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Published quarterly. $1.50 the year.

Manuscripts, business communications, and subscriptions should be addressed to Frontier and Midland, Montana State University, Missoula, Montana. Manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.

Copyright, 1937, by H. G. Merriam. Published in March, June, September, December.

Entered as second-class matter May 4, 1928, at the postoffice at Missoula, Montana, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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Under alphabetical production literature, like hogs and potatoes, is now measured by bulk. Parrying Ralph M. Easley's acerb letter to President Roosevelt, Henry P. Alsberg, chief of the WPA Writers' Project, states to President Roosevelt, Henry P. Alsberg, chief of the WPA Writers' Project, states that by September first 10,000,000 words will be issued or on the press.

"In all there will be more than 200 books," he is quoted as saying, "aggregating more than 20,000,000 words, a series of publications twice the size of the 'American Dictionary of Biography' which required 15 years to complete."

The burden of complaint against the Federal writers is that too many of them use the left hand only, leaving the right hand free to 'hast too many convivial bottles, say some, or more malignly, the Hammer and the Sickle.

Ignoring these charges, Mr. Alsberg points out that the project has won three Guggenheim awards; that Houghton Mifflin has taken for publication the six New England state books, and those of New Orleans and Louisiana; that Washington; City and Capital is recommended by the Book-of-the-Month club and has sold out its first printing of 8,000; that The Cape Cod Pilot gives promise of becoming a best seller; that Who's Who in the Zoo is one of the most popular of educational books; and that advance sales of the Massachusetts Guide were phenomenal.

World Flight, Amelia Earhart's story scheduled for publication by Harcourt, Brace this Fall will become Last Flight should all hope of her return be abandoned. As she completed each lap of her world flight Miss Earhart sent back to her publishers all her records. These include her diaries, notes, personal letters, newspaper clippings and an informal cockpit log.

Margaret Haley of NYC is winner of the 1937 Yale Series of Younger Poets contest. Prize winners in an essay contest conducted by the Panhellenic House, Manhattan, were L. M. Blackburn, Sima, Harry Martin, and Isabelle Tuomey of La Crosse, Wis. Finlay Petrie of Opal, Wyo., was the first man to win the Country Home Magazine prize for rural correspondence. He won over 3,500 contestants.

Michael Foster's American Dream has passed its 30,000 mark, and Foster has temporarily left his night rewrite job on a Portland newspaper for Orcas Island, Wash., to work on a new book: American Dream was the July selection of the Literary Guild.

Houghton Mifflin scholarships were awarded to Dorothy Baker of Berkeley, Calif., a native of Missoula; and Corncl DeJong of Michigan, now living in New York. Double-day, Doran will publish the Avery Hopwood prize winner, Emmanuel Varandyan's The Well of Ararat. Dodd, Mead & Co. offer another $1000 prize for mystery or detective story. Closing date, Dec. 31.

Blackburn Sims, author of Trailer Homes toured the West this summer—in a trailer—gathering material for an American Guide book series to be published by Longmans, Green & Co. Sims has circled the globe three times, and declares no country can offer such attractions as America holds for sightseers. The Guide's five volumes will cover The Rocky Mountain states; Pacific coast; New England states; Southern states; Midwest states. Sim's study of Marvelous Montana was completed early in August, and he promises that his guide book will be on sale by Christmas day.

Random House reports that the great Goldwyn has presented more than 1,000 copies of his book to friends.

Macmillan had the distinction of publishing Miss Ruth Pitter's A Mad Lady Garland. Miss Pitter is the recipient of this year's Hawthorned Prize for her volume of poems, Trophy of Arms. Critics call her a poet of genius who has not yet won wide acclaim.

Henry Goddard Leach, president of the Poetry Society of America and editor of The Forum, devotes a page of each issue of that magazine to matters of interest to poets. The April issue carried an article by Margaret Mansfield on the poets laureate controversy, and a summer issue discussed poetry racket—whose name is legion.

Carl Van Doren, chairman of the Elinor Wylie Poetry Fellowship Committee announces a drive for a $100,000 poet fund to be administered by the Academy of American Poets, in the hope that income from the fund may permit a $5000 annual or biennial award to American poets of high merit.

The Appleton-Century company has on its list three books kept continuously in print by the Appleton company for ninety-one years. These are three handbooks designed to make sermons easy for ministers—if not for their congregations.

A seven-inch piece of water-rotted rudder of the Bounty, mutiny ship beached and burned off Pitcairn Island, was presented to H. S. Smith, president of the Corinthians, a businessmen sailors and navigators club of NYC. The wood, mounted, will be kept in the Corinthians' office in the Chanin building.

Dixon Wecter of Denver has written The Saga of American Society, which is receiving good reviews. Facts "that take a good deal of getting around" move one reviewer to quote Renan's remark about Bonapartist Socialists, that "their ignorance gives one a rough idea of the Infinite."

Lyle Saxon wrote much of his novel, Children of Strangers, while he was supervising the preparation of the Louisiana and New Orleans guide books for the Federal Writers' Project.

On the suggestion of Governor E. D. Rivers the Georgia State Board of Education has unanimously approved the purchase of 1,000,000 copies of the King James version of the Bible—one for each school child in Georgia.

Harry Hartman's Lantern, Seattle, an... Continued on page 71
MISSOULA—
the HUB of
WESTERN MONTANA

By GRACE BAKER

Set in the heart of the mountains in western Montana, the center of conservation of water and forests, where Montana State University is situated, Missoula is an ideal spot for those who are seeking a prosperous community for their homes.

Missoula is situated at the meeting place of five great valleys: the Missoula, Flathead, Blackfoot, Bitterroot, and the Rattlesnake. Each of these is productive as well as beautiful. To Missoula each takes the products of farming, ranching, lumbering and mining, shipping them from there to all parts of the country. This makes it necessary for Missoula to have facilities to take care of these businesses and to serve the needs of the people of the entire western portion of Montana.

The State University now has an attendance approaching 2,500, which is a third greater than it was a decade ago. The oldest building, Main Hall, was constructed in 1897. There are now 23 buildings on the campus; a new women's dormitory will be built within the next year. The school has received national acclaim for its academic and scientific work. Many of the professors are well known throughout the country.

Seven miles east of Missoula, in the Hellgate Canyon, is located the largest lumbering mill in western Montana. Its operations have extended over a fifty-year period. Logs arrive for sawing there from the drainage areas of the Blackfoot and Bitterroot rivers in quantities aggregating millions of feet monthly.
Outstanding in western Montana is the electrification which has been furnished to farms and ranches as well as to cities and various industrial enterprises. The Flathead irrigation project has expended more than $500,000 in building transmission lines to serve the many farms which dot that expansive production area. Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders counties also have expended vast sums of money in electrifying the entire region tributary to Missoula.

More than $2,000,000 have been spent in the building of new homes in Missoula during the last eighteen months, and still Missoula is faced with a housing shortage. Workers and vacationists returning to Missoula in the fall have a difficult time finding homes—which speaks for the rapidity of the growth of the community and its desirability.

The forests are being protected for timber production and watershed advantages. They are unparalleled scenery and the source of a priceless water supply for irrigation, domestic use, power, and recreation. The Federal Forest Service has its regional offices in Missoula. From Missoula 23,000,000 acres, comprising seventeen National Forests, are supervised. Among its improvements the Forest Service boasts the construction and maintenance of 113 miles of forest highways and 4,600 miles of forest roads. These roads, built primarily for protection purposes, also give an outlet to isolated ranches, lumbering operations, and mining. They also attract a great influx of pleasure-seekers to western Montana. National Forest camps are improved in secluded spots for use by family groups.

Cultivation of sugar beets began here in 1928 and the acreage has increased each year until now the sugar beet industry has been a $5,000,000 source of revenue for western Montana farmers. The product in sugar beets of the area is converted into sugar in the second largest sugar beet factory in the United States, located one mile west of Missoula.

The commercial enterprises and recreational possibilities of the entire district are greatly advanced by the highly perfected network of oiled highways, constructed in the last few years by the State Highway Department, which maintains a
division headquarters in Missoula. Hundreds of miles of improved highways make possible easy and rapid transportation for business and pleasure.

Missoula is in the way to becoming a city of fine parks. Ten parks have been laid out, and improvement is well advanced in the majority of them. The largest of these is the 28-acre Greenough Park, which is still mostly in its natural wild condition. Most of the smaller parks now have large wading pools and tennis courts.

Missoula is now recognized not only as a first-class retail business center, but as a very considerable wholesale and jobbing point, serving the people and communities of the entire western end of the state in obtaining merchandise and building supplies with unusual facility.

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STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
STANFORD UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA
SHUTOFF

Dolores Waldorf Bryant

Mr. Auger went rigid with shock. What was this? A shutoff without tears, recriminations or a slammed door? It was unbelievable!

His grim lips opened and closed in mute astonishment. He scowled, he growled, he waggled threats with the meter key, but the lady of the house continued to radiate the brightest of smiles.

Again he pointed the key at the yellow notice in her hand. "I said it is overdue, Madam. Six-ninety-seven overdue. It gets paid right now or out I go to the meter, and quick—like that—you have no water! Electric juice you can shut off, gas you can shut off, telephone you can shut off, but when the water quits where are you?"

Mr. Auger’s lean weathered face glowered with threats, but in his pale blue eyes pleading fused with the pained defiance of a zealot who has been stoned.

The lady’s smile flickered and vanished as she reread the cold proscription of the shutoff slip. She wished very much that she could take her husband’s parting advice. He had said through his teeth that morning, "I can’t help it if a dozen collectors call today. I haven’t the money! I don’t know where the little I did have went! How the hell can you budget when there isn’t enough for what you need and what you owe? The fix we’re in you pay the buzzards that show up first. Stall him ’till payday. Tell him anything! If he gets tough put your foot on his chin, smile like a lady, and push him downstairs!"

It was a pleasant thought. With Auger, overdue meant nothing less than “off with their heads!” Suppose she did tell him they hadn’t the money? The big thundermouth would probably go into a panic lest they draw an extra gill before the shutoff. Besides, why tell the truth until all else had failed?

She looked up ever so archly, "You know, Mr. Auger, I wouldn’t blame you a bit if you turned the water off right away. Why not go ahead and see what our absent-minded friend does then. Always forgetting! I’d say it served him good and right!"

Mr. Auger recoiled in consternation. The next cue in this scene at the shutoff vanished in dizziness as his world reeled down like a top. It was a rout and a defeat—but not for long.

"Madam!" be blurted, "I wish I was a collector in a big town like New York! You know I wouldn’t care what I done! Up to their front doors I’d stomp, ring hard on the bell and tell ‘em, ‘Here you, pay up or off it goes!’" He gave her a lingering gaze of profound self-pity, "Here it’s a dog’s life, Madam. Every day I collect off people I know twenty, thirty years. Worse’n a dog’s life: a dog gets patted once in awhile. If I do right by my job they call me a snitch and a heel!"
That's my thanks for being an honest job holder!"

Now the lady gazed aghast. Had Mr. Auger actually insinuated that anything so vibrant as a human heart beat beneath that hickory bosom? She held her breath against a ribald snicker, but the mad impulse found words which were worse, "After all, Mr. Auger, you can only let your conscience be your guide—if any."

A stab of dismay said she had done it now! Still, it would be something to hurl at her fire-breathing husband when the faucets sighed and gaped emptily at the turn of his hand and he hissed, "You mouse!"

