

TRACE

LIVING LITERATURE

i.e.:

POETRY . . . TALES
from six diverse hands

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A POET'S PEACE PLEA
essay by Paul Eluard

insequi:

TRACE CELEBRATES
its Tenth Anniversary

44

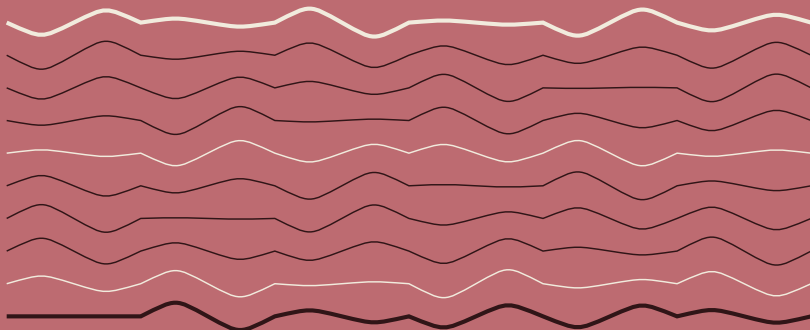
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A READING EDITION

ABOUT THIS EDITION

This reading edition preserves the issue's poetry, fiction, essays, correspondence, reviews, and other literary writing in their printed order. Advertising, subscription matter, mastheads, the magazine's own contents pages, annual indexes, address lists, and the running trade directory are omitted as reference apparatus.

The text was checked against newly rendered source pages. Poetry lineation, stanza spacing, shaped indents, and hanging continuations for long lines are retained; prose continuations are joined without false paragraph indents. Conjectural readings are enclosed in square brackets, while original spelling and punctuation are otherwise kept.

Artwork is not reproduced in this text edition. The visual material in the issue is described here so that its place in the magazine remains visible:

A full-page drawing by William J. Margolis stands here, titled 'Excerpt from an Autobiography: MENDICANT NOTEBOOK No. 2', and cannot be reproduced in a text edition. It is a single continuous pen line enclosing a field of boxes, arcs and blacked-in wedges, with five words written into it in the artist's hand: LOVE at the left edge, PAIN and CONFUSION across the middle, and at the foot [BLISS?] and (MYSELF) — the brackets and parentheses are Margolis's own. The page carries no other text. It is noted here rather than passed over, because it is a work of the issue and not an ornament.

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POETRY OF CIRCUMSTANCE

*By Paul Eluard**

The world is so great, so rich and life offers such a diverse spectacle that subjects for poetry will never be lacking. But they must always be poems of circumstance; in other words, reality must provide the occasion and the subject matter. A particular case becomes general and poetic precisely through its being treated by a poet. My own poems are all poems of circumstance. They are inspired from reality, on it they are founded and on it they rest. I have nothing to do with poems which rest on nothing.

Let it not be said that reality lacks poetic interest; a poet proves himself a poet precisely when his mind knows how to uncover some interesting aspect in a banal subject. Reality must provide the motivation, the starting point, the kernel proper, but it is the poet's business to make a whole out of it that may be beautiful, alive. You know Furststein, who was called the poet of nature. He wrote a poem on the cultivation of hops, a poem leaving nothing to be desired. I have just asked him to write craftsmen's songs for me, particularly a weaver's song, and I am sure he will succeed....

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA. Even though political pieces by French poets of today may seem to you far behind the splendid past of combat poetry and the marvelous present of objective poetry in the U.S.S.R., remember that these poets are only explorers in a land they are determined to conquer, a land which has been promised to us now for a long time.

Many of us need only a little more awareness, awareness of human possibilities and also of the possibilities of poetry. Poetry has never created obstacles for itself, nor has it ever proposed conclusions. Poetry has never worshipped gods,

but did give a measure of immortality. This immortality, today, is concrete because the highest hope is no more afraid of death than of combat.

The dictionary tells us that the circumstance is a place in common, comprising all that bears a relation to person, thing, place, means, motives, manner and time. The criticism of the men and their works will therefore consider first all the conditions of person, object, means, motives, manner and time. It will thus determine to what extent they have elevated or diminished him. A man normally identifies himself not only with the beings that are close to him, but also with those he does not know, and with the events acting on those beings as well as the ones they themselves bring about. And the poet burns to reproduce life.

**Arranged from a translation by Francois Hugot, with his permission. Originally published in French in LA NOUVELLE CRITIQUE No. 35, April, 1952.*

Like an echo from the past to Goethe's desire (expressed above), Chrestien de Troyes wrote in the Twelfth Century what has since been called 'The Shirt Song,' LA CHANSON DE LA CHEMISE . . . In telling us about the misery of a poor weaver of the Middle Ages (in this poem), he identifies with him. Thus, the poet's sensibility and understanding make it possible for him to weigh all that is offered to him of the life of his fellow men and of universal life. The most obscure circumstances become clear under the poet's pen, for they are reflected in a mirror that elucidates them, and are given back, visible, to all.

All and any poem, we can say with Goethe, is a poem of circumstance. But whether this word is taken in its largest sense or in the narrow one in which it is commonly used, such a poem will exist, will reach its goal only if it escapes mediocrity. Even more so in the second than in the first case. One is ready to forgive the poet of genius all his contradictions, his imprecations, his excesses, whereas one

finds it difficult to absolve a mediocre poet, despite his good intentions. And this for the reason that, generally, one has on the one hand weighed the reasons, the circumstances that led the true poet to contradict good, while on the other the language of the mediocre poet, unwarranted, is unusable. Above all, the ideal reader refuses to be cheated. He is cautious; he knows that consciousness in evil may be less dangerous than unconsciousness in good. He guards himself against hypocrisy. He knows to what degree of degradation an incompetent person may be taken by facility and cowardice.

True poetry must express the real world, but also our inner world and the transformed world of our dreams, the truth which lies in ourselves if only our eyes are truly open. If the real world has not permeated the poet's mind, he will only be able to give back to the world abstraction and confusion, shapeless dreams and absurd belief. His personal poetic reality will not endure in the face of the poet's reality of the world. He will not have been born to the work because he will not have borne the weight of man, his own weight, the weight of man in the world and of the world in man. The work of reflection has not taken place inside him. He speaks as a ghost. It is easy to be a ghost, for oneself and for others. It is so easy to yield to weariness, to one's own sorrows, to one's idleness, easier apparently to break with the concrete world than with the old mists laziness, of misery and of death, easier to commit suicide than to live, especially out of duty.

To get the sum total of what is in and of the world, you have to have the courage to add up objects and sentiments, love and hatred, colors and forms, epochs and climates, and the thousand ways that men have, as Blake puts it, of being equal by their very differences. The poet will unite his sensibility, his judgment, his imagination with the real world that he must overcome and transform. He will do it

passionately, and, if he throws himself wholly into it, he will emerge victorious out of the inevitable struggles between evil and good, youth and decay, armoured hatred and self-reproducing love.

The point is to emerge, both with the immemorial and future multitudes, from the fetid mud of the oppression of man by man, of the poet by the philistine, of the martyr by the hangman.

Human thought must recover its health, this philosopher's stone, must recover its unity, must be able to annihilate what is not purely and simply good, life, and the happiness of being alive.

We know that there is poetic genius only to the extent that the poet does not lie. And today, not to lie is to act. Let poetry be a means of action, a way of going forward, for it sings from all its windows and on all horizons, it sings, evident and exemplary, against lies.

Fruits, flowers, are the circumstances of spring just as a revolution may be the circumstance of the happiness of a people and of all peoples. The revolutionary poem must seek its inspiration in clear sentiments, based on the necessity to live and to reproduce life, on a well-defined, logical desire for justice. Yet, because this revolutionary sentiment finds itself on human solidarity, it can and must have a poetic content as dense as love, another expression of the fight for life.

The poet must, and man must, get hold of reality, must dominate it. Reality is far from being a puzzle. It does not disguise itself. There is no angel of reality. It may be unhappy and dusty, cruel and vain, monstrous. It may go by the name of stupidity, misery, disease, war. The poet does not live on mountaintops, he does not often lull himself in sweet beatitudes; but when he has gauged our distress he must not submit to it. Above all, he must not succumb to the distinguished melancholy that would class him among those whom Laudréamont named 'the Big Soft Heads.' Neither

must he consider that the paths of poetry are narrow or that its forms are unchangeable. Any courageous poet must, by duty, open as wide a passage as possible to human exaltation. To this end, all forms are appropriate; his language is made up of all words, all things. There are no consecrated forms any more than there are sacred subjects or words, or profane or vulgar subjects or words.

I wish to give you an example: the simple description of human effort, such as Ilin, the Russian poet of the five-year plans, wrote in his book *OF MEN AND MOUNTAINS* must be considered a true poem. After Maiakovksy, who made his whole life one single piece of sincere speech, Ilin described with fervor the useful marvels, their present, their future, as simply as a lesson in natural science.

'Here I wanted to tell,' says Ilin, 'how, in our country, people rebuilt according to one single plan, the fields, the forests, the rivers and their own life.' And here is how he tells the marvelous story of Mitchurin, the man who rebuilt horticulture:

The horticulturist from Koslov took the pollen of the flowers of the Pineapple Pippin and fecundated with it the flowers of the common Antonovka. From her father Pineapple Pippin, the Slavinkia inherited a tender flesh, juicy and savoury, and from her plebeian mother, she inherited resistance to cold weather. Temperatures of 5 degrees centigrade below zero were unable to kill her blooms.

The horticulturist took the wild Ussurian pear coming from somewhere in the East and crossed her with the fine and delicate specimen called the Butter Pear.... Five sister pears came out of the crossing. The first two sisters were unlucky. The third, Rakovka, was better and the fourth, Tostobieja, even better. But the best of all was the Winter Butter Pear, Mitchurine....

From her French father, the Winter Butter Pear inherited a delicate taste and from her Ussurian mother a resistance

not just to cold weather, but to blows and scratches....

And Ilin ends thus:

It is better to be born too soon than too late. It is better to be a man of tomorrow than a man of the past. Now, we no longer think of Mitchurin as the horticulturist from Koslov, but it is Koslov which is known as Mitchurin's town: the town has a new name, Mitchurinsk.

This is today's fairy tale. Man's work and intelligence replace the magic wand of the fairy, an image-creating instrument. There once existed the legend of the earthly paradise. Only a curse came out of it. But we who have accepted this curse, who have not lost confidence, know that our hope will materialize. We will change the fruit that has been forced upon us. And the new poetry which is being born out of the transformation of the world has endless possibilities.

In disagreement with all erring philosophies, we are beginning to understand, as did Gorki, that nothing but our friend and enemy—man—is worthy of our attention in this world. Objective poetry like Ilin's is the poetry of nature dominated by man, such as it really is, vulnerable, perfectible, reduced to its sublime role of mother and of servant, the poetry of work stripped of all selfishness, the poetry of the fight for freedom, the poetry of material happiness made equal for all, the poetry of human grandeur which does not tolerate a shadow attached to it, or someone smaller than itself. The poet's ideal comes true: he creates for and through others. The word 'poet' may have come to seem ridiculous, but here it is regaining its nobility. It is now the synonym of brother. It has the weight of bread, the ardent lightness of the man who refuses to be hungry any more.

Once again, let us agree with Goethe: 'Every poem is a poem of circumstance.' And, to contradict the defenders of immaterial poetry, I repeat — in order that a poem carry itself

over from the particular to the general and thus take on a true, lasting, eternal meaning — the circumstance must accord with the simplest desires of the poet, with his heart and his mind, with his reason.

Otherwise, the circumstance is lost in the moment, in the instant; nothing gives it continuity other than the fact of its having been, at some date, more or less well sung.

I want to take a personal example — my poem *LIBERTE*. I wrote this poem during the summer of 1941. When I wrote the first stanzas:

On old copybooks
on my school desk on treetops
on the sand and on the snow
I write your name . . .

On each body I love
on every outstretched hand
I write your name . . .

I was thinking of concluding by revealing the name of
the woman I loved, for whom I was writing this
poem. But I quickly realized that the only word I
had in mind was the word 'liberty:'

And by the weight of one word
I start my life over again
I was born to know you
and call you by your name
LIBERTY!

Thus, a woman I loved embodied a greater desire than herself. With her was mingled my most sublime aspiration. And this word, liberty, existed in my poem only to eternalize a very simple, daily, painstaking determination, that of freeing ourselves from the occupying power. Liberty, this absolutely indispensable idea, is a boundless ideal, and every step we take on its path should be a liberation. However, we free ourselves from one thing at a time. The idea of liberation is identified with the very idea of progress, of continuous progress away from fatality and toward the dream of total liberty. So it is that poetry prefers to point out the end rather than the

means, the target rather than the arrow. A poem should push back the horizon at the same time that it embellishes the way. A new horizon is born from man's effort, ever clearer, purer, just as water by passing through finer and finer filters becomes clearer and purer. One's memory can fail, but one's awareness remains. This is moreover the reason we must not mistake poetry of circumstance for poetry written on command. The latter may or may not coincide with the desires, with the deep conviction, with the sensibility of the poet. True poetry of circumstance should gush from the poet with the exactitude with which a mirror reflects the image of other men. Thus, poetry becomes what Maiakovksy called 'social command,' in contrast to chance command which is void and not transmissible. The exterior circumstance should coincide with the interior circumstance, as if the poet himself had created it. Thus, the exterior circumstance becomes as valid as love, as the

spring-begotten flower, as the joy of building for life. The poet follows his own idea, but this idea leads him to place himself in the curve of human progress. And, little by little, the world replaces him, the world sings through him. It can happen that a poet write hopelessly poor verse, such as a certain poet who, however, reflected better than anyone else the hope of his time and the struggle of the men of his time. I mean Rouget de Lisle, who could only write insipid verse, pastoral poems, who had hardly any convictions, and who, suddenly incensed by a fleeting inspiration, created a song which continues to be heard around the world, independent of local conditions, even beyond reason: *THE MARSEILLAISE*. This is perhaps the unique example where the circumstance dominates the hour, where poetry testifies against the non-poet, as reason does against the madman. At last is man, destroyed by his subjective dream, reimbursed in the objective money of the world. *THE MARSEILLAISE* is the bankruptcy of individual genius, the victory of men over man, History inspired and dignified. And with it, all the poetry of life, all the objective poetry, imposes its sway. Who is speaking in *THE MARSEILLAISE*? Is it the poet? Is it Rouget de Lisle? Certainly not. Is it his time, or the happenings of his time? Yes and no, for, still today, under entirely different circumstances, this song embodies the anger and the hope of men, their enthusiasm, their nobility, and their faith in the future. *THE MARSEILLAISE* is not the song of one man, but the song of all men, a song which no one will ever be able to criticise. 'I sing of man and his arms,' Aragon wrote in the preface to *LES YEUX D'ELSA*, 'I have long forged my speech for nothing else, for nothing else have I prepared this singing instrument . . . I sing of man and his arms, now is more than ever the moment.'

French poetry, despite its habits and despite all the limitations and the constraints, has come out of the trials undergone by France during the war and the occupation

considerably greater. Greater because its horizon has enlarged and it no longer believes that any subject can be outside its domain. French poetry has found again, without hesitation, the violence of patriotic feelings, it has come closer to unhappy men, and it has regained a collective voice.

This voice should predominate; for it agrees with the ageless desire of men to live their lives against disaster and ruin, 'Now is more than ever the moment' . . . we can say again today, because the threat is again weighing upon us. But man's hope has grown deeper roots. How could the poets fail to translate so strong and simple a hope? From everywhere, the song for peace is rising. For a long time, the symbol of peace has been a dove. Its whiteness protects it against birds of prey, its whiteness is colored by the fire lit by Prometheus. The birds of prey are blinded by it. In many parts of the world, their eyes have been put out, their wings and their claws clipped; they have been made harmless forever.

Poets know that victory is possible, that peace is the only watchword, the only annunciation which has endured, the only future possible.

It is for this reality that we are fighting. There can be, for us today, no circumstances which are not related to it. Between the conquests of Mitchurin and the conquests of the atomic bomb, we have chosen. Neither birds nor our hearts will stop singing.

TOWARDS PRINT

(ARE LITTELMAGS OUR FINAL VOICE?)

by Curtis Zahn

IN LARGE MEASURE, in the U.S., the author's right to say what he pleases has always carried a written guarantee — good, at least, for the life of the (sponsor's) product. This is to say that the American publisher is concerned more with money than morals. If the readers subscribe, if the audience watches, if the consumer buys, then the stockholders get their 9 percent. And the writer (having been bought) is paid.

No one, really, has expressed grave concern over the above set of pleasantries — except perhaps a few jealous or zealous Rightists or Leftists who seem to feel quite a bit more is at stake. Of course, despite dark official admissions that Art & Literature (and even Journalism) are subject to the mathematics of soap, certain 'moral' censorships have been exercised — taboos on pornography, religion, sex, and treason. But these, too, tend to be more financial than philosophical. Baldly: if enough citizens objected, enough dollars were held back. And the price of 'freedom' became, shall we say, expensive. The people, then, were the censors. If a story lacked sufficient violence, murder, sadism or masochism, they censored. If a poem was too old or too new, or held too many ideas or too few — they censored. The people, by becoming angry or bored, determined what literary art the people wanted....

