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1941-42

The Educational Leader

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

By

KANSAS STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

PITTSBURG, KANSAS

MELLICENT McNEIL, *Editor*

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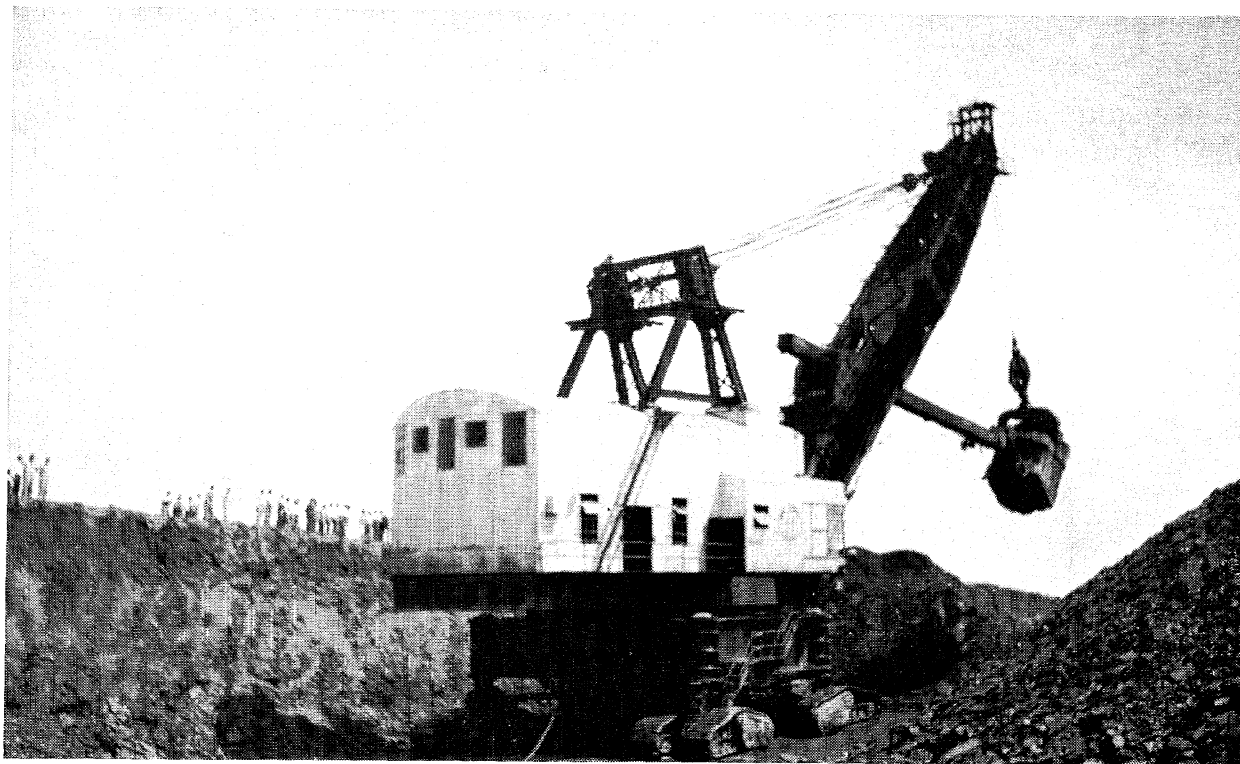
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No. 1



Pittsburg is the center of the soft coal producing area of southeast Kansas, at present using the open-cut method extensively. Here is one of the largest electric shovels in the world at work about 15 miles southwest of Pittsburg—capacity of the dipper, 33 cubic yards.

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MELLICENT McNEIL, *Editor*

WILLIAM T. BAWDEN, *Associate Editor*

Contributors to this issue:

English Faculty directed by MELLICENT McNEIL

Speech Faculty directed by JOHN R. PELSMA

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The Effect of Background on Literature

MELLICENT McNEIL

Pearl Buck found that there were "roses, roses, all the way" in the first eight years of her literary career. Why is it now the critics find so little good to say of her? Does the attainment of the Nobel Prize in literature carry with it a deteriorating effect upon the power of the pen or are the critics too keen in their analysis, too anxious to show that international prize winners are made of common clay and therefore unable to continue on the high plane of literary excellence which they set in their early works? Whatever may be the cause, Mrs. Buck's critics are declaring that her literary condition is serious and that they fear, judging from her later books, that it may continue to grow worse.

If one looks over the list of Mrs. Buck's novels, it is immediately obvious that the recent books she has produced have their settings in the United States with the exception of one. This one, *The Patriot*, is made up of two different views of China, dominated by a portrayal of the family life, the religion, and the culture of Japan. All of her other novels are intimate pictures of China.

It seems to me that the cause of Mrs. Buck's inability to reflect the life of the American people with the intimacy and charm which she has attained in describing the Chinese is not a question of her art but a question of her understanding, her background, her early associations. Perhaps a short résumé of her life will make it clear why her American books seem un-American.

While her missionary parents were on leave from China, Pearl Sydenstricker was born in Hillsboro, West Virginia, in 1892. But her stay in the United States was brief, for when she was three months old, she was carried in a market basket to the boat that bore the family back to the Orient. It was on this voyage that her strong will and her independent spirit were first asserted. As her mother was very seasick, the care of little Pearl was left to the father, a man who had little aptitude to cater to the wants of children. But in this instance he was forced to feed Miss Pearl, who decided she would have nothing more to do with bottles; she demanded to be fed from a spoon.

Pearl Buck's earliest recollections are of a small bungalow and garden on the top of a high hill overlooking the crowded city of Chinkiang, whose tiled roofs "overlaid each other as closely as the scales upon a fish." At the foot of the hill flowed the Yangtze River, yellow, muddy, fearful. It was a never ending source of interest to Pearl, for it was a great thoroughfare, dotted with boats filled with foodstuffs brought from the farms or with merchandise going out to the smaller towns and villages. It was the Yangtze river also that wrought havoc during the heavy rains, carrying off houses and washing down the precious fields that lined its shores. Along its bank Pearl used to spend many hours, watching the boats push their prows into the orange colored mud as they were tied up, guessing the contents of the cargo which was being loaded, listening to the constant chatter of the boatmen; as Chinese was the first language Pearl learned, she understood the disparaging remarks concerning her which these men often made. They disliked her brown hair; they thought her blue eyes ugly; they laughed at her American dress and called her a "foreign devil."

The childhood of Pearl Buck must have been lonely. The Sydenstricker family was made up of two groups of children, born years apart. Of the older group only one, a boy, had survived the hardships of Chinese life, and he was away at school before Pearl's birth. Pearl was the oldest of the second group.

Mr. Sydenstricker was away for weeks or even months at a time preaching in the little inland villages. This left the burden of the household upon Mrs. Sydenstricker. Grief over the death of her older children, the recurrent attack of fever which she could not overcome, worry over keeping the babies safe from epidemics of cholera and typhoid, the tragedy of famine, flood, and disease which befell the people about her—all these troubles left their imprint upon the mother, a woman of unusual courage and strength. Despite her effort to make the little cottage a cheerful home, it wasn't always possible to keep tragedy outside the closed door. Nor was it possible to keep this quiet, shy child away from scenes that must have shocked her greatly. As questions over these encounters worried her mother, Pearl learned to keep her thoughts to herself and thus grew more and more into a meditative child. She learned to live within herself, to create her own entertainment, in fact, to be self-sufficient.

Her first childhood friends, she tells us, she found in the novels of Dickens. She had been taught to read when she was very young, but as there were no children's books in the home she got what she could from the books of adults—the Bible, Pilgrim's Progress, missionary tracts, and other books which she could lay hands on. Then one day when she was alone, her eye fell upon a whole set of books on the top shelf of the bookcase. With the aid of a chair upon which she care-

fully placed a stool, she was able to reach *Oliver Twist*. With her new find she retreated to the attic and presently forgot she was a little seven-year old girl in a foreign land without playmates of her own age. She had found delightful playmates in the dream children of Dickens. She walked hand in hand with Dorrit, grieved over the troubles of Tiny Tim, and wept at the death of little Nell. These novels which she read one by one down the shelf and then all over again opened up to her a world far removed from her own limited horizon—a world filled with many interesting complications, with different scenes, but most of all with living people of her own race, whom she longed to know. Pearl Buck still feels that she owes a debt to Dickens for helping her to develop an interest in people, whether they be people of the flesh or of the imagination.

Pearl's mother became her sole teacher. It was her mother who taught her the beauty of flowers and how to grow them, a hobby Pearl Buck still pursues; it was her mother who taught her to sing and to play upon the old-fashioned organ, the only instrument the family could afford and one which her mother refused to give up despite her many moves to different homes; it was her mother who taught her the beauty in country landscapes or in city streets despite the poverty and filth that were visible; and it was her mother who taught her to write. Never a week went by that her mother did not ask to see a little composition on some subject which

interested Pearl. She went over the paper carefully, pointing out such faults as lack of logical thought, choice of words which did not convey the meaning intended, or lack of force. Perhaps this training had much to do with Mrs. Buck's later success as a writer. The more formal subjects which are usually studied in high school were added to her daily lessons until Pearl was finally ready for college. She says of her mother as Lincoln did of his, "All that I now am or all that I ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."

When Pearl Buck was seventeen, she was sent back to Virginia where she attended the Randolph-Macon College, majoring in psychology but also giving much attention to English literature. Among the college students she was not entirely accepted as one of them. Outwardly this was in part due to her clothes, which had been prepared before she left China and were not in accord with the style, and partly to her voice and inflection, both of which seemed a bit foreign. In reality the life and experiences of Pearl Buck were so different from those of the college girls she met that they found little to talk of that was of common interest. She was shy and quiet, but her teachers found she spoke fluently on a topic she was interested in or on a subject they called upon her to discuss. Pearl Buck felt herself a foreigner in her own country.

As her college life drew toward a close, she looked forward with anticipation to going back to China, for there she understood better how to meet people and live at ease

among them. Finding her mother very ill, she devoted her time for two years to nursing her back to health. When her mother had recovered, Pearl married G. Jossing Buck and went to North China to live. Mr. Buck who was a teacher of agriculture, was also studying farm conditions for the purpose of writing on Chinese agriculture. North China was a new experience for Mrs. Buck in landscape, climate, and vegetation. Life in this region was even more harrowing, for the revolution which was in progress, intensified the epidemics of famine and disease and added the horrors of bandits, raids, and battles. Almost no other white people lived in the entire region.