But throbbing alarm subsided in limp relief as Mr. Auger, who had obviously not heard a word or seen so much as a dubious scowl, twisted his lips with a wry, commiserating smile. "Here's the kick, madam. I'm on the PEOPLE'S SERVICE, you know. I'm not collecting for some fat buzzard with diamonds on his vest. I'm settling bum accounts and mending busted water pipes and oiling engines and greasing pumps for the people of this here town. It's the municipal water works, y'understand. Who pays more taxes if we get in the red? They do! And they slam doors on me! They yell at me, they cry at me, they say they'll punch my nose! And I'm collecting bad bills for them, off them!"

Mr. Auger folded his arms with tragic emphasis and glared at the sycamore trees beneath which his little truck was parked.

Busy once more with doorstep diplomacy, the lady assumed an expression of brooding sympathy. She could have said, "And that isn't all, Mr. Auger. My husband reminds me regularly of the delinquent who kept you at bay with her garden hose on full stream while standing on the meter box."

But diplomacy was, after all, the wiser and the safer course. Hadn't the stand at the meter box collapsed when Auger's reinforcements turned off the water main? Auger threw on defiant stands, slammed doors, and cries of rage. But he could be unmanned by soft words—she hoped.

The lady creased the yellow shutoff slip into tiny precise folds. Craft and tactical nibbles could be her only defences. But when she found herself watching Auger's dour dehydrated face with the eager concentration of a dog waiting for his master to discard a chop, she was revolted. Not any more, though, than she would have at finding herself hurling the six garden stepping-stones one by one at Auger as he bent over the meter box with his key.

Inhibitions might forbid her a little violence but what about a loyal word for the other delinquents? She was just as much one of them as any who bore the heavier side of their common burden. To pay for Nature's little mixture of oxygen and hydrogen she must stall a few days, but many another must also weigh necessity against necessity, laughter against fear.

"Trouble with you, Mr. Auger," she wanted to say with scathing clarity, "You'd like to put them in sackcloth and blinders so they could pay in dollars when they earn in pennies! So they couldn't be tempted by billboards and Neon signs and shop windows and sales pressure! You want them where you want them, no matter what anybody else gets. It's a racket, Mr. Auger! But when a man's broke, he's broke!"

It would have been a grand speech,
but she was merely a mouse after all. For in a mildly chiding voice, diluted by another of those arch little doorstep smiles, she retorted, “Really, Mr. Auger, don’t you realize that some of the people can’t pay even for necessities? If they can’t, what then?”

“Hah!” rasped Mr. Auger, “When you haven’t got enough, Madam, you cut. If things is bad, they’re bad. No waiting for buried treasure or a gold mine to pop out of the back yard like some of them babies with million dollar wishes. When I give a turnoff, they squeal to Johnny, our office manager. Johnny don’t know any more now than he did when he wasn’t to my knee. Anybody can get a turnon from Johnny if he played baseball with the mush-brains at school. Why, one year after trouble started that simp had us not only a cold thousand in the red, but headed for the street and an investigation!”

The lady’s face congealed to a mask of automatic expressions. When withering darts shot from Mr. Auger’s scornful eyes, they were reflected by the lady’s chameleon ones.

“Did I tell Johnny!” barked Mr. Auger. “Madam, I got a list of bad accounts off the books and I dried up meters faster than a drought! I pulled us out of the red and the investigators off our necks, but do you think I got a thank you? Madam, thirty years I’ve been with this water works, boy and man, private and public property, and not a thanks have I heard. I’ve seen it go from bankruptcy to clean black figures and less than one-and-a-half percent unpaid accounts, which wasn’t done by letting bellyaching friends chisel themselves out of the PEOPLE’S SERVICE profits. I keep telling that slick haired dimwit, it’s the PEOPLE’S SERVICE! And by godfrey, the people will get service if I have to beat ’em over the head with my meter key!”

It was nothing to laugh about, but the lady tapped a smile from her lips with the yellow shutoff slip for a fan. She wanted very much to say with a valiant but slightly wry smile, “Yes, Mr. Auger, you’d burn their bodies to save their souls!”

What would it get her, beyond a three day thirst and endless radical talk from an irate unshaven man who found he couldn’t make soapsuds with the rights of the proletariat alone, even if he did have the soap. Mr. Auger was perfectly right. Without water, where were you?

But she stood to lose her soul, one way or the other. This pantomime of perjury, the crafty smiles, the grimaces of encouragement, all reeked of brimstone. What hypocrisy this zealot aroused!

Proving it, she smiled from under her brows and declared in a very convincing voice, “You are loyalty itself, Mr. Auger!”

It startled him, and he stared fixedly at her for long enough to set her thoughts racing on such precautions as filling pots and pans and possibly the bathtub. But no, he was lean and swift of limb. She’d be lucky to draw off a scant kettle full before the water sucked back in a dying gasp.

However, the shutoff at hand was not on Mr. Auger’s mind at the moment. He was preoccupied with a larger field and his contemptuous eyes swept a groveling, unseen populace.

“Madam! What they don’t do to gip themselves! Lie, plug the doorbell, pull down the shades, kick off the me-
ter, plead for their babies, moan over their sick husbands, and jump town owing us money. But they can’t fool Auger. Two, three, four years—it don’t matter. I never forget. One bright boy sneaks back to town after ducking out two years ago. You should see his face when I hands him the old bill and says, ‘No money, no water.’ What a noise he makes! But I just stand there with a nasty smile on my face. If there’s anybody I like to take down, it’s a bill beater with a big mouth! He’d have the law on me, he’d put me on the street. I just looked down my nose with a sour nodding. I been on this job thirty years, Madam. Every election I hear I’m going to be on the street, but here I am. Pipsqueaks like him don’t mean nothing. He paid!”

The lady brushed back a lock, settled her wave and said with a blithe, confiding smile, “The barking dog seldom bites. You’ve heard that, Mr. Auger.”

Touched, Mr. Auger coughed nervously behind a big, freckled hand and pensively resumed his analysis of human society. “Madam, they think they’re foxy. They get down on their knees in the morning, crying and twisting their hands at me with an eighteen months shutoff to serve. And by night I’m at the show with the wife and daughters in plain hard seats, when into the loge boxes goes my friends who can’t pay their water bills. Not a nickle for PEOPLE’S SERVICE, but there they sit like they came in limousines. My heart isn’t flint, as you can see, Madam, but I won’t be a sucker for nobody. Me in thirty-cent grab-what-you-can seats and them holding down forty-centers with cushions! Did that baby get a shutoff!”

The lady looked up with a flash of hurt alarm. “Oh, but Mr. Auger...”

He gave her back a hard, righteous defiance and she wilted.

“They owed PEOPLE’S SERVICE, didn’t they?” he demanded.

She nodded.

“And two times forty is eighty and three kid fares is sixty. One buck and forty over, Madam. With that we could check off a month’s bill and more. How many times they done it, I don’t know, but they don’t do it no more!”

She shut her jaw tight on seething indignations. The old martinet actually believed that God’s little raindrops fell for PEOPLE’S SERVICE alone! Why, he’d even call a dry year divine judgment on the delinquents and order a rate increase! What she couldn’t tell him! But she drew a deep, quivering breath and declaimed in a tight little voice, “After all, Mr. Auger, those people are just terribly unfortunate. They are the victims. . . .”

“Victims!” cried Mr. Auger, “Victims, you say! Madam, for PEOPLE’S SERVICE I have today given up a friend!”

It was out. The baiting of the bill beaters had come to this! For Mr. Auger, one friend. For the lady of the house, one soul, and that quite possibly in vain. Auger’s grim jaw promised less and less, not even three days’ grace.

“Madam!” croaked Mr. Auger with a heavy, brooding gloom, “When Henry slams the door on me this morning, I am sunk. I can’t do nothing. I don’t even give him a shutoff like I should have two weeks ago! Victims is it! Ingrates, chislers, pigs at the civic trough!”
The lady turned her head with weary impatience. Was Auger even slightly abstract? Could she inquire, "Mr. Auger has it ever occurred to you that truth has more dimensions than a prism? It's all relative, you know. Not up or down, not this side or that, but all at once and all the time."

But Mr. Auger had a meter key and the power to declare drought. Truth to him was a long, narrow trestle across a deep, black pit. She doubted if her husband's rights and roars would have kept them as clear of the pit as had her diplomacy—so far. To all that Mr. Auger had related, her husband would have replied, "I haven't got the money. So what?"

So what indeed! So out with the key and off with the water. But suppose diplomacy achieved no more than a shutoff? Suppose in answer to her husband's subsequent oratory on the sanctity of the American home, she replied, "But the meter box is at the boundary and we owe PEOPLE'S SERVICE six dollars and ninety-seven cents! When you owe, you owe." That sounded uncomfortably like Mr. Auger, but it was a fact. "All right, we owe the louse," her husband would agree, for the sake of the argument alone. "We owe everybody else too, but the telephone company hasn't hit the breadline and the gas and light bigwigs aren't rattling tin cups, so I guess the PEOPLE'S SERVICE can patch its pants a little while longer. What the hell! If you haven't got it, you haven't got it. If he gives you some lip, put your foot on his chin, smile like a lady, and PUSH him downstairs!"

Rising from his reverie with a sigh, Mr. Auger directed the uplifted reproof of a martyr at the tops of the sycamore trees. "I know hard times when I see them," he said, "I saw Henry's wife in the hospital with bills rising like they was on a meter. I saw him and his son's family doubled up in the old place. Everything I could do, I did. My wife made cakes, we took over roast, even chicken the nights we played pinochle. Twenty years we been meeting twice a month for dinner and pinochle and never a touch of trouble or hard words, not even over politics."

He shook his head with slow woe, "But now it comes to this. Johnny thinks he's got grief! Johnny don't know nothing! Why, my wife goes around like a ghost. She don't laugh. She don't even get mad. When I say something about Henry she just gives a long breath and says she guesses I did what I thought was best. A heluva (I-beg-your-pardon) lot of help that is!"

The lady's spirit sagged in despair. Of what use were proletarian protests or smiles or wiles against this ego in hickory? Only her first smile and her first volley had he seen or heard. What would fall would fall, shutoff or stay-on. She was but a chip on the stream!

But resignation fled in quick alarm as Mr. Auger withdrew his meter key from the slot at the side of his hickory overalls and began tapping it against the hard, shiny surface of one big palm.

His voice lowered to deep confidences. "You know how trouble is, Madam, one drop and it floods. Well, when Henry's son-in-law lost his job, I put him on the credit list. I know I shouldn't, but he was helping his folks, friends of mine too. He got odd jobs, then he went on relief and after that the road projects. And not a nickle for PEOPLE'S SERVICE in all that
time. I kept shut, even when I heard the gas company is getting tough and a couple of store bills have got to get paid or else. But I got an awful worrying there'd be nothing left for PEOPLE'S SERVICE."

The mysterious THEY again. Auger was really just a symbol of the people hounding themselves in a swirling dogfight. Once more the lady's spirit faltered. The mouse may have gnawed the lion's cords but what was mere rope compared to Mr. Auger's abhorrence of red ink and deficits?

Mr. Auger drew a deep, burdened breath. "I'm desperate, Madam, when it comes to me sudden how lucky Henry's son-in-law has been at pinochle lately. Always raking in the winnings. We play for only a small point, just to give the game snap. But when I told him how he could pay a little down on the water bill after each game, was he glad? Did he thank me? Madam, he blew up like a steam exhaust."