I realize that the above premise(s) are disputatious. There is always the question: Who laid the egg in the first place? Some will say that if the editors & publishers printed only quality stories, the readers would want only quality stories. I could not less agree; I say they'd want quality stories only

until some publisher bolted from his height and offered sex, guns, sadism, and smoke. True — saturation has been achieved; but suppose this reversed? Suppose only one detective story was available — only one PEYTON PLACE (or whatever they're reading now), only one psychological, philosophical Western whodunnit? Then, I'm afraid, we'd find out what the public wants.

Thus, censorship comes in several models to choose among, the most popular being the reader and his money — not easily parted. The reader plants his own taboo on 99.9 percent of the literary soil: he hasn't the time, he hasn't the inclination (or he has built-in fixations) to cultivate style and subject matter. Next, come the Editor-publishers. Yet, theirs is the role of agent or representative they (allegedly) know what the People want, and the hell with anything else — no matter the truisms. The third censor is the artist himself; he, too, has an ear (consciously or unconsciously) for long green. There seem to be as many sellouts among the Angry Young Men as among the old, fat, complacent ones. Therefore (I am saying) the only 'real' censorship extant comes from local, state, or national Government. Here, bans exist for reasons of morality or security — not from expediency. This is censorship of a lofty and different danger. But, so far, censorships for 'moral' reasons have been local, sporadic, scurrilous, and shortlived. The ACLU and other libertarian watchdogs usually quash such stray sprouts.

What remains is censorship for reasons of national security. And regrettably, of late we have become very national and very insecure.

I.E.: 410 U.S. Editors and Publishers were invited by the President recently to practice Voluntary Censorship. Here, there's no doubt about the egg; voluntary censorship leads to the war-state, and the war-state turns around and commands involuntary censorship. About this, we recently heard — at Coffeehouse Positano, which clings to the edge of

the Pacific, looking west toward the Far East. The lecturer was a Canadian press correspondent. And he knew what we didn't know. This, he said, is the first time (if you'll excuse the word) a free nation has instigated curtailment of news during a cold war. And it is the first time (I have been officially informed) that the American public cannot be told the truth because they are not ready for the truth. The correspondent cited example upon example of news withheld by the U.S. Press (not censored in Canada), — telling of distortions, bias, and actual wire-service lies. All, of course, under that insidious flag named Security. Most of the news we do get comes after the fact(s) — after some other nation breaks it first. (Exempli gratia: the Cuban invasion.)

The Canadian divulged that, while some editors frowned disapproval, all are going along in this malpractice. Unhappily, he himself does not believe Americans dwell in a mental frame where the truth sets easily. If you want to grow up to be big and strong like the Russians, you've got to let Dad choose your reading materials. Perhaps? In Wars I & II, if you recall, the citizenry was lead gently by the nose, deeper and deeper into the storm. And only when it became too late to turn back did the whole picture unfold — in snatches and snippets, whenever necessary to gird the citizenry for a newer, tougher reality. It stands to reason then, if you feel that Wars I & II ended all war, saved freedom, and caused us to live happily forever after — then War III and what we're about at this time, should make everything even greater.

But, if not? Then the Littlemagazines are left as sole custodians of the public truth. Radio, television, the press, the Slicks will, historically, accede. But, for censorship, 'the Littlemags would be the very first to be the very last to volunteer.' They are not now, nor have they ever been, members of the Commercialist Party. And, having few sponsors and not many more readers, they worry not about popularity. Their only obligation being to print what

they—not the Government, not the stockholders—see fit. The Littlemags must become the resistant weeds in the kept lawn of American publishing.

But, will they get past the voluntary censorship imposed by the U.S. reader, suckled on a saccharine formula of sweet-slops (with rib-tickles), before it is too late? I cannot say what can be done; I am only able to say what must be done.

EDITORS (AND OTHERS) WRITE

THERE IS ONLY THE SCHOOL OF LIFE

(With his permission, the Editors of TRACE, offer excerpts from three informal letters, written last summer by Jack Micheline, in connection with his submission of poems,—from among which the one published on pages 35 and 36 was chosen.)

Dear Editors:

I'm sorry I did not answer your letter of last year. I was kind of strung out mentally. Thank heavens I'm alright now.... These last four years have been kind of frantic. As a wild dog's life would be frantic.... Suffering is part of life, especially if one is still alive within himself.... This Beat Bullshit will blow over soon; and out of this publishers' revolution maybe three good writers will have come to the surface. I'm working on my first play and it's hell and more hell and suits my temperament. Thank God there are a few great people left in this age of frozen fish.... A rummy told me on a park bench one day — a great old Irishman: 'Life is above all words.' There are few writers whose works live in our times. The whole literary world is a marketplace. A drugstore and an execution chamber, and the publication of poetry.... basically cliques and politics.... I think of Lorca's eyes sometimes, of what a child he was, of how that man loved, to the point of anguish, torture, agony, illumination and liberation. There is a war in the arts, and that war takes place in each human being. We have been seduced, here in America. The moralist will not save mankind, nor any ist or ism, nor any book or play. Mankind was doomed from the beginning, and hope lies in the individual liberation, the freed self of a Lorca.... I am not saddened by the death of Hemingway. He chose his fate and made his destiny. Everyone must die, including heroes. Sherwood Anderson

swallowed a toothpick.

What have made our times so desperate are the values of men chained to the dollar bill.... certainly, the fear of any strong light, a voice of truth, the voice of the sun, and the night cities. I lie between two schools of death; and there is only one school: the school of life and pain and agony and creation.... I have seen the avant-garde publishers tied to their bankbooks, their faces of fear and cowardice, their denial of life.... Perpetrating a fraud on the American public. I am not so naive. I realize art is a business to most publishers; they are not interested in creation, in truth or dignity — they are only interested in money. But the artist must live.... above the filth of my American land.... the greed and lust of the runners of the almighty dollar bill.

Jack Micheline

Defense and Disagreement with Harry Hooton

(Unknown to this writer, and not known to TRACE Editors until after the last 1961 issue had gone to press, Mr. Hooton died on the 27th of last June in a hospital in Sydney, Australia, his long-adopted country.)

Dear Editors:

I should, perhaps, say something to defend Mr. Harry Hooton and myself from our 'label-ladling' friend Mr. Corrington (reference is to *THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG LABEL*, in TRACE No. 42) and his justified-if-applicable onslaughts against our articles in TRACE No. 40. Though I very strongly disagree with Hooton that poetry has to have a message,* I think Corrington has not only missed the boat on both articles, but seems to have put a label on the oar. My purpose in writing *MU, AS I REMEMBER IT* was to point up the importance of intuition as a critical yardstick, and certainly not as any kind of label. My contentions may have been vague to some — and even incompetent, as Corrington seems to think — but I, too, am concerned with the 'implications of the statements.' Otherwise, why try to draw an analogy with

legend (as I did) to point up the sinkin of poetry into prose rhetoric? I refer Corrington to his own poetry for examples of work which 'dredges up from the reader's subconscious a prior experience,' a opposed by, say, Edgar Guest's dredgings of dissimilar reactions fro another part of the anatomy. Yeats once said that he liked D. H. Lawrence's poetry because it seemed to come from the solar plexus A friend says that he likes mine because it seems to come from a poi slightly lower and to the rear. Fine. I assay no claim to label-sticking though I must admit that a little sampling of the glue is necessary, i one is to get one's point across. Robert Vaughan

On the 'Subsidy' Side

Dear Editors:

The article on subsidy publishers (Hugh Collins, in No. 42) seem to me neither fair nor satisfactory. Having exchanged maybe 10 letters with four or five subsidy publishers, over the years (I neve could afford their prices), I know something about how they operate Sharp practices? Yes. Dishonesty? No. If you keep your guard u and ask pointed questions, they'll respect you for it; and they ca do business with you under a tight, tightly-executed contract. If yo want to dream your dollars away, they'll take 'em. Same goes fo most business men.

The FTC order against subsidy-publisher advertisements was ju another example of the Government picking on weak, minor offender in order to demonstrate its vigilance, while leaving the big fraud unmolested.

The widespread prejudice against subsidy publication need not b

*Editors: Mr. Vaughan's pot appears to have some of the same tar he se on the Corrington kettle. Hooton did not maintain all poetry is poetry-o message; 'innumerable emotions,' he wrote, 'can occasion a poem' — ar referred to other-than-protest art. His thesis was that a poem still can be poem, though it may have things of importance (other

than the aesthet statement) to say. taken lying down. After all, it is stupid prejudice; many royalty-published books are trash, too. Book critics have had the nerve to admit in print that the subsidy book often finds its way into their wastebaskets, unexamined; but, surely they can and should be ridiculed out of this stupid blindness. They do miss a good book that way, once in a while.

The subsidy publisher will offer you a decently printed and bound book (usually), with your own artistic standards governing the format, if you prefer; and they offer you a skeleton of national advertising and distribution. There is usually damn little meat on the skeleton; but you need not take that lying down either. Competition among the subsidy houses is keen; pressure from writers could act to increase their advertising expenditures. . . . How about letters to all critics receiving review copies, challenging them to be fair, reminding them of all the great names who paid to publish their own early works? Writers have worked their way up through subsidy houses to royalty houses; they have, on occasion, made tidy sums out of the subsidiary rights on their books. And, once in a long while, a subsidy book does sell well. . . .

Felix Singer

One of Several Reports

Dear Editors:

Regarding THE PARTY AT CRANTON (John Aldridge novel reviewed in No. 38). It's a 'must' for anyone; so impressed, I wrote my reaction in review form. Not a submission. . . . It appears to be primarily a high-level blast at intellectualism. When finished, one recognizes that self-revelation of the author might be the main directive, at least a main result. . . . Adept at critical studies, Aldridge unjoins the artificial framework of intellectual hierarchy and lets it fall on the underlings who slaver around the throne. He points out that in Cranton (university) circles, it is: 'What do you know, and

how much?’ The human question: ‘What are you, and how much?’ —is never asked. . . . The book . . . is for anyone who refuses to stand in a cranioscopic aura and swallow the —(reader’s choice) hurled at him in pink eggshells by literoarons like Buchanan (the m.c.).

Parm Mayer, Norwood Institute

How (Many) Editors Know Poetry?

Dear Editors:

Sixteen different publications have accepted and published my poetry, yet they almost always take that which I do not consider my best. Can I be wrong? What is poetry? If I am right, about 98 percent of those who read poetry have little understanding . . . They seem to feel that any thought or great idea arranged into an ordered pattern, rhymed and perhaps decorated with beautiful images, must be good poetry. But this can be done by purely intellectual processes, and poetry is not a contrivance of the intellect; at least, not that part of the intellect that functions through the cerebral cortex. Does not poetry come, rather, from the age-old wisdom of the unconscious, that part of the understanding that grew over the long ages before the newer part of the brain evolved? . . . For perhaps a million years, life existed by reacting to environment with feeling, rather than with thought. And the Unconscious still carries a high tone of feeling in all its interactions with experience. We love this feeling; and, unless we wish to become machines, should cherish it and keep it the goal of our becoming. And that, I submit, is poetry’s function. Yet, when I write from feeling alone, daring to put down the images as they come, when I know they have vast meaning, no one takes them. This type they take: I saw this mouth, I saw it well, the stuff it spat — venom of Hell.

ate through the brains of the mighty hoard, and from their mouths again it poured,

In noisome words the poison poured and saturated a mighty hoard,

swept out and through the good earth's space to annihilate the human race.

which appeared under title: MOUTH OF HATE — in WRITERS NOTES & QUOTES. This type they return: BREAD OF LIFE There was gold in the small canvas bag, or at least we thought so. But it turned out to be fruit instead; apples. We could not believe that it was not gold since that was what it was expected to be. So I watched the man pull one apart, like an over-ripe peach, thinking that the center would be a ball of gold. But no. Our intense eyes were defrauded. Surely, it had to be gold, since that was the weight of the feeling. We searched the fruit, then truly found that threads of gold ran thinly through its meat. There all right — but spoiling the fruit as food.

ANNELLE EASLIC

(TRACE Editors: Setting aside as irrelevant the matter of 'merit' in this work, Miss Easlic's question is valid and of broad interest . . . and whatever 'level' may be deemed that of her verses here, they do illustrate the point. And the answer seems to be that, in determining where to submit mss., writers should accept at face value what editors reveal concerning their tastes in the works they do publish; putting it baldly — those who habitually relish a routine, flavorless diet cannot be re-educated to react with the exquisite delicacy of discrimination of an epicure.)

POETS' 'UNION' PROPOSED

Tracy Thompson

Dear Editors:

The following plan is presented for a poets' union (or equity)— endorsed by, among others, Robert Lowell, Richard

Eberhart, and John Ciardi. It would be on a national scale.

1. To preserve the legality of contracts (acceptance slips or actual contracts), to oppose by legal action any breach of contract between any editor, publisher, etc., and any poet-member; either to retain one lawyer to handle all cases, or a selected few lawyers in central locations.

2. An agency to notify all poets of any appearances of their work, or articles written about them or their work, of which they might not otherwise hear. A New York agency and one on the West Coast might suffice.

3. An emergency fund set aside to prevent the kind of personally-tragic dilemma faced recently by Kenneth Patchen.

4. Perhaps a minimal understanding in regard to payment for poetry is looking too far ahead; however, Reed Whittmore has provided an outstanding example in this direction.

5. Suggested: monthly dues, \$1 per poet. This would keep all members actively aware; and after a few months, they would feel they had a stake—helping to induce them to contribute needed funds to remain in good standing.

Hoping to hear your suggestions,

Tracy Thompson

IN RESPONSE TO ALBERT PERKINS

[illegible]

Charles Gaulkin, Editor Review of Research & Reflection

Dear Editors:

I am intrigued with certain categorical, general statements made by Mr. Perkins (in TRACE No. 42). Is he writing satire? I think he writes well, but I fail to understand what he has to say. His ideas don't reach me, so of course he must mean his remarks to be frankly entertaining. And of course he is most entertaining in advising the writer to live in an apartment so as to perceive the 'philosophical purport of the times.' For years, I have been living in apartments, and I now have a fine perception of the sound of a crap-game played on the floor above, of roaches of various sizes and habits, of landlords, friendly and unfriendly, etc.—but I am damned if, for all this, my writing has improved. Maybe I ought to turn to SCUBA: there is lots of flux in water, and maybe the purport of everything will just come to me like that.

Now . . . I want to say that such exchanges as the debate betwixt Perkins, Brophy, and Elevitch add real liveliness to the literary scene. . . .

Charles B. Tinkham

Editorial Purpose in 2 New Mags

Dear Editors:

KALEIDOSCOPE (Melbourne, Austral.) persists in its original policy of printing the best poetry, and a very little of the best prose available . . . and remains firmly determined never to trade on engineered reputations and thus give space to inferior work. Most acceptable is quality material, whether in formal metre, sprung rhythm, free verse, polyphonic prose, etc., and poems german to the galactic era will have an edge.

. . . Religious and political controversy does not find a place in these pages; but this does not mean (operation) in a spiritual, intellectual, and moral vacuum. On the contrary, it affirms . . . at all times . . . the primacy of positive human values as enhanced by the sublime significance of artistic beauty—the one universal solvent of barbarism and savagery, twin perils to civilization. . . .

COSMOSYNTHESIS will hold the mirror up to 1962 by transcending KALEIDOSCOPE. It will fulfil the programme of the Cosmosynthesis League, and thus cover not only the arts, but—in a comparative and nonpartisan spirit—religion, philosophy, psychology, and political science. In this way, it will inaugurate, from the Commonwealth angle, the neo-Elizabethan renaissance. . . . Its worldwide coverage will include . . . non-English countries whose writers will be presented in translation.

Brian Cox

DEAR EDITORS: I CERTAINLY LOOK FORWARD TO MORE OF G. V. STILLMAN'S SEARCHING INTERVIEWS, SUCH AS THE ONE WITH MARK VAN DOREN; OR SUCH AS I VISION IN THE FOLLOWING —

A TALK TO JESUS CHRIST

'You might say that' — Jesus

IN MY CONSTANT attempt to fish up untouched answers out of the deep well which hides the source of poetry, I have frequently found the comments of poets themselves to be of interest. Recently, I was privileged to entertain Jesus Christ, cited by Mark Van Doren as 'one of the Bible's great poets.' Unfortunately, I could only give him an hour's time before having to depart for a lecture engagement; but, even in this brief period, I was able to determine that Jesus is such an outstanding man that he was able to enlighten me on a number of subjects. Here is a transcript of our talk.

