, put on your overcoat and your overshoes and your cap."

David dressed quickly and even remembered to take his mittens.

"Be careful, dear. The sidewalks will be slippery. Don't go too far."

He was gone. Quickly he clambered down the stairs and opened the outside door. Ah, how cold and wonderful it felt. And David ran and played in the snow.

It was noon. Serge Kavolski was ambling homeward slowly, with the confident pace of a man who has just pocketed four dollars received in tips. He was approximately two blocks away from home and thinking of what he would have to tell David, when he met his son coming out of a side street.

"David!"

"Oh, Papa! I told Mama I might meet you!"

"Well, you were right, then. Where did you go?"

"Papa, I just had a wonderful time. I started to walk and walk and, then, I started bumping into people."

"Bumping into people? Why, weren't you looking where you were going?"

"Oh, yes, but there were a lot of people. They were a lot of people. They were coming out of a big temple. And you know what, Papa? I heard some music like the people sang in the street last night."

"Oh?"

"So I went in the temple. Oh, Papa, it was so beautiful! It was as beautiful as you said the temple would be."

"David, you shouldn't have gone in. That wasn't the right temple. Come. Hurry home."

"But, it was so nice. I went 'way inside the temple and 'way at the other end there was a little stable and lots of little statues—sheep, a cow, a donkey, and people. All of the statues

were looking at one baby statue. It looked as if it was smiling at me."

"You're not to go in those places, David. Not any more."

"Why not, Papa? The little statue was smiling at me the way a friend would. You know how I'd like a friend."

They had reached home.

Daddy, Fix It!

By L. W. MARINO, '52

The soldier is minus a leg and an arm,
The stuffed dog sags in the middle.
Junior presents them, and says with aplomb,
"Daddy, fix it!"

A three-wheeled wagon lies on its back,
The pull toy's string is broken.
Donald Duck waddles without his "quack",
"Daddy, fix it!"

A caved-in tank truck, a soundless bell,
The fire truck minus its driver.
In the midst of the wreckage, you'll hear him yell,
"Daddy, fix it!"

Now Old St. Nick is coming to town
With his bag-full of new toys and games
And what will I hear 'fore the tree's taken down?
"Daddy, fix it!"

Rue De Bom Jesus

(Impressions Of The Azores)

By WILLIAM HONNEN, '49

THE early morning mists shrouded the islands from peak to sea as our vessel slipped noiselessly into the harbor of Fayal. We had made our landfall an hour or so before, when the lookout had reported the flashing beacon at the tip of the island. Since then it had stabbed an eerie finger of light through the vapors to beckon us to our haven.

The Second Officer broke out 'George' and chased him up the halyard where he snapped in the breeze with international aplomb, calling attention to the fact that he desired a pilot to guide us to our berth. But either the low hanging clouds had concealed our arrival until the vessel loomed large against the lee shore, or else the wireless message which 'Sparks' had dispatched the previous evening, had been misconstrued, for we were almost inside the broad artificial breakwater before the pilot launch came sputtering towards us across the bay.

The pilot's smiling countenance appeared over the bulwark just as dawn broke in the east behind Pico, piercing the mists and revealing the imposing contours of its lofty volcanic mass. This was nature in the raw; the stark outline of the mountain etched against a shimmering roseate sky. This was the panorama which artists aspire to set upon canvas; this was the vista which the tourist dreams about, and travels halfway around the world to find. And here it was, thrust upon us, overwhelming the senses with sudden grandeur and unexpected beauty.

The Alembic

But a seaman has little time to indulge in esthetic contemplation when making port, and soon we were laboring at the more prosaic task of heaving the mooring lines out of their locker, preparatory to tying up. When a brief respite permitted us to scan the towering pile again, the mists had once more swirled about its hulk, conjuring up the apparition of a crater without a base, suspended some seven thousand feet above us in the blue.

The air of undisturbed tranquillity which permeated the island was now abruptly shattered by the blast of the ship's whistle. As we gazed through the binoculars at the pueblo-like dwellings clustered at the base of the mountain across the harbor, we saw the town astir in the early morning routine of any hamlet.

Along the water front quad the fishermen tallied the results of the previous night's haul or mended the spreading nets suspended from the rigging of their trawlers and schooners. A hooded Nun drifted into sight; the folds of her gown trailing along the dusty road concealing her pedal extremities. She vanished as quickly as she had appeared into a large dwelling, which we later ascertained to be an asylum for the poor and outcast.

With the aid of the glasses we picked out the proprietor of the Hotel Internacional, already setting out the little tables and wicker chairs beneath the canopy of his sidewalk cafe, undoubtedly anticipating a bonanza of trade with the arrival of a thirsty American ship's crew. With hands on her hips, and graceful stride, a washerwoman crossed our line of vision, a basket heaped with snowy linens delicately poised on top of her bandana.

A ribbon of road wound up the steep hillside where a patient donkey struggled down the almost vertical incline with a cartload of wood. From the manner in which he

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wrested with his burden, it might have been more appropriate in this case to place the cart before the horse, and at least give the unfortunate beast the advantages of gravity.

Behind the multi-colored facade of the town's dwellings the mountain rose abruptly from the sea. All the arable land on the slopes had been neatly tilled and terraced and the ripening fields converted the inclines into a tidy checkerboard. Perched atop the hills were a score of windmills. Their scrawny vanes, listless but unflagging, pumped water from hidden springs to the heights, where it was sluiced down through irrigation ditches and returned to the thirsty earth.

Fayal is often referred to as the 'Blue Island', which is appropriate enough when one contemplates the deep azure of the bay, the abundance of purple hydrangeas which gaily border the roads, and the bluish haze which continually hangs over the island. Horta is the capitol: an old world town where one's legs are still the major means of transportation. Many of those feet are still unshod, in peasant fashion, as they pad along in the volcanic dust.

How this string of islands, which juts up from the Atlantic in a crescent for a range of almost four hundred miles came into existence, is difficult to determine. However it is safe to presume with the geologists that they are the result of volcanic eruptions of terrific force beneath the ocean bed itself, which have thrust lava up through the sea and eventually formed land masses above the deep. The craters tower thousands of feet above the ocean and at least one of the cones is still active. The topsoil may have been deposited by a glacier while much of the humus is the residue of volcanic erosion.

Fayal boasts of a natural harbor which is several fathoms deep. Since the bottom is rocky, the water is almost

transparent and reveals the multitude of fish which make the bay their habitation despite the constant peril of the fisherman's net. Our own hooks and lines were less effective than the nets; there were plenty of bites but very few catches. Our ship's anchors served as little more than weights on such a bottom as this, since the flukes could not grasp the bony ocean floor securely.