Was the man a worm? the lady wanted to know. Did Auger actually expect to find the world peopled by water subscribers who always paid their bills by the tenth of the month and never complained when he flushed out the hydrants on wash day?

But that was merely her private opinion. For Auger she said, "St-st-st-st-st-" with slow, incredulous head shakings, as if Henry's son-in-law were beyond her comprehension.

"Ah, but listen," barked Mr. Auger with a glance of dramatic import. "Out of the room stomps Henry's son-in-law, the wife and the baby! All my family give me the look of slapped puppies and Henry's son wraps up the pot roast we'd brought like it was poisoned. Back to me he shoves our offering and out I go, getting madder every step. Did I put down the screws next day? Madam, you'd be surprised how quick that bill got paid!"

But triumph was fleeting and his eyes faded. "I guess that would have finished the pinochle games, only Henry's wife was taken bad. I was with Henry when she died. Right away everything falls in on them. Bills, more bills, nothing but bills. Henry gives his son rent free for boarding him. Then Henry's son gets laid off, they both owe PEOPLE'S SERVICE and a baby drops in! Trust a baby, madam, to know when things couldn't be worse! Well, Henry's son is stiff-necked about relief, he never did like taking orders, so he tries any job he can get, including giving that little truck of mine the squeak of a piccolo when it hits thirty. I told him, 'Kid, don't repair no more cars, because one of your customers is apt to come back on you with a tire iron!'

The lady made polite, tinkling laughter and cast roguish eyes at Mr. Auger who beamed in response. "But wait 'til I tell you, madam," he counseled, "Listen how some people get all the breaks, even if they do cry about how bad they are treated. What happens to Henry's son? He buys a Sweepstakes ticket with money he might have paid to PEOPLE'S SERVICE and what happens then? He wins a place and a prize! A big prize!"

The meter key rapped out these monstrous facts, just grazing the lady's apprehensive nose, but she held on to her expression of burning interest.

Mr. Auger leaned forward, fixing her with his pale, cold eyes, "Madam, the minute I see the news in the city paper, I grab the phone as a friend of the fam-
ily and I congratulate this kid. I'm not too fast about mentioning PEOPLE'S SERVICE, but I get it in. Sure, he's going to get that bill paid up right away. Well, madam, I wait and I wait. Lots of talk I hear at the pinochle games (bygones were bygones then) about how there's money for Federal taxes and State taxes and the gas company and the doctors, but nothing for PEOPLE'S SERVICE. Every time I say something, they tune me out with this oh-sure talk. Well, as you can see, I'm soft about Henry and his family. I let 'em ride."

Again the man implied a heart that throbbed in human fashion. Incredible! But the lady shook her head with sympathetic distress while casting wary, little glances at the restless meter key. It looked very much as if Auger were merely waiting for the proper period to desend upon the meter box and turn the valve.

Mr. Auger gave a great gusty sigh. "I couldn't sleep, madam, wondering what lay ahead of me. But one day it settles itself. I'm coming back from mending a busted pipe near the big tank when Henry's son glides by me along the main stem in a new stream, four door sedan so shiny it nearly blinds me."

The lady's heart leapt with icy premonition, returning to an apprehensive flutter as Mr. Auger, swallowing painfully, narrowed his eyes with offended virtue. "Madam, that ear got me. Here I am a man who pays his bills and sees to it his own kids pay theirs, even if it's only a quarter at a time. And there sits Henry's son in that swell blue ear with Pa puffed up beside him like a bull frog on a lily pad. Both of them feel so grand they can't even see me, their good old friend!"

Mr. Auger's lips drew tight. "I'm patient, madam, but when they darn near rip off my headlights making one of those swoop-and-zoom turns by the courthouse, I'm through. I don't take no gas shooter's muffler fumes. Why should I? Me swallow his carbon monoxide when he owes the PEOPLE'S SERVICE? Madam, I put on the gas and I cut in on that sedan so quick he bounced when he stepped on those swell new hydraulic brakes. 'Hey you!' I bawls out the side of my tin heap, hoping the whole town'd hear me. 'How about that bad water bill you ain't paid a nickle on?'

The lady gasped. If he'd do that to friends of thirty years, what chance had she?

Mr. Auger smirked with vicious satisfaction. "The town heard me all right, madam. That boy jumps down out of his new ear like a cat with a swelled tail. Little short guy he is, like his father. What a beef he made! He'd beat me up, he'd knock me all over State Street. I may have some gray hairs, Madam, but I'm far from a runt as you can see and I've wiped his nose too many times to take cracks like that!"

The lady resumed nibbling the tightly folded shutoff slip, staring up at Mr. Auger with steady, frightened eyes. Mr. Auger bristled with menace. "'Listen shrimp!' I tells this bird, 'You're too little to talk like that to me. You get back in that ear and you raise the price of this bill or you won't find no water in your faucets when you get home. And tomorrow's Saturday and the next day's Sunday and I don't
work neither day, not even if the whole town goes dry! So step on it!"

There it was again! Six dollars and ninety-seven cents or else! For this exercise in tyranny she had lost her soul in a futile hour of doorstep mediation. Where could she raise six dollars and ninety-seven cents in less than five, less than one minute?

"Give him some buttons!" her husband would have told her. "Tell him it's money in your language. Ask him, does he want a rubber check or will he keep his blood pressure down 'til I get paid. And if he doesn't like it, put your foot on his chin, smile like a lady, and push him downstairs!"

It was that or nothing. The lady was measuring the idea, when Auger's dark, introspective resentment met her startled gaze.

"Madam," his voice was husky, "Maybe you'll understand how I feel right now. Today is Henry's birthday. Never in thirty years and more have I failed to go over to say happy birthday with cigars on my way to work. Always he does the same by me. Today, madam, I ring the bell. I think nothing of the mixup downtown. Bygones are bygones with me. By rights I should have cut off their water six months ago. But nobody thinks about that. When Henry opens the door this morning what does he do? Madam, he screws up his mouth under that little gray mustache and he spits words at me! Heel, snitch, pinch-penny, snake-in-the-grass, Shylock, Judas! And then, madam, he slams the door! BANG goes thirty years!"

In anguished silence Mr. Auger studied the neat black letters on the side of the little tan truck parked under the sycamore trees.

The lady of the house could not keep her eyes off Auger’s meter key. Though it hung limp from one big hand, that key might at any moment snap into action. It had the fascination of a firing squad.

But Auger's face was clouded by memories of persecution. The proletariat were to him just a mass of howling ingrates. Her feeble loyalties had gained her nothing. Even her best smiles had failed. But she wore the last of them like a hypocrite's waxen mask that had begun to crack.

Slowly smoothing the wrinkled shut-off slip, she shot her final dart, a bit of consolation calculated to reduce Mr. Auger's alleged heart to a trembling state of brotherly love. "I've found trouble to be just a mirage of hardfast beliefs," she told him, "The closer you look, the deeper you delve, the farther they fall away. Your friends just don't see..."

Mr. Auger's sad face gave back a blank detachment. "Huh?" he asked without hearing and fished a big nickel-plated watch out of a hickory bosom pocket.

"Oh well," he sighed, pensively regarding the watch face. "I can get as tough as any of them."

The lady blushed for her sweet philosophy, then rallied with sharp dread and braced herself, for Mr. Auger bounded back to aplomb as swiftly as he had fallen.

Slipping the meter key into the slot at the side of his hickory overalls and smiling down his nose with benign condescension, Mr. Auger said quite briskly, "You know, madam, you can't make a record of all but one and one-half percent paidup bills without working for
Frontier and Midland

it. If they want to owe somebody let them try owing the gas company or the telephone outfit, but not the PEOPLE’S SERVICE. That burns me, madam; they might as well cheat at solitaire!

Lifting his hat, possibly more by inference than fact, he concluded in bright, crisply departing tones.

"Good-day, madam. Remember now, I’m making you a special exception. Until eight Monday morning, then no money, no water!"

“Oh!” gasped the lady and shut her eyes to save the sycamore trees, the doorstep and Mr. Auger from spinning over in a surge of jubilance.

Halfway down the path, Mr. Auger flushed, turned swiftly and called back, "And thank you kindly, madam."

But the lady of the house had already closed the door.

MORNING SONG

JOSEPH CHERWINSKI

The crystal jewels of morning
heap in the grass,
a young-deer wind is running
through the fruit trees,
and the maidens have come to bathe
in the river.

O, their arms are wet copper branches!
Their breasts are golden apples!
Their hair shimmers blue-black
as blackbirds’ wings!

They are the morning of life,
the cool sweet morning!

O god of the rain!
O god of the sun!
You have made our maidens fair!
MEN AND FATE

I. MEN WITH HARD FACES

ELIZABETH HERRIOTT ALLEN

The crawling years have robbed them of desire;
. . . The flood, the drought, the bitter harvesting.
Not winter’s hush nor autumn’s horn and fire
Could rouse their song, nor all the eager spring.
They will not stop beside a flowering peach,
The maying tree that piles with rose-of-dawn—
Who has the time for loitering, or speech,
Or watching orchards put their blossoms on?

Yet if they go from furrow and from field
They are as strangers in a foreign land.
The stolid earth and what the earth will yield
Are all they ever love or understand.
And I have seen them leave a city street
For faded lawns that crunched beneath their feet.

II. LONE WOLF

JOHN STAHLBERG

The coyotes howl tonight
in the dark coulees, on the shadowy hills, under the
dim cut banks.

First one
(Hu-hu-hu-huuuuuuuuuuuuuh!)
Another
(How-how-aaaaaaaaaaaaah!)
And another,
(Hoof-hooooo0000000000!)

Are they howling because their hearts are heavy?

I wonder why only coyotes may howl
to the dead echoes.

Let me shed this human garb
and don a coat of fur
and join my brothers in the hills
and squat on a snowbank so old that it is gray.
Let me throw back my head
and turn my wild muzzle to the stars and howl!
III. RANGER

COURTLAND MATTHEWS

When I am dust beneath the forest cover,
No wind that tells in March of trillium bloom
And currant flower in cedar-scented gloom
Will charm to dreaming one who was a rover
Of these green hills. No sunshine of September,
Nor smell of smoke in twilights of the fall;
No tread of deer, nor any wild-bird call—
Only the rain will make my heart remember.

Only the rain beloved by forest ranger,
The autumn rain that ends the fire and fear,
Gray healer of the burn, the singing changer
Of death to life. Remembering, I shall hear
(Knowing my fir-green hills are free from danger)
The pattering music of the closing year.

IV. FARMER

DENNIS MURPHY

Red coals of sunset fall upon the hearth
Of day, yet he must labor on whose bronze
Muscles have stood the centuries of suns
And rainy winds that lash him out of mirth.
For him no renaissance, no bright new birth
Of dreams and ecstasies, no blue beyonds—
But ages of hard work, those iron bonds
That chain him always to his master earth.
Yet there appears a truth more exquisite
Than anything carved out of song or stone:
The earth is his. He conquers it. And it
Will render slave and Caesar each his own.
This simple one, this servant of the clods
Goes to a kingdom durable as God's.
MOMENTARY MEDITATIONS

Carrow De Vries

I. A THOUGHT

New Truths
Are the result
Of a kind of crystal clear
Insanity
Known to but few men.

II. DESIRES

Give me this plat of black loam
The dank smell of new-turned earth
The sense of things growing.