From North China the Bucks, on invitation, went to the University of Nanking, where Mr. Buck continued his scientific work and Mrs. Buck took up the teaching of English literature. There life was still anything but peaceful. One morning during breakfast the family was informed that the Nationalists, who were entering the city, were murdering all foreigners. Taking refuge in the home of a Chinese woman whom Mrs. Buck had befriended, they lay in their hiding place in a cellar for thirteen hours, not daring to move or to speak. Still in the greatest danger, they escaped to Japan, where Mrs. Buck with her usual thoroughness observed the life and religion of the Japanese. When the war had subsided, the Bucks returned to find their home a ruin. Money was very much needed. The combined sal-

aries of the Bucks would hardly provide for the family which now consisted of four persons, as two children had been born to them.

In hopes that she might add to their depleted funds, Mrs. Buck began writing articles, which she sent to the American magazines. But the publishers promptly replied that the United States was not interested in China. Finally by 1925, the year she came back to study at Cornell, she had succeeded in selling three articles. On this voyage to the United States she wrote her first novel, *East Wind: West Wind*, which went hither and yon seeking a publisher for five years. At last it was brought out by the John Day Co. in 1930. Though the sale of this book was small, it was favorably reviewed by several critics. Her publisher encouraged her to try again, and this she did. Borrowing a small sum of money which would provide the actual necessities of life, she gave up her teaching and sat down to write. *Good Earth* was the result. Like Byron, Mrs. Buck awoke to find herself famous. The book was immediately proclaimed by both Americans and Chinese. "The best book of the century," "The first book to interpret the Chinese," "A book for the ages," were some of the statements made about it by critics. Its sale was augmented by being selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club and later awarded the Pulitzer Prize. It was translated into a number of foreign languages. Greater publicity still was given it when it was dramatized, the play running successfully in New York

and in a number of other Eastern cities. Several years later it was produced on the screen. Urged by her publisher Mrs. Buck returned to the United States.

In rapid succession following *Good Earth* and rounding out her picture of China and the Chinese, appeared *Sons*, *The First Wife*, *Mother*, and *A House Divided*. All of these books are written in the same simple style as *Good Earth*, but to some they seem a little less penetrating, a little less convincing. Other critics find them equal or superior to her first great success. Time was taken from her novel writing to translate from the Chinese Mr. Shui Hu Chuin's splendid book, *All Men Are Brothers*. This was followed by two biographies, *The Fighting Angel*, of her father and *The Exile*, of her mother. Mrs. Buck's ability is never more pleasing than in her biographical works. In the past several years, since Mrs. Buck has made her home in the United States, she has turned to American scenes and life for subjects for her novels. It is against these novels which attempt to portray life in the New World that the pens of the critics have been unsympathetically turned.

This is Mrs. Buck's story, briefly told. But even from this short sketch perhaps one can see why Mrs. Buck became a novelist and where she got her style and subject matter. She became a creative writer probably because she was forced in childhood to find her pleasures inside herself. Instead of giving vent to her emotions as they arose, the procedure

of a child in a normal atmosphere among playmates, she refrained from expressing her feelings and continued to ponder over them. Under her mother's tutelage she grew more and more observant of the world about her and especially of people, the Chinese people among whom she lived. At last her emotions pent up for years burst their bonds and flowed forth in a steady stream of novels—novels which told the story of all she had seen and felt and thought during her life in China. China became the subject of her novels because China was the land she knew best, the land associated with her earliest experiences, the land where she had spent the most impressionable years of her life. When she attempted to write an American novel as she did in *This Proud Heart*, she was not successful. Her style, by which I mean her choice of words and the manner she has of putting them together, is not American. I cannot judge whether or not she uses the Oriental style, but I am certain that it is not an American style, and since Chinese was her mother-tongue, I can well imagine that she has unconsciously adopted the Chinese habits of speech. By means of her terse, unadorned prose, almost Biblical in its simplicity, she can well reflect the foreign atmosphere of the Orient, but she cannot make America seem real. Even after ten years in the United States her last book, *Of Men and Women*, finds its greatest appeal in her vivid description of the Chinese.

This handicap of writing less

convincingly of a people the writer has not associated with for long periods is not peculiar to Mrs. Buck. Most novelists are not at their best with subject matter they acquired in middle life. George Eliot, despite the greatest effort, could not write of Italy as she had of the Malvern Hills region where she was born and reared. Willa Cather rarely attains the reality with her other novels that she did with those laid in Nebraska, her childhood home.

Hence, it is not peculiar that though Mrs. Buck is an American, she cannot reveal American life. Not only did she receive her most vital sensations in a foreign land, but she lived alone with those sensations, she pondered over them, and she wrote them down in her childish style. She thought the long, long thoughts of youth in the Chinese language. China and the people

of China Mrs. Buck knows. This knowledge is reflected in her first novels, written in a style suited to the tragic lives she depicted. But this style is not suited to describing American life, a life which Mrs. Buck knows only as a visitor. Her intellect can grasp it, but her emotions are unresponsive to it. If Mrs. Buck still has something vital to say of China, if she can travel back in imagination to her home above the Yangtze River, if she can catch and portray the varied life, the vivid colors, the laughter, and the tragedy that passes between the yellow shore lines, then Mrs. Buck will again be writing up to the standard of her first books—the books which won her the Nobel Prize. Incidentally, she may also win back the critics who now find so little to praise in her recent works.

Stage Fright

J. R. PELSMA

The word fear challenges definition. Like all emotions it is something to be felt rather than to be defined. Webster says, "It is a painful emotion marked by alarm, extreme awe, or anticipation of danger; agitation or revulsion caused by foreboding, fright, dread, disquiet; also an instance or manifestation of this feeling." Now that we know what it is, either through definition or experience, and most likely both, let us take a glance at its manifestation.

It is usually recognized as a disagreeable sensation arising from the contemplation of bodily or mental pain or discomfort in oneself or in others. It ranges in sensitivity from a mild degree of apprehension, worry, or caution to the superlative of fear as expressed in horror or terror. Fear paralyzes the faculty of reason, destroys the imagination, kills self-reliance, undermines enthusiasm, discourages initiative, leads to uncertainty of purpose, encourages procrastination, wipes out stability, and makes self-control impossible. It takes the charm from one's personality, destroys the possibility of accurate thinking, diverts concentration of effort, masters persistence, turns the will power into nothingness, destroys ambition, beclouds the memory, and invites failure in every conceivable form; it kills love and assassinates the finer emotions of the heart; it in-

vites disaster in a hundred forms; it leads to sleeplessness, misery, and insanity. Fear can do all of these things despite the obvious truth that we live in a world of overabundance of everything the heart could desire. Fear, indecision, and doubt erect the "closed Sesame" to success.

However, whether it comes to us through the accumulated racial inheritance or whether we accept the oriental theosophic concept of reincarnated egoistic experience, it nevertheless constitutes a fundamental principle of life and performs a preservative function. Our conscious fear is often an outward reflection of the inward reality. Thus, fear may be said to be either conscious or subconscious.

Conscious fear is that feeling of manifestation induced by a conscious knowledge of impending harm, either immediate or remote. It is a fear that can be explained; and hence can be explained away as soon as we have more knowledge of the cause and probable result. We fear death because it is inexplicable. We fear the economic results of a world war because we do not know the outcome. We fear an approaching tornado, for we know not what ruin may come in its wake. Hence, it is akin to danger, and is concomitant with ignorance. Knowledge overcomes fear. This type of fear bears analysis. Reason can be applied

and past experience can greatly aid in arriving at adequate solutions, thus permitting us to avoid or at least mitigate the impending disaster or doom. When we stop to analyze many of our conscious fears, they dwindle in size, often to nothingness. So when we say that we fear this or fear that, we experience conscious fears which dissolve in the light of knowledge and truth. Love engenders confidence, confidence begets courage, which in turn is governed by knowledge. Hence, we read that "Perfect love casteth out fear."

On the other hand subconscious fear is more subtle. It will not yield to reason. It is no kin to understanding. Like other subconscious manifestations of the mind, it may never reach the "fringe of consciousness." Subconscious fear is a fear that is inherited from the primal cell; it comes through a long racial experience. It is an instinct, and like all instincts, plays a large part in the preservation of the individual and the race. This fear too can be removed or greatly reduced, but this is not advised as the laws of the subconscious mind are not fully enough understood to experiment with without danger. This danger is beautifully and dramatically expressed in one of Hawthorne's stories entitled, "The Birthmark."

"Stage fright," says Philip Gordon, "is simply a feeling of panic and a nameless, causeless, reasonless fear induced by a highly exaggerated notion of your momentary importance combined with a doubt of your ability to come up to expecta-

tion." Since stage fright is but one manifestation of this general fear, it too may be of two kinds—conscious or subconscious. In my opinion and for the sake of comparison, let us say that stage fright consists of 90 per cent of the former and 10 per cent of the latter, varying of course with the individual and the occasion. Before taking up each division, permit me to say that I shall be mostly concerned with the conscious fear since it constitutes 90 per cent of our trouble and should and can, to a large measure, be overcome by practically everyone. On the other hand, our subconscious fears had better be left alone. Not only are they difficult to eradicate, but their elimination is positively injurious and often dangerous.

Let us now examine some of the different types of stage fright and suggest some definite remedies. It should be understood in the beginning, however, that not all stage fright can be eliminated once and for all. I wish to make suggestions that will reduce the agony, but some fear is inevitable. But it should not be so strong as to interfere with one's accomplishment or endanger his success.

FEAR OF FAILURE

Fear of failure is so pronounced that one is inclined to make it synonymous with stage fright. We erect a certain standard of attainment, and when we are not sure that we can measure up to this goal, we experience an annoying sensation that may in itself be instrumental in being the greatest hin-

drance to reaching that goal. These standards may be those set by our own ambition, or they may be those imposed on ourselves in an attempt to meet the achievement attained by others. It is often the latter. We are prone to emulate others. We pronounce ourselves failures unless we can equal or excel some one else. This attitude brings about what the old psychologists called "an inferiority complex."

A little fear, like a small dose of strychnine, may prove a healthful stimulant. When we are afraid that we may not be successful, we are prone to work all the harder and by this extra effort try to put ourselves along with the top notchers. We have known students who were not afraid of anything. Platform or stage had no menace for them. My experience has been that these students do not make much progress. They are easily satisfied with themselves; their goals are easily attained. On the other hand, when men are very conscious of their audience and are anxious to make good, when they possess the proper temperament—the temperament of the artist—a high measure of success may be theirs. It may be stated as a truism that if an audience doesn't affect you, you are not likely to affect the audience. If your tongue wants to twist around your eyetooth, or stick to the roof of your mouth, and if your mouth is too dry to spit, you have at least one of the qualifications of the orator.

