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The Educational Leader

MELLICENT McNEIL, *Editor*

WILLIAM T BAWDEN, *Associate Editor*

Published on the 15th day of November, January, March, and May

By

KANSAS STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

PITTSBURG, KANSAS

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MELLICENT McNEIL

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Contributors to this issue:

English Faculty directed by MELLICENT McNEIL

Speech Faculty directed by JOHN R. PELSMA

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Humane Learning and Intellectual Freedom

J. GORDON EAKER

The humanities, though constituting the most ancient and honorable education, are today facing a crisis more serious than at any time in their long history. The crisis is not primarily due to the rise of laboratory science in the nineteenth century, for many scientists like Huxley have a broad conception of a liberally educated person, and emphasize the love of beauty, the discipline of the will, the trained intellect, respect for oneself and others, and the cordial acceptance of truth as the elements of a humane education. The chief attack springs from that long educational tradition extending backward to Benjamin Franklin and beyond, which insists that education shall include the useful only. But the concept of the useful presently becomes the concept of the usefulness in money-making, and from the utilitarian it is but one step to the vocational. The vocational has its place; but its aim is distinct from that of the liberal arts, and the liberal arts college

must continue to be the stronghold of the humanities.

From the later years of the nineteenth century, there has been an increasing swing away from the humanities. Mastery over external nature through the development of the physical sciences has turned men's thoughts to the material existence. We forget that the harnessing of physical nature to men's use has been made possible by the harnessing of internal or human nature which is the concern of the humanities. With the rise of the material sciences to dominance, and the resulting cult of satisfying economic demands, we come to forget how freedom makes material progress possible and how balance and law, by which freedom is maintained, are basic to civilization. Throughout the world to-day absolutism is expressed in philosophies that regard efficient satisfaction of material wants as the highest good. Political absolutism in Europe and the growing fashion toward administrative absolutism in the Eng-

lish-speaking world grows out of a quest for efficiency in satisfying material wants, to which for a time men have seemed willing to sacrifice the values of the spiritual existence.

This is not what Edmund Burke would call in the proper spirit of history. In the early nineteenth century, the aims of reform were political rather than economic. The nineteenth century gave us our concept of political democracy. Democracy may be defined as standing for two things: first, government exists to secure the life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to the people; secondly, the people shall be consulted from time to time as to the kind of government they want. The first statement assumes that government is not an end in itself, but a means to the end of human values. The second one corrects the absolutism of government by compelling the rulers from time to time to persuade the people into voting for them. In other words, the political leader was compelled to have in mind perpetually the human values for which society exists.

Now we might say that contemporary ideology is fundamentally economic. Whereas political thinking regards the individual as a voter and therefore as a man, economic thinking regards the individual as a producing or consuming unit and therefore as an abstraction. Reduced to its lowest terms, it sees the American citizen as a stomach to be fed, a body to be housed, a behavior pattern to be

conditioned. Such a notion of "economic man" makes us think of economic systems as ends rather than means, and we consider the accumulation and distribution of things as the chief end of man. Hence the statistician has destroyed the philosopher and the fanatic has stepped in.

But philosophy perpetually reminds us that the end of life is well-being, not the accumulation of goods. As Mr. Howard Mumford Jones has said:

Socrates and Plato are the essence of Hellenism, not the spoils of war heaped up in the Athenian treasury. We admire the great scholastic tradition of the Middle Ages, not the wealth of the robber barons . . . We may in the future remember that Mussolini improved the schedules of Italian railways, but we shall never forget that Hitler persecuted the Jews.

If, in our civilization, the colleges are to be the guardians of humane values, the heart of the college should be those disciplines which we call the humanities. It is apparent that colleges have lost their philosophic core. Catholic education has a core in theology. Many American universities began as schools for the training of a learned ministry. But now we have expanded so widely that we have abandoned philosophy; we have lost our beliefs and have weakened our general sense of values. This means that we are delivered over to the mechanistic view which sees in economic determinism the answer to the riddle of life.

How to restore singleness of purpose to the college is a baffling ques-

tion. One difficulty is that the college of arts has come to mean all things to all men, where students avoid their responsibilities as they are not permitted to do in the professional schools. The college of arts has allowed itself to become a feeder for the professional schools. This has increased the teaching load of elementary courses out of all proportion to the real relation of these courses to the primary aim of the college. Furthermore, high schools have nibbled away at the entrance requirements until colleges can do only spade work in the first year or two. Elementary French, English, mathematics, or history cannot be broadly cultural when most of the time must be spent in drilling on fundamentals. Some of our elementary instruction is unworthy of the attention of a mature educational institution. Such courses offer little chance to lead students to the broad plateaus and philosophic outlook comprehended in the aim of the humanities.

Here we notice an inconsistency in the secondary schools which remove the subject-matter fields and introduce in their place social theory designed to give the student a so-called intelligent understanding of "the nature and purpose of the social organization." In wrestling with such huge problems, the immature mind, instead of forming independent judgments, is likely to be exploited by those who have their own social theories to expound. It is surely a reversal of logic to load the secondary school curriculum with courses which are

ordinarily given in college, while at the same time excluding elementary instruction in subjects outside the field of the social sciences. By cutting out languages, mathematics, and sciences, the new program would force the student into the groove of the social sciences and almost neglect the humanities.

What is the place of the humanities in education? In other words, what is the place of literature, of history, of philosophy in human life? Let us begin very simply, with the student. The undergraduate has only about two important prepossessions. First, he is scornful toward religion because he believes that he lives in an evolutionary world. Secondly, he is keenly interested in the contemporary world—so much interested that he regards the literary classics as old stuff, history as a discipline imposed from without, and human genius, except in the present, as having only archaeological value. He knows perhaps—let us hope that he knows—that Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, and Alfred North Whitehead are influential philosophical thinkers, but the fact that Plato, St. Thomas Aquinas, and John Locke preceded them is high-brow information. He has read Poe, Shakespeare, Hemingway, Margaret Mitchell, and Dale Carnegie on how to win friends and influence professors, but Milton, Virgil, Thackeray, and John Donne are "literature" and therefore do not interest him. He knows that Napoleon was a great general and that Lincoln freed the slaves, but the careers of

Attila and Charlemagne are gratuitous information.

As a matter of pedagogy, our first task is to convict the young man of gross intellectual inconsistency for believing in biological evolution, while in the field of human civilization he is content to take events at their face value. Out of what conditions, we should ask him, did the contemporary world evolve? Some economists begin history with the Grant administration, and sociologists often assume that nothing much of interest happened before the invention of the slums. The function of the humanities is to trace the steps by which the human story has evolved. We speak of the areas of living, like vocations, home life, citizenship, and so on, as if it were nothing to be a citizen of the world and to be free of all lands and ages.

We speak of "liberal" education without stopping to inquire how that adjective crept into the educational field. The Romans called those things "liberal" which were befitting to men of free and not of servile birth; and the "liberal" arts as those branches of learning which only free men were permitted to pursue. The world has moved on since then, but it still remains true that a liberal education, based on the study of the liberal arts and sciences, alone can free the minds of men and keep them free. Vocational and technical instruction and training in mechanical skill are well enough in their way, but there must be a broader education if richness is to be given to the

individual life and an intelligent outlook gained on the problems of a troubled world. A liberal education, in the words of president Nicholas Murray Butler, gives the knowledge and insight possible to a maturing mind through knowledge of these fields:

The ancient classics and the source of the continuing power of Greece and Rome in modern civilization; the development of systematic thought in the fields of philosophy, of religion, and of the natural and experimental sciences, the outstanding achievements in the fine arts; acquaintance with the languages and literatures of those people which have played so large a part in Western civilization, the French, the German, the Spanish and the Italian; close study of the language, the literature and the political and social organization of the English-speaking peoples in order that present-day interests and problems, intellectual, social and political, may be understood in their due proportion—these are the powerful and attractive forces which the college brings to bear upon those youths who are so fortunate as to enjoy its advantages and its opportunities.

The humanities, specifically, are the best expression of "the peculiar nature distinguishing man from other beings." Their field is art, literature, history, and philosophy—four of the highest expressions of the human spirit. The greatest achievements of the human race, we know, are preserved in cumulative form in the worlds of science, art, religion, social and political institutions, philosophy, and literature. In proportion as we draw on those worlds and make them part of ourselves, we become truly educated. Many-sidedness is the mark of the

first-rate mind. Such knowledge forms a habit of mind of which the attributes are freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom—the philosophical habit.

What is the *use* of this habit? *It is its own end*, for only through our habits do we inhabit the world. Such is the constitution of the human mind that knowledge, if it is really such, is its own reward, worth more than wealth, power, honor, or the conveniences and comforts of life. Knowledge satisfies a direct need of our nature which arises as soon as we have supplied our physical wants or the calls of our animal existence. Only when our physical and political needs are supplied are we in the right condition for “desiring to see, to hear, and to learn.” Hence knowledge should not be justified by its bearing on social life. Aristotle said that it should not be cultivated if it will interfere with our duties to our fellow-creatures or with our public occupations. This explains its separateness from vocational pursuits. The vocations must come first, of course, but there is not enough of the vocational education that is worthy of the word “education” to take up four or five or six years of the secondary schools and colleges. Knowledge, if it can be cut off from everything else and still live, must have life in itself. And knowledge has been regarded as admirable for ages, worth great sacrifices and labor to obtain, for whatever good it may turn out to be. No race or people is so servile and so base as to choose political and personal slavery, if

their minds are left free to learn and their tongues to speak.

That alone is liberal which stands on its own pretensions, independent of a sequel. The professions cease to be learned or liberal professions exactly in proportion as they are cut down to the strict end of money-making. Liberal education tends to enjoyment, as distinguished from revenue. All men, for instance, love beauty, and we never ask of a flower or picture, what is its *use*? It is eternal, as an idea is eternal, an end in itself, expressing a purposiveness in life, but a purposiveness without a purpose, as Kant said of art. So it is with knowledge.

Now there are two ways of using knowledge. It can descend to a use or it can rise to philosophy. And those who use it one way are not likely to use it another, or at least in a very limited measure. One kind of knowledge rises toward ideas and universals; the other is exhausted upon what is particular and external. The mechanical trades are of course essential, but knowledge, insofar as it tends to be more particular, ceases to be knowledge. The principle of dignity in knowledge is this germ of the scientific or philosophic process. Knowledge becomes philosophy only when it is impregnated with reason. That gives it fecundity. And it is philosophy that has mapped out the universe.

Philosophical knowledge is not something that is here to-day and gone to-morrow. It is a habit, an acquired illumination, and inward endowment. It implies an action upon our mental nature, the forma-

tion of character; it is individual and permanent, and is commonly spoken of in connection with religion and virtue. The object of liberal education is this intellectual excellence, for there is a beauty, a perfection, of the intellect, as there is a perfection of parks, trees, palaces, and churches. In the words of John Henry Newman, "To open the mind, to correct it, to refine it, to enable it to know, and to digest, master, rule, and use its knowledge, to give it power over itself, application, flexibility, method, critical exactness, sagacity, resource, address, eloquent expression," surely this is an intelligible object.

