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MSS

VOL. III.

MAY, 1936

No. 4

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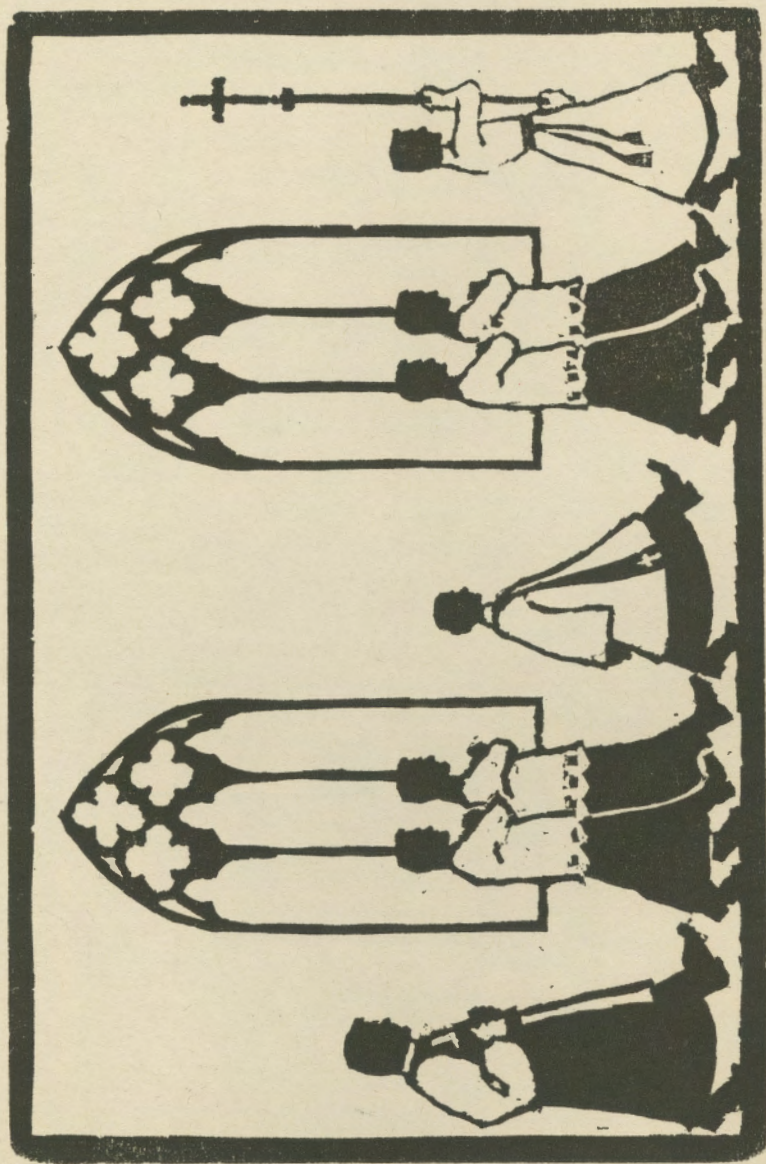
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Mr. Tippet and the Archbishop

Joseph Rilus Eastman

Snow was falling; the streets and walks were covered with ice as Mr. Tippet, the rector of the smallest and poorest parish in the diocese, walked to church. Mr. Tippet was a little man; his old black overcoat was buttoned to his throat and concealed his clerical garb. He walked with such a gay step that we would not think him a man of the cloth. As he swung along with a satchel in his hand he was not going to address his own parishioners from his own pulpit. He had a far more pleasant time ahead, he knew, for he was shortly to hear His Grace, the archbishop, who had come all the way across the Atlantic to deliver a sermon. Mr. Tippet had never seen or heard His Grace, nor had many who were coming to fill the largest church in the parish, but Mr. Tippet was sure he was in for the most enjoyable time in his life. He reached the parish house of the church and bounded up the icy steps; the parish rector admitted him and extended an invitation for Mr. Tippet to put on his vestments in the study at the back of the hall. It was very early and as yet no clergyman save Mr. Tippet had arrived. The parish rector hurried away for the final preparations in the church and left Mr. Tippet in the study. He chose a modest chair to lay his hat and satchel upon; he removed his little overshoes and placed them beside the chair. When he slid out of his overcoat he really looked a very small man. Five minutes later as he left the study wearing all his clerical vestments and new stole he still looked a little man.

He paced up and down the hall outside the study in anticipation; he debated whether His Grace would deliver a sermon on the text from the service for the day, or choose

one of his own liking—surely an archbishop had that privilege on such an occasion. While he debated with himself, a group of clergymen arrived at the door; Mr. Tippet greeted and shook hands with each one and showed the way to the study. Tall churchmen, short churchmen, red-faced churchmen, and pale churchmen followed the first group in a steady stream. As soon as he had vested, each returned to the hall and joined Mr. Tippet who was waiting for the first glimpse of His Grace, and when His Grace did come Mr. Tippet got to open the door; but another seized the sacred satchel and showed the way to the study. Only the chair next the one Mr. Tippet had used was bare of coats and hats. His Grace placed his own great coat upon the vacant chair with his satchel and hat. Although His Grace was a large man, Mr. Tippet had to stand on tiptoe to see him over the heads of the clergymen who crowded the study door and stared in. Mr. Tippet watched him remove his large overshoes and place them by the chair. When His Grace was dressed in his red vestment with starched white sleeves he looked as big as Gibraltar to Mr. Tippet, and he was—almost.

In the time His Grace and the visiting churchmen had been preparing themselves in the study, the church had filled to the doors, and the choir and parish rector with his acolytes were waiting in the vestry for His Grace. Never had the church seen such a processional. In his own little church Mr. Tippet always exchanged smiles with every one of his parishioners during the processional but now every layman was smiling at His Grace who smiled back; Mr. Tippet looked straight ahead, but he was smiling inside, for

he was marching in the same processional with His Grace. Mr. Tippet had visited the old church often in his long ministry; this time it was filled with a bright glow which radiated from His Grace and touched everyone and everything in it.

After the processional into the church, the important clergymen took their positions at the altar with His Grace; but Mr. Tippet and the lesser lights were given places in the choir stalls. Here, tucked in a corner, Mr. Tippet drank the service in. When His Grace delivered the sermon, Mr. Tippet closed his eyes. It was enough to give him inspiration for the remainder of his ministry—to Judgment itself, if he were allowed to carry on so long. It is doubtful if Mr. Tippet is to know a sweeter hour in the hereafter than the one he experienced then.

Not until His Grace gave the final blessing at the close of the service and Mr. Tippet joined the other clergymen in the recessional did he realize again that earthly happiness must sometime fade. When the recessional reached the vestry, and the last amen was sung and the choir disbanded, His Grace shook hands and greeted everyone who wished to come to him—first the important churchmen and big wigs among the laymen and then anyone at all—except Mr. Tippet. He smiled and pushed others forward until he had placed a large crowd of admirers between himself and His Grace. Mr. Tippet decided to remove his vestments in the study and return when

the crowd had left. Yet all this time he was happy, happier than he'd ever been, so happy and in such a hurry he didn't notice how he packed his vestments in their satchel, and how easily his overshoes slipped on. Mr. Tippet didn't notice much of anything for he was in such a hurry to have the one hand-clasp and greeting. He rushed from the study and met an admiring crowd of clergymen coming down the hall with His Grace in their midst. Mr. Tippet stepped aside and let them pass into the study. He waited at the door for a chance to present himself. Always there was such a crowd around His Grace that Mr. Tippet hesitated. Finally His Grace was being helped into his overcoat. Before Mr. Tippet could act, His Grace, still surrounded by churchmen, was ushered down the hall and out to his waiting car. Mr. Tippet followed to the door and saw the car drive away. He stood there and swallowed; he said goodbye to the parish rector and walked slowly down the icy steps of the church. Sleet was falling.

It would have meant such a great deal to him just to have shaken the hand of His Grace in greeting—if he could only have touched his garment. The smallest token of recognition would have been the thing to make Mr. Tippet happy. But as it was, Mr. Tippet hadn't seen a husky churchman help His Grace squeeze into two very small overshoes. It wasn't until months afterwards that Mr. Tippet realized why his overshoes had come to fit him so loosely.

Add To Angling

PRIZE STORY, 1936

Robert W. Straughn

Pisces are fish. Mr. Tedder Size was very fond of catching Pisces, meaning fish. In most instances the Pisces were very fond of young Mr. Tedder Size. Seldom was it that this astute gentleman returned from such an expedition without a scaly trophy. Not that Mr. Size ever sought to commercialize this exceptional ability. He would have been horrified at the mere suggestion, for he was first in life an Isaac Walton. When there was time left, Mr. Size attended strictly to business.

