MANUSCRIPTS

March, 1950

Oh My Darling — William Griffith

Mignon — Barbara Sims

The Understandenest Woman — Emmett McGinley

Love's Miracle — Don Peterson

It Ain't Etiquette — Forrest Dunderman

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Mignon

Barbara Sims

M. Julien Flaubert plodded homeward on feet that lagged because their destination held no element of pleasant anticipation or even mild interest for their owner. The feet would bear him across the square, down four blocks to 23 Rue Heidelberg, and up fourteen steps to the flat he had taken in one of the more imposing apartment houses of downtown Paris. Once inside the feet would be caressed and purred over by Mignon, the female cat, and indeed the only female resident of M. Flaubert's flat. There was no Marie or Josette or Emilie to greet her breadwinner with an embrace and an aroma of simmering pot roast drifting from the shining enamel kitchen at 23 Rue Heidelberg. There was only Mignon, who, being unable to open her coveted nightly tin of salmon herself, was therefore obliged to caress and cajole one more familiar with the mechanics of can opener and can.

M. Flaubert was a bachelor of some forty years, and, for the last five of those years, he had lapsed into musing over and sometimes privately lamenting his unmarried state. More accurately, he felt a little guilty about it, for the fact was that he had never once been in love with anyone, and he was quite certain that no one had ever been in love with him. This fact he concealed as a matter of pride, for, being a Frenchman of the old school, he felt that he had a tradition to uphold in matters of love. Anyway, he was getting on in years now, and what eligible woman would glance twice at the bejowled, paunchy old figure M. Flaubert represented? Nevertheless, he sighed heavily as he usually did when sentimentality misted over his banker's heart, and he tried to feel a little eager about the letter he was certain to have received from his brother in the United States.

The feet plodded on, and little specks appeared on them as rain began falling from a gray, overhung sky. He felt his new black Homburg apprehensively; then, as the rain turned into a downpour, he glanced about for a protective doorway. Finding one near at hand, he ducked into it and shook the rain from his hatbrim. The downpour continued, and M. Flaubert, fidgeting, thought of Mignon, who would be impatient and disgruntled at his delay and was certain to be querulous and irritable all evening. To pass the time, he ran his eye

over the list of tenants in the dirty, musty building. One small, soiled card caught his attention. It read: M. Gustave Richeux, and beneath it was lettered: Problems of the Heart. He glanced at it, looked away, then looked back again. Months later he could not have explained what impulse moved him that rainy day, but some force propelled M. Flaubert's usually conservative feet up three flights of stairs to the flat of one Gustave Richeux, where his tentative rap was answered by a tiny pink gnome of a man who ushered the startled Julien Flaubert into the dingy flat. With a polite gesture, he seated Flaubert at a rickety table which supported a threadbare oilcloth and a half-eaten sandwich. These impediments the gnome brushed to the floor with a sweep of his gnarled little fist. He perched on the edge of the seat, folded his doll's hands, and peered at M. Flaubert, banker and conservative, through the scraggles and wisps of hair and beard that almost completely concealed his beady little eyes.

"You have come to me because you are sick at heart," he began. "I am able to help you because I understand that a sick heart is sometimes more painful than a diseased limb, and my advice to you will be worthwhile and valuable because I sympathize with you and comprehend your difficulties." M. Flaubert did not question the logic of this statement. The rain, the dingy room, and this bizarre little man extended him a protective cloak of isolation that had never before been offered him. He nodded dumbly. The bizarre one waited. M. Flaubert sighed heavily, opened up his sick heart, and told the whole shameful story in a matter of five minutes. The grotesque little creature clucked sympathetically.

"Your problem, my friend," he said, "is that you wish to love and eventually espouse an eligible woman, preferably young, who will, in turn, love you and agree to become your dutiful and obedient wife. What you fear most is rejection and disappointment because you are no longer young. But what is youth? Exuberance, overconfidence, wholesomeness, and fierce pride in one's honor and responsibilities. All are most easily feigned. My advice to you is to go where eligible women abound, cloak yourself in youth's armor, and captivate the lady of your choice."

He hopped up then, signifying that the interview had ended. M. Flaubert sat stupefied. It was childishly simple! One simply acted well, read his lines on cue, and carted home the prize after the performance was over. He was amazed that he had not thought of it himself; he had sought so many times for the answer to his dilemma. Of course, he must find a woman he could genuinely love, but that would be easy if he met eligible women in flocks, and, after all, it was different now because he really wanted to fall in love. Where he had once been only spasmodically serious about a mate, he was now eager and a little desperate. He dropped a handful of coins on the rickety table and, wordless, left the room and the building, feeling as if

blind chance had led him to Venus herself in the guise of a tiny pink gnome.

Two weeks later found him at the resort of Monte Carlo where women of every sort came in droves. Had one of Flaubert's business associates chanced to encounter him there, he would have hastened back to Paris to report the new Julien Flaubert who pranced and strutted and leered like a young turkey gobbler and gave every indication of having gone quite mad.

The fact was that M. Flaubert was not in the least mad; he was, rather, mildly delirious. The youth that had slipped so suddenly through his fingers had returned just as suddenly, and he was intoxicated at his prowess with the ladies. These latter found him privately amusing, but they flattered him, petted him and pretended they did not see the old Flaubert in this dashing creature who promenaded along the boardwalk each day with a different lady and danced every dance in the evenings under the arcade. Matchmaking mothers and predatory spinsters eyed him speculatively, but he was oblivious to all this and waited only for the day he would meet the woman he aspired to. He found her seated across the bridge table from him one evening on the porch of the resort hotel, and he prayed for blind chance to lead him into a grand slam so that she would be impressed and, above all, impressionable. The grand slam was not forthcoming, but the next few days found him constantly with her, purring over and caressing her in much the same manner that Mignon used to procure her nightly tin of salmon. It is certain that Mlle. Joyeuse Costaine did not find his youthful antics ridiculous, for she was a simple, light-hearted little thing who found his vigor overwhelming and eagerly consented to return to Paris with him and become his wife.

Now M. Flaubert's feet were airy things which moved him lightly and quickly homeward each evening to the charming Joyeuse who greeted him with a laughing, lilting song and an aroma of simmering pot roast drifting from the shining enamel kitchen. And, after supper, well-fed and contented, M. Flaubert read his journal and stroked Mignon who no longer reigned supreme at 23 Rue Heidelberg and who had lately become as grumpy and cross as a rheumatic old dowager queen in exile.

Let it be said that Julien Flaubert never for a moment forgot that his newfound happiness was due in a large measure to the wonderfully wise little man who had given him such sage and successful advice that rainy day some months before. One evening, homeward bound, M. Flaubert allowed his feet to lead him into the dingy doorway of yesterday's adventure. The small soiled card with its provocative message was gone and so, it seemed, was M. Gustave Richeux. A highly indignant landlady, still smarting from her loss, informed Flaubert that the gnome had been last seen being escorted to jail for failing to pay his board and lodging. M. Flaubert's feet

hurried him to that very institution. Here was a chance to help one who had done so much for him! It was a small price to pay.

A courteous gendarme ushered Flaubert to the gnome's cell, where he found the inmate perched on his bunk dealing and redealing a pack of greasy cards. M. Flaubert, puffing nervously on his cheroot, explained his mission and offered generous financial aid. After all, as he told the gnome, he owed all his happiness to him, did he not? The gnome was puzzled, and cudgeled his brain until he remembered the rainy day that had brought him this strange visitor. M. Flaubert was shocked to find the oracle in such ignominious surroundings. Just what, he inquired delicately, were the financial resources at the little man's disposal? The answer stunned him more than a stock market crash would have. The tiny creature, it seemed, eked out a living as fortune teller, mind reader, and mystic during the summer carnival and circus season. The winter months left him no alternative but to give pseudo advice to the gullible on matters of love, stolen goods, and other problems of personality and fortune. But where, M. Flaubert demanded a little desperately, had he found the wonderful advice he had sold that strange, rainy day? The gnome, who was by this time a little uncomfortable and beginning to regret his open answers, replied that that sort of palaver came easily enough to a man who earned his living fleecing the desperate and lonely refuse of humanity's backwash.

M. Flaubert slunk from the cell row and left the jail building with a mottled purplish color rising from his collar to his cheeks. He, Julien Flaubert, had been duped by a charlatan, a circus fakir! Mortification washed over him, and was followed by alternate waves of shame and rage.

Gone was the air from under M. Flaubert's feet this night, and gone the swagger from his shoulders. The airless feet carried him down the street to No. 23 and up the fourteen steps to the Flaubert flat. The voice of Joyeuse greeted him laughing and lilting. His brows knitted together. Every evening the same song! Was it that she knew nothing else but that idiotic thing about *"Le Petit Oiseau"?* He opened the door and the odor of simmering pot roast assaulted his slightly flared nostrils. It smelled old and a trifle burned tonight, did it not? Mignon saw him, yawned and stretched, and sallied forth to be greeted by the sharp, angry toe of M. Flaubert's shoe. Her liver, which had been rather shaky of late, was somewhat displaced by the blow, and she sailed out the open door with enraged yowls and vindictive hisses.

In the sordid narrow alley behind No. 23, she met a nondescript battle-scarred tom and followed him along the fence tops and rails until they were miles from Rue Heidelberg and the flat of Monsieur and Madame Julien Flaubert.

"Sorry, Friend, I Didn't See Ya Standin' There"

Chester Perkins

I SAT IN MY usual corner booth at the Victory Bar, sipping a glass of beer and glancing about at people and things I had seen dozens of times before.

Heavy-jowled Charlie, the proprietor-bartender, stood behind the oaken bar, polishing a beer glass and swapping small talk with the patrons seated on the high stools across from him. Most of his customers were G. I.'s, and he smiled and beamed with pleasure as one of them handed him an army shoulder patch insignia. He placed it with other patches which were pinned to red, white, and blue banners hanging on the wall behind the bar.

Charlie liked soldiers. He had opened the Victory Bar when the government built an army hospital nearby, and he catered to the boys as if each was a hero just returned from Bataan. They liked him too, and there was always a spirit of good will and fellowship in Charlie's tavern, even when some of the boys got a little "pickled" around midnight.

Outside, there was a loud clicking of heels on the step, and Danny Maddin, whistling, came bursting in. He headed straight for the bar with sure steps, and when he bumped into one of the customers he said, "Sorry, friend, I didn't see you sittin' there."

"S'all right, Danny," came the reply.

"Hey, Charlie, y'old son of a gun," Danny exclaimed, "damned if you ain't gittin' fatter every day. Why don't ya' quit drinkin' up all the profits? Draw me a tall one."

"Okay, Danny, okay," Charlie laughed. "We can't all be as neat 'n trim as you are."

Danny was, as Charlie said, neat and trim. And he was good looking, too. He had black, thick, curly hair which, although he seldom combed it, never seemed mussed. His teeth were white and even, and they accentuated his winning smile. The only thing which marred his appearance was a number of small scars around his eyes.

"I got a buck that says I can whip anyone in a game of shuffleboard," said Danny as he headed for the table in the rear of the room.

On his way, he nudged two or three people, and to each of them he said, "Sorry, friend, I didn't see ya standin' there." A couple of G. I.'s accepted his challenge, and the game was on. Several minutes later he was back at the bar, waving three one-dollar bills in the air.

"Won't these jokers never learn they can't beat me?" boasted Danny. "Give everybody a drink, Charlie."

One of the bills slipped from Danny's grasp. He stooped to the floor to pick it up, and, as he groped for it, he grabbed a man by the ankle. "Sorry, friend, I didn't see ya standin' there," he apologized.

The drinks were served to everybody in the house, and Danny gave a toast he had learned overseas from a Chinese girl. Everyone laughed.

A minute later, eyes opened wide and mouths dropped in amazement as Danny reached up and removed one of his two plastic eyes and dropped it into his beer.

Turning toward a telephone booth, he remarked, "'Scuse me, friends. I just want to keep m'eye on m'beer while I'm gone."

Fenner Street

Patrick J. Mahoney III

THE BLACK BUICK came to a halt at the foot of Fenner Street. The man behind the wheel sat smoking a cigarette until Officer Fogarty passed out of sight down Nelson Avenue hill.

The door swung open, and the man that emerged from the Buick was an interesting study. His clothes did not go with his face. He was a big man who did justice to the obviously well-tailored brown suit, but his face was cold and expressionless. His eyes were jet black orbs, peering out from under the large brimmed hat.

He gave another swift glance in the direction Officer Fogarty had disappeared, and proceeded up the street with a determined gait. He struggled through groups of women buying produce from the market carts. A rummy asked him for a dime and was ignored. There were an ice cream vendor short-measuring a couple of kids and the inevitable crowd surrounding the Ginny and his playful monk. Three boys jostled against him in their mad flight down the street. They had stolen some wire-spoked wheels from Max Colbert's Junk Yard, and old man Colbert was in hard pursuit.

As he approached the front of Giofannis' Delicatessen, a little, dark eyed girl sat on the pavement playing jacks by herself. She had a large steel brace on her left leg.

He glared at her "Hi, Mister," grunted, and started through the door.

"Hey, Mister!"

He stopped abruptly, then turned around. "Wot ya want?"

"My ball please."

"Wot about it?"

"It rolled out there in the street."

"Git it yaself!" he said, then started through the door.

"But, Mister."

Again he turned around. "Wot?"

"I can't get my ball."

"How come?"

"I can't walk."

"Oh!" he said as he noticed her brace. He hesitated, then walked out into the street, picked up the ball, and returned it to the kid. "Here."

"Gee, thanks, Mister."

"Wot's yer name?"

"Nina, Nina Giofannis."

"Yer ol' man own this store?"

"Unhuh, why?"

"Nottin', no reason at all."

"You wanna see my daddy?"

"You talk too much, kid. How comes yer Ma lets ya play out here in a street wit dat bum leg?"

"Oh I haven't any mother any more, she's in heaven. Just Daddy 'n me now. You believe in heaven, Mister?"

"You talk too much, kid."

"I guess maybe I have to do somethin', Mister, I can't play hopscotch like the rest of the kids."

"Ya can't walk none at all?"

"Oh sure, I get around some on my crutches, only right now daddy has 'em down at Mr. Donovan's shop. He's puttin' them rubber what-ya-call-its on the bottoms, so I won't slip on the tenement house steps when it's wet out."

"Ya gab a lot, don't ya, kid?"

"That's what daddy says. Ya know, Mister, I'll bet you come down here to get some of our cheesecake. Mrs. Garabaldi says we've got the best cheesecake on the whole waterfront. You just go right on in, Mister. Daddy's gone, but Nickey'll wait on you."

He took his hand slowly from the door knob, pulled the wallet from his inside coat pocket, crumpled a bill, and dropped it into the crippled kid's lap. "Buy yerself a new rubber ball, kid." He turned and walked away.

"Hey, Mister, this is a *five* dollar bill.—Hey, Mister . . . ."