Give me this earthy blood woman
The heavy scent of her
The sense of love growing,
Who wants, can have the rest.

III. STRONG ONE

Oh strong one
Conquer your fear
Do not run away.
You may die here
But is not running away
A worse though different kind of death
A mortification of your personality!

IV. SOILLESS

How far I am
Away from the soil
Comes to me
As I see consciously
My first grasshopper
Of the season—
Already August is half gone—
He comes walking
Toward me
Across the black cinders
Of this metropolitan railroad yard,
Of all places.
I'VE seen men die.

I reckon I've seen a half-a-dozen drap in their tracks without loosenin' their broggans. I seen Ruf Craig swallow a bullet square in his mouth and go down with his teeth clenched, his lips drawed, and nary a speck o' blood droolin' out.

I seen Brag Thomas soak up a plug o' lead in his heart last gingerbread election. He never batted an eye. Jist sort of sunk down in the mud, his eyes standin pine-blank open. When they laid him out it tuk five nickels to hold his lids down.

O I've seen men head toward eternal torment without a flinch. But men are powerful braggers. They would do this, and they would do that. When it comes to stretchin out final for the grave-box, no man can say what he'll do.

Death cin come sudden. Here on Squabble Creek it comes that way more'n a leetle. Hit don't tickle-toe up and tell you to lay down and pull the sheet up. And to call yore woman, and yore pap and all yore young'uns.

Hit's like lightnin strikin a yaller poplar and skinnin her all the way down. Hit's like yore heart turnin square over and givin you a minute to do all the rest o' yore life's thankin in. This ole breath kin be mighty puore and sweet when it comes to loosin it.

I've seen men die. But nary a one that tuk it like a lost brother come home.

O nary a one 'cept Ambrose Middleton who never dodged a chunk o' lead all his days. And never moved a frog-hair to stop the last one. Ole Fiddlin Ambrose who never harmed a critter in his life, who made ole Bollen County the best sheriff they ever knowed, and who could fiddle like all git-out.

His fiddle was the sassiest in the hills. He made it hisself out o' best grained cherry. And he drawed and waxed his own catgut. Thar was fourteen rattlesnake rattlers makin it sound like the one I heerd ole Bull had. I heerd tell he was the fiddlinest fool ever lived. I reckon he was favorin Ambrose. Ruther play than to eat ground-hog gravy.

And when Ole Fiddlin Ambrose come to die, I reckon he was tickled and never begrudged a wink o' light that went out o' his eyeballs.

O he never put store in livin like you and me. He wasn't stingy with the calendar. Not since he killt his blood-son Parly nigh goin on twenty years ago.

He never aimed to do it. Hit was puore accidental, and it was with a shotgun he was unloadin after he'd come in from a fox hunt. And his belly had been washin likker for a week afore. He never tetch a drap after that. Not in these twenty years.

Hit's a lot o' tales they tell on ole Ambrose. About him scratchin up the grave-box with his fingernails the night after the buryin. About him makin his bed in the graveyard for three months. I never put a grain o' faith in them tales.

Parly was buried on the ivy p'int yon side the doublins. Never the time did I see Ambrose on that p'int, never the night or day in all my life. Once I seen him standin in a patch o' moonlight lookin up thar. I reckon he was lookin square through that hill at the
stars. He stood thar a long time, never movin or retchin his eyes down. I streaked off through the thicket and he never knowed I seen him.

I never seen nothin quare about Ambrose.

There was nothin quare about him 'less it was the way he sawed the fiddle. He could make yore feet go to beatin time spite o' wish and damnation.

There was nothin quare 'less it was the way he stood up to the shootin and scrappin when he was The Law. O he'd spit death in the face many the time. He never cared after Parly went. With him it was jist hell or no.

After Parly went he was in a puore bad fix. I reckon he jist run for sheriff to give him somethin to thank about. Well, hit wasn't much runnin he done. He jist stuck his name on the ticket and said no more about it. Ambrose Middleton ain't asked a livin soul to vote for him till yet.

O he put the cat on the fellows runnin agin him. I figger folks voted for Ambrose 'cause he didn't ask 'em to. I figger they voted for him out o' puore respect.

You wouldn't a-knewed Squabble Creek when Ambrose was sheriff. It got to where a fellow could go to a bean strangin, or a log-rollin without gittin his skull cracked with a gun-barrel. Or his nose, or his ears bit nigh off.

When ole Ambrose was around you'd better keep yore barlow knife retched out o' sight. Many the time he stepped square in where the bullets was a-spewin. He never got a scratch till his time come at Wage Thompson's squar' dance.

When ole Fiddlin Ambrose was The Law he jist about opened the jail doors and told all the likker makers to git home. He told them to git to their homeseats and plant a patch o' corn for their women and young'uns.

But he done one thang he ought never done.

Thar was a boy in jail named Tobe Romer who had jist about growed up yon side the bars. I reckon he'd got more jailhouse victuals than any other kind. His mommy and poppy was dead and he jist run wild on the hills like a fox, a-stealin and a-preyin.

Tobe was twenty-one on the record books, but he didn't look more'n seventeen. And he was all the devils in torment rolled in one ball. O he'd steal the horns off a billy goat. You had to be good to Tobe Romer or he'd feed pizen to yore hound dogs. Or burn yore house down over yore head. He was a rascal if thar ever was one twixt earth and burnin hell.

The devil hisself must o' put the idea in Ambrose's head.

He tuk Tobe to his house and treated him like he was his own blood. He give him everythang. Hit was a sight the pettin Ambrose give that boy. But it didn't make no difference to Tobe. I reckon it come too late.

Hit was like pettin a wild cat. He jist tuk all Ambrose would give him, then he'd raise more racket than ever. But Ambrose never give up. Tobe always had plenty o' good victuals, and he tuk to more meanness 'cause Ambrose was The Law and he'd never be put in jail agin.

I reckon Ambrose done everythang he could. Everything that talkin and beggin could do. You can't make a saint out o' the puore devil. Tobe jist done what he'd been doin straight on and many the knife stayed sharp for
his hide. I bet thar was bullets jist achin for his meat.

I was at Wage Thompson’s squardance when Ambrose met the bullet that was molded for him the minute he was born. O that lead had been a-growin sixty-two years afore it had a chancet to do its work.

Thar was Ambrose settin on a splintwood chair, fiddlin for puore glory. O he could make a fiddle talk sweet talk. He could make it whine like a baby when he had a mind to. He could make it yell and holler, and nigh walk out o’ his hands when he put hisself to it.

John Tolbert was callin the sets and we had danced three, gittin powerful warm, and beginnin to sweat. He was jist gittin limbered up good when Tobe come in. He was all lit and his chin was sort of hung over his collar. We looked at Ambrose settin thar in his chair with his fiddle in his lap. Ambrose jist set thar and never let on.

I went outside with a couple o’ fellows to take a drank, and when we come back I see somethin had hap-pened. Tobe is settin by hiself in the corner and glarin at Ambrose pine-blank. Ambrose ain’t payin him no attention.

Somebody tells me Ambrose has told Tobe to leave and stay gone till he sobers up.

But Tobe ain’t made a move. And Ambrose ain’t sayin a word. He’s jist a-settin and a-restin for the next set.

Then, sudden-like, Ambrose gits up and walks over to Tobe. We stood thar froze and wonderin. He never says nothin, jist stands thar and looks at Tobe. Tobe gits to squirmin. I reckon his seat was gittin too hot for him. He gits up and sidles out o’ the room.

John Tolbert jumps out in the middle o’ the floor and hollers right big, and Ambrose gits to pullin down hard on his bow agin. First thang we knowed we was shufflin the Squirrel Chase. And the fiddle was nigh talkin.

*Keep yore skillet good and greasy all the time, time, time.*

O that was a sweet set we was a-dancin. It must o’ been a heap o’ noise we was makin too, draggin and scrapin our feet, keepin time to that music. That music was like a dream you dreamt.

I was swingin Hebe Fuller’s daughter right nigh Ambrose when I heerd somethin crack. You couldn’t have hardly heerd it with all that noise and everybody laughin and payin no attention to nothin ’cept cuttin corners proper.

Hit was like somebody had broke a right dry stick in a brashpile. I looked at the window and didn’t see nothin. Then I looked at Ambrose and I saw the quarest look on his face. But he was still strikin that catgut with all his might.

Right off I knowed what had hap-pened. I broke loose and started for the door, lookin back at Ambrose. He shuck his head and I knowed he didn’t want me to go out. I didn’t say nothin ’cause there wasn’t nothin to say. If I was actin quare nobody paid me any mind. I was drankin right peart.

I jist stands thar starin at Ambrose. And I seen the happiest look come on his face.

He laughed right out loud and keeps greasin that skillet with his bow. *Keep yore skillet good and greasy*—Then I knowed he hadn’t been hit.
Frontier and Midland

O hit would take a charmed bullet to drill ole Fiddlin Ambrose.
I grabs Hebe Fuller’s daughter agin and swangs right swift round the cor-
ner, feelin sort o’ proud of ole Ambrose never turnin a hair.
O they’ll never forget how he played that set.
When I come back round to Am-
brose’s chair I looks at him agin. He was still laughin and his fiddle ain’t
stoppin a minute. But he looks quare. He was gittin pale. All the time he’s
workin that bow like a cross-cut saw in a walnut log.
Then I takes another look and I see
Ambrose is holdin that fiddle up high
but he can’t hide it.
I see his shirt and the dancin jist run
clear out o’ my feet. It was time to
swang, and I swung like my jints was
frost-bit. I kept a-goin. I knewed
Ambrose wanted it that way.
We was nigh through that set when
the music stopped.
We was caught thar with our feet
clear off the floor and no music to put
’em down with.
I heerd Ambrose’s fiddle hit the floor
and one strang twanged.
I never looked. I couldn’t look.
I jist draped down on one knee. My
eyeballs was hot as a coal.

ALONE ON THE MOUNTAIN

MARIE DE L. WELCH

I only of the living here
Know with sharpened breath
The tall and hardy ranges
Of unbroken growth.

I alone know death.
I and nothing else
On all this mountain dream
Of true and false.

All is beauty here,
And fierce peace;
Indeed I am alone,
Alone aware of these.
LONG and leisurely passage of time is not everywhere required for the growth of folk ways. In Montana, change, rather, and the human tendency to romanticize what is past, have led to the formation of tradition and legend, some of it accepted elsewhere more readily than within the State. The notion, for example, that this is a land of noble but hell-raising cowboys who gallop over vast empty plains with trigger fingers itching dies amazingly hard. To match it we have the tradition that all Easterners are ignorant and credulous tenderfeet whom any ranch hand can “kid” with impunity. Our estimate of ourselves is summed up in the familiar words “Where men are men.”

Early Folk Ways: Early western hospitality was a matter of mutual protection; a rancher’s home was everyone’s castle because that rancher had himself need of a welcome at other ranches. Even when nobody was at home, a cold, tired, and hungry rider could stable and feed his horse, enter the house, and cook a meal. Only one rule qualified the privilege: He must leave the place neat.

Cowmen had a term of special contempt—“grub-line rider”—for the rare ne’er-do-well who rode from ranch to ranch merely to obtain meals, or otherwise abused the custom.

Sometimes more than contempt enforced the rules. A rough character known as Bull Creek Miller disappeared after a horse-stealing raid, and six ranchers hunted him down. Miller readily admitted having “stolen a few cayuses,” but felt it was no great crime, especially as the best one had “piled” him and returned home. One Hodgins agreed for the posse that the theft might be overlooked. But there was another matter to settle.