It was Tuesday. The sun came out as usual on schedule with the morning paper. It was quite as bright as it had been on Monday and on Sunday. There was a difference however. The difference lay in the fact that Tedder Size had gone fishing. Now Mr. Tedder Size should not have gone fishing, for he had a position in a downtown firm. At least that was an opinion voiced by Mr. Richard Envey in red faced anger. Being the boss, Mr. Envey was entitled to his opinion, in respectful deference to his material gains.

While Mr. Envey spluttered, Mr. Tedder Size fished. Where the current ran in blue pertinent ripples, he fished the hardest. In the corner of his mouth a fire-pitted pipe smoked blue-clouded derision for all the Mr. Enveys in the world. As he fished Mr. Size spoke in gentle persuasive tones to a wriggling Crayfish. The Crayfish which was acting in the capacity of bait dangled in officious effrontery at the end of the tapered leader. It gazed with accusing eyes at the fisherman.

Crayfish have been used as bait for centuries. For this reason they have adopted the fatalistic attitude

of the Far East and remain perfectly stoic. His particular Crayfish silently murmured Insh'allah and continued to stare at Mr. Tedder Size. He stared not pleadingly but instead with the round-eyed wondrous look of a thoroughly astonished Crayfish.

Mr. Size's appearance was indeed astonishing. Ladies who passed in their cars were pleasantly shocked, and not a few halted their cars to watch the angler. His black hair stood up in tangled sobriety. Below the unruly hair, a brown face smiled encouragement from without hazel eyes, at the Crayfish. The young man wore no shirt. Clad only in his under-breeches, and a pair of hip-boots, he waded in the stream. With an unsympathetic flip he tossed the Crayfish back into the water. The plop was scarcely perceptible. A breeze blew gently across the water. It left little waves where small ripples were beginning to form.

The breeze blew over the watchful ladies' heads. It blew up and down furrows in a newly plowed field and whipped the plowman's shirt. With an added exuberance it dashed into town and raced for the open windows of a great white office building. Dancing among Mr. Richard Envey's correspondence, the breeze helped to cool that worthy's cheeks. When Mr. Envey's temperature had been sufficiently reduced he noticed Miss Kate Lacey.

Miss Lacey was a stenographer. In spite of that she was an exceptional person, for she was pretty, and pretty girls who work are exceptional. Not only could Miss Lacey type, but she always knew where to find Mr. Size. As Mr. Size was al-

ways ready to admit, she had a pestiferous knack for discovering his retreats

"Well Ummhmph," spluttered the irate Mr. Envey who felt his temperature take a leap upward. Before he had completed the last syllable of his short speech Miss Kate Lacee was gone. She went quickly from the room in a panic of cloudy auburn hair. As the neat fitting brown loose knit suit vanished around the door-jam, the keys to Mr. Envey's auto disappeared too.

In the street outside the office, the sun was shining. Soft white clouds wrapped tall buildings in a wooly mist. Behind the mist the sky was blue. Turquoise blue, thought Miss Lacee, as she jumped in a ladylike fashion into Mr. Envey's car. Before starting the motor the young lady waved her hand. Officer Bammy Roick, policeman on the beat, was the object of the wave. The officer waved back.

"'Tis really beautiful," murmured the law officer. He included the whole world with an expansive gesture. With the other hand he wrote out a ticket for an unappreciative motorist. The unlucky driver stared after the long car with the pretty girl at the wheel. He sighed, in harmony with the policeman, but not for the same reason.

The car sped east on the smooth highway. The noon sun grew steadily warmer. Curves flashed into sight and were lost behind the long car. When Miss Lacee noticed the crowd of watchful ladies near a bridge she slowed the vehicle. Making certain, she stopped, and got out. Then she saw Mr. Size. Mr. Size was fishing and paying very little attention to the ladies except out of the corner of his eye. Kate Lacee made her way to the stream edge with a determined stride.

"Hello, Apollo," she said.

"Hello," came the answer. The

answer was followed by a series of plops. The Crayfish figured in the plops.

Under the sun the blue water mellowed in tone. It softened into a warm color on some artist's palette. The crowd of ladies had gone after noting the determined glint in Miss Lacee's eyes. Under the protective halo afforded by a huge willow tree, two figures fished. They stood in mid-stream. One of the figures wore a loose knit suit. The breeze freshened across the water as a brace of Crayfish plopped into the stream.

The breeze blew in gusty waves toward the west. In fact it blew toward town. On a street corner in town a man wiped a florid face with his handkerchief. The breeze fluttered the damp cloth. The man was Mr. Richard Envey; beside him stood Officer Bammy Roick.

"My car's been stolen!" said the excited Richard to the policeman.

The officer mistook Mr. Envey for the mayor. Since the mayor, also was a power in local politics, the policeman became excited.

"This way, sir," avowed the officer of the law, and helped Mr. Richard Envey into the cramped quarters of his motorcycle sidecar. With a roar they headed into the breeze. As they left, another officer in another part of town, tore up a police sticker with Officer Bammy Roick's name signed to it.

The breeze grew quiet as the sun sank behind the willow tree. The stream turned to a deeper shade of marine and grew as quiet as the breeze. That is, with the exception of four little spreading rings of waves where Crayfish had been plopped into the pool beneath the willow tree.

"I'm not the mayor," emphatically denied Mr. Richard Envey.

"Shh, be quiet," whispered Officer Bammy Roick, "I've got a bite." As indeed he had.

Prize Poetry, 1936

Louise Dauner

PORTRAITS

Martha

To her, the sun, the moon, the stars
Grow dim beside a room kept neat.
She will not know the bliss of Heaven
Should dust deface a golden street.

Cat

Serene and blandly satisfied,
With calm, appraising eye,
She sits, complacent in her pride,
And sees the world go by.

Petted and spoiled and comforted,
All homage is her due.
Then when Her Grace is surfeited
She slips away from you.

Snake

I know her well; for is she not
Soul of my soul, my better part?
We see things always eye to eye,
And whisper of them heart to heart.
Often we've caught the vagrant word,
Or wept for breathless Art's dear sake—
But oh, my dear, be careful, do!
Whatever she can get, she'll take!

A Man I Do Not Like.

A thought, against his seamless mind
Beats with a little hollow thud.
But could it enter, it might find
Strangulation in the mud!

Mary

She does not know if quilts or drapes
Combine to match the paper;
And social trends and fashion's shapes
Will usually escape her.
But she will catch the errant grace
In music, poem, or gesture,
And find in a submissive face
A soul's immortal vesture.

SONGS FOR A DAY

Day That Was Mine

Day that was mine—

Gently as maidens' feet upon a hill
Where willows sweetly rustle and are still,
Trailing your dimming hours upon the grass,
Sun-broidered draperies, softly you pass.

Day that was mine,
Leave me one radiant hour, always to keep
Changeless, forever mine . . . So shall I sleep.
Tranquil and comforted, soothed by your touch,
Day that was mine, day I have loved so much!

Pastorale

It was an April morning
When first I saw you pass;
A mad-cap April morning
With young lambs on the grass.

Through meadow-green you wandered,
You, beautiful and young.
All grass and flowers and April
Were hymns to beauty sung.

I was a watchful shepherd:
None stole my lambs away.
But my true heart—I lost it
On that sweet April day.

If You Would Come

If you would come, this luminous flame
Sedately burning at my feet,
These phantoms of a poet's brain,
Like deer on mountains, shy and fleet,
Would burst their bonds of silence numb
If you would come—if you would come.

Upon my window, fingers tap.
Crisp rustlings would betray your tread.
Flame, fantasy and I
Await you; but the hour is sped.
Dead leaves upon the walk, the rain,
These only come again—again.

These are my visitors tonight;
These only come to wish me well.
My book drops leaden in the light
That dies to darkness, and the spell
Falls back on printed things still dumb.
You did not come—you did not come!

Extasie

There is no poetry that bears your name;
No music individual to you
Woos the capricious jade of men's acclaim
With sharp cacophony or accents new.
Yet every poem claims you for its own,
And strain with strain harmonically vies,
Till you, creator and omniscient grown,
Embrace them all, oh beautiful and wise!

REFLECTIONS**Last Watch**

A twisted crushing silence
Broods on the room
Heavy with grief.

Candles, wan and guttering,
Consort with shadows
Where once the echoes of her laughter
Were flickering sunbeams
On limpid water.

In the kitchen
The clocks race,
Swollen with time and self-importance.

Dirge

I did not feel the winter's breath
For you were summer to my veins.
When summer's locusts droned to death,
You were the spring's renewing rains.
But now, the spring with subtle art
Is come, and winter's in my heart.

Sonnet

When this proud flesh shall lie insensate clay,
Poor humbled dust within its narrow berth,
Knowing no sun, moon, stars, or night from day,
Or aught of tranquil radiance in the earth,
Shall all it loved be never loved again—
(The earth's slow melting from the rigorous frost,
The gentle, searching fingers of the rain,
Strong hills that stand sun-crowned, with snow embossed?)