During the recent war the archipelago was wrenched from its complacent isolation and was projected into the turmoil of modern conflict. Life was primitive in the island dominions, much the same as it was in the towns and villages of the Portuguese motherland, eight hundred miles to the east. The people's needs were simple and the temperate climate afforded sufficient produce to augment their diet of fish.

Aside from the Pan-American clipper's touch at the island and an occasional cargo steamer or mail packet, there was little to disrupt the even tempo save the erring muffler on an antiquated Ford or Fiat. Were the intrepid navigators who discovered the island for the Portuguese crown to return, they would undoubtedly perceive many twentieth century encroachments upon the island civilization.

However, even when the islands were utilized as a forward base to protect the Atlantic lifeline, and as a haven for the mighty dreadnoughts of the sea and air which patrolled the ocean, the invasion of the machine was regarded as merely a passing phenomenon by the inhabitants. They have long since settled back into the old familiar pattern of primitive habits and customs.

The island's civil affairs are administered by benign representatives of Señor Salazar's quasi-military dictatorship in Portugal. Uniformed militia were in evidence everywhere,

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but we were informed that the local 'calaboose' had but one tenant. Like their Spanish brethren on the the Iberian peninsula, these people cast aside the monarchical yoke a few decades ago, only to slip the reins of government into the hands of authorities who retained the dictatorial powers of a king, without the added burden of a crown. Portugal is a republic, but hardly a representative form of government at present. However the dissemination of democratic ideas among the people and the transition to democratic ideals, is an evolutionary process which requires time. Today, Portugal is making progress in raising the economic and cultural standards of its people; tomorrow we hope she will be capable of assuming her place in a free world.

As soon as our ship had been cleared by Customs and Quarantine, the inevitable 'bum boats' came scudding across the harbor, laden with a variety of trinkets and handiwork for the souvenir collector. The foolish American has long been noted abroad as easy bait for a bargain, and so from Singapore to Rio the natives have passed off trash of Woolworth quality as genuine curios. The discerning purchaser is less likely to be taken in by such chicanery.

There were cheap watches and good ones, tawdry handkerchiefs and fine linens, all at prohibitive prices. Among the sundries which these floating hucksters held up for our critical glance were some hand-wrought filigree bracelets, some finished crochet work and clever little hand-woven cane baskets. Mottled watermelons, bananas flecked with brown, purple grapes, pears, pineapples, and all the other varied produce of this temperate clime were for sale. At first we thought we could do some bartering for cigarettes, à la continental Black Market style. Instead we discovered that we could purchase good Portuguese brands, as well as the pop-

ular American varieties, ashore, at standard prices. A veritable river of spirits, pressed from the fruit of the local vineyards or distilled abroad, found a ready market among the crew.

It was amusing to hear the polyglot jargon employed between the sailors and the peddlers in striking a bargain. "Hey, Joe! Bom vino! You like?" . . . "Like! Hell, I love the stuff, Chicol Quanto? How much for the 'schnapps?" . . . "Cognac, Joe! Good stuff! You speak!" "Nuts! I'm buyin' the juice . . . you speak!" "Fort' escudas . . . two dolla', 'merican money, Joe! Cheap!"

And so it went until, to the satisfaction of both parties, a bottle and some currency changed hands. An American dollar, worth approximately twenty escudas in local currency, was acceptable as legal tender, as it is throughout the world; a truly cosmopolitan check, guaranteed not to bounce. When the term 'Escuda' slid from the glib tongues of the islanders it sounded like 'Scoots' or 'Skeets' to our untutored ears, so for the remainder of our sojourn the coin of the realm became 'mosquitoes' to those on board the ship.

As soon as the captain issued a draw against our wages we prepared to disembark and have a closer look at the Azores. For me, as for most of the crew it was our first visit to the Island, although we had passed within sight of them countless times in our transatlantic crossings. But aside from an occasional ship from Lisbon or Oporto, traffic between the islands and the continent is infrequent. If a freakish gale had not sprung our plates, necessitating immediate repairs, we would probably pass the archipelago numerous times again without stopping there.

As the launch carried us across the short expanse of water to the town, we had a leisurely moment to scan the

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bay. At the mouth of the harbor lay an English cable ship and a Portuguese mail packet. Several expensively rigged sailing yachts tugged at their moorings near the jetty. The fishing schooners, some careened for caulking and repairs, others with nets spread and ready for sea, lay scattered about in a natural cove at the inner extreme of the harbor.

Along the quay and breakwater, fisherfolk of all ages and sexes dropped bare hooks into the water and placidly waited for their dinner to impale itself upon the barb, which invariably happened. A good sized trawler beat her way up to anchorage, only to have a motor vessel of similar proportions suddenly swerve across her bow, carrying away the bowsprit and jib. Such apparent unconcern for nautical traffic regulations elicited the jibe that perhaps it was more of an accident, than any shrewd calculations, which brought Columbus and the western hemisphere together.

As a matter of fact America's discoverer did pile his flagship upon a rock while exploring the coast of Haiti (a little known historical fact). And if our own hand were at the tiller of the launch we probably would have caused history to repeat itself at this precise moment, for a kyak slipped into view, bearing two comely daughters of Fayal. Black eyes glanced demurely from the delicate lines of olive countenances, as the ripe young bodies bent to the task of propelling their fragile craft. Needless to say, their appearance elicited a chorus of wolfish howls which were at best a dubious compliment to their femininity. Although the damsels did not comprehend the ribald remarks which their presence evoked, nevertheless they displayed their innate gentility by paddling hastily away.

It was good to have solid earth beneath our feet again after those few anxious days on the storm tossed sea. Although the realities of the town were less enchanting than

they had appeared from the ship, we took the narrow, dusty roads in stride and sauntered into Horta. The inhabitants were more urbane here in dress and manner than the bare-footed, serapi-wrapped peasants we had seen on the dock awaiting transportation to a distant island.

A true Latin flare for ostentation, rather than good taste, was evidenced by the garish architectural appointments of numerous public and private buildings. The fact that personal hygiene and public sanitation apparently commanded a minimum of attention from many of the inhabitants, could probably be best understood by a realization of their close and constant contact with the soil and the sea, and their primitive methods of eking out an existence.

Although the shops stocked some custom styled garments from abroad, most of the raiment exhibited was of the homespun variety. And aside from the export of fish, most of the produce raised on the islands seemed to find its way into the family larder, to provide a simple, sustaining diet.