The humanities, in the words of Professor Jones, include history—"that vast and crowded drama

under the stars, of which man is still the hero, though the villain be the conqueror worm." The object of humane studies is still human conduct, though our teachers of ethics take to the questionnaire and the adding machine. The purpose of the humanities is still to show that goodness and beauty are preferable to evil and ugliness, even though we have abandoned theology and are doubtful about the ten commandments. The humanities "may be assailed and even degraded from without, and betrayed by false friends from within, but when the last case study is completed, and the final report on commodity prices is filed, they will be found where they have always been, in the center of the field."

Who Is the English Teacher?

MELLICENT McNEIL

Much criticism in the last few years has been directed against English teachers and English departments, both in the public schools and the colleges. It is alleged that students, from the elementary grades upward even into the graduate division of universities, are unable to speak or write their mother tongue with any degree of accuracy or power. That these criticisms are well founded is evident to even a casual observer. There is no doubt that English teachers and English departments every where are failing to turn out students that have acquired the best English usage. Why is this? Is it that English teachers are poorer in logic, in organization, or in teaching ability than instructors in mathematics or science? Are they more poorly prepared for their work than teachers of other subjects? Is English more difficult to teach? Or are the shortcomings of a student's speech more obvious to the world than his shortcomings in mathematics and biology? These questions need serious consideration.

In the first place it must be admitted that many teachers of English are poorly prepared. The old superstition, that anyone can teach his mother tongue if he has a vacant period, still seems to be believed by many superintendents and princi-

pals. Teachers, whose majors were in biology or vocational arts, are assigned classes in high school English. In districts of the first and second class they must have fifteen or more college hours of the subject to be taught. But this doesn't mean much, for of those fifteen or eighteen hours, five or six are in freshman English, a course which largely reviews the fundamentals which were not acquired in the grades and high school. This required course makes a good beginning, so far as credits are concerned in the reasoning of the student, toward the requirements for a minor; hence he completes a teaching minor in English. In districts of the third class instructors need have eight or nine hours only of college work in the subject—three to five hours added to freshman English. Teachers who have taken a major in English are not always well prepared for all phases of the subject. Many students, unguided, find themselves teaching a subject for which they have little aptitude or appreciation. But despite all these misfits, there are hosts of well prepared English teachers. Why do they not succeed in turning out students who have mastered the English language?

Contrary to popular belief, English is a difficult subject to teach for several reasons: It does not provoke

the curiosity of the student as does the new material he finds in biology or psychology. It lacks the precision and rule of mathematics, for English is not logical or consistent, since correctness is determined by the great mass of people, who are neither logical nor consistent. Hence a rule which apparently ought to apply to a construction may not apply, since the construction was not determined by reasoning but by use of the majority. English has literally dozens of rules, each applicable to one peculiarity of the language only. All students go to the English class with a certain amount of previous training—the ability to speak their mother tongue, a few well and the remainder poorly. Speech habits are already formed. By the time the child enters the first grade the habits have been practiced four or five years; when he arrives at college, sixteen to forty years. The English teacher, then, has three duties: he must break down the bad habits of speech, teach the theory of correct English, and build up a new habit based on the theory of correct English. Since it is obviously easier to break down a habit practiced four or five years than it is one that has obtained sixteen or eighteen years, it is easier to establish good English usage in the first grade than it is in college. A good teacher can often teach the correct theory to college freshmen, but in three hours a week for nine months, he cannot break down the old habit and set up the new one.

But these grievances, serious as they are, are not the greatest ob-

stacle to good English usage. The greatest enemy of the English teacher are other teachers of the child, including his parents, his older brothers and sisters, his playmates, his heroes, and his teachers from the kindergarten through college—teachers of various subjects. Since language is acquired entirely through imitation in infancy and largely by the same method throughout life, it is obvious that the language of the home establishes the speech of the child. If the parents use good English, the child will follow their example, at least until his horizon broadens and he begins to pick up the speech of playmates. If bad speech habits are formed at this early age from following the example of careless or ignorant parents, the schools are faced with the problem of substituting new practices for old. Here again accuracy could probably be acquired if his teachers are persistent and the old examples could be removed, but the schools are helpless to remove them. At school Johnny is told to say, "I saw," but at home he falls back into the easy, effortless way of saying, "I seen," which is received without comment or correction. As he spends more time at home where he speaks freely under natural in contrast to artificial environment in the school, the old, inaccurate habits of speech become strengthened.

If this procedure continues, as it usually does through the elementary grades, the faulty speech habits continue to become more fixed. The number of pupils in the room does

not permit the teacher to give individual attention to each child. When the student arrives at junior high school age with speech habits strongly fixed, the schools begin to teach him grammar with the hope that the theory of language, which he grasps only in part, will correct his inaccurate construction. But the study of grammar has not so far shown that it is a panacea for teaching good speech. It is the child of unusual and peculiar mental ability, who will transcribe the grammar lessons into his oral recitation or his written theme. But from the drills, the writing, the exercises in correctness, the admonition of the English teacher (if she is a good one), it dawns upon the child's consciousness that certain forms must be used and certain other forms must not be used, at least in the English classroom. Here is where the cooperation of the entire teaching staff must be solicited if good English is ever to be established.

If the student reaches the high school level using poor speech, if his elementary and intermediate grade teachers, who supervised his work in a number of subjects for several hours a day, have not been able to set up good habits of speech, then how can the high school English teacher, however good she may be, break down inaccurate usage of years in the one period set aside for English teaching? If the student is ever to acquire respectable language standards, every teacher must set the example of good speech, must demand that every child speak acceptable English, must see that

every paper he turns in be written legibly and neatly, and must hold him accountable for grammatical construction, correct sentence structure, and accuracy in spelling. Good language habits can never be built up when they are practiced only three to five periods a week in the English classroom and ignored in other classes. Nor can teachers of other subjects than English afford to ignore good English in their work. It is impossible to express a statement in science or history or mathematics accurately in incorrect English. Many teachers already recognize this principle and require a high degree of accuracy of their students, a requirement which unquestionably raises them in estimation of the students; others neglect the opportunity to aid the student in acquiring good speech or even resent such an idea, indicating that they haven't time or perhaps inclination "to do the work the English teacher can't do." I am not urging that all teachers *teach* English; I am only asking them to correct flagrant cases of misused English in order to help students to strengthen good English habits and to discard bad ones.

Some years ago Dr. Rollo Walter Brown¹ became interested in teaching a class of American boys to write. So difficult was his task that he looked about for techniques that might help him. Eventually he was led to make an intensive study of the French school system and particularly of the French boy's writ-

¹*How the French Boy Learns to Write*, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1927).

ing abilities, which had long been recognized as superior. Among many interesting findings in this study the outstanding one is that every teacher in France of whatever subject is first and foremost a master of the French language. He must set an example for his pupils of the best spoken French, both in diction and pronunciation. In whatever subject he teaches, be it chemistry or botany, he sees that all recitations or reports or papers are in the best of French. If they are not, they must be corrected and rewritten until they do reach this high standard. The united efforts of teachers well trained in the French language have developed an enviable standard in one of the most difficult of modern languages. Why shouldn't this practice be followed in the American schools?

From personal observation, I believe that the standards demanded of the teacher in the English school system are very similar to those of the French. In the secondary schools I visited, I was amazed at the language accuracy I discovered in the notebooks of such subjects as botany, zoology, and mathematics, each showing as much care in the English used by the student as in the content. Neatness was everywhere present, and care was reflected in matters of margins, titles, the logical arrangement of outlines, as well as in accurate construction and spelling. Teachers set the example of good speech and saw to it that their students used good English in all their oral and written work.

In the last few years psycholo-

gists and education departments have seen the need for the cooperation of all departments in high school and college in setting standards of good English to which all students must rise. Monroe and Weber say:

. . . most of our thinking is in terms of language symbols. Consequently the learning activities of high school pupils in the field of English are not confined to English classes. In a sense all teachers are teachers of English.²

Along this same line Cook³ declares:

All written work should be liable to rating on grammar, capitalization, indispensable punctuation, diction, spelling, and decent legibility and neatness, as well as on content. The preservation of margins and indentation of paragraphs ought to be noted at all times.

Burton⁴ emphasizes the fact that teaching of English cannot be an isolated subject.

Whenever the teacher causes the children to employ language, oral or written, she has created a condition for which she is responsible. It is not here a question as to whether ability in English is more important than ability in other subjects. The inescapable facts are that the other subjects are learned in part through the children's use of language, and that the recitations and discussions in these subjects present the opportunities and also the obligations to teach English.

Similar statements from educators could be greatly multiplied, for most of the writers on teaching in the public schools emphasize the

²Walter S. Monroe and Oscar F. Weber, *The High School*, pp. 231-232.

³William A. Cook, *High School Teaching*, pp. 48-50.

⁴H. W. Burton and others, *Supervision of Elementary Subjects*, p. 265.

need for setting and maintaining standards of accurate language habits throughout the schools. The National Council of English Teachers has long advocated the need of cooperation of all departments if good English is to be attained. The logic of this reasoning is beginning to be recognized in many state teachers colleges and schools of education where teachers are being prepared for work in the public schools. For example, the Texas State Teachers Colleges are requiring twelve hours of English of all their students; the same requirement is in use in the New Jersey State Teachers College at Montclair; East Carolina Teachers College, Greenville, N. C., requires twenty-four credit hours in English of their degree students and Northeast State Teachers College, Kirksville, Mo., requires twenty-five, ten of which may be elective. Other state teachers colleges and schools of education are requiring students to reach certain standards in English usage. If students fail to meet the level set by the college after completing the required courses, they must repeat the courses and take additional ones until they can attain the required level, which is mastery of the rules of good usage.

This start is surely in the right direction. When all teachers who go into the public schools are taught to know that they are responsible both for setting the example of good English and of

teaching their students to follow certain accepted rules in their oral and written work, there will be the hope of successfully breaking down the poor speech habits which pupils bring from the home into the school. But as long as the English teacher only is held responsible for the speech and writing of the students, while other teachers fail both to set good examples and to take note of bad spelling and inaccurate constructions, just that long will poor English continue. In three to five hours a week the finest English teacher in the United States cannot counteract the bad language habits the students use in the other fifteen waking hours of the day. Cooperation is especially necessary in state teachers colleges where students are preparing for the teaching profession in order that the coming teachers will be sent out with a command of good English and a knowledge of their responsibility in helping to create in their students a desire for the mastery of a tool which they will need in any walk of life. In time, homes themselves will be raised in language standards. When that blissful day arrives, the child will not be sent to school already handicapped by improper use of the most essential tool in his whole school career—the one tool which he will always use throughout his life and the most powerful tool he can master both for acquiring greater knowledge and for transmitting his information to others.

Flux de Bouche

JOHN R. PELSMA

"Men of few words are the best men."—Henry IV.

A negro once applied for a divorce on the grounds that his wife talked all the time. Said the judge, "What is she always talking about?"

"She ain't said yet," replied the man.

Although women may excel men in extensive conversation, men take the palm in excessive public speaking. Platform speaking has become a national disease—speechitis. The French call it "*flux de bouche*."

Chronic diagnostic symptoms are (1) Frequency, (2) Poor Quality, and (3) Quantity.

Why is it that an oriental can sit for hours enjoying a feast, while we no sooner have the pleasant sensation of smoothing the wrinkles out of our tummies but that some one must interfere with the metabolistic processes by heaping ill-digested verbiage on undigested herbage? Shall we never learn to partake quietly, with our friends, of the bounties of nature without the customary, and often vulgar and asinine, remarks of the perpetual post-prandial pulmotor?