Q. Do you believe, Sir, that the Bible must be conceived either as mythological encyclopedia, in the mode of Brechtian tableau, or as the messianic epic in which intrinsically unrelated elements are woven into a coherent whole?

A. The Bible, yes — it is The Book —

Q. For instance, let us take the various books within the Bible; can we consider their varying styles and preoccupations to be a Faulknerian presentation of foreshortened time and multiple aspects of a given phenomenon?

A. The books were of course not all written by the same person . . .

Q. If poetry is accepted as an abstract language which has not been practiced for thousands of years, perhaps then the Bible is that very document which proves the original beauty of abstract poetic expression, since it certainly dates back thousands of years?

A. You might say that, and yet —

Q. I have observed that if one examines any particular chapter of a given Book, the beginning and the end of the chapter are separated by a shorter interval than the beginning and end of the Book itself, which terminal points are polarized across an extended linear duration. A. The chapters, of course, are shorter than the Books. Frankly, I am unable to perceive how it could be otherwise.

Q. Why is it, Sir, that the ambiguities and paradoxes of the Bible have never been thoroughly explicated? Is it because, the subtleties of ancient Greek and Hebrew being what they are, the Bible is essentially untranslatable?

A. There seem to be some difficulties of understanding, true.

Q. In your own contributions, for example — were the choices of symbolic expression conscious or unconscious? The multiplying of the loaves comes to mind, suggesting as it does the possibility of infinite wheatfields, metaphysical harvests, does it not?

A. No, it just happened that way.

Q. Then you don't feel that a more simplified structure would have enabled more readers to see the message of the Bible?

A. I don't know how it could have been changed.

Q. I have a proposal, Sir, stemming from my belief that a fault of the Bible lies in the fact that the authors impersonally addressed an outside audience rather than conducting discussion among themselves to render more subjective the various narrative portions. If you and other leading poets could hold a conference and fish up the untouched answers about humanity, the entire group could put the recommendations into an anthology which would supplement the Bible and bring it up to date.

A. Thank you, I see no need for that.

Q. What made you select the literary field? Either it was your existentialist awareness of your self-as-self contained in

the world, or it was an adventure into the unknown worlds of literature. Well, which was it?

A. Neither.

Q. Inasmuch as we now have rockets capable of one million pounds' thrust, satellites in orbit at altitudes ranging up to 3,000 miles, and space navigational equipment which permits manned operation despite weightlessness, should poets write in pentameter or perogee?

A. I don't see the connection.

Q. Perhaps I can make it more clear: Wouldn't it be a good idea to send up Biblical satellites to defend the free world by the free verse method? As you know, the Bible is set up in paragraphs of free verse, each having an important message for the world, and maybe we could orbit those messages.

A. I see.

Q. Which would be the greatest man in the world, the greatest novelist or the greatest poet? A. Judge not — Q. One last question, Jesus. Do you have any idea what the outcome of this world will be? A. Nary an idea. Q. I do. Some day I'd like to interview you about my thoughts on the subject. Poets are such interesting . . . !

INTO THE FINAL MADNESS

(supplied) by Jay Nash and Ray Puechner*

*(Introduced by an Associate Editor's
PROCLAMATION)*

JAY NASH AND Ray Puechner, a brace of brash, bemused authors, teamed up and began writing — everything, almost, about everything, almost. And they began submitting same to editors everywhere, at all times. They enclosed return postage and, evidently, their own rejection slips — which turned out to be tragically prophetic. Despite the gimmicks, the Hard Sell, the beggary, bullying, needling, wheedling, the score to date stands at .001. But, out of it all has come a 'book' — a monumental collection of their unpublished articles, poems, essays, satires, and stories and an even more imposing bibliography of editorial diatribe, rejection slips, and their own growls and barks. Call it MEMOIRS of wars lost. It grows daily, writing itself.

A second by-product — of even greater interest — is their formation of a club called 'The Rejected Generation.' Its members met, until recently, in the basement directly beneath their cracked ivory tower, there to Hack away at adamant publishers or lick their postage stamps. According to Ray and Jay, who are not to be confused with Lerner and Loewe, it is an oasis where 'eager young novelists fresh from a two-week course in creative writing . . . enter with their Harold Bell Wrights or Faith Baldwin masterpieces of tender self-analysis . . .'

**Excerpted and rearranged by TRACE Editors.*

But as to the book — and its chapters, sections and parts which the authors ship piecemeal or en toto in all directions — Nash and Puechner candidly admit that:

‘ . . . it is without doubt the most brilliant of its genre to appear since the famous third volume of that classic work in the field of neuro-pathology, THE WORM EATERS . . . we think this book will truly speak for itself.’

Perhaps? However, Editor Reed Whittemore of CARLETON MISCELLANY politely declined, with the comment: ‘It is nothing at all — but thank you for submitting . . .’

TRACE herewith presents other excerpts from the two-way odyssey, including correspondence, rebuttals and reactions, picked at random from the unabashed contents:

C.Z.

Dear Mr. Nash:

This ‘Cretin’s Lullaby’ is very funny in parts, but unfortunately we don’t publish funny verse! We are all very morbid types. Best wishes . . .

Robert Bly, THE SIXTIES

Think of the horrors of being ‘The Accepted Generation.’

o

Dear Rejected Generation:

Permit me to add to your stature. Far be it from me to spoil your fun or ruin your image.

The Editor, EXODUS

Again, sorry.

Reed Whittemore, CARLETON MISCELLANY

o

Dear Sirs:

. . . Taking the contributions of ‘The Rejected Generation’ . . . in no particular order:

Jay Nash: A good craftsman. But this tale has been told before . . .

Richard J. Castro: The theme, or rather its treatment, is handled in too traditional a manner for us.

David A. Edwards: These verses are a bit too cute. Ray Puechner: Essays rather too informal and/or intimate. . . . Sincerely, Leonard Feldman, VENTURE o With certain

admiration for Mr. Puechner and with certain impatience for Mr. Nash and Mr. Castro, we reject the enclosed. But not the generation. Editors, BOTTEGHE OSCURE o This piece shows talent. Avoid cliché writing derived from facts about the Foreign Legion, such as appears on page one. Just keep writing and writing until you correct your own lapses. Jane Esty, MUTINY PRESS o The Rejected Generation: These two pieces are just not for us. The Egyptian take-off is a labored piece of whimsy and satire, not funny at all. W. Manus, VENTURE o Dear Sirs: We have carefully considered your manuscripts, CELERY STALKS ALONG THE HIGHWAY and OUTSIDE THE GATES, and have regretfully come to the conclusion that neither one lends itself to publication on our small list. Sandra Auchincloss, THE VIKING PRESS, Inc. o Dear Jay Nash and Ray Puechner: Thank you for sending us your article WHAT YOU'LL BE WEARING THIS SPRING. We do not feel, however, that it is exactly right for VOGUE, so we are returning your manuscript to you with regret. Sincerely yours, Jessica Daves, Editor-in-chief, VOGUE o Dear Mr. Victor: Thank you for letting us consider LET ME RECITE WHAT HISTORY TEACHES. I am returning this to you as it doesn't fit into our 1961 programme and I don't want to hold any mss. for more than a year. I am a little curious as to what 'The Rejected Generation' signifies: — a group, a literary agency, or — what? With kind regards, A. Norman Jeffares THE REVIEW OF ENGLISH LITERATURE o 27 Mr. Jay Nash and Mr. Ray Puechner: None of this material comes close to what we might use in GLAMOUR. Read the magazine! Mary Ellin Barrett, Feature Editor o Dear Mr. Nash: We are very sorry that neither of these stories worked out for us. Thank you nonetheless.... Sincerely yours (signature illegible), For the Editors, ATLANTIC o Dear Mr. Smith: I very much enjoyed POLITICAL SUBVERSION ON THE RACIAL FRONT, . . . we simply don't feel we can accept anything new at present, since it would be four to six months before we could run it. If the

situation eases up, as it might after the election, and you still have not sold the article, you might try us again. Priscilla Buckley, Managing Editor, NATIONAL REVIEW o Dear Mr. Smith: I am very sorry to have to return your article, POLITICAL SUBVERSION ON THE RACIAL FRONT, but it doesn't seem to us that it bears heavily enough on the events of the present political campaign to warrant publishing at this late date.... Sincerely, Priscilla Buckley (ante vide) o Dear Rejected Ones: I am very embarrassed about not having returned your manuscript, HOW TO GET REJECTED AND ENJOY It sooner... Mary Ellin Barrett, Articles Consultant, GLAMOUR MEB: SB P.s. And a merry Christmas to you, too. o S.B. was married on May 6th and is no longer with GLAMOUR, nevertheless, I am sure she would have been flattered by this article. Jill Krementz, GLAMOUR o Sorry, not for us. Gene Lichtenstein, ESQUIRE o Witty—but reader interest flags after a few pages because 28 your parody becomes itself, as dry and lifeless as the sort of scholarship you are mocking. J. E., MUTINY PRESS o But it is amusing. The Editors, NEW WORLD WRITING o Much better. CHICAGO REVIEW o This story has already been submitted in 1959. THE DIAL o Thanks, but afraid we can't use poem. (Why don't you fold poem and mail in regular business envelope, 1st class—4c.? Save dough?) George Dowden, VENTURE o Thank you—and best wishes for further rejection. FIRST PERSON o Sorry, fellas. V. Spenser, COSMOPOLITAN o Nope. Reed Whittemore, CARLETON MISCELLANY o Dear Jay Nash and Ray Puechner: ... old hat, sophomoric, 1930 transition, chi-chi, dada-surreal. But please try me again. Best, Paul Carroll, BIG TABLE P.s. Why don't you write more out of your own Milwaukee life and quit wasting time tinkering with old dada puns? I don't want bad Studs Lonigan.... The geography of the heart is the only land for the writer—the heart with its fetishes, obscure gestures, posturing, fierce needs. Gertie McDowell in ULYSSES would have kissed such a letter and kept it under her pillow. Vivian

Mercier o Dear Friends: Who am I to judge? If the manifesto crystalizes your thoughts, 29 fine and dandy. Obviously, VENTURE can't print it. . . . Basically, I think you waste some good effort in attempt always to be iconoclastic . . . art, and I mean sustained art (not artfulness) demands . . . something more than sarcasm. Sincerely, Leonard Feldman, VENTURE o Why don't you get off this name-dropping kick? You asked me to just read it and return it, but I thought I'd throw that comment in gratis. Reed Whittemore, CARLETON MISCELLANY o Dear Boys: I'm honored — and I loved it! But . . . one of these days. . . Mary Ellen Barrett, GLAMOUR o BOTTEGHE OSCURE has now ceased publication. o Dear Mr. Gicas: Thank you for letting us read . . . JAZZ? I think that the basic story premise . . . has some possibilities, but unfortunately I don't think that the irony of it would be understood and appreciated by our readership. Very truly yours, Oliver P. Ferrell Editor, HiFi STERIO REVIEW o Dear Mr. Nash: Thank you for sending us your article THE ACTORS but does not fit in with our editorial needs at present. Sincerely yours, Leota Diesel Feature Editor, THEATRE ARTS o Why don't you try the new MINNESOTA REVIEW? Reed Whittemore, CARLETON MISCELLANY o Gentlemen: Glad to know Milwaukee produces more than liverwurst. MINNESOTA REVIEW o Dear Rejected Generation: Please try us again. The Editors, NEW WORLD WRITING o 30

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NOTES WHILE REPAIRING A NOVEL

*by Felix Singer**

THE NOVEL HOGBUTCHERS, TWO DOZEN, NEAR NORTH is actually two books in one. Book One consists of a dozen sketches about Chicago's Near North Side, written in a cynical, vulgar manner by a fictional character named Macon. Book Two, the novel proper, shows the direct and indirect effect that reading these sketches has on two people who know Macon (and, through them, the effect upon several others). I had called the work finished, but in early 1960 the typescript was lost in the mail, and while retyping I saw repair work to be done. By January 1961, it'll finally be finished; meanwhile, these notes ventilate the cortex.... The original plot was much simpler: a cultivated woman, sexually hypnotized by a rough, virile man (Macon), accidentally discovers his sketches, and, though she cannot contradict their content, the subtleties of style and tone tell her everything about Macon, revolt her, and so free her of him. This was oversubtle, overintellectualized, I thought (c. 1955). I therefore substituted a schizoid country girl who can't really read at all, but senses the tone vaguely, semi-consciously, and an extremely introverted man (Ted Golfarrow) whose latent anxieties are activated by reading the sketches. And the whole thing ended up subtler and more involved than before. Also, thinking it unfair to show nothing of the Near North Side other than Macon's obscenity, cynicism, and self-deluding sentimentality, I brought in Golfarrow—as ambiguously 'good' a character as Macon (new version) is ambiguously 'evil.' But gross distortion is inevitable in a novel about so variegated an urban area, and the original pattern of distortion came closer (I now think) to being 'artistically true' of the neighborhood than the sprawling attempt at balanced comprehensiveness I'll end up with....

**An excerpt from this novel, chosen by TRACE Editors, ensues this essay. As this was being prepared, Mr. Singer had been released on \$1,000-bond in connection with charges growing out of his*

participation in a Freedom Ride protest against racial segregation in the South.

I changed the original idea in order to avoid certain things, but much of what I wanted to avoid caught up with me anyhow. It would seem that you often can't run away from your psychological patterns, no matter how hard you work at fictional technique.

I arrived at this book-within-book idea because of my preoccupation with what I call the QUELLEN Viewpoint (from the German, Quellenkritik, a critic of historical sources). Its basic question is: sez who? who tells the tale? distorts it how? for what reason? The author must constantly keep in mind the difference between what really (in his fictional world) happened and what the narrating character says happened: ideally, the narrator's reasons for distorting the account become subtle interrelated with the account itself. This sort of thing is going to make for extreme artistic selfconsciousness: one becomes overconscious of writing. It also tends to lead to self-mistrust and excessive introspection: the author goes from doubting the veracity of his narrator to doubting his own....

(Of course, QUELLEN is hardly my personal invention. Mann and James have worked in these areas. But, for the most part, I find their attempts excellent examples of errors to avoid. From what I've heard of Lawrence Durrell, I'd guess that he is most extremely viewpoint-conscious, too, and way way ahead of me in variations....)

I had thought that I had rid myself of my preoccupation with QUELLEN by riding it as hard and far as I could in this novel. I did want badly to stop this business of working at one or two removes from the core of the story. While first plotting HOGBUTCHERS, I had written: '... something in me, something rather fundamental, recoils in squeamishness and pain from humanity and its deepest involvements. I'd rather analyze creative processes and subtleties of

perception than create events....' Maybe so; nevertheless, the fascinating thing about a story remains: who is distorting it? how? why? The roots of such inquiries go far down into the nature of meaning, of objective truth, if any. (If any — what is it? I can't conceive of it....)

The problem is communication. The problem is how to allow for every witness's inevitable subjective distortion. It comes out in all sorts of bitter acrimony caused, primarily, by inadequate communication; it comes out in translation; it comes out in deciding (or does anyone still bother?) where legitimate public personality-projection

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STUART Z. PERKOFF

Two Poems

I
no one knows
how to wait for the poem. that's
the thing. no one.
all waiting may be
the same, death
is waiting for us, we
wait for it. a simple observation.
if a man cd
wait
the poem, wait
inert & open, i wd
count that a major
craft
accomplishment
bench, beach, bed, any empty
space can be
so filled
if only one knew
knew how to

STUART Z. PERKOFF

II

since birth i am
an exile. not counting
the roads. traveled or
avoided.
in moments of rare
hope i have
even set markers on
the trail.
as tho others

wd follow.
running & hiding away
& towards
not knowing
either.
flight. boned
terror in my eyes.
in my rush breathing dust
& corpses. i dont
speak the tongue
dont know the customs
yet i
am, tho
survival is surely
impossible in such conditions.
always, always the push
ing out, never the
ingathering, the
coming home.

MARVIN MALONE

HAY TIME

My world, a whisper of field grass,
With heart beat beat red in the neck,
And with furry animals (non-stuffed)
Huddling; while round and round, a-
Round us, the cheerful chattering
Razor slashing mower circles near
And nearer around, round and around.
Soon — brain blind we leap — out,
Or in halves spurt bleed as the Sick
Evens us, trims us and our world in a
Universe spinning around round. Eyes fade.

