

a heavy-footed intruder. The farther he walks, the more he is overwhelmed by a feeling of tranquility, isolation, and utter satisfaction. All around can be seen evidences of nature in her most quaint yet breathtaking guise. The killdeers tip and bob in the shallow water, the swallows wheel overhead, and all around are heard the warm, pulsating sounds of summer. Peace and contentment almost tangible in its completeness settles upon the beholder of this vast, magnificent pageant.

In every form of human expression—art, music, sculpture, literature—there is something missing. Inspiring as they may be, they are subject to mortal limitations. Only in the cathedral of the outdoors can one experience the grandeur of God and the pure ecstasy of human existence.

Fenstermacher's Music School

Ruth Myer

IN LOOKING back I can recall no specific event, no definite time, no clear-cut emotional experience toward which I might gesture and say that it was the turning point. My dislike for Fenstermacher's Music School must have come over me so gradually, so subtly, that memory failed even to record the date when this dislike changed to utter loathing.

The Fenstermacher's I remember from my student days was an underground establishment. Although I understand the school has since moved to more fashionable quarters, in those days its clientele was obliged to reach it by descending the back stairs of a dusty music shop. As one moved downward on this creaking apparatus, the foul air and roar of the city's streets would give way to the fouler air and more strident roar of Fenstermacher's. Here confusion sat enthroned. More often than not, the small lobby had been invaded by a class of baton twirlers whose shiny sticks—frequently out of control—rebounded off wall, ceiling, and student. If the lobby happened to be unused, one could sit on the folding chairs and gaze at the yellowed magazine prints of singers liberally besprinkled on Fenstermacher's walls to hide their peeling yellow paint and chipped plaster. About the room would recline the standard array of Fenstermacher students and their mothers—usually mute and always expressionless. Around these individuals the sounds and smells of the school boiled and surged continuously. From 10:00 A. M. to 10:00 P. M. the voices of drums, pianos, violins, accordions, organs, trumpets, trombones, and electric guitars blared, ground, grated, and whined incessantly forth from each studio. Lest the suffering client yet remain patient under these tortures to eye and ear, Fenstermacher's instructors liberally spiked the atmosphere with a high concentration of reeking pipe and cigarette fumes.

I do not know why I did not rebel sooner. One evening I turned

my back on Fenstermacher's forever. Perhaps the unshaded light bulbs, hung starkly from their ceiling cords, had glared at me once too often. Perhaps the water cooler was empty one time too many. It may be that the filthy linoleum was uncommonly unbearable. Whatever my reasons were, I found that my decision to leave brought great relief. I ascended that night into a smoke-blackened city whose streets were swept with rain; but my heart was filled with sunshine.

"English As She's Not Taught"

Bill Duff

IN APPROACHING the problem of deriving clear meaning in English, Barzun states that the principle of mental discipline should be made clear to every beginner, child or adult. However, he adds, the schools make writing an irrational chore approached in the mood of rebellion by requiring length and concentrating on correctness.

How right he is! I could not agree more.

In the primary grades the student realizes, with a rude shock, that he not only has to learn to read reading, but also to read writing and write reading. The extent of this disciplined education stops, however, with the firm differentiation between making neat circles on lined white paper and informing the world that "Herman is a rat" on the rest-room wall.

Other attempts of self-expression are sterilized by bringing to his attention mistakes of grammar, punctuation and spelling in a confiscated love letter written in secret code.

This conflict between teacher and student develops into a struggle to get all of the requirements of an assignment fulfilled without the student's invoking the Fifth Amendment. The student tries to avoid this because invoking the Fifth Amendment requires the use of only nineteen words, and he knows that it is best, when you do not know much, to say a lot.

What view could the student develop other than that compositions are like a bolt of cloth: to be reeled off in the required length? The fact that the cloth contains no pattern or originality is to be expected. This eliminates the need of any effort on the part of the teacher to judge the material with any but the accepted academic scale.

The ability to rapidly throw up a wall of words to hide ignorance stands the student in good stead in later life.

In college he observes that the objective test is apparently graded by the difference in weight between a new blue book and one to which lead has been applied. If you do not comprehend what the professor wants, give him enough wordage, and he can find his own answer.

Outside in the jungle, the graduate advocates the proposition that a prolific use of words is supposed to indicate a degree of intelligence—thus perpetuating a vicious circle.