Next in useless frequency come the political harangues. In the last presidential campaign, over four million dollars was wasted in writing and delivering ghost speeches—part of the price we pay for the

freedom of speech in a democracy. Yet there is no price we wouldn't pay for the privilege of retaining it! But it is too priceless to be abused. Again, the radio has opened a new field for the oral exhibitionist. Tune in your radio almost any place, day or night, and you are sure to hear the blare of a jazz band or the bray of a "jassax." Any time from six o'clock Sunday morning until ten o'clock at night, you can tune in on some sermon. Pray tell me, have you ever heard of anyone who has been converted by a radio sermon? If Christ condemned the Pharisees for praying on the corners of the streets, what would he say should he listen in today on a nation-wide hook-up?

An aphorism learned from my first instructor in oratory, Prof. M. E. Bogarte, Valparaiso University, was, "Never speak until you are so full of the subject that you cannot keep still." Just imagine this becoming the motto of every public speaker in America!

Much can be said for the Quaker meeting. Often hours pass without a spoken word interrupting the communion of souls with their Maker. No one speaks until impelled by the spirit to give utterance to thoughts for the edification of those present. "Why," says Bruce Barton, "must we have sermons

every time we go to church?" The Christian religion is the only one so ordained. Is it that we are so Balish we think God hears us for our much and loud speaking? In Ecclesiastes we read, "Let thy words be few, . . . a fool's voice is known by his multitude of words."

It is a real treat to stroll on a Sunday afternoon through the Boston Commons or Hyde Park, London, and listen to the fervid, spontaneous outbursts of oratory from each occupant of a soap box. Here you have speeches from persons "so full of the subject that they cannot keep still." Most of them have never heard of Lindley Murray or the three Graces, but there is a warmth and glow and earnestness that cause many who come "to scoff to remain to pray."

There are public officials in Washington who could spend their time to better advantage than by making speeches denouncing other governments, thereby bringing this country under ridicule and jeopardizing our amicable relations with foreign nations. What good can possibly result from such egotistic outbursts? There is enough fire raging in the world already. No vocal gasoline is needed.

Frequency of speech often results from the fact that many, especially young men, have not sufficient moral courage to say, "No." "Won't you speak at our 'gathering' tonight?" coos a decided blond; and the answer invariably is, "Yes." We jump up like a jack-in-the-box and make a speech every time some one presses a spring.

This frequency is sure to result in poor quality. We cannot expect a literary classic from Eddie Guest or Berton Brailey when they are obligated to turn out a poem every day. Quantity and quality are not Siamese twins. Every poet has one great poem. Every artist has one great masterpiece. Every orator has one great speech. Lincoln has his *Gettysburg Address*; Henry, his *Give Me Liberty*; Webster, his *Bunker Hill Address*; Ingersoll, his *Liberty of Man, Woman and Child*, Bryan, his *Prince of Peace*.

"Of the making of books there is no end;" but praise be, we do not have to read them. It is different with speeches. No matter how poor they are, both as to content and delivery, social conventions and professional expedience often compel us to listen—or at least to deposit ourselves within hearing. On such occasions I have found a welcome remedy—"God still giveth his beloved sleep!" After listening to the introduction I usually decide on Prometheus or Morpheus. It is usually Morpheus.

Poor quality results from (1) Matter and (2) Manner.

Too many speeches show insufficient preparation, both general and specific. There is no background of facts, no deep, prolonged study—no premeditation. Too many speeches are impromptu, and the results are words, words, words; ranting, ranting, ranting; nothing, nothing, nothing! Blackstone failed to list one felony usually committed by speakers—triteness—generalities that are commonplace and banal.

One does not sing a solo without years of general preparation and days of specific practice. But one arises to speak at the drop of a hat. Our speech standards should be raised to equal those in music.

The manner of address is often as objectionable as the matter. The two undesirables usually go hand in hand. Which, you may ask, is worse, the ability to express oneself acceptably without having anything to say or being primed with the wisdom of the ages and unable to say it? I cannot answer the question. It might depend upon the degree of either. More often the fault lies in not having anything worth while to say rather than in being unable to express it adequately. Teachers of speech have usually done their part. The present generation knows *how* to speak even though other departments of our colleges have not always kept pace by teaching them something to say. They are better equipped with jaws than with brains. However, we speech teachers are not wholly blameless; too much encouragement is given students to "vocalize" on all occasions when we know they are unprepared. Hence our duty seems clear. *Encourage fewer, better, and shorter speeches.* The Rooseveltian doctrine is that reform should take place within the industry itself. So let it be.

May we remark here, in case some one, not a teacher of speech, has read thus far, that our speech realm is bounded by material sent us from other departments. Our task is to aid the student to select, organize,

and arrange his knowledge on a given subject to a definite end, as well as to help him to overcome faulty speech habits and to acquire others more effective. If his speeches lack substance, it should not be laid at the door of the speech department.

The English, schooled in the accuracy of classical lore, have no compunction in hesitating in the midst of a sentence until the right word comes; on the other hand, the American never falters for a word. If the one which would express his precise meaning is not on his tongue's tip, he takes the next best and goes on.

The mightiest men in the British Parliament have ever been slow of speech. For a speaker who has something to say, John Bull has an exhaustless patience; but for mere loquacity he has an unmitigated contempt. When he suspects that a speaker is talking "for buncombe," that he is, in short, *Vox et preterea nihil*, he gives reins to his indignation and coughs him down without mercy. It may be said to be nearly unparliamentary to be fluent—to speak right on without hemming and hawing—without, shall we say getting tangled up in a long sentence, stumbling over the King's English or even the King himself. Like Antony, they are plain, blunt men, and because of verbal difficulties seem to get the sympathy of their audience. If an Englishman wishes to succeed as a speaker, he first stores in his mind facts and more facts, and by patient study and profound meditation masters the

subjects upon which there is a demand for knowledge. Not until he has honestly worked out a problem by brooding over it like a hen over her eggs, does he prepare to lay the solution of it before the public. It has been justly said that "if the maiden speeches of some of England's most brilliant and polished debaters have been downright failures, it has been owing to inexperience, not to the lack of solid information."

But says someone, "Is it then of no importance to cultivate facility in speech? Do not men of fine abilities sacrifice half their power and influence by not learning the art of speaking well in public? Is it not painful to see a man who has spent years in self-culture standing dumb as a heathen oracle, or with his intellect smitten with indescribable confusion, the moment he rises to speak, for the lack of a few happy sentences in which to embody his thought?" Every time one opens his lips in speech, he has an opportunity to acquire and strengthen the habit of giving clear and forceful utterance to his thoughts. Instead of bidding our students to "spout" at every opportunity, we should bid them to read widely, think deeply, reason logically, and act sensibly.

We have rarely known a fluent speaker who said things that stuck like burrs in the memory; but we have heard artless talkers who have blurted out the most original, the deepest, and the most pregnant things in words we can never forget. We want thought, taste, brevity, and the Doric simplicity of

style which is very nearly allied to the highest and most effective eloquence.

Assuming that a speech *must* be made, a student should be taught to make the most of the occasion. If he cannot present new, vital, and interesting material, he should at least clothe the old in a new dress, and in place of substance use substantives, so that the audience may say, "What a beautiful speech," as they did when Alcibiades spoke; if not "Let us march against Philip," as was said at the conclusion of addresses by Demosthenes. There may be beauty if not duty in a fruitless phrase. There are times when "beauty is its own excuse for being."

However well a speaker may be informed on his study and research, unless the facts are logically arranged, clearly and persuasively presented, the speech will not fulfill its purpose. The dictum of Socrates that "All men are sufficiently eloquent in that which they understand" is not true. The speech department justifies itself when aiding a student in manner and method of composition and delivery. But no instructor, however enthusiastic, whose sanity is above question, will advocate that these factors take precedence over having something worth while to say. We rather hold with Lowell, who would add another beatitude: "Blessed is the man who has nothing to say and cannot be persuaded to say it."

Speeches are most boring to those who realize how much more interesting and effective they might be. The manager of a large utilities

company, after completing a course in speech, once remarked to me: "I am sorry I took the course. Annually I am obliged to listen to a score of speeches at our national conventions. Before taking the course, I didn't know how rotten they were, so enjoyed them; now I am bored to distraction." Paraphrasing Bobbie Burns, if we could only *hear* oursel's as ithers *hear* us!

Voltaire said, "Men employ speech only to conceal their thoughts." To this, too, we cannot subscribe. Speech, the greatest invention of all time, originated to express thought, and only in so far as it fulfills this mission is it wholly justified. It loses much of its potency through injudicious use. Words are often spoken, not to conceal thought, but as a substitute for judicious thinking, a camouflage to hide a vacant mind. "Empty vessels make most sound."

The ability for impromptu speaking which dazzles so many persons begets self-conceit and a thirst for public notice and tempts thousands of young men to seek temporary notoriety at the expense of a solid and lasting reputation. Instead of cultivating and disciplining their brains, storing their minds with the hived wisdom of the ages, and, above all, acquiring that most valuable and important of all arts, the art of consecutive and persistent thinking, they study claptrap and sensational speech pyrotechnics—the art of producing the instantaneous and ephemeral—instead of the deep and enduring. Habits of speaking thus formed speedily react

on the habit of thinking, and instead of weighing questions carefully and trying to ascertain their merits, young men view them only as pegs upon which to hang their speeches. An easy utterance, a lively verbosity, a knack for stinging invective, and a command of that piquant ridicule which always bring down the house, soon come to be preferred to the profoundest knowledge, the largest grasp of mind, the most thorough comprehension of a subject, which, owing to the very *embarras des richesses*, hems and stammers in trying to wreak itself upon expression.

There is hardly a gift so dangerous or so worthless as what is vulgarly termed eloquence. It is a mistake to suppose that it is difficult to acquire. Almost any man can succeed who will try often and who can harden himself against the mortification of frequent failures. Complete self-possession and a ready flow of language may thus be acquired mechanically; but it will be the self-possession of ignorance and the fluency of comparative emptiness. Such a habit may teach him something of arrangement and a few of the simplest methods of making an immediate impression; but as Lord Brougham has said, "his diction is sure to be much worse than if he had never made the attempt. Such a speaker is never in want of a word, and hardly ever has one that is worth having." The truth is, full men are seldom fluent.

As Andy would say, "Another thing." We come to our last point—Quantity. When Alexander Pope

read Milton's *Paradise Lost* his comment was, "If it has no other virtue, it at least has length." Would it not be well if we might say of some speeches, if they have no other virtue, they at least have brevity? Civilization has learned much through the years relative to the length of speeches. Sheridan spoke six hours at the trial of Warren Hastings. A two- or three-hour sermon was the rule during our Colonial period; one hour during the pre-Civil War period; one-half hour at the beginning of the century and now, thanks to the radio, most sermons are cut to fifteen minutes. We have often wondered what would happen if a preacher would some Sunday morning have the courage to preach a five-minute sermon. May we predict that it would be remembered until the following Sunday?