The manana mood, so typical of Latin peoples, dominated the town and its inhabitants. It permeated their entire philosophy and set the tempo of their daily lives. While it may sound facetious to observe that their simple ways are often the best, one has but to dwell in a contented society such as we found on the Islands but a brief period of time, to discover the inherent truth of the statement. The progress of the atomic age may not be theirs, but the promise of a satisfactory and peaceful existence close to God and their native earth, is a fairly acceptable substitute.

The number of gardens in the town was exceeded only by the number of churches. Some of these edifices were of cathedral-like proportions, and the crosses atop the pinnacles, by far the most prominent landmarks among the clus-

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tered structures, bore witness to the role which religion plays in the lives of these people. In the names of the streets, in the names of their boats, in the people's own names, we observed frequent and reverent reference to their cherished beliefs. Cynics have observed that the only time the Latins enter their churches is when they are married and when they are buried. Such tepidity in devotion and infidelity to one's creed deserves no apology. But when exposed to the relentless light of logic in the hearts and minds of men of good will, the golden rule of Christianity is still found to be society's only real solace and salvation.

Our meanderings finally carried us to the outskirts of the town, to the *Rue de Bom Jesus*, the Good Lord's Street. It was little more than a winding path which twisted past a row of pathetic hovels to the seacoast. The surroundings fittingly adapted themselves to the name of the thoroughfare. Jesus might have trod a similar dusty road; He might have dined in homes such as these; he might readily have found the hillocks bounding the shore an appropriate place to discourse with the people.

Wrapped momentarily in these reflections we almost overlooked the unmistakable gestures directed towards us by one of the local belles. But as the irony of the situation dawned upon us we beheld sloe-eyed sirens, behind the partially drawn curtains of several huts, seeking to lure us within. The illusion of a Galilean haunt was shattered; regrettably we had stumbled upon skid row, the primrose path where the Magdalenes and Sadie Thompsons of Fayal sold their self respect for a few paltry 'mosquitoes'.

The Concrete Jungle

An Indictment of a Way of Life

By CHARLES F. WOOLEY, '50

WE'RE high above the city—where the skyscrapers of man brush shoulders with the God-made clouds; looking down on a world all its own. Across the way, a read beacon light has just been turned on, and because of the prematurity of the act, it seems to spin about, reflecting the blood-red sun's dying rays. As deceptive as quicksand, everything below appears sluggish and diminutive, in direct opposition to the pulsating, blazing giant, that, like Gulliver, lies strapped to the earth.

You look around, and see the Empire State reflecting its golden majesty skyward, as the last of sun's rays touch it; and beyond, the Lady with the Torch is drawing her cape of haze closer against the oncoming evening cool. Down below, all around you, stands this throbbing city—in a nation of cities, the one with sceptre held high and a million burning eyes, daring you to deny its majesty.

In a way, it's more or less symbolic of an era . . . the hub about which the spokes of a given civilization rotate; as was the case with the magnificence of Babylon, the Athens of Pericles, Caesar's Rome, and the Paris of yesterday; with all their culture and splendor, their virtue and vice. Here is the high-water mark of the United States as a nation; a nation close to, or at, its peak; and as such, it is a city that is all things to all men.

The Concrete Jungle

In the jungle, a dense, intermingled growth, we see the mammals in their search for security, as they swing from tree to tree. Here in the concrete jungle we have the mammal as he dashes from the subway to taxi, bus to elevator; with speed as the essential, and hurry the byword. But why the hurry—*quo vadis?* Would you measure your life by the number of steps in your treadmill existence?

God made man, and man made the city; since his tower-of-Babel-days man has never ceased to outmode his own performance. In it he has developed hospitals to salvage lives that were once beyond repair, while at the same time he skillfully concocts a means to destroy all life; in it he made universities to initiate and further his own knowledge, while at the same time in these institutions he develops and perfects the "isms" that would render man the puppet of his appetite.

The city . . . its police, officials, and government are but attempts to keep hold on the innocence that does not exist . . . its people, in the main, living "lives of quiet desperation," sacrificing, always sacrificing, with only the material view in mind . . . its soul, non-existent, simply because it is man-made . . . its tomorrow, only an endless succession of todays.

And yet, there's an awe-inspiring magnetism that belongs to the city alone. It's not its hugeness that produces this effect, nor is it the magnificence of its wealth as contrasted with the hopelessness of its poverty. I imagine it's the slow realization of the fact that underneath all this concrete and steel beats a vibrant heart, pulses a flowing river of humanity. Just another generation of mankind, just a generation of modern cliff-dwellers. You can't deny life, nor its mode of existence—the boats on the river at night, the roaring subways, the burning lights—all cry out and dare you to deny it.

Some day man will be called upon to make an accounting of his stewardship; and Justice, with her sheathed sword, will carefully weigh his creations, both good and bad. And it is not for us to say upon which side of the carefully balanced scales his cities will fall. Yet it is something to ponder—people who burn out their bodies and singe their souls in the day-by-day process that goes on within the city; into what pattern do these robots fall?

Were we put into this world to maintain a certain standard of living, or rather to be as happy as is possible in this "valley of tears"? And can you do both, merely by pitting individual nonconformity against the friction that the modern city generates—definitely no, as the divorce, juvenile and criminal courts will testify. Modern man has been making progress by building hurdles, and now his legs are far too short.

You know, travelling around a city such as this sets you wondering—you see the great monuments raised as hero's graves, and ask yourself where one will find the monumental tomb that signifies the dead that clutter within the city's boundaries, those who have long since stopped living. And maybe your conclusion is something like the poet's:

"Hypocrisy is your religion, and
Falsehood is your life, and
Nothingness is your ending;
why
Then, are you living?"

Reverie

By CLIFFORD J. BROTT, '50

THE spray-swept deck rolls gently beneath my feet as I stand silently, braced in a curving arc against the headwind, letting my mind drift over memories past and present, dwelling on certain adventurous happenings along my life's road.

The air is clean and the tangy smell of salt makes my throat feel alive and fresh. The tropical sky is a brilliant blue and the setting sun a blazing mass of molten steel. As my eyes follow it down beyond the horizon, and my thoughts accompany it onto some foreign land, I cannot help thinking of people at home when ends the day and comes the eve, that marvelous transformation between day and night which some romantic philanthropist called twilight and which poets have immortalized.

As the blazing sun is hanging, half beyond the horizon and half above it, midway between our sea and your world, I turn my face upward and my eyesight lifts its way through billowing racks of canvas up into the changing sky. Banks of rose-tinted clouds are coming out to sea on the soft wings of evening's breeze and, as my eyes follow their shifting contours, my soul soars upward and mingles with their beauty. They change to silver through shades of purple, red, and gold; then, too swiftly, the beauty of sunset at sea passes upward out of earthly vision and another night upon the lonely waves begins.