Silently he worked his way back down Fenner Street to the parked Buick.

To Jonathan Swift

Michael Moran

Speak not of fright'ning hate for all mankind,
Nor torment with despising thought a mind
And heart that in reality must feel—
As later writings, nobler works, reveal—
True love for erring—though not worthless—man,
And make thy line a pleasant one to scan.

But think not that I beg for flowering phrase,
Or gentler words to cheer life's cheerless days—
Such prostitution of ideal for song
That speaks not truth but prettiness is wrong—
So, lest in haste this anxious, prying youth
Should perjure while demanding strictest truth
From one whose years at least might claim respect,
I'll state the point, and idle verse neglect.

Your damning letter to the worthy Pope
Condemns man as corrupt beyond all hope.
And then, as though with sentiment reversed,
You wrote four books on man—the beast accursed.
The depth and length of such a work betrays,
It seems to me, your vow of early days,
For who applies so keen a wit as yours
Denouncing at great length that which they curse?
The answer, I believe, belies in fact
The motive you profess inspired the act.
Would not such industry and shrewd insight
Seem indication that a will to right
The ways of mankind was in truth the urge?
Some hope to cleanse the race with verbal purge?

Hark, Jonathan! You're list'ning, are you not?
My words aren't meant to be ignored—forgot.

But answerless I am and must remain—
Jonathan—quite dead—can't write again.

Oh My Darling

William Griffith

THE HUGE BLACK cigar smelled horrible. The fat man who was smoking it, however, seemed to enjoy it a great deal. He chewed on it, putting it first in one corner of his mouth, then in the other. Clem watched him out of the corner of her eye. She was fascinated and disgusted by his appearance. His face was round and red. From it stuck a huge bulbous nose with tiny purple veins and red welts. The eyes were mere moist slits with a thin line of eyebrow above. The lips were large and purple. Once he smiled at her, and she saw the brown stubs of broken teeth. Sweat poured from his face and dropped onto his untidy brown suit. Clem could smell him and could feel him against her. Although she sat as close to the window as was possible, she could not get far enough away from him on the narrow seat. She was, therefore, uncomfortable. She pressed her forehead against the window and watched the trees and telephone poles flash by in neat rows.

With her hands she carefully held a small pastry box on her lap. She occasionally glanced at it and fondled it, pulling the white cord with which it was tied and tracing a long thin finger over the blue letters that spelled out Hergeshiemer's Pastries. A little bake-shop man was pictured on the pastry box in blue and pink. He held a huge blue ladle in his hands from which was dripping what appeared to be a rich and creamy icing. Clem smiled unconsciously as she carefully ran her hand over the little box.

"Hey, kid, ain't this where you wanted off?" the bus driver yelled back through the bus. Clem looked up: the bus had stopped and outside was the bridge. The driver was waiting.

"Yes, this is it. Just a minute," she called as she squeezed past the plump knees of the fat man.. "Bye, Honey," he mouthed at her. She ignored this and walked to the door at the front. Passengers looked at her with listless eyes. A little boy sniggered at her. A boy sitting on the front seat whistled as she stepped off the bus, then smugly laughed.

"Thanks," she said to the driver.

"Yeah, kid; you're welcome," he called over his shoulder. The door closed and the red and yellow bus moved away. The fat man

waved to her from the small square window. She turned and crossed the cement bridge.

Although the air was still hot, she could smell no vile cigar. She smelled the damp grass, the scum at the edge of the water, the hay in the field, and the dust of the road. The leaves on the trees had a brown film of dust on them which intensified the heat that was everywhere. The sun shone down from a paleness of blue warmth and oppressive hot air. The rippling of the stream below gave the only impression of coolness in the monotonous landscape of tree and field and road that surrounded her. So, carefully holding the pastry box, Clem descended the slope to the water's edge and followed the path there that went with the stream into the wood.

The grass was wet, and soon her sneakers and feet were also wet. But she enjoyed this, and shook her hair back from her face as she walked. Once she stopped and picked one of the small daisies that grew in such profusion here in the shade. She looked at it carefully, examined it, smiled at it. She noted the white, uneven petals with tiny rills, the cushion-like center of peculiar brown, the green sepals, the fuzzy stem, and the slender green leaves. She held it against her cheek, and then threw it into the water and watched it floating so smoothly down the stream.

She reached a place where the stream broadened and formed a pool. At both ends of the pool were shoals where the water rippled and splashed over pebbles and rocks. Large sycamore trees grew around the pool and created a wall and screen through which little sunlight penetrated. But golden flecks appeared here and there, shimmering on the water and quivering on the soft grass that grew right to the edge of the pool. Besides the noise of the water, a buzzing of bees near the daisies and primroses that grew around the mighty trunks reached Clem's ears.

She set the pastry box between the roots of a tree and sat down on a fallen log that stuck one shattered end into the water. She unbuttoned her white shirt and threw it on the log. She untied her sneakers and pushed them off, leaving them where they fell. Standing up, she unbuttoned and slipped out of her faded blue-jeans. These landed on top of the shirt. Her cotton pants landed on top the blue-jeans. Thus ready she ran and dived into the clear, cool water of the pool.

She swam for half an hour or more, splashing, laughing, and thoroughly enjoying herself. Once while floating, she watched her body in the water; it was long and thin. She had hardly any breasts to speak of, and her arms were thin, with hands small and narrow. Her legs too were long and thin. She had at one time wished for a small beautiful body, but now it did not matter to her. She was alone and she was happy. It seemed as if her moments of greatest happiness came when she was alone.

She came out of the water and sat down on the log. Shivering, she waited for her body to dry before getting into her clothes. She reached for her shirt and took out a package of cigarettes and a box of matches. She lit a cigarette and inhaled deeply. The smoke, filling her lungs, felt good; she exhaled slowly and watched the smoke disseminate in the still air.

As she finished dressing, Clem saw a small boy come from behind one of the towering sycamores. Her mouth fell open.

"Who in the hell are you?" she finally got out.

"Oh, I'm Aaron and I live over there," the boy said pointing aimlessly in no particular direction. "I was watching you."

"You were, were you!" Clem stated. She was half angry, half amused. "That's nice!"

Aaron looked earnestly at her. He had big brown eyes that grew larger as he stared at her. His hair was curly and brown, his face round and pleasant. Clem liked the kid; he was kind of nice looking for a kid. He had on short pants, and his legs were well formed. His whole body was lovely and beautiful. He will be quite a looker when he grows older, she thought.

"How old are you?" he asked.

"Fourteen," she answered after a pause. "Why?"

"I just wanted to know. I have a sister and she is fifteen, but she is prettier than you. She isn't so tall or so thin, but I don't like her." He continued to look at her. "I think that I like you."

"Well, thanks," Clem muttered rather self-consciously. "How old are you?"

"Oh, I'm ten, but I'm small for my age," said Aaron.

Clem took a comb from her shirt pocket and combed her hair. She parted it in the middle and began to plait it.

"May I help? I know how to braid; my sister taught me. May I?" begged Aaron.

"Yeah, sure," said Clem. "Come on."

He took the damp hair in his hand, working slowly and carefully. Clem put a small red rubber band around her completed plait and waited for him to finish. She could feel his soft breathing upon her neck. It made her feel strange, and she shifted her body.

"Did I hurt you?" Aaron asked.

"No," she answered.

He was finally finished. "There," he said. "Have you another rubber band?"

"Yes, here," and she gave him another from her pocket.

Aaron stood back to examine their work. Her hair was short and lank. The braids stuck out from her head at rather peculiar angles. The face he saw was plain, but comely; freckles gathered about the long thin nose, and the lips were narrow without shapely lines. Her

eyes were pale blue. In her left eye was a small golden fleck. He smiled at her and she smiled back.

"What is your name?"

"Clem."

"Gosh, what a funny name for a girl!"

"My real name is Clementine, but everyone calls me Clem. I don't like Clementine; do you?"

"No," he said and laughed. Clem laughed with him.

They talked together for some time. Then Clem remembered the little pastry box; she bent down and picked it up. "Are you hungry?" she asked. "I am."

"Golly is it that late! I'd better go. Mother'll be waiting lunch for me," Aaron cried nervously. "I'm afraid I'll have to go, Clem."

"Aw, that's too bad." Clem was sorry. She wanted to reach out and touch him before he left.

"I will meet you here again, won't I? Maybe next week?" he asked.

"Sure, I'll be here next week. I'll see you then," she replied.

"Well . . . goodby then," Aaron called as he walked away from her.

"Goodby, Aaron," and he was gone between the tall sycamores.

Clem sat silent for a few minutes, then untied the pastry box and ate her lunch alone. After she had eaten, she set the pastry box on the ground and set it afire with the match she was using to light her cigarette. The little box burned brightly and gave off hardly any smoke. The ash remained whole: a curling grey box with dark lines forming the bake-shop man with his great ladle dripping rich and creamy icing. Clem flipped the cigarette onto the water and stepped on the grey ash. Small bits twirled around her sneakers and fell on the green grass, crumbling into nothing.

The Ring

Patty Lewis

EDWINA MARKHAM gazed around her apartment with obvious satisfaction. The room was painfully clean, and she observed rather smugly that each piece of her treasured furniture fully showed the care lavished upon it. She had polished her mother's silver service just that morning, and her cherished collection of antique figurines was ever artfully displayed behind the glass doors of two small cabinets. Even the white and grey cat, sprawled peacefully on her special cushion, in no way disturbed the prim atmosphere of the room.

Everything was in readiness for Esther Lee's visit. A ridiculous name for a forty-five year old woman, and Edwina privately thought her sister as ridiculous as her name. Sentimental and helpless were adjectives with which Edwina often labeled her in a voice that was as scornful as a curled lip.

The doorbell rang, and, before she answered, Edwina smoothed the hips of her severe black suit and adjusted the collar of her immaculate white blouse. She was quite conscious of the contrast in their appearances when Esther Lee entered. Esther Lee was wearing a frilly dress that was wrong for her plump figure and crumpled gloves that were not too white. The sisters greeted each other perfunctorily; Edwina politely and Esther Lee, as always, a little apologetic.

Once seated in Edwina's favorite straight back chairs, they found that conversation was not difficult. The cat jumped into its mistress' lap, but Edwina had to put it down as it might shed. She patted it kindly, however, this being the one display of affection she permitted herself. The cat then appealed to Esther Lee, who good naturedly settled it in her ample lap. This annoyed Edwina, but stifling an exclamation she prepared herself for her sister's customary rambling recitation. Yet today Esther Lee seemed more nervous than usual, blushing frequently and often forgetting altogether what she was going to say.

At last Edwina, trying to suppress her irritation, went out to her small kitchen and soon returned carrying a tea tray. The sight of her lovely china restored her amiability, but Esther Lee was not so easily pleased. She crumbled the tiny cakes between her fingers and finally placed her cup and saucer on the table.

"I have something to tell you, Edwina," she said in a low voice. "Ever since Richard died, I've been pretty lonely—the children all being grown and away. Well—I met a Roger Adams several months ago—he's so nice, I know you'll like him—and, well, we're going to be married. I've wanted to tell you, but—anyway he's given me a ring—it's an heirloom, it's been in the family for years." She fumbled in her bag as she spoke.

Edwina, too, set her cup and saucer on the table. She clenched her hands to conceal their trembling. She looked at her sister who was blushing and stammering becomingly. Here was she, Edwina, only five years older than Esther Lee. She had a better figure, much more style, her intelligence was far superior, and Esther Lee could not even boil water. Yet Esther Lee was to have two husbands, whereas she, Edwina, had a white and grey cat!

She compelled herself to concentrate, fearful that these conjectures would be forced through her compressed lips with the swiftness of an adder's tongue. Then Esther Lee was placing the ring in her hand. It was beautiful. It sparkled with an unbelievable radiance; it was the culmination of any woman's desire; it was Esther Lee's.

Edwina stared in fascination at the glittering jewel. Esther Lee's voice went on and on, now loud and harsh, now faint as from a great distance. She wanted to scream, to slap, to kick—anything to still the voice.

"I just know you'll like him," her sister was saying. "He's a lawyer, terribly brilliant and precise—he almost frightened me at first. But he's so kind, he thinks I'm silly I know, but he wants to take care of me. Isn't that funny? Of course, I am careless. I'd lose my head. But then I always have been that way, haven't I, Edwina? You've always been the successful one. You're a wonder at everything you undertake. I guess all I can do is be a loving wife. At our age, the thought of love seems—well, absurd, but Roger says that's all he wants."

Her first nervousness was gone now that she had disclosed her happiness. Her eyes seemed to glow, and she could not repress her joyousness. Edwina watched with growing repugnance, and, as she did not speak, Esther Lee hurriedly drew on her gloves, almost knocking over the table in her haste.

"I'll let you know about the wedding; it'll be very small. Then we're going to Europe. There'll be so much to do——."

Her voice trailed off uncertainly as she looked at Edwina's impassive face. Then she was gone.

Edwina moved mechanically to clear away the tea things. As she did so, her eyes fell upon the ring which she still clutched in her hand. She started towards the door, then stopped. Soon the telephone would ring, and Esther Lee would be asking if she had found Roger's heirloom. There would be no doubt; she would think she had dropped it outside; she knew how careless she was.

That Roger Adams, how would he react when Esther Lee told him she had lost his beautiful gift? It wasn't fair, of course. It wasn't fair at all. Clumsy, careless Esther Lee, incapable really of doing anything. Incapable of anything but being adored by Richard and the children and now this Roger Adams. Certainly it was an injustice, Europe, this ring—this priceless ring!

Edwina looked around her well-kept rooms once more, noting each loved possession. She looked down at her competent, ringless hands.

"You're the successful one, Edwina, you've always been the superior older sister. Everyone's always admired you and bowed to your judgment."

She nodded in satisfaction at her thoughts. Then she found she couldn't stop nodding and that strange sounds like sobs were catching in her throat. With her accustomed self-discipline she drew herself up sharply and moved into the kitchen. Methodically, deliberately, she threw the ring into the garbage disposal chute, turning as she heard the insistent clamor of the telephone. Smiling knowingly, she walked slowly toward it, pausing only to pet the grey and white cat who slept on blissfully, heedless of her touch.

Love's Miracle

Don Peterson

A GROUP OF men were sitting around a table at the Press Club in Chicago after having attended a banquet for newspapermen from different parts of the country. One of them, John Rolf, began to tell a story. Everyone at the table took an interest, for Rolf had spent seven years in Paris as foreign correspondent for the *Tribune,* and as editor for several local journals, the largest and most important of which was *La Revue Moderne.* He had come back with many fascinating stories about the Parisians which, if compiled into a book, would have made excellent material to rival even the best of best sellers.