We will go on record here and now in declaring that any candidate of whatever creed or political faith who will promise to introduce in the next Assembly a bill similar to the one passed by a South African tribe will get our vote. This tribe, partly civilized, has set up a deliberative body, all the members being experts in the art of oratory. But hardly a speaker has reasonable terminal facilities. So the elder statesmen, the wise men of the tribe, put their heads together and attempted a remedy. In the simplicity of their minds they clearly saw that long speeches were not only injurious to both listener and speaker but to the cause advocated. They put their remedy into the form of a law. Every speaker must stand on one leg

while addressing an audience. As soon as he has to place his other foot on the ground or floor, his oration must close. Native orators desperately balance themselves on one leg as long as possible, but the moment that leg gives out and the speaker connects himself with the planet by both supports, a wild yell arises and the speaker is obligated to take his seat. It was a simple device, but it worked.

The purpose of an introductory speech is to create an eagerness in the audience to hear the speaker. Such speeches have been an hour in length. The briefest and most appropriate introductory speech I ever heard was that given by Senator Barkley, when as chairman of a political meeting he introduced Franklin D. Roosevelt. Senator Barkley said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, your President."

Washington seldom spoke in public, but when he did his speech was made up of a few pointed sentences, delivered in an easy conversational way. In the convention that framed the Constitution of the United States, he made but two speeches, each of a few words; yet it has been said that if the thirty words of his first speech had been omitted, the Constitution would have been rejected by the people. Neither Franklin nor Jefferson had "the gift of gab." President Jackson was as tongue-tied as General Grant. After Grant was given the command of the 21st Illinois Volunteers at Springfield, Illinois, on June 16, 1861, General John Logan made the address of the day. When

he concluded, the soldiers called on Grant for a speech. The audience wondered if Governor Yates had not made a great blunder in appointing such a quiet, insignificant man, small of stature, and weighing only 135 pounds, instead of the 200-pound personification of superb and eloquent manhood, General Logan. Grant arose, looked at the thousands of troops, and said, "*Go to your quarters!*" Perhaps, after all, Governor Yates was right. General Moltke is said to have been silent in eight languages. He rarely spoke except in the crash of solid shot or the shriek of angry shell. When the Creator chose a man for the greatest work ever done in this world, it was Moses, the man "slow of speech," and not Aaron, the man who could "speak well," that he commissioned.

The most convincing speakers have been niggard of their words. The reason why the classic orators of antiquity spoke with such terseness and condensed energy was that they turned over their subjects long and deeply and made the pen a constant auxiliary of the tongue. Southey was right in "Words are like sunbeams, the more they are condensed the deeper they burn." One day Tennyson made a social call on Carlyle. After a formal greeting, both sat down by the fireplace. Neither spoke again, each busy with his own deep thoughts. At the end of an hour Tennyson arose, bade his friend good night, and thanked him for a pleasant and profitable evening.

Repetition may be the cause of immoderate length. The same idea is often prefaced by "In other words." A colored preacher boasted of his hour-and-a-half sermons. "How come you all can preach so long?" inquired a fellow exhorter.

"Well," said the preacher, "De fust half hour I tells dem what I's gwine to say. Den I expostulates for a half hour. Den I uses the last half hour tellin' 'em what I dun said."

There is no orator so hypnotized by the sound of his own voice and so entranced by his own stale jokes as the after-dinner speaker. Says John B. Kennedy, "It is extremely doubtful whether ninety per cent of postprandial oratory is necessary, to say nothing of effective. Yet, day by day, the welkin is banged and rafters rocked by exhorters emulating the spell-binders of eld."

If in my humble way, in the daily grind of the class room, I can curb or shorten the speeches of the coming generation, my life will not have been lived in vain. The obscure, yet prolific poet, Berton Brailey, has expressed our sentiment in a poem called "The Hero." We quote one stanza:

They gave him twenty minutes, but he
finished up in ten.
Oh, there's a prince of speakers, and
servant unto men.
His diction wasn't such-a-much, he
hemmed and hawed a bit;
But still he spoke a lot of sense, and
after that—he quit.
At first we sat plumb paralyzed, then
cheered and cheered again;
For they gave him *twenty* minutes and
he finished up in in *ten!*

Reading to Understand

ERNEST BENNETT

It is now generally recognized that the teaching of reading does not end when the student has been conducted through the fifth reader. In fact, it is recognized that the older teaching of reading was very elementary indeed and did not cope seriously with the more difficult side of the art, that of reading with understanding. The materials used were ordinarily within the intelligence of a rather dull pupil. The older methods tacitly assumed that if the pupil could recognize the words and, within his own mind, link them in sentences, the whole problem had been solved. The resources of his intelligence had then been brought into full and easy play, and complete understanding of the author followed automatically.

That assumption was exploded some years ago for the teaching profession at large, and most thoughtful teachers of subjects making much use of books have always known that even many college students can not read. They have always known that the power to read sentences aloud with apparently intelligent emphases does not mean that there is any real grasp of the thought as a whole. They have known that there is much more to intelligent reading than apprehending words and sentences.

So now it is also generally recognized that every instructor whose students deal with books, whether in high school or college—perhaps even in the graduate schools—must also be a teacher of reading. Most students have to be taught to read history, literature, biology, geology, political science, just as they had to be taught to read the fifth reader. If not so taught, they are losing part of the values in their course and few of them are developing into independent scholars.

“Remedial reading” is the name given to the formal teaching processes which attempt to correct earlier inadequacies in the teaching of reading. Doubtless these processes have their place in the classroom; they probably help to correct those inadequacies which were chiefly mechanical and on the surface. But it is impossible for “remedial reading” administered once and for all to finish the task; that power of reading with a full and deep understanding which is the ultimate goal can only be a matter of gradual growth under instructors keenly alive to how infrequently the goal is reached. These instructors, like a good physician with his patients, aim at making their students independent of them in their power of gleaning thought from the printed page, but they also know that pro-

longed treatment is first necessary.

This kind of higher training in reading concerns itself little with speed and the improved mechanics that produce speed. Greater speed will usually be one of the final results, for mastery of an important document in any field makes for faster reading of other documents in the same field. As one investigator found, "Improvement of both speed and comprehension appear to be acquired as a by-product of wide and thoughtful reading." It is the *thoughtfulness* of the reading that this advanced instruction must stress constantly.

An essential preliminary to this reading for understanding is to arouse the interest and enlist the co-operation of the student. He should first be made to see that as a reader he is defective, to realize perhaps that, except in a superficial way, he does not know how to read. Then he should be encouraged to believe that he can become a good reader and that help to that end is at hand. Only mental slugs can fail to respond to a tactful appeal. The immediate goal in attacking any one fairly difficult document as a means toward this end, whether scientific treatise, essay, poem, or historical record, should also be definitely set forth—the complete understanding of the document so far as that is possible with one's intellectual background.

At this point a disclaimer must be entered. This aim does not call for a dry threshing out of dusty details, for a minute explanation of everything in the text. That

method would defeat its own purpose. The real aim is the understanding of the very essence of the document so that the details quickly fall into their proper place relative to the whole.

So the student may get his bearings before he begins, certain preliminary steps must precede the reading of the essay or chapter. He should reflect a moment on the subject. Does he know anything about it already? has he read something else on the same topic? does it connect with any discussions he has heard? If he is attacking a chapter in a book, he should scan the table of contents to get a glimpse of the chapter's relation to what precedes and follows. Next he should look through its pages noting any headings, the opening statements of its paragraphs, the italicized sentences, and especially the final summarizing paragraph. If he has noted strange words that looked important, he should consult his dictionary. When he has done these things, he may discover that the chapter does not look nearly as formidable as it did at first glance, that already it begins to take on meaning.

Parenthetically, if the reading about to be undertaken is in a textbook, the student must be made to understand that his mastering the chapter is usually conditional on whether he has studied the preceding chapters. If he lacks the background that they provide, he is proceeding stupidly when he does not try to fill the gap before advancing. Even though he has stud-

ied regularly, he should nearly always review rapidly the preceding chapter. He then has a hitching post for new facts and ideas.

The student is now ready for the first reading of the assignment, which should be a rapid reading. Though he should look at nearly every sentence, he should refuse to halt for what he does not understand, for his present aim is to seize the general intent of the chapter. The rapidity of his reading causes him to connect the beginning with the end and both these with the middle, a connection that hosts of readers never make. He is doing the same thing that he would do if he should notice an express train gliding across the landscape; he would look at the train as a whole before he noted which were mail coaches, which Pullmans, and which diner.

The student is now ready to ask himself this question: What is the central thought of this chapter, the controlling idea? Can I state it in one brief sentence? If he cannot so state it, he should hunt for it. Usually it is to be found near the beginning, for it is the text of the writer's sermon. Often it is there stated so emphatically that the student seizes upon it in that first rapid reading. In any case, he is not ready for a detailed reading, section by section, of the chapter until he knows what it is, for it is the key to the whole chapter and without it the door of understanding cannot be unlocked.

The second reading now becomes truly analytical. Its purpose

is to trace the red thread of the controlling idea through the chapter from beginning to end. If the book is well written, that red thread will be found in every paragraph, though at times only by implication. By means of it every paragraph takes on its meaning and has its definite relationship to what precedes and what follows. When the student cannot find the red thread in the paragraph, he has either failed to understand what he is reading or the chapter is badly constructed. He must persist until he has found it and knows that he understands the paragraph.

The opposite kind of reading, the sentence-by-sentence variety, is the kind the sincere but untrained student usually does. When he has finished, he can answer many specific questions of fact, but he is lost when questioned on relationships. He does not see what contribution the individual parts make to the whole; he does not understand what he has read as a whole. Is it going too far to say this is the kind of reading usually done both in the schools and by readers in general?

Two or three suggestions on what the student should do when he falls into difficulties at this point:

1. He would be wise to write out the controlling idea and keep it before him; often he should have done this before starting the second reading. He may discover that he is in error as to what the controlling idea is and, finding the correct statement of it, have to

revise his analysis of the preceding part of the chapter.

2. He may find it helpful to set down in their order the topic sentences of the preceding paragraphs and then read them rapidly to make sure of the direction the thought is taking.

3. Perhaps he has misunderstood two or three key words. He should use the dictionary for any that now appear doubtful. A light may suddenly fall on the paragraph.

4. Perhaps, in historical or literary matter, he is overlooking time relationships. He should note carefully any date, even the tenses of the verbs.

5. He may reread the chapter rapidly to that point, perhaps three or four times. One of these readings is likely to give him the missing clue. Persistence will have its reward.

When he has finished the second careful reading, the student will usually grasp the chapter or article as a whole. He sees how the author organized his thought and how he handled it. He has made it his own, he has assimilated it. If, however, he feels that he has not achieved complete understanding, he should either repeat this analytical reading or outline the chapter, perhaps both. When the light finally gleams through its whole length, he will know that his time has been well spent.

For fairly permanent retention, a third reading in which essentials are noted and incidentals skimmed over is usually necessary. But this

reading may be done quickly, for the analytical reading has already impressed the pattern of the chapter on the mind. Understanding is the direct route to remembering.

But how may the teacher know that the student has taken all these steps? Usually, in the case of the quicker student, he cannot know positively. Moreover, they are not always necessary; that depends on the nature of the reading matter. But there are certain devices that can at least show whether the student has understood the chapter in its essence and as a whole. The teacher may call for a short summary written in class, sometimes with the use of the book. Or he may ask for a paraphrase in order to check understanding by requiring the student to state things in his own way. An oral report is usually revealing, especially if supplemented by a few incisive questions. Or the student may be submitted to a short cross-examination on the chapter.