“Did you eat at my place yesterday?” he asked.

“Yes, sure I did. Nobody was home, so I cooked a meal.”

“Can you read?”

“Yes.”

“Did you see a sign on the wall by the table?”

“Yes, but I didn’t pay much attention to it.”

“There’s where you made a mistake,” said Hodgins. He consulted the others and it was decided Miller should hang.

The sign the outlaw had ignored read:

“If you are hungry, grab a plate; You have my best of wishes. But jest before you pull your freight Be shore to wash the dishes.”

The old-time cowboy is supposed to have been a hard-ridin’, hard-drinkin’, quick-shootin’ hombre who delighted in charging down Main Street with blazing pistols and resounding yells. Proverbial are his fondness for lassoing street signs; his skill with a gun, and his joy in such whimsicalities as making newcomers dance by firing at their feet; and the situations he got into in his rare encounters with refinement.

Two favorite legends keep cropping up: the horse that couldn’t be ridden and the cowboy who couldn’t be thrown. When they come together, the dramatic possibilities have no limit but the limits of narrative art, for no one can know whether the unthrowable buster will bust the unbustable bronc or the irresis-
tible horse will displace the immovable man. A range ballad tells the story from the cowboy’s angle, modestly allowing the horse to win:

**THE BRONC THAT WOULDN’T BUST**

I’ve busted bronchos off and on
Since first I struck the trail,
And you bet I savvy bronchos
From nostrils down to tail;
But I struck one on Powder River,
And say, hands, he was the first
And only living broncho
That your servant couldn’t burst.

He was a no-count buckskin,
Warn’t worth two-bits to keep,
Had a black stripe down his backbone,
And was woolly like a sheep.
That hoss warn’t built to tread the earth;
He took natural to the air;
And every time he went aloft
He tried to leave me there.

He went so high above the earth
Lights from Jerusalem shone;
Right thar we parted company,
And he come down alone.
I hit terra firma,
The buckskin’s heels struck free,
And brought a bunch of stars along
To dance in front of me.

I’m not a-ridin’ airships
Nor an electric flyin’ beast;
Ain’t got no rich relation
A-waitin’ me back East;
So I’ll sell my chaps and saddle,
My spurs can lay and rust;
For there’s now and then a digger
That a buster cannot bust.

The lore of the plains settlements brims with the humorous fortitude that used exaggeration and laughter as a means to make difficulties bearable. Lack of roads inspired such owlish yarns as that of the farmer who drove up to a parsonage, accompanied by a middle-aged woman and several children. “We figgered on comin’ in and gettin’ married sooner,” he apologized, “but the roads have been so bad we couldn’t make it.”

Some settlers apparently enjoyed the prairie loneliness, or at least needed wide room for their boredom. One is said to have moved as soon as he could see the smoke of a neighbor’s fire; another tried to stop the railroad by tearing up a section of new-laid track and moving his house into the breach.

Whisky was plentiful, but water was some times hard to get. Milk and butter were almost unknown, for “longhorn” cattle were not a dairy breed; and cowboys felt that a job like milking, which could not be done in the saddle, was beneath the dignity of men who were men. When they did attempt it, it was a fearsome process. One man roped the cow’s hind legs, another her front legs, and a third extracted the milk, while the air grew smoky with their vigorous talk. Even today hosts in some of the remotest plains regions think it a good joke to ask a new arrival whether he will have milk or water to drink—and heaven defend the tenderfoot who says he wants milk!

Most of the State’s outlaw lore concerns road agents and livestock thieves. Buried treasure is inevitably associated with them, and like pirates, they are often regarded as daring and romantic characters. A story about Kid Curry, who robbed trains and stages, shows there can be humor, if not honor, among thieves. Curry sauntered down the aisle of a railroad coach, holding out his hat. To prove that “it is more blessed to
give” promptly and substantially, he also held a six-shooter. A preacher contributed his mite, and as the small change clinked into his hat, Curry said “How come? If you can travel, you must have more money than that!”

“I’m a preacher,” explained the preacher.

Curry understood. “What kind of a preacher?” he asked.

“I’m a Methodist.”

The Kid’s eyes twinkled. “I’m sort of a Methodist myself,” he grinned, extending a five-dollar bill.

Many an “honest” cattleman made it a rule never to butcher animals bearing his own brand. Beef somehow tasted better if taken from a steer or heifer belonging to someone else. Two partners named Baker and Mays once rode out on an empty range to look for meat. They searched until they grew a bit confused, but at length Baker shot a fat heifer. In skinning her, Mays discovered that she bore his brand. His displeasure was extreme. They fell to quarreling, Mays accusing Baker of having picked the heifer intentionally, Baker replying with vigor. At last the latter hit the former on the head with his gun, and rode away. Mays recovered consciousness, an embittered man. Riding to the county seat, sixty miles away, he swore out a warrant for Baker’s arrest. The heifer was left to rot in the sun.

Dances were among the favored recreations of the pioneers. Whole families often traveled forty miles in the saddle or in wagons to attend, beginning to arrive in the afternoon and seldom leaving before morning. On special occasions a dance might last several days. Guests often brought their own liquor for the host to dispense at his discretion, and the quality of a dance was measured by the quantity consumed. A 2-gallon dance was a quiet affair; 10-, 20-, and 25-gallon dances were things to remember.

If the dance was large, it started with the grand march. In the quadrille that followed, young men in high-heeled boots vied in swinging the girls; middle-aged ranchers at least started with their wives. The largest women were literally “swept off their feet” by their husky partners. There was much stamping, and floors needed to be strong.

The average caller’s concern was with rhythm; only superior artists “made passes” at rhyme. A sort of free verse resulted:

All set. Salute your partners.
Swing on the corner. Alamen left.
Meet your partners and swing ’em home.
First couple lead to the couple on the right
Pass right through, and balance, too,
And swing the girl behind you.
Swing that girl, that pretty little girl,
The girl you left behind you.

During the midnight lull, while the dancers ate, and the caller rested, a plaintive song would be sung: “We all must die like the fire in the grate.” Its mood would infect some cowboy, inspiring a basso profundo “Oh, bury me not on the lo-one prair-ree!”

The fiddler would then play the Irish Washerwoman; the crack jig dancer would do his stuff; and the dance would be on again. The caller would try his most difficult variations, stepping out on the floor to guide falterers while continuing his rhythmic chant:

Swing 'em to the center
and promenade round
Pass your honey
and balance to the next,
Swing alamen left,
Grand right and left.
Meet your honey, and swing 'em to the
center, and gents promenade.

The pioneer dress was simple. Men
went everywhere in work clothes, which
often included spurs. A woman wore
basque and overskirt, sometimes a polo-
naise, stout stockings, button shoes.

Modern Folk Ways: For a few days
each summer and fall, the roundup or
rodeo brings back the old Wild West, as
the country's top cowhands gather to
bust broncs, rope calves, ride steers, and
do bull-dogging and trick roping. The
purpose of the early roundup was to
gather stock of many brands into one
herd, and then to cut out those that were
to be branded or shipped. After the job
was done, the cowboys amused them-
selves by displaying their expertise in
the daily activities of ranch life. Rodeos
are a reenactment of those scenes. State
or county fairs are seldom complete
without a rodeo, and many an Independ-
dence Day celebration resolves itself into
one, after a few conventional prelimi-
naries. Informal exhibitions on ranches,
with only the hands and a few neighbors
watching while some bad horse is ridden,
often form welcome interludes in a busy
season.

Old-timers' reunions are usually pic-
nics and dances where music, dress, and
dance steps all contribute to a pioneer
atmosphere. Reminiscent speeches are
featured. The Vigilante Parade held in
May in several cities is a celebration of
that type, but with more display.

Holidays are celebrated variously.
Among Scandinavian residents no
Christmas dinner is complete without
lutfisk—a dried cod reduced to extreme
tenderness in a brine of wood ashes or
lye, then cooked and served hot. A vast,
thin griddle cake called lefse, made of
flour and mashed potatoes, is baked on
a floured stove top, and served folded
and buttered. Two delightful old cus-
toms are slowly passing: julotta is a
simple service held in the churches be-
fore dawn Christmas Day; julebokker,
Americanized as 'Christmas fools,' are
people who go about the countryside in
fantastic disguises, invading houses and
entertaining their occupants.

In the Balkan colonies of Butte, Great
Falls, and Anaconda, Christmas begins
on the evening of January 6 (Julian
calendar) with the preparation of the
badnyak, a fire of three logs. A family's
first visitor after midnight mass is
known as the Polaznik. He sprinkles a
gloveful of wheat on its members, say-
ing "Christ is born"; they reply,
"Truly He is born," and sprinkle him
with wheat. He kisses one of the logs
in the fireplace and is given a present.

A Balkan pre-Lenten celebration, the
Mesopust (leave out meat,) lasts three
days, ending Shrove Tuesday. The
public exercises are held on the third
day. Slarko Veljacić, an effigy of the
people's sins and misfortunes, is tried,
condemned, dragged through the streets,
hanged, and burned, enabling the par-
ticipants to enter Lent with a clean
slate.

In Scottish settlements Burns' birth-
day is celebrated. His poems and songs
are featured, with bagpipe music and
national dances.

Billings beet workers celebrate Mex-
ican independence with a fiesta, Sep-
tember 15-16. There is some interpre-
tation of the Spanish exercises for Amer-
ican visitors.

Neighbors often gather to help those
who have had fires or other misfortunes.
The help may range from gifts to build-
ing or shingling bees at which the men of a community literally “put a roof over the head” of the unfortunates.

A farmer or rancher who wishes to move, without shipping his belongings, invariably has an auction sale. The good auctioneer, like the good square-dance caller, must be a combination of poet, priest, and clown, with complex and wonderful cries at his command. He must have a quick wit, and deep insight into crowd psychology, knowing when to be funny, when to plead for a bid, and when to chop the bidding short.

On the plains, entire communities join in jack rabbit drives. Lines of men miles long, armed with wooden clubs, move slowly over the prairie, converging upon large corrals into which the animals are driven, to be dispatched amid clouds of flying fur. A lunch (not rabbit) is then served at a camp fire or nearby house.

In Montana, as elsewhere, a baby is not born, but is brought by the stork, the doctor, or the milkman. Its arrival is usually followed by a “baby shower.” In the Scandinavian settlements, “sympathy soup,” a concoction of prunes, tapioca, and raisins, is brought to the mother while she is still abed.

An unannounced marriage is nearly always followed by a charivari, or, in common usage, “shiveree”—but the charivari is no longer merely an appalling noise. Nowadays the couple is whisked into an old trailer or buggy and “taken for a ride” amid the glare of automobile headlights and the tooting of horns.

In general, employer and employee are social equals. Ranchers and ranch hands call each other Jim and Bill; many an old-timer, addressed as “Mister,” would feel slighted. “Sir” is used only casually. (“Well, sir, it blew for a month—”) or for emphasis (“No, sir, I never saw such wind!”). Conventional greetings are most commonly used, but “howdy,” “adios,” and the Indian “how” are heard often.

Men on the range still wear the serviceable garb of the old West: cowboy boots, chaps, buckskin vests, and 10-gallon hats. Dude wranglers and punchers doing exhibition riding wear bright bandannas, silk shirts and other finery, but ordinarily cowboys disdain exaggerated western styles. Their clothes are likely to be old and worn—hats with holes in the crown for ventilation, chaps greasy, boots half-soled.