"One day in '27 I was going through a stack of manuscripts," Rolf began, "when I came across some work submitted by a fellow named Phillip Austin. There was a strange vivacity to it which revealed a touch of whimsical genius, yet it had the depth and clarity of genuine first-class stuff. I wrote him a card, asking him to stop by the office at his earliest convenience, and when, three days later, he ambled in and announced himself, I was the most surprised man in all Paris. Standing before me was a lad that looked about twenty-two though I learned later that he was only twenty. At first I thought some of my friends had sent him around to provide a laugh at my expense.

"Austin was well over six feet, deep chested, and with blonde curly hair and blue eyes. His hands and feet were unusually large, and his voice was soft and high pitched. He acted too old for one so young, but his conversation proved he was mentally advanced for his age. I told him how much I admired his work, suggested a few changes, and offered him a job as one of my associate writers. I didn't need another writer then, but I wanted to observe him to find out what made him tick. It would be good experience for him to work with other writers, I explained, and perhaps in several months he could achieve widespread celebrity. He liked the idea, and we agreed that he would start within four days.

"The next few days passed quickly, and I debated whether to publish Austin's work or hold it back for a while. The field at the time was crowded. I finally decided to hold off a bit and wait until the works of the leading novelists had died down. I thought maybe

I could begin a new clamor with his undeniably ripe material—it was worth a try anyhow.

"After he had been working for me about six months, I felt that I knew less about him than when we first met. There was an unmistakably distant quality about him that prevented me from getting very close to him. His work, however, was extremely satisfactory and distinctly original. Then, late one afternoon, he came bursting into my office waving a crisp new manuscript. He was very excited, and I thought he had just polished off the world's Great Novel. It was a masterpiece, but it wasn't his. It was signed Ellen Peron, and when I read it I knew why he was so excited. It was almost as if he had written it himself, for the style mimicked his own with an uncanny exactness. He wanted to phone her at once and have her come over to the office, but I thought we should send her a routine card. He won, and after I replaced the phone and told him that she would be in early the following morning he smiled and, with a sparkle in his eye, said, 'I never knew that two people could think so much alike. It's almost as if we came from the same pod.' It was the first time he had ever said anything that indicated his special talent for writing. He was not one to boast, nor did he revel in his sudden acceptance as a new and promising writer.

"The next morning promptly at nine-thirty, Miss Ellen Peron was sitting in my office. She was a beautiful woman, middle-aged, yet with a youthful vitality that was charming. Her rich brown hair was long, and her eyes were strikingly blue. I sent for Phillip, and, as soon as he arrived, I no longer existed for them. I wondered about those two—they spoke each other's language with a mutual understanding that was obvious. I surmised what might become of their sudden friendship.

"For the next week I didn't see much of Phillip. I was aware that he and Ellen were together constantly and that they were frequently seen in the early morning hours at the cafes along the Rue Royale. I became engrossed in my work, having put Phillip from my mind, when one day he came into my office with a big grin all over his face. 'What's the matter with you?' I asked. He told me that he was in love with Ellen, but I had already guessed that, so I merely said, 'So what?'

" 'I'm going to marry her,' he answered.

" 'Have you asked her yet?'

" 'No, I will tonight,' he said and then left suddenly.

"He had a habit of coming to me with little unimportant problems, as if he had to talk things over and then suddenly realizing that an explanation would have to follow. This time I didn't need an explanation. I was certain that Ellen wouldn't marry him. She was twenty-three years older than he. I decided that they would carry on an affair for a while and then gradually drift apart.

"The next morning when he came into the office he looked terribly sad and broken-hearted. Before I could say anything he murmured, 'Ellen turned me down.'

" 'That shouldn't bother you, I replied. You two are in love. Convention is a thing of the . . . .'

" 'Shut up,' he said and I could see that he was completely serious about his affection for Ellen. Things went from bad to worse. He wouldn't work or even try to write. He sat around most of the time just staring into space. I tried everything to pull him out of his lethargy, but he became indignant when I tried to reason with him. I finally kept my ideas to myself and silently cursed Ellen. Then I cursed Phillip for ruining the genius that was his, and then I cursed myself for having been the one to bring them together. I felt like I had lost a prized possession.

"I could have shouted for joy when, about two weeks later, Phillip burst into my office and laid some manuscripts before me.

" 'Just like old times,' I said. 'Tell me about your sudden renewal of life.'

" 'Everything is all fixed. I'm going to marry Ellen after all. I haven't asked her yet but in five days I know she'll say yes. I met a man, Lawrence Fearing, who after listening to my story about Ellen and me asked me what I'd wish for if I had a single wish. I told him I'd want to be one year older than Ellen. I couldn't have had any better luck than my meeting him. He's some sort of biological scientist connected with one of the universities, and he told me that all my worries are over.'

"I had heard of this Fearing fellow. A crack-pot if there ever was one—so I believed at the time. Right away I knew that Phillip had fallen for some idiotic notion that could be conceived only by the brain of a visionary with a twisted mind. Phillip continued to rave on and on and ended by saying that in five days he would be old enough to marry Ellen.

" 'And you believe that?' I asked. A look of scorn blazed across his face, then his eyes softened and a shadow of a smile tugged at his mouth, and I knew he had fearless faith and dauntless courage in what he had done.

"The next few days Phillip was extremely happy and worked rigorously. That was enough for me. Anyone who could write as he did was entitled to a delusion or two. He kept talking about how wonderful everything would be when he and Ellen were married. He hadn't mentioned anything to her about this Lawrence Fearing. He wanted to surprise her. I knew the whole thing would blow up in his face, yet I caught myself watching Phillip for a sign of age—a touch of grey around the temples or a spread of wrinkles around the eyes. The days seemed endless. By Friday afternoon—Saturday

was the fifth day—Phillip assured me that when he awoke in the morning he would be as old as I was. I nodded my head and agreed to be his best man, knowing perfectly well that it would end in tragedy. Suddenly my office door burst open and Ellen rushed into the room. Her hair was mussed and she was out of breath. 'Phillip,' she gasped, 'we can be married.'

"'Yes, but how did . . . ?' It was obvious that he thought I had told her.

"But she added, 'I met a man . . . Lawrence Fearing . . . he gave me a wish. . . . I'll be nineteen in five days.'"

With that Rolf closed his eyes and eased back in his chair as if lost in reminiscence. No one knew what to say. To laugh might have been out of place, but somehow the story had a true ring to it, yet Rolf could have been leading the group on. Finally someone asked him to finish the story.

"There could only be one ending," Rolf said. "Ellen was the prettiest and youngest bride I have ever seen, and the wedding was the most depressive I ever attended."

Two Poems

Frances Mohr

The Muse

"My sect the rock aspires and gains."

The hand she held him by was steady
As he lay shifting in the sand.
Awake, he rose, but touched mere air;
He searched, but found no lady fair.
But on the sand he found a word.

Suddenly the world blurred.

Globe-Trotter

Airplanes navigate my brain
And ships cruise my reverie.
I travel dawns of light-to-be
And, homeless, wish me home again.

An Appreciative Study of a Play of Mode

Donald Barnes

THE LONDON stage of 1667 was graced with the first presentation of "The Tempest: or, The Enchanted Island," a greatly altered version of the comedy by William Shakespeare. The play was designed to conform with the taste of the Restoration period, and certain characteristics of Restoration comedy are clearly evident in it.

Sir William Davenant, the Cecil B. DeMille of the period, was chiefly responsible for the alterations. This play was the last work of this great Restoration figure, and it was undertaken by him chiefly with a view to scenical decoration. Indeed, Sir William gave free reign to his fancy and splashed joyously through Shakespeare's comedy.

John Dryden worked in collaboration with Davenant, but his part of the enterprise lay in the adaptation of the finished product to the stage.

From the opening scene, we are aware of the Restoration delight in spectacle. The setting for the first act confronts us as something both awe-ful and awful. The stage directions from the 1670 publication will more quickly reveal the meaning of this statement.

> SCENE I.—The front of the stage is opened, and the band of twenty-four violins with the harpsicals and theorbos which accompany the voices, are placed between the pit and the stage . . . .
> This frontispiece is a noble arch, supported by large wreathed columns, of the Corinthian order; the wreathings of the columns are beautiful with roses wound round them, and several Cupids flying about them. On the cornice, just over the capitals, sits on either side a figure, with a trumpet in one hand, and a palm in the other, representing Fame. A little farther, on the same cornice, on each side of a compass-pediment, lie a lion and a unicorn, the supporters of the royal arms of England. In the middle of the arch are several angels, holding the king's arms, as if they were placing them in the midst of that compass-pediment. Behind this is the scene, which represents a thick cloudy sky, a very rocky coast,

> and a tempestuous sea in perpetual agitation. This tempest (supposed to be raised by magic) has many dreadful objects in it, as several spirits in horrid shapes flying down amongst the sailors, then rising and crossing in the air. And when the ship is sinking, the whole house is darkened, and a shower of fire falls upon them. This is accompanied with lightning, and several claps of thunder, to the end of the storm."

Such color, and such splendor! The intensity and vitality of the tempestuous sea and the shower of flame is neatly balanced by the delicate presence of winding roses and the airy quality of blushing cupids. Only the mind of a Restoration playwright could conceive of such striking contrasts. But Davenant does not divorce sense from scene. In the first line of the play, he couples keen intellectual insight with the sensual beauty of the setting, as Mustacho sagely remarks:

> ". . . we shall have foul weather."

Bravo, Mustacho!

The reader would naturally presume that the intensity and vigor of such an opening scene would so completely tax the playwright's ingenuity for spectacle and his wit for dialogue that he could not possibly sustain the brilliance. But the reader would underestimate the dramatic powers of Sir William Davenant. For, as the play progresses, Davenant acquires such force that sheer momentum carries him far beyond the point where Shakespeare wearily penned his "*Exeunt Omnes.*" Such a point, for Davenant, is merely a whistle-stop, a breather before dashing on to Act V, scenes two and three, and "Enter Everybody." In the final two scenes, our playwright, breathing hard, but still driving onward, puffs out the cheeks of the stage with an abundant harvest of human, super-human (and sub-normal) bodies, plus various and sundry odds and ends.

Of the human species participating in the final two scenes, we have Alonzo, Antonio, Gonzales, Miranda and Dorinda, Ferdinand and Hippolito, and the members of the ship's crew (slightly intoxicated, but all present). Among the super-human entities, we have Prospero, Ariel, Neptune, Amphrititie, Aeolus, Oceanus and Tethys. The ranks of the odds and ends are very adequately filled by "all ye sea-gods and goddesses, all ye Tritons and all ye Nereids," a fine assortment of sea-horses (thoroughbred, of course), the four winds, aerial spirits, ad infinitum. These many creatures indulge themselves in the most riotous goings-on, in which we have singing and general bustling about, and finally, twelve Tritons dancing a saraband. The elaborate and ornate splendor of the figures and their actions are matched by the setting, in which we see the Rising Sun, with a "number of aerial Spirits in the Air: Ariel flying from the sun, advances towards the Pit." Many critics have damned these scenes,

for they appear to have no sense, neither advancing nor retarding the plot, but merely seem to stand apart—little plays within a play. Such foolish criticism, of course, is not accepted by the majority of critics. Sir Dropsy Drypen, the theatre critic of the Restoration period, denounces such denouncers in a witty statement, to the effect that, "What a devil is the plot good for but to bring in fine things." Having once advanced to the Pit, Ariel sings a lovely ditty, which Shakespeare most inappropriately placed in his Act V, scene 1, but which is much more effective in Davenant's version. When one considers that heroic verse requires a full stage, one sees how very successful Sir William is, for his stage is literally packed to the rafters (including, of course, the airy spirits *in* the air).

A revision of any work of art is so much more acceptable if the author goes beyond the original in context, inserting information and themes derived from his own experience. Davenant excels in this field of endeavor. He has greatly enriched Shakespeare's play by the insertion of sea jargon, which he had acquired during his more adventurous years. In the first act, the action takes place aboard ship, and what could be more fitting than language which conforms to the atmosphere of the scene. Thus it is that we hear the sailors bellowing forth such salty terms as "Bring the cable to the capstorm," "Reef both top sails," "Man your main capstorm," "Our viol-block has given way," and "cut down the hammocks." The violence of the moment is greatly accentuated by this nautical terminology. Note the grisly swashbuckling quality of "Man your main capstorm," the pathos of "Our viol-block has given way," and the tone of complete despondency in "Cut down the hammocks." The spirit of the sea is captured by the raving sailors, and as Trincalo, the boatswain, remarks, "They are louder than the weather." The total effect of such passages prodded one critic to remark, "Such passages are very brief, but very terrible." We most heartily agree with him.

Davenant definitely establishes himself as a witty and clever playwright by his manipulation of Shakespeare's characters. Sir William was undoubtedly aware of the old maxim, "One evil is evil, but two are absolutely revolting." The contrasting character of the sister monster of Caliban, Sycorax, proves this statement, for they are indeed the most revolting part of the play. Critics differ on this point, however. Sir Walter Scott, in his preface to the 1883 edition of Dryden's works, states that "Much cannot be said for Davenant's ingenuity in inventing a sister monster for Caliban." Dryden, on the other hand, condones this technique and praises Davenant's "quick and piercing imagination." We will speak at several points of Sir William's "piercing imagination."

Davenant's rampaging imagination pierced even deeper into the Shakespearean comedy, for he also doubles the characters of Ferdinand and Miranda, the lovers, by presenting to us the figures of

Hippolito and Dorinda. The situation, then, is that we have not one man who has never seen woman, but two: not one woman who has never seen man, but two. It is not difficult to imagine the unlimited possibilities of such a situation, and Sir Will made the most of them. The lovers have ample opportunity for displaying their wit. The repartee is brilliant, and the battle of the sexes rages in not two, but four directions. Dorinda and Hippolito provide Davenant a splendid opportunity for inserting the favorite immoral innuendoes. Thus we have love flourishing and floundering in almost every manner conceivable. But Mr. Davenant's "piercing imagination" cannot rest with merely jabbing the Shakespearean drama. Davenant contrives a love tryst between Trincalo and Sycorax, thereby uniting two of nature's most grievous errors. This last instance of Davenant's "piercing imagination" leaves Shakespeare's creation looking like a sieve, pierced to the quick. But, in the event that some semblance of sanity may yet persist, Sir Will bestows upon Ariel, the spirit of the air, a lover spirit, Milcha.

It is interesting to note that Davenant's duplication of characters leads to some amusement. Whereas Caliban, in Shakespeare's version, attempted to violate the honor of Prospero's only daughter, he now has the enviable pleasure of violating the honor of two children.

When Hippolito, the virgin man, finally views woman for the first time, his response gives a basis for some good old-fashioned Restoration comedy. He learns that there are other such creatures in existence, and casually remarks, "I will have them all." Naturally, such a policy of universal amour gives Davenant a basis for rapid-fire, witty repartee on the part of all the lovers. This discourse extends for many pages, during which time love is discussed from every viewpoint (with the exception of romantic love, of course).