Cicero states that when he arose to speak his tongue clove to the roof

of his mouth as a man about to be hanged. John B. Gough, the noted temperance lecturer who for twenty years spoke on an average to three audiences a day, says that during the first five minutes of his speech he was so nervous he scarcely knew what he was talking about.

At the White House in 1937, Miss Katherine Cornell had stage-fright so badly when she tried to respond to the presentation of the Chi Omega national achievement award that Mrs. Roosevelt had to come to her rescue.

Otis Skinner, one of our greatest actors, after thirty years on the American stage, testified that before he received his cue in his dressing room or while waiting for it as he stood behind the scenes, that he trembled like an aspen leaf. But as soon as he got on the stage proper, he lost his fear and felt at ease. We wonder if the fear that haunted him all of those years did not act as a stimulant and make a vital contribution to his success. He was offered a million dollars to make four motion pictures. He said he refused, for he realized the agony he would pass though before the camera.

Most people would willingly bear the agony of a little fear for a million dollars! So do not be disappointed if you do not overcome all your fear. If your knees shake, let them shake. Control them enough so that they do not jeopardize your equilibrium. Do as Marshall Ney, one of Napoleon's bravest generals, who discovered that his knees were trembling while seated on his horse on the hillside overlooking the val-

ley where the battle of Austerlitz was being fought. He looked at his knees a few minutes in disgust and then said, "All right knees, go ahead and shake. You certainly would if you knew where we are going in about two minutes." Just say to your knees when they shake, "All right knees, go ahead and shake, I am going to make this speech anyway."

The remedy that immediately suggests itself is confidence. Confidence is attained mainly through two processes, through preparation and experience. When we know that we are master of a situation, as when we stand before our classes, we are not frightened; but let the superintendent step into our room and we immediately feel some trepidation. We are not quite so sure of ourselves. We wonder whether he will approve of our method of conducting that recitation. But if these visits are frequently repeated without lethal results, we regain our mental equilibrium. Confidence returns. Hence, master your task, whatever it may be. Practice until you know without a single doubt. Often a student will say, "I knew that perfectly at home." The student may have known it, but not perfectly. Just to be able barely to recite a selection from memory at home does not assure success on the platform. One must take no chances. Be absolutely positive that you know. Go over a selection scores of times. And then practice a few more times for good measure. Repeated experience before an audience will give you confidence and

eliminate this fear of failure. To have accomplished again and again is the surest way to know that you can do it.

The testimony of Paderewski, the noted pianist, corroborates this viewpoint in the following excerpt from his memoirs:

For many years in my career I had that terrible pain before playing—that anguish which is not to be described. It takes not only all your courage, but all your strength. It is agonizing, frightful. My theory was and still is that that fright, that terrible inside nervousness, practically fear of every thing, of the public, of the piano, of the conditions and of the memory too, was nothing else but a bad conscience.

For years and years I had it. I was continually analyzing myself, and it took me a very long time before I discovered that it was, I repeat, a bad conscience, which meant that there was something in my program which I had not yet completely mastered, a difficulty which was above me—I was not above the difficulty. There was still some weak point in my program, something I had not conquered. And this is always the case. Fright is only the sense of insecurity of only one passage or phrase.

Our imagination often plays havoc with our efforts. We get a certain mental quirk that usually spells failure. We think we cannot do it and we have convinced ourselves that we can't. And when we are thoroughly convinced, we can't. We need faith. Like the story of *The Flying Yorkshireman*, we can fly if we have enough faith. Most of us do not have enough faith to remove mountains, but we should have enough to make a speech when the occasion arises.

CORRECTION

Correction is closely allied to "fear of failure." It represents a type that is one degree greater. We have a "fear of failure," but this fear is intensified when we are conscious of the fact that this failure cannot be corrected. Once made, it must remain. Suppose you are playing a musical selection. An error cannot be corrected. If a mistake is made it is just too bad. Knowing this, you have a fear of making this irredeemable error, for you know you cannot repeat the movement with its correction.

This fear is therefore more manifest when we appear before the public where accuracy is demanded as in a musical performance or in reading a poem, or in any other exercise. This fear seldom occurs in making a speech because in a speech obvious grammatical and other errors may be corrected without any ruinous results.

To those extremely sensitive on this point, let me say that no man is perfect. All people make mistakes, and an indulgent public does not long hold our shortcomings against us. Since our efforts are not a matter of life or death, they should not be taken too seriously.

ILL HEALTH

Fear is often a sickness, and if chronic, frequently results in some form of nervous disease. Physical nervousness usually indicates a need of rest, a change of environment, or a change of life attitudes. Nervousness often results from a wrong philosophy. As Harold Bauer, the

pianist, suggests, "Accept, do not resist. Why fight the unconquerable." We often find ourselves in a nervous dither, excited, jumpy, not so much because we are expected to perform, but because of a general physical breakdown due to worrying about specific things very remotely connected with the platform. Our muscles are tied in a nervous knot, we press our hands against our bodies, or we pace up and down the platform. First and always we need to relax. Performing is seldom a matter of life or death. Learn to laugh at what at present may appear to be a misfortune. There are some who do not take their platform appearance seriously enough, but on the other hand there are those who take it too seriously. Both are bad. The first leads to careless work; the latter to ineffectual effort.

Not infrequently there is a physical weakness that causes definite nervousness when we try to execute some instrumental solo, sing a song, recite a poem, or make a speech. A restoration to superb health and an abundance of energy is all that is needed to restore confidence and eliminate this type of fear.

A NEUROTIC COMPLEX

Certain experiences that befell us years ago, so remote that the "memory of man runneth not to the contrary," are still lodged deeply in our subconscious mind and crop out on specific occasions. To illustrate. A young lady had a strong aversion to appearing in public on a platform. She made no explanation. It

was no small embarrassment to her not to be able to offer a reason, but there seemed no rational explanation. Yet the fear persisted. She was talented and had a decided leaning for the stage. Her mother offered this explanation. When she was about four years old, she was nearly through "reciting a piece" when she discovered that her petticoat had dropped around her feet. The audience laughed. She ran from the stage mortified and frightened. This incident was not referred to by her mother as the years passed, but her aversion to the platform persisted, though the cause no longer remained in her conscious brain. When the incident was recounted and viewed in a humorous light, the ancient ghost was forever laid to rest. Unless these subconscious secrets can be brought above "the fringe of consciousness" and rationally explained, they remain trouble makers during one's whole life.

DIVERSION

When we permit ourselves to be diverted from the central task at hand and attend to passing stimuli, as a rule quite non-essential to our immediate task at hand, we become confused, forget our "piece" or the outline of our speech, and allow fear to grip us. We may see a face in the audience which we recognize, we are not sure that our petticoat doesn't show, we wonder how our voice sounds, "whether our hat is on crooked, or our belt is unhooked," and lose track of our program.

It would be a simple matter to walk along an eight-inch board, if

that board were lying on the ground. Anyone not drunk could do it. But few would undertake to walk along that same board if it were placed a hundred feet above the earth. Why not? Too many distractions. Too many opportunities to take our mind from the one central thing at hand.

Hence, concentrate on the thing to be done. If you are singing a song or reading a selection, the important thing is your message. *Your* doing it is secondary. Concentrate on the message of the author whose spokesman you are for the time; remember that this message must be put across whether you come off with glory or not in the undertaking. You must talk yourself into this reality until you believe in it. Do not let slips upset you. Look forward and forget them, not backward and regret them. No one's life is dependent on your perfect performance. The following jingle is to the point:

A centipede contented quite
Until a frog one day in fun
Said, "Pray tell me, which leg comes
before which,"
This put her mind in such a stitch
She lay distracted in a ditch
Uncertain how to run.

Let us disabuse our minds of a prejudice against all fears. Fears like any natural tendencies are God-given and have in the past and may at any time in the present be a positive good. Fear like pain has its place in life's economy. If it were not for pain, we would be void of all warnings of physical danger. We have a headache. If we are wise, we will

investigate the cause and thus avoid a general physical collapse. We don't like pain, but it may be our best friend, for it tells us of our faults and shortcomings. On the other hand the unannounced cancer cell gives us no warning pain, and we are often unaware of its destructive inroads until too late to save life itself.

Pain may be the result of an accident about which we already have knowledge and in this particular cannot accomplish any useful end; it must be allayed by some anesthetic. Fear when it interferes with our comfort and attainments and serves no preserving or warning function should also be anesthetized.

Reading Maketh a Full Man

WALTER PENNINGTON

"Sir, when I was young I read very hard." "Not that I slighted books; that were to lack all sense." These quotations from Dr. Samuel Johnson and from William Wordsworth could be multiplied infinitely from other great men of all ages.

Today the elementary school, the high school, and the college have collaborated to give special attention to reading skills. Never before has so much interest been shown in the question of how to read. Never before has so much attention been paid to reading readiness, reading techniques, and the overcoming of faulty reading habits.

Despite the advantages enjoyed today, the college student who is a reader is rare. I define reader as one who reads for pleasure the great works of all times, one who has learned to find joy in "the best that has been thought and said in the world." So true is the statement that such readers are rare that the college professor is always astonished when he finds a student who has read something that is not in the beaten path of assigned courses. Literary allusions, which should so enrich what is being read, mean nothing to the average college student. The instructor soon learns that he has a choice of ignoring these allusions and trying to get the main ideas of the author under discussion sufficiently interpreted, or telling to what book or character each of the

allusions refers, thus exhibiting what seems to the student a great show of useless erudition, or assigning to the students the task of looking up the allusions. Yet when they are looked up and an attempt is made to remember them *in vacuo*, no real acquaintance with their sources having been established, they are meaningless and will soon be forgotten. It is hard for the student to realize that these allusions were not inserted by the author as imps to annoy rather than cross-references to delight by recognition and to amplify the meaning. When an author says "like Ruth and Naomi," he means to clinch in the mind of the reader the idea of great devotion; he does not suppose that the phrase he gave to help will prove a stumbling-block, an exercise in the use of the library reference shelves. At a meeting of college English teachers a few years ago, one of the speakers besought his colleagues not to "teach the foot notes," as he called these allusions, but to stick to the author in hand. He had adopted solution number one, ignoring the allusions, and perhaps he was right. Yet, as a solution it is about as effective as "no parking" signs to relieve a congested parking situation. As a potential parkee, I find little benefit in the solution. Before, I could not park because there was no room; now, I cannot by official decree.