I lower my eyes, my vision descending slowly through the creaking sails. My gaze inspects the ship in preparation

for the night. The sea is pounding against our prow and spray falls on the deck like angel's tears.

Down by the hatch, a little knot of men are gathering and, soon, the mellow strains of an old folk song come drifting to the bridge. Guitar strings give forth honey into the liquid night. Presently, all the voices, save one, are silent and from some sailor's heart come his memories, hopes, and dreams. His voice holds me transfixed as I listen to him singing.

I find myself transported to a prairie and spring is in the air. The grass is like a carpet spread o'er the boundless plains. Gay antelopes leap and bound in their joy that winter's past. Banks of snow are melting into tiny streams. The plains slope down to lakes so blue that the sky looks on in envy and weeps jealous April showers. The sun brings forth banks of pretty flowers; and spring has come at last.

A girl rides laughing gaily by my side. Her hair is silken, soft, and free. Her laughter silvery, full, and gay, is still so clear in memory.

The guitar is stilled and all is silent, save for the creaking masts and the occasional pop of a rebellious sail. At last, I hear a wistful sigh; the men nod to each other and drift off to their beds—to dreamland, and maidens, and wives, ashore.

Tomorrow morn, again, our ship will sail; and my men will be a husky, fighting crew. Tomorrow, perhaps, we'll engage the enemy; and in the eve, these voices may consist of only precious memory. But I know that otherwise when comes the night and evening's breeze blows soft and free, like gusts from an angel's wings, gently filling our billious golden sails, my men will gather on the deck and songs will pour into the night. Some sailor's hopes, dreams, and memories will leave the caverns of his heart; and in the magic moonlight of the sea, our deck will become the home of some member of my crew.

Reverie

A cheerful fire will be burning down there where the hausers ought to be; children will be laughing in gleeful play upon the deck; and thoughts of war will be remote and far away.

It's this that keeps them fighting here when how much easier it would be to turn our ship back towards home port, and cast our nation's hopes upon the sea.

I know the day is not so far away when, one by one, my men will shake my hand upon the deck, then leave the ship and go ashore. They'll go back to their memories and children's joy will fill the air.

While in some port down by the sea, my ship stands idle; sails are furled. And in my cabin, chin in hand, my turn has come to dwell in memory. My thoughts are not of wooded glens, nor laughter soft and free, but of the wild, crested waves, and of the open sea.

* * * * *

Criss-Cross

By WALES B. HENRY, '50

A simple love from a loving heart;
From such a love I should not part.
But heartless love crossed my path today
And led my simple heart astray.

Evolution of French Literature

By NORMAN D. BEAUSOLEIL, '51

THE parent language of French, as of the other romance languages, is Latin. Traces of this parentage are clearly to be seen in the great number of words that have come directly from Latin. Such words as *père* (father) from the Latin *pater*, and *mère* (mother) from the Latin *mater* clearly show this origin. Latin derivatives like these, indeed, constitute the bulk of the French vocabulary. French words, in the main, are simply Latin words which have been modified by natural development through the centuries.

Of the various dialects of Latin which sprang up over Europe during the early centuries of the Christian era, French was the first to be recognized as a separate language and the first to develop a literature. By the 9th century the dialect spoken in the north and center of what is now France, and that spoken in the south, had developed such marked differences that they were known by distinct names. The tongue (*langue*) of the south was called the *langue d'Oc*, and that of the north the *langue d'Oïl*, from the fact that the word for *yes* in the south was *oc* and in the north *oïl*.

Out of this northern tongue has developed the French language of today, a language which yields to none in clearness and richness. Of both the language and the literature which has sprung from it, the first and sharpest impression that the student receives is indicated in the famous remark, "That which is not clear is not French." More can be tucked

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away in a French sentence with less effort and less ambiguity than in any other modern tongue.

Not that in French it is necessary to express all thought bluntly and crudely. Black must be black and white, white; but there is much that is also gray; and for all fine variations of meaning, for delicate differences, French is the perfect tongue, because even in vague, cloudy matters, French must be clear. The very word *nuance*, by which the French indicate a subtle distinction, is appropriated by us in default of an English equivalent, just as our vocabulary has taken over many other French terms for the same reason. But all this crystal-line perfection, like every perfection, is bought at a price, and the price in this case is poetry, mystery, sentiment. For the French people, of whom the French language is the natural product and expression, are anything but mystical or sentimental.

This love for preciseness and clearness in literature is sharpened by the French social instinct. More than any other people, the French put the emphasis on society; less than any other do they interest themselves in the individual—his whims, his eccentricities, his special moods and traits. For this reason they have a "social literature", that is, a literature which concerns itself with matters of general social interest, rather than with the personal problems of the individual. Their writers remain within the illuminated circle of common experience, and seldom explore the uncommon, the mystic, the fantastic. Thus it happens that they are sometimes charged with being unoriginal and even superficial, especially by foreign critics.

In depth French literature compares favorably with any other. But it has a profundity of intelligence rather than of emotion, its fine distinctions are of thought rather than of feeling, its beauties are more often of form than of content, its

triumphs are analytical and concrete rather than poetical or visionary.

In view of such qualities as these in the French mind, it is therefore not surprising that French literature has gathered more laurels in prose than in poetry, whose very fabric is reverie, the intangible, the inscrutable. The French ardor for beauty of form has rendered their verse-forms somewhat severe and rigid, though most graceful, elegant, and polished. Besides, no matter how clever the technique of the poet, the French language, with its nasal sounds and tapping monotone, is not an organ from which the sweetest music may be drawn. In any case, the unheard melodies of pure poetic fancy are somehow not a part of the French gift for delicate thinking rather than delicate feeling. Consequently if a reader is familiar with the subtle fairy singing of English poetry, the supple sensuous beauty of Italian, reminiscent of the arts of music and sculpture, or even the long, low rumble of German—that reader is often inclined to feel that French verses tinkle out in rhyme some very soulless and conventional thoughts.

But in tasting the delights of French prose there are no such secret protests to suppress. Here French clearness, French elegance, French insight, truly come into their own. Where English prose sprawls in abundance, the French is fine and shapely. Where the German and Italian are often disposed to flounder in sentimentality, the Frenchman is keen, firm, unmuddled. Where the Russian turns morbidly in upon himself, the Frenchman is incorruptibly sound and sane, irrepressibly gay. In a world bitter with prejudice and flighty with wild dreams, the Frenchman seems able to see with clear eyes, to perceive with a cool heart. He is even exasperatingly right. If he does not sail among the stars, he does indeed possess poetic truth.