Here is a class plan which will reveal pretty definitely how intelligent reading a class has done on a given assignment: Require the class to answer in writing a list of questions designed to test understanding rather than memory. Let the questions be numerous enough to bring out all the chief points. Do not discuss the answers after the papers have been gathered up. If the teacher's later reading of these papers shows that the class has not understood the chapter, he may then assign it for another day, with the class using the questions to

guide the new readings. The better thinkers in the class will then become keenly aware of what they overlooked the first day.

An important question to be put to a class which has finished the study of a chapter or an essay is: What did the writer set out to explain or prove? How far has he succeeded in his intention? Besides increasing understanding, such questions will cause students to take a critical point of view toward what they read. They will come to realize that there is purpose behind all good writing.

An instinctive hostility toward a writer's views may occasionally prejudice thoughtful students against giving him a careful reading. Sometimes the teacher can

show them that they have misunderstood the writer. In any case he can assure them that they are in no wise expected to accept the writer's views, that all expected of them is to understand them.

Naturally a good many students cannot be persuaded to read and study after the plan here described. But to influence them so far as possible to use it will be thoroughly worth while, and the more industrious students will profit from it greatly. There is nothing new in it. Unnumbered thoughtful readers have always followed it more or less closely, and many other thoughtful readers would have been grateful had they been taught such a scheme of reading and study.

Arturus Redivivus

WALTER PENNINGTON

"Why do writers keep telling the same story over again? We know, if we have read one version, how the others are bound to end. Why do the authors not think of something new and show some originality?" These are the words, as well as I can remember them, of a query put to me several months ago by a college freshman. The questions of freshmen are not to be despised. Their viewpoint in matters academic is not prejudiced by any former knowledge of the subject. In their *naïveté* they propound, in wide-eyed wonder at the world about them, such queries as, were they all answered—and answerable—would solve the problems of the universe, would, at least, contain the sum of human knowledge.

We were discussing some of the background material of English and American literature and had come to the Arthurian stories. I had called attention to some of the earlier redactions and compilations of the Arthurian legends, particularly Malory's noble work, and had shown that there had been many retellings of the old story since. Then came the question, which I answered as well as I could at the time, but have been pondering since. It is an honest question and deserves consideration.

I shall try to show in this paper that the Arthurian legends have become compounds of several universal subjects, and that, while basically unchanged, usually are retold in the light of the author's time, and embody the thoughts, the viewpoint of life, the *Weltanschauung* of the period in which the author lives. There is, therefore, a truth to life in these old stories that embraces all man's wonder at the phenomena of the world about him, including those three greatest mysteries, man, nature, and God, so that while these stories are made up of men and women, of trees, horses, houses, and all the physical appurtenances of man, they comprise the interaction and interrelation of these beings and things, so that there is strife, there is love, there is birth, there is death. They comprise, too, the spiritual aspirations and yearnings of mankind.

The origin of these early legends—I shall confine my paper to the Arthurian legends, though it would be equally true of some others—is lost in the "dark backward and abysm of time." This is as it should be. Helen of Troy is a greater beauty for having been first introduced to literature by a blind man. Deirdre could not be the symbol of Absolute Beauty to the Celt if she

could be identified with a street address and a telephone number. So the historical Arthur remains shadowy, vague. Just enough emerges to convince us that there was a man by some such name, probably Arturus, as he was a Romanized Celt; that he lived at the end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth centuries; that he was a Celtic chieftain (*dux bellorum*, Nennius calls him) and fought against the invading Angles and Saxons (yet has since paradoxically been adopted as the national hero of their descendants in the British Isles); that he was a Christian; that he died in the Battle of Mount Badon in the year 510.

That isn't much to build on when one considers the mass of future accretions. He must have been a great hero in his lifetime. Fabulous stories of his prowess were extant, probably even in his own day. By the time of Geoffrey of Monmouth, in the twelfth century, he is equipped with all things needful for a completely euhemerized hero. Wace, a little later in the same century, accepts most of the marvels but with some reservations:

Ne tot mencunge, ne tot veir,
Ne tot fable, ne tot saveir,
Tant ont li conteor conte,
Et li fableor fable
Por lor contes embeleter
Que tout ont fait fable sembler.

That is the result of his pondering on the veracity of the stories, already in his time more than six hundred years old.

But with Nennius, with Geoffrey, with Wace, and with Laya-

mon, Arthur and his exploits were as yet but pseudo-history. It was with the greatest poet of twelfth century France that Arthur emerged as a literary theme, a hero of romance. Why should Chrétien de Troyes have chosen a sixth century Brythonic Celt and the court of noble knights and lovely ladies that by this time surrounded him as the central theme for nearly all his great romances? The answer is that Arthur was adaptable; he was far enough in the past to allow the imagination free range; he could at the same time be modernized and be brought without difficulty into the current ideals of chivalry. So Marie de France told the lay of "Sir Launfal," and Sir Tristram's sad, sweet story in "The Lay of the Honeysuckle," while Chrétien was busy shaking octosyllabic couplets out of his sleeve to produce long romances of chivalry that satisfied the readers of that chivalric age. When an analysis of what has constituted the true gentleman and the perfect lady in every age shall be written, the research must include a study of the Arthurian stories for each period. These romances of Chrétien's sufficed every need of their readers: there could be found the social ideals of their time; love—tried and true, and triangular; psychological problems of great delicacy, as in his *Lancelot*; and the mystery of the grail, the dominant theme that ever since his *Perceval le Gallois* has persisted in song and story, in opera, in painting. For the Arthurian legends were destined from Chrétien's time to be a ve-

hicle of expression for the ideals of centuries to come—always the same, yet always different.

In the fourteenth century the anonymous *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* depicts with a seasoning of humor the virtues of that best-mannered of all Arthur's knights. Gawain's humility because of his having been a little less noble than he might have been became his crowning glory, for others recognized not the slight defect but rather that the defect itself showed how near perfection he had reached.

Caxton, in his "Preface" to Malory's great compilation of Arthurian legends at the end of the fifteenth century, recognized the value of the stories as an epitome of the best ideals of the time. But Malory, though a skillful compiler, was compiler rather than artist, took his treasures where he found them, but kept the dross of less refined centuries. So Caxton says, in the words now so well-known:

For herein may be seen noble chivalry, courtesy, humanity, friendliness, hardness, love, friendship, cowardice, murder, hate virtue, and sin. Do after the good and leave the evil, and it shall bring you to good fame and renommee . . . all is written for our doctrine, and for to beware that we fall not to vice nor sin, but to exercise and follow virtue, by which we may come and attain to good fame and renown in this life, and after this short and transitory life to come unto everlasting bliss in heaven; . . .

Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, the "clock of fairy-land," bungled the Arthurian legends because it was neither medieval nor modern. Ben

Jonson observed that Spenser "writ no language." So the poem stands not only in language but also in imagery and in its message for its own day an anachronism, like a Praxitelean torso with a late Renaissance head. As Légouis has pointed out, Spenser gives us an Arthur without either a Guinevere or a Lancelot and a Tristram without an Iseult. Missing as he does so completely the real value of these legends and trying to make of their characters mere accessories to his story, Spenser stands as the one notable failure of a great poet in his attempt to use these materials. And his failure consists in not recognizing their possibility of adaptation to the late sixteenth century.

The vogue of the Arthurian legends struck their doldrums in the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth, as might be expected in that age of prose and reason. There were in the late seventeenth century Blackmore's two long, dull poems, *Prince Arthur* and *King Arthur*. We can only speculate on what Milton would have done with the theme if he had used it; we know from his common-place book that he entertained the project at one time. He finally settled on a theme much older even than the Arthurian legends and through the grand organ-tones of his music and the sincerity and eloquent beauty of his many fine passages produced a work that lives despite new views in theology and a cosmogony that he knew to be displaced at the time he wrote. His supreme handling of that theme forces us to the con-

jecture that he would have made a lasting work of art of the Arthurian stories.

But when the eighteenth century was in its sixth decade Bishop Thomas Percy published his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, containing some Arthurian poems, one of which, "The Marriage of Sir Gawain," had been told by Chaucer's Wife of Bath. Percy's collection was but a promise of the new awakening. The breath of new life had again been breathed into the legends. The princess, it was found, had been but asleep, not dead, waiting only for the kiss of disenchantment from some prince charming author. In the nineteenth century many writers were attracted to the legends. Various were the forms in which their versions appeared, yet generally with a message for the age, a perennial message, yet one that needed rewriting, reinterpreting, that people of the nineteenth century might see their problems within the framework of these old tales. So widespread was the interest that we may find an occasional poem on the Arthurian theme even among authors whose names are not usually associated with those legends.

Only lovers of Wordsworth, who read more of him than can be found in the anthologies, will recognize readily the two titles "Artegall and Elidure" and "The Egyptian Maid," both Arthurian. "The Egyptian Maid" is only slightly Arthurian, and Maynadier objects, rightly, I think, to Wordsworth's marrying off the chaste knight Sir

Galahad, for Galahad had been invented to replace Perceval, who had become too worldly for the grail quest. "Artegall and Elidure" opens with praise of former writers on the Arthurian legends—Geoffrey of Monmouth, Spenser. Milton is mentioned for his interest in the theme. The story is told for its moral and human interest appeal. But Wordsworth liked better his own Lake Country and the romance of the everyday life about him so that we may look on these poems as an indication of the current vogue of the Arthurian legends (Southey edited *Le Morte D'Arthur*) rather than evidence of any great interest in the theme by Wordsworth.

Scott's "Bridal of Triermain" bridges a gap of some five hundred years to make a story of long ago have some pertinence for two modern lovers.

More valuable than the work in this field of either Wordsworth or Scott is Matthew Arnold's "Tristram and Iseult." In this beautiful little idyll in three scenes, Arnold shows us Tristram lying ill in Brittany, watched over by Iseult of the White Hands, but looking for the sail that will bring Iseult of Ireland. Iseult of Ireland arrives in time to talk with Tristram. When Tristram dies, Iseult of Ireland dies too. Then we see a year later Iseult of the White Hands telling old Breton tales to her two children, a symbol, perhaps, of the continuity of these stories, how they were old in those days, yet how they are ever being renewed.

I shall but mention William Morris and his Arthurian poems "Sir Galahad, a Christmas Mystery," "Near Avalon" (Avalon, the isle of apples, a name for the Celtic Otherworld of bliss), "The Chapel in Lyonesse," "The Defence of Guenevere," and "King Arthur's Tomb." They have a mystic beauty that shows Morris's ability to find the best and noblest in the old and transmute it into something of equal significance for an age ailing from too much materialism.

In Swinburne's "Tristram of Lyonesse" and again in his "Tale of Balen" we have old tales retold in stanzas of high merit for their music and for their narrative quality. Swinburne in his "Prelude" to the "Tristram of Lyonesse" shows his recognition of the value of these old themes by giving a list of women whose love stories have become a part of the great literature of the world—Helen, Rosamund, Beatrice, Isolt, Guenevere, Juliet, and so forth. "The Tale of Balen" he concludes with lines that would rouse men in any century to emulation of noble endeavor:

This is the tale that memory writes
Of men whose names like stars shall stand,
Balen and Balan, sure of hand,
Two brethren of Northumberland,
In life and death good knights.