JACK MICHELINÉ

ERIMINNO

Eriminno sixty-nine
Eriminno a clown
his hands waved
as he spoke
Ah this world he said
Eriminno grey hair
Eriminno sad face
Eriminno a clown Eriminno
they push me here
they push me there
a messenger boy
you go everywhere Eriminno
I look at the girls
they walking the street
all the girls they look nice
all the girls on your mind Eriminno
Be free and alone
Be free and alone
limp gestures he walks
head down Eriminno
A clown's face is a sad face
life like a stormy sea
Ah what is this world
what is this world Eriminno
How was the Bronx in 1904
the streets filled with snow
the voices of children
the lights in the night Eriminno

JACK MICHELINE

YOU WALK IN THE STREETS

a messenger boy
the dreams in your head
your voice of a clown
your hands in the air Eriminno

I want to be with angels
I want to dance with a blonde
always you're dreaming
and you talk to the moon
you came to the Bronx fifty-six years ago
the woods filled with birds
your hair is grey now
and time does pass by
the world runs for money
the world doesn't dream
people pass you by
out in the streets
still youth in your eyes Eriminno
I want to be with angels
I want to dance with a blonde
Erimminno Serrentino
a messenger boy
walking the streets Eriminno
the coffin is coming
the coffin coming soon
you died in the streets
a messenger boy
the angels were with you
the blondes by your side
the cries of the night Eriminno

ALDEN NOWLAN

PARTY AT BANNON BROOK

At the dead end of a road twisting snakelike as that out of Eden, in a hunting camp, the hoarse creek crawling through the closed door like the wet ghost of some drowned Adam coughing water on the floor, I sprawl on a straw-filled bunk and drink rum with strangers: The chef in his tall white hat and apron embroidered with ribald slogans, spears steaks with slivers of white pine, roaring.

Beside me, in the leaping shadows next the rough boards
of the wall, her head resting on a calendar from which all the
months have been ripped away, leaving only the likeness of a
woman with orange skin and a body that might have been
stretched on a rack in the dungeon of Gil deRaiss it has such
perverse, blasphemous proportions, a girl sits, swaying in
time with the chef's song, her sweater

ALDEN NOWLAN

pulled out at the back,
my circular arm
stroking the soft fat
of her belly — not because I love her
but because I am afraid. If we could do what we wish
always, I would tell them I understand:
this is the season
when the bobcat is not driven away
by smoke and the eagle
makes reconnaissance from the coast.
But they will not listen.
And they could do worse: tomorrow
the chef will be cashiered, kill eight hours
sending bills to debtors and this girl
sit at a desk, addressing letters
to the brains of dead men, each a packaged
pudding
in whom despair
has bred superior cunning
will escape only by long study
of how the silver beads change to gold, falling
by my employer's window, the icicles
stroked by an amorous sun.

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LAWRENCE P. SPINGARN

FROM: SEVEN MORAL TALES

*C*H*I*P*P*I*E*

Years later, I was dry; but then, I wet my bed and had buck teeth.

We lived on a queer, uneasy avenue full of crushed beetles and broken glass. Of course, no cars came that way, and Mother laughed in her sleeve when Henry Ford was mentioned. Father baked little images of gingerbread, selling them to misanthropes at a huge profit. To lovers and gunsmiths only, he made a special price; we prospered and hung caged parrots in our windows. The summers were longer in those days and the drinking water more limpid. No one came to see us ever, and the postman always spit upon our gatepost. But I had dolls stuffed with gold dollars, and when I laughed the whole house shook.

Later, I wore pigtails and rehearsed short speeches which I never made. Mother was terribly busy with the rag-weed that crept onto the lawn, and Father would from time to time run into the yard and shoot away the ravens. Consequently, I was little understood or appreciated, and the pains in my left leg grew worse. When I walked upstairs, where the books were shelved, I grew dizzy and could not concentrate. Finally, the day came when the nails dropped out of the furniture and the carpets fell apart. By then, I was old enough to understand. I was exonerated by a fixed jury. The lawyer pinched me and felt under my dress. Having no bus fare, I accepted his kind offer of a lift home.

Times were easy. In the restaurant where I worked, men left me big tips. I had a manner of turning with a tray, of turning without a tray, of turning . . . so that they forgot to eat. Finally, I took up with a swarthy man who found me friends and kept what they paid me. One day he left town

with a large blonde. Instead of weeping, I took a bath in talcum powder and called in a Swede who massaged me unmercifully, boasting of her own early successes.

Indeed, I was too fat and sweated rings in my silk dresses. I was not loved, and rarely kissed. A senator three times my age adopted me as a daughter and kept me in a huge, cool flat with crystal chandeliers. But he died in my arms, and there were many men. Passion for candied fruit and black silk stockings kept me poor. I took up French, and learned to ride horseback. The old hulks cast up on my bed invariably

LAWRENCE P. SPINGARN

broke condoms, or confessed to being Masons. I worked hard, and long.

Somebody is guilty. Cops to the contrary, I have always been a clean girl, bathing twice a day and sleeping eight hours. No, I recall the man, smelling of tobacco and with dirty feet. The sore refused to heal, so I closed up shop and went to Wisconsin. At the hotel, I avoided women with parasols and wore a veil. Hiking around the lake every day, I lost thirteen pounds and sent post-cards each night to all my friends. If you ask me now who paid the bills, I shall reply that my memory fails me.

Growing old is like pissing in public. You are sure to be found out. Cosmetics are expensive, former lovers ungrateful. I still like iced wine and conjugate 'entrer' at four in the afternoon. But, yesterday they took out my phone, and tomorrow I shall go for my operation. On hot nights, I struggle for breath. My ankles no longer support me. A Canadian with big feet and a pimply face is my nurse, and no one sends flowers. But when I die, I shall order ice-cream for the entire town. My monument will be a hairpin.

C*O*N*F*U*S*E*D BIOGRAPHY

Suppose that I told you I was Spanish. You would not believe me, for I wear thick glasses and labor with my hands. We come from an unbroken line of haberdashers. In the little village near Lodz where I was born, my father was known for his green eyes and deep voice. His sweetheart was the Bishop's cook; but I have never liked oysters. The significance of my birth depends upon what mood you are in. If you are jolly and refuse to eat shredded wheat, the date will be March 3rd, 1886.

My education began in a convent and ended in a lottery office. When I was sixteen, I signed up for a colonization scheme near Leopoldville in the Congo, where Belgians promised to buy us corrugated houses and met us with a brass band at the boat. Although fever killed off half my companions, and worry a quarter of the survivors — with faulty mosquito netting and defective revolvers, we soon colonized the interior. I was promoted to Chief Clerk. Strenuosity with a pen brought me membership in the French Academy. Immediately thereafter, I began to receive shipments of dress suits.

I developed a bad kidney and was pensioned off. Unable to part with my faithful black servants, I had them shot the night I took ship. In Paris, I sought in vain for hedgehogs, counterfeiters, the ghost of Oscar

LAWRENCE P. SPINGARN

Wilde. Two men walking behind me in a dark street made disparaging remarks about my posture. I kept my nails pared down and ready for anything. When bells rang, I dashed madly about, snatching papers from newsboys and giving them to every baker I could find. Alas, it was futile. The pigeons settled again on the soiled steps, and the gargoyles wore a tipsy, foolish expression.

I*N*V*A*S*I*O*N

There are fourteen feet of water under the bed. I have heard from the Portuguese, but not the Russians. In the outer room, telegraphers are busy; prisoners tap on my other wall. When all reports are in, and they will be fragmentary, I shall turn over and go to sleep. But right now I laugh at the unicorns poking their heads through the blanket. From this height, my carpet slippers resemble dandified muskrats. At breakfast I plan to concentrate on my paper and not talk to Grandma.

Statistics reveal a great deal. When the bombs came down, we stuck out our tongues and tested them with litmus paper. Afterwards, we counted three dead among us and sent them home with written excuses. Floods have blocked all the roads, and we must stay our hunger with comic books. At Cannes, a lady put poison in her husband's parfait. In New Jersey, Slavs with tremendous shoes walk all night and talk to themselves. The simple plan will not work out. The complicated chart was stolen by a dwarf. We tried the doors, and found them locked.

Numbers know nothing about grapefruit. Other facts are hard to get, and difficult to follow out. In the town library you can shout all day at no cost. Cotton is our best friend. I have tried several methods, but my hands shake and my head whirls. Sometimes radishes will help, but they must be cut into small pieces. Every time I wink, the police come running and are terribly rude. Only on the boardwalk, among fat people, do I feel safe. I must pack my bag again, and this time not forget a length of rope.

Butchers have come and gone in our district. Taxes remain pretty constant, but the streets shake like jelly where certain people walk. Others enter doors and never exit. A few are lucky and spend Sundays at the Zoo. As for myself, I have long since given up counting beards. Ostriches are scarce out this way, and summer storms have disrupted the

horse-cars. Yesterday someone screamed my name, but I did not turn around. Today, I shall fall on the stairs and lose my bridgework. Obviously, something is wrong with the way we live.

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A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

MOTION PICTURES OF THE PAST

It has been a long time, I think, Since anyone dared to say to my father, 'You little Jew boy!' He's probably forgotten, I suppose.

People don't like to be reminded or acquainted.

That's understandable. Kaple is a drag.

And for what, a name like that? is his opinion.

Progress is simpler with a name like Carol.

That's our name now. Boodleybop! Bop bop!

(I play tenor sax.)

He isn't, like, ashamed; you dig? My father says a person's entitled to change his name anyway, If a person wants; And what's the point of going in the teeth of people all the time And always reminding everyone? he feels. It's just sensible, he says; This is a funny Business, he says. I guess it is. I guess he knows.

The reality of my father Is a small, fat, grey-curled, waddy man; An aging man. A Jewish man, too, of course; With a big Semite nose that he and I inherit From some long and forgotten march . . . But it's hard to perceive the varieties of him And the constant changing back and forth. What you notice mostly, and what remains with you longest, Is the anger; all that apparently untethered anger; And that strangely undivided vanity! These gang up in the oddest way

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

To make him look taller; I mean physically; And almost noble
. . . in a neurotic sort of way, I mean.

I mean, that's what the reality is,
More or less, when he's by himself.
For me it's another thing naturally.
I'm not positive what all actually I see him like.
But it has got something to do with fighting, I know.
I guess I see him as sort of brave.
And somehow Babylonian. In a suit.
I see him from the stories mostly
Which he used to tell us about how he grew up
And became successful,
When he was a child.
His wife, too, sees him another way of course;
Her own way; from her old hurts and her own needs.
I mean my mother! Ha.
I mean, his wife is my mother. Naturally, ha.
I'm probably confusing you, I bet . . .
But I mean his wife, who is of course my mother,
Probably sees him in a different way altogether
From anyone else.
I don't know exactly how though;
Because it is long and long
Since she gave up arguing with him
The question of her own identity.
I don't think she recollects that herself now.
I doubt she even thinks much about it.
Anymore. Oh . . .

Only I remember once they used to have some dilly fights!
And they don't know it, but he used to hit her, And I
remember him doing it to her, Right in the old stomach. I
remember. I remember good! He did it with the same tightly

balled fist He used to use on my brother and I

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

When we were bad.

And I used to think, 'Boy, she's sure being bad!'

He gave it to her so hard . . .

And my brother and I could hear it late at night

(I used to think he probably didn't want to embarrass her)

Clear in the other room where we slept on the couch.

Mostly he did that to her

Account of when she found out some new woman

which he was fucking instead of her

And got sore at him. It's a little confusing, I know.

But she's a very quiet kind of person now; Not at all sparkly and argumentative and pretty Like I seem to remember her when they first had us, My brother and I. She's no trouble to him at all now, practically. I imagine after enough of them, She just got very tired of all those arguments And all those punchings at night And all those other women which he did it with too Instead of her. Like that, she always seems so tired now, all the time. And doesn't say much. Who knows what she is thinking about him? And things? Maybe nothing.

Actually she keeps pretty busy. She likes to do useful things and has taken up sketching now, And draws flowers to hang on the walls, And things like that; or her husband's portrait; She draws everything so good you can tell what it is In the picture. That must make her feel good. And she is sort of his pal now. They are friends And she is his little pal. He calls her Little People. He says he likes little people, and pats her on the head Like she was very small. I think she likes it. They have made it up

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

Where she is, like, his little partner in the Industry. They are a team: He has to be around the studios with his clients all day And comes home discouraged or inferior. So she cheers him up, or whatever's needed; And agrees with his observations about what's happening.

Or once in a while he comes home with exciting news; Like when he found out the Bishop himself Was going to marry this famous movie actress to her husband. I was there at the house that time, And it was hard, in a way, For me to see why it was any importance to us What was happening about a famous star's wedding Or her religion. I knew she was rich and celebrated, But we didn't know her. And my father was so enthused about it, Like it was his dear friend, or his own religion That she was getting married in, Or something. So I kind of smilingly wondered why. Of course my mother got the importance of it right away And agreed completely with him When my father got pissed off at me And wouldn't let me stay for dinner Like I'd been invited. Out you go, boy! I didn't mind that. Getting pissed off at and put out by him Was nothing new to me At this stage of the game. Boodleybop! Bop bop!

Well, as I say, we all see him differently. I don't exactly know, too, what my brother or my sister thinks; My sister was always too frightened to say anything. But every year gets her husband to let My father make out their income tax return

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

And other things like that he lets my father do for them.

They get along pretty good with him,

Except once in awhile when they don't do what he says

About their baby. (My father has definite ideas about raising it.)

About once a year my sister gets stubborn!

But she gets over it.

It's almost easier, in a way, to tell how the outsiders feel About my father. Mostly they dislike him; Except he's well-known in the Business And they usually need him too much to show what they think. They only don't like to submit to his personality Because they are not married to him, I guess, Or children of his. Bdbeebop! And they sometimes say he is unkind. But his venom always has a minimum acceptance: He despises faggots, for instance; And with almost Victorian constancy Always brings home from the studios The latest fag jokes. Everybody has to laugh At how good he imitates them.

In his way, he is a kind of power now . . . By the force of circumstance . . . I mean, among the higher paid flunkies And the better known fringers in the industry. He was one of the early 'commies,' for instance, Who didn't get found out about, for some reason; And who later exposed the other commies in the Industry For Hedda Hopper's column.

I mean, he was never really anything political, himself; Not actually; and he still isn't; But just as it was once the thing in the Industry To make a parlor profession of pink sentiments,

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

Today's swinging thing is to expose them in others Who were naive enough to mean them! He grew up on Chicago's South Side, As he is fond of telling us; Gangland, he likes to remind us. He likes to talk a lot about that; About how tough it was; How tough he had it as a kid Growing up in Chicago's South Side.

And I guess it must have been tough, all right.
At least, it sure sounds like it,
Even from the somewhat hazy accounts he gives of it.
I've sometimes wondered about those accounts;
Why they are so vague, for instance . . .
The memories too painful, do you suppose?
Well . . .
I'm sure he was as tough as any of them
And gave as good as he had to take,
Him so big and hard!
I mean . . .
That's right, he's just a little guy;
Isn't he?
Funny to forget like that. That's what I mean . . .
I guess it's the way he tells it.
Makes you think he was one of the rugged guys.
I guess that's not very likely, huh?
Him so little and cerebral and fat
And Jewish
And like that.
Anyway, it has been a long time, I think,
Since anyone could tell him like that:
' Shag ass, Ickey!
Shag your little kike ass! '
Bdbeebop! Boodley boodley . . .

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32)

ends and dishonest 'image'-making begins. . . . And husbands who can't talk to their wives, and children, their parents. . . . Communication-interpretation: common symbols and concepts to span the loneliness of individuals, the hostilities of groups. Your novelist can be very much involved here. His possible (but always incidental) social role can be enormous. He is moralist without theology, psychologist minus degree; he communicates to people their own failure to communicate with each other. Why, then, try to escape a preoccupation with the problems of viewpoints, of how subjectivities distort communication?

When you are looking for communication, comprehensive, all-pervasive communication on all levels, what can beat the novel? The cinema is, potentially, the greatest art form of them all, of that I'm certain; but it can't really think, and it is external: you look out at it. When and if (scientists have already predicted this) devices are invented to tickle cerebral tissue electronically, thus transmitting though-sound-picture directly into the brain — then, assuming humane, artistic, libertarian control of that media (gigantic assumption, that!), it may well become time to say farewell to the other arts. Meanwhile, films aren't enough; and poems are moments, not lives. Only novels are lives, are of, by, and for lives. The novelist can be, must be the freewheeling interpreter-communicator-explorer-reformer of lives; and what he learns must be blended into communicative accounts rendered in appropriate (not necessarily rhythmic or euphonious or clear) language and plotted with a shrewd mixture of stagecraft and psychological trickery. And be from the guts, be of lives. Sheer trickery and manipulation alone can create some powerful effects, but never the most powerful. The unforgettable things in novels — the moments that readers remember as they remember music — these began as the

deepest, most agonizing discords in the novelist's life; then they were most carefully rearranged, transcribed, orchestrated. The self-knowledge, emotional stamina, the skill and endurance required is alienormous. It takes some humanbeing. Certainly, a minimum requirement would seem to be that the novelist retain his integrity, his inviolability.

And, regarding that, we're in a bad way. Maybe, by refusing some months ago to let a publisher dictate to me about this novel, I have made a small sacrificial contribution to the Good Fight. But, it didn't seem small to me, and I was just looking out for myself, mostly.