Shall there be sun and moon though eyes be blind?
Shall songs be sung though ears be deaf to hear?
Or shall the finite spaces of the mind,
Dark to each single joy, yet know them dear
In that grim silence when my tryst I keep
With other dust that laid it down to sleep?

The Kid

Virginia Cunning

We used to make a lot of fun of the Kid when he first come to the mill, 'cause he was so green, bein' fresh off the farm. But you couldn't help likin' him when he was tryin' so hard to keep up with the rest of us older fellows. We all knew he didn't have no business in a steel mill.

I'd been workin' in the mill all my life and I could see plain as day that the Kid wasn't strong enough. Oh, he was big enough, tall and big boned, but he didn't have much flesh on him: sort of made you think of a bean plant that had sprouted too fast. Come to find out, he wasn't more than seventeen; he'd lied about his age.

The boss must have known the Kid wasn't old enough and that he couldn't stand the gaff. But labor was scarce then on account of the war and we was runnin' three shifts a day. So the boss took him on.

The Kid made out all the time that the work wasn't too hard. Said he'd always worked just as hard on the farm. I guess that was true, all right, 'cause his old man had T. B. and the Kid and his brother had done all the farmin' until they come out to Pueblo on account of the climate when the old fellow got real bad. But that was different. Bein' outdoors on a farm and workin' hard ain't like workin' in a steel mill, and I noticed that the Kid was gettin' kind of pasty lookin'.

Well, even if we did sort of tease the Kid, we was all pretty nice to him and tried to show him the ropes. All except John Hamby. He was a big fellow; weighed about two hundred and thirty. Hamby was a mean one, always pickin' a fight.

That wasn't all he did either. We found out later that he'd been sellin'

the jobs to the "Hunkies"—they're the Poles and Slavs who work in the mills. Well, Hamby didn't have no more control over the jobs than I did, but he made the dumb "Hunkies" think so, and every week they'd pay him so they wouldn't get fired.

Hamby was a bad egg all the way through, and I knew he was layin' for the Kid. He didn't have any reason; it was just his natural meanness. He kept doin' little nasty things like borrowin' the Kid's tools without askin', or workin' so much faster than the Kid, bein' new, couldn't keep up with him. I thought maybe the boss mechanic would notice and say something to Hamby, but if he did, he never opened his mouth about it.

I could see Hamby was just tryin' to start a fight and I says to him one day, "John, why don't you lay off the Kid."

But he just snarls and says, "If you know what's good for you, you'll mind your own business."

So I warned the Kid. I says, "Kid, Hamby's layin' for you. I'd be mighty careful if I was you, and I wouldn't let him get under my skin. It wouldn't be smart business to tangle with that guy, I'm tellin' you." Hamby kept on tryin' to pick a fight but the Kid was smart and he didn't have no luck.

One day, though, Hamby was cleanin' the sewers under the rollers. Ever been in a steel mill? Well, the rolls are cooled by water and the scales drop off the steel into the sewers as the steel goes through the rolls. John was cleanin' the sewer. There's a hole about twenty feet deep under the rolls. The Kid had been workin' on a valve, and he'd set his torch on a roll. When he came back for it, it was gone. He

asked a "Hunky" workin' there if he had seen it.

The "Hunky" says "Yes. I seen it. Boss Takem." So the Kid went over to where Hamby was workin' on the sewer hole.

"John," he asks, "have you seen my torch? I set one down on the roll and the 'Hunky' said you got it."

John turned real quick and said, "I didn't get your damned torch," and he hit the Kid in the chest. The Kid wasn't hurt much, but he was standin' with his heels against an empty rack, and when Hamby hit him so unexpected, it knocked him over into the rack. For a minute the Kid just set there in the rack, lookin' kind of silly, and then he reached around and pulled a hammer out of his pocket. First thing you know, he climbed out of the rack and he hit Hamby in the head with that hammer.

Hamby went down in a heap, backwards and hangin' over the rolls, and his head rolled over on one side. But he was a tough guy, I'll say that, and in a minute he sort of grunted and got up and started after the Kid again. Of course, the Kid hit him again with the hammer. Well, Hamby kept coming back for more, and every time the Kid slugged him with that hammer. He was a sight, bloody as a stuck hog, blood spurtin' out of his head everywhere the Kid had hit him. Finally, after about five times, the Kid knocked him out and some of the men got him and took him to the hospital.

After it was all over, the Kid didn't say nothin' at all. He just sat on the rolls with the hammer still in his hands and he got all white like he was scared to death. I guess maybe he thought he'd killed Hamby. As it turned out, Hamby was laid up for a couple of weeks, but he was one of those guys who's just too mean to die.

After a bit the boss mechanic come in. He was a Frenchman. The boys had told him about the fight, I guess, because he set down on one of the rolls and nodded his head for the Kid to come on over. The Kid went, sort of dazed like, and the boss motioned for him to set down beside him. The Kid thought for sure then that he was gonna be fired, cause he knew there wasn't supposed to be no fightin' in the mill.

"You had a fight?" the boss asks.

The Kid answered straight out, but kind of hopelessly, "Yes, I had a fight."

"Well," says the boss in his soft voice, soft as a woman's and with that funny French accent of his, "you didn't use a big enough hammer. The next time, when he come back, if he bother you, you no use a hammer. You pick up a rail—and you kill him!"

But the doggondest thing had happened—the Kid had fainted clean away!

LOVE

"I'm seventeen, I'm old enough
To know love never dies,"
Said Paul to Margaret as she heard
His words with widened eyes.

He kissed her. Stars came tumbling
down
And tingled in his head.
And Paul went home and couldn't
think
Of anything he'd said.

He dreamed that they were king and
queen—
Two glittering crowns—
She wore blue satin—
* * * * *

And Margaret went up to her room
And did her Latin.

—Mary Catherine Funkhouser

For Blood and Wine Are Red

William DeClark

The kitchen, bright with two clean windows, was cut neatly from a wing on the second floor of an apartment house. Scoured utensils, shiny though bruised, were decorously placed where they belonged—larger pieces arranged conveniently beneath a sideboard, smaller ones hanging uniformly—along a remote side of a cabinet bearing white china.

In the room's center a plain covered table was arranged for an informal dinner. One deck of silverware and an empty water tumbler—nothing more—graced the cloth, while a newly enameled chair awaited, in a straight-backed sort of way, its occupant.

Briskly, considerately, as though a gentleman were behind it, the door opened and a young man walked in. Immediately he paused, head lifted, eyes closed, breathing in a sensitive, exploring fashion. Though no one but himself seemed to be on the second floor, the diner gathered, from thin aromas, that his meal was ready.

Carefully, so as not to disturb his reverie or the staged quiet, the slender man drew a shade. With the act, he darkened another corner in his mind. Then, gently tinkling his knife against the glass and listening for distant echoes, the man sat down to wait.

Dull foot treads began presently to ascend the hall stairway. They sounded methodical and old as they grew heavier; yet a note of rebellious middle class security was also present. The young man who waited was able to detect, or so he believed, every thought expressed in those steps, those ideas in evolution. Each beat had a meaning, while a drag on the landing more clearly revealed all his caller's emotions.

Now, decided the man as big fingers tapped at the door, we shall see. "Come in, please."

The request, though hardly audible, may have carried itself to the person beyond the door. Again, mere habit might easily have caused the solidly aproned housekeeper to enter and place her tray in silence. The woman moved slowly. Every turn of her elderly body, every touch was done with a deliberation that resembled a ritual. When she laid a salad beside the fork, it remained there just long enough for her tenant to frown. Deftly she edged back the plate, where an approving nod allowed it to stay. The wine her man in Room 2 would not permit being moved, even off the tray. He must do that himself, using a refined form of the same ritual. Fruit salad and wine constituted his dinner.

Satisfied at last that the dishes were arranged in accordance with his fancy, the man spoke. His voice, when he suggested the patient housekeeper had a new problem, was pleasing and direct. "So you have been having trouble with the Wisconsin nephew, who arrived this morning? Wouldn't worry so much about the boy but rather try divorcing him from a few meals. Or send him to bed at five sometime. He would soon mind."

Restrained as she usually was in her tenant's presence, the woman replied that she would do as he thought best, because after all he probably knew a great deal about unruly children. "If you want anything else," she concluded blandly, retiring, "let me know, of course. I can always hear you ting that glass. Today I was down cellar when you asked dinner—."

She went out, glad the ordeal was

over. As the housekeeper began the heavy descent toward her apartment, she regretted the nearest drugstore library hadn't a book on how to rid one's house of male renters. Peculiar, that fellow. Kind and oh, very genteel. Always paid on the first of the month, too. But somehow the man annoyed her with his unnatural insight.