The days of gee and haw are past; horses now are taught merely to obey the reins and a few commands meaning “go,” “stop,” and so on. A short, sharp whistle or a shout of “All right!” may be used instead of “Giddap,” but “Whoa” is the universal stop signal. Many a flustered farmer has shouted “Whoa!” to his car or tractor. Riders talk casually to their mounts: “Come on, jughead; get goin’, cayuse.” In driving herds of livestock, plain yells are often used.

A sheep dog obeys both words and signals, and will round up sheep as long as his master waves an arm front-to-rear; when both arms are raised, he stops. A good herder uses his dog as little as possible, lest the sheep cease to fear him.

Beliefs: The importance of wind and rain in a semi-arid region makes weather signs the most typical of Montana folk beliefs. Because of the State’s size and diversity, they differ according to locality. Among the favorites are “changes of the moon” which influence everything from rainfall to the sex of babies. A moon with both horns up brings rain; one with horns down is a dry moon, be-
cause it cannot hold water. The interpretations are often reversed, however, making the dry moon wet, the wet, dry.

Rings around the sun and moon foretell cold, wet, or stormy weather; sun dogs and northern lights, cold.

A deep blue cast of mountains and hills in winter signifies moisture or warmer weather.

If prairie dogs move their towns to higher ground, the summer will be wet. If whirlwinds move counter-clockwise across the prairie, it will be hot and dry.

When sheep, cattle, or horses huddle together or drift toward shelter, and when a dog or cow stretches out its nose and sniffs the air, a storm is brewing.

Most superstitions found in Montana are equally familiar elsewhere:

If your right ear burns, someone is speaking well of you; if the left, your enemies are at it again.

A horseshoe nailed over the door for good luck must be hung open side up, or the luck will run out.

Foreign beliefs have passed into local lore, with or without changes. The Yugoslavs of Anaconda say that the superstition of “three on a match” originated in the Russian Orthodox funeral ritual, in which three candles are lighted with one flame.

Adopted beliefs include:

If clothing is mended while worn by the owner, a piece of bread held in his mouth willward off evil spirits which might otherwise be sewed into the garments.

A man whose second toe is longer than his big toe will be bossed by his wife.

More indigenous to the West are these beliefs:

To dissuade rattlesnakes from crawling in among the blankets, persons sleeping in the open should lay a coil of horsehair rope around the bed, for rattlesnakes hate horsehair.

A horse difficult to break will be more faithful than one with less spirit. A sleepy-looking one is likely to be a violent bucker. One may judge horses by the color of their feet: “One white foot, look him over; two, try him; three, buy him; four, no good.”

A dying sheep gives a “death call” at which other sheep rush to it headlong, heedless of cliffs, streams, quicksand, and the like.

Home remedies were often the only ones available in pioneer days. Those that then came into favor are not yet wholly discarded:

For rheumatism, wear a copper bracelet or anklet, or use a rattlesnake or skunk oil rub.

Hold a hot match point against a wood tick’s bite to remove the danger of spotted fever infection.

For bronchial and lung ailments, sleep on spruce boughs and chew spruce gum; take deep breaths of the pitch of balsam fir.

For a side-ache caused by rapid walking or by riding in a jolting vehicle, lean over toward the side that aches, and spit three times.

Heat is often used in primitive therapy. A negro is said to have cured himself of meningitis by drawing a red hot poker up and down his back. When an Indian has a sore which does not heal, he burns it and then gives it the care appropriate for a burn.

Water-witching is perhaps the favorite form of magic on the plains, where water is often hard to find. The “witch” is a forked stick. The “witcher” holds it by the forks, pointing the other end forward and up as he walks. Where his wrists feel a downward pull on the end of the stick, drill your well.
Frontier and Midland

Tales: Montana has fewer ghosts per square mile than most States, but the lack is being remedied. A few places are already haunted with efficiency.

In Bergen Coulee, near Roundup, a man was killed and chucked into a hollow tree. A family abandoned its home in the coulee and a neighbor seeded wheat on the land. At harvest time he sent his men, who had never heard of the murder, to shock the wheat, telling them to sleep in the cabin that night. At midnight they awoke. They heard nothing, saw nothing, yet felt a terrible, malign power in the atmosphere of the place. They lay still. It grew and tightened about them like some horrid hand. When they could bear it no longer, they jumped up and ran headlong out of the coulee. Even the rats and snakes now avoid the cabin.

Rather different is the ghost story of the large-footed cowboy who awoke from a tipsy sleep to see a pale, indistinct thing leering at him across the bed. With a yell of defiance, he drew his six-gun and shot a hole through his foot.

The legend of the lost mine appears in several places. In southern and central Montana its hero is Skookum (Good) Joe, who came to Billings one night and told a friend, “We’ve got it at last, Bud; richest thing in Montana.” Next day he was found dead. In the Bannack country the hero is Jim Olafson, who strode into a saloon with samples of the richest ore anyone had ever seen, saying he had found the mother lode. A rush into the hills followed, but the mine was not found. Jim became insane, and in a few months, died. Prospectors say his lode will be found again, but the man who finds it will be cursed with insanity.

Montana has one legendary superbeast, the great white wolf of the Belt Mountains. Immune to poison and bullets, it was so big and strong that it could carry a large sheep without dragging any part of it.

A favorite folk tale topic is the cussedness of range cows. A man whose cattle had damaged some haystacks was warned by the owner that the raids must stop, or the cattle would get what they deserved. He said, “Go ahead; the critters sort of need a workin’ over anyhow.” Next day the owner of the hay got one old cow into a shed, and began giving her the workin’ over. A cowboy found him huddled in a corner, feebly calling for help, while the cow industriously prodded him with her blunted horns. “He was sure cowed,” said the puncher later.

Two things prove that Paul Bunyan crossed Montana on his way from Puget Sound to the virgin pine forests of North Dakota: Paul thought too much of his noble blue ox to make unnecessary detours; and the ox, who was dragging a singletree and chain, left a trail across the State in which the Missouri River now flows. East of the Rockies, one end of the singletree caught and gouged out the Great Falls of the Missouri.
AUTUMN

I. HARVEST

ELINOR LENNEN

Now comes the season of falling leaf,
Of falling tear,
When hearts gather their harvest of grief
From all the year.

Poignant and bitter, marked by regret,
Garner the grain.
Winter shall winnow; then love may forget
The increase of pain.

Search out the least ravaged, scourge-bitten part
From the sad yield.
In soil watered when memories start,
Plow the spring’s field!

II. VERSE

OPAL SHANNON

Sunflowers: small suns drooping in alleys;
in the fields corn stands dry and brittle.
Trees burn without flame.

Four weeks till autumn. Each slow day
falls relentless. Sun claws at the night.
I wake, and the day
is a roomful of old shoes.

Rebel banners of the woods
will be but a shadow of victory
though it be autumn.
WHERE THE APPLE REDDENS

WARREN BECK

STEADY, he cautioned himself. Steady in that streak of loose gravel. Easy on the curves. Take no chances. Take no more chances, anyhow. You've done one man's share of gambling already.

Mary, big as she was now, had relaxed comfortably in the seat beside him and had let herself drift into drowsiness; but she noticed his strain. At last, after he had crawled a hundred yards behind a farmer's wagon rather than spurt around it ahead of an oncoming car, she laughed and protested.

"Tom, dear, you needn't handle me as though I were a case of eggs."

"But why so modest? Somewhat more precious than that," he told her, not looking away from the road, but patting her hand twice, hasty and awkward as a boy.

And that's a fact, he thought. Precious indeed. The greatest treasure—source of the race. The oldest treasure, perhaps what had moved man to build walls, beat out swords. Who knows what monkey-business man would have rested in, content to hang himself out by his hind legs on any temporarily convenient branch, if this treasure hadn't required care.

"How wonderful!" Mary was whispering, comically rapturous. "More than a whole case! But Tom, did you know eggs went up last week?"

"All that goes up comes down," he said, swerving around a bump in the macadam, "so look out."

Yes, he told himself, by all means look out. The mothers of the race had made man lose his race to be a contented monkey. Pretty thought! How to get your race and lose it! O pretty lousy pun! Damn near like what old Doc Shellabarger back in college used to relish as a conceit. Your conceit! One with Shakespeare, eh? Anyhow, now you know what you are, you're a frustrate monkey. Trained to drive carefully with something most precious. Say something.

"Most precious," he said. "No, ma'am, darling. I'm taking no chances with you, in your highly important condition."

"Sweet old Tom!" she answered, with a smile that he glimpsed in the mirror and returned hurriedly.

Stop! Hell, another arterial! But if one insists on going to Franklinville, if one insists and another assents, over the hills to the native village, over the side roads running at right angles—no, at wrong angles—to the main currents, at wrong angles to the busy flow on roads that really go places, then one who is going to Franklinville to show herself to the grandmother impatient to be made great, and another who is driving her there, must wait at arterials; they must be told, Stop! Stop! They also serve who only stand and wait. One of old Doc Shellabarger's favorites. But who wants to serve? But who cares whether or not you want to serve? They can draft you, can't they? Sure they can draft you, you yellow so-and-so. So we are going back to Franklinville by side roads, side-tracked, back to the cradle of Mary's childhood to fetch Mary's mother's cradle, for Mary's child. Stop! Why shouldn't you stop? You aren't going anywhere anyhow, just back to the
cradle. Jeez, why don’t I shut up? But the music goes round and round. Sermons in stop-signs, and metaphors in maternity. And confusion worse confounded. Where am I? What’s happened to the old ad-writer? It seemed as though I was talking to myself, but maybe it was two other fellows. There I am, though, on the driver’s card. Thomas Stratford Burton, that’s my name. And heaven’s my destination. I’ve just lost my way, that’s all. I’ve lost myself. Thea! Thea! Thea! where is Burton? Don’t tell me I’m still the Duchess of Malfi! Where there’s so much bellyaching there must be some Burton.

“Grandmother will be glad to see us,” said Mary, with a dreamy smile.

“I was just thinking of her a minute ago,” he said.

Ain’t repartee grand? Two minds with but a single thought! Earth hath not anything to show more fair! Let me not admit impediments! Shades of Shellabarger come to haunt the favored pupil who went and prostituted himself to ad-writing! So must some aging prostitute remember tearfully the daisies in the upper pasture on the old home place. Hath not a whore tears? Tell me not an ad-writer’s heart is harder.

“I don’t know,” Mary said, “whether I’ll be able to use that old cradle she wants me to have. Aren’t cradles awfully small?”

“I don’t know. I shouldn’t think so. Not too awfully small. Surely the pioneers with hairy ears had babies big as ours—pardon me, darling, nothing personal—I meant babies big as modern babies. They must have crammed ‘em into the cradles somehow.”

“And aren’t cradles awfully low!” Low enough to break both our backs, darling, tending the cradle. And I chose never to stoop. Or thought I did. “I couldn’t say how low they are,” he answered. “I’m really not up on cradles. Not even up to ’em, you know. All I remember about cradles is that they’re endlessly rocking. And Whitman said that, and Whitman was a bachelor, if I remember correctly, and if he remembered correctly, but how can anyone remember incorrectly? So what did Whitman know about cradles?”

“Crazy fool!” she said, affectionately.