Jones & Co., we'll call them. I could read it between the lines of letters, and my gossip sources confirmed it: Jones was on the verge. Only, I was to play ball. Take 'advice' on revisions. Maybe, maybe through patience and subterfuge and bluff, I could have won say seven points out of ten; but, by the good Lord Harry, they would cram those other three points down my throat, they would impress their notions upon my novel. I said no. I had not refused artistic compromises for thirteen years in order to give in then, at the first major climax.

I don't doubt that Jones thought they had the best interests of literature at heart. (The rationalization patterns of the Manhattan intelligentsia are nothing short of fabulous.) Me, I was just looking out for my own virgin purity, don't you know; but maybe it does help a little (in encouraging others to assert that it is possible to resist temptation and settle for nothing. You don't have to look around much to see the thousands of artistic sellouts occurring daily. As one distinguished poet wrote (as early as 1955): 'The sellout now is commonplace/Once it was hubris to do it/Now it's neurosis not to.'

I'll very likely encounter the same trouble again; the novel almost certainly won't be published. Oh, I'll submit it another few times. But, in this day, an unsolicited,

poorly-typed hunk of 880 bitter, complicated, reader-challenging pages, coming from an unknown, is just not likely to interest anybody in the book factories, especially when accompanied by a covering note which says, in effect: 'I won't tell you how to publish, you don't tell me how to write. Yours truly . . .' The saying is: 'It is simply unheard of to publish a first novel without editorial's "suggestions."' So I'll simply be unheard of. True, I thus deny myself the one-in-10,000 chance of encountering an editor who can see exactly what I'm doing and give me specific hints on how to do it better; true, also, I almost certainly deny myself publication.

But a human life should have some meaning to him who lives it. And now that I've finally quit writing, I wish to leave myself this much meaning; that, though in just about every other area I've been coerced to do and say and be that which is unnatural to me, in this my art I have had it my way: good or bad, right or wrong, my way.

While Mr. Singer's essay is published on its own merits, to the extent that it may be regarded as a typical apologia (certainly, most of the points made have at least come to the minds of most writers) its uniquely-personal relevances demand a look at the ms. The Editors read it, and chose the following selection: (pages 193-200, inclusive).

Take it by streets. There is Rush — they call it Main Drag — and if that's what you want, it is. The clubs, the restaurants — on it or give take a block. Popping lights and cornball p.a. music and gin by the gallon and comics and the food — well, the food is pretty good lotsa places, but you pay, brother, you pay — minimum and cover and food and drink and hatchcheck girl and everybody else who has got the hand out . . . tho its slowg down and let em hit one gd slump and theyll start paying you attent when you got a ten-spot in the wallet.

Starts out of the water and fades in this triangle grass bit called Rhems — right there at that point Mr. Kelly and Gus and Singapore and the Swede joint and the shrimp house, etc. — so go south from there Jim Saines, Caruso, Tradewinds — and just stuck in for laughs that big medieval seminary deal with this brickass monsignor statue standing there sneering over at the Tradewinds neon cocktail glass — this seminary right out of a European postcard — and we better watch the grammar here bo — you think you are Proust — well now we are past Chicago Ave. Past which you have these two-three story white or yellow or gray or blue little housethings and a few shops and dodad joints stuck in the basements and a couple Episcopal type deals and the Method Publishing in there and the big car agency and down to Riccardo — and over and out into Chgo River.

That is the nightlife street and this is where Muller roams with his ticket book and this is where the broads get filled up to the brims and around Ohio and Ontario and around there in the hotels is where they get laid. Rush St. don't really begin to wake up till eight at night and don't stop till six in the morning.

But I have spent enough on that street. You start out with this broad, you're just gonna have a couple of drinks. And she drinks and she drinks and you gotta keep up and the hatchcheck girl and the this and that and the next thing you know that is \$17 you used to have. There was this party of four led by the Great Nude Artist — the models are nude, not him, at least to start off with — Mike Morass: this starts at 8 at Riccardo and ends up at 9.13 hours later in beds couches etc. etc. matched and mixed — during which I collect abt \$7 from them — and during this they spent a grand total of \$297.75 and at that, it was cheap. Morastin took in a about a grand at the Art Fair — or so he said — and he was celebrating.

In those little cellar joints you have also floating around some of the best LAY TALENT in town, if you follow, minus the clergy — and the sugardaddies fattening up the peroxide calves for the panty-girdle-removg bit in the hotel — and which is no spot of tea if you are drunk in a dark room and she has first got to squirm and wiggle and hic cough and tell you the story of her life — and meanwhile back in Evanston Mamma is attendg the Wctu meetg. And you have got the models and the 2-bit celebrities and the Youth for Christ kid deserted from the Moody mess on LaSalle and the middleclass h.s kids trying to be so Sophisticated.

These kids, if they are smart they reconnoiter first. You make the tour alone one night, have a 7Up here and a coke there, costs you \$3-4 but it pays off. Because you find out where to go and how to stay for the cheapest deals and when the prices change and when the shows start and where you have to do the age-proof bit so a fin might just do it. Hell, if she is 17 and impresses pretty easy — from out in Yorkville, say — and can't hold the stuff, you might even make yr score with \$5 plus \$5 for the hotel, but the h.s. kids are scared to go into the hotels. I mean, this might sound Depraved and all that—and I grant you, a lot of those kids ought to be home studyg the lessons and I don't serve the punks, that's for sure, and neither does the glasswasher downstairs if he knows what's good for him—but still and all, let us Be Realistic. In this society everythg serves its purpose. And the purpose of Rush St. is to prepare women for bed by hittg their nerves with jazz and alcohol and the purpose of the hotels is to strip and screw in the rooms thereof.

One block east of Rush you get Michigan Ave., Rue Rubloff, the big deal Bull Mich. Magnificent Mile. Picture postcard about 8 miles wide and the hogs ain't satisfied yet—not by a long shot—they have got to rip up the areas all around and kp spreading out for Levensraum as Der Foorer said and so they won't get contaminated by the poor folks.

This is where the tightcorset bitch with the bluegray hair and the puss that is Production of Dupont Chemistry and 2 plastic surgeons buys the \$2750 originals and the jewelry and for Pops \$87.50 worth of 14-K gold garter mountings in the stores with wall-to-wall carpets 3 ft. deep and a big goldfish pool right in the middle and the ferns and leaves... The Drake is at one end and the Chewg Gum Building—white like in a urinal and lit up at night but who ain't? And the Trib Tower of course which is a sort of Gothic cathedral that got stretched vertically. 5c. a throw, suckers, from where the Goode Spanish-Am War Colonel has bn dispensing the kernels and the horsemanure for many a decade. And in 1948—DEWEY WINS. Oh boy—that tells it all—how they run that rag—my explanatn you want to know, is that they had that headline lying around since 1899 when the Admiral took Manila.

Well—and yes—we MUST get in this History Local Color bit—that area between the Boul and the lake is called Streeterville—after old Cap'n Streeter for whom, confidently, the city ain't gonna erect a statue tomorrow in the p. meridian.

That's quite a tale. That guy got screwed up-down-sideways screwed. But well he had a shotgun and the rich bastards had the cash—guess who won. Old Civil War Cap'n drops anchor and the land starts settlg around his boat so he claims it. Calls it a Community of booze-makers and crapshooters and laissez-fairers. But for the LaSalle St. type laissez-fairers this was a mite TOO fair becse that land was worth gold. Well, he had squatters rights and Civil War vet rights to boot, so he claimed it. Some of the biggest highass Society apt. hotels etc. etc. are now on the 200 acres G. W. Streeter claimed around 1890. Well, well, that don't go, there was too much cash involved.

Took the Big Wheels 40 years to lick him—they had the lawyers, they ran the cops, had their own goddamn private

army—and that old guy and Maw with the axe—they held 'em off with buckshot and guts—gunned down a dozen cops too. I saw the old guy couple times when I was a kid—top hat and that mouthful of mustache, ferocious. It was HIS land. Hell, the State of Ill. line ended at the lakeshore—and that hadn't been lakeshore when he got there, it was H²O, so by God the Streeters wasn't even in the damn State of Illinois. Deestric of Lake Michigan he called it — and let the Gov. send the militia — he'd defend it w. buckshot and boiling water and Maw with her axe. She got abt 4 cops with that axe, too, Maw Streeter did. Well, there was too much money there — never mind abt Justice etc., — they screwed the old guy just like they screwed the Indians. But it took 'em long enuf. . . . So now you got the Northwestern deal and the hotels and all that land, also a few old rooming houses that got there first. But with all that gradual pressure from the Greater Mishitigan Asso and so on, those old places are gonna have to go — and soon. So now west, cross Mich., cross Rush, and then there's Wabash and Dearborn and State. Wabash takes that wicked zag at the bridge, but nothg special abt it — ends around 900. Rhems, that's it, I think— Rhems Arbor — This Arbor, That Arbor — these little postage stamps of grass which his Doublejawed Votescratchg Honor has got to have his john hancock on the green sign for to show how the Great White Machine Father spends the sales tax. Plant grass w. sign — lookie what Chgo Puke Dist. did for you, you lucky taxpayer! Now if His Honor cd spare a minute once a year to see abt those crooks loafg in half the City offices and constructn projects — ah, hell, that's chgo. Dearborn — the most respectable-like north-south street below Division, exceptg LaSalle. Two Y's on it and the Moose deal and the Scottish Rite bit — and churches — and when Dearborn and State get up to around Schiller and in there, they ain't STREETS any more. Heavens to Betsy no, they are PARKWAYS up there. And Clark. Everybody knows abt Clark. Up to

Chicago its the stinkpot, maybe a cut above W. Madison but just that. The Skids. And Wells — which is the colored slums — and that's where the small factories start — and over there all fades out in the wilderness of junk yards and RR yds and the River and out west into the Polakland on Division. Wells is old and tired and full of dozen hundred dusty time-forgot junk shops and then between Divisin and Chgo Sat night over near where Bro, G. had his sexy mission house — does that jump in there! man on a summer night it's Harlem and Catfish Row etc. They have themselves a time like us pale gray types never ever will. You used to have zillions of species of Socialian and Sardinians and Eyties in around in there when I was a kid — and those looong knives — man, you just stayed away from there night's! But that's all fading off in there — and a lot of those dagos with the mean eyes and the sharp blades are pushing sixty now sitting around in the parks playing cards and watching their bellies jut out in front. . . Well, there are corners — like Chgo-Rush, that old allnight drugstore there and the Club Alabam with the neon legs akickin; and ChicagState-the Holy Name deal where this hood got tommygunned down— they still got the machine guns holes in the cornerstone and DivisionDearborn natch which is called Perversion and Queerborn. But no necessarily — they move around here and there and elseplace, the laded boys—swishing by with the tight white Jerseys and the prettypretty sports cloths and the yummy brown tans and walking like they got the thighs glued together or the pants full—and man in the lounges, the two-three of 'em they practically run—in those booths—man!! Well, these will be the music boys and the Goodman play actors—some of 'em—don't you know darling and so and such with their teensie weensie little Mexican doggies and the pretty-pretty blond hairdos. Can they turn it on and off—here is this man—you think—walkg down the street to his place and up the steps and then he Sees Somethg He

Wants come walkg up and just watch this hip-wigglg and
ass-squirmg as he goes up this staircase lookg back like
saying: Well, how about it? Do I shake it right for you? nice
ass? Ah the hell with 'em. Ain't hardly a one of 'em but he
could cut the shit and be a man if he wanted to. And don't
tell me about the Psychology please thank you....

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FELINE

by Sam Bradley

She's photogenic (genes glitter like stolen coins!), and her talk is daintily obscene like a cat licking its loins.

THE OLD PROFESSOR OFFERS ADVICE III

GRADUATE STUDENT FRIENDSHIPS

Tom Roberts

Walter Lowenfels'

(This is one of a series of satirical sketches conceived 'in hopes that readers would be irritated enough to consider more realistically the academic life.' The first two appeared in GRADUATE ENGLISH STUDENT (1960), the 'birth, life, and death' of which Mr. Roberts detailed in TRACE No. 41. He also states: 'My acquaintance with the type supposedly writing these (sketches) leads me to believe that he is a little out of touch with his readers; hence, the occasional puzzling references . . . which I prefer to be worked out by the reader . . . to suggest a man slightly out of date attempting to speak to "the young" in Their Own Language.')'

THE FRIENDS ONE makes in graduate school are precious — almost beyond price. The young reader will forgive a touch of sentiment in an old man looking fondly back over the years; time has given that simple statement a significance which I think no young man could ever appreciate. But — to business.

Let's start with three well-trying maxims. • A friend is vulnerable. He trusts you: constant reflection on this truth has saved many an ambitious young man from expressing his dislike of a successful colleague and rupturing a relationship that would later prove valuable. It is not merely a matter of utilizing some of his ideas and findings before he can; it can also be a matter of visiting your department chairman, say, shortly after you've heard your friend complain about him. . . . • A friend is loyal sometimes. It may be that a friend will let you know of an opening in his department or will recommend you to an editor or will arrange to have you read a paper at a convention. Nevertheless, the young man should rest his weight only lightly on such a saying: for some reason, it seems to be less reliable in the academic world than perhaps it is in other professions. We who teach in American colleges have plenty of room for improvement, certainly. • A friend slowly slipping behind heightens one's sense of progress. (My own coinage.) In the hurly-burly of the struggle, with our eyes constantly fixed on the road ahead and on the goals so dear to us, we frequently forget our humble origins. The young man will find it a source of peace and renewed strength if he looks back occasionally in the coming years to see how many of his friends never make it out of those humble origins and how many others fall by the wayside: 'Westward, look, the land is bright!'

In many a dark hour, through many a desperate day, these three simple truths have been a stay and a comfort. How flat, by contrast, have always seemed the usual maxims of friendship: A friend will lend you money, A friend knows girls, A friend will help you cheat, etc. The graduate student who thinks no more deeply than these clichés perhaps doesn't deserve academic success.

But I am writing for a more serious reader, and if he has been giving some thought to the vexing problem of choosing

his friends he may find two other maxims worth considering:

- There is no such thing as a really useless friend, and
- A friend is a man who is not more valuable as an enemy. What few remarks I have space for I shall devote to these.

It's nice to have friends — to complain with them over coffee about the new requirements for the thesis, to plan with them the humiliation of an outsider, perhaps merely to sit with them in the warm bath of knowing how little the intellectual is appreciated in America and how much he deserves the admiration of everyone. No book can replace this kind of experience, and the graduate student should recognize this and try to have as many friends as possible: all of them will be useful in many ways. That young man who will never go beyond the M.A. (and may not even get that far) will become a book-salesman and in travelling from college to college pick up useful information about job-openings, or will recommend you to a publisher. That young lady who says she is going to be a 'writer' will teach in the high schools and could encourage her students to ask for your classes or might be a source of invitations to speak before women's clubs (Community Service is big at some universities). One should learn always to see the future of the callow material surrounding one. As unpromising as it is, it is all your seniors have from which to choose the deans and chairmen and editors of the future.

Of course, one can spread oneself too thin; also, it is sometimes more profitable to have an enemy or two. If one does want to draw the line, one should probably dislike the following: First, poets. Only rarely are they of any use to anyone, and their friendship could be positively embarrassing in the wrong department. Nothing is more suspect in an English department than a live poet. Second, students of the same specialization as oneself. For one thing, they will be filling the positions one will want for oneself. For another, the rough treatment they will give one's

publications, as enemies, is relatively unimportant; for deans and chairmen rarely read reviews and if they did would probably even prefer the lesser challenge of a man who writes badly. Third, women students. Nobody respects them, and they almost always get married and retire anyway. Of course, if one's greed is large enough and one wants to take no chances, even these three types may be of some use.

But one certainly should have some enemies. The student occasionally meets who knows more about his field than his teacher. Students who get a B on their term paper, and then get it published. Students who ask questions that make it apparent the teacher has not read the assignment. Students who do imitations of professors. Students who have degrees in Education. Student-teachers who are suspected of giving high grades. Students who wear beards or loud, flashy clothes. Students who use French phrases in their conversation. Most important of all: students who are the proteges of the rivals of one's advisor.

The aspiring graduate student will choose a few enemies from among these types. He will do this because he knows that in doing so he will make friends among his teachers. And every graduate student knows that these are the dearest friends of all.

P.J.V.

(In late 1961, at the time TRACE Editors accepted the ensuing piece Mr. Lowenfels was leaving on an 'exploratory' journey to East Germany to attend a writers' congress; and he expressed hope that he might be able to transmit his 'on scene' reactions to what may be transpiring in that area.)

LETTER TO A YOUNG POET

DON'T TELL ME *about your doubts,* 'Goethe told a
young writer,
'I have enough of my own.' That is what I'm
saying, in effect
—I have the same questions, doubts, frustrations
— and leave behind
the same suicidal notes as you. So do Corso,
Vallejo — and Shake-
speare. No other poet is the hero you think he
is—he is just trying
to get down that last gasp before the little man
comes to take away
the buttons and sew up the corpse.