Students have the mistaken idea that modern authors are easier to read, that they do not refer to so many characters and events with which the students are unacquainted as do the great classics. There may be fewer allusions to ancient mythology in our moderns, but the best of them have read widely, and to enjoy them thoroughly one must have eaten some of the same porridge on which they have been nurtured. A casual reference in one's reading to Becky Sharp or Mrs. Malaprop or Mistress Quickly can, of course, be ignored, but how much more joy in one's reading and how much more understanding because of the apt allusion if one can relish with the author the pertinence of the name.

Even an English major can be a little-read person. It is possible to take any college catalog and select the required courses for an English major and yet avoid or omit some of the great figures in the limited fields of English and American literature. How much greater does this darkness become if the student ignores also, which is often quite possible, the foreign language department.

Yet wide reading, acquaintance with the thoughts of the wisest in many fields, is essential not only for the culture that we still hope goes with being a college graduate, but also for a really comprehensive understanding of the field of the student's greatest preference, what we call his major. Would he be a statesman and ignorant of Plato's *Republic*, or More's *Utopia*, or Mach-

iavelli's *The Prince*, quoted recently over the radio to explain Italy's position today? Would he be a teacher and be ignorant of Erasmus and Colet and More, of Pestalozzi, of Bronson Alcott and Horace Mann in our country, or of the Great Teacher, Christ? There have been teachers without classrooms, men who have imparted their wisdom to the world from a public platform or in quiet groves. Emerson was one of these. "God's greatest gift to the world is a teacher," he once said. How will the student who does not read get acquainted with all these inspirational sources? To be sure, he may himself have a great teacher, one who has enthusiasm for life, who has an appreciation for the good things of the spirit which time has increased and mellowed, not sated or dulled. Such a teacher may lead the student to read and thus help him to meet greater minds. This is the only true scholarship, a love for learning for its own sake.

What is our purpose in teaching literature? Is it so that the student may know the approximate date of a play of Shakespeare's by the number of run-on lines? Or that he may compare the cosmogony of *Paradise Lost* with the cosmogony of our time, or for that matter of Milton's? Or that he may know unerringly when Chaucer retains the final *e* for the purposes of prosody? Is it not rather that the music of Shakespeare may go ringing in the student's ears, that Shakespeare's insight into humankind may make the student wise in the understanding of the

people in his own world; that the organ-tones of Milton may have been heard by yet another whose soul could respond; that Chaucer with his love for people and tolerance for their weaknesses may make another, while he is enjoying a romance which he has taken "to read and drive the night away," sympathetic with his fellowmen. Is it not, then, our chief purpose in teaching literature to fan into flame that latent spark of love for the best in life possessed, if not by all, perhaps by more than we realize, so that having once dwelt near the gods of Olympus students will be dissatisfied in years to come with an existence however profitable materially that denies them an occasional glimpse of the heights they have seen in college days? Always a few there are who having experienced the afflatus of the masters, the makers as they were called in days of old, read on, and learn, and live, as he only can live who knows what the arts can offer, be it in literature or music or painting. Arnold Bennett says, "He who knows not literature cannot see, cannot hear, cannot feel; he can only eat his dinner."

I think that teachers of literature will in general agree with my contention that our chief purpose in instruction is to inculcate an abiding love for literature. Why, then, do our ministrations fail to bring a majority to this "*O altitudo!*"?

Honors courses are not the answer. They are good, but good in the same way that football practice is good for the squad. They take the

chosen ones who would carry on if they no longer sat at the feet of Gamaliel and give to them who are already the strongest and best still further training. Let us aim, instead—to resume the comparison with the physical education department—to give such work as will strengthen the average student, and perhaps at least some corrective exercises for the weakest.

It is easier to point out some of the contributory causes to the situation than to give a remedy. One of the causes, it seems to me, is that while we hope in teaching literature to teach appreciation of literature, we must examine, not on appreciation but on facts. Appreciation may be caught from the teacher's enthusiasm, but examinations must ask questions of fact. How can I know how much Annabelle Brown, who sits in the third row, appreciates Shakespeare? She works hard and answers all the questions on tests. If I ask why Miranda seemed to be sleepy while Prospero told her the story of her life, Annabelle knows. She knows because she's a good student, reads her assignments, and listens to what I say in class. She hopes to make an "A" in the course, and I believe she will. Appreciation is too private, too individual a matter, to admit being elicited by way of examination papers. Some years ago, I was asked to award a considerable money prize to my best student of Shakespeare. The donor stipulated that it must not be given for grades only, but for "clearly demonstrated interest in and appreciation of the

noblest and best in the works of Shakespeare." I knew who had done the best work in my class in Shakespeare and thought that *ergo* she appreciated the poet most. I sought counsel in the matter among my colleagues. One said tersely, "Dangle that prize before them and ask who loves Shakespeare most? They'll all froth at the mouth in expressing their devotion. Give it to the one that stood highest in the class. She earned it."

We must examine on facts. Hence, the student, adopting the criterion that our examination system sets up for him, is constantly on the alert for some catch-phrase that he can give back to us on examination, something that characterizes romanticism or transcendentalism or the Gothic novel or neo-classicism, something which fulfills the requirements that he hears over the radio, "twenty-five words or less," and a "reasonable facsimile." Perhaps the prevalence of the objective test has something to do with the student's reading, not for beauty, or truth, or goodness, those three sisters that "cannot dwell alone," but for hard facts that will probably appear on the next test. "Who dragged whom around the walls of Troy how many times?" has become a classic but its reasonable facsimiles flourish.

Another contributory cause is the sort of text-book common in survey courses, an anthology that attempts to give at least something from nearly every author, good, bad, or indifferent, in the period to be studied. At such a banquet, there

is not room for everyone to come in. The specialist has been defined as the person who has read the trash of a period. The student has time in a survey course for the best authors only; then he can read enough of an author to feel really acquainted with his work. Let us look at the sort of text that attempts to give a little from the writings of many authors. To take an actual case, here is one with 116 authors for 828 pages of reading, all to become the student's familiars in a 2-hour course, which means in actual practice about 34 meetings. The acquaintance one can get with these 116 worthies is something like that attained at a reception where one is a stranger to the group—"Meet Mr. X. Have you had punch? It's a lovely evening."—and so home to bed.

Students tell me that they are busy, and I believe they are if they do conscientiously all the work assigned them in all their courses. Fifteen hours of classes is the usual schedule, with two hours of preparation expected for each hour in class. Even without the usual two or three term papers a semester, which are supposed to be accomplished with no diminution of other work, and the extra-curricular activities of departmental clubs, chorus, band, and so forth, the student is doing more than the forty hours' work the law prescribes for trades. Moreover, the fact cannot be overlooked that many of our students are today under N. Y. A., or wrapping groceries, or doing something to maintain themselves in school.

Our whole college system is based on the assumption that no one will work unless tasks are assigned. Let a student get interested in reading for pleasure and he will soon find himself in the dean's office explaining why he is down in algebra or biology. Let him even get interested in that term paper he has been assigned and do something more than scratch the same surface that has been irritated by scores of students before him, and his reward will be a summons to explain his shortcomings. *Multum in parvo* takes on a new meaning in our halls of academe. I have heard many good students resolve to do some reading when they get out of college and have time to read. *Scholia* once meant leisure, leisure for the pursuit of knowledge.

It is easier to indict a system than offer a remedy. The situation as I have outlined it is that students do not read the great books of the world except on assignment. "Ho hum," I heard a student on the library steps say one day to another, "I've got to go inside and do my outside reading." Some of the fault, as I have pointed out, may be due to our examinations, which call largely for facts; some blame may be attributed to the sort of anthology common in our colleges, which gives a nodding acquaintance with scores of authors but not the amount of reading of any one auth-

or sufficient to insure lasting friendship; some blame we may put on our system, which assumes that no work will be done unless assigned, coupling with our cash-nexus system of academic sales-slips for every bit of work done.

Now, I should like to be able to conclude this paper with a solution. The most that I can do is suggest that our system should be able to find a place in its scheme for those who are willing to read, perhaps a recognition in semester-hours and grade-points for passing creditably a difficult examination in general reading. Reading guidance could be given through the fine pamphlet called *Good Reading* published by the National Council of Teachers of English. Of course, the lover of reading needs no such incentive. He has learned that there is time to read, that if he brings a book home from the library and puts it on his desk, though he knows he has no time to read it, in some miraculous way it is soon finished. Did he steal the time for its reading from his assignments? Perhaps, some of it. But who can say, ten, twenty, thirty years from now, which would have profited him more?

The wheel hath come full circle, for students who go out lacking a love for good literature will not inspire their students. The problem, therefore, is one of especial pertinence in a teachers' college.

Ozark Advertiser

ELMINA E. GRAHAM

A generation ago few people could have readily located the Ozark Mountains, the oldest range in the United States. In the last thirty years this region has come into prominence, and most people know something of this rocky and heavily timbered country which extends from Jefferson City, Missouri, in a southerly direction through Missouri and Arkansas into Oklahoma. Much of the country is characterized by rounded low wooded hills, jagged by shelves of rocks jutting out here and there and refusing to be disintegrated by centuries of weathering, sometimes resulting in a table land above a solid rock floor. Between the hills are wooded rocky ravines and occasional fertile valleys lying along the banks of meandering streams. Over the rough contour of the country spread numerous kinds of trees, shrubs, and plants, among which dominate the various kinds of oaks, hickories, black gum, dogwood, redbud, and cedars, making the hills and valleys a vista of beautiful scenery at all times of the year.

Following Daniel Boone and other trail makers into this country came the Anglo-Saxon pioneers taking up homesteads and building their cabins of logs cut from the virgin forest. These homemakers, many of them from the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Kentucky, found that the new country provided

strange experiences and called for new interpretations and modifications of their sturdy code of ethics in order to meet the needs and emergencies of the wilderness life. While adjusting themselves to their surroundings, these settlers developed a manner of speech as well as a frontier code of ethics which they in turn handed down to their children who grew up in this secluded region.

National highways and railroads were slow to invade the rough country, and like a little eddy in a stream, the people lived much to themselves. Most people living in the adjoining territories came to regard with superior air, if not contempt, the seemingly worthless, poverty stricken country and its isolated inhabitants whom they named "Hill Billies."