The play has been severely criticized for its departure from the plot sequence, and indeed, from the basic thought of the Shakespearean version. The fact is that Davenant's version is not concerned with plot, action, characterization, and other intrinsic folderol. For we have spectacle by the carload, and as one critic of the period remarked, "It is the greatest scene that ever England saw," referring to the last scene, already mentioned. We have lively scenes of wit, which give much pleasure, and, after all, who could prefer sense to wit? There are magniloquent scenes of ranting and raving, which are the backbone of good drama. As Sir Roger Fashion remarked after seeing the play, (and very wittily, we might add), "The rant's the thing." It must be pointed out that the worth of the play lies not in mere words and sense, but in "state, show and magnificence."

Davenant has taken the garment of Shakespeare's "The Tempest," altered its length, scissored it into separate sections, and then transversed it: that is, if it be prose, put it into verse, and if it be verse,

put it into prose. He then utilizes his "piercing imagination" by doubling each part, so that we have four sleeves, two collars, and no bottom. He then re-arranges the whole, so that the sense of the play is not so evident that we should tire of the play too soon. Indeed, if there be a lack of sense, there is a super-abundancy of everything else. He then snips here, snaps there, excluding those sections which have no wit, ergo, are useless to the play, such as the buttons of a greatcoat. For these extraneous sections, Davenant substitutes a prize of wit: so that we have characters line up, and then one speaks, then presently the other is upon him, slap, with a repartee, and then the first again, and so on. And thus, instead of dull sense and essential foolishness we have snip snap, hit for hit and dash. Most excellent!

We now have the very same garment of Shakespearean thought, only in a different form. Tattered, perhaps, but only by the quickness of Sir Will's "piercing imagination": baggy in parts, by all means, but with a certain glitter and brilliance and magnificence in parts, (as in the seat of a well-worn pair of blue serge trousers). If the vari-colored patch-work resulting from the alteration proves distasteful to you, remember that the play was a smashing success according to the criterion of that immortal Restoration critic and playwright, Mr. Bayes. That is, "Pit, box and gallery."

Three Poems

Frances King

Release

The time, though immeasurably late,
Has come when once again the mind
Finds space for all the old and worshipful
Scenes of other years. The sun and wind
Once more can find their place in more than words;
Again they offer sense of warmth and swift as silver
Movement through the trees. The leaves
Are trembling, laughing surfaces of green
Which feel as cool and living as the years before.
Clouds become more than background,
Filled with promise and sculptured with delight
In all their reckless, mounting lines of freedom.
And at the zenith comes the ever-rising thought,
Comes the singing, greening joy at heart-peak's height
That once more the Old Enemy of all
Is driven, beaten, fallen, slain again.

The Obsession

The time has come when the rain
Becomes a natural thing,
When the water slap on the piazza fails to disturb.
The phonograph records are all different
And all the same.
The asters remain so through the twelve months.
And the clock moves insidiously toward thirteen.
Take up your needlework which
Ravels out each night
And prepare for the long walk,
In the mind's groves,
Through the dripping leaves
To a tall tree and a small owl
Which whispers "Who?"

The Obsessed

Mr. Masters walked down a wide road.
He was very thin, and the wideness
Of the road made him feel
That he was keeping his environment at bay.
Mr. Masters didn't like the road at all
And he wondered why he had decided to
Travel at all. He didn't like the way
The trees changed from palm to evergreen,
Just when he had gotten used
To one familiarity.
And as the path began to narrow
And the cobwebs stroked his cheeks,
He remembered Hansel and Gretel
And somehow it comforted him.
He began to see that he couldn't have
Chosen another road,
And soon Mr. Masters forgot
There was a destination
And fell to hating and loving
The increasing dust.

Pink Frosting

Sharon Collins

THE YEAR WAS 1944, and the world was at war with Germany and Japan. People read the headlines and front pages of a newspaper instead of turning to the society and sports pages. War Bonds were plentiful, nylons were not, and new words had found their way into the American language. There were ration books and a shortage of materials of all kinds. However, one Madame Gabrielle, a clever French milliner, continued to find enough material, flowers, and feathers to create her original hats in her small salon on 5th Avenue.

This is the story of a hat as it touched the lives of three women. It was not an ordinary hat, not at all. It was the newest creation of Madame Gabrielle. It had clusters of pink camellias resting on a crown of pink straw surrounded by pink tulle. Madame named each of her creations, and this one she named Pink Frosting.

One warm March morning Madame Gabrielle walked from the back workroom into the front of her salon of grey blue velour and oval mirrors. She had the Pink Frosting resting on the finger tips of her right hand.

"Marie! Marie, come here!" Madame's tall, thin figure stopped in the middle of the salon. She viewed in the mirrors the hat that she was holding.

"Marie! Where is that girl?"

"*Oui, Madame?*" A small dark girl hurried out from behind the heavy drapes that hid the disorder of the workroom from the eyes of the customers.

"Marie, is this not the most beautiful of all my creations?"

"*Mais oui, Madame!*"

"I call it Pink Frosting, Marie. Come, let's put it in the window."

She and Marie moved to the window, and Madame Gabrielle fitted the pink hat on a hatless plaster head that was centered under the gold lettered name: Madame Gabrielle Salon. Although the shop was small, the stately, black-haired French woman had gained a name for herself because of her genius in creating a hat to suit the personality of each of her patrons. Madame never created two hats alike; each was exclusive for that customer. But this new hat was an exception. She had fashioned this hat with no one person in mind.

Perhaps it was the influence of Spring—she had not decided. Or it might have been the inspiration of the young girls' faces that stopped to gaze into her window every day.

"Oh, it is so good to see bright, gay Spring hats in the window again! Do you think my patrons will like my Pink Frosting, Marie?"

"Certainement, Madame!"

"I hope so. But now you have work to do, and customers may be coming in soon."

"Oui, Madame." Marie went to the back of the shop, and Madame Gabrielle moved to the window to watch the shoppers hurrying along the street in front of her shop. She enjoyed watching women and even a few men stop by her window to gaze at her latest creation.

This morning as she watched, she saw a tall blonde girl pause at the window and rest her eyes critically on the pink hat.

"Ah," thought Madame Gabrielle, "this girl is a model. The grace with which she carries herself could mean nothing else."

The girl turned away from the window and pushed open the heavy glass door. Madame Gabrielle smiled at the tall blonde and walked forward to meet her.

"Good morning, Mademoiselle. May I help you?"

"Why yes. That hat—the pink one. I'd like to see it."

"Ah, to be sure. My Pink Frosting. I will get it for you."

Madame Gabrielle moved to the window, lifted the pink hat from the plaster curls of the dummy and returned to the girl.

"If you will take this chair by the mirror, I will fit it for you."

The tall blonde sat down on a small plush-covered chair in front of the mirror. Madame fitted the hat over her honey-colored hair and chignon and stood back to admire the hat. She tilted her head from one side to another and smiled at the girl's reflection in the mirror. The girl was busy viewing herself from all angles and tucking stray strands of hair into the chignon. Her face ran the gamut of expressions as she turned her head from side to side.

"Ah no, Mademoiselle. This hat is not for you. It does not fit your personality. One moment, I think I have one that becomes you better."

"No, no wait. I like this one. Yes," the blonde replied slowly, "I think this hat will suit my purpose perfectly."

The girl pushed back the chair and viewed herself in the full-length mirror. Then her face softened into a smile, and she glided toward Madame Gabrielle.

"This hat will do very nicely," decided the girl as she opened her soft suede purse. "I'll take it."

"Oui, Mademoiselle." Madame Gabrielle shrugged her shoulders. "As you wish."

The blonde inquired as to the price, took a bill from her purse and handed it to the French milliner. Madame disappeared behind the drapes at the back of the shop and reappeared in a moment with a black and white striped hatbox with *Madame Gabrielle* scrawled across the black top. Madame handed the girl her change and the hatbox.

"I hope Mademoiselle will be happy with her new hat." Madame smiled at the girl and walked to the door with her.

"Yes, I think I shall, thank you. Good-bye."

The glass door opened, and the high heels clicked on the pavement until the door had closed and shut out the sound.

Madame Gabrielle sat down at her desk, and a sad look came into her eyes.

"It is such a pity," Madame said half aloud, half to herself, "that one cannot refuse to sell a hat because it does not fit a personality. But then that would not be good for business. That girl was much too cold to wear my warm, gay, pink hat. I do not think she appreciated it. My hat will never suit the purpose for which she wanted it. Of that I am sure. Madame," she chided herself, "you are too sentimental!"

All that night and the next morning when she opened her shop, Madame Gabrielle was disturbed about having sold her Pink Frosting to the tall model.

As she finished an order for a customer, the heavy glass door opened. She turned to see the same tall blonde girl that had bought the pink hat the day before. The look of surprise on Madame's face became a smile as she walked toward the girl.

"Good morning, Mademoiselle."

"Good morning, Madame Gabrielle. I have come to return your hat, if I may."

"You do not like my hat?"

"No, Madame. It's not that I don't like your hat. It's just not the hat for me. You were right when you said that it didn't fit my personality. I'm glad I finally realized it before I made a big mistake for that special occasion. I'm afraid that orchids are more my type than pink camellias. I haven't worn the hat, so I would appreciate it if you would take it back."

"Oh, to be sure, Mademoiselle. It makes me unhappy when my hats do not fit the personality. One moment, I will give you the money for it."

Madame Gabrielle beamed as she hurried to the back of the salon. Once more she had her creation in her shop. She returned shortly with the money.

"Perhaps, Mademoiselle," she suggested, "I might be able to make one to suit you?"

The girl yielded to the suggestion and seated herself in the same plush-covered chair before the mirror. With excited gestures, Madame Gabrielle traced lines in the air close to the model's head as she described the hat to the girl.

"How does that sound to you, Mademoiselle?"

"Yes, I think that will suit me."

"I will have it for you tomorrow, Mademoiselle. I am sure you will like it."

"I'm sure I will." The blonde girl smiled as she pushed back the chair and moved toward the door.

"Thank you, Madame Gabrielle. I will be in tomorrow."

As the door closed, Madame hurried to the window and replaced her precious pink hat on the head of the dummy. As she smoothed the tulle over the camellias on the brim, she was conscious of a pair of eyes watching her. She looked up and saw the chic figure of a woman of perhaps fifty looking at the pink hat. She smiled at the woman in her embarrassment and gave the tulle a last affectionate pat. The woman smiled back at her and turned in the direction of the heavy glass door of Madame's salon. Madame Gabrielle moved from the window toward the glass door and greeted her stately customer.

"Good morning, Madame. May I help you?"

"Yes. I was interested in the pink hat in your window."

"Ah yes, Madame, that is my Pink Frosting hat." Madame Gabrielle hesitated. She had just gotten the hat back and was reluctant to sell it to another person whom it did not fit.

She asked slowly, "You are looking for a hat for yourself, perhaps?"

"Yes, Madame Gabrielle. I want to see that pink hat."

Madame reluctantly went to the window and brought back the pink creation.

"Oh, it is beautiful!" murmured the stately woman.

"But, Madame, would you not like me to fashion a hat to fit you?" suggested Madame Gabrielle.

The woman took the hat and walked to one of the mirrors and tried it on.

Madame Gabrielle followed the woman to the mirror and excitedly began to wave her arms.

"But Madame, perhaps a hat that . . . ."

"No. This is the hat I want. I knew it the moment I saw it in the window. I must have it!"

"S'il vous plaît, Madame," pleaded Madame Gabrielle, "allow me to make you a hat that is more becoming to your age—I mean . . . ."

"Do not apologize, Madame. I know what you mean, and I also know what I am doing. You see I had a hat very much like this many years ago, and no other hat that you could make would do."

She inquired the price of the hat and handed the money to Madame Gabrielle.

"If Madame insists. The hat is yours."

The French woman tried to smile as she went to the backroom for a box.

"It is a shame that the wrong people want my hat," thought Madame Gabrielle. "But the lady is so insistent—well, maybe I am not making a mistake after all."

She returned to the front of the salon, handed the woman her change, and gave her the black and white hatbox.

"I hope, Madame, that you will enjoy my Pink Frosting."

"Thank you, Madame Gabrielle." The older woman opened the door and smiled back at the milliner as the heavy door closed behind her.

"Ah, my Pink Frosting is not only a beautiful hat, but a busy one," Madame Gabrielle thought to herself.

The next morning after she had opened her salon, she gave Marie some last minute instructions concerning an order.

"Now, Marie, do you understand about that order for Mrs. Courtney? I left her address on the table by the telephone. You are to send the Ivy Cap to her this afternoon."

"Oui, Madame."

"And Marie—"

"Oui, Madame?"

"Don't forget that hat that Mrs. Harrington ordered early this morning."

"No, Madame."

Madame Gabrielle turned and started toward the front of the salon when she saw the door open. It was the woman who had come in the day before; she had the black and white hatbox with her.

"Oh," thought Madame, "my hat has failed again."

"Good morning, Madame Gabrielle. I brought your pink hat in hopes you might take it back."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that." But Madame was glad to get her precious hat back.

"I'd appreciate it if you would let me return it," the woman said quietly. "I see you were right. I should never have bought such a youthful hat."

"I should not take it back if you've worn it because I make my hats to preserve individuality and . . .," the French woman began.

"I realize that, but let me tell you my story first."

"Oui, Madame."

"Do you remember yesterday that I told you I had a pink hat once long ago that resembled this one? I bought such a hat as this about thirty years ago, shortly after I was married. My husband liked

it very much, which was unusual for him. I thought maybe with a hat that resembled it so closely, I could bring back the love that my husband once had for me. But it was a very foolish thing to do. People can't expect to bring the past into the present. I tried it on before a mirror, and it was then I realized that I no longer even looked like the young girl who had worn a beautiful pink hat before. So now you see why I can't keep it."

"Oui, Madame, I see. I would not want you to keep it then. But I would like to design a hat especially for you if you like."

"Oh, thank you, Madame Gabrielle. I will phone you for an appointment."

After the money and hat had been exchanged, the woman left the salon. As the door closed behind her, Madame looked at her pink hat.

"Ah, my little pink hat. I have you back again. On the shelf with you! You have made too many mistakes already."

Madame went to the back of her shop and placed the hat on a shelf among her other hats. She returned to the front of the salon and saw a small, dark, young girl peering around the room at the hats resting on the plaster dummies arranged on pedestals around the wall of the salon.

"Oh, good morning, Mademoiselle. I am sorry. I did not hear you come in. May I help you?"

"You are Madame Gabrielle?"

"Oui, Mademoiselle, you are looking for a hat?"

"Yes, I'm looking for a very special hat for a very special occasion. My soldier will be home the day after tomorrow, and we are going to be married in three days and four hours!" The girl's dark eyes danced as she talked.

"Oui, Mademoiselle," laughed the milliner, "a *very* special occasion, indeed."