The greatest of the nineteenth century writers who dealt with the Arthurian legends was, of course, Tennyson. No one would question how well Tennyson has expressed through his *Idylls of the King* the ideals of the Victorian Age. The *Idylls* are given unity through

their symbolism—Arthur, the soul; Guinevere, sense; Lancelot, imagination; Merlin, intellect. MacCallum in his *Tennyson's Idylls* sees as Tennyson's purpose the attempt to show that the union of soul and sense can never be perfected yet soul must manifest itself in such union for this world. MacCallum believes that in Tennyson the Arthurian legend found "its unique predestined interpreter." MacCallum's book was published in 1894. Certainly that statement is true for the nineteenth century.

But we need only look at some of the more recent criticisms of the *Idylls* to recognize that the interpretation for one age will not suffice for another. Emerson tells us that every age must write its own books. Tennyson's vogue has waned in our day, not because the poems are intrinsically less good than ever but because a new age has new values. So, as Tennyson himself says,

The old order changeth, yielding place
to new,
And God fulfills himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt
the world.

If we compare Tennyson's characterization of Vivien in his "Merlin and Vivien" with Robinson's portrait of the same character we shall see the sharp difference between the Victorian sense of moral values and that of the twentieth century. Tennyson could not condone sin and has given us a Vivien that seems to us so much overdone that she does not seem real but rather an abstraction representing

Evil. So also in "The Last Tournament," by having Mark kill Tristram just when Isolde has accepted the rubies that Tristram has won for her in a tournament, Tennyson, while succeeding thus in keeping to the general plan of the *Idylls*, has given us the least satisfactory conclusion of the Tristram story.

E. A. Robinson is the most recent great interpreter of the Arthurian legends. Though he has in the main gone back for the story element to the older versions, he has made the characters seem like people you know, or at least might know. When Robinson's trilogy appeared (*Merlin*, 1917; *Lancelot*, 1920; *Tristram*, 1927), comparisons were, quite naturally, made between these works and Tennyson's *Idylls*. Untermeyer was moved to speak of their "shaming the tea-table idylls of Tennyson." Cestre referred disparagingly to Tennyson's "varnish of glazed respectability." W. Branch Johnson called Tennyson's *Idylls* "falsetto preachments of the modern Muse" with the hero "a respectable Victorian."

The Arthurian legends have furnished inspiration to a host of others—writers, musicians, painters—of whom I need name but a few: Wagner, in his opera *Parsifal*; Edwin A. Abbey with his frieze of fifteen panels called *The Quest of the Holy Grail* in the

Boston Public Library; Warwick Deeping, *Uther and Igraine*; Gerhard Hauptmann, *Parsifal*; John Erskine, whose *Galabad* is distinctly twentieth century—indeed, Erskine informs his readers that he will tell the story as it took place in "our own world, to people like ourselves."

Joshua Reynolds in his *Discourses* (VII) says that "What has pleased and continues to please, is likely to please again." With reinterpretation that will make the characters and scenes understandable, every age delights in these legends because time has hallowed the story and the themes are universal. Man has found, for example, no better symbolism to express his spiritual seeking than the grail legend furnishes. Though it may have originated in a Celtic cauldron of plenty, it has long ago become identified with the Holy Communion service of the Church.

My inquiring freshman is convinced, I hope, that not lack of originality but recognition of worth has attracted some of the greatest authors, musicians, painters to the time-honored legends of King Arthur and that with such recognition went a realization of the adaptability of those legends to the ideals of the age in which the artist lived. Arthur, I feel sure, is destined with his noble followers to live long in song and story.

John G. Neihardt at Home

ADELE MEHL BURNETT

To know John G. Neihardt, the American epic poet, one must know his family; one must see Mr. Neihardt at home in an atmosphere of quiet, cultured appreciation, such as one dreams of, but seldom finds, for a genius. A loving joy pervades the home which centers around Mr. Neihardt.

Two summers ago, when the poet was living in St. Louis and serving as literary editor of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, I was a luncheon guest of the Neihardt family. No one needed to tell me that the tall, slender woman with bobbed gray hair that curled and fluffed as it would, her face lighted by the kindest gray eyes I have ever seen, was Mrs. Neihardt, though she answered the door herself.

"How nice of you to come!" Her rich voice made the usual words sound personal and sincere. "John was called to the office a short time ago, but you and I can visit."

And visit we did. Talk of spring and flowers in the Ozarks, where the Neihardts have a large and comfortable home, to which they had gone for an occasional week end during the twelve years that Mr. Neihardt was connected with the *Post-Dispatch*, brought Mrs. Neihardt to the story of her husband's delightful lyrics, "April

Theology" and "The Little Wind." These he had had recorded only the week before as a gift for his wife's birthday. From the electric phonograph, came Mr. Neihardt's voice reading his lines and ending with the tribute, "To Mona for her birthday, May 26, 1938."

Mrs. Neihardt was exultant over getting her heart's desire. She had long wanted her husband to have the records of his readings made, so that both verses and voice should be preserved for future generations, but it seemed as though she would never get him to the point of actual recording. At last she herself made an appointment with the recording company, and Mr. Neihardt submitted.

We talked of *The Song of the Messiah* with its beautiful, throbbing couplets, of the strange emotional appeal of the story of the tribes looking for an Indian Messiah who would save them from the whites, of the fascinating jewels of description of spring, of the white plum blossoms—the hurting beauty of it all as one read the epic aloud.

During my visit Alice with bag and books was the first of the family to arrive. "Our baby," her mother introduced her. As she talked of school days in St. Louis, of her lessons in ballet dancing, of

week ends and holidays in Branson, of Hilda, the sister next to her who is secretary to the Swiss consul in St. Louis, and of Enid, the oldest, married to a staff member of the *Post-Dispatch* and serving then as her father's secretary, I was reminded of Alice in "Dream Children"—Alice, so young and yet so old and wise, so capable, so understanding without the pertness and swagger of the modern high-school girl.

And then like any other girl of her age she thought of kodak pictures to entertain me. A snap of herself on a rearing horse caught in the dizzy height of a fancy step suggested the expert rider that the young girl is.

I turned the pages of the kodak book and came to a mite of a laughing baby playing with the garden hose in a fountain in the center of a charming setting. Mr. Neihardt had installed the fountain and Mrs. Neihardt had modeled the baby for their outdoors in Branson, Mrs. Neihardt explained.

"Do you have a studio here, and do you do any modeling in St. Louis?" I remembered something that I had read of the well-known Mona Martinsen's sculpturing.

From somewhere she brought a jar that was truly a small stump of a tree, six or seven inches in diameter and about as high, all tender green ridged with the springtime. Within, a delicate, feathery sort of plant continued the illusion. But what made the jar different from every other jar was the lovely baby, sitting on the edge in a blissful

state of nudity. Mrs. Neihardt had molded it, painted it, and burned it.

She led the way to the dining room. On the radiator by the window some half dozen putty-colored stumps, each with its own adorable baby balanced on the edge, each baby a little different from the others, were drying in the sun. When the jars were dry, they would be ready for painting in springtime greens and browns and then for burning in the kiln.

"This is my No. 2 baby, but Jac-card's—the exclusive jewelers—" hesitantly, as though she weren't sure that a Kansan would know Jac-card's—"took my No. 1 baby. I am very proud of that." Quietly she went to a closet on the opposite side of the room and brought out another piece of her work: a darling three-inch baby curled up in a lily-pad of mingled purple and pink and blue tints showing through an outer green. "This is my No. 1 baby."

Putting the baby and the lily pad back in the closet, she brought out, this time, a small clay bust of her husband, the figure resting on a miniature replica of Mr. Neihardt's seven books which make up his cycle of the West. An American flag was draped across the back. To my inexperienced eyes, it seemed an amazing likeness, but she assured me that it was far from finished and that she would continue to work on it until every line was true.

As we returned to the living room, John Neihardt burst in from the outdoors, a man ludicrously small beside his tall, slim wife. However, at second glance I saw he was

far from ludicrous, a man of burning vitality. He was all in gray except for tie and hose of vivid blue, but at first, I was conscious only of his shaggy hair—a pile of it like a drum major's shako—and gray eyes that were a fire—not brown or black as one might expect—but gray eyes that crackled and leapt.

When we had seated ourselves comfortably, Mr. Neihardt turned aside to Alice in a moment of irritation. Something was lacking. She assured him that it would take her only a few minutes and was gone, returning in a short five minutes with a sack of tobacco that turned into cigarettes from time to time under the nervous, energetic fingers of Mr. Neihardt. As fast as he smoked one cigarette, he rolled another. As he puffed, he gestured with one hand and then the other. Now and then between cigarettes he talked for seconds with both hands at once. "You see what I mean?" went with the gestures.

While we discussed Mr. Neihardt's books, Mrs. Neihardt and Alice quietly arranged the simple meal on the small dining room table. From living room to dining room the talk went on. Mr. Neihardt ate but little, entertaining us with delightfully amusing tales of his teaching experiences in the country schools of Nebraska, where his trained skill in wrestling saved him from ignominious treatment at the hands of bullies twice his size. He is a marvelous raconteur and never stints his family or friends.

But the tales were at an end

when he caught a gleam from my earrings, which in the reflected light looked like amber, and I made the pleasant discovery of what few except intimates of the family know,—that Mr. Neihardt has several hobbies, chief of which is the collecting and setting of jewels.

In St. Louis, shut off from his workshop in Branson, where a hobby of many years gave him recreation, he deliberately chose as an outlet for too much energy the collecting of gems — concerning which he knew less than nothing when he began. The road has taken him through books on gems to pawnshops, secondhand dealers, and jewelers' shops. He bought old rings, he told me, for their stones or to be used as settings for other stones which he had already accumulated. Slowly and methodically he goes about gathering his jewels until he has found what he needs for some particular pattern.

Food entirely forgotten, Mr. Neihardt went to his study at the far end of the house and brought from his treasure-trove, a small piece of amber, half a dozen synthetic rubies, and several topazes. The small topazes, shaped like the petals of a flower, each added to his collection from a different source at a different time, he laid out on the lunch cloth in an exquisite flower design. There was also a necklace of almost theadlike gold with two handsomely cut topazes, clear and perfect as crystal, one above the other, and yet so slight as not to detract in any way from the

beautiful stones themselves. This was a gift for his wife.

Mrs. Neihardt called my attention to the necklace she was wearing. It was unusual in design and lovely in effect, two or three strands of large quartz beads with rock crystal between and a flat oval shaped rose quartz at the base. Mr. Neihardt had gathered the stones for this necklace one at a time and then had had the pattern made up from his own design.

Her wedding ring he had made over into an elongated design with sapphires—three flowers—one for each daughter, a large one between two small ones. At the death of Mona the ring goes to John—if and when. At the death of John the ring goes to the oldest daughter on the mother's birthday to be worn by her for a year. The following year at the same time it is to go to the second daughter for twelve months and then in turn to the third daughter and so keep alternating. The arrangement was explained in a matter-of-fact way but beneath their casual words was an undercurrent of excitement.

When we at last rose from the table, I started to go, for we had lingered there far past the luncheon hour. "Don't go," they urged. "You have the whole afternoon and you can't know us yet." Mrs. Neihardt mentioned some acquaintance who had come again and again to get material for the life of Mr. Neihardt and yet he missed, she said, the real John Neihardt. How could I, a stranger, I asked myself, in a few hours catch the personality

of one so kaleidoscopic? And yet the hope persisted. Sometimes first impressions etch themselves clearly on the mind of a stranger, making it possible for him to evaluate as he could not if he knew the personality too well.