Recent years have brought great change in the Ozarks. The country and the people have been discovered by the assayers, the artists, writers, and pleasure seekers. Especially have the writers found rich ore for their use. They have made use of the customs, manner of speech, and characters of the people, for the country is rich in local color.

Among the first to become enthusiastic about the people and scenery of this neglected region was the very popular writer, Harold Bell Wright, whose literary tendencies seem to have been developed

somewhat by chance. While serving as pastor of the Christian Church in Pittsburg, Kansas, where he lived during the period of 1898-1903, he often told original parables to emphasize or illustrate points or ideas in his sermons.

Forty years ago, Pittsburg, like many other pioneer towns, had room for social, ethical, and religious improvements. Wishing to teach his church members that they should put their religion into practice to the extent of bringing about the much needed reforms in the community, Mr. Wright wrote a series of parables, several chapters in length, about how "Boyd City" made improvements. In this city, the people did away with saloons and gambling dens by building a place for the unfortunate, for the fellows who, as Uncle Bobby remarked, "Go to the devil because they ain't got nowhere else to go." Sunday after Sunday, chapter by chapter, he continued to tell just how the people of Boyd City brought about the great social and civic improvement. His story gave careful details of the plan for a community building and its operation, thus showing his people how the good work could be done.

After using his manuscript in his church service, Mr. Wright, it seems, felt disappointed about its effect on the congregation, for one of his neighbors states that he was so discouraged that he threw the manuscript into the waste basket. There it might have remained to serve as kindling had not one of his church members found it in

time. When calling on his pastor one morning, Dr. W. Williams noticed a large bundle of manuscript bulging in the waste basket, picked it up and discovered that it was the chapters he had heard read in church. He then succeeded in persuading Mr. Wright to send it to a publisher. When published, the book bore the title of *That Printer of Udell*. The setting was Pittsburg, Kansas, and many of the characters were Pittsburg people. The book met with immediate success.

A few years later, while living in the Taney County region of the Ozarks to rest and regain his health, Mr. Wright published a second novel, *The Shepherd of the Hills*, in which he preaches another sermon. But the book did more than put forth a moral idea. It preached a sermon of beauty and appreciation for this secluded region and its people, and advertised them as they never had been advertised previously. Its popularity was immediate and tremendous.

Even people who had read little more than their newspapers and almanacs read *The Shepherd of the Hills* and saw in imagination the romance and the beauty of the Ozarks. The book was popular not only here but across the water, and reached a sale of hundreds of thousands. It was so successful that Mr. Wright retired from the ministry to give all his time to writing. *The Calling of Dan Matthews* and *The Re-creation of Brian Kent* continued his passionate enthusiasm for the Ozarks and its neglected people. But of the three books, *The Shep-*

herd of the Hills, has done most to advertise the Ozarks.

One reason for the popularity of *The Shepherd of the Hills* is that Mr. Wright used real places and persons for his setting and actors. He caught the true character of the Ozark people and their dialect, and wove into his story mystery, suspense, dramatic situation, and stirring events. All co-operate effectively in this melodramatic love story in which he assures us that the world is headed for heaven, not hell.

During the last twenty-five years and more, hundreds of visitors have agreed: "Yes, we must see *The Shepherd of the Hills* country." Then they have bought tickets at Branson for the tour. On the trip the guide has shown them the old road by which "Dad Howitt" found his way into the country, then into the hearts of the hill people. Always the guide stops on the crest of a hill, Sammy's Lookout, for the passengers to view the beautiful hills and ravines which stretch to the eastern horizon like a huge contour map. Then he points out, in the surrounding country, places of dramatic scenes in the story, including Mutton Hollow, Old Baldy, Dewy Bald, and Sammy Lane's cabin.

On beyond the shoulder of a hill, another stop is made at a big log house where the hero, young Mat-

thews, lived. Past this house runs the old trail which leads from the ravine, past the Lane cabin, up along the crest of the ridges, past the Matthews' home, and on into the west country, "a trail that is, nobody knows how old." The next stop of importance is at the one-roomed post office and general store, where until a few years ago one could actually shake hands with Uncle Ike, "By thunda, what!". From him, a little man in his eighties, one bought post-card pictures of places and people made famous by the story.

The statement that Harold Bell Wright was unwittingly an Ozark publicity agent is true. But the extent to which he advertised the hilly country, especially that region surrounding the small towns of Branson and Hollister, would be hard to estimate. In the villages, on hillsides, roads, and lakeside large signs and small repeat and proclaim names and places mentioned in the book. There is even a Sammy Lane bank. Not only have travelers and resort seekers come, but they buy, until trade in *The Shepherd of the Hills* region has advanced from a few hundred dollars into as many millions annually. Much of the progress is due to the railroad, the new highways, and the lake, but the interest created by the book when the country was little known certainly brought people faster.

The Lure of the Renaissance

J. GORDON EAKER

The literature of the English Renaissance, outside of the work of Shakespeare, is so often slighted in college courses that it may be worth while to show that glamour and romance can be found in even the non-Shakespearean literature of that period. No one would argue, of course, that the sixteenth century is as important for undergraduates as the recent century of Wordsworth, Browning, Carlyle, and Arnold; nevertheless the century of Queen Elizabeth was too great in its literary beginnings and accomplishments to receive only the minor consideration often given it to-day. The Renaissance is a fascinating period, and perhaps a drawing together of some of the larger ideas running through the century will suggest a frame of reference whereby the individual writers can be made more interesting.

1. No one knows all he should about the Renaissance; we are apt to forget that the revival of letters was just one side of it. It is customary to learn the causes of the Renaissance, such as the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the break-up of feudalism, the rebellion against asceticism and scholasticism, the growth of nationalism, the voyages of discovery, and the inventions of printing and gunpowder. The printing probably helped more than the gunpowder; but all these events, important as they are, were only the outward signs of an inward, psy-

chological change in men's thoughts. There was something new and strong in the air, an exuberance, a thirst for freedom, experience, and pleasure. People may have been living full lives before, but never before had they felt such an urge to express their thoughts.

2. Evidence of this exuberance is seen in a number of meteoric literary careers that immediately intrigue one. We see young Christopher Marlowe, at the height of his promise as the author of *Doctor Faustus*, killed in a tavern brawl; we see the promising university wit and playwright, Robert Greene, sink into the excesses of Bohemian London life; and we see the gifted Thomas Dekker fall into the hands of the theatrical pawn-broker, Philip Henslowe. Everyone knows about the greatest dramatist of the age, Shakespeare, but the second greatest, rare old Ben Jonson, had an equally interesting life. We see him, for instance, killing his man in a duel, though his sword was six inches shorter than his opponent's; and we find him up to his neck in the war of the theatres, while his wiser friend, Shakespeare, stands aloof. We see Puritan attack poet, and poet satirize Puritan, as we follow these brilliant careers.

3. For an explanation of this activity, we need only go back to the fifteenth century when new ideas were reaching England through manuscripts of the Greek and Ro-

man classics collected in Italy by such outstanding noblemen as Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester. As early as 1474, the printer William Caxton had begun a movement that continued until Meres' *Palladis Tamia* (The Temple of the Muses) in 1598 to render into the English tongue the best literature of all languages. A similar movement, we find, was undertaken by the *Pléiade* group of poets in France, who endeavored especially to enrich the French tongue from Latin and Greek. Under the impetus of the movement in England, an enormous amount was translated from the Italian, including the principal classics and many sources for Shakespeare's plays. Thus we have the source of it all, the classics of Greece and Rome, brought before us.

4. Imitation of these classics was urged by scholars like Roger Ascham, Sir Philip Sidney, and Ben Jonson. Literature, they held, should be either an old thought in a new dress, or a new thought in an old dress. The word *plagiarism* had not been listed in the dictionaries that did not exist. Roger Ascham laid down an extensive bibliography of imitation, but the English never imitated slavishly. Though they depended upon their models, they altered freely what they borrowed, and, toward the latter part of the Renaissance, we see a breaking away from models. Spenser made his wide reading distinctly his own by raising his sources to the high level of his own music, pictorial art, and moral purpose. Shakespeare and

Jonson put their own objectives above faithfulness to their sources, and other powerful writers like Kyd and Marlowe, grounded in the craft and morality plays, kept the main stream of the drama definitely English. The devil who carried off Faustus at the conclusion of Marlowe's first great play recalls the Vice of the morality plays, and the debate in that play between the good and bad angel suggests the similar contest for the soul in the morality play, *The Castle of Perseverance*.

5. Nor was the English Renaissance a mere copy of the Italian Renaissance, for the religious awakening that came at the beginning of the English revival of letters determined its course. It is significant that Erasmus translated his *New Testament* just a year before Luther posted his theses in 1517. Colet, with his lectures at St. Paul's School, began the historical study of the Scriptures, and his work was furthered by Erasmus, who met the scholastics and urged them to follow the teachings of the Bible without disputing over unessential passages. This religious interest led to the Tyndale Bible in 1525, the Coverdale in 1534, and culminated in the Authorized Version of King James in 1611. The strong moral tone of the English Renaissance contrasted sharply with the worldly spirit of the movement in Italy. Roger Ascham protested against the vices picked up in Italy, and the wild adventures of Nash's *Jack Wilton* served as a warning against foreign travel and the dangers of Catholicism. Sidney's *An Apology*

for Poetry shows the early English tendency toward this didacticism; Sidney defended poetry because, like a sugar-coated pill, it taught while it pleased. Throughout the century, even the teaching of history had a didactic purpose, to show what to imitate and what to shun.

6. The lively interest in education is another side of the Renaissance that appeals to-day. John Colet founded St. Paul's School for boys in 1508, and soon it was not unusual for youths of twelve or fourteen to be called in to advise the Privy Council, so well read were they in history. William Lyly's *Grammar* and Wilson's *Arte of Logique* are notable milestones in this progress. Ascham's *Scolemaster*, with his advice on translating and then turning the translation back into the original, devised the best method yet found for mastering a foreign language. He praised the learning of Elizabeth, who read more Greek each day than any of her churchmen did Latin. Men like Ascham and Elyot set up a strong aristocratic tradition to guide the course of education. The classical education that they propounded was possible, of course, only for the wealthy. Their aim was to perfect the individual, but this aim, in the later Ben Jonson, was allied to a more democratic desire—to lift up society.