“You couldn’t mean me, darling, so you must mean Whitman; but Whitman was not a crazy fool. He was a true poet, and a great free spirit, and he got himself so dirty he had to have the whole ocean to wash in.”

Mary settled herself on the seat with a contented chuckle and sigh.

“Feeling all right, darling?” he asked, solicitously.

“Wonderfully fine!”

A whole ocean to wash in. Wash in, wash out. The wash out on the line. The line of a wash-out. Wash out ahead of me? asked the drunk. Another stop sign! Stop! Oh, stop, for God’s sake! They that dally nicely with words may quickly make them wanton: Shakespeare. O wanton words, what a pimp you make of me! If anybody wants to get up a book on the ethics, aesthetics, and neuroses of the advertising profession—profession, my—yes, your profession, you laboring ass—your profession! Though it make the judicious Shellabarger grieve, it cannot but split the ears of the groundlings. Maybe I should have been a poet after all, the way he wanted me to be. But
our trade's much like poetry, professor. But yes, yes! *Le mot juste!* Wonder what happened to that waggish copywriter who hung up the office motto, 'Words are our tools, wherewith we carve our niche or bust'? He could have done an appendix on eccentricities. I'll do section three. The neurones of the advertising profession, by Miles Hamlet Dribblepencil, A.B., late of this and that ad firm, now infirm, now of the nut-house. Well, it's one way to make a living. What would all the low-life word-lovers and pseudo-literary sons-of-guns and fuse-fizzled poets do to make the price of a case of gin if it weren't for the good old ad racket? We may be inglorious, too, but we don't have to be mute! Not during working hours, anyhow. Expression! Whitman liked the whole ocean to wash himself in, but he would have turned his back on the Atlantic if he could have seen one of our nice shiny bathrooms, says so-and-so of the Tatler Hotels. Smug smiling face, an oval insert. Oh, the pity of it! O Captain, my Captain, I will not sell you to the Tatlers. Great free spirit, good gray dirty poet, go soak yourself in the surf; I will not soak you with the hotels. This is Sunday, we do not work on Sunday, on Sunday we are free men—Stop!

"You certainly do these stops very smoothly," Mary murmured, resting her head against the back of the seat and closing her eyes lazily.

"Think of my years as engineer on the New York Central—to say nothing of the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe."

He began to hum *Casey Jones.*

"The most comfortable ride I ever had," she said. "And the sun is so warm on my cheek, and the wind off these fields is so mellow—the smell of ripeness everywhere."

Ripeness is all! But you can't sneer at ripeness, you gnarled green apple, you, you maker of bellyaches. O God over heaven and earth and hell, see me, and let me lay only this flatteringunction to my soul, that eaten with the undying worm though I am, I never sneered at ripeness. I never sneered at you, darling. I've always loved you, and I love you as you are.

Her contentment warmed him suddenly like the sun out from a cloud. The staccato of the city streets and of the village stop signs faded out of his mind. He glimpsed the swelling curves of the harvested hills serene in their eternal fertility.

And suddenly, and otherwhence, I looked on your magnificence.

"Wake up, sleepy, and look at this bit," he said, softly.

She opened her eyes, sat up, and gazed at the willows dropping a few yellow slivers of leaves into the rocky creek that bordered the road, and at the rolling fields opposite.

"It's like a place we picnicked once," she reminded him.

"Sure enough. I know the one you mean. Remember the northern lights that night?"

"Weren't they lovely!"

She smiled at the recollection and closed her eyes again.

"Lovely!" he echoed.

And so were you, my dear, my lost slim sweetheart and gypsying companion. Oh, to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken! How did that long delightful road we traveled so freely lead me into this meagre dutifulness? Now Fortune has my hostage, and I am for-
tune's fool. But how can I forget our old quiet agreement, deep underneath all our crazy larks, that we stood back to back to preserve ourselves and each other from the world's ensnaring illusions and labors? Once you agreed, my dear—at least you said you agreed, and so you must have believed it then, that we are the vanishing Americans, doomed not only to get our white collars dirty, but to be crushed ourselves if we try to carry the weight of our traditions through this turmoil and chaos into another generation. But now! I suppose now you think I'm just spinning out my distaste for domestic responsibility into a whole theory of history and prophecy of cataclysm. I suppose you think something like that. I don't know. We don't know each other's thoughts any more. When sworn friends find themselves in opposing armies, they can only try not to meet. But how did you get on the other side, my dear? I never knew when you left me, or why. All of a sudden, in the midst of our sweet dream of unity, and straight against the grain of our companionship and our professed beliefs, you wanted a baby. Then you seemed strange, all of a sudden, over against me on the opposite side, quiet and calm and professing the old affection, but dead against me. Stop!

"Have we much farther to go?" she asked, drowsily, not opening her eyes.

"Ten miles," he told her.

Have we much farther to go? Does the road lead uphill all the way? To the very end. And you have laid on yourself a burden I cannot carry for you. That is the wedge of our separation.

He drove slowly across the intersecting concrete highway and carefully let the car gain a little momentum on the next stretch of gravel road; then, fearing that he had sounded preoccupied, he spoke again.

"'Ten miles. Time for a fifteen minute nap, darling. Take a snooze if you can.'"

"Maybe I can," she whispered, in a dreamy voice. "Snoozing's the best thing I do now. I had no idea a human being could feel so much like a vegetable—and like it so."

And like it so. Once she agreed, if you're the vanishing American, try to get by quietly and take what real pleasures you can find on the way out. But now, how can I do the vanishing American act easily and gracefully and yet leave a child behind? Who wants to beget a child and then just abandon him naked on the doorstep of the future? But wherewithal shall I clothe him? What warm idea, tight-woven, have I that he can wrap himself in, what taste that his generation will allow him to wear? What can I leave a son that I'm sure he'll have a use for in this brave new world, unless it's a gas mask? And maybe half a dozen shirts, assorted colors, just in any case. Oh, let the poor little sinners be bred by those who haven't so many questions to ask. And by those who know nothing else to do. Leave the human race to the Chinese—and to the good Americans on relief, with plenty of leisure for breeding. Why not? They've been sixty percent faster at it than we fellows who have jobs to look after. It's an age of specialization. Let the melting-pot simmer down to the homogeneity and unanimity of mediocrity. Whew! Of course, with the law of averages amended to make every man a king. Which ought to let me out, cer-
Frontier and Midland

certainly. But listen to the *ex post facto* orator. It’s too late to argue, boy; the rolling snowball has picked you up. All you can do now is wail, wail like Hemingway, that time he took refuge with Gertrude Stein, according to the Revelation of Toklas, and stayed for lunch and stayed for dinner and finally at ten o’clock at night came out with what was eating him, and wailed, ‘I, I am too young to be a father.’ Have it your way, Hemingway, but as for me, I’m too old to be a father. I’m a hundred and eighty right now; and believe me, since the Quaker City Declaration of Independence and the Parisian apotheosis of Reason I’ve aged one hell of a lot. O my darling, how could you want me, with my disease of doubt, for your child’s father? O my darling, when will I learn not to ask you questions? You can’t answer any of them. You couldn’t say why you wanted to give yourself into this servitude of body and spirit, any more than you know now how to build the bone and flesh of your child. All the more reason why I can’t forsake you. When you move in such a trance, you are doubly mine to cherish. This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. But I can’t even be jealous. You that are yet in the world and of it, pray not to be delivered from jealousy, not to be delivered from self-assertive ambition, and from prejudice, and from all the saving sins of the stout-hearted. Stop!

“Asleep, darling?” he whispered to her.

“No. Only dreaming.”

She did not open her eyes, but she smiled.

“Just six miles to go,” he told her.

“We’re on the old road now.”

“I know. I can feel the curves and the rise and fall of the road. I mean, I can see by feeling them. There’s the rocky hill with poplars.”

“It’s really very simple, ladies and gentlemen. She does it with mirrors.”

“It’s the strangest feeling, Tom. It’s like knowing a familiar room when you go into it without a light.”

O doubly sentient, deeply perceptive one! Perhaps I could see if I could only close my eyes. No, that’s a lot of mystic rot. And see, no longer blinded by our eyes. But Rupert Brooke was just winding up a sonnet with a roll on the snare drum and a cymbal crash, and he knew better, and said so elsewhere. Most poets are weathercocks, blown about by moods and tastes. Weathercocks—weather vanes—cocky and vain. Lousy! You take this vein in vain, Mr. Burton. But it’s only a vein taken in name. As I was saying, Doctor Shellabarger, a few poets are signposts, but most of them point down roads that are closed. We little men must creep about by back roads now. Opportunity for the *magnum opus* of this age: ‘Detour, the Art of Life!’ How characteristic, Miles Hamlet Dribble-pencil! You propose to systematize your eccentricity and call it art. Quite in the best artistic tradition, of course. Too, too utterly conventional, really. Nuts to it! Nuts to everything. Let Rupie damn his eyes all he wants to; tell him, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing, what the hell else should they be used for? For other people to stick their thumbs into? We’ve got to go according to our lights, steer by the beacons as we see them—oh, this last of course—or at least, in the absence of beacons, steer by what we glimpse in the lightning flashes of the brewing weather. So how can a man enlist himself in
the lost cause of middle-class home and family? Lost cause or forgotten art or exploded theory or outmoded method, whatever it is, how’s a man to swing it? Anyhow, a man like me, who’s been fool enough in his youth to try to take up his legacy as heir of all the ages, and is damn near smothered as it is in the multitudinous moth-eaten rags of his inheritance. Let the next generation be begotten by those who have no memories. What if it’s raw stuff they produce; a new deal needs raw material. I’m of no use. Whatever papier-mâché millennium is just around the corner, I can’t be a pillar in it. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. When smart guys ask too many questions and bring in too many minority reports, He cages them so closely in their own doubts that they won’t breed. The higher forms of animal life won’t breed in captivity, and Denmark’s a prison. At least, my thinking makes it so. Or maybe not just my thinking. Maybe Chaos, the oldest power, returns to claim his own. Or maybe God, in whom we all live and move and have our being, is the Great Centipede, who in our day has reached the awful stage of asking which leg is which. As for me, I’ll go play. I’ll gather me paychecks while I may; I’ll write ads to ease the gouty old order and hope it won’t blow up once more, and for the last time, while I still have three pairs of shoes to pay for. That’s my career—a career in reverse, enough to break old Horatio Alger’s trusting heart. This way out. As for the heir of all the ages, give him the air. So this is the way the world ends, not with a bang but a whimper. If whimper comes, can spring be far behind? Lousy, lousy! Query to automobile engineers—can spring be far behind? Memo: ask Mr. Ford next time you see him. Always talk to people about their interests. Not about yours. Never tell what you’re thinking. Silence, silence. Peace, it’s wonderful! Not a whimper! Not even a humanist, royalist, anglo-catholic whimper. Let the whimperers go feed themselves to the hippopotamus. What the hell difference does it make? No matter how thin you slice it, it’s still the old miasmal mist. Shut up. Shut up and say something. “Are you all right, darling?” he asked. “Certainly.”