—And yet, you are a hero for me. This doesn't make sense?

Exactly! You write your own poem, please.

If you can say it in half the words, it's twice as good.' There's no question about your talent. The world is full of promising people. What counts is how you manage the last inch nobody can do but you. Printing a poem does not extinguish it or light the world with one more Milky Way. Here I am trying to quote Horace: 'Keep your mss, nine years.'

Please don't be a success, except in the poem you write for nobody to see—except in that other self you hide from . . . I'm not 'answering'—I have your poem tucked away for more reading, also your letter. If I turned to them, I wouldn't be able to say anything. So— just these random notes. . . . When a poet is as good as your best, we want him to be always his best.

'Across the boundaryline' we read you after we read Dante and just as we turn to Villon. We don't put you in a separate class; you compete in our ears with every other poet. It doesn't make any difference if you are young or old or

crippled—the only measure is performance. Poetry hunting is the cruelest season.

I can't advise you: only sum up my pros and cons. You should work it out your own way remembering you are Fra Angelico for us —also Leonardo, Chu Yuan and Charles Ives and Charley Parker. When we read you, there are no other artists but you. If the others intrude, we stop reading you for them. In this race, there are only winners; nobody ever takes second place.

Of course, I am asking you to be even better than you are. That's your fault for being so good. . . . Are we on the verge of fighting? Each line I write you in this letter is a boomerang that comes back and cuts off my neck.

And that is how I started: 'I have the same questions, doubts, and leave behind the same suicidal notes as you.'

TWO PREMIERES: TOMBSTONE AND AUTOMOBILE GRAVEYARD

by James V. Baker

RECENTLY, DAVID LARSON, young chairman of the drama department at the University of Houston, conceived and directed an entirely original improvisation-drama called COMICAL ERRORS IN TOMBSTONE, which saw five presentations in the round in Cullen Auditorium.

Rehearsals, often a chore, were exalting; there was no learning of lines and no 'blocking' the show. The actors were given a plot and characterizations, but no script; they had to deliver, speak, extemporize as the exigency of the situation or the spirit moved them. Several members of the cast had timid reservations, but the show played to full houses each evening.

One of the common complaints against amateur performers is from the sense that here is someone reciting lines. In this instance, this was impossible. There were no lines! Perhaps the spirit of Stanislavski was hovering in the wings; anyhow, the attempt was to capture a fluid, spontaneous acting style. The grand objects to be achieved were sincerity of emotion and imagination; the actor was to empathize into and 'live' his part.

(When Jackson Pollock painted, he did not paint with a hand steadied by a mahlstick; instead, he painted with eye and brain and muscle and heart and soul, he painted with his whole body, with everything he was or had. The result is world famous today; it is called action painting. Perhaps some day we shall have action poetry, a poetry daring, yet not formless, more willing to take risks than the immensely-accomplished but decorous poetry of men like Richard Wilbur, John Frederick Nims, and Howard

Nemerov—though the latter can be staggeringly indecorous once in a while. Certainly, in COMICAL ERRORS, we have a new and experimental kind of drama to which the name ‘Action Drama’ is appropriate. It has its affinities with jazz. Jazz usually takes a known tune as a base and then improvises around it or upon it, giving the musician a chance to create, experiment, explore. Here, then, is a Gretna Green marriage of form and freedom, and when the emotion is excited to the right pitch, the jazz really ‘swings’.)

The action takes place in the Bird Cage, an actual combination theatre-saloon that still stands today in Tombstone. A naked woman is painted in back of the bar, but the painting lets down on hinges onto the bar itself, thus becoming a stage on which either can-can or Shakespeare may be danced or acted.

The actors—in order to get into the spirit of the times—had to read diaries, journals, newspapers, and other accounts of the West in the Eighties; and the audience encountered actual incidents from the time of cowboys, miners, gamblers, cattle-rustlers, dance-hall girls, preachers and Shakespearean actors. Several Shakespearean troupes toured the West, and famous actors such as Edwin Booth and his father, Junius Brutus Booth, were heartily welcomed for bringing lusty Elizabethan drama to the lively mining camps and frontier towns. For, says David Larson, ‘though it is not generally acknowledged, the cowboy loved vivid language, speaking a highly colored one of his own and relishing the vaulting language of Shakespeare.’

The high point came when a naive cowboy confronted a professional actress, the Juliet of the traveling troupe. The cowboy made light of her acting; and she (Charlotte Glenn) defended her art in beautifully articulated English: ‘Acting is a noble profession, and to it I dedicate my life.’ The cowboy was impressed to the extent that he, too, wanted to become an actor. Yet, it is to be doubted whether this type of

performing (can it be called acting, with so much left to chance and depending upon the readiness of actors?) can be termed other than haphazard; the true nature of all art is a rage for order, in which natural passion is subsumed and transcended. Juliet on the balcony (solo by Miss Glenn) to an imaginary Romeo below, was in the exquisite perfection of language and gesture far above even the most inspired makeshift.

However, the director, Mr. Larson, is to be congratulated for his daring experimentation. His aim was to have the actors existentially 'engaged,' and these actors did get actively involved. And, since the wild West of the Eighties was remote from their own way of life, they were not playing themselves.

THE AUTOMOBILE GRAVEYARD

by the Spanish playwright Fernando Arrabal

was performed perhaps for the first time in the U.S.A. at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, last August. It is a passion play, but definitely not in the Oberam magau manner. It is raucous, strident, farcical, angry, tragic, gruesome, and disturbing. The action takes place in a grotesque motel of junked automobiles. None of these have wheels. They were a sickly corroded green with battered Texas license plates. The Satanic manager of this corrupt motel is Milos (Glen Jefferson, whose ballet training was visible in his disciplined flexible grace). His assistant, who helps him run the show, is Dilla (Karen Friman), — a combination slavey and prostitute whom he forces to satisfy all the needs of his guests. Milos alters his behavior with quick-change-artist rapidity: to his guests he behaves with exaggerated deference; to Dilla he is generally cruel,—though, when she threatens to leave him, he cringes like a frightened child. He swings from sadism to masochism precisely in the manner described by Jean Paul Sartre.

The car body on one side of the stage has its rear axle jacked up with cement blocks; it is the office and center of operation for Milos and Dilla. The other two cars, at the other side of the stage, appear stove-in as from head-on collision. Inside these cars, which are curtained, one can hear all the activities of living, talk of incredible intimacy, sexual intercourse, the cries of a new-born baby, and (here perhaps the sound technician is to be congratulated) the making of water as the chamberpot is passed around.

The Passion element is heavily underlined. A combo of three jazz musicians arrives: Emanu, Fodere, and Tope. All are young. Emanu soon discloses himself as a Christ figure;

the others are destined for the roles of Judas and Peter. Emanu (George Richie) has an extraordinary innocence of face, and constantly intones his ritual formula about 'the great inner joy born of peace of mind that is yours when you see yourself in the ideal image of man.' He seems to have been conceived rather as the Christ of D. H. Lawrence's *THE MAN WHO DIED*. He pleads each evening to 'make it' with Dilla; and he does. I want to be good, too,' says Dilla, 'You are good, Dilla,' replies Emanu, 'you let everybody make it with you.' Here is an extension of the meaning of the word 'kindness' and possibly an allusion to Christ with Mary Magdalene.

What is Arrabal saying in this tortuous, tortured, and torturing play? Obviously, this is no conventional Passion play, nor even an overt moralization such as William Faulkner's *A FABLE*. Rather, Arrabal paints the modern world as his nervous system responds to its brutality and violence, its flagrant commercialization of values. He points out the strange mixtures of existence through strident and striking juxtapositions. An hilarious 'cops and robbers' chase, right out of the Keystone comedies, is almost side by side with a scene in which a new-born baby is beaten to death — its little body passed out of one of the autos, bathed in blood. The tenderness of a prostitute's reaching out for love ('Mister, give me a kiss') is contrasted with a lashing-to-death. Noticeable too — there is only one oasis of tenderness in this desert of cupidity and stupidity, only one moment of groping toward mutual understanding between Emanu and Dilla. The playwright seems saying that such moments are of increasing rarity in the modern world. (One notices similarly the difference between Robert Penn Warren's garden poem, in which the moment of release from tension is snatched, and the serenity and contemplation in Andrew Marvell's Seventeenth Century garden poem of Nun Appleton.) In the automobile graveyard, all characters are capable of all

feelings; yet old feelings are dispensable, junked,— and limbs and bodies scattered in piles like scrap. No scheme of salvation is discoverable, and there is no resurrection.

Act II moves quickly to the bizarre crucifixion. Emanu, perched atop one car, is betrayed by a Judas kiss, to the police. When the cock might be expected to crow, a hand honks an auto horn. The leading cop has in the basket of his bicycle a formidable cowhide whip, and Emanu is collared. When he is captured, he seems to half-collapse, as though loss of freedom were loss of everything. He makes the sign of the cross, but stumbles and grows confused when he would pronounce the old confident formula . . . ‘peace of mind . . . inner joy, is it? . . . ideal image.’ No torture is onstage; but we hear the rhythmic, pitiless application of the lash. Finally, whitefaced, shirt soaked in blood, his limp body is wheeled in, ‘crucified’ to the handlebars of a bicycle. The occupants of the cars hoot and hee-haw.

The play ends in a strange manner. Dilla rings a bell. At first, her disgust seems directed at the insentient and callous guests of the motel; but her anger seems to widen to embrace the audience and eventually all the people of the world. And (no doubt) the bell is tolling for us all. She rings: ‘WAKE UP! WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!!!’ As the lights go up, the audience sits dazed. It is an embarrassing moment. Should they obey Dilla, wake up, do something? Do what?

It is a shocking play; but *MACBETH*, too, is a shocking play,— and what is shocking is that two ‘nice,’ clever, intelligent people, who simply have ambitions, can produce such hell. It’s hard to see how they can get the chain reaction of murder started and go on committing murder after murder. But they do. And Shakespeare shows us how. At the end of this play, we are in possession of insight; nobody needs to ring a bell or shout: ‘Wake up.’ We are awake. And this tells what I think about Arrabal’s crude device: if his shocker hasn’t woken us, ringing a bell won’t do

it either.

Director Ned Bobkoff — also young — has a fine sense of rhythm, pacing and timing. His faults are the faults of youth. The play, as performed in Houston, was done in Hellsapoppin style, when I, having in mind the gravity and simplicity of Castilian character, feel a more sombre playing, such as would suit Garcia Lorca's BLOOD WEDDING, would have been more in order.

The play, as directed, was a series of gimmicks. We were entertained by acrobatics on an auto tire suspended in air; the slop from a chamberpot was emptied onto a rubberized or plastic plant, which (proving sensitive like Shelley's) collapsed and died. I did not think that a hand emerging from an auto, firing a pistol, and the sudden plunk to the floor of a rubber duck from the rafters added significance. I wonder whether Arrabal, had he seen the Houston production, might not have been affected as Ionesco was by the New York presentation of RHINOCEROS, when he walked out and would not go to see it again. These athletic performances seem to turn what is quite serious (isn't the Nazi lockstep, in Ionesco's, depicting a kind of mental or spiritual lockjaw?) into a three-ring circus . . . five-engine fire-alarm. To end on this note, however, would be unjust; for it leaves the impression that the play was nothing if not noisy. It was that; but the acting responded to the rapid shifts of mood required by this extraordinary script — and the final impression was of savage power.

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A TELLING TALE

by Sam Bradley

Fictions flesh out 'Who is able?'

*Silly, don't you know how rabbit-skinned is a
moral (appendage of fable) that's erected at the
end?*

SOME ITEMS RECEIVED

IT WAS GREAT TO BE ALIVE

HARRY HOOTON, an Englishman who had resided in Australia since 1925, thereby doubling obstacles to recognition as a foremost seminal thinker, died of cancer last June at the age of fifty-three. He left widely scattered works; both prose and poetry had appeared through intervening decades in periodicals in virtually all parts of the English world. Together with self-published pamphlets and one limited-edition book, *POWER OVER THINGS* (prepared by Leslie Woolf Hedley), Inferno Press, 1955,* these have exerted influences beyond what his limited readership would indicate.

When his incurable illness became known, Margaret Elliott undertook, for the 21st Century Art Group of Sydney (an organization of writers, painters, and other artists, founded on his concepts) a more definitive selection, *IT IS GREAT TO BE ALIVE* (\$2 equiv. from the Group at: Box 3015, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia). Unhappily, this did not reach publication until midsummer, ensuing his death. Copies first reached the U.S.A. in September.

Determinedly, with both typewriter and tape-recorder, Hooton endeavored to pack into his remaining weeks, before lapsing into an extended coma, the revised arrangement of his major prose volume, *THE INHUMAN RACE*, and largely succeeded. This may be released in late 1962.

Meanwhile, *IT IS GREAT TO BE ALIVE* holds much of his best poetry, some 5,000 words from this book, and a choice grouping of epigrams, a form in which he excelled. His range is illuminated, from serious poems to light verses, from uproarious comedy to incisive presentations of his own kind of anarchistic philosophy. Humanitarian faith in Man's vital

potential to find his own eventual salvation, is expressed in a hundred ways. Highly-individuated use of language is present in every form. He had been credited with significant contributions to semantics; and, in contrast to most linguistic theorists, he applied his hypotheses for communication with creative originality, to exhibit a distinctive style.

With typical self-respecting humility, he wrote this Editor just before death: 'I have been given three months to live . . . I am hoping to extend this, at least long enough, to finalise my literary work. These things are relative of course; I can edit some of the crudities out, fill in a few gaps, tidy it a little. . . . I would like you to act . . . to further or maintain the slight interest in my work there (the U.S.). . . . I must not load you with work of course, it need be only a mild interest, but I like to think I left (a) record.' He aided with the script of *IT IS GREAT TO BE ALIVE*, and said: 'But this book, although it will contain much not collected in book form, and some not previously published, is only a pointer to a larger context. I have, for instance, a complete prose theoretical work of 60,000 words (see above) and other . . . My only real concern, in my present distress, is that this should not be lost. I needed twenty years at least to finish . . . I can only hope more of it reaches publication, no matter how or where. . . . Friends have made it possible for me to continue writing in comfort to the end, with no financial worries. . . . So I am happy — so happy I hope I have not worried you. . . '

**See CONCERNING A MAKER, by this Editor (INFERNO No. 10, 1954), a condensed critique, dealing with Hooton's publications to that time. This essay—later approved by its subject—was reprinted as a chapter of SELECTED ESSAYS & CRITICISM, James Boyer May (VILLIERS, 1957—still in print).*

This new selection suggests so many facets that it's difficult to decide which to describe. The lesser ideas are easier to translate than the larger ones; and they also do connote

their related expansions.

Hooton's semantical interests have been noted, and not long since (in TRACE No. 40), we published his reply to John Ciardi's non-expository theory of poetics. Here, in a third section from the GOLDEN CITY, he parodies imagists:

the gravid yellow pulp of an orange with silent peel
exquisitely stripped or just the ineluctable pips . . .

and then parenthetically interrupts: (This is easy — the number of times you can juxtapose two words never before so juxtaposed and still stir the associatory tracks of two men who never cliched in their unique lives is infinite. Try it out sometime — every adjective can fit any noun. But to hell with such iniquitous unicity! I'm here to tell you something — to tell you everything . . .)

The first two epigrams in DIRECTIONS abstract much 'telling.'

Whatever is is a movement; man is a movement — to something other than man.

Movement is direction: nothing can move without moving somewhere.

And here's the 33rd epigram:

There is no stronger force than an idea whose time has come. It is usually strong enough to crush the original ideal and too strong to accept the better ideas which should supersede it. And (39):

There is only one way to maintain a position, that is to extend it — and that is to leave it, to move on from it.

In another area, — an untired definition of a long-overtried concept (vide ante):

The genius is a man who will talk, listen to anyone, everyone, no matter how stupid they may be — he knows how stupid he himself can be. (45)

A limpid No. 55:

If a thing is hard to do it isn't worth doing.

Particularly addressed to these ominous years (72):

There won't be another war, when there's no-one to stop it.

Among those on literature (Nos. 118 & 126):

Joyce and I wrote rubbish, but I destroyed mine.

Nietzsche was a modern with his eyes on Greece; Wilde was a Greek looking to the future; Whitman is eternal.

And, from THE INHUMAN RACE:

A book starts with its title. If that title is bad the book can be thrown away.

Of course, Hooton meant the author's title, not a tag some publisher's copy-boy might attach. Which brings forward another important consideration: Hooton could have been more printed, had he not remained adamant, not only about titles, but about each word, phrase, and mark of punctuation. He took a harsh view of alterations in creative work without the maker's assent; and as editor, too, he rejected the practice. Which introduces announcement, for late this year, of the delayed (now, final) 1961 issue of 21st CENTURY, with writings chosen by himself (\$1 — from foregoing address), including many American authors.