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Such have been the distinctions of French literature through a long history, so long and rich and complicated that any brief account of it becomes merely a roll-call of world-famous names.

But before we come to the first of these names, that of the chronicler Froissart, there is a vast mass of folk-epics in verse, of lyric poetry, of mystery and miracle plays, and of chronicles. As in all other literatures verse preceded prose, and it was not until the 14th century that we find any considerable body of prose composition. This took the form of history, or chronicles, represented at their best by Froissart, the famous contemporary of Petrarch in Italy and Chaucer in England, who enriched and invigorated the French tongue much as Petrarch did Italian and Chaucer English. Soon after Froissart came Villon, the vagabond poet, whose hauntingly sweet and powerful lyrics stamp him as the greatest figure in French literature up to the time of the great men of the 16th century.

These creative geniuses—Rabelais, the jovial humorist and satirist; Montaigne, first and greatest of the modern essayists; Calvin, the theologian; Ronsard, the elegant and original poet—these were the men who molded the French tongue into much the form it has today, expanding its resources, and making it the pliable, powerful vehicle of one of the world's greatest literatures. The French translation of the Bible, made in the 16th century, was a factor of weight in shaping the modern French language, in the same way that the development of English, German, and other European tongues was vitally influenced by the popular versions of the Scriptures.

During the closing years of the 16th and the opening years of the 17th century, while Shakespeare was liberating English poetry from its dreary formalism and artificiality, Malherbe, poet and critic, was busy in France framing a rigid form

and cramping tradition for French poetry. In the 17th century came also the first of the *salons*, or fashionable literary gatherings of Paris, and the establishment of the French Academy, two powerful factors in the cultivation of taste and a sense of literary form.

One of the golden ages in French literature was the reign of Louis XIV (1638-1715), the monarch who declared, "L'Etat c'est moi", and raised France to the position of the leading state of Europe. During his reign flourished the three dramatic giants, Corneille, Racine, and Molière; the preachers, Bossuet and Fénelon; the theologian Pascal; the poet Boileau; the inimitable letter-writer Madame de Sévigné; the wits La Rochefoucauld and La Bruyère; and many another of that great generation.

Then came the amazing Voltaire who turned off scores of fat volumes, now widely unread. In his time he was a founder of the future. His influence lay over all France until along came Jean-Jacques Rousseau who voiced the ideas which produced the French Revolution and overthrew the existing social order. Half-starved in a garret, he launched modern ideas of hygiene and education. The Revolution destroyed a world of formalism and fixed ideas, and raised the curtain on the modern age. The old classical rules of writing were smashed, along with political laws. Writers made new forms, used words in new and vivid ways. This new and rebellious trend was known as "romanticism".

Balzac and Hugo, Mérimée and Dumas and George Sand, were the true leaders of the romantic movement. The vast stage of living beings by Balzac dwell in a world expressly made for them by Balzac. Hugo found no theme too dramatic, no tale too powerful, for his gifted pen. Mérimée led in the use of "local color", painting an exotic background, as in *Car-*

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men. George Sand lost herself in a morass of sentimentality, and Dumas the elder poured forth a flood of lively tales too careless to be great.

With Gustave Flaubert realism entered into French literature. Realism was a reaction against romanticism. Flaubert presented life in its true colors—to him, drab. More typical of French genius was Ernest Renan, historian and stylist. Anatole France has been likened to the great essayist, Montaigne, as having most distilled a disbelieving quality in the French spirit. Guy de Maupassant, genius of the short story, perfected compression, cold analysis, and a powerful style.

Symbolism, which makes its appearance from time to time down the centuries in all literatures, was rediscovered in France toward the end of the 19th century, particularly by the poets. Symbolism in literature was the tendency to suggest by various means more than the literal meaning. Its writers suggested emotions and sensations through sound and rhythm imitating music.

In poetry, novels, essays, and criticism, French literature of the 20th century has compared well with the record of the past. The conflict of "isms" noted in the 19th century has subsided. Creative minds absorbed the idea that the world reveals itself in different ways to different temperaments, and thus brings about new ways, schools, or styles of writing.

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By JOHN J. LYNCH, '49

“THE ALEMBIC is out!” The frenzied cry rings furiously through the corridors and classrooms. Within minutes after the latest issue of the college literary quarterly appears in the rotunda, this portion of the school resembles a Times Square subway station during the rush hour. Eager hands snatch for copies, only to be brushed aside by those of more avid seekers. Within a few moments, the stacks have to be replenished, only to disappear as hastily as their predecessors.

Yes, the ALEMBIC is a success—it must be—else it would not enjoy this popular response. The supply of copies falls far short of the demand, and there is always an abundant supply of varied and well-written material. Yes, Providence College, its faculty and student body, might well be proud of its ALEMBIC.

But, strange as it may appear at first glance, the ALEMBIC is a dismal failure in many respects. And so, too, are the *Cowl*, the Debating Union, and the Pyramid Players. And when I say dismal failures, I mean exactly that, with all the connotations that may be ascribed to this phrase.

The faculty, the moderators, editors and directors, far from being swelled with false pride, are filled with a sense of failure. And the student body, smug in their contention that all is well, must come to the realization that these extra-curricular activities are doomed to ob-

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scurity, and that the blame will be placed, not on the few that have done their utmost to preserve them, but on the complacent and lethargic student body. Yes, sadly to say, those who consider that these activities have reached fruition, are, in fact, tolling the bell that will soon sound their death knell.

A separate consideration of each of these will point out their deficiencies, and will acquaint the student body with some of the problems.

First, we shall essay an analysis of the college newspaper, the *Cowl*. A look at the editing staff will show that the *Cowl* seems to be very well manned. Yet, this is entirely untrue. The fact is, it is seriously lacking personnel. The numbers of writers, reporters, typists and editorialists is sadly deficient, for many who have volunteered their aid in the *Cowl's* publication, are, for many reasons, at times unable to fulfill their assignments. Class work necessarily takes precedent over their desire to aid, and hence they must curtail, or even cease their well-meant efforts. Others, expecting more glorious duties, become dismayed at the prospect of chasing a faculty member or club president for three or more days in a vain attempt to obtain information. Some are disappointed when the novelty of aiding in the publication of the school paper turns out to be more onerous than at first expected. And they "silently steal away."

As a result, the staff becomes badly depleted, and the burden becomes more firmly placed on the shoulders of the few willing workers who double and redouble their efforts to produce a paper worthy of Providence College.

