

As the world matures, then, the "we" must include ever-widening areas of people. Nations cannot do what they think is right without consulting other nations or preparing for the suicide a full-scale war will bring in the modern world. Perhaps in the not-so-distant future, the "we" will take in the whole solar system, and one world will need to appraise its strength in terms of that offered by other planets before it attempts any policy change that will make better use of time. The "we" is ambiguous, yet it presents an example of a good ambiguity. A fine quotation must have enduring qualities, a narrow term must be capable of broadening with time. Emerson made such an allowance by using the flexible pronoun "we," illustrating the same resiliency the framers of the American Constitution built into that document—the ability to be reappraised with time. Emerson knew what he was saying, and he said it for eternity.

Thoughts on a Cold Winter's Evening

Jerry L. Childers

I am sitting at my desk, and, although I try to focus my thoughts on my work, I find that I am mentally wandering to other times and to other places far from the book beneath my reading lamp and the writing paper and pen before me. I'm always an oppressed soul halfway between the last day of Indian summer and the first day of spring. I lose all interest in my studies, and I long to take myself away to a distant place, far from the snow, the cold, and the winter. Of all the seasons of the year, I know the winter to be the most dreary and interminable length of time.

I can remember experiencing this same chained and tormented feeling long ago in my childhood. I would look from my bedroom window out on the dirty, melting slush in the streets and would watch the voluminous black clouds of smoke as they arose from the chimneys and deposited their soot over the world below, and I would wish that the earth were warm and clean again. The tree outside my window was cold and naked with its shoulders heaped with a dingy layer of ice and snow. I was sure that the tree was in pain, and I knew that the tiny seedlings in the window-box beneath my sill were as anxiously awaiting the warmth and the freedom of spring as I.

After the long torment of those days, I would soon rid myself of my shoes and delight in the warmth of the moist earth beneath my bare feet. It was always difficult for my mother to know where I might be in those days as I would wander, barefoot and free, away to the nearest haven of trees and stretch of meadow that I could find. Even today, I go for such sojourns in the country whenever I can. Most people, caught up in the machinery of modern living, have forgotten what simple joys they knew as children. I believe the purest and most rewarding pleasures I have ever known were

those I had as a child away on a solitary walk. Only when I am able to go and wander through some spring wood, do I sense being a part of life and know that I am the same person of so long ago.

In my garden, beneath the miserly trapping of February, I have a memento I brought back from one of my excursions as a youth. One of my first discoveries was a wild flower called jack-in-the-pulpit. I found this pastor of the moist woodlands ministering to a congregation of Dutchman's breeches and blushing spring beauties deep in the shaded depths of a wood I still remember well today. Although he has never failed to greet me each spring, I have felt a sense of guilt because I have taken him from his home. He still preaches and stands as straight as ever in his pulpit, but there is no congregation to listen to the words I cannot hear.

I have learned that one cannot bring the beauty of the spring and the wild countryside into one's backyard, as I had attempted to do, but that one must leave off the cares of the world and steal down a solitary forest path in order to know the true beauty of nature. Often, I would lie down in the warm timothy grass and listen to the honeybees go about their gathering among the yellow blossoms of a wild forsythia and watch them cast pale saffron-colored petals adrift in the morning air to leave dusty trails of pollen on my face. The heavy air, laden with the perfume from the massed blossoms of the wild cherry and rosebud trees above my head, would lull me into a quiet dream, interrupted only by the occasional chattering of meadowlarks busily weaving a nest in the tall grass nearby. It is surprising the great store of discovery and adventure that can be known to small boys in such places. I can only feel sorry for those who did not early discover the delights of such times and places, and I can only hope that my thoughts will bring others to experience the impatient awaiting of spring that I do, as I gaze through my window on this cold and bleak winter's evening.

The Indifference of the Universe

Mike Schwartz

WHATEVER the nature of the universe, ordered or chaotic, teleological or mechanistic, whatever its nature, described in either philosophic jargon or lay terms, this basic fact concerning it seems manifest: the universe, in itself, is dreadfully indifferent. This indifference is so dreadful because of man's egotistical nature. Even adverse "spirits" or forces are much more reassuring than an indifferent universe because they at least recognize man's existence, *the only fact which he knows for certain*, as significant. Stephen Crane in his short story, "The Open Boat," illustrates this essential fear of insignificance. In this story a gull, which can be regarded as a symbol of nature, flitted about the four men in the boat, almost landing on the head of one of them. These