Finally, to close on Hooton's major thesis (THE INHUMAN RACE):

. . . Yes — pull up your filthy nets — you organisers, manalyzers, manpowerers, and see if there's a MANINIT! 150 years ago the workers decided to take possession of the machines but it was pointed out, by some particularly perspicacious intelligent gentleman, there was man behind it . . . So before we can get at the machine we must get at the man who controls the machine and before we can get at him we must get at the man behind him and we can go on like that forever and ever getting at man for — there is a man upon man's behind.

. . . Of course, you can see how ridiculous my position is — that we will take possession of the machines only by taking possession of the machines. Obviously the thing to do

is to take possession of men — and then? Well then, you'll be where you began.

. . . We must rule, not man, but man's Kingdom: machines, architecture, the world outside. This is the new politics: plastics, technics, power over things. Not the rule of one man over man, monarchy, nor of no man over man, anarchy, but the rule of all men over matter. Manarchy!

And for postscript, one of his most-precise, meaningfilled sentences:

'No matter how angry we may become we must always remember that there is one side to every question — the outside.'

FOLEY WITHOUT BAEDER

Lawrence P. Spingarn

FOR ABOUT TEN YEARS following World War II Martha Foley discovered a variety of trends in her prefaces to *THE BEST AMERICAN SHORT STORIES* (Ed. by Miss Foley and David Burnett — HOUGHTON MIFFLIN Co., \$5.50). During this decade, it seemed to me that despite the editor's disclaimer, most stories were chosen for the anthology on the basis of their conformity to pre-arranged patterns. But this year's collection has clearly broken with the old policy Miss Foley pursued. In its place I find a lamentable lack of focus. Of the twenty 'best' stories for 1961, many can only be described as pointless or tired elaborations of small episodes that have not jelled in fictional molds.

Traditionally, this annual has been more hospitable to new and often raw talent than to name-writers gone to seed. In this year's offering, however, a sorry alliance has been made with the dead hand of the South as represented by Peter Taylor in *MISS LEONORA WHEN LAST SEEN*. I am strongly prejudiced concerning material from these nether regions, a prejudice based entirely on the decadent emphasis that Southern writers present ad nauseam. Miss Leonora is the stock figure of shabby gentility we find in Faulkner's *A ROSE FOR EMILY*; she is an updated Miss Emily who stops short of murder to cruise about country roads dressed in dungarees or choker collar, depending on where she stops overnight. The thorn in her flesh is progress. For generations her ancestors have kept Thomasville faithful to the stereotype of the patrician county town, which shuns industry and seeks to reproduce judges, bishops, and poets. Mr. Taylor, a darling of the *KENYON* set, has devoted nearly thirty pages to a very stale travesty on traditionalism that offends truth,

honor, and the reader's belief. He is a peter, to be sure; his story suggests fraud and wishful thinking. Although progress wins at last (Miss Leonora's ancestral home is condemned for a school that may become integrated), these Tennessee aristocrats seem to be having the last laugh, for certainly Miss Foley could have recognized a better example of work from 'below the Line.'

If the Southerner is chary of Negroes, I am chary of such stories about them as James Baldwin's *THIS MORNING, THIS EVENING, SO SOON*, the first selection in the book. This first-person narrative is told by a sensitive American Negro married to a Swedish girl; after having lived many years in Paris as a 'free' person, he is called back home to Alabama by the death of his mother. The reader, involved with the entertainer's problem as an expatriate suddenly exposed to the half-forgotten facts of white supremacy in America, is carried through forty pages of alternately meaningful and meaningless experience to the thematic final scene, in which a broken-down Tunisian boxer friend of the hero steals from a colored American girl. As the narrator says: 'If you would steal from her, then of course you would lie to me, neither of us means anything to you; perhaps, in your eyes, we are simply luckier gangsters in a world run by gangsters.' I buy this line. it agrees with me. But why waste so much print on a high-level Sammy Davis, Jr. with a warm spot in Miss Foley's heart?

The other tale of darkness is equally pretentious, but the language is trickier and the twists are more clever. I don't much care who Ivan Gold ('native New Yorker . . . graduated from Columbia College') is, but you can bet your hunch that he was once a pupil of Miss Foley on Morningside Heights. Otherwise, I can't see any better connection between this labored treatment of the old army game and *BEST AMERICAN*. . . . Carver Brown, the slow-moving Negro soldier in *THE NICKEL MISERY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER BROWN* is a

natural victim for the sadistic Sergeant Cherry (cherry tree cum Parson Weems cum Gold?); for good measure, the author threw in both the 'tolerant' white Southerner and the standoffish Northern Negro who refuses to discuss the race question. While all the fashionable ingredients are present, the meaning lies buried somewhere in the no-longer-tolerant white observer's last exasperated shout: 'Where is that anti-social Northern nigger? Is he still above it all now?'

The several downright cute New (brain-)Wave stories are in a different category. William Peden, a pedant from Missouri, contrives to get a little girl crucified on a Ferris wheel in NIGHT IN FUN-LAND (from NEW MEXICO QUARTERLY); his version of the symbolic horror story does not come off. Another professorial trickster, Mark Harris of San Francisco State College, conducts a tedious argument in THE SELF-MADE BRAIN SURGEON, between a cop and a grocer accused of practicing medicine illegally. The piffing conclusion is a plea for self-rule, since 'The police are few, the residents are many, the neighborhood is its own Department, it cures and mends, it regulates itself.' Harris fools around with punctuation, with street props, with irrelevant talk and conjecture. His tongue-in-cheek coyness is a shrewd bid for attention, not a sign of talent.

And still, one of the better Best stories is about academic life-in-death: THE COLLEAGUES OF MR. CHIPS, by Samuel Sandmel. Here we see the pressures of our nitpicking era mount up and overwhelm a young English instructor in his first job. It's the publish-or-perish situation dramatized by a master; there's no coy writing in this piece, no bringing in of hipster talk or distorted modern idiom for the sake of disguising emptiness and defeatism. When Jim, saddled with a neglected wife and a sickly baby, finally tears up the manuscript of his thesis, on which so much of his future hangs, one feels shocked and outraged at the kind of university that counts commas and promotes pussyfooting

idiots. Sandmel, at least, has a point of view, tools to express his indignation, and an unashamed interest in a good yarn.

The collection as a whole is disappointing. On one hand, it contains exploitations of new or bypassed subject matter, presented in an unsuitable experimental manner; Tillie Olsen's *TELL ME A RIDDLE* is an essentially trivial study of an elderly Jewish couple with a radical background who are cut off from their children by our demoralizing prosperity. On the other hand, it prints empty sketches, pastiches in which the characters have died or moved away; St. Clair McKelway's *FIRST MARRIAGE* is more a celebration of the 1920's than a study in matrimonial failure.

Inflation, attrition, and politics are at the root of this anthology's false emphasis and shallow posturing. Nonetheless, I have a great deal of respect for the editor and her son; theirs is a worsening dilemma, given the kind of smart little boys and girls getting printed today. It is said that during the period of final selection Miss Foley sits on the floor of her Greenwich Village apartment with the contending magazines spread at her feet. With so little strong fiction about, perhaps we should condemn the original editors, not Martha Foley, for the poor showing in this year's *BEST AMERICAN SHORT STORIES*.

FICTIONAL TRADITION IN 'UNTRADITIONAL' 60's

FOR MOST CASUAL readers, it must seem that this decade in Anglo-American literature opens with less of confluence, singular or plural, than has any decade since such a literature took form; they witness layers and interlayers, only partly blended and scarcely semi-fused in almost-unpurposed change. And yet, most readers of contemporary fiction are able—if not to pinpoint the criteria behind their discriminations—to distinguish which works rate 'modern'—praiseworthy or not. In a next breath,

readers dismayedly may exclaim over what they say are unpredictable diversities amongst those older or recently-deceased authors whose often-conflicting methods nevertheless concurrently affect the later candidates to letters.

These readers seldom realize how their valid distinctions derive from related directions which are in fact manifest—directions (or, better, a direction) to be found both in book- and periodical-fiction that's obviously 'in the mode,' as well as (significantly) from which writings out of the near past are favored for reprint by 'modern' publishers. The reason their sense of this is undefined is because they may not recall—though having read them—those distant progenitors from whose influences the signs point.

Solely through examination of what so-minded publishers re-issue from the immediate past, it can be confirmed that the identifiability of a special Sixties 'modernity' stems from a long-since-foreshadowed trend. 'Different' though the publishers' selections are—stylistically, and in subject matters too—amongst them, their choices of reprints carry the intermediate lines of special reader-appeal closely resembling those of favored newer writers.

What is the long-since-foreshadowed trend? From which manifestations of which pre-Twentieth Century authors has the modern image formed?

A superficially-dubbed journalistic approach was contrarily adopted by the largest number of writers in the first decades of the Twentieth Century, in reaction to the also-contrary endeavors of the impersonal abstractionists of the Nineteenth Century. The modern reaction against both has followed the return to a proven-enduring trend which also persisted through all those years: that of intense subjectivity, intimately tied to an emerging philosophical question, which is today's search for the meaning of identity. In an aesthetic sense, this has not given birth to works of

true abstraction; and, of course, little detachment can be looked for in artists proceeding from concentrated ego-absorption,—while their individuating focus makes for irrational disorganization and leaves, as the sole syntheses, shifting and more-or-less-fortuitous series of events and sensations.

The unwinding is a literature of social analysis by 'internal' indirection. Whether ensuing miscellanies of 'reports' are transported through introspective attributions to fictional minds or, outrightly, through autobiographical narrations of actual or modified recollections or by conjectural flashes concerning the minds of observed persons, 'objectivity' is nearly always absent. Although selection inevitably occurs, there's little selectivity, except insofar as the author's unique personal taste, realm of interest, and verbal bent will have brought forward those aspects of existence more emphatically registered within himself.

Students of these fictions must effect a fundamental reversal of customary processes toward comprehensive reception, appreciation, and deeper understanding via their potentials for apprehensive appreciation and intimate awareness of the minds of the authors rendering such projections. They must give account to the probable mental states of writers, regarding these as valid portions of the relevant literary fare, and as integral both to what they assimilate and what they vicariously add to their own experience of life, and to problems of modern mankind at large.

Leaving aside the comparative 'worths' of writings — not merely in terms of literary composition, but for the fertilizing of cultural growth — amongst themselves or separately, or interpreted as a 'movement' from creations of preceding decades, the names of a few progenitors quickly uncover common ground beneath diversities. Consider, for instance,

outstanding elements in works of Laurence Sterne, the elder Brontë sisters, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and George Gissing. These names, taken almost at random, are conjured because they are familiar — and bypassing, for the immediate purpose here, reference to important relationships of Russian, French, and German creators. For, a minimum of concentration on the unorthodoxies of just these half-dozen authors who predate us a hundred years, excepting Gissing, provides unifying keys; more precursors soon come to mind, and a complex definition of today's modernity appropriately clarifies in Jungian terms of dreamanalysis. Many easier labels have been used — most generally, that of Romanticism — but none embraces more than a single modern genre. The wide mainstream of Sixties fiction is moved by currents, each of which is impelled by individualized associations formed out of impacts from preponderantly unconscious causes within those authors whose perceptions have developed more than a 'slightest degree' of 'loosest connections'* with their conscious utterances.

Let's look at the fiction arriving for review in this issue. But, first—to emphasize that items here illustrating this thesis were neither searched out nor selected to support a preconceived theory; they happened to come, and their contents (similar to many others) have underlined inchoate earlier observations.

To begin with a novel that's more than subtly different from novels of its type (the social-conscience portrayal) from the Thirties (when left-wing radicalism prevailed), the Forties (caustic disillusionment), or the Fifties (individualistic, negative rejection)—*A LOST KING*, by Raymond DeCapite (DAVID McKAY Co., \$3.75). A good book to view first, because the treatment is not heavily introspective, despite first-person narration; and—at the superficial level—it's howlingly funny, evoking laughter even in depths of tragedy.

All great humor embraces tragedy (a hackneyed remark); but, here, the angles of perception are both acute and obtuse. Paul (who tells a homely story of father-son conflict from a mixed stance of filial love and total disrespect) reveals the author's insights via more-or-less-unconscious bits describing his inner feelings (the book is nearly 100 percent dialogue); and a far-extended focus upon society's guilt enables readers to see that the range of predetermination is very limited and that chance both orders and 'disorders' a world where literally any kind of life is found. The outward effect of an almost-rambling narration of family and neighborhood experiences implements DeCapite's psychology in a way to allow less-perceptive readers to be entertained and respond to the external realities of tragic finale, without feeling more than mild jolts from the underlying oppositional voltages of universal frustration and despair . . . with minimal awareness of the darkly-turning subterranean ways along which the author moved in composing what some take for a 'light' novel. DeCapite has early (this is but a second book) formed an easy semi-idiomatic, individuated expression comparable to that of William Saroyan,—yet, indubitably, his own.

Since the essential Gotho-romantic (an only-partly accurate coinage) strain in this young writer is not salient, another look at him while perusing novels and stories of an older author, ascendant in the popular sense, proves peculiarly helpful. This is Robert Lowry, virtually all of whose books have reincarnated in those flashy paperbacks that attract the naughty-minded with bared breasts and thighs. The latest for the drugstore racks, a praised 1949 volume, *THE*

*From Introduction to Part II of *PSYCHOLOGY AND ALCHEMY*, C. G. Jung. *WOLF THAT FED US* (POPULAR Library — 35c) recently arrived along with a belated copy of *THE PRINCE OF PRIDE STARRING*, a softbound 'highbrow' offering of NATIONAL

GENIUS Books (Stat. O, Box 57, Cincinnati 2 — \$2). Merely to assert that both writers reach big audiences through appeals to low-denominator emotions — Lowry, with ‘sordid’ passions, and DeCapite, daydreams, not really glossing over grosser bits — would be an oversimplification as crude as a trite comment that both are natives of Ohio. For, in each, the weight of social significance and ‘message’ lies in deep perception. Their fictions achieve tragedy; and, apart from dissimilar styles, their sole ‘literary’ diversity is lack of humor in Lowry’s.

In either, the broader human implications must be discerned by induction. And only in this way does Lowry also really convey a presumptive optimism. The latter results not simply because his very preoccupation with morbid ‘facts of life’ assumes probabilities of opposite vital potentials in healthy natural acts, but because he consistently highlights, in his lowest characters, amidst rather revolting actions, their visionary (sometimes sentimental) urges. Even readers attracted to Lowry for promised vicarious jolts — those who might not continue turning pages except for the verbal ‘slickness’ which often (as, for that matter, in F. Scott Fitzgerald and other memorialized ‘major’ talents) mars his stories — must be moved by his intense absorption with inner wrestlings. his probing for those centres where the psychic cancers possibly could be dissolved. And, despite that he frequently is chargeable with fabricating plots and employing stock narration, none of his sensationalism can be called deliberate catch-penny tactic. Problems fuel the motor of his creativity, as in DeCapite, — who remains detached without losing impact, and penetrates philosophical questions without such graphic treatments of partly-labeled ‘animal-sex.’ And DeCapite already has surpassed Lowry in distinctive identification with his own language.

Superficially at radical variance with these Americans, the prevailing Sixties' 'line' is present in an older British author, Rayner Heppenstall (*THE GREATER INFORTUNE — NEW DIRECTIONS*, \$3.75). Sophisticated, highly learned, and given to interpolations of erudite remote allusions projected on multiple levels (many of them perhaps communicated to few readers), he is yet frank enough to have been 'banned' in several places; and he's an effective humorist, subtler than DeCapite, but not invariably so. His first-person narration (*A LOST KING* also is first-person) maintains a less-self-conscious tone; and still, he frequently manages to break out of rapid-action scenes, smoothly and convincingly to analyze what in fact are his own closely-involved questions about the nature of existence. The tale is an amazing sleight-of-hand; he simultaneously deals both seriously and comically with extra-sensory perception, clairvoyance, astrology . . . other carelessly-named 'supernatural' phenomena,—at the same time revealing he's an amateur psychologist whose observations should prove quite acceptable in scientific circles.

A fascinating facet of Heppenstall—in re essentials of the 'romantic' Sixties' category—is his comprisal of social reportage in sharp miniatures of decadence. Besides the 'split' (maybe 'double-exposure' is better) in his method, he maintains a somewhat old-fashioned sympathy for a narrator who—though amoral in most attitudes—embodies national virtues and whose human synergisms eventually expand to implied Tolstoian dimensions. Heppenstall ends evoking more universal questions than did Stendhal, though in doing so he discards tonal consistency and fractures unity. What long proceeds as a detached Firbankian-JoyceCaryian-Forsterian 'combo,' merges in the last two chapters into an emotive psychological documentary. Most readers will be confounded to discover what an earnest proponent of higher ethics Heppenstall truly

is . . . Which makes this novel an ideal subject of study for all phases of 'modern' modes.