The *ALEMBIC*, too, is sadly short of material. Although each issue seems to contain a wealth of material by a variety of authors, a comparison of issues will show that the bulk of

the work is being carried on by a fistful of willing writers. This is even more apparent with an examination of the not too distant past, when one issue would contain three, and even four, articles by the same student. And some of these were produced with the sole purpose of filling space, forgetting the primary rules guiding creative writing. It is only through the continued efforts of a few students that the ALEMBIC remains. But, unless new aid is quickly forthcoming, it will again sink into the oblivion from which it has so recently been recalled.

The Debating Union is another activity that is suffering from neglect. Although it enjoyed a successful season last year, it came within a very few steps of being a dismal failure. The Reverend Moderator was forced to use every trick at his disposal to urge, beg, force and cajole men into debating. In fact, at times, those who finally consented to volunteer found that they had little more than 24 hours in which to perfect themselves and their speeches. And many agreed to help, only to save the reputation of the school, lest it be unprepared to defend itself against its competitors. It seems strange, and it is disheartening, that out of a student body of some 1600 students, only a handful were willing to take part. The complacent student body takes the credit for a successful year, ignoring the fact that it did nothing to aid in the success, while entirely oblivious of any notion of what might have been accomplished if the Debating Union had received the support to which it is entitled as a student activity.

Last spring, when the Pyramid Players called off their final production while it was still in the early stages of rehearsal, there was much moaning and groaning on the part of the students who had looked forward to its presentation. Lack of time was given as the reason for cancellation, but the dearth of volunteered acting talent and the acute shortage of

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managerial and technical advisors was as much to blame. But, since it would not look well publicly to blame the student body, secondary reasons were extended.

Now this coddling of the student body, lest it acquire a bad reputation, is not only undesirable, but it can be considered a gross negligence. The students of Providence College are men—or should be—and therefore, should be made to accept the blame if and when they are at fault. If there were only one such instance, then it might be deemed advisable to forestall any undue criticism. But, when four different activities are so ignored and allowed to flounder in the depths of near annihilation, so that only the continued efforts of a faithful few are the sole saving factor, then it is time that the student body, not only receive, but accept the blame.

Providence College, as a Catholic educational institution, is intent upon producing sound minds. But this is not the only purpose of the school. Mere classroom work, with its lecture courses is far from adequate, and the faculty, recognizing this, has set up outside methods of transforming the acquired theory into application. Philosophy is taught to discipline the mind, but this regulation of intellect is a failure unless it is proven that the courses have achieved their purpose. It is also necessary that this training be evidenced before education is completed, lest any errors go uncorrected. Any graduate of a college is presumed to be ready to step into his chosen profession without experiencing any difficulties in the performance of his duties. And it goes without saying, that no student can go into the world of practicality with little or no training other than the theoretical disciplines presented in the classroom.

The purposes of these activities are distinct, though interrelated. The *Cowl* enables us to write clearly and un-

derstandingly, for the persuasion or instruction of other students. It corresponds to the descriptive and expository branches of composition and affords ample chance to supplement composition and journalism courses.

The ALEMBIC gives vent to the productive spirit of the student, allowing him to make full use of his creative abilities, that he might have the satisfaction of seeing in print the fruits of his labor. And—more important—whereas his themes and term papers receive criticism from professors, ALEMBIC articles come into a more widespread consideration at the hands of the student body.

Thirdly, the Debating Union makes use of the oral word in producing a desired effect on the audience and in the minds of the judges. It gives the student the opportunity to express himself forcefully, grammatically and emphatically; teaches the use of persuasion, threat or pleading. Where the *Cowl* and the ALEMBIC complete composition courses, the Debating Union affords us the chance to utilize the doctrines of public speaking and oratory classes.

While debates are of value in expressing our own ideas, the Pyramid Players offer the opportunity of expressing the thoughts of others. It can and should be a great contributory factor in the development of poise and self-assurance.

From these few observations, we can glean a few of the benefits to be received by a student who volunteers to aid in the continued success of these activities. But, more than just realizing their values, we must do our part in order to obtain them. These activities are not a part of the prescribed courses of Providence College, but for that reason, they are not to be overlooked.

Yet, they will be overlooked if the same attitude grips the students this year. The most important part of school life,

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seems to be, for the most part, a good schedule, a dearth of afternoon classes, and a full measure of social activities. I am not in the least critical of any of these, but I do criticize the lethargic student who refuses to avail himself of every opportunity of obtaining the fullness of education.

However, I fully realize that there are many, especially the married students, for whom even attendance at class is a hardship, who are unable to partake of the fruits of extra-curricular activities. Nor, am I blaming students hampered by heavy schedules or make-up studies, those who are forced to work full time, or who need spend extra hours on concentrated study.

Those whom I am criticizing are the slouches, the slackers and the goldbricks. Their only concern is the attainment of a degree, coupled with all of the social activity that they can possibly attend. These are they who "haven't got time", yet they attend all the dances, all the sports activities, and ever look forward to a Saturday evening with the boys. When questioned over their ability to find time for these things, the inquirer will find that this is an entirely different case. Sure, it's different—this is fun! Writing an article, chasing a story, or memorizing a speech or role isn't fun. They haven't got time, because they won't give it the time. Not if it means a little work, they won't!

There are students here who should deem certain of these activities compulsory for themselves. The *Cowl* and the *ALEMBIC* are natural supplements for courses in English composition, journalism, creative writing and the short story. There, a student preparing himself for a journalistic career can especially be benefited. However, since a man's educational background is primarily judged upon his ability to express ideas, it gives all of us a wonderful opportunity to increase such a valuable asset.

In addition to the above publications, education and business students should avail themselves of the opportunity the Debating Union affords them in the acquisition of an oral mastery of English, since their livelihood will surely depend on their ability to present ideas through the medium of the spoken word.

Lax as the above mentioned groups have been in sampling these benefits, there is one group that so far has won the championship by its absolute failure to support these activities—the pre-legal students. Each of these activities is of great merit to a lawyer whose livelihood depends on his ability to write clearly, to express himself forcibly, yet concisely, and to parade his acting ability before a jury panel. The literary publications, the Debating Union and the Pyramid Players all tend to the betterment of the pre-legal students more than any other group, and more than any other group, they ignore them.

Just why they fail to avail themselves of these beneficial aids is not apparent. Yet, it is true that although they seem sincere in their attempts to obtain the knowledge necessary for a successful business or professional life, they are sadly negligent in availing themselves of every means at their disposal.