Certainly she’s all right. She’ll get along somehow; she has a heart to go on, the darling. And I’ll stand by. I’ll do what I can. She would cling to her one and only husband through all this, the sentimental little Puritan, and through all that’s to follow. I’ll stand by, and I don’t even ask for a friend. But it might have been. It seemed for a while that we had found how to conspire to shape our two lives stealthily into a shared adventure against the world, going muffled and unobtrusive so that we would not be noticed, and feeding in secret on the pleasures like music and books that are untaxed and untaxing. We walked these hills, out from their old home, and talked such schemes. At least, I talked, and she listened and acquiesed. Go on talking! A smart fella, George Bernard, and a slick ending, that, but it’s the speech of a superwoman, it’s theatric not dramatic. You make your women too voluble and too articulate, Bernie. The real article isn’t like that. You, poor darling, wouldn’t tell me to go on talking. I can see you’d much rather I didn’t talk about unanswerable enigmas that are eating at me. And so I don’t talk,
and it fills me up and poisons me, and I wish I were dead, and I wish I were different, but I can't blame you for being what you are, as you were made, and I can't forsake you, although I'm really no damned good to you, but as long as you want me I want to do whatever I can. There's nothing I'd rather do than do what I can for you, if anything. I would build a wall; I would forge a sword sharp for your defense. That's the kind of aspiring monkey I've become. A woman is a fated creature, and fatal to the man who loves her and awakens her love. Little man, what now? Is sad experience making you prone to utter cap—T truth in single sentences? I wonder what's the correlation between sententiousness and soul-gripes? When I was one-and-twenty, I wasn't much given to maxims. Is this what Life has done to you—or is it the advertising business? Stop!

Mary spoke without opening her eyes.

"We're almost there, aren't we."

"Just outside the town. You'd better open your eyes, darling, and get used to the light, so that you don't walk in blinking, or your grandmother'll think you're drunk again."

"Don't worry. Grandmother knows you haven't been able to corrupt me."

"Right. You didn't fall my way."

It's so hard to be honest. It becomes so hard to be open. Now and then one tries, but it's no go. You aren't falling my way.

She opened her eyes quickly and looked about. They were entering the village street.

"Oh," she said, "there's that dreadful new porch on the old Morse house.

No wonder Grandmother was so disdainful about it."

He slowed the car and looked, grinning.

"'It's worse than the one Harding sat on all summer to win the presidency,' he said. "'Those were the days, my gal. Men made good livings by perching on flagpoles; mere children gathered in merchandise by living in trees; and Warren Gamaliel won the presidency by sitting on his front porch. The whole nation saw pictures of the porch and agreed that he deserved the largest possible reward.'"

She laughed. They rounded the corner into a street shaded with old elms.

"There's Grandmother," she said, and now she seemed to be trying not to cry.

He helped Mary out of the car and turned to fumble with the packages they had brought. He heard the two women call to each other as they hurried into each other's arms, and he knew that they were both crying in their familiar foolish way.

Oh, this is embarrassing! Do let's be brisk. Somebody say something funny, please. Lady, don't shoot; I'll marry your granddaughter, that's what I'll say. Stop! Do you speak city matters?

The grandmother turned and embraced him; pulling down his head, she kissed his cheek warmly, and he awkwardly returned the kiss. Then the two women sat down at once in chairs on the wide front lawn, and seeming to forget him, hurried into intimate discussion. He retreated to the car, and pretended to inspect the motor.

You clumsy ass, stay hitched and let 'em talk. Let 'em have a little privacy
for swapping data and lore, for speaking of symptoms past and to come, and all the many signs and wonders. Is nothing sacred to you, not even the tales and prophecies of a grandmother about to become great? Great with child. See, the grayhaired, wrinkled grandmother is tremulous for the delivery of her new rank in the maternal hierarchy. How the fervor possesses these women down to old age and the grave. See how women share a pregnancy. It's enough to show you the tide you tried to buck, puny Canute.

"Is the car all right?" Mary called, politely, to show that the interval had met their needs.

"Okay," he said, returning. "But I thought I heard a funny sound, and I wanted to be sure."

Would not this get me a fellowship in a company of players?

The grandmother's soft old voice warbled on.

"Your Cousin Martha is much better now than she was earlier in the summer. . . . Uncle Frank has done as well as he expected with that agency. . . . Yes, Martha's oldest is five now. . . . You knew Caroline and Jack are expecting their second baby—about two months after yours?"

Your's! Mine! The grandmother almost makes me believe in the being of our child, that unwearied faith of hers reaching out to the third and fourth generation. This mysterious winsome gladness—on what manna do they feed that supports them over the rocky deserts of their duty?

"You must see my apple trees," the grandmother was saying.

They walked slowly together around the side of the house, Mary holding his arm to steady her feet in the thick grass.

"It's been a wonderful season," said the grandmother. "See!"

They stood and looked at the loaded tree. Its limbs were bent in graceful arcs, and the clean red apples studded the branches everywhere.

"Isn't it the loveliest thing!" said Mary.

From one of the foremost branches an apple dropped, whistling through the drying leaves, and hitting the ground with a plunk.

"Oh," cried Mary, "it's been a long time since I've seen an apple fall!"

O my darling, my darling! I shall never forget the ardor in your eyes now, the lips parted with delight, and all for this ripe apple fallen to the grass.

Then faster than words he felt the increasing chill of autumn and its grayness, in which nevertheless the apples would yet be falling, ripened, fewer and fewer, but falling still; and after the snow had covered all the grass, when the nights were dark and cold, fruit like this, he dared to hope, would yet come to his hand, fragrant in its age, juicy still, and good for him to eat.
TO CHIEF KAMIAKIN, HAPPILY DEAD

CLARK EMERY

Squaws on the kerosene-sprinkled floor
Of Baldwin-Emery's grocery store,
Wrinkle-furrowed and black-eyed, squat,
Thinking, perhaps, of buffalo steaks
Or venison sweet in the tribal pot;

Of smoky fires on the Klickitat
When Chief Saluskin wore no hat
Or blue-serge store clothes, ready-to-wear;
When tepees fumed—their hearth and home,
Not sideshows barked at the County Fair;

When eagle-quilled Kamiakin
(O straight and tall, O bronze of skin)
Led Toppenish braves and Okanogan,
Kennewick, Yakima, Walla Walla,
Through Moxee hills and the Tieton,

South of Cle Elum and Keechelus,
North of Chinook and Ohanepecoosh,
Skirting the glacial gulch of Nisqually,
Though eager for salmon at Mukilteo,
Picking wild plums in Puyallup valley;

North to Skykomish,
West through Snohomish,
To race canoes or to fight if need be,
To barter for clams and brides with the Siwash,
To Potlatch and peace-pipe, or perfidy.

Impassive toadstools, they splotch the floor
Of Baldwin-Emery's grocery store,
Deerskin pouches upon their knees,
Papooses mummified on their backs,
Munching crackers and rinds of cheese.

O straight and tall, O bronze of skin,
O eagle-quilled Kamiakin,
The squaws of your children are begging cheese;
You whom the Yakima braves revered,
Whom Umatilla and Nez Perce feared.

And the sons you sired, Kamiakin,
Are they straight and tall and bronze of skin?
Oh, they're bent and retching and greenly-pale,
They've come to Saturday's end of trail,
They wait for their squaws and the weekly bail,
Sick and drunk in the County Jail.
SEA GULL

MARION HUTTON

Lonely marauder
Gray as sea;
Seeking something
Incessantly.

Seacoast pillager
With desolate cry,
Do wind and water
Never reply?

BEACH FIRE

GEORGE WITTER SHERMAN

This beach-fire picnickers have lit
That wanes now, flares now on the shore;
The restless shadows watching, tending it,
In subdued shadows, tell no more

Than this: Man, in his irony,
Not knowing, hides his loneliness;
Through the mind's glass his fire is seen to be
A signal, rather, of distress.

ONCE UPON A TIME

TED OLSON

Life is a sad road for a lad who follows
The map of a fairy tale, with a dream for staff,
Slow to surmise that Grimm and all his fellows
Told half the truth, perhaps, but only half:

Finding ogres, more than he cares to reckon,
And asp-eyed witches, muttering and malicious;
But never a princess whom a kiss might waken;
Never a godmother offering him three wishes.
I FELT SORRY FOR FATHER

Lillian M. Korup

MOTHER, Father, and I had had a wonderful day. I remember wishing that all days could be like it, because Father had been so jolly, and Mother had been happy, too. Mother always was, if Father was. We had been fishing. Father loved to fish and so did I—with him. I had even learned to bait my own hook. At first I didn’t like the squirming night crawlers that grew so thick and fat and then thin in my fingers. No matter how tight I held them they would do it. They made me think of Ned’s accordion. Father said I could forget their slipperiness if I’d make myself, and I did. Funny how you can! Still I couldn’t take the wriggly fish from the line; but I thought probably I’d get used to that too, sometime.

Whenever we went fishing, Father called me his partner. Said I was worth more than Harry and Ned put together. That always made me feel awfully important. Of course I knew he didn’t really mean it, but it was fun to hear him say it just the same. He never mentioned Phil. Always acted as though he’d never been one of us. But I missed Phil, and Mother did—lots—I know. Often when she and Ned were talking together, I would hear his name whispered. Once I asked her why she was whispering, but she told me to run along and play; so I never asked again.

On this day I’m telling you about, the boys, Ned and Harry, had stayed home to get in the last of a second cutting of hay. I hoped they’d get it all in because Father had promised them that if they did they could go to the County Fair. He said that the alfalfa must be cut while in bloom or else it got all woody, not fit for cattle to eat. Father was proud of the large amount of milk he made and he said, though lots of farmers even wouldn’t believe it, that the alfalfa was mostly the reason.

The sun was just dropping behind the line of birches as we drove into the yard. It made me think of a big soap bubble Harry and I had blown last winter from suds we had colored with red ink. It was awfully pretty when Harry held it in front of the lamp, but it didn’t last, either.

We stopped our car under the birches to unload. Gyp, Phil’s dog, was the first to come. He admired everything, mostly with his tail. We did have a nice string; a black bass, a couple of pickerel, and a queer looking one—a wall-eyed pike, Father called it. I had caught him, but Father pulled him in because I got too excited and was about to lose him.

The boys liked the fish lots and kept asking all sorts of questions—if we caught the pickerel in Horton’s bayou, if the big bass had put up much of a scrap. Ned did, I mean. Harry didn’t say much, and I wondered if he didn’t feel well because he usually talked the most.

Then Father with his hands on the boys’ shoulders started for the barn. He wanted to see how his prize heifer was coming. I always felt left out when they went to the barn; I had teased to learn to milk, like Marta who lived up the road, but Father said the barn was no place for a girl, so I seldom went. They always seemed to have such good
times there, laughing and calling to each other. The boys had told Father that he needn’t help, that they were almost through, anyway, so he didn’t stop to change into his overalls. Mother went inside to start supper, and I to set the table. That was always my task. Afterwards I went out on the porch to wait for the men folks.

Gyp got up from his corner and flopped himself down beside me. I took his head on my lap. Someway I always felt sorry for him because he seemed to miss Phil so much. I wondered if Phil would ever forgive Father—or Father him—and come home. Gyp and I both hoped so. As I laid my head against his I saw something in the corner of his mouth, a feather. Suddenly I felt all queer inside.

“Oh Gyp, why did you do it?” Nobody had tried to teach him any better. I looked up quick to see if Father was coming and then called out in a half-whisper, “Mother, Gyp has gone and killed another chicken.”

Mother came quickly to the door. “Are you sure?”

Gyp stood there looking so solemn, first at Mother, then at the feather in my hand. He held his tail so close to his body I was sure he knew what we were talking about.

“Quick, Sally, look around and see if you can find any others. We must burn them at once.”

I hunted hard, out by the chicken-house and among the lilac bushes where Gyp