Who told him the nephew had come, or that he was from Wisconsin? There had been a little squabble when the boy wanted his own way over some trifling matter, but how did the man upstairs know! More than once upon entering his room the woman had met a penetrating question, as well as a reply so accurate it might have been her own. Keyholes provided fonts of handy information; surely, though, the inquisitive tenant had little access to them when she held a monopoly.

The boarder's nonsensical requests often disturbed his housekeeper. That time he ordered her to pick up and save regardless of condition, all old shoes, was an example. Nor could the unwashed, raw cucumber served in a green goblet be quite forgotten. Again, a summary of the man's habits brought something like fascination coupled with a desire to scold. The housekeeper struck open her door, determined he was inhuman. Did any real man sit in his unused kitchen from morning until night, when the world had enough real work for everybody? Well, here was a lady who refused waiting at all hours for summons which at times grew so imperious they came to her in dreams. "Later," her mind schemed, "I'll say to him politely, 'Sorry, but you will have to give the apartment up. I've been offered more for it. And you know how us poor landladies must skimp to get along.'"

The small kitchen was becoming less bright and sharp. Living shadows dulled the pans, while the room's least outstanding highlights already

had been erased. A bit of yellow sunshine, like a watchman casually making his last round before going home, looked through a tear in the drawn shade. It went no further than a large human eye, very red and watery. The man in Room 2 was holding a wine glass beside his nose.

The man in Room 2 had, within a period of several hours, effected a change in his surroundings but twice. First, as is known, he partly darkened the kitchen by lowering a shade. He did that because frayed curtains, dented pans, scratches and other signs of ugliness so nicely pointed by light, offended him. His second wish to alter things was acted upon when he left the table and carried his untasted salad across the room, where it was left on the floor..

Tailored legs out at length, feet crossed, the young man sat about as gracefully as one is able in a graceless chair.. Though long minutes passed, he continued to look into the red wine. The glass, held close before one eye, grew pale, almost pink, when the owner moved it in line with the spot of sunshine. Viewed against a more sombre background it turned blood red; and when the man lowered his glass to see over the rim, it was black. Delightful experience, this finding of moods in even a cheap wine! Hereafter he would spend, the pleased connoisseur figured thoughtfully, perhaps one hour each afternoon with the salads, two with the shoes and three examining the wine. The last must be reserved for semi-darkness from now on.

Still holding his wine, the young man turned wearily to the salad. Half a day old, the little plate of nuts and fruit there on the floor looked withered. His rare discovery that a common housekeeper made really enchanting wine, took away the man's early love. He removed his eyes from the damp failure under the sink and thought back. Not long

ago, fruit salads were blessed. Almonds, white satiny almonds, so truly expressed the symbol of religion. And the grapes! Glorious in their powder grey bloom and vigor. He wished the skins were thinner, that the fruit had no bitter seeds. Life was like those grapes: sweet, only near the surface.

Recrossing his feet the esthete tried a new approach. What brought this sure feeling that salad needed spiritual depth, whereas worn, muddy shoes seemed immortal? One could hardly say the former was impure. No, quite the reverse; it was refined: overly so. That was it. Preparation destroyed its soul, made one certain the divine spirit was never had on a dish. A stout shoe now, cast off by some individual whose use for it was past—

His mind probed, discarded, rested for a short while longer. Then he sipped the wine. What disappointment, a vital organic shock to find it thin!

The room had almost taken on the color of night; what few objects remained were fast turning to black lumps as the man arose and flung wide his drink. Though he cared not at all where the watered stuff fell, he marked its swish against the window shade. Then a straight chair, following the rule that a period closes each sentence, smacked over and left the room more still than ever.

Because the man in Room 2 was aware his housekeeper diluted the wine, just as she greedily tricked other tenants to make "pin money," he felt stern anger marching. His fingers pressed the drained glass tightly; his eyes dilated. Alone in a cold room, the man's mind started revolving. Faster it turned, white sparks flying. Soon it hummed.

Directly outside the kitchen windows, several minutes later a street lamp flared in. Its poor light set half the rooms furnishings in relief,

found a young man whose back alone was visible. The closed door, defined only at its base by the gas lit hall, had won his interest. Revolt turned under before a wise elation. He knew!

It was a simple matter to tiptoe noiselessly around the furniture and stand rigidly at one side of the keyhole. Equally simple was it to fix an unsteady knob by merely bearing hard. Tense, expectant, hand firm, the man in the kitchen attuned brain and ear. He heard a scrape; classified it. Cloth brushed wood paneling, and he added that to his composition. A restless shifting of feet outside sent him the keynote. Ready for action, the tall young man swung in his door.

Done as the work was, smartly, the bent figure on the threshold had little time for composure. She raised her face above the keyhole level with all the brazen dignity of a child caught stealing pennies. Arms settling on a bold front, the housekeeper met a faintly surprised tenant.

To be confronted at the wrong time by a person whom one feels morally obliged to turn out, requires tact. The apartment owner, however, through years of experience with prowlers who managed to come from behind when she was inspecting their quarters, had learned that ignorance is innocence. Spying? Pardon, you are mistaken, was a convenient defense. But she needn't say that when the boarder who waited for her to proceed, smiled readily.

"I think you should know," began the woman, "that I can get nine dollars cash on Room 2. Three dollars more than you pay." She would like to have whined a bit, but did not. Whining hurt one's prestige, though in special cases it might sometimes be used to show poverty's ragged skirt.

"Yes, I understand," he said good

naturedly. "You deserve more. A great deal more. As I can't give it, I'll leave tomorrow. No ordinary woman can support herself on your tiny income. By the way—" Taking release indifferently, the gentleman leaned on the door, swaying idly. He noted the gas jet airily blue, from behind his extended glass. The wine, his wine, gave this crippled flame life. The gas in turn aided its vulgar employer to cheat others. Both fed as parasites. They were better off dead.

An archway hid the man's features. He had stood there during the whole interview, politely attentive. "By the way," he pursued, rather keenly, "there's a really unimportant affair about some wine. Let's step down the hall a way and discuss it."

Together they moved along the bare floor. Enmity was non-existent. Having neared a broom closet, the man stopped. His housekeeper drew up also, wondering why he glanced about so often, why he asked where everyone was tonight. She was sorry, now, he must leave. The poor, lonely chap would miss the few friends who tolerated his unsocial behavior. Was she right in pitying him, a far away idea nudged. Gas light made him look an evil cat minus whiskers; and his eyes were queer.

* * * * *

Back in his kitchen, the occupant of Room 2 set the door ajar. The place was still unlighted, save for an infirm street reflection. Singing an operatic measure, the man let up his shade. Happy when he thought of the fresh wine he had secured, yet remorseful at the sight of a deserted neighborhood, he weighed his glass. Upon this occasion, company would be welcome.

Good, that wine appeared! Ripe and hearty and thick. The lamplight saw him drink it, blinked down when it saw the sticky red wine coagulate on his lips and turn brown. A hall gas flame could not blink back; it was out.

Pie-Eyed

Jane Pfeiffer

It's the funniest darn thing I ever saw, the way Flossie and Fanny Widdett haven't gotten over their old fight yet. Why good grief, every one in town likes Fanny and every one in town likes Flossie, but they still won't even look at each other. After all, they're twins and they're gettin' up in years—sixty-five if they're a day; yet you don't hear a peep out of 'em. They just act like the other one wasn't around.

My husband used to kid 'em a lot when they were younger. Fanny would come a walkin' past the store, petticoats a swishin', her long nose lookin' like a blue steel razor blade, and Gus would say, "Why hello there, Flossie. My, but you're lookin' purty today," and Fanny would say just like drippin' icicles, "Mr. Gussmeyer, I am Fanny. Pray don't suggest that I resemble that hypocritical sister of mine." Then she'd give her bustle a flip and sail on. Lordy, but Gus would nearly die a laughin'.

Well, they have been entertainin' the town like that ever since they had their split about—let me see—thirty years ago. That's the longest time to stay mad I ever heard of. You see the trouble is they're just alike and neither one will be the first to give in. They've always done everything just the same ever since they were kids. Dressed alike, talked alike, and looked alike, but fireworks sure broke loose when they both took a hankerin' for the same man.

Sam Blake was his name and even though he wasn't much, they both went crazy tryin' to get him serious about them. If you want my opinion, it was because he was the first new male to come to town since they were too young to pay any attention to such things. What added to the trouble was that both Fanny and

Flossie were thirty when they met Sam and they knew that Sam was their last chance. Every one in town married or unmarried knew them. Fanny and Flossie always said that if they could only go to another place where everybody didn't know who they were, they'd show the stronger sex a thing or two. "Yes-siree," they said, "we'd snatch ourselves a husband quicker than a cat."