7. One of the great contributions of Renaissance education was its ideal of the rounded gentleman, exemplified in a whole array of men like Wyatt, Surrey, Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter

Raleigh, Edmund Spenser, the Earl of Leicester, and the Earl of Oxford. Taking their cue from Castiglione's *The Courtier*, numerous writers formulated their models for a gentleman or prince, in mirror or courtier books like Sackville's *Mirror for Magistrates*, Ascham's *Scolemaster*, and Elyot's *Gouverneur*. Sidney's *Arcadia*, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, and Bacon's *Essays* are also courtier books, though not ordinarily appreciated as such. Shakespeare's own ideal prince appears in the person of Henry V, or Prince Hal. The English gentleman, on the whole, was expected to possess both scholarly and moral qualities. The manners of this gentleman are suggested in Lyly's *Euphues and his England*. Nor was his life to be all work. Henry VIII, who himself wrote nicer poetry than any sovereign has since, eulogized in his poetry the quality "dalliance"—the mixing of ease and work, of pleasure and profit. Dalliance was the Aristotelian mean between overstudying and idling. Pastime was needed for good work, and a rounded culture demanded sufficient leisure for educational purposes. Of the many rounded gentlemen, perhaps Sir Philip Sidney was the most fine-grained, and Sir Walter Raleigh the most typical, as an adventurer, courtier, and scholar.

8. Naturally this culture, though aristocratic, soon filtered down to the middle classes, who had already achieved much freedom after the destruction of feudalism. The common folk, as well as the courtiers, liked to listen to sententious tragedy

in which a counselor like Polonius in *Hamlet* would utter what seemed to them the very words of Wisdom herself. Bacon's *Essays*, full of practical advice for the man of the world, catered to the middle classes, who read him most widely. In the days of Elizabeth it had become possible for a poor boy like Dick Whittington to become three times Lord Mayor of London and to advance great loans to the crown. Dekker's blustering shoemaker-alderman, Simon Eyre, and Heywood's Bess in *The Fair Maid of the West* illustrate the high hopes and, in a measure, the achievements of the middle class. The interest in voyages and discovery was largely on the part of the middle-class merchant men. Ballads like *Sir Andrew Barton* show the interest that King Henry VIII had taken in the development of seamanship and commerce; and later, under Elizabeth, many had an opportunity to gain fame through letters, service of the crown, explorations, or military victories.

9. Men of letters, strangely, seemed more interested in statecraft than in "mere literature" as such. Sidney's sonnets sparkle with touches of concern over statecraft; Spenser concealed in allegory his advice to the Queen regarding her marriage, and perhaps his chief purpose in writing *The Faerie Queene* was political. Most of the dramatists made political allusions, and the popular ballads of the time are full of them. So there were few professional poets; those who wrote were primarily statesmen busy with

temporal affairs. Poetry was not an effeminate calling then, any more than it should be today. A gentleman disdained to "publish" his verses, as Lord Byron still did in the nineteenth century. Gascoigne, one of the first "men of letters," claimed that his works were surreptitiously published, as an excuse for bringing out a "corrected" copy. Publication was often much delayed, notably in the case of Sidney's writings. Every poet sought through his writings first, the favor of the Queen, and only secondly, immortality for his name. A new conception of what his sovereign means to an Englishman is gained from reading *The Famous Victories of Henry V* and Shakespeare's historical plays. What delight Elizabethan audiences must have taken in Prince Hal's brusqueness to his old friend, Falstaff. And no scholar, surely, could refrain from honoring a monarch like Henry VIII or Elizabeth, whose court was full of the learned men of the nation.

10. Another fine thing about the Renaissance was its interest in government. That the chief aim of government is to serve its subjects, an unusual statement for that day, was proclaimed by Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia*. Here we see the altruistic side of the Oxford Reformers. More also desired relief for the middle classes from economic injustice and dared to speak out for fair councils, equal educational opportunities, international amity, and religious toleration. How far we are yet from his ideal!

11. For the student of literary

history, the Renaissance is an age of beginnings in literary forms. English prose was being perfected by Ascham, Hooker, and Bacon; the novel by Lyly, Nash, Lodge, Greene, and Deloney; criticism by Gascoigne, Ascham, Sidney, and Jonson; the sonnet and the drama by numerous writers, and the lyric by the best dramatists. Drama then often approached music. Verse was the prevailing mode of expression. We can trace its rise from Hawes and Skelton to the point at which it received an Italian impetus through Wyatt and Surrey, and thence to its culmination in the dramas of Marlowe and Shakespeare and in the lyrics of Jonson, Herrick, and Carew. Experiments in verse continued throughout the century, giving rise to much critical discussion of values. Should English keep the Latin quantitative verse or adopt accentual meter? Should it favor French feminine endings? What pattern is best adapted to translating Virgil? Should the Italian sonnet form be kept or modified? Should Latin or Anglo-Saxon words be emphasized?

How much dressing-up should be allowed in a good literary style? These were some of the pressing questions of the time. Similarly, in prose fiction one can watch its development from Lyly's long speeches, colorless descriptions, and affected language through the romantic adventures of Nash's famous rogue, Jack Wilton, and thence to the natural conversation, interesting action, and striking bits of realistic description in Greene's

Cony-Catching Pamphlets and Deloney's novels of the middle-class clothiers and weavers.

12. The age was a great melting pot for the English language. Bacon thought that English, as a language, could not last and hastened to translate his first essays into Latin; Burton, unable to have his *Anatomy of Melancholy* published in Latin, avenged himself by writing it in English and filling it with Latin quotations, humorously translated. Edmund Spenser was the first to realize the full pictorial power of the English language, and therein lies the distinct Renaissance quality of his work. Spenser brings before us all the imaginative vividness of medieval romance, and his quaint language gives a pleasant air of antiquity to his borrowed materials. In their eagerness to enrich the language, others tried to popularize foreign words. Greene added a picturesque slang vocabulary. Others affected to speak Chaucerian, or to use only Anglo-Saxon words. Harvey resorted to "ink-horn" terms, and Sidney had to ridicule the figures of "herbarists" with their similitudes drawn from the "unnatural natural history" of Pliny. Ascham had pointed out that some writings were full of pedantic terms and that many strange words could be cut away, adding to the precision of English prose. This boiling down process reached its extreme point in the terse essays of Francis Bacon, who contrasts with the earlier Duke Humphrey, who was praised for his ornate, Ciceroian style. English prose, it is clear,

was exploring the possibilities and finding the norm. Ascham, though a Greek scholar, was sure that English could present thoughts as clearly as any language. In spite of a few faults of excessive balance and "pre-euphuism" he wrote clearly and directly, emphasizing his ideas rather than his art. Hooker, later in the century, while English was still under the influence of Latin prose, achieved a marvelous clarity and an almost perfect adaptation of medium to thought. Dryden is usually called "the father of English prose," but there was a great deal of good prose written before him.

13. There is some affectation in Renaissance literature, to be sure, but no more than in the styles and dress of the time. The elaborate Elizabethan costumes were matched by attempts at an elaborate mode of expression, and we have euphuism and the puns and plays upon words found in *The Spanish Tragedy*, for instance, and in Shakespeare's early plays. Language was found delightful and a charming toy in itself. The sonnets are full of stock affectations that must be carefully segregated from the solid merits around them. Renaissance love seems the most affected and conventional; it was customary for the poet to address a lady distant and inaccessible. The theme had to be tragic. Byron thought a prosaic husband incompatible with such love, for he queried:

Think you, if Laura had been Petrarch's wife,
He would have written sonnets all his life?

Perhaps the highest note comes into Elizabethan love poetry with Spenser, "a better teacher than Aquinas," as Milton called him. In the chaste and noble sonnets to *Amoretti*, in the hymns in praise of heavenly love and beauty, and throughout *The Faerie Queene* a line is drawn between earthly and heavenly love, and one can foresee the verses to come later from Milton:

Love virtue, she alone is free;
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime:
Or, if virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

14. Although there were some excesses in the century, the age was aware of its own faults and seldom lacked satirists. Gascoigne held up his "Steel Glas" to show the truth that a flattering glass mirror might not; Skelton attacked Cardinal Wolsey, the court, and the church; Gosson and Stubbs attacked the drama and the affectations of dress, calling starch for the elaborate ruffs, for example, "the devil's liquor." And Marston, Hall, and Donne directed general volleys against the literary, social, and religious errors of the time, Erasmus' *The Praise of Folly* is perhaps the supreme satire of the age, showing how quickly men follow folly because the path of study and intelligent questioning is so difficult. The presence of such satire is surely a healthy sign.

15. The age, finally, was not without its daring doubters and bold sceptics. Charges of "atheism" against Kyd, Marlowe, and Greene, regardless of how unfounded, show

that there were some who boldly defied conventional views. Intoxicated with the new freedom and with the expansion of their faculties in so many directions, some, indeed, went to excess. Italy had set a bad example. But on the other hand, Puritan sentiment was also growing rapidly. Religion, fresh from the controversies of Luther, was a central concern. Even after the authority of Rome had been thrown off, the authority of the King or Queen was everywhere felt. It is true that the people shifted easily from the Protestant to Catholic services and back again with the changing of the sovereigns Edward and Mary, but many died for their convictions. Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* was widely read, and

Latimer's sermons are deep and earnest. Finally, Richard Hooker was busy putting the new religion on a rational basis. All of this prepared the way for the Puritan conflict with Charles and for the liberty won during the next century. The seventeenth century is important largely because it followed in the wake of the Renaissance. Perhaps it was inevitable that a Renaissance somewhat pagan in spirit should be followed by a Puritan Reformation, and fortunately the checks began when they did. Puritan criticism early forced authors to maintain ideals and prevented a possible stigma being cast upon the really tremendous contributions made to English literature during the Renaissance.

The International Mark Twain Society

ADELE MEHL-BURNETT

You who have enjoyed the "quips and cranks and wanton wiles" of the American humorist, Mark Twain, did you know that there is an International Mark Twain Society; that on its roster are the names of most of the world's great writers; that there is an official publication, *The Mark Twain Quarterly*; that Mark Twain's third cousin is the president of the society, and editor of the *Quarterly*? Well, I did not until about a year ago when I was invited to tea at the woodland home of Mr. and Mrs. Cyril Clemens in Kirkwood, a suburb of St. Louis.

The beginning of the International Mark Twain Society was as small as the acorn which I picked up from the grass that late summer afternoon. but the Society is now as huge as the oak beneath whose branches I spied the shiny brown nut.