His name now having been invoked—a decidedly relevant reprint is *THE COMPLETE RONALD FIRBANK* (GERALD DUCKWORTH & Co. Ltd.—distrib. by NEW DIRECTIONS—\$7.75). Firbank is one whose transmissions from recent past trials of subjective fictions have proved both diverse and definitive. Nearly unread in his lifetime, little read for years after, and not now in heavy demand, he has been admired by other writers ever since World War I. Scores of authors have freely acknowledged their debt to him. All moderns—in their several manners—utilize (if at second- or third-hand) either (or both) his 'free-flow technique' or his internal-via-external (and vice versa) approach to the world/s of man. Sophistication, humor, naïveté, sensationalism, reserve, poetical syntax, shocking verbiage, neologisms, realistic skits adjacent impossible dialogue—the whole bagful is in Firbank. In the now-coalescing mainstream, his works exercise perhaps bigger influence than those of James Joyce or T. S. Eliot. This collection of eight novels, two short stories, and one play will lead to an enlarged, clearer image of one regarded by most critics, while he lived, as a precious dilettante—but whose posthumous recognition again is confirming the obtuseness in all times and places of a majority of professional literary judges.

Although the bulk of a Llewelyn Powys collection, edited by Kenneth Hopkins (*HORIZON*—\$6) consists of nonfiction (just three chapters from *LOVE AND DEATH*, his major novel, are included), its current appearance is of signal import for the Sixties' trend. Enhanced attention for the Powys brothers — till recently, John Cowper Powys has been brought forward rather than Llewelyn or Theodore — underlines choice British writings of mystical, personal bent. Often published, both in Britain and the U.S.A., into the Forties ensuing his death in 1939, Llewelyn still remained

lessknown than John. Yet, his forms the potent linkage. From his famous novel, issue flavors of an intellectualized D. H. Lawrence; nevertheless, it doesn't actually contradict Lawrence, despite that the latter was a self-declared anti-intellectualist. Perhaps this is a slight, even compromised approach. Perhaps better to point out that the conflict in Powys parallels the dilemma of today's cultured man; he unequivocally rejected religion, as such, yet his refined naturalism is artistically realized via idealistic embracement of fervent postures toward the biological viabilities out of which every religion rises.

The very title abbreviates the antithesis which supplies themes for modern fiction (poetry, too); passage upon passage suggests search for a faith to succeed those being discarded. From a sexual love scene in a novel-excerpt: 'It was no celestial happiness that surrounded us. It was an earth happiness, golden, all-embracing — a benison from gods older and wiser than Jesus.' Hopkins limns an iconoclast who — while advancing counter-advocacies in rational guise — invariably defers to the intuitive digressions rising from the innerself or the unconscious; and the persuasive charm is welded from the warmth of these elements. The arrangement of the selections enforces an hypnotized affirmation, weaving a fascinating and only half-definable argument. This book should lead to re-publication in the U.S.A. of THE BODLEY HEAD Collected Edition (1948-50).

A new reprinting of the first comprehensive collection of the stories of William Carlos Williams (THE FARMERS' DAUGHTERS — NEW DIRECTIONS, \$4.50) may seem in total contrast. True — so far as outward presentation goes. Yet, the drive behind Williams' incisive reports on American life seen close to the flesh by a physician, is essentially mystical. Here is the other strain of contemporary influence, actually posing the same questions about existence and pursuing the

same probable answers, though Williams rejects (as Powys did not) the literary manners associated with the Western religious temper. Leaving aside his convictions about a 'new' American language — while conceding the importance of Williams' own uses of his own language — it's the deeper aspects of Williams' intentions which link his works with the Sixties' trend. Mere frank simplicities of expression and honest allegiances to idiom have characterized many kinds and grades of writings in this century, ranging from the leftwing-to-Red propagandas of the Thirties, through the brutal wartime novels, and to the blasé 'rejections' of the Fifties. Perhaps, one of Williams' contributions will prove to have been semantical; but his present relevant prestige rises from his personalized psychological absorption and implicit philosophizings.

This is plainer of detection in William Faulkner, whose COLLECTED STORIES came out about the same time (RANDOM HOUSE — \$6.50); his more-complex narratives are woven usually with direct, as well as indirect, conjurings of refabled mysteries. Had Williams spent his life in the South, he well might have—in his own way, to be sure—granted more attention to the "dark" constituents of being. The fact that Faulkner remains a blacker pessimist than almost any of the younger writers he has impressed, is chiefly a matter of temperament. This is not the central concern, but that the foci of his preoccupations, the springs beneath his 'flow,' are undeniably 'modern' in the sense here meant.

As if to supply the precisely apropos reference, the next book is a close examination of an Englishman whose novels, dating from the Twenties, illustrate adjacent 'bridging.' This is A READING OF HENRY GREEN, by A Kingsley Weatherhead (U. of WASHINGTON Press — \$4.50). Along with keen dissections of Green's advances toward more meaningful self-creation through his protagonists (use of the individuated mode of inward search for the impersonalized outward answers),

Weatherhead introduces thoughtful contributions of his own. Delving psychology and philosophy to relate the literary problems to those of ethical and timely social nature, he offers a study which exceeds mere top-grade scholarship. Besides explicating the art by which Green enlarges insights of existence for his readers, he keys the novelist's special timeliness in suggesting solutions through individuals rather than through dubious 'reforms' of communities or larger cultural aggregations.

Comparatively little has so far been written about Green; but this is not the first full treatment (as heralded), though Weatherhead's examinations of the novels obviously are quite independent. Perhaps his actual work predated that of John Russell, whose *HENRY GREEN: Nine Novels and an Unpacked Bag* (RUTGERS U. Press) goes unmentioned here, though Weatherhead does refer to shorter studies as different from his own as is Russell's approach via semi-fictionalized reconstructions and metaphrasings. Since Russell's is likewise significant to 'modernity,' he simply must not have known of it. Here, the relevant thing is that these sorts of criticism appear at the opening of the decade, ensuing an oddly-'blank' period insofar as this genre had been concerned. Weatherhead gives particularly close heed to the factors in Green's style which developed in part from the unconscious—the play of which is tagged in specific metaphors—giving account to Freudian dream-interpretations and citing the importance of these in much new poetry.

Although any detailed investigation of earlier signs of this trend in other languages would lead to extensive complexities, it chances that a reprint of Andre Gide's *DOSTOEVSKY*, with an introduction by Albert J. Guerard and an added chapter from Louise Varese's translation (NEW DIRECTIONS—paperb., \$1.55) has just arrived. The enduring effects from F. M. Dostoevsky's work upon modern literature

require no charting; the indicative consequence here is that an avant-garde house now issues a low-priced edition of this decidedly-romantic view of him. A further link is found in Gide's concentration upon religious questions in a mingled psychological-mystical fashion, thereby also revealing himself as one of the 'in-between' writers who have not suffered the usual eclipses in the first years after their deaths. This may be chiefly because he and such others remain vitally identified with the new mainstream.

A noteworthy example of a periodical centred by calculated editorial approach upon the Sixties' manner of hunting out life's potentialities, is ALPHABET (see No. 2—\$1, from 17 Craig St., London, Ont., Can.). While many of the contents lack spontaneity and are slanted towards a Canadian cognizance, the fact that they appear together belies what might otherwise be declared merely regional or quasi-intellectual criteria, from national stress and from writings that selfconsciously hark back to ancient fabled mysticisms. Only an unusual rapport with his own unconscious could have directed Editor James Reaney to these choices. Separately printed, the two stories here (by Edward Yoemans and William J. MacDonald) might not be detected as 'Sixties Modern,' and Reaney chose them in conjunction with poems selected from an Edward Lear bias, together with parodies on T. S. Eliot and a documentary of myth in the poetry of ancient Mexico. His editorial brings forward the subjective elements that cause the combination to address the same perceptive contemporaries who may uniquely understand how today's enigmas are addressed by such differing authors as Heppenstall and Lowry, Powys and Williams.

And it happens that THE QUIXOTE ANTHOLOGY, edited by Jean Rikhoff (GROSSET & DUNLAP'S Universal Library—paperb., \$2.45 & \$3.25 outside the U.S.A.) recently appeared with altogether another order of selections from

several years' issues of that magazine. Perhaps interesting then many of the stories in this large book, are intervening sections delineating experiences of putting out a 'little literary' (this one actually has been larger than the average). Rather unselfconscious exercises of admittedly-arbitrary likes and dislikes are revealed in these true tales of editorial joys and sorrows. Miss Rikhoff expounds no theory; and the reasons given for sorting out these particular stories convey no seeming intentions to meet an emerging 'romantic' demand. And still, nearly all the offerings are marked by their authors' decided individuations (dull, bright, or neutral), and extra-sensory integrants figure in the modes of composition, choices of subjects, and/or methods of handling in most of the stories. Without rendering judgments on their uneven qualities, it's fascinating to observe how, independently, the authors of all ages conjure mythical antecedents—how many of them, either directly through their subject-materials and characters or through their manners of narration, reflect privately-personal approaches to broad social problems. Even the objective, 'surface' writers among them touch more than tag-ends of the kinds of psychological revelation utilized in this new mainstream of creative fiction.

J.B.M.

(Unfortunately, an important article on a new collection of poetry, THE LONG STREET, by Donald Davidson (VANDERBILT U. Press—\$4) was not received from the reviewer in time to be allotted space in this issue. The book will be considered in TRACE No. 45.)

SLY PURITAN

by Sam Bradley

My shutter snaps. But I've seen
the white goddess occur
almost anywhere. Every spring's a green
— hmm! — hymn to her.

FOURFOLD MOUNTAIN-CLIMB IS REWARDING

Marvin Bell

RAYNER HEPPENSTALL'S THE FOURFOLD TRADITION (NEW DIRECTIONS — \$3.75) is a kind of monster-work. It is also a whole army of mountains — 'peak-full,' honest, beautiful, misleading, almost useless.

Heppenstall turns his fourfold 'viewfinder' on French and English literatures from 1400 to 1950-plus (1900 arrives one-quarter of the way through). Two of the folds are those of French and English literary histories — effective, real or imagined (they in-breed before our very eyes). The other two are those of Second Tradition Culture (Lawrence, Jouhandeau, the 'poor boy provincials' . . .) and First Tradition Culture (Eliot, T. S.). The pleats are autobiography (seen everywhere: yes and why), biography (read backwards), and kinds of narrative (streams of conscious- and unconscious-ness: see 'autobiography'). Sunny and sundry wrinkles, of varying lengths and influence, are accidie (necessitates that display of virtuosity which permits Joyce to write the last two-thirds of ULYSSES), the Catholic novel (begins with Newman's LOSS AND GAIN), that group of people and languages we call 'Celtic' (it ain't), 'American' literature (ditto; it's English), and a short plea for an Anglo-American Academy similar to the Académie Française.

Where Heppenstall seems most discerning and creative, in synthesis and analysis, he shows how much of criticism must be scholarship. And where he is most unconvincing, he proves the same thing. NOTES & QUERIES, and other tenure-bound offsprings notwithstanding, Twentieth Century scholarship has done its job (genealogy, revelation). Criticism (evaluation) has not . . . except when the application of the

work to other areas, or of standards to the work, has followed scholarly procedures. Persuasive evaluation without supporting material is both lazy and dishonest. 'All knowledge develops by approximating the unknown to the known, but a too rapid approximation is one of the chief intellectual snares,' says Heppenstall, who is both honest and ambitious, but who is also sometimes sketchy and inconsistent.

Part of what I mean by 'sketchy' is the result of his Will Cuppy style (I mean only praise, gratitude and surprise): 'We have also had Margaret Murray, doing for witches what Jessie L. Weston did for the Holy Grail.'— and: ' . . . hundreds of novels today employ the go-on-he-said, she-bit-her-lip convention.' (One hint: that's part of a plea.) His supporting statements often seem like abstracts of their full and necessary arguments. He also dispenses with most internal transitions, to get to the meat, leaving us wondering how he is slicing it, and why. I suggest that Heppenstall is a fine butcher, but that it takes one leisurely reading through this volume to find out just what kind of a fine butcher he is.

And that makes all the difference in his world. It accounts, for one thing, for his apparent inconsistency. It accounts, also, for the wonderfully terrible time you are going to have reading this book. The central facts and opinions, the asides, the changes of tone and pace come at you in a flood. Sometimes they seem to contradict one another, at least in terms of parallelism, because one moment, Heppenstall bores in like the bi-linguist he most relevantly is (see 'Beckett'); at another; like an aesthete (see 'Kafka'); at other times, as a semantacist, an anthropologist or an historian — despite his warning that he claims to be none of these, nor to suffer, therefore, from the blind spots and short arms of the specialist. The result is, on the one hand, unjustifiable inconsistencies in technique. (He perceives that art is not the object, in insisting that

stream-of-consciousness gives us only 'the appearance of catching a thought at its birth,' yet criticises works by Proust, Camus, Wain, Snow, and Jouhandeau on the basis of the logics and necessities of those works' referents. He debunks stereotypes, but indulges his own.) On the other hand, it is wholesale synthesis and revelation. I mean simply that, while his sketchiness impairs any easy use of the book, and may reflect a 'chief intellectual snare,' his surface inconsistency is a virtue.

Heppenstall makes his main points and, I think, makes them quite well. That his selection of analytical techniques is frenetic shows only how well he understands the application-criterion for a theorem. He differs from those academic scholar-critics he dislikes (whose best points, I insist, are his best points) primarily on: (1) this one point of concept: that he is more interested in criticism and scholarship than in aesthetics; (2) this one of technique: that he often assumes the reader's knowledge of literary history, making only skeletal background-statements, in order to work at altering his generalizations.

If I have not made this clear (and I have not), *THE FOURFOLD TRADITION* is rough reading — its shortcomings, those of its reach and unscholarly asides, its achievements, those of its scholarly synthesizing grasp and courageous sensitivity. I could be bothered much more by that ferocious worldly logic with which Heppenstall dissects contemporary novels, were I not convinced that they welcome those terms, and deserve them. I invite each reader's own treacherous but rewarding climb through these fourfold mountains, how little one may contain, how impossibly owned, how lastingly bound and backed, and how little disturbed by these mumblings — which are, after all, mostly criticism.

WITH GRAVE ASPECT*

ROBERT MEZEY'S book, *THE LOVEMAKERS* (CUMMINGTON Press — now via *STONE WALL Press*) contains the poems of a young man, but a remarkably sensitive and perceptive one, and so prematurely mature that it would seem he had never been a child. Of course, Keats, Shelley, etc., did have their melancholy fits in early youth; but Mezey's poetry is not melancholy. Melancholia is tyrannized by sad memories. Yet, Mezey seems to have no despair, expressing sober experiences, as in these lines from *A BEDTIME STORY*:

Accidents will happen. Still, in time,
The rigors of mortality may chill
The racing channels of the blood and spin
Around the brain a cold and opaque skin.

Also this, from *ON THE FIRST POEMS TO MY FRIENDS*:

So read with good will
This verse that bears my name —
If I have done it ill,
You may take all the blame,
Take every sickening line.
If well, the laurel's mine.

And yet he is not barren of feeling, as is shown in a later poem, *THE KILLING*, about a rabbit hunt. He says the hunters are the rabbit's 'meat-eating enemies,' and he calls the rabbit 'gray trembling thing.' And, finally:

I might have spared this quiet creature,
But hungered, and my aim was true.

The book is called 'the lovmakers,' and does deal largely with human love, good, bad, and indifferent. No soaring passion here. Experience comes and goes as a natural thing, pleasurable, mortal, disillusioning.

Religion, race, friends, — he meets all and sets down his reactions in verse that's excellent and often heartless, or, at least, cerebral. He seems to have few joys; and the world of nature is not a wonder to him. Perhaps he has lived largely a city life. He has a poem, *AGAINST SEASONS*, wherein he writes, seemingly unstirred by the flow of time or the year:

**Editorial comment: This somewhat-late review appears because of a general significance hinted by the title — the persistent 'aged' tonal quality of much young work — as well as for this reviewer's special observations, from which may be implied certain validities affecting the entire poetry scene.*

*Why should we praise them, or revere,
The stations of the Zodiac,
When every unforgiving year
Drives us hence and calls us back?*

Translations, either original, or some he has read, attract him. And he has done a good piece of work in *WITH MY GOD THE SMITH*, after Uri Zvi Greenberg. There is nobility here, a real manliness that is often lacking elsewhere in Mezey's poetry. Here is some of the poem:

Like chapters of prophecy my days burn, in all the
revelations,
And my body between them's a block of metal for
smelting,
And over me stands my God the Smith, who hits hard.

Mezey won the 1960 Lamont Poetry Selection with this volume. Born in Philadelphia in 1935, he has been writing poetry for ten years, perhaps longer. He studied with John Crowe Ransom at Kenyon College, and with Paul Engle at the University of Iowa, and later held that Stanford University fellowship in poetry under Ivor Winters.

Ethel King