As I said before, they did everything alike. And one thing they were good at was bakin'. They could make the most gorgeous lemon meringue pies you ever saw. The lemon was as gold as butter and the meringue was always heaped in snowy sparkling mounds on top. Why, Gus used to say and still swears, that when he eats a Widgett pie he can't see who's sittin' across the table from him, the dang pie is so thick.

Folks say that it was those pies that started the whole thing, 'cause Sam Blake wouldn't even have looked at them if it hadn't been for the pies. But that's where fate came in. There was somethin' inborn in Sam that just naturally cried out to lemon pies. I 'spect, too, he liked home-cooked food more'n most people 'cause he travelled all the time. Sam was about forty and he had been a travelin' man for years, that's probably why he went to the home-baked pie social that night that the Methodist church gives every year. We girls always got excited about the pie social 'cause they always give a prize for the best pie and after the contest is over you can give it to the man you like best, so you see that makes it kind of romantic.

Well, the minute, the very second that Sam walked in the door, he headed straight for Fanny and Flossie's table. And I'm tellin' you I've never seen two girls in more of a dither. They liked to died when they saw that nice lookin' fellow stridin' toward them, smilin' real broad, with a hungry look in his eye.

They were both flutterin' their hands and smirkin' and tryin' their level best to look pretty. And, the longer Sam looked at those pies the more he smiled and the hungrier he looked.

Well, we all nearly fainted when by accident, or on purpose, none of us have been able to figure out Fannie knocked Flossie's pie on the floor. It didn't make much of a sound, it just kind of oozed out of the pan. Lordy, it was so quiet in that room then that you could almost hear it oozin'. Fanny started to giggle 'cause she thought right away, well there's no doubt about who's goin' to have Sam now. But, she sure stopped gigglin' when she looked up at Flossie.

Flossie was madder 'an a peacock that's lost his tail feathers. Her face was white and you couldn't even see her mouth it was pressed so tight; and her flat bony chest was risin' and fallin' like a barometer in a typhoon. I bet all she could think of was that her sister had ruined her pie on purpose and that now she'd lost the only man she'd ever have.

We were scared, Flossie was so mad. The two sisters were just standin' there lookin' at each other when, all of a sudden I saw Flossie's hand reach down on the table and pick up that other lemon pie, and before any one knew what was happening she threw that pie with all the strength she had, right in the direction of Fanny's mid-section. The horrible part was that Sam Blake was standin' right next to Fanny, and when she saw that pie come flyin' through the air she ducked.

Well, you can understand now why Flossie and Fanny Widgett haven't spoken to each other since that night. Sam was madder 'an hops at first but he saw the funny side after a while and he still tells the story about the two old maids who thought he looked so hungry for pie that they even gave him a bath in it.

Wooden Pillow, By Carl Fallas

A Review

Mary Catherine Funkhouser

Life, in the village of Kanagawa, is presented in swift, colorful strokes to Mr. Grier, a young English visitor in Japan. Unlike the figures in the quaint Japanese prints, however, he learns that these people have hearts beating in them and that their wan, oval faces conceal deep and sensitive feelings. Like a boy at the theatre, he enjoys the panorama. He loves to listen to the legend of the swimmer, Ito, and his sweetheart, Tekona, whom the people believed to be a fox woman. He is amused by Chika, the girl acrobat who grew too clumsy to tumble with her famous brothers. He is entertained by the Gieshas at the House Of The Playful Kitten, and horrified by the shriveled hag, Toni, with her black polished teeth. Grier is even mildly charmed by Setsu San's note, "In duty to my parents, I return your love which I am not allowed to accept. Nevertheless, indelibly in my heart is the memory of your august image, white as a cloud fleece." But always he returns unmoved to the comforts of his hotel, vowing to his friend Jessel, a young German doctor of philosophy, that these people are yellow puppets—immaculate dolls. And the women! Who cared about their exaggerated obeisance to their spouses—their graceful comedies in courtesy—their silk kimonos embroidered with leaf and bird—their shining convergent eyes. Did they ever feel anything?

Then one warm night when rumbling volcanoes are shaking the hotel guests out of their beds, when a white owl beats its wings against the embroidered screens of Grier's room,

he climbs to the window of the naive and lovely O Kaya San to find out why she always looks so sad. He discovers that she cannot speak English, so to tease her, he carries away her tiny padded head-rest, and around this wooden pillow is spun an enchanting love story.

The background is perfect. Miniature hills, toy bridges, and century-old trees a foot high; Nanten bushes, into whose curling leaves one whispers to dispel unhappy dreams; plum trees and cherry blossoms; wisteria and iris feasts; the season of the Gentle Rain, the anniversary of the Ghost Tide, all weave a charming picture of Japanese life. Grier learns that O Kaya San's love for him is nobler than his—finer than any feeling he can ever achieve. "Not this love of kisses, this low class love," old Marikara tells him, "we love for many lives—even in all the lives beyond this."

The story is a series of Japanese pictures, intermingled with curious legends, and with the fragrance of wisteria and the chirruping song of the cicadas running through it.

When Grier sails, the proud and tiny O Kaya San, afraid that he suspects her grief, shields her head with her gay kimono sleeve to hide what is happening to her face. The second day at sea he has forgotten her, and as he drops an orange from the top deck of the steamer to a group of chattering Japanese girls, he grins casually at their gracious response, "Be courteously pleased to accept our thanks for the gift of the honorable orange."



Life With Father: A Critical Essay

Doris Goldsmith

"Forthright, downright, upright (is) Father (in this) beguiling book of sketches about life with that gusty household tyrant of the eighties." ¹ Those of us who made the acquaintance of Clarence Day senior in "God And My Father" are glad to meet again this "irascible, loud-voiced family tyrant," ² and will certainly not be disappointed in the amount of fun, verve, and innocent hilarity with which Clarence Day junior has packed every chapter of "Life With Father."

Clarence Day junior, author and cartoonist, was born in New York city, in 1874. His heritage, a good one, makes it seem not at all surprising that he became a writer. Benjamin Day, his grandfather, was founder of the "New York Sun," and Ben Day, his uncle, was originator of the engraving process which today bears his name. As Day junior was the son of a well-to-do family (his father was a Wall street broker), no special praise is due him for any spectacular climb into a place in New York society. He attended St. Paul's school, in New Hampshire, before graduating from Yale and receiving a seat on the New York stock exchange as a gift from his father. This gift was not truly an appreciated one, however, and soon Day junior rebelled and (as so many young men are wont to do) joined the navy. Life on a training ship proved a jinx for it was there that Day contracted the arthritis which made him an invalid for the rest of his life. His indomitable will undaunted, Day bought a ranch and went for daily rides about it propped upon a pony. Even when he returned to New York his condition made it impossible for him to return to his father's business, and he turned to writing. As sec-

retary of his class of Yale alumni, he startled his fellow members by compiling actual facts about them instead of the usual ribald nonsense. Though Day was quite surprised to find his short stories and poems accepted and published, he took advantage of his talent and soon became conductor of the book department for the "Metropolitan magazine," and, until he was discharged, a writer of financial material on the "New Republic." Until he proved his talent by launching his literary career at the comparatively youthful age of thirty-six, with "This Simian World," he wrote short sketches and verses which he illustrated with "Sinister drawings of shapeless men and beasts." ³ Day's family never approved of his writing and he moved to an apartment on Riverside Drive where he lived with his wife and small daughter. His death, following an attack of bronchial pneumonia, came in December, 1935, soon after the publication of the currently popular "Life With Father."

Although Clarence Day Jr. was physically an invalid, he lived his mental life with the points of view and interests of a man in perfect health. He "gave back life to his parents and youth to his mother. This was done with affection and gave a touch of loveliness and unsweetened tenderness." ⁴ Yet with all this, Day did not reminisce in a manner which ordinarily leaves a bad taste in one's mouth. A realist living in a world of realism, "he obviously enjoyed the here and now and knew that flesh has always been heir to aches and pains. He was (definitely) a philosopher, not a sentimentalist," ⁵ and "few have had his telescopic vision for the human being behind every situation." ⁶ His kindliness was American, his pessim-

ism the hedging of an optimist who saw that human nature would never catch up with its promises; his humor was the delight in paradox of a man who had lived all his life in a comfortable society that was quite sure it was master of its own fate. He was twentieth century America philosophizing upon the nineteenth, satiric, yet sympathetic, in a way in which no man of a leaner, less humorous time will ever be able to equal.

And so Clarence Day Jr.'s story of life with his father embodies a flavor of the social history of the day that seems ages past when "fathers commanded, children obeyed, and mild mothers slyly ruled both,"⁷ with his memories of the "humorous, kind-hearted man whose loud dominance did not make his wife afraid of him and whose tyrannical dealing with his sons did not spoil their admiration for him."⁸

One reads the first chapter of the book with qualms as to the course of the remaining chapters. The lines of the pictures smack of revolt—and of monkey shins. But soon the author begins to roll into one episode after another with father appearing in all of them true to his character—moody, good and bad humored, roaring, swearing; in fact, sometimes one suspects him of being irrational.