The dark-eyed girl continued. "I'm going to have a very simple wedding—the war you know. I intend to wear a pink suit with blue accessories, and I want a perfect hat."

"Let me see, if you are going to have blue accessories you might want a blue hat to match them."

Madame Gabrielle tilted her head to one side and looked at the girl.

"Mais non. That would not provide enough contrast to your dark hair. Perhaps a color that would harmonize well——." Madame's eyes opened wide and a smile lighted her face.

"Mais oui! I have a hat, just the hat for your wedding. I should have thought of it immediately! If you will sit over there by the mirror, I will bring it to you."

Madame hurried to the back of the shop. She took the pink hat from its place on the shelf and straightened the tulle on the brim.

"Ah, my little hat, I have at last found the girl to wear you."

Madame Gabrielle walked gayly back to the girl who was seated before an oval mirror.

"Here, Mademoiselle, is the hat!" she announced with a note of triumph in her voice.

The girl turned to look at the hat before Madame fitted it on her head.

"Oh, Madame Gabrielle. It— It's beautiful!" she gasped.

"It is one of my newest creations. Youth and Spring inspired me to create it, and now I've found the only person who could possibly wear it. That is you, Mademoiselle."

Madame carefully fitted the pink hat over the short dark curls of the young girl. The girl excitedly reached for the hand mirror on the table near her. She viewed herself from all the angles that the mirrors would permit.

"It's absolutely beautiful! It's out of this world! I've never seen such a hat. And I'm sure that Don will like it."

"Oui, Mademoiselle, it is perfect on you. Perfect!"

The excited girl got up from the chair and viewed herself in the full-length mirror. Suddenly she began to giggle.

"Something is wrong, Mademoiselle?" asked Madame Gabrielle with a troubled expression on her face.

"Oh, no. Nothing is wrong."

"Ah, I am relieved, Mademoiselle."

The dark girl continued, "I was just thinking. When Don wants to tease me, he calls me 'Angel Cake.' And now I'll be his 'Angel Cake' with Pink Frosting."

"Oui, Mademoiselle, Pink Frosting."

"Shush,"—The New Password

Kenneth Hopkins

ESTIMATES OF THE intelligence of the average American range from very low to a little higher than very low, depending upon the amount of cynicism or the rosiness of the rose-colored glasses of the person computing the averages. These surveys may be well founded or they may be final semester theses knocked out by advanced students in pursuit of masters' degrees in psychology. In either case, and in direct and naive opposition to these averages, I am sometimes quite well impressed that the average American is rather intelligent and strives to keep himself well informed.

Although I have never made a study, complete with notes, conclusions, et cetera, of the species, I have been exposed to rather continuous contacts with a substantial number of its members; and have, therefore, formed certain opinions. I have heard Americans in general conversation which, for the most part, showed a good degree of learning. I have heard them discuss politics, and, with minor, noisy exceptions, noted reasonably astute reasoning. I have been eclipsed by them in bridge games and other active sports wherein they showed outstanding shrewdness. Other examples too numerous to mention have also left me with a high regard for the American mind. Other examples, that is, except one.

Why it is that a half dozen or so of the above mentioned supposedly intelligent people display such a total miscarriage of mental processes when they come into the presence of an active television set is a phenomenon worthy of investigation. It seems that activities of the brain are suspended with the initial glimmer of the test pattern. Perhaps it is a form of vacuum tube hypnosis. Or maybe it is a psychological block in awe of science. It might, in specific cases, be the product of an advanced case of worry as to how the next payment for the set is to be made. Whatever the cause might be, the effect is remarkably complete.

As evidence of the mental lethargy which overtakes those who indulge in this tube gazing, I merely ask that persons who differ analyze the depth of the conversations of people so engaged. If the audience is typical and the television set is on for about two hours, the chances are good that the total conversation may be recorded on a half sheet of paper in shorthand if the recorder can find or originate symbols to cover sundry unconventionalities encountered in getting the set properly tuned.

Television programs tend to vary from wrestling and quiz shows on to the higher level of film productions of ten or fifteen years back. The wrestling matches involve either two men, two women, or one man and a curly-headed individual of undeterminable sex; the quiz shows shower fortunes on stupid people for stupid answers to stupid questions; and the aged films bring back from the grave outmoded styles of dress and not so outmoded melodrama.

The exchange of words among the persons viewing this new transmission of art runs the gamut from "Ooph!" expelled at the fall of a wrestler, to "Grant is buried in Grant's tomb," presented in aid of the distressed studio contestant, to a sort of tortured silence toward the antique film. These comments would not be considered brilliant from any source, but they seem especially lacking when brought forth by persons who at other times are capable of long discussions of at least a semi-serious nature on varieties of subjects.

My initiation into the video-polluted sanctum of the home of a friend of mine was instructive to say the least. I entered the room

and saw a group of faces dully peering at the screen, the room's sole source of light. The scene was reminiscent of a seance or some other form of black magic. After making certain that the coffee table was not about to float up off the floor and relate the memoirs of my great aunt Sadie, I groped my way to a chair.

I stupidly broke forth with, "So this is television. Great thing. I predict that it will go a long way."

I was greeted by the host with, "Shush.——Godfrey.——Good."

I naively came forth with another complete sentence, "Oh, yes,—Godfrey,——I get the biggest charge from his morning radio programs."

The gentleman in the chair nearest the set criticized my comment briefly, "Harrumph!"

Blundering on, I said, "Godfrey has one of the most spontaneous senses of humor that I have heard in a long time."

The hostess came over and said, as she handed me a cup of an undistinguishable liquid, "Coffee." I rather think that the offer was fundamentally based on the theory that it is well nigh impossible for a person to talk with the rim of a coffee cup between his teeth.

My usual brevity of etiquette gave way this once and I effused, "Oh, thank you very much. There's nothing like a spot of coffee as a bracer-upper." I sipped. "Very good. I'll bet you made this with your own two little hands."

The hostess, probably disgruntled by the failure of her cloture said, "Yes, and a percolator."

Sensing the embryo of a subtle wit, I decided to offer encouragement. I chortled and said, "Good comeback. Maybe someday you'll replace Godfrey."

The gentleman nearest the screen came up with his second comment of the evening, "Speaking of replacing Godfrey,——" he tapered off with inarticulate mumblings significant only in their threatening inflections.

It was obvious that I was losing ground. The host, evidently fearful for his gate receipts, turned and repeated, "Shush.——Godfrey.——Good."

It was slowly becoming evident to me that this group had lost its conversational turn. I sat in morose silence and looked at Godfrey.

Some fifteen minutes later as I was busily engaged in balancing the empty coffee cup on my knee, another victim was ushered into the room. He stood in the doorway adjusting his pupils for about a minute and then, spotting me, ambled over and seated himself.

"Hopkins, old boy! How is everything with you?"

I said, "Shush.——Godfrey.——Good."

Probably the true significance of television's grip on the American mind is not fully realized in all its ramifications. For years politicians have talked themselves red in the noses championing the

contents of the first ten amendments to the Constitution. They prattle incessantly on the absolute necessity of maintaining freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and freedom to trade cheap cigars for votes. School children in this country since the beginning of the nineteenth century have devoted tons of paper to themes dedicated to the importance of these freedoms. Even the man on the street is capable of imposing the wrath of these rights on the local constable if he is placed in detention for drunken driving and not given opportunity to communicate with his barrister.

All these freedoms are waved threadbare time after time, and still no one has come to the rescue of the American freedom of thought from this devious miscarriage of science called television.

The public's total acceptance of the harmless frivolities now appearing on the video screens of the country shows that television could be turned into a weapon of unequaled potentiality for the dissemination of propaganda. In proportion it would reduce the late Adolph Hitler's system of geopolitics to less significance than a Republican presidential campaign. He who would rule television would rule the nation.

It is to be hoped that officials of our national government, which is usually a little costive in accepting new techniques, will arouse themselves to the importance of the situation before some undemocratic movement seizes the opportunity and dramatizes the Marxist theory, soap opera style, in half the living rooms of the country. I believe that present day television programs would suffer very little if Gorgeous George were replaced by a weekly reading of the Gettysburg address or by a Town Meeting of the Photo-electric Cell.

As an aid toward directing the power of television toward socially democratic goals, it might be advisable for some astute political scientists to design a department of television, to be placed alongside those of agriculture, interior, commerce, et cetera. Since one department, more or less, is hardly noticeable, the plan would probably gain acceptance in an election year. In its simplest form the new department would, of course, have a head Secretary. Going lower down the scale there might be an Under Secretary for each television channel and appointments for special secretaries for wrestling, political speeches, cowboy shows, and so on down to the Secretary in charge of "John's Other Wife."

Regardless of the form, it is becoming increasingly evident that some effort must be made to place television's power of persuasion in the proper hands. Any instrument capable of gaining such vast control over the attention of a modern, intelligent population, must be recognized as a major propaganda tool and dealt with accordingly. Never let it be said that our country, which has bulldozed its way through a series of great wars, was finally laid low by a household appliance.

Tolstoi

Jack Monninger

And I,
Reluctant to concede that I am sane,
Avoid the beautiful,
That beauty which we mold
To satisfy our every drive.
Dare I accept convention
To then find peace of mind
Within unrest?
For what is sanity,
To thrust the dagger deep into a heart
And then survive,
Or stop the beating of my own
Then slip away into the darkness
To be remembered as a coward;
To link my voice
With other voices of the day
Crying peace,
Knowing that it will not come to pass,
Or standing on the mountainside
Accept the fallen angel
That I might justify my worldly needs;
Display my shiny wares before almighty man,
Careful to conceal but caring not
About the tears that made them such?

O, I am surely mad
To stand erect and still not walk,
To know that I have mouth and tongue
And still not talk,
To have two twisted hands . . .
My work is vain;
O damnable convention:
I am not sane.

The Understandenest Woman

Emmett McGinley

Well, Sir, this Mrs. Webb is the understandenest woman I ever run across. They ain't none other like her in my territory. It would sure make things easier if they was. The way things are now, it's gettin' so I just can't quite stomach this mail carryin' business. 'Specially since the war sneaked up on us. Seems like everybody is lookin' for a letter from everybody else. Mothers lookin' for letters from their boys, grandmas from the grandsons they used to bounce on their knee, daughters from their sweethearts, and the brothers and dads are in there too, but they don't pester so much as the womenfolk. Can't say as I blame 'em much, it's just human nature to worry about your kin gone off to some faraway place to dodge bullets of some kind 'er another, but dagblammit, they don't have to shove the blame off on me for the poor service they're gettin'. They just can't seem to understand I can't bring 'em a letter till somebody brings it to me. With the new help the government's using, expectin' a letter on time would be just like expectin' the war to end tomorra. Why, they even got me worryin' and frettin' with 'em. My wife sez I'm gettin' grumpy as a bitch with pups.

Well anyway, as I was sayin' this Mrs. Webb is the understandenest woman. Let me see now, I reckon it was about '22 when her and her husband moved into the new house they had built on Lake Street. Now I watched that house go up comin' by every day like I did, still do for that matter, and I could see they didn't skimp none. Later on I found out that her husband was a salesman at the mill here in town, so he naturally got the best lumber they had, and he knew what carpenters was best at their trade. It's kinda hard to beat a combination like that, so when their place was finished it was the envy of the block, pretty as a picture and plenty solid. It's the kind of a house you build when you're thinkin' about havin' a parcel of kids kickin' up their heels in it.

Yessir, those folks were as proud of that house as they were of the little boy that came with it. That's right, they hadn't no sooner got moved in and situated some, than that little rascal came along and moved hisself right in with 'em. He was a cute little mite, healthy and strong and full of pep. And lungs, say when he started lettin' you

know he was hungry or wanted hisself some dry pants, his hollerin' purt near took the roof off the house, but it didn't 'cuz like I said, that's the kind of house it was.

He was a healthy little imp alright, but his mommy had a purty tough time of it. Some women is made so's they can have babies every year and shake it off in a week or so; as luck would have it, Mrs. Webb wasn't made that way. She'd sure liked to have had 'em reg'lar, but the doctor put the quietus on that right then: no more babies for her, 'cuz it could kill her easy as not. For a woman who was hankerin' as much as she was for a house full of kids, she took it mighty fine, didn't let it throw her a bit, leastways not so's anybody could tell. She's the understandenest woman.

When he got so's he was old enough to walk, he'd come toddlin' out to meet me, and we'd have some man to man talks. 'Course at first it was me that did all the talkin', but it wasn't long 'fore I had to fight like fury to get a word in edgeways, with his mouth openin' and closin' like one of those department store doors at Christmas time. While we were standin' like a couple of old maids at a hen party, his mommy would be up on the porch smilin' and watchin' to see I didn't slip him any peppermint sticks 'tween meals so's he wouldn't eat his dinner when she wanted him to. After a while though, the two of us got purty slick at it, I'd kinda slide it in underneath the letters and he'd give me a wink with those big eyes of his, all the time lookin' like a cat that had just caught hisself a nice fat mouse, and run up those steps like a squirrel up a tree. That gave the whole thing away 'course, but like I say, Mrs. Webb was the understandenest person.

Once they get started growin' they sprout up like sweet potato plants. 'Twasn't no time at all 'fore he started in school. After that about the only time we ever got together was on Saturdays and summer vacation. He did right fine in school though, stayed close to the top of his class all the time. Mrs. Webb seen to it that I got all the particulars. I remember the time they had open house at the school, Mrs. Webb asked me if I wouldn't like to go and I snapped up the chance right away. I wouldn't have missed that for all the stamps in Washington.

Well, that night little Webb walked into class lookin' as bright and shiny as a new Model A. Hair slicked down, that is all 'cept for an ornery cow-lick at the back, cheeks rosy from the scrubbin' his mommy had given 'em and wearin' his first double-breasted suit. He walked over to his desk, sat down, folded his hands, and started givin' everybody the once-over, cool as a shade tree on a warm day, and not the least bit jumpy. I caught his eye and he gave me a great big wink, that almost got lost in the grin spread all over his face.

Class got started right after that and little Webb was all business. He'd pounce on those questions the teacher asked like the devil after a sinner, then he'd take 'em all apart and put 'em back together. I could see some of the people 'round me were mighty impressed and they weren't nothin' compared to his folks. You could almost see proudness poppin' out all over 'em. Soon as she finished up with all the reg'lar work in the class, the teacher got the kids lined up for a spellin' bee. They started out with some easy words and purty soon they began gettin' harder 'n harder. Those kids started droppin' fast and furious, just like apples in a windstorm, but not little Webb. When it come his turn he'd stop, screw his face up, think for a minute, then look that teacher right in the eye and spell it out real fast like. Purty soon there was only him and another boy. It was his turn and his word was "occasion." Well, little Webb thought a little longer this time, but he put one too many S's in it. You could tell he was disgusted with hisself, but just the same he marched right up to that other fella, patted him on the back, and told him what a good job he did. Well, when that happened I don't think his daddy would've been any prouder if he had've beat the other boy and he sure won hisself a lot of friends that night. Yessir, for a fact, he was a lot of boy.