And so under their generous insistence I stayed on for intimate talk of the things in life that really matter—things that reveal the poet's soul, things that could never profanely go into a published interview. Things of the spirit do not easily go into words; so much depends upon the tone of voice, the inflection, the tempo of words, the play of feature, gestures, movements of the body. Poetry in the abstract, poetry in the concrete, Tennyson, Shakespeare, Browning, Aeschylus, and his own epic cycle all shone with magic light under Mr. Neihardt's words. Lines from "Morte d'Arthur," and the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus shared with *The Song of the Messiah*. Music, sheer music.

When John Neihardt reads poetry, his voice becomes both instrument and words. His Greek is the richest of all—as it should be—in the Greek masterpieces, but one cannot help marveling at it. He never had formal study with a tutor, but at thirty he enthusiastically plunged into the language with only the help of a Greek primer that he might read Homer and Aeschylus untainted by the idiosyncracies of even the best of translators. Line after line of the *Agamemnon* he chanted with the feeling and perfection of rhythm that

would have charmed even that exacting master of Greek, Paul Shorey. Mrs. Neihardt remarked that her husband had already translated a good portion of the play, keeping the original meters.

"He will finish it some day when he gets around to it," she said in a tone that sounded like a challenge to the figure across the room, intent for the moment on the cigarette he was rolling. But as though he had not heard, he merely asked me, "Do you remember what H. G. Wells said about the Greeks' being overrated and all of Shakespeare's being sheer poetry? You know that is nonsense." Of course, one who had been taught the love and appreciation of poetry by Professor Shorey could but agree.

There is something of the mystic and very much of the spiritual about John Neihardt. What one has only vaguely felt, one realizes when Mr. Neihardt talks of the Indians and his life among them. "I am not an Indian expert," he said reflectively, "but I am happy with the Indians. Then I am released from all artificiality. It is not a sentimental attitude, but just a human attitude. Did you know that I am the son of a Holy Man?" His manner was strangely dramatic. "The spiritual son, I mean," he added.

Without any need for encouragement other than my interest he continued, "I and my son had gone to the Sioux in an old Ford to get in touch with some of the Indians who had believed in the coming of a red Messiah to save them from the white man. I sought an inter-

view with Black Elk, a cousin of Crazy Horse, although the government agent, a hardboiled, cynical fellow, told me it would do no good; that he wouldn't talk; that a woman from Lincoln, Nebraska, had tried to get a story from Black Elk about Crazy Horse, but he had refused to talk with her.

"However, I came to Black Elk, who seemed to be looking for me, knowing as he did that the white man had been sent to him to be taught. And he had his eagle feather brought him, and his star, and his buffalo skin, and he gave the white man all his religious relics. 'Now, you are the priest,' he told me, 'Just think how that poor old man gave up all his power.'" At this juncture Mrs. Neihardt handed her husband the relics he had just mentioned. He seemed deeply moved at the memory they recalled. I knew then that I was listening to no man of ordinary religious conviction, but to one who had something outside my experience.

The next summer the poet returned to listen to Black Elk's vision, which he had had when twelve years old. Since Mr. Neihardt was of the same spiritual outlook, Black Elk must share the vision with him, too. Black Elk's son, who had been in school at Carlisle and spoke imperfect English, served as interpreter, and Mr. Neihardt's daughter wrote it down in shorthand. The Holy Man took seventeen days to tell his vision, which in itself is a complete social religion—not superstition, but the purest spiritualism.

Black Elk named Mr. Neihardt *Flaming Rainbow*. "Do you know what he said to me? Take it down: 'He is a word sender. The world is like a garden and over this go his words like rain; and when his words have passed, the memory of them will stand long in the west like a flaming rainbow.' But you will find all of this in my *Black Elk Speaks*. I have no church, no creed, but I have feeling and understanding from Black Elk."

The following summer Mr. Neihardt lived in Manderson on the Sioux Reservation and wrote most of *The Song of the Messiah*. He tries always to write in the locality in which the poem has its setting. For five years he worked steadily on this epic, and those years, he said, did something to him spiritually. The poem is dedicated to Mona—*His Woman was a Mother to the Word*.

"The proudest thing in my life is John's dedicating this poem to me," she said with affectionate warmth.

The whole cycle was planned more than a quarter of a century ago, but Mr. Neihardt wrote the individual poems only as he felt ready for the spirituality of the work, these coming not consecutively, but in seeming crossword-puzzle order to the uninitiated: the first of the cycle was written second; the second one, first; the third one, third; the fifth one, fourth; and the fourth one, last. *The Song of the Messiah* forms a splendid climax of the whole cycle, though there is still one not yet

published, *The Song of Jed Smith* being number four in the cycle. Jedediah Smith was a young New Englander who with his mountain men discovered and explored the great central route from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean.

For *The Song of the Messiah*, Mr. Neihardt was awarded the Gold Scroll Medal of Honor as foremost poet of the nation for 1936 by the National Poetry Center, Radio City, New York, and also the 1936 Award for Poetry from the Friends of American Foundation in Chicago.

Mr. Neihardt has spent the last year in his Ozark home near Branson, dividing his time between lecture recitals at universities and colleges and work on *The Song of Jed Smith*, which his publishers are expecting to bring out late in 1940. For writing, Mr. Neihardt needs privacy and solitude. "The creator is the loneliest thing on earth," he said to me. "Creative work must be accomplished alone like birth and death." When he has written, the poet comes out of his loneliness and shares with his family what he has written, not for criticism, but for joy and appreciation.

He never does creative work after eleven in the morning. His energy, he says, runs out. The nerves of his solar plexus become frozen. He has actually tried pepper in his drinking water but to no avail. At eleven he is done. Also when he does one thing, he does nothing else; that is, when he writes epics, he doesn't write lyrics, and when he writes lyrics, he

doesn't think about epics. Whatever he does, he does with his whole being, and so the vital energy is quickly used up.

In her devoted enthusiasm, Mrs. Neihardt sometimes found herself dominating the conversation. Suddenly she would check herself. "I shouldn't be talking, but I want to say this," as when she was speaking of the versatility of her husband. "John's poems form a progression. You must read the whole of them to know the real John Neihardt. Take the lyrics of *The Quest* first. Then follow the little dramas to the grand climax. You must see the growth from the seed to the gorgeous tree. Have you noticed the batik there?" She pointed to a large pattern on the wall opposite. It was of rich browns and black. The design, she explained, was symbolic of *The Song of the Messiah*. A figure leaned against a tree, at the foot of which was springing grass, and around the whole, a border of stars. A young St. Louisan had made the interesting piece.

In the course of the afternoon, Mr. Neihardt talked of the reality of poetic values, of the mystical state of poetry, of the difference between the sensuous and the illuminated state, of William Blake,

the mystic poet of the eighteenth century who couldn't achieve the transition between the two because he lacked the technique, of the impossibility of the world's living on the heights—kindergarten world that it is; in short, of the many things that one feels are of immense importance to the spiritual life of man. Suddenly I was dizzy from the richness of the atmosphere, from the rare spiritual experiences I had shared.

This was a day in June. It is now somber fall. In my notebook there are only a few notes on this and that. My memory may have tricked me about one or more details. Much has gone, but the conviction remains that I had found the real John G. Neihardt, the man who wrote:

Let me live out my years in heat of
blood!

Let me die drunken with the dreamer's
wine!

Let me not see this soul-house built of
mud

Go toppling to the dust — a vacant
shrine.

.

And grant that when I face the grisly
Thing,

My song may trumpet down the gray
Perhaps

Let me be as a tune-swept fiddle-string
That feels the Master Melody — and
snaps.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Miss Eulalia E. Roseberry, head of the Department of Geography, spent her summer vacation visiting in the southwestern part of the United States. Among the natural features that she saw were Grand Canyon, Oak Creek Canyon, the Petrified Forest, old lava beds in Arizona, which at a distance resemble newly plowed land in form, and several extinct volcanoes, one being the "Sunset" volcano of central Arizona.

She also visited three Indian Reservations: the Navajos, the Hopi, and the Apache. She was permitted to witness the Buffalo Dance of the Hopi, which is called a revival dance (Miss Roseberry says it might be called a "pep" dance). It was performed in native costume for the purpose of training the young people in the ceremonial of the tribe. Later Miss Roseberry went to California.

Dr. J. A. Glaze, of the psychology department, and his family drove to Mexico City during August. While there they visited various points of interest and drove on south toward the western coast of Mexico.

Eighteen clubs, including more than four hundred alumni, met in

their respective towns to hear the K. S. T. C alumni night program broadcast over KGGF, Coffeyville in April.

President W. A. Brandenburg gave the address and Kenneth McFarland, Superintendent of Coffeyville Schools, spoke to the alumni.

Other alumni reunions took place at Winfield, Eureka, Chanute, Columbus, Arma, Moline, Ft. Scott, Oswego, Joplin, Arlington, and Independence.

The Service Bureau of the College has prepared a directory of the degree graduates of the College, showing the distribution of the alumni. It was found that alumni are living in 45 of the 48 states and in seventeen foreign countries or distant possessions of the United States. Kansas heads the list with a total of 2,359. Of these, 2,062 have bachelor and 297 master degrees. Missouri comes second with 458 bachelor and 40 master degrees. Oklahoma ranks third with 211 bachelor and 38 master degrees. Only one other state, California, goes over the hundred mark with 102 bachelor and 6 master degrees.

The distribution shown in the other states for the combined bachelor and master degree lists is:

Alabama, 4; Arizona, 35; Arkansas, 52; Colorado, 61; Connecticut, 2; District of Columbia, 13; Delaware, 3; Florida, 13; Georgia, 10; Idaho, 10; Illinois, 90; Indiana, 33.

Iowa, 38; Kentucky, 7; Louisiana, 9; Massachusetts, 5; Maryland, 8; Michigan, 37; Minnesota, 13; Mississippi, 3; Montana, 19; North Carolina, 13; North Dakota, 3; Nebraska, 27; Nevada, 5; New Jersey, 12; New Mexico, 21; New York, 35.

Ohio, 32; Oregon, 10; Pennsylvania, 16; Rhode Island, 3; South Carolina, 3; South Dakota, 8; Tennessee, 7; Texas, 79; Utah, 6; Virginia, 6; Washington, 20; Wisconsin, 10; West Virginia, 4; Wyoming, 23.

Graduates of the college are also located in seventeen foreign countries and possessions of the United States. In addition to giving the occupations of the graduates, the directory also designates life members of the Alumni Association of K. S. T. C.

Two members of the Horace Mann Training School staff are on sabbatical leave from the College this year. Mrs. Ethel Moore Peck, kindergarten supervisor, will spend the year in study in the George Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee. Mrs. Daphne Cross, third grade supervisor, will study in the Missouri University, Columbia, Missouri.

Miss Thelma Carnagey, who was on sabbatical leave the past year,

traveling and studying, has resumed her work in the Horace Mann Training School as second grade supervisor.

Dr. O. P. Dellinger, chairman of the Graduate Council and formerly head of the Department of Biology, was appointed Dean of the College this spring upon the retirement of Dean G. W. Trout. Dr. J. R. Wells succeeded Dr. Dellinger as Head of the Department of Biology.

George E. Ruggles, Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences, has returned to the College after a year on leave, doing graduate work at the Kansas State College at Manhattan.