The book has no plot, just a wide range of subjects which cover nearly everything—from father almost killed riding Rob Roy (the horse that was quite as stubborn as father) to father charging into an employment agency and demanding of the astonished clerk, "Where do you keep 'em—the cooks?" He found one and she remained twenty-six years before departing for the place in Heaven that father was sure God had reserved for her.

Clarence Day Sr., with his offices in Wall street and his clubs ("What the saloon was to poor men and what coffee houses were to Londoners, his club was to father") a fixed part of

his life, believed that the father's world was law, and women who studied current events wasted their time in reading them and his in discussing them (he firmly believed that Woodrow Wilson was an anarchist.). He opined that God had made several classes and that the working man should keep his place. In fact, "his main principle of life was that there should be no nonsense about it. No principle ever took a stiffer beating." Even God didn't offer the proper cooperation, and more than once when father was suffering with one of his roaring headaches did his family hear him shout, "Have mercy. I say have mercy, damn it!" "As piety, that is deplorable. As characterization it is magnificent."⁹

Father was a typical member of Victorian society. When he came home after a hard day at his offices he felt that he had every right to expect to find a household that showed some semblance of sanity. Did he find it? Definitely no. More often than not the house appeared to be a stage set for scenes bordering on any one of "the infinite varieties of pandemonium!" That really left him in the position of a staunch windmill, with a family full of Quixotes forever tilting at him. Imagine the slightest traces of sanity in a household where Clarence Sr. was constantly opening Clarence Jr.'s mail, where Clarence Sr. was always receiving and declining invitations to lunch with total strangers. That telephone was a "damned nuisance" and father expected every call to be for him. Imagine father arriving home to find guests in the house. He heartily disapproved of guests. His remedy for them was either to send them to a hotel or to put them on some train headed for a large and very empty desert. "If they wanted to roam, the damn gypsies, give 'em a hand, let 'em roam."¹⁰ If it wasn't one type of guest, it was another. "Dear Vinnie," his wife, might be

giving a musicale. How father hated having his home cluttered up with musicians. Even if there were no guests father might expect no end of trouble just with the family. Perhaps it was the fabulously inexpensive rug that mother had bought at a fabulously expensive price from an obliging Armenian. Any one of these things were capable (and often did) of sending father into a blithering rage, when he had arrived in search of a "little damned peace."

There we have father for what he really is—a living man. "He is not a humorous subject, certainly not a potted parent, but one of those justly perceived human beings who brim with life, who over-ride others by sheer exuberance, so intent on living that they never mirror the other mind or other will, getting their own way by tactics often hugely infantile, triumphing over all of them (by irrationality), unless a wife oppose them by another irrationality, this time feminine, or else a David come along with the sling of a comedy and lay the giant low."¹¹ He was ruled by being humored (little did he realize it) as his wife lived her own life and his children obeyed him, all the while taking care not to let him sap their personalities of originality.

There isn't much more to say about "Life With Father" than has already been said with sturdy conviction. Critics have unanimously admired the book, as I do now, and have reviewed it more competently and thoroughly than I could possibly. Each of them has the same idea as to the practical value of the book as they do its splendidly written chain of incidents.

With its setting in one of the world's largest cities during the most interesting and enjoyable period of American life in the last century, this story without a plot carries its reader breathlessly through from chapter one to the last paragraph.

If there is an outstanding fault in the book it is that it is too noisy. At times it makes one tend to hold his ears. It is the kind of book one wants to read aloud so that he may laugh with his listener without being thought foolish. No one can read the book and not say of at least one chapter, "Why, he must have been thinking of our family when he wrote this."

The book is homey, yet it is like a thriller-ride—windy, noisy, over in a hurry, and you want to go again.

Footnotes

1. New York Times, Aug. 4, '35.
2. Booklist, 32:10, Sept. '35.
3. Time, 27:56, Jan. 6, '36.
4. New Republic, 84:135, Sept. 11, '35.
5. Current History, 42:IV, Sept. '35.
6. S R L, 13:8, Jan. 4, '36.
7. Catholic World, 142:508, Jan. '36.
8. Yale Review, Autumn, '35, p. 193.
9. New York Times, op. cit.
10. New York Times—op. cit.
11. New York Times, op. cit.

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The Dinner

Melvin Cranfill

"Why of course I'll pass the bread, Doras. And the meat and potatoes and salad. Why, no it doesn't bother me. You're sure that's all?"

Yes, of course I'll pass her the meat and bread and potatoes. And I'll pass her the salad and the pie and the jam. In fact, I'll probably be passing her my hat before I'm through. No, of course it doesn't bother me. I've passed so much stuff now that my arms are completely worn out. So far I haven't had time even to unfold my napkin. And now, just when I am getting ready to take one nice bite of something to eat, Doras has to sit down at the table and have everything passed all over again.

Yes, the dear girl has been out in the kitchen helping ten or twenty of my little cousins get themselves fixed. Wasn't that just too awfully sweet of her? It just goes to illustrate the motherly instinct that lies within her. Heaven knows that she has plenty of material with which to illustrate her motherly instinct when she starts messing around Uncle Barry's children.

Uncle Barry has been married about fourteen years, I guess; and out of those fourteen years, he has worked about five. He's dependable, though! Very dependable! With every spring, I can depend on being told that a new "little stranger" is coming to visit Uncle Barry's. So now the dependable old boy has brought friend wife and all the little kiddies over to eat dinner with us. And so here I sit, wedged in like a sardine, between two hundred and forty pounds of Uncle Barry and two hundred and ten pounds of Grandpa.

"Why no, Uncle Barry, I don't mind your elbow. It's not in my way

one bit. I don't even notice it."

No, of course I don't mind his elbow. The good Lord knows that no one minds having two inches of bone jammed into his ribs when he's trying to eat. No, it doesn't bother me one bit! Why should he think that it bothers me to have a person jar the food off my fork just when I have almost reached my mouth with it? Why, it's a pleasure! It cultivates, within one, the art of being alert. Pugilists shadow-box to keep in shape; acrobats stick to plain calisthenics; but for a good general condition-keeper, give me a half hour of lively elbow-dodging at a crowded dinner-table. Ten minutes is really enough when this horse of an uncle of mine is doing the pitching.

"What's that, Uncle Barry? Would I like to hold little Everett? Sure, you bet I would, I'm simply nuts about kids. I guess I inherit that from Dad. Just hand the little tyke over to me. Cootchie-coo, honey. Cootchie-coo, Everett."

Yes, "cootchie-coo" you little devil. Didn't you ever hear the word before? It's a word originated to make brats like you chirp up and smile. I sit here and "cootchie-coo" until I'm black in the face; yet, you don't even bat an eye. That's it! Grab at my new fifty-cent tie with your gummy hands, and then wipe it all over my face.

But maybe I shouldn't feel like this toward you. After all, you're too little to help yourself. You were dragged into this howling mob of Indians without being consulted the least little bit. I guess you're not so bad after all. Why do you look at me like that? You look for all the world like Mark Anthony must have looked when he was planning revenge on Brut....Oh!

"Oh, that's all right, Uncle Barry. Yeah, maybe you had better take him. No, you won't either. I was just telling Mother yesterday that this old gray suit of mine should be sent to the cleaners."

"What's that, Mother? Sure, I'll dish the ice-cream. No, no help will be needed. You remember last reunion, don't you?"

Yes, I'm tickled to death for the opportunity to shovel this cement. I'd even play with snakes to escape that mob of hoodlums for a while. We ought to have a hotel for this congregation of Uncle Barry's, so

one could hear himself think. Oh, Oh! here goes that dirty old washcloth. And was it wet! Oh, well, what they don't know won't hurt them.

"Now is everybody served? Well I guess I'll go upstairs and get some lessons; these teachers have to be humored, you know. No, I don't think I want any ice-cream. I'm full to the top. Well, so long. I'll probably be studying when you leave. And do come over for dinner more often, won't you? We always seem to have so much fun."

Four Thoughts On Four Themes

Charles Aufderheide

I

Just now, across the street, a black cat jogged along. It stopped for a moment; silent, soft, its tail a slightly moving velvet rope. Suddenly the house opposite wasn't a house at all, but a jungle of trees; and the cat was no longer a cat, but a bundle of wild emotion—a lithe, black panther, crouching, tail twitching—. But quickly it turned and was over the fence and gone.