'Fore long little Webb was in high school, the little didn't fit anymore, but I still called him that out of habit I guess. He got on all the school teams and I tried not to miss a game if I could help it. Once though, when my wife was down with the flu, I had to stay home and doctor her, but I guess he played that game just like he did all the rest of 'em and just like he done in that spellin' bee, bein' a good sport and a gentlemen and all the time tryin' just as hard as he could to win.

He finished high school and then his folks sent him to that engineerin' college upstate. He used to write his folks a letter every day. Yessir, every day I walked up to that house on Lake Street, that was built to hold a parcel of kids, and brought a letter from the only one who ever had a chance to know how nice that house was to kick up your heels in.

Then this danged old war come along and Webb was just goin' on twenty. The Monday morning after Pearl Harbor he come back from college totin' all his belongin's. I got to see him for a spell and he told me he was goin' over to Indianapolis the next day to join the Marines. From that day on I didn't get to see Webb anymore. The letters started comin' again, only this time from Parris Island in South Carolina, then Camp Lejune, North Carolina, then from Camp Pendleton in California, always two or three of 'em a week. After that they were always Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, and they weren't reg'lar like they used to be.

Still Mrs. Webb never deviled me for 'em like most of the other people did. Why I've got so now that I'm scared to walk by some of those people's houses, knowin' that if they see me I'll have to tell 'em, "No, I don't have any letters for you," and then on top of that I'll have to listen to 'em cry about not havin' 'nough sugar or gasoline or meat or a raft of other things.

Today, I brought Mrs. Webb a letter from her son that was postmarked three months ago, where on earth that letter's been God only knows, but one thing I know for sure is, that I would've sooner rassled a bear than walked up to her house with that letter. She's an understandin' woman though, like I told you. Her eyes were red like she'd been cryin' a lot, and her voice sounded kinda tired, but she thanked me and smiled, which is more than other people would've done in the same spot. You see her son, little Webb, was killed in action two months ago.

It Ain't Etiquette

Forrest A. Dunderman

THE OTHER DAY I was having lunch with a friend at a restaurant particularly noted for its delicious soup. I had just begun to relish the flavor of my own bowl and was about to make some comment on it when I turned to find my friend rather furtively breaking crackers into his own. Now I would not have objected to such action, assuming, of course, that my friend really enjoyed the additional flavor of crackers in his soup, if he had not hastened to apologize for what he considered a serious, a monstrous breech of etiquette. His tone was as ashamed as if I had burst into his dining room to find him at the table wearing only his undershirt and trousers, his unnapkined face smeared with grease, and gnawed chicken bones strewn on the floor as if he had thrown them over his shoulder in the manner of Henry VIII. I could see in a moment that he was deadly in earnest and, feigning a kind of innocence of what is considered genteel *à table,* asked him why he apologized for an act which, in no way, could be thought repulsive or unsightly by even the most fastidious of diners. His reply was one that I expected: "It is not considered good etiquette," he said, as seriously as if he had just recited one of the Ten Commandments. It was then that I exploded. At the risk of having indigestion for the rest of the afternoon, I launched into a vigorous and, I will have to admit, angry rebellion against the ridiculous taboos to which society has fallen heir. Whence they came, no one seems to know, but they are so firmly entrenched in upper and middle class society that any breech is regarded in almost

the same light as the committing of petit larceny. I do not condone coarseness at the table, but its adversary, "delicacy," has risen to such prominence that if the Duchess of Tweedlebom were to give vent to a belch, no matter how tiny or how Bacchanalian, the scandal would be earth-shaking.

So it is with many of the practices at the table. The dictum is that when eating soup of the thin kind, the spoon must be pushed away from one, never in that barbarous fashion of moving it toward one's self. I am always reminded of a steam shovel when I see the automaton at the table laboriously pushing his spoonfuls of soup away from him and lifting the load to another location. The motion is as calculated, as methodical, as any excavating that was ever done. Fashion decries the licking of bones as an affront more appalling than that of appearing at the opera in dungarees. Which of you has not found extreme pleasure in nibbling at those elusive bits of meat on a pork chop which lie in the crevices no fork was ever designed to enter? The man who said, "The sweetest meat lies close to the bone" must have had pork chops in mind when he made his observation. Then, when one has reluctantly put his bone back on his plate only to seize it again for an unnoticed and final morsel, who can deny that a wistful licking of one's fingers is the ultimate satisfaction to be derived from a chop? Elbows on the dinner table, friends, if one would be influenced by the disapprobation of the high tribunal, is an indication of boorishness hardly to be countenanced in this age of gentility. On and on the taboos run. To be fully confident at the table, so complicated is the system, a book of rules should be laid beside the silver and the napkins as a handy reference for some point in doubt.

Who is to blame for this sad state of affairs? The question, put point-blank as it is, requires a point-blank answer. Emily Post, that denizen of the drawing room, that plutocrat of the breakfast table, is the insidious force undermining the gastronome's enjoyment of his repast. It is she who appeals to the finer instincts of a man to lift his teacup as if it were a bubble and not (heaven forbid!) as if it were a teacup. So universally is Miss Post accepted as the authority for what is right and wrong at the table, it is supposed that if she should suddenly go on record in support of hanging from a chandelier while one dines, the chandelier business would immediately flourish. I believe Miss Post's books on etiquette have reached many lands and many people through translations. It amuses me to consider what forms she would recommend for a group of etiquette-conscious head hunters about to sit down to dinner of roast missionary.

To one, such as myself, who places food high on the list of life's pleasures, being told how to transport it from plate to lips is a little like being told how to live. I wish Emily Post had been a painter.

The Toy Box

Alice Aldrich

WHEN THE Coopers came to call, I was elected to entertain their six year old twins, Jeanie and Joanie. On sudden inspiration I took the two up to the attic where there is a large toy box, half-filled with odds and ends of once beloved playthings. There we found such articles as battered story books, pieces of train track, a car with only three wheels, and several dolls with missing limbs. The children were delighted. They began busily to dress the dolls in the faded, wrinkled clothing.

Suddenly Joanie discovered in the bottom of the toy box the worn shopping bag that contained the "dress-up clothes." The dolls were forgotten. "Let's play go visiting," Jeanie suggested. "I'll be mother, and you can be Mrs. Grant." Her sister agreed, and soon the two girls, one stylishly attired in a Chinese kimono, and the other in a faded net formal, were sipping imaginary tea and seriously discussing the problems of child discipline and household management.

As I watched them, I wondered just why it is that in games of make-believe, little children love to assume the roles of adults. I think it seems to children that it is an adult's privilege to do whatever he pleases. Children long to be "grown up" so that they too may enjoy this privilege. Thus in their favorite games of imagination they become temporary mamas and papas, school teachers, policemen, and firechiefs.

It is difficult for children to realize that their conception of "growing up" is the exact opposite of really "growing up." The more one is willing to accept the sacrifice of his personal desires, the more nearly adult he becomes. Many so-called adults are merely overgrown children. They have no desire to become really adult, for they find the life of a child much more pleasant.

When the Coopers had gone, I returned to the attic and put away the toys. As I thought of Jeanie and Joanie and their game, I felt suddenly afraid. With a sense of dread I realized that I must soon leave behind the world of the twins, of childhood, and become an adult. As I reached to close the hinged lid of the toy box, the act seemed to be a symbol of the decision I feared to make. Impulsively I rose and went quickly downstairs, leaving the toy box open.

The Importance of Words

Barbara Dunham

ONE OF THE most powerful forces at work in the world today is the ability to speak fluently. So important are words that many scientists believe that language ability is the missing link between man and the ape. So important are words that hundreds of people devote their lives to the study of etymology and to the compilation of more complete and correct dictionaries, and thousands more continually strive to increase and excel in word power. With words alone, one can hurt deeply or heal gently; one can exalt or degrade; one can lead or be led. Used in the right way, words can be instruments of greatness; and used in the wrong way, they can be weapons of perfidy. There is no greater indication of Abraham Lincoln's magnanimity as a man than his magnificent Gettysburg Address; and there is no better illustration of the deceit of a politician than his hypocritical campaign promises.

It should not be concluded, however, from these statements, that we are powerless in the face of a person who is a glib speaker, that we are hypnotized by words and have no control over our actions in response to them. These statements are only meant to bring out the fact that words do have some influence over our thoughts and behavior. Nothing can more easily sway a mob from one subject of allegiance to another than a few fawning phrases. Yet, an individual does not have to be controlled by others' speech. It is within everyone's power, through a comprehensive knowledge of words, to choose between right and wrong and to formulate his own opinion. The achievement of this knowledge can be accomplished by wide reading of good literature, careful and attentive listening to good speakers, and thoughtful observation of words everywhere, always with the idea of accumulating and increasing a superior vocabulary. This increased mastery will in turn give a fuller understanding of important issues. Word power makes us more discriminating in our choice of ideas and values and more eloquent in the expression and defense of these ideas and values.

Thus, all of us have the power to be leaders of men through language ability. We can all be independent in the formulation of our thoughts and in their expression. Yet, it must not be imagined that just because a person has a large vocabulary, he is omnipotent. Actions, not words, lead to the final analysis of a man's character; and it is his ability to get things done well, and not his proficiency in promising to get them done, that determines a man's degree of success in life. Lofty words and idealistic phrases will not long conceal lowly ambitions and deceitful actions. The importance of words lies in the fact that through the medium of language man is able to express his innermost thoughts to the world. Words are but indications of future action; they are pointers on the road to greatness.

Realizing the Meaning of Integrity

Francis H. Balcom

THE WORD INTEGRITY had no definite meaning to me until I read the essay, "The Luxury of Integrity," by Stuart Chase. Moral soundness, honesty, and uprightness were given as definitions in the dictionary. Only through my experiences can I appreciate these meanings. I was reared in a happy home even though it was not blessed with great material wealth. From the first days I can remember, truthfulness and honesty were bywords in my home. The rural area in which I lived provided a never-ending list of chores. I was taught how to do the work required, and, from that time on, my responsibility was to do the work to the best of my ability. Lessons in Bible school taught me to be honest, to be truthful, and to do my best; and the public school teachers taught the same principles, often with the aid of the legendary "hickory stick." Although I had no knowledge of the word integrity, these teachings were instilling integrity in me.

High school was a new world to me, for I left the rural school and my friends to go to the largest city school. By applying the principles which had been incessantly drilled into me, I found this new world a most enjoyable one. Four years gave me many hours—hours for formulating dreams of the future. As an honor student, I began to have faint hopes for furthering my education; these hopes grew brighter during the summer months; because of an accident, however, they were dashed; and my dream of becoming an ornithologist was put away. I continued to work diligently as an apprentice in the sheet metal business, and I became quite adept. Success in a new kind of work gave me great pride, but soon I noticed that I was not permitted to do my best. Since the customers often desired a piece of work which they could not afford, I was forced to make something from inferior materials or by cheaper construction. When the item was completed, I was unable to look at it with pride and say, "I made it with my own hands." The same situation occurred many times until I finally became discouraged and left the apprenticeship. Thus, I first tasted the forced loss of integrity.

Without previous experience or knowledge pertaining to salesmanship, I accepted a position as a sales clerk in a large store. Many lessons were taught to me, and I eagerly put them into practice. With a great desire to do my best, I became one of the top sales clerks in the store. The Wilmark Service System spied on me and gave me a superior rating. The position of assistant manager of one of the firm's branch stores was offered to me. Needless to say, I jumped at the offer and continued my fine record. Just a few months before the beginning of World War II, I began to feel the need for more money because living expenses had increased. My income was a fixed

salary plus a commission, and to increase my income meant that I would have to make more in commission. All of the lessons I had ever learned about salesmanship were put into practice, and my sales soared to a new level. This practice continued for a number of months, but after I had been with the firm for more than a year, an incident happened which caused me to stop and think. My thoughts were not good as they went back to the past, to the sales I had made, to the inferior products I had sold, and to the customers who had been cheated. I quit my job that same day, but it was too late, for I had already thrown my integrity aside merely to earn a few paltry dollars. Cheating myself was a new experience.

After a few years in the military service, I returned to civilian life. Not knowing what to do with my future, I traveled in the West and went to work in Oregon. Because I was a handy man, I found employment more to my liking on the ranches and in the lumber camps. During my entire stay in that area, I was elated by the integrity displayed by the local residents. Their word was their bond, and they believed in the life they lived. Luxuries of life were not theirs, but they had a feeling of security and an immeasurable wealth, for they were living as they believed. The local storekeeper was also a man of great integrity. In his store were two items of luxury: candy and sodas. Every other item in that store could be considered an item of necessity, for even the usual shelf of patent medicines was lacking, and in its place were a few time-tested remedies such as castor oil, Sloan's liniment, and Vick's salve. Will, the storekeeper, was also the local news reporter for the county weekly, and all news was rendered truthfully and accurately, for he feared no one, and he was not a "yes man." My next stop for employment was a ranch in the north central part of Nebraska. Again I was elated by the integrity of all the people I met. Every man had his code of ethics, his beliefs, and he lived up to them. In this wealthy cattle country, I saw transactions involving hundreds of cattle and many thousands of dollars, but never did I see a legal document or a paper transaction. A man's word was sufficient. Therefore, integrity is not a luxury for some people; it is a necessity in their environment.

Soon after leaving these two encouraging environments, I re-enlisted in the military service. Within one month after re-enlisting, I had property stolen from me which was valued at more than two hundred and fifty dollars. Integrity was apparently unheard of or was completely disregarded. At the same time, I was forced to be a "yes man." Not a day passed when I could live entirely as I believed, for I had become a tool of some general or one of his subordinates who were my superiors. My previous experience and diligent performance of duty had been rewarded by many commendations, but now I was not even permitted to do my work as I knew it should be done. For almost three years I was forced to do things

in which I could never believe, and I was forced to be dishonest time and again in order to account for property. During a period of over two years, I marked each day off on the calendar and counted one less, and on the last day I counted hours and minutes. Finally I was released, and I was free to live up to the principles I had been taught many years before.

Long ago, my dream of becoming an ornithologist was put away, but now it has been taken out and dusted off. I learned the meaning of integrity, and I now realize and appreciate its value. Integrity should be instilled in man through teaching; he may be forced to lose his integrity; he may cast his integrity aside for want of worldly possessions; he may have integrity because of necessity. But I believe that life is worth living only when man can honestly and truthfully say that he is living the life in which he believes. The meaning of integrity may then be realized.

Impressions of Keats

Jack Albertson

IN THE POEM "Ode on a Grecian Urn" there is a reflection of the character of Keats. This reflection is made more remarkable by his life. He had always known poverty, hardship, and suffering. His health was bad because of his struggle for existence. With this kind of environment one would expect Keats to have a gloomy outlook on life.