The story belongs to the Clemens family of Webster Groves. Dr. James Ross Clemens, a wealthy retired physician, is a cousin of Mark Twain, looks something like his cousin—even without the long hair—and has the Irish trait of wit in conversation. He lived in London and France for fifteen years, receiving degrees from Cambridge University and the University of London. After attending clinics at St. Thomas Hospital, the oldest and most famous in London, Dr. Clem-

ens returned to the United States to serve on the staffs of the most important St. Louis hospitals. He was a lecturer at the University of Missouri, Dean of the Medical School at Creighton University, and a major in the first world war. All through this busy, exciting life, however, he was writing verse, and after the war he gave up the practice of medicine to devote himself to the writing of movies, plays, essays, stories, and poetry.

Katherine Clemens, the wife of Dr. Clemens, is a distant cousin of her husband's. She comes from an old, wealthy family of St. Louis, in the environs of which her ancestors have lived for 150 years. She is in the fifth generation of a picturesque Irishman who fought in France after the French Revolution; who came to America in 1792, choosing St. Louis because in his beloved Irish brigade there had been knights and chevaliers of the order of St. Louis; who amassed millions in this land; who, being a firm supporter of literature, used these millions to build schools for charity and education. Mrs. Clemens' own father was a wholesale book dealer in St. Louis. After she had been educated in the convent, she traveled and lived in Europe with her mother and an uncle. She, too, wrote verses and the quaint autobiography, *Gardens and Books*.

Such is the background of Cyril

Clemens, who was destined not only to carry on the cultural and literary tradition of an unusual father and mother, but also to wear the mantle of his famous relative, Mark Twain. The red-haired, six-foot youth with the characteristic Twain drawl had a passion for books, having been brought up in a home where books were piled from floor to ceiling. Daily, even when the children were tiny, the book-loving mother saw to it that they read at least a page of poetry, of French, of Italian, and of history.

And now when Cyril was scarcely turned twenty, with a college degree from Washington University and graduate credits from Stanford and Cambridge University, the Clemens family in their longing for fellowship of kindred minds began inviting to their charming home in Webster Groves the literary people of their acquaintance into a symposium of the great and the near great—"People with brains and those who had enough to appreciate them," as Mrs. Clemens naively remarked. Cyril would ask some one at these *salons*, as the meetings were called, to lecture or read an original paper on some literary topic. As the object was good talk, the guests sat in a circle, each in turn expressing his opinion on the subjects during the ensuing general discussion.

A rare time it was with no trivial gossip, no asides, no long monologues, and rarest of all when good friends get together, no mad conversational rivalry between two or three talking at the same time. After refreshments the guests might

decorously leave this gracious, rarefied atmosphere; perhaps they might linger on until late, sitting around a log fire, telling ghost stories, singing songs at the piano, or even ending with a dance. It was a goodly fellowship and they called it the Mark Twain Society.

Under the stimulus of this group Cyril Clemens came to a realization of his literary as well as his blood inheritance from Mark Twain. Pride in that relationship and a growing awareness of a sense of humor of the proverbial Twain type had taken root. However, a women's club of St. Louis was the springboard from which Mr. Clemens became an authority on American humor and the interpreter of the American humorist. This club had asked Mr. Clemens to lecture on Mark Twain, probably because of his social position, his education, and travel rather than his relationship to Twain. Incredible as it may seem, he had not at this time even read *Huckleberry Finn*. To be sure most boys have read this truly American classic at least once by the time they are ten, but we must remember that young Clemens had daily associated with Dr. Johnson and Dickens, with Keats and Shelley in the book littered playroom of his childhood. However, with plenty of warning, he busied himself, worked up his lecture, and caught fire. He was no longer young Cyril Clemens, the dilettante, the booklover, the scholar; henceforth he was to wear the mantle of his cousin, except for his father the only living relative with the name of Clemens to carry

on the tradition of the American humorist.

And then this disciple of Samuel Clemens dreamed of an international Mark Twain society, which is now a reality with representatives scattered over the civilized globe from America to Africa. In 1923 Cyril Clemens organized the International Mark Twain Society with the ideal of "A society whose province is to knit the whole world in bonds of cultured peace," accomplishing this by carrying the message of the lusty humorist into the high places of Europe as well as of America. On both continents he made personal calls on the outstanding men of letters. Through preliminary correspondence with some and through a chain of circumstances after he had arrived in Europe, the way was made pleasant and unforgettable.

To these celebrities the young American offered membership in the international organization. With few exceptions those invited accepted and presented signed photographs to the society. Among these were Giovanni Papini of Italy, the late Rabindrath Tagore of India, and John Galsworthy of England, who confessed that he had always been an ardent admirer of Mark Twain and re-read *Huck Finn* at least once a year.

In 1927 Mr. Clemens became president of the society. Nine years later he established the official publication, *The Mark Twain Quarterly*, issued in spring, summer, fall, and winter. Mr. Clemens is the editor, and John G. Neihardt, the poet,

associate editor. The magazine is devoted to literature, one of the few periodicals given over entirely to *belles lettres*.

The list of vice-presidents of the Society reads like a *Who's Who*. There are ten committees, headed by men whose names carry no less weight. At the time of his death Sir Hugh Walpole was serving as chairman of the Fiction Committee. Steenio Vincent, former president of Hayti, subscribes for the *Quarterly* two years at a time. Presidents Hyde of Ireland and Manuel Quezon of the Philippines were charter subscribers. They are also members of the Society.

The Mark Twain medal was established by the Society in 1930 to show recognition for outstanding achievement in various fields of human endeavor. Benito Mussolini was the first recipient. Mr. Clemens personally presented the society's medal to Mussolini at Palazzo Venezia, November 3, 1930, for his work as an educator. Rudyard Kipling received the medal the following year. December 3, 1932, just after his first election to the presidency, Franklin D. Roosevelt was honored with the medal, which for him was engraved, "Roosevelt Great Orator." President Roosevelt, when only a boy, had met Mark Twain, and all his life has enjoyed the masterpieces of the American genius. My own copy of the *Quarterly* with personal greetings of the editor bears the reproduction of the President's photograph, personally inscribed for the Society at the time he received the medal. George San-

tayana, Alfred Noyes, J. M. Barrie, Robert Frost, Hilaire Belloc, Bernard Shaw, Neville Chamberlin, Booth Tarkington, and O. W. Holmes have been likewise honored. The 1941 recipient is Secretary Cordell Hull, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to statesmanship.

The Jefferson Memorial in St. Louis is the depository of most of the Mark Twain material. At the Library of Congress in Washington there is a collection of inscribed volumes representing the work of the members of the Society. The late Conan Doyle wrote in a copy of *Sherlock Holmes*, "Not my favorite book, but the public's I fear. A. Conan Doyle."

Last year the United States government issued a Mark Twain stamp in several denominations, a deserved recognition of the strenuous efforts of the Society since 1933. Philatelists, Mark Twain enthusiasts, and lovers of literature added the stamps to their other treasures without knowing that it had taken several years to achieve this particular stamp.

And now for the amazing part of the story. It is the incredible ease with which any one genuinely interested in literature can become a member of this international society. If three or four such people agree to meet at certain intervals to discuss one of Mark Twain's books or some other literary subject and send in the names of their group to the Society's secretary at

Webster Groves, Missouri, the group automatically becomes a member of the International Mark Twain Society. It is not even necessary to form a separate club, as the group can be formed within a club already existing. The question of officers, frequency of meeting, and local dues is left entirely to the local organization. The Society, however, gives every assistance within its power for the formation of these groups and their successful continuance. Mr. Clemens acts as head of all these groups, a service which takes considerable time and energy.

Each year the Society conducts a literary contest. This year a life subscription to the *Mark Twain Quarterly* was given for the best two-thousand-word essay on "Mark Twain as a Historian."

There you have the story of the International Mark Twain Society from the acorn to the wide spreading oak. If you wish to know anything about Mark Twain, ask the Society. It is the "Answer Man." Are you curious about Twain's favorite book? Ask the Society. Do you wonder whether Mark ever met Oscar Wilde and Walt Whitman? Ask the Society. Would you like to know whether Twain changed his opinion of Christian Science before his death? Ask the Society. These are typical of the hundreds of inquiries regarding the life and writings of Mark Twain answered each month by the Society as one of its services.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

The Nutrition Class under the supervision of Miss E. Jacques Wade is working with the Pittsburg Housekeeping Aid Project this semester. Mrs. Hazel Turner is director of the project and Mrs. Marcellis Price is in charge of the classes. The demonstration training center is sponsored by the Crawford County welfare Agency which furnishes the material for the work. The labor is furnished by the PWA. Several women are employed. Instruction is given in home nursing, meal preparation, low cost meal planning, child care, laundry, care of the sick and of the aged. The class also is demonstrating food preparation for low cost meals—emphasis being placed upon the value of maintaining health through the use of adequate food.

Nutrition class 150 is planning to take the Red Cross Nutrition course which gives Red Cross Nutrition certificates for Defense work in Nutrition.

Miss Josephine Marshall, professor of home economics attended a meeting of the State Nutrition Committee held in Manhattan on Sept. 18.

A Nutrition Refresher Course was held on the campus in September.

Mrs. Gerald Waggoner of the State Board of Vocational Education was the instructor. Eleven women enrolled. The course was made possible by the State Board for Vocational Education and the College.

Miss Annie Marriott, Miss Josephine Marshall, Miss Louise Gibson, and Miss Lillian Nelson of the home economics department attended the Kansas Nutrition Conference held in Topeka on Oct. 17-18.

Two instruments designed to assist in training good readers—a metronoscope and a flashmeter—have been purchased by the department of English Language and Literature. They will be used especially in freshman rhetoric classes to enable the students to increase their reading speed and get rid of faulty eye movements in reading. The department has discovered that many freshman students have never acquired correct reading skills in their earlier schooling. The metronoscope is especially designed to produce rhythm in eye movements and to correct regressive movements, and the flashmeter, which projects sentences and paragraphs for fractions of a second on the screen, trains for high speed in grasping meanings.

Dr. Ralph A. Fritz and Professor W. E. Matter, who were appointed three years ago by the state representative of the North Central Association for Secondary Schools of Kansas, report that they have conducted studies in seven high schools and have assisted in the studies at three other schools during the past three years. The schedule for 1941-1942 calls for studies to be conducted by them in four more schools.

Professor Edgar Nelson Mendenhall retired from active teaching duties in the College at the beginning of the fall semester. He has been connected with the department of education in various capacities since 1917.

Previous to his coming to the College, he was active in public school work in the state of Indiana. He was county superintendent of schools in Decatur County from 1903 to 1911 and city superintendent of schools in Goshen, Indiana, from 1911 to 1916.