II

I saw a pair of young lovers sitting uncomfortably on a solid, hard wood bench. I, living on a six by six grass plot, saw young lovers in unbroken moonlight. Mentally, I saw a huge tree felled, sawed up, cut, nailed into hard park benches. With my eyes, I saw in the distance a stunted tree surrounded by an iron fence. And I saw the lovers in unbroken moonlight, sitting on a hard, wood bench, look longingly at the distant tree.

III

We have a huge bunch of paper flowers in a black wall-pocket. They are red-orange and purple-blue. Outside, there are huge bunches of real flowers, red-orange and purple-blue. They are alike, yet different. I pick a real one and it wilts. The paper one still stands bright and stiff.

IV

(From Amy Lowell's "Patterns")

Christ! What are patterns for? Lady in a garden with echoes of the cannon-boom in her ears. She steadies herself with a thin hand touched to a rose and with dry eyes stretches herself to the pattern. Turning ever so slightly she dismisses the messenger with, "See that this fellow has refreshments." With steady eyes she watches the messenger depart, while in her ears there is the continual boom of the cannon and his "So sorry, miss." Then she walks stiffly down the path of her garden, very erect, very calm. Christ! I think, what are patterns for?

Stones to Mark the Path

I

Love is a graceful hound. He comes
Swiftly, silently, through the wood,
Tracking down all defenseless things,
Drinking sustenance from their blood.

And with relentless claws, with teeth
Polished and strong, to the very bone
He rends the quivering flesh, then leaves
His victim's pitiful skeleton.

Scurrying creatures of the wood,
At last you will find yourselves undone
By a bewitching, lovely hound,
A murderer cloaked in beauty. Run!

II

Across the mysterious crystal of my heart,
Shadow without substance, you must pass,
Leaving the crystal empty when you go,
Not to be held a captive in the glass.

Only a bright dream flashing over! Then
Glowing, an empty symbol, against the night,
The delicate globe will shatter, will become
Pieces with jagged edges, diffused with light.

III

Marking my path with crumbs, a child
Lovely and lost, I came into
A tangled wood, whence is no way out,
Now that the night is deepening blue;
Now that the wild birds flying over
Call to each other with alien cries.
I alone in the world of creatures
Stand forsaken by all the wise.
If I had filled my pocket full
Of stones to guide me back to town!
But the birds have eaten all my crumbs,
And the wind shrieks, and the night comes down.

—Betty Richart

Robert Frost, An Authentic Voice in Modern American Poetry

Robert W. Ayers

Although best known as the chief interpreter of the new New England, Robert Frost was born in San Francisco, California, March 26, 1875. At the age of ten he came East to the towns and hills where, for eight generations, his forefathers had lived. After graduating from the high school at Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1892, Frost entered Dartmouth college, where he remained only a few months. The routine of study was too much for him and, determined to keep his mind free for creative work, he decided to earn his living and become a bobbin boy in one of the mills at Lawrence. He had already begun to write poetry; a few of his verses had appeared in *The Independent*. But the strange soil-flavored quality which even then distinguished his lines was not relished by the editors, and the very magazines to which he sent poems that today are famous, rejected his verse with amazing unanimity. For twenty years Frost continued to write his highly characteristic work in spite of the discouraging editorial apathy, and for twenty years he remained unknown to the literary world.

In 1912, after fifteen years, during which time he had gone to Harvard, farmed, made shoes, taught school, and other things, Frost moved to England. For the first time in his life Frost moved in a literary world. London was a hot-bed of poets; groups merged, dissolved, and separated over night; controversy and creation was in the air. Frost took his collection of poems to a publisher with few hopes, went back to the suburban town of Beaconsfield and turned to other matters.¹ A few months later *A Boy's Will* (1913), his first

collection, was published and Frost was recognized at once as one of the few authentic voices of modern poetry.²

Little information on critical opinion of Frost's first volume may be gleaned from reviews, since this volume seems to have not "made" American reviewers' columns. Those few reviewers that did recognize *A Boy's Will* made a further recognition of Frost as being original in outlook and idiom in spite of certain reminiscences of Browning. Chiefly lyrical, this volume, lacking the concentrated emotion and feeling of Frost's later volumes, serves in its best capacity as a significant introduction of his next book, *North of Boston*.³

North of Boston, like its successor, contains much of the best poetry in power of character and symbolism of our time, according to most critics. Rich in actualities, richer in its spiritual values, every line moves with the "double force of observation and implication."

It is by this "observation and implication," sometimes more briefly and tersely termed the synecdoche that Frost likes to be known. The lines of *North of Boston* betray an extensive use of synecdoche, and it is through the use of this device that Frost achieves such subtle variations in tone of speech. The delicate shades of emphasis of *North of Boston* are almost indiscernible in their changes because of the way in which Mr. Frost presents an entire scene by giving only a significant detail.

All Frost's characters illustrate this power of character and symbolism. Like the worn-out incompetent in "The Death of the Hired Man,"

the country boy in "Birches" who, Frost suspects, has been swinging on the birches that "bend to left and right," or the positive, tight-lipped old lady in "The Black Cottage," his people are always intensified through the poet's circumlocutory but precise psychology. They remain close to their soil. Frost's monologues, written in a conversational blank verse, establish a link between vernaculars and the language of literature, and imbue his characters (especially those in *North of Boston*) with much desired realism.⁴

Mountain Interval, Frost's next volume which had the ever evident New England background, consisted of five long poems in the narrative style of *North of Boston*, in addition to many shorter poems in the manner of a *Boy's Will*.⁵ Here the siffling and naive colloquialisms of his "backwoods" characters, which are presented with almost classical restraint by the author, bring out an essential spiritual quality in the subjects' lives. This spirituality must have been felt by Frost to be a quality of the land that bore them.⁶

In the production of *New Hampshire* (1923), which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for the best volume of poetry published during that year, Frost produced a thing which was at the same time local and universal.⁷ This holds true on any point on any criticism. His characters are New Englanders and non-New Englanders, young and old, all types; his locales, though usually New England, have refreshing exceptions; he includes heat and humor, passion and cold reason; he displays both biting observation and wise tolerance. All in all, *New Hampshire* served to synthesize all those qualities that Mr. Frost had previously shown; it combines the stark unity of *North of Boston* and the diffused geniality of *Mountain Interval*.⁸

It has been said that Frost gives us poetry without the delight of the

senses, without the glow of warm feeling, but this—when confronted with *New Hampshire*—is to utter an absurdity. Frost, in spite of a superficial under emphasis, does not hesitate to declare his close affection. Such poems as "Two Look at Two" with its tremendous wave of love, "To Earthward," with its unreserved intensity, even the brilliantly condensed "Fire and Ice," with its candidly registered passion—all these brim with a physical radiance, with the delight and pain of the senses.

Nor is the whimsicality, so characteristic of Frost, absent from *New Hampshire*. Who but Frost could put so whimsical an accent into the farewell to an orchard entitled "Goodbye and Keep Cold," who but he could picture with so few strokes, the frightened colt "with one forefoot on the wall, the other curled at his breast" in "The Runaway." It was the prize-winning volume that confirmed Frost's possession of a definite niche among great American poets.⁹

When reviewing "West Running Brook" it seems no disrespect to Frost to say that it shows no change, perhaps no advance, over his previous volumes. The ripe response, the banked emotion, the nicely blended humor and tenderness are all there. But Frost is not a poet in whom one looks for a change. *A Boy's Will* clearly forecast his later volumes, and *North of Boston* marked the development of his own idiom and an outlook on life, neither of which he has ever altered in essentials.¹⁰

A premonitory couplet written before 1900 seems to foresee this lack of change:

"They would not find me changed from
him they knew—

Only more sure of all I thought was
true."¹¹

Footnotes

1. Untermeyer, Louis, *American Authors*, p.215-216
2. *Ibid.*, p. 215-216
3. *Ibid.*, p. 214-215
4. *Ibid.*, p. 217
5. (B.W.S.), *Boston Transcript*, p. 4
6. Anonymous, *Review of Reviews*, Vol. 54, p. 674
7. Untermeyer, op. cit. p. 216
9. *Ibid.*, p. 218
9. Anonymous, *Outlook*, Vol. 134, p. 521
10. Anonymous, *Springfield Republican*, p. 7
11. Anonymous, *Saturday Review of Literature*, Vol. 5, p. 533

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- B.W.S. "Review of Mountain Interval," *Boston Transcript*, Dec. 8, '23, p. 4
- Untermeyer, Louis. *American Authors*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921
- Boston Transcript*, Dec. 8, '23, p. 4
- Anonymous, "Review of Mountain Interval," *Review of Reviews*, Dec. 8, '23 p. 4
- Anonymous, "Review of New Hampshire," *Outlook*, 134:521
- G.H., "Review of West Running Brook," *Springfield Republican*, p. 7

Man's Opinion Of Himself

Hilton B. Atherton

Hail, fellow worm!