But Keats was quite the opposite. His hardship seemed only to deepen his perception of beauty. Note his interpretations of the figures on the urn—a maiden never to lose her beauty, a lover never to lose his love, a tree never to lose its splendor, the musicians never to stop playing their ethereal melodies.

Yet upon closer examination one may detect a certain unhappiness in all this beauty. The lover will never reach the lips of his maiden fair. The tree will never bring forth its fruit and fulfill nature's cycle. And the melodious music of the musicians will never be heard by the ears of mortal man.

It seems as though Keats were saying, "My life has been drab, but I am able to see beauty all around me. This beauty is wonderful to behold, yet it saddens my heart. For how can I attain this beauty, this happiness? It is always just beyond the reach of my fingers, always ahead, driving me on to realms unknown."

However, I think Keats did find happiness. He found it in his search for beauty. He found it by reaching and climbing to heights unknown to other men. He lived in a dreamer's world, and in that world he found happiness and beauty.

Courtesy

Sam Kouchis

CHIVALRY! What's that? It originally had something to do with horses. The knights of old started it. It also has something to do with courtesy and politeness. Maybe the knights were polite to their horses. It's the only conclusion I can come to. Anyway, chivalry seems to have disappeared. If you are doubtful of what I say, stand by the main doors of the school some morning. A girl opens the door to the building, and, before she knows it, a half dozen boys push their way into the building while she stands holding the door. If a boy accidentally collides with a girl, all he does is give her a dirty look and walk away, unless, of course, she is good looking.

I can understand why boys will be less courteous to younger females. After all they are only girls, but little respect is shown to adults. A boy seldom expects himself to open a door for a teacher. It must be lack of courtesy, energy, or good grades. Just recently I saw a woman open the door of the store in which she works to give entrance to a fellow-employee carrying a large chair. Much to her anger and disgust two men walked in also while she held the door open. I, at least, thanked her.

When riding on a crowded bus from Chicago two weeks ago, I noticed a lady enter the bus carrying a baby. When nobody else rose, I offered the lady my seat. I believe she is still suffering from a case of shock.

Revolving doors are also courtesy detectors. The other day I observed a small boy as he started to enter a revolving door. Just as he stepped in, a large woman barged through from the other side, and caught the boy's foot. She was nice about the whole thing. She looked down at his bleeding foot and inquired whether or not he was hurt.

Good sportsmanship is also lacking in the gymnasium at basketball games. It is not unusual to see a boy charging recklessly down the floor, disrupting his own and the other students' games. This is altogether unnecessary and can be prevented with a little thought and consideration. While jumping for the rebound, some players actually hurl themselves upon their opponents. One of them ducked once and I got a bruise on my knee.

There is nothing more exasperating than to hear very loud "boos" and cheers. This not only denotes a person's lack of manners, but also his stupidity. Some teams even refuse to play certain other teams because of the loud yelling. I don't care if they do stop playing because I always get hoarse after each game.

Well, I must go now. I have to help some elderly lady's good looking daughter across the street.

Adventure on Sunday

Roger Mays

ANYONE OF COLLEGE age should be able to write a lengthy essay on irrational behavior. The period of attendance in high school seems to be the most irrational period of life. This is a time when we substitute impulsive behavior for rational action. Adults try to help us reason things out, but we do not like to be reasonable because it spoils our fun and excitement. From this period of adjustment in my life one irrational experience stands uppermost in my mind.

Being like most high school fellows, I had a piece of an automobile which I drove to and from school. The car was a 1930 Pontiac possessing wooden spoke wheels, a canvas top, and very inferior brakes. Its top speed was about fifty miles per hour, and that had been reached only while we were rolling down hill. I did not dare drive over twenty in town, for often when I saw a traffic light it took me a block to stop. As my jalopy was painted bright yellow, the traffic policeman had no trouble spotting it. By not having a gasoline gauge my crude calculations in gasoline purchases sometimes led to more walking than riding. (Now that we have a mental picture of this monster, let us go on with the narrative.)

It was a wonderful autumn Sunday, the kind of day on which the city dwellers flock to the country for picnics. Being no exception, my friends and I bought a gallon of gasoline and headed for the wide open spaces. We drove to a near-by state forest in order to get off the highway and enjoy some good fishing. We were off the highway all right; it seemed as if we were blazing a trail, as the gravel road was barely wide enough for the passage of two cars.

Coming upon a steep hill which I had traveled many times, we saw the following sign in bold black print: "Put car in low gear—steep grade." Being very rational, I thought why use the gears and strain the engine when the car is equipped with brakes. With those famous last words down we went, gravel flying. Sensing an increase in speed, I gently pushed upon the brake pedal; nothing happened. I slammed it to the floor; the speedometer needle passed thirty and kept rising. As we were sliding sideways I glanced in the mirror; the

fellows in the back were rigid. My hands were wet; my knuckles, white; my throat, dry; my legs, like jelly. I could see that the next curve was much too sharp. A tree loomed in front, and beyond it was a thousand foot drop.

That which had been so tense and ear splitting a second ago was now sickly quiet. Smoke and dust enveloped my lungs. I wiggled out of the wreck spitting blood. The now splintered tree saved three families untold sorrow.

The next day at school the fellows thought me a hero, but I knew what a stupid trick I had pulled. Irrational human beings are surely the idols of high school groups.

What Is Wrong With Our Movies?

Lois M. Peeler

ANYONE WHO has been unfortunate enough to venture into one of our glacier-cooled motion picture houses recently has no doubt been forced to the conclusion that our "movies" have not only hit rock bottom, but that they are attempting to burrow through it. The average person, sick unto death of psychiatrist's couches, mother fixations, and planned crimes, may take one of two paths: He may give up movies altogether, or he may turn to foreign pictures and thereby find a rewarding experience free from Betty Grable's legs and Alan Ladd's torso. What is wrong with the American movies? Predominantly three things started this journey to rock bottom.

The most glaring fault of all—as wide as a church door and as deep as a well—is our star system. The agent, about to give birth to a new star, "ballyhooes" this magnificent creature, this angelic imp, this typical American girl, this darling of society to the skies. Despite our reluctance to become so, we are soon made aware of everything that has ever happened to her, and of quite a little that has never happened. We are given to understand that seven men are about to commit suicide for the love of her, and that she uses a magenta toothbrush and so on ad nauseum. And so, at long awaited last, her first picture is completed and sent out to be received by the incredulous gasps of her admiring public. It takes place in a dirty Russian garret, and she is a dreary little seamstress who hates all men. Here is art, indeed! After her great success as the seamstress, the new born star goes on to even greater ventures. She appears as a psychoanalyst, an idiot, a debutante, a slave, a lady of 90, a girl of 10. And so, she merrily pursues her industry, adding to her fame with each succeeding epic and becoming less believable with each. It is impossible for even the most fertile imagination to believe that someone whose

face, personality and doings are as familiar to one as one's own has suddenly become transformed into another person in another world.

The second thing which sweeps across the motion picture colony, leaving half the pictures maimed in its wake, is the morality code of the motion pictures. It would be very wonderful to believe that people were the purest of the pure, that never a word was said in anger, or a deed committed in haste, but that all was sweetness and light; but we know that life is not like that—except in the movies, that is. I know that a great many self-righteous individuals will accuse me of wishing to corrupt the morals of the American people. Frankly—and forgive me if I am wrong—I do not know of a single person who is so pure that a four-letter word spoken now and then will set him upon the path to degradation. And, if there is such a one, may I say to him, "Congratulations, and may you be happy in your ivory tower." I do not remember very much of "Gone With the Wind" except the closing scene where in reply to a question from Scarlett, Rhett turns and says, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn." There was true power of thought. There was a majestic utterance. Can you imagine Rhett standing there and saying, "Frankly, my dear, I don't care."

In the Hollywood of today, there is a growing trend toward realism, and behind that simple, innocent word lurks horror, pure, unadulterated horror; for Hollywood attacks—I use the word advisedly—realism in the same manner in which it approaches everything else, in a non-realistic way. Thus far, the realism has taken the course of making normally beautiful actresses as hideous as possible, but we are headed for bigger and better accomplishments. I do not believe that the future of the motion picture lies in this direction. Suppose, by some chance, that Hollywood decided to make a picture on the trials and tribulations of a street-cleaner at precisely the same time as the Italian motion picture industry. In Italy, they would go out in the streets, find a likely street cleaner, and assign to him the role. And what would Hollywood do? Well, after a great deal of thought and probably a million dollar talent search, they would decide upon Cary Grant for the part, equip him with a $500 outfit and a mahogany broom, polish up his British accent and set him to work. Of such stuff is realism in Hollywood made.

I shall not attempt to offer suggestions for improving our movies, for that is up to the public. As soon as the people refuse to accept a picture whose only claim to fame is its "color by technicolor," the pictures will improve immensely. As soon as they demand true realism and refuse to accept pseudo-realism, the motion picture industry will be forced to make better pictures. The public alone has this privilege, and it alone will be responsible for the eventual fate of our entertainment level.

It's Been Lovely, But—

Joe Owens

MANY'S THE DAY I have toted peppermint patties to a hostess, but this is the first time I have come bearing a brickbat. Before proceeding to bash the hand that feeds me, let me say hurriedly that if any hostesses, after reading this, want to come to my glass house, they are cordially invited and may bring their own stones. Without further dodging, I shall get on with this bread-and-brickbat affair.

First, on my "no thanks" list, is the hostess who wants to keep the party moving. If anything makes her nervous, it is to see a roomful of people divided into small, congenial groups talking contentedly. For example, suppose I am sitting in a corner with two other guests, discussing socialized medicine, John Lund's mustache, or the best way to kill dandelions. Our hostess approaches, "You naughty people, hiding off by yourselves. Come!" she says, using the imperative in its nastiest form. "You must talk to So-and-So and meet So-and-So." Usually I am the first she grabs and hustles away, because I am skinny enough to fit into any cramped niche. I am thrust on a brand-new group who resent having their discussion broken up, and all of us are reduced to such typical party witticisms as, "I like dogs. Do you like dogs?" or "Warm in here, isn't it?" or "Lovely party!"

I do not like to exercise my slow-moving wits in guessing games. I am even more suspicious of hostesses who introduce a new game with the happy cry, "The rules are simple. You can all learn as you go along." From sorrowful participation in these "simple" games, I have discovered that either the rules are so complex that they should be taken up only by The Institute of Advanced Study, or the hostess thinks of some new twists, just to keep us on our toes—twitching.

Another variation is the hostess who stews and fusses over refreshments. To have dinner at her house is an even more indigestible experience. Usually, she has been simmering since dawn, and looks it. Invariably this hostess plans a seven course meal and nags her guests as if they were two year old problem eaters: "But you must eat a third helping. I made it all for you, and it's so-o-o good."

Another form of anxiety I resent fiercely is turning a spotlight on my few food dislikes. It so happens that the three foods I loathe are oysters, parsnips, and cooked bananas. As no menu is composed

of these three items, I could manage very nicely if it weren't for the hostess who moans, "Oh, you aren't eating your oysters. If only I'd known. Why didn't you tell me sooner?"

It is worse to visit a hostess who worries about the dust under the guest room bureau (a fact I couldn't possibly check upon unless I wriggled around the floor on my stomach). According to her, the silver needs polishing, the curtains came back from the laundry chewed by chipmunks, the most interesting people she invited couldn't come, and she knows it is going to be so dull. About that time I am convinced I should have found something better to do.

Yet all these types seem harmless compared to the most recent menace: the hostess who invites me to take the television cure. This experience combines the fuzziest features of watching sixth grade amateur theatricals and opening one's eyes under water. The victim is ushered into a darkened room, often without food or drink, and forced to stare fixedly at a small, lighted screen that shows a series of flyspecks shrouded in mist. Occasionally, the mist clears, and that is even worse.

Meanwhile, the owners of the set pretend to identify each moving flyspeck by name or occupation: wrestler, actor, trained seal, and so on. They interrupt themselves with pretty protests of, "Oh, you should have been here last night. It was so much clearer then," or with fascinating technical explanations. By midnight, I have acquired a persecution complex and a full-fledged case of pink eye. Understand, I think television is the coming thing. But until television reaches a higher level of perfection—I'm frightfully sorry, darling, but something's come up unexpectedly, and I won't be able to make it.

The Meaning of Democracy

Shirley Stillwell

I

"MY DEAH, do you really think this is the gown I should choose? After all, I am expected to maintain a certain standard, and I trust you implicitly. The opening of the opera is one of the most important events of the season."

"But definitely, madam, this is an exclusive creation for you; it suits your particular style as no other gown could do."

"Very well, my deah. Now I must decide between the ermine stole and the mink cape. Since my last year's coat was mink, possibly the ermine would be the better choice. It is a bit more regal, don't you think?"

"The ermine is very good for you, madam, and for this gown also. Do you wish them sent special delivery?"

At this moment outside Saks Fifth Avenue, the shop where Mrs. Goldplate has just made her selection, Gracie Schultz and Sadie Small are taking advantage of one of their rare free days to window shop and dream. This is the favorite pastime of the two girls who have few other pleasures.

Doing piece work on a power sewing machine six days a week provides little spending money above living expenses, and leaves little time for recreation. Once each six weeks, a free afternoon is the bonus for exceptional production, and for both girls to manage the same afternoon off is nothing short of a miracle.

"Gee, Sadie, sometimes I wonder if our chance to wear a dress like that will ever come. And them diamonds in Tiffany's! When my knight comes riding on his white steed, I'd like to be dressed like that."

"Aw, dearie, that dress ain't practical and them rhinestones in Macy's basement shine just as pretty. Nobody'd know the difference. By the way, have you made the last payment on that fur coat yet?"

"Well, next payday I think I can get it out of hock. Forty-nine ninety-five at a dollar a week is pretty slow, but it will be worth going without lunch. Won't Herman's eyes pop when I spring that coat for the Firemen's Ball?"

"Do you want to borrow my red satin to wear with it? Red will sure set off your complexion and it won't go bad with your new skunk coat either. Them tails on it take my eye."

"Thanks, Sadie, you're a real friend. Oh look at who's getting in that limousine! Know who that elegant female is?"

"Sure enough! I see her picture 'most every week on the society page. 'Mrs. Goldplate Breaks a Bottle of Champagne Over Boat' or 'Mrs. Goldplate At The Opera.' Sure, I'd know her anywhere. Snooty, ain't she?"

"Uh huh, but Sadie, maybe if I had so much dough, I'd be snooty too. I've heard her husband came from Milwaukee and made all that money in a brewery—didn't have a dime when he was a kid. They say his folks still live in the same house he was born in and don't even have a bathroom. I wonder how he ever married into society. Maybe her old man went broke in '29."

"Well, dearie, like I always say, your Herman may be the meat packing king some day—look what a good start he has in Schmaltz's Butcher Shop."

"Yes, you never can tell, Sadie, but I won't forget you. When Herman makes his fortune I'll buy you them diamond earrings and maybe even give you my skunk coat."