Certainly, if we were allowed to obtain, free of charge, any volume in the bookstore, it is a fact that nearly all would request the three volumes of the *Summa Theologica*. Only one is required for classroom work, but the other two are desirable for reference, for additional study, or even for the edification of those examining our bookshelves. At any rate, since they would not cost anything, these volumes would be in great demand.

The same parallel can be applied to extra-curricular activities. The faculty does not require that any student do

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more than complete the necessary courses and show cause that he be worthy of a degree in the field of his endeavors. Nor will they withhold any degree solely because a student complies with just the catalogue requirements. However, they encourage extra-curricular participation, yet are appalled at the lack of cooperation. To complete the analogy, we may become mercenary—the only argument that seems to have any effects on some students—and say that these activities are offered the student body free of charge. No extra fees are collected, no force is applied, the incentive of the student is the sole factor in the increase in the number of participants.

But, here the analogy ends. Although anxious to procure the *Summa*—whether or not for cultural purposes is immaterial—the same students are extremely hesitant in obtaining the tremendous benefits afforded by the simple medium of joining the *Cowl*, the *ALEMBIC*, the Debating Union or the Pyramid Players.

Of late, there has been much hue and cry about the lack of spirit on the part of the student body of Providence College. And that lack of spirit is not only noticed on the field of sport. It is all too noticeable in the classroom, but most of all, in these extra-curricular activities. There has been much ado lately about the lack of a football team here at P. C., but it is grossly incongruous for the student body to raise such a clamor in its proposal, while letting already established institutions go to seed. I know that some will read an aversion to football in these lines, but that, most probably, will be done by those whom I am trying to influence in this essay. I am trying to reach those who are so willing to protest their school ties, and who are ever ready to give mental support to its institutions. But when asked to do a little more, to expend a slight effort in behalf of one of these, they are conspicuous by their absence.

Unless there is a little more effort on the part of the student body in support of these activities that have been instituted for the advancement of no one other than themselves, then we may look forward to a gradual decline in the spirit and temperament of Providence College, that can only result in the eradication of all the traditions that have so slowly and strenuously been acquired through the persistent efforts of those who have preceded us.

Wake up! Drop that lethargic attitude! Get behind these activities! They are for you, and unless you take advantage of them you may be sure that they will decay and sink into that oblivion from which the ALEMBIC has so recently been recalled!

Finem Respice

By JAMES E. KELLEY, '50

Oft, to every man and nation,
Comes a moment to decide
'Twixt the strife of truth and falsehood
For the good or evil side.
But the King, the true Messiah,
Kenning all the bloom and blight,
Parts the goats upon the left-hand
And the sheep upon the right.
But man's choice goes on forever
'Tween the darkness and the light,
And the end bequeaths him glory—
Or eternity in plight.

Five and Twenty Years Ago

By WALES B. HENRY, '50

"It is not the least debt that we owe unto history that it hath made us acquainted with our dead ancestors; and out of the depth and darkness of the earth delivered us their memory and fame."—Sir Walter Raleigh.

AND so it seems that Sir Walter not only circumnavigated this globe of ours, looted a few odd Spanish treasure galleons and managed to toss his cloak over offending mud-puddles, but he also had a healthy eye on the existence of that tangible aspect of History which makes it a convenient vehicle to study the past, reap knowledge and glean enjoyment, pleasure and an understanding of what has hitherto preceded us. So, too, with our literary quarterly, we may gain much by perusing what has gone before.

It is well over the quarter-century mark since one Joseph A. Fogarty edited the first copy of the ALEMBIC. Published monthly, at that time, the first copy made its appearance in the hallowed halls of Harkins in December of 1920. As this was one year and eight months before the writer of this copy made his appearance in the sanitary halls of a Bristol, Connecticut hospital, I believe I can say, without fear of contradiction, that a good deal of history has gone by the board. Now the pity of it is that the fruits of all these years of literary endeavor should be lost to the student who presently treads the campus of Providence College in search of *Veritas* and the cultural arts.

That we may explore the past and read again some of the writings of the men of Providence College is the intention of this column. The archives of the ALEMBIC will be opened to reveal the dusty pages of twenty-five years ago. In this section of the present ALEMBIC the reader may find accounts of past student activity, former student poetry and prose, and above all, any bit of humor that may have previously appeared on the pages of yesteryear's ALEMBICS. It is the hope of this writer that the practice of reprinting the manuscripts of the past will continue in the future so that the writings of today will not be lost in the vagueness of tomorrow.

Therefore, without the slightest fear of recrimination on the part of Sir Walter, let me paraphrase:

It is not the least debt that we owe unto the present editors of the ALEMBIC that they have made us acquainted with the works of our previous authors; and out of the depth and darkness of the files of the P. C. literary quarterly delivered us their memory and fame.

• • • • •

Enigmas

I come twice in greeting,
But once, in good-bye;
For I love a meeting
And part with a sigh.
I end every sunrise
And begin every eve
The day does not know me
Though I crowd every breeze.

L. BOPPELL,

January 1923

For my money, it was one of those Freshmen campaigning at the beginning of the term. Freshmen usually come twice in greeting.

Enigmas

I'm with all the girls but ne'er with a dame
Though I've met one called Helen I don't know a name;
I hide in a dwelling at the end of the hall,
I'm dancing with belles who attend every ball.

G. CONWAY,
January 1923

This is perplexing. It can't be a Senior—they hide in the cafeteria. It must be the fellow who took Sadie Hawkins to the Sophomore Hop.

Day By Day

With deep reflection
And imperfection,
I nightly prepare
That loathsome Greek;
Whose words complexing
And oh, so vexing!
Drive me most crazy
From week to week.

EDWARD DWYER
January 1923

Look, Ed, the students don't worry about Greek any more. This is the Atomic Age and, what with the draft and all, we should try to be Pericles?

Bedtime Lucubrations

. . . Did you ever consider the queer things that people say? You should, you see if you invent some wise saying they may put it in some flashy magazine like *Smart Set*. Of course it would have to be in the class of "People who live in glass houses should never throw stones," nor brinkbats, since somebody might get hurt. . . .

FRANCIS KIELTY,
January 1923

I certainly do consider the queer things people say.
What is a *brinkbat*?

Oh!

With deepest pleasure,
I take the treasure
Of Grecian verses,
 "Euripides,"
Whose plots so vivid,
Turn one's blood livid,
When reading the horrors
 Of Pelides.

JOHN F. FITZGERALD,
January 1923

Have you ever tried reading *Superman* or *True Crime Comics*?