Now wait a moment. Don't be alarmed, gentle reader, and take no offense. The rather startling salutation is only a figurative greeting to the human race in general. I do not mean to classify the peruser of this manuscript as a member of Annelida, or any of the related phyla of the uninspired angleworm, but I do intend to give some idea of the great conceit of the bi-pedal inhabitants of the obscure little chunk of matter we refer to so confidently as "the earth."

Of course, there are several things about man which are highly commendable. His body itself is a stupendous miracle. His mind (the source of even these idle scribblings) is colossal in its import. He has advanced a little during the few moments he has existed geologically, and his future is bright. However, he remains an amoeba, and in the early embryo stage at that, as far as the age and extent of the universe are concerned.

For that matter, he isn't even complete king in his own goldfish bowl, so to speak. For instance, did you ever look for any length of time in the face of an old, passive, bored elephant at a circus? Scorn bred through the ages is expressed in every movement and expression of the pachyderm. Though I have never been on intimate terms with an elephant-trainer, I should think one would become rather humble in the prolonged presence of these old fellows. Men are generally humble when they deal with anything large enough to dwarf the petty hurrysings and scurryings with which mankind is so

often busied. I am no exception. I shall no doubt be lost in the rush, hastening about like an ant in the colony.

That is why I admire the quiet men who realize what greatness really means. If you seek sincere modesty, speak to the men who climb mountains and at least know the bigness of the earth's monarchs, though the hundred highest peaks have never been soiled by the touch of mortal foot. Talk to Beebe, who has a little idea of the depth of the sea. And if you really want to get "set down a peg or two," visit an astronomer. It's truly amazing to me how these sky-searching geniuses manage to retain any respect at all for the human race. They deal all evening with stars larger than our orbit around the sun, more numerous than grains of sand, hundreds of light years away in limitless space, and then come home to read in the paper about a tremendous furor over a breach-of-promise suit, or a sensational political campaign. It's ridiculous.

Consider for a moment the opinions a Martian being might have. He (or rather it) is the standard one-eyed, three-armed, metallic monstrosity with a fourth-dimensional brain, and stands idly peering through a super-telescope toward our cozy little planet. The antics of the simple-looking human busy-bodies seem to amuse our Martian onlooker immensely. In an American city the super-telescope picks up a group of people wildly gesticulating in the

throes of an election. "They must be crazy," comments our friend in Martian accents. In another part of the city a scientist is busy trying to render an atom asunder. "Good work, but he's 'way behind," observes the Martian critic. On a different quarter of the globe, the "man" from Mars watches two groups of men trying to annihilate each other with guns. "What are they trying to do, make their species extinct?" asks the bewildered Martian. Finally, after seeing a few of the better agencies for human advancement, the monster concludes that the "earthlings" might have a chance, but it's pretty slim. However, he keeps these radical views to himself, for his fellow Martians are convinced that humans will never rise above the oyster stage of intelligent civilization, by the standards of Mars.

Perhaps if everyone realized how far man has yet to go people would become so humble and meek that society would collapse. However, I don't think this very likely. As long as men fight over money, nations are offended and go to war over insults, movie stars sway people, and society debutantes have contests to see who can marry the most foreign titles, no worries need arise from over-humbleness in the race. The majority of humans will continue to concern themselves with petty, local matters for many ages before they awake to the realization of their position in the universe. Or perhaps I should wake up myself. I don't know. I give up.

On Predestination

(An Imitation of Charles Lamb)

Samuel Gordon

"And God announces in the heavens," says the Talmud, "forty days before the birth of a child, if he shall be rich or poor, if he shall be strong or weak, if he shall be wise or foolish, AND WHO UNTO HIM SHALL BE HIS MATE." Such a broad statement is much too comprehensive to consider at one time, but let us regard only the final clause in some of its many aspects and imports. Unfortunately the sages do not expand on their brief reference to predestination in marriage; hence, the reader is left entirely to his own mental resources in elaborating and embroidering this simple and yet potent statement.

On first encountering this fine phrase, Mr. Average Man might well be impelled to sit down, and with folded hands wait for his heavenly selected help-meet to knock on the door, and respond to his greeting with a wifely salute and a noncommittal, "O, yes, you'll have to sign this marriage license." Mr. Man realizes, after three distinct rings of the doorbell turn out to be the gas man, the installment collector, and the Fuller Brush salesman, that he must not take the Talmud too literally. With his bubbling enthusiasm only slightly restrained, Average cogitates, and concludes with this ponderous certainty, "God has written who is to be my wife, all right, but"—displaying his natural aptitude for the law—"He can adequately fulfill this bond as well when I am sixty as when I am twenty. If I intend to enjoy an average amount of marital bickering, I must be up and doing, that I may annex my chosen mate at a proper age."

Here Mr. Man almost faints

when it dawns upon him that the Creator can still technically meet the bill by inflicting a divorcee upon him. By now he is in a pother of indignation and bewilderment and is rapidly approaching either dementia praecox or a pure state of atheism. He has committed the sin of trying to think too deeply about things which must be taken on faith, indeed a fault common to all mankind except the solitary few who are either fanatics or fools.

Leaving Mr. Man in a state of equilibrium between his clashing contemplations, I pause to consider the devious workings of the heavenly manifesto among my personal friends. I am confused in trying to determine how this girl has managed to discard eleven gentleman friends, during our acquaintance, without encountering her star of destiny. Why does the all-seeing Deity permit such needless tampering with a young virgin's affections, especially since all too easily it might have permanent effects on her affections, with the resulting mix-up when her allotted soul mate does make his belated entrance. Though it is right that I admire the initiative and perspicacity of this fair damsel, out to discover through trial and error whom God chose for her some sixteen years ago, it is doubly mystifying to hear mingled sentiments of loyalty to different beaux—none I am sure the ONE—from her lips.

Can it be that God was in such a hurry that he dropped an extra male into my young friend's heavenly mail box, or did He in His omnipotence produce a surplus of men that there should be enough to divide between the women and the armies? Perhaps He put one soldier and one

husband in a compartment, with the mental reservation to have the soldier patriotically pass on before he could play havoc with the celestial scheme of matrimonial predestination. And while the powers that be are saving up taxes for another war, consider the tragic consequences of the powerful and equal tugs exerted on a girl's heartstrings by her two predestined parcels, since she is naturally unable to differentiate where God himself has not made a choice.

If this is puzzling, how about the numerous men and women who find great pleasure in life, first with one partner and then with a second or even a third. I do not refer to these changelings who alter partners through divorce decrees, but those who lose loved ones through natural processes, only to discover anew an affinity, and to stroll again down life's green ways in happy abandon. Does he pick such characters as the ones who are to be compensated for a terrible paucity of gray matter and human feeling by the presentation of two living foils instead of the customary one?

But even if predestination is a fact, in spite of these conjectures and criticisms, can Mr. Man violate the ironclad edicts of Emily Post by leaping off a trolley, risking death before the crunching wheels of a truck whose driver has one eye on the traffic and another on the passing parade of pulchritude, and then dare to hail a fair young Venus with such an inane phrase as "How do you do?" First, Average breaks the rule that he should not speak to a stranger, secondly, he is strongly liable in this day of enlightened womanhood to receive the open palm of the athletic young woman directly above the line where the fuzz begins, and finally, he is very likely to be immediately incarcerated as a presuming masher. (Vile creature that he is, without even the redeeming feature of a pleasing technique).

Mr. Man, sorely provoked, holds communion with his inner conscience. "Wouldn't the chosen shop girl also feel the quickened pulse of affinity and thus recognize the approach of love on labored arches?"

Speaking in the scholarly accents the inner conscience always affects, conscience twits him upon his logic thus, "You should know that no human sales girl just off from her labors can find time to detect the exhilaration of divine match-making and a quickened heart beat, just when she is busy applying the artifices of rouge, lipstick, and mascara. She undoubtedly will attribute it to her aching right big pedal appendage where that big clumsy floor-walker, handsome though he is, stepped on it when he stopped to flirt a wee while." Not only does Mr. Average Man sorrowfully refute predestination, but he swallows the bitter pill of knowing that an illegal, nay a devilish rival, is added to the lists of romance. He must be an agent of Satan since only Mr. Man's name is written in the books of heaven.

I remember my own experience with the gospel. She was a dark fair maiden, with a vivacious face and a heart of pure twenty-two carat gold. Her carriage was dignified, yet graceful. Her eyes were dark pools of pulsating passion. Her lips were curved at that just correct angle of the arc, and her teeth were fairer than the wildest dream of a toothpaste advertising man. Though my hapless heart felt the strong tugs of divine intercession, all was for naught, for she went her way, serene and unseeing, and I, a shattered defender of predestination, retired to my lonely nook to think, to suffer, and to call up another girl on the telephone.

Yes, predestination must be taken into account by all careful students of life, the universe, and the motivating influences behind human action.