Giggles float back on the crisp air as the girls stroll on down the avenue in search of even greater adventure.

II

The Mrs. Goldplates of our country have nothing on the Gracie Schultzes and the Sadie Smalls. A girl can dream in any land, and probably does, whether or not there is any hope for her dreams to come true. In America even the most insignificant shop girl has the opportunity of becoming a gown designer or anything else equally fabulous.

This is not a fairy tale sort of success. It is not the result of a wishing well or a magic wand. The miracle is not worked by "presto chango," but by a combination of ability, determination, and the God given freedom to do one's best.

Horatio Alger is the symbol of American democracy at work, overdrawn to be sure. None the less, this American hero story is as true as the hundreds of biographies of self-made men and women who are nationally famous. What if, in the strict sense of the word, we are not all born equal; very often a smaller gift of talent can prove of greater value if it is augmented by a larger amount of ambition and application.

Maybe Gracie Schultz's boy friend, Herman, may rise from his humble experience in the meat market to become the meat packing king. Such a success story has happened before and can happen again; it is a common occurrence in America.

Given a chance, Gracie may even become a *grande dame* and wear her French imports and square cut diamonds like a queen. While buying her skunk coat on payments, she has developed a love for and a deep appreciation of finer things. She has an advantage over Sadie who seems satisfied with her mediocrity.

Her friendship for Sadie is genuine, and her love for Herman sincere. Should Herman remain a butcher's apprentice, she will manage their income uncomplainingly as she has juggled her own pittance all her life. However, if Herman should possess the elements of financial genius, Gracie could adapt herself to her new opportunities without losing all appreciation for the friends and experiences associated with her past.

In Gracie's vivid imagination, her chance to enjoy life's most exciting luxuries will come only if Herman is made of more than common clay. If he can provide the best, she can make the most of it; if not, her lot will be none the worse. A girl can dream and sometimes, it does no harm for her to do a little dreaming for her boy friend.

Why You Should Have a Dictionary

Richard Orman

One of the many facts I have discovered in my study of the dictionary is the wide dissimilarity in weight and binding of the various types. To many people, perhaps this would not mean anything. But to me it suggests an amazing field for speculation. Just to think of the many differences in size and color of dictionaries is exciting. To chase for a few moments the thought of how the size of a dictionary might have changed the world is, in a sense, perfectly idiotic. And yet, in your spare time, it can be great fun.

Think, if you will, what talent might have been given to the world if little Johnnie had had a large unabridged dictionary. With such an aid he might have been able to reach the piano keys. But no, his family had no such helpful device. Alas, he had no way to reach those beautifully noisy keys, and instead of becoming a great, although underpaid, musician, he had to lay bricks and amass great wealth in later life.

Or imagine what might have happened to poor Mr. Jones if his wife had had such a wonderful weapon as Webster's "Unabridged" instead of that miserable rolling pin. The last time he came sneaking in after a late poker party, she might have been able to collect on his insurance, rather than merely putting him in the hospital for a week or so with that small hole in his head.

Such are the vicissitudes of life, and even though it may be no use to lock the barn door after the horse is stolen, such an attitude might explain the run on large dictionaries at the corner bookstore—although many uninformed persons might lay the fact to a sudden increase in people's quest for knowledge.

Then there is the color matter to look into. If you are one of those persons who always carries a book with him so that everyone will think him studious, why not carry a medium-sized dictionary? It will be about the right size, and not too heavy. Someday, you may actually open it, and in such case, might learn a few facts about words which you had not known before!

And, since dictionaries come in so many beautiful colors, it would be very easy to get this interesting volume in the shades to match your favorite costumes. Or, if you keep a dictionary in your library, whether you use it or not, imagine what the wrong color (such as orange) would do among your perfectly matched blue volumes. Any responsible interior decorator would be more than glad to assist you in choosing the perfect volume for your library. And the exciting part of this is that he will do it at no more than three times what it is worth to you!

The Luxury of Idleness

Catherine Cowan

LIVING HAS ALMOST become a lost art. The ancient Chinese knew how to live and developed the art to a degree no other people have since. Their philosophy was deeply introspective and intuitive; it never attempted to explain God or the universe but only tried to show men how to live contentedly. Chinese art was not pretentious and awe-inspiring, but it was sensitive and restrained. There were dainty carvings in ivory and exquisite bowls and vases of china. The Chinese had already reached a high degree of culture while most of our ancestors in the wilds of Europe were still crude people, barely making a beginning in civilized ways and thoughts. Did the Oriental possess a higher aesthetic sense than other races? Perhaps the secret was the fact that they had the time—or took the time—to think and to be alone. The Chinese might wander to some quiet grove. Perhaps there would be a waterfall here with forested peaks beyond. He would contemplate the scene, muse upon its beauty, and absorb the serenity of the landscape. Nature and the contemplative life gave him understanding and peace of mind. But what was the result of such a way of life? It kept the country from making swift changes in modern times and kept many of China's intellectuals in the bondage of tradition at a time when they might have been studying modern problems and using modern ideas.

We think of the small, American village of our forefathers as being neighborly and kind. Food was cheap; there was no night life; the family unit was strong; and moral standards were high. As someone has said, "There was nothing to do except live." Keeping one's word was taken for granted; honesty and kindness were more important than wealth. Age was more simple, and there was time to practice the art of living; there was time for thinking. The early pioneer did not carry his appointment book conveniently in his vest pocket. Certain basic tasks had to be done, but when those tasks were completed, one's time was his own.

Idleness is fast becoming a luxury we can hardly afford. There is a job to be done, a home to be maintained, children to be educated. As citizens we are urged to participate in patriotic efforts; as church members we are expected to give of our time and support. Other

organizations, too, make their demands. The modern individual's life has become so complicated and even materialistic that we can hardly censure the man who seemingly is rushed all the time. He is the product of our age. However, we may still well wonder if all this activity is necessary; or if, as Mr. Stevenson says, there are not some individuals who "have not one thought to rub against another," and this affords them a reasonable excuse.

A little act of kindness, an unexpected encouragement, some expression of affection—these are the things we remember. How much enjoyment we are missing because it is actually the little things of life that count. Peace of mind is something that cannot be purchased. To some, it has become a luxury sacrificed in favor of things, material things. Matthew Arnold says, "We would have inward peace, but will not look within. . . ." It must be that our understanding and growth are not all in the things we do, but in the moments of quietness when we let nature speak to us. In the relentless race for economic success, is the result worth the price? Or will we borrow a page from history and let idleness cease to be a luxury.

Idler Meets Mr. Machine-Man

Paul Ross

IDLER PAUSED to brush the beads of sweat, worry, from his forehead. He watched as the droplets fell to the dusty road of Life, landing in the footprint of the traveler several yards ahead of him. He studied the footprints, concluding that they were made by a person in great haste. This realization caused a cloud of gloom to pass over Idler's face, for he hated to see anyone in such a predicament. No person in this world can be enjoying himself when he has imbibed that destructive potion, Hurry, as this poor soul has evidently done, he decided.

Lengthening his stride, he was able to overtake his fellow traveler. Coming abreast of him, Idler recognized the man.

"Why, hello, Mr. Machine-Man."

Mr. Machine-Man turned, still maintaining his steady swift pace, and mumbled a word of greeting.

"What is your destination, sir?" Idler inquired.

"The city of Daily Living, you Lazybones," was the gruff reply.

"I resent your epithet, for truly I am not as you say."

"No matter. I am too busy to spend time bothering with trifles."

Idler was becoming weary from the rapid pace of walking.

"Do you not have the time to rest awhile and converse with me?"

"No. However if you desire to talk, you may do so and accompany me on my way."

For a few minutes they walked in silence. Then Idler spoke.

"What are your stops on this journey over the road of Life?"

"Eat, Sleep, and Work."

"But are you not going to visit elsewhere? Those places are mere villages compared to the cities I frequent."

"No, those are the only towns on the way to Daily Living, and I spend my time there according to a strict schedule. Besides no other towns exist which can measure up to my three."

"Oh, but there are. The trouble with you is that you are addicted to Hurry, which causes one to see only the three villages you mention. In this complex state, Modern Society, we are living under the terrible influence of that drug. Never realizing its destructive powers, we citizens gleefully gulp our portion each day and become conscious of nothing other than Eat, Sleep, and Work. These villages are continuous, one taking up where the preceding left off. Hurry has injected into our brains the impression that these are the only points of interest on the route to Daily Living; it incites us to pass through Eat and Sleep quickly so that we may spend more time laboring feverishly in the thriving community of Work. We become a machine, like you, with our goal consisting actually of one monotonous routine. The possibility that there may be other cities has never occurred to us. I have found others, though, and the atmosphere within these cities is soothing, a diversion from the routine of Eat, Sleep, and Work. Most of the cities are in the neighboring counties of Relaxation and Enjoyment, but the short trip is worth anyone's while. In the limits of these comforting cities we may find that envied nectar, Pleasure."

Idler's discourse had caused Mr. Machine-Man unconsciously to slow down. Obviously puzzled, he looked quizzically at his companion.

"You know, I think that I have formed an entirely wrong impression of you. You do know what you are talking about. However, I am afraid that I have fallen under the spell of Hurry so completely that I am unable to see any roads to Relaxation and Enjoyment."

Idler reached into his coat pocket and took out a map. Handing it to Mr. Machine-Man, he said, "If you follow the directions on that map, you will have no trouble in finding the two counties. Be sure to drink Pleasure when you arrive, for it will immediately offset the effects of Hurry."

Idler smiled when he saw Mr. Machine-Man's face brighten as he accepted the map and started off on a new route to Daily Living.

A Characterization of Amarantha

Robert Malsberry

THE SPIRITUAL maturation of a young girl, ignorant of any real happiness in life, who is awakened to the beauty love can offer, is the theme of a beautifully narrated short story by Wilbur Daniel Steele. After one night's interlude, the entire course of the girl's life is altered. It is this tempestuous night that the reader glimpses in "How Beautiful With Shoes."

Any attempt to characterize the heroine, Amarantha, must first reveal her environment. One of the most backward sections in North Carolina is the setting, and the reader is made vividly aware of this typical "Tobacco Road" backdrop. Amarantha is a farm girl—used to farm life and used to handling animals. The simplification of her name to the harsh and ugly "Mare" fully illustrates the crudeness and coarseness she is exposed to from birth. The author emphasizes Amarantha's faulty speech traits, but the reader feels no contempt for her—only pity for her lack of a normal educational background. Along with the responsibility of performing many farm chores, Mare's deaf mother seems to add a greater burden on her. The reader resents these impositions upon the girl and understands her predicament. The girl finds herself attracted to rough and crude Ruby Herter, but actually she is not capable of loving him.

Mare is totally unprepared for her meeting with the madman, Humble Jewett, and the full meaning of their brief encounter remains muddled until after Jewett's death. Although the tragedy in Jewett's life is barely outlined, the reader's sympathy is actively aroused for the educated maniac. The madman frightens her, and the shock is too great—too sweeping—for her to evaluate the night's events until she is again safe in her home. The poetry that Humble dedicates to Amarantha falls upon unaccustomed ears—she does not understand the poems and is easily embarrassed. Like an art connoisseur trying to discuss a painting by Van Gogh with an ignorant pauper, Jewett talks a language she does not understand.

After Mare is again in her lean-to bedroom, the full significance of the night's events passes before her eyes. Last night she had moved beneath the trees, but only now is she stumbling over the

untrod paths. Only now does she begin to understand the meaning of the poetry the young man sang. Only now does she run through the moonlight with the man beside her. And then the awakening that the reader hopefully has been anticipating arrives—Amarantha utters the most meaningful sentence in the entire story, "Is it only crazy folks ever say such things?" She realizes that there is more to love besides Ruby's animal ways. The shoes she refuses to take off are symbols of her enlightenment. However, she remains troubled—incapable, for the moment, of accepting her newly discovered theories. In a terrible and fascinating moment she dismisses Ruby forever from her room. The author's omniscient point of view is able vividly to portray the various levels of human relations, and in the end the reader lauds Amarantha for her spiritual awakening.

About "An Apology for Idlers"

Barbara J. Fisher

I AM IN complete agreement with Robert Louis Stevenson in his essay *An Apology for Idlers.* However, I cannot help wishing he were here today, so that he could tell me how to accomplish the nearly insurmountable task of being a successful idler. Granted, one can be a successful idler today if one is a recluse, but being of the social nature, I can think of nothing worse than isolating myself from this society no matter how hectic it may be. Therefore, I have a stone wall in front of me, since the task of existing in today's society is a full-time occupation and leaves little room for the glorious freedom of idleness. Surely Mr. Stevenson would have to modify his plan a bit for the world of here and now.

I can think of any number of times I have managed a little philosophical thinking and luxurious idleness in this speeding world. Of course I had to do it while standing on a subway, while standing on a street corner or while being jostled on a bus stuffed with people. Nevertheless I do consider it idleness, because I derived much pleasure from those minutes. As an example one evening I came off a bus in front of a white building, just in time to hear, "Times, pay-pah!" being called in a thin, childish voice. Immediately I forgot I was in a hurry and searched for the voice. In front of the white building stood a little colored boy, so little he looked like a doll. All I could see was his wooly head above the big paper he clutched in front of him. Again he called his wares in his reed-like voice, but as I watched him I realized he would not appreciate my solicitude for his size and age. He was a straight sprout and one could see that he was

unafraid of the stream of humanity flowing around him. As I watched the passing people, I realized that very few of them even saw him. Even those who bought a paper from him read the headlines on the paper as they handed him their money. I doubt that they knew he said thank you. Suddenly I realized I was standing still when I should have been rushing to get another bus, so I charged on toward the bus station, forgetting momentarily the little newsboy. Needless to state, I missed the bus.

Occasionally I have a whole day for idleness, and these days I never forget. These are the days that renew my faith and strengthen my belief in this life. These are the days I love. I started one of these days with a trip in an airplane. The sky was a threatening gray as the plane took off, and I anticipated a choppy flight. However, as the ship gained altitude, it broke through and above a cloud layer, and we were in heaven. What can be more inspiring and uplifting than this—floating above a carpet of iridescent white clouds and surrounded by a breathless blue sky.

Mr. Stevenson mentions the fact, in his essay, that some friends are not always as trustworthy as would be desired, but they are still friends because they can erase a frown with a smile. A smiling countenance lifts a shadow from more than one brow each day. Those who find a smile easier than a frown are usually those who find time to absorb the beauty of a sunset.

What have I done! I have found a hole in the stone wall. Perhaps I cannot loll in idleness by a stream while thinking profound thoughts, but I can derive much from my minutes of idleness. As a matter of fact, I have derived enough from these moments to know that I am not "indispensable." My ego has become moth-eaten, but my backbone is getting stronger. What a glorious sensation of freedom I have when I speak as I believe rather than as a puppet controlled by strings.

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