Professor Mendenhall received the Ph. B. degree from the University of Chicago and the A. M. De-

gree from Columbia University. He studied also in Indiana University and in Harvard University. He has traveled extensively in both this country and in Europe.

Among the publications of Professor Mendenhall are: *A Rural School Board Measuring Stick*, *Teacher-Rating Employment Card*, *Self Improvement Scale and Clergy Rating Card*, and *The City School Board Member and His Task*.

Professor Mendenhall plans to devote his time to research and writing.

Mrs. Elsie Broome of the Geography Department had the privilege of spending an afternoon and evening aboard Uncle Sam's newest and largest battleship, the USS North Carolina, during August. The major parts of the ship, the newest instruments and devices for charting the ship's course and in finding the exact position, the weather instruments, and the signal system were some of the high points in a tour of the ship. This special privilege was permitted Mrs. Broome in courtesy to Ensign E. Gordon Van Pelt, a ship's officer, who is a graduate of the College in the 1940 class.

FIELD NOTES

Albert York, class of 1933, who teaches in the junior high school at Balboa Heights, Canal Zone, finished his work for the Master's degree during the summer session. He returned to the Canal Zone to resume his teaching.

Robert Briley, class of 1941, and president of the student council last year, has received a law scholarship at Duke University, Durham, N. C.

Richard Greer, class of 1941 has received a scholarship at the University of New Mexico.

Fred Childress, class of 1938 is filling the vacancy left by Professor Ernest Bennett, who is on leave of absence this semester. Mr. Childress received the master's degree in journalism from Columbia University in 1940, and since then has been a reporter on the Coffeyville Journal.

Don Farmer, the new principal of the high school of Oswego, Kansas, received the B. S. degree in history in 1932 and the M. S. degree in education in 1939.

David D. Moore is assistant professor in the speech department. This position was made vacant by the resignation of Professor Kessler,

who is attending Northwestern University. Professor Moore received his master's degree from the University of Wisconsin.

James Doores, who received the B. S. degree in 1941 with major in biology, was appointed graduate assistant in zoology at the University of Indiana for the year 1941-42. Mr. Doores is the fourth College student to receive this honor at Indiana University within recent years, being preceded by Herschel Gier, Stacey Denham, and Wendall Johnson.

Joseph J. White, B. S. 1941, with major in biology, accepted an appointment as a Graduate Fellow in bacteriology at the Ohio University, Athens, for the school year 1941-42. While at the College Mr. White was an assistant in the department of biology and active in Lambda Sigma Kappa.

Miss Elizabeth Gall, who received her B. S. degree from the College in 1938 and her M. A. degree from Columbia University in 1941, is, at present, critic teacher in the Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, North Carolina.

Clemon C. Boulanger, who received the B. S. degree with major

in biological science in 1940, has resigned his position with the Kansas City office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to accept a teaching position in the Rural High School at Woodbine, Kansas. He is teaching science and mathematics.

George L. Cushman, M. S. in history, 1939, is superintendent of the schools at Preston, Kansas.

Homer Evans, B. S. in history, 1940, is superintendent at Carnerio, Kansas.

Jerome McColey, the superintendent of Elk City, Kansas received the B. S. degree in history in 1932 and the M. S. degree in education in 1939.

John Schwab, A. B. 1937 with major in biology, who is serving as Research Fellow in Bacteriology while doing graduate work at Ohio State University, Columbus, visited friends on the campus at the opening of school this fall. He was accompanied by Mrs. Schwab, who is the secretary of the department in which Mr. Schwab is working.

Prof. Harold M. Perry, formerly in the department of commerce and business administration of the College, has been appointed head of the department of business education at State Teachers College, New Britain, Connecticut. During the past year Prof. Perry served as part-time instructor at New York Uni-

versity, New York City, where he was working on his doctor's degree.

Wayne Christy has resigned his position as teacher of commerce in the Joplin High School to accept a position with the Jayhawk Ordinance Works. Mr. Christy was an assistant in the department of commerce and business administration at the College last year.

Three brothers, all graduates of the College and all with M. D. degrees, are in service for Uncle Sam. These are the sons of Dr. John Bowers, who until his death, was a member of the history department of the College.

Garvey B. Bowers, B. S. 1927, who took his M. D. at Washington University in 1935, is now captain the Medical Corps Reserve. Dr. Bowers has been assigned by the government as a sergeant to work at a new base near Ponce, Puerto Rico. Mrs. Bowers, who was formerly Clara Marsh, took her B. S. degree from the College in 1929 and her M. S. in 1933.

John A. Bowers, B. S. 1927, who took his M. D. at Washington University in 1935, is now a lieutenant in the Medical Corps Reserve. He has been assigned to hospital work in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Copeland G. Bowers, B. S. 1931, who has an M. D. from Washington University and who has been a practicing physician is now located at Sheppard Air Field, Wichita Falls, Texas.

COMMENTS ON BOOKS

Interactions: The Democratic Process

L. Thomas Hopkins
D. C. Heath & Company, New York, 1941

The author believes that the most crucial educational problem concerned with the improvement of the American educational system is to help those individuals and groups in charge of the schools to mature their authoritarian actions into more cooperative, democratic, social interactions.

Suggestions are given as to the use of the democratic process for the improvement of living generally, but the author is chiefly concerned with showing how democratic participation can be used for the improvement of education of the children in the school. The child learns democracy by living democracy in a democratic school.

The experience curriculum which gives attention to functional meanings in a series of purposful life experiences growing out of pupil problems and interests seems to offer most at this time. The curriculum should be designed by all those most intimately concerned with the activities of children while they are in school. This would include the children themselves, together with their teachers, parents, other educators, and citizens of the community.

Ernest M. Anderson

American Politics

Peter H. Odegard and E. Allen Helms,
Harper & Brothers, 1938

No more interesting or vital subject can be found in the field of human investigation today than government "for the people and by the people." Popular government versus dictatorship has pointed the minds of the thinking world toward American politics.

The book written by two professors of political science, Peter H. Odegard of Amherst College and E. Allen Helms of Ohio State University, was designed for the college student as a study in political dynamics. It is written as a human interest story, which it is, the authors having carefully avoided technical definitions buried in deeply involved statements. Many authoritative footnotes and explanatory paragraphs aid the student in locating the sources of data used in the text. The text proper moves along in a rapid and readable story.

Any person who wishes to become informed and gain a wide and yet fair picture of the governmental machinery in the oldest democracy in the world, will not be disappointed in *American Politics*. Twenty-three chapters make up this book of nearly 900 pages. The first eleven chapters are devoted to

a digest of politics and parties in their inception and the way party politics developed under our constitution, together with a recital of the methods which have come into use in federal, state, and local government units. This fourth of the book gives a comprehensive background upon which to bring to life many sectional pictures: "The Politics of Farm and Section," "The Politics of Business," and "The Aims of Labor." With "The Politics of the Melting Pot," we are not yet half way through this interesting story, for now the authors are ready to build the great pyramid beginning with two chapters on "The Right to Vote." The story of voting is told, and the development of the two theories—one, that man is not interested in the state unless he owns property in the state, so that only proprietors should have the privilege of voting—the other that man should recognize no other master than reason and that every man should have a right to share in the voice of the government. How these theories have affected the growth of suffrage and the problems that came into the foreground with the increase of voting privileges and the social results thereof are handled in an interesting manner. Following "The Right to Vote" comes "The Business of Politics—Bosses and Machines" with such timely sections as "The Rape of Civil Service," "Honest or Dishonest Graft," "Bossism and Society."

The longest section of the book is given over to a careful statement

covering the long and greatly involved mechanism which "Nominates the Candidate," "Engineers the Consent," and gives "The Midas Touch—Campaign Finance," leading to "The Voters' Verdict."

This is the great pyramid of politics in the democracy of the United States. Scarcely one voter in a hundred can trace the nominating and electing of a president. The methods have developed through custom and usage. There are few laws, few legal authorities for these customs.

The authors devote the last hundred pages of their book to a statement on pressure politics and majority rule, closing with a chapter on "The Future of Party Government." Appendices give the party platforms of 1936 and a graphic picture of the election records of the past twenty years. If the general knowledge included within the covers of this book was in possession of every intelligent adult American, the party system of politics would be better understood and appreciated, and democracy would be "safer" for future freedom and human rights.

—R. H. Smith

Hoaxes

Curtis D. MacDougal

MacMillan Co., New York, 1940

It is a generally accepted principle among psychologists that man is fundamentally a believing animal, that he finds belief a more comfortable state of mind than doubt, and that he is inclined to believe a statement until it is proved false

rather than hold judgment in abeyance until the truth of the statement is established. If there was ever any question about the validity of this assumption, it should be permanently and definitely dispelled by this volume, for the propensity of mankind to believe and believe—and then believe some more, even in the face of directly contradictory evidence—is put on display as never before.

Where the author ever managed to drum up such an extended and varied collection of examples of human gullibility would be difficult to determine, but the whole three hundred pages—and then some—are literally chock-full of Lock Ness serpents, hodags, whirling wimpuses, tripoderos, rubberados, mummies of John Wilkes Booth, literary forgeries, and other abracadabra of the hoaxer's art. As a matter of fact, what is probably the main criticism to be made of the book has to do with the encyclopedic nature of its contents. The author apparently started out with the determination not to slight any cases of hoaxing that could possibly be squeezed into this general category, and the consequence is that the reader is apt to become "fed up" with the steady diet of tall tales before he finishes the book. The fact remains, however, that as a compendium of hoaxes of all shapes and types, the book is in a class by itself.

The author makes a pretense of attempting to explain and analyze the psychological principles involved in the success or failure of hoaxing, as the case may be, devoting the first several chapters to a discussion of why hoaxes succeed and the remaining section to an analysis of how they succeed, but one has a feeling that he must have had his tongue in his cheek when he pinned the labels on the chapters. For actually the material in most of them seems to bear little relationship to the heading. About the only purpose served by the chapter divisions is to provide a break now and then in the content of the volume, as well as to give the author a sort of framework on which to hang his tales.

This should not be taken as a disparagement of the volume, however. It is doubtful if any very valuable contribution has been made to the psychology of belief in its pages, but such was not the author's intention. His purpose was rather to provide a readable account of hoaxes, both intentional and unintentional, which have been a subject of interest to him for many years, with the added thought that such an exposé might possibly exert a deterrent effect upon the future course of human gullibility. In this purpose he would appear to have succeeded admirably.

—Paul Murphy

Contributors to This Number

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