Dr. J. A. Trent of the department of biology had the Ph. D. degree conferred upon him at the September convocation at the Ohio State University, Columbus.

Miss May Hare, Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences, who was state elementary school supervisor for the past six years and who taught here at the College prior to her appointment to the state department, has returned to the College as supervisor of teacher training in the department of biology.

Dr. Lynne C. Monroe, guest professor in Industrial Education for the summer session and graduate of the College, was appointed to the staff of the Santa Barbara State College, Santa Barbara, Calif.

Sixty-eight graduate students and members of the Department faculty participated in the eighth annual Industrial Education tour which was held in Fort Smith, Ark., June 22-24. The group visited the industrial education shops of the schools of Fort Smith as well as a number of industrial plants.

A conference on the curriculum in home economics was held in the department of home economics during the summer session.

Miss Anna Yates Stoffer, M. S. '32, spoke on the core curriculum and the part of the home economics teacher in this program. Mrs. Stoffer is a member of the faculty of the Tulsa, Oklahoma, high school. She has been assisting in developing the core curriculum in that school, and in the summer of 1937 was sent by the Tulsa school board to Teachers College, Columbia University, to study curriculum problems. The following summer she continued her study in Denver at the Progressive Education Workshop.

Miss Ruby Emmitt, B. S. '37, reported on the curriculum construction plan now being used in Missouri for the revision of the home

economics program. Miss Emmitt teaches at Liberal, Missouri, and has participated actively in the district and state curriculum conferences.

Among those from out of the city who attended the conference were Miss Hazel Thompson, State Supervisor of Vocational Homemaking, Topeka; Bessie Hiatt of Paola; Dorothy Nichols of McCune; and Effie Hackney of Columbus. About fifty students and alumnae attended the luncheon meeting.

The second Four-State Regional Conference for industrial-arts teachers and supervisors which met at the College October 6, 7, 1939, showed an increase in attendance of 46 men from outside Pittsburg as compared with last year. This year's conference attracted guests from Texas (5), Iowa (3), Connecticut, Michigan, Minnesota (1 each), Washington, D. C. (2), aside from the four states, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Arkansas.

At the business session of the conference Dr. W. T. Bawden, head of the Industrial Education department was re-elected general chairman for the third conference which will be held in Pittsburg, October, 1940.

FIELD NOTES

Three graduates of the English Department have taken important positions this season in the teaching of journalism. Ray Heady, B. S. '30, and M. S. '38, became in June acting director of publicity at Kansas University as well as instructor in journalism. He had previously taught journalism at Wyandotte High School, Kansas City, Kansas, for three years, after having taught the subject at Junction City and Pittsburg. Succeeding Heady at Wyandotte is William Corporon, '33, who had earlier succeeded him at Pittsburg. Corporon's successor in Pittsburg High School is Alvin Proctor, B. S. '35 (English) and M. S. '36 (History), who taught for two years in the Hot Springs, N. M., high school and then studied a year at Wisconsin University.

Eugene C. Roberts, B. S. 1938, M. S. 1939, who was a Fellow in the department of Biology in 1938-39, received an appointment as Graduate Assistant in Bacteriology in the University of St. Louis for the year 1939-40. Mr. Roberts expects to complete work for the Ph. D. degree.

Claire Blubaugh, B. S. 1938, who taught biology in the Webb City,

Missouri, High School during the year 1938-39, received an appointment as Graduate Assistant in Bacteriology at Ohio State University, Columbus, where he hopes to complete the requirements for the doctor's degree.

Mrs. Pauline Atkins Keller, B. S. 1938, M. S. 1938, accepted a position as serologist in the State Department of Health at Topeka this spring.

Two K. S. T. C. graduates with majors in English won admission this fall to professional schools in eastern universities. Aaron Butler, '39, is studying in the Harvard law school, and Fred Childress, '38, is in the school of journalism at Columbia University. Only forty men are admitted annually to the school of journalism.

Garth Thomas, who graduated in 1938, is beginning his second year of graduate work in the psychology department at Kansas University, where he is acting as instructor. Mr. Thomas was married during August to Miss Louise Carpenter, a former student. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas will make their home in Lawrence during the ensuing school year.

COMMENTS ON BOOKS

Mental Hygiene of the School Child

By P. M. Symonds
Macmillan, 1934

Altogether too many books dealing with mental hygiene approach the subject from a negative or pathological point of view. To avoid this error was the aim of Symonds in his *Mental Hygiene of the School Child*. Instead of devoting the major portion of his time to a consideration of how the abnormal may be made normal, the author is more concerned with the problem of how normal individuals may be kept normal, which, after all, would seem to be the real connotation of "mental hygiene."

The book also possesses the virtue of being simply and understandably written. This clarity has not been achieved, however, at the expense of accuracy and reliability. The writer is recognized by psychologists generally as an authority in the field of mental hygiene. The principles he lays down in this book are based on sound scientific psychology. While, as the title of the book indicates, it is devoted primarily to an elucidation of mental hygiene principles as they apply in the classroom, the author states quite specifically that "the principles discussed, to be really effec-

tive, must have been practiced in early childhood and ought to be the possession of every parent as well as of teachers."

The first several chapters are devoted to a number of introductory and general considerations, such as "The Importance of Mental Hygiene in the School Program," "Positive Mental Hygiene," "Learning," "Drives," "Mechanism of Adjustment in the Satisfaction of Drives," "Analysis of Behavior Patterns" and "Some General Principles Underlying the Development of Good Mental Hygiene." Some of these topics may sound rather abstruse to the person who has never made any particular study of psychology or mental hygiene, but they are all treated very concretely and simply.

The main portion of the book is taken up with a discussion of the applied aspects of mental hygiene, and closes with a sympathetic yet pointed discussion of the mental hygiene problems of the teacher. If all teachers and prospective teachers could be induced to read and put into practice the ideas expressed in this one section of the book, the majority of our mental hygiene problems would be solved.

Paul Murphy

WAYFARING

This column is devoted to notes and letters from faculty members away on leave or from other friends of the College who are doing interesting things.

[Although this letter was written in the early spring, it still holds much interest.]

Marseilles, France
February 23, 1939

Two months in France with a stubborn tongue and a reluctant ear is quite an experience. There are compensations, however, for the resulting nerve strain. French cooking is a great improvement over that of England, and it is such a relief to know that traffic streams move as they do at home. Some of the streets are terrifyingly wide, for there are so many chances for the careless pedestrian to go under the whizzing wheels.

The French policemen are polite and give directions clearly and concisely. But their knowledge of the city seems to be confined to their districts in many cases. Most London policemen can tell one at once how to reach any remote spot and how to get there by walking or by bus or by subway. Some way the British bobby gives the inquirer a strong feeling of protection and security.

The French seem to have more mirrors than some other spots of

the world. I have seen French men take advantage of them in the store windows to prink. They seemed not the least mindful of passersby.

I took a trip one week out of Paris, going to Rheims, Laon, Amiens, and Rouen. The cathedral at Rheims is of course famous and needs no description. It seems that the restoration is practically complete. I had not known of the equestrian statue of Jeanne d'Arc close by. I was also interested to see the remains of an old Roman archway with the representation of Roman gods carved on its face. The Cathedral at Laon is on a lofty eminence—really so lofty that mountaineering excellence is an aid in attaining it. The exterior is especially interesting because of the carvings of beasts of burden, horses and oxen, which brought the materials up that hill. The cathedrals at Amiens and Rouen have also been often described. The markets in the streets at Rouen are quite fascinating. In the old market place where Jeanne d'Arc was executed, only foods are sold. In some of the other street markets, all sorts of things are for sale. One of these

squares is quite close to the cathedral. Temporary booths are put up with canvas coverings, although some of the stalls are entirely in the open.

I think Rouen and Toulouse are the friendliest cities I've visited in France. Toulouse has great parks and boulevards and many trees. The vegetation indicates there is no extremely cold weather. It is a hustling city, but people on the street have time to give directions to a stranger and even to walk two or three blocks to be sure he is in the right line. A girl in Orleans walked even further to help me find a good cheap restaurant. Her choice was good, too.

I left Paris February 10. I went first to Chartres to see the cathedral. The glass is entrancingly beautiful. In the cathedral is a box to which tourists are asked to contribute for a fund to provide for the removal of the glass in time of war if war seems imminent.

From there I went to the towns of the Loire. To me this river valley is full of charm, and I am not surprised that so many kings chose the region for their castles. There are many vineyards in this section but not on the scale that one finds further south where mile after mile is devoted to them exclusively. The vines are vigorously pruned down to the stump. I was surprised to find so much irrigation in the South.

I am now at Marseilles. Here I shall take the boat Saturday for a short Mediterranean cruise. I enter

Italy by way of Naples, and I'm looking forward to a peaceful visit to that famed peninsula. I have my Italian money and hotel coupons and some excursion coupons. I have inquired about regulations from various sources, which I hope I shall not break.

Marseilles is a very hilly town. Seeming mountains surround part of the harbor. Some of them are rocks. It is said to date from about 600 B. C. Its excellent harbor makes it a desirable place for commerce, and it is listed as the first commercial port of France. An Armenian church was pointed out with the remark that there are some 65,000 Armenians here. The population numbers about a million, which makes it claim to be the second city in size. It is quite cosmopolitan, and there is an air of gayety and nonchalance about it.

I am told that the refugee camps in this region are very strongly guarded. The refugees are a serious problem for France, who is their reluctant hostess, wishing her guests would say goodbye. Some of them have complained of their fare, asking for chocolate for breakfast instead of *cafe au lait*. There is quite a violent discussion of this question and the whole Spanish situation. My language inadequacy does not enable me to follow as closely as I should like, especially when the discussions become heated and words flow rapidly.

Elizabeth Cochran

Contributors to This Number

Ernest Bennett (A. M., University of Chicago) has been a member of the College staff since 1914, first as a teacher of French and Latin and later as assistant and associate professor of English. His specialty in the English department is journalism. His graduate studies include a year at the State University of Iowa.

J. Gordon Eaker (Ph. D., University of Iowa), professor of English literature and language, came to the department in 1932. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and of the Modern Language Association of America. He is the author of a monograph on Walter Pater, and a contributor to philological and educational journals.

Mellicent McNeil (Ph. D., Columbia University) is head of the English department, president of the Pittsburg Branch of the American Association of University Women, and editor of the *Educational Leader*. She is the author of a *Comparative Study of Entrance to State Teachers' Colleges* and of numerous professional articles.

Walter Pennington (Ph. D., Northwestern) is assistant profes-

sor of English and a member of the graduate faculty of the College. His interests in medieval legends stems from his graduate days at Northwestern. He has contributed articles to *Modern Language Notes* and the *Philological Quarterly* on these themes.

J. R. Pelsma (Ph. M., University of Chicago; M.D., American College of Medicine and Surgery) has been head of the department of speech and coach of forensics since 1920. He organized Theta Alpha Phi, largest dramatic fraternity in the world; he has coached scores of champion debaters and orators in Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. He is a world traveler, lecturer, and ex-governor of the Kansas Province of Pi Kappa Delta. He has published *Essentials of Speech* and *Essentials of Debate*.

Adele Mehl Burnett (A. M., University of Chicago) is associate professor of English language and literature. She published a series of nine interviews, "Little Journeys to the Homes of Kansas Authors", in the *Kansas Teacher*, 1936-37. She is a member of the Kansas Authors' Club.