The ALEMBIC for the past few months has had to cope with the problem that has faced every college pub-

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lication from time immemorial, a dearth of suitable material to publish between its covers. When the ALEMBIC was first published it was hoped that every student would co-operate with the staff in an effort to make it a truly representative publication of the student body. "Or, By and For the Students" was the slogan.

Of late we have fallen short of the mark, . . . as far as literary contributions are concerned . . . It would seem that with a student body the size of ours sufficient suitable material for publication would be forthcoming . . .

It is not too late to make a fresh start and make the ALEMBIC the magazine of the student body and not the work of a few members of the editorial staff. It's up to you.

Editorial,

January 1923

"It seems to me I've heard that song before,
It's from an old familiar score.
I know it well . . ."

Gifts to the College

Providence College has lately been the recipient of several gifts from old and new friends of the institution. Mrs. I. A. Clark of Providence has given the college a work of art in the form of a piece of hand-embroidered tapestry of great antiquity. It depicts a medieval church scene. The colors are still in perfect preservation. This is a valuable acquisition to the numerous paintings which now grace the college halls.

College Chronicle,
January 1923

I wonder where it went?

A Barbarous Epic

"Trim," I said in tone quite meek;
"Shave," added the barber sleek.
Lathering my forehead, eyes, and mouth,
He scraped my features from north to south,
He carved and cleft with skillful art,
To make my face a graphic chart.
He slivered my nose with painful slash,
And cut my chin in a bloody gash.
I rose from out that barber's chair,
And spoke to him in serious air.
"Abuse if you must this old bald head,
But spare yon single hair," I said.
A gleam of joy suffused his mask.
"Shampoo?", I heard him boldly ask.
My sterner nature within me stirred
To life at that barber's cruel word.
"Touch you that hair on this bald head,
Die like a dog! Shave on," I said.
Shave on he did—just as before,
And cut me in twelve places more,
Then gazing at my naked head,
"Too late for Herpicide," he said.

JAMES J. LYNCH,
February 1923

Second Semester

On Monday, February 5, the students of Providence College entered on the second semester of the scholastic year. The entire student body gathered in the Gym-

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nasium Hall. An address was given by the president, followed by the reading of the rules.

College Chronicle,
February 1923

Times never change, do they?

Student Council

There has recently been established in the college a student council. It is composed of ten men chosen from the various classes. It is the duty of the council to try students who may have been guilty of any misdemeanors and to punish them accordingly.

College Chronicle,
February 1923

Wherein one Robert Doe, a Freshman at Providence College, has been found guilty of attempting to revive school spirit, it is the judgment of this court that he shall be banished to the cafeteria and be put on a diet of beans and coffee.

Morpheus Mighty

Sleep, work, and sleep again!
That's about all.
Sleep, work, and sleep again
Summer and Fall,
Winter and Spring
Over and over

The same old thing,
Sleep, work and sleep and then—
Work—and sleep again!

FRANCIS L. DWYER,
February 1923

Gets rather monotonous, doesn't it?

Enigmas

I am last in the door but first in the room,
Tho' I'm always in trouble, I never feel gloom;
I am much in the river and live on its shore
And now I am seen at the end of the floor.

JOHN NUGENT, '25,
February 1923

Keep out of that barroom, John!

. . . and a dance-mad, movie-mad, risque-mad
Broadway on which Shakespeare is played to packed
houses. Truly it is good now to be alive, but to be young
is very heaven.

JAMES F. KELEHER, '24,
March 1923

Pity the poor Bard! But it sure is nice to be madly
young.

Try It

When your days are dark and dreary
And your life is one big trial.

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When your heart is sad and weary,
Cast your cares aside and smile.

While the clouds that float above you
Hide the sun's bright rays of light,
And you think your pals don't love you.
Just continue with the fight.

Smile at trouble; forget sorrow;
Make your mind up that you'll win
And you'll find a glad tomorrow
If you bear it now and grin.

CHARLES A. GIBBONS, 24.

March, 1923

Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag.
And smile, smile, smile—
Tomorrow's History test is just a gag.
So smile boys, that's the style—

In 1923 we had the following teams scheduled for the Providence College baseball team: Yale, Clark University, Holy Cross, Lowell Tech, Colby, Boston College, U. S. Coast Guard Academy, Brown, Villanova, Middlebury, Boston University, Norwich University, New London Submarine Base, Springfield College, St. John's (Brooklyn), St. Michael's, Georgetown, Cooper Union, Harvard, Dartmouth. The *ALEMBIC* covered the sports in those days, both baseball and football.

Senior Gate

The Seniors are still advancing, with unbated zeal, toward their great objective, a gate for the College. The undertaking has been in progress only a short time, but the goal is in sight.

*College Chronicle,
May 1923*

There is many a slip twixt cup and lip.

Said the Walrus to the Carpenter

From September to June is a gigantic stride. From June back to September is a step almost lilliputian. The future will always loom up before you in gigantic proportions. Fill it with your activity. Have big plans. Complete them if you can, but never give in, the future is unlimited when built of present instants. But don't live in the pigmy of past. Grow with time.

May 1923

Use Wildroot Hair Tonic!

Why Football?

By I. KONO KLAST, '49

Eleven men with mud begrimed,
Eleven more combatting these;
An inane test of strength is held,
In answer to the urging pleas
Fanatic students send on high,
Whilst clad in blankets, flags in hands,
With throats full hoarse from constant yell.
They shiver in the wind-swept stands.

Quite safe above, the watcher cries
For more excitement down below;
His only fear—that those opposed
Provide a more impressive show
Of power, and perhaps the chance
That Alma Mater may not win,
And he, in turn, be forced to pay
The odds he gave, to his chagrin.

While far from harm, in safety there,
He cheers his favorites, lest they yield.
But greater is his cheer for him
Whom JayVees carry from the field
(A brute whose brawn surpasses brain.
Whose sole ambition drives him on
To show his strength, to pit his weight
Against the foe, 'till strength is gone).

Are battered bodies, broken bones,
The splintered goals, the harm we wreak,
The true exemplars of that college
Spirit we so avid seek?
Is this the reason you propose
A football team? Nay, rather you
Should first support those undermanned
Activities that cry for help from you.

Song of the Bridge

By GEORGE HUNTER COCHRAN '51

Wire and Steel and the sinews
Of men. . .
Toil and tears and the sorrow
They send. . .
Born of a spark in the mind
Of a man. . .
Built by a tool in the hand
Of a man. . .
Sound of the sea and kiss
Of the surf,
These are the things which
Gave me birth.
And the hand of a man
And the mind of a man
And the heart of a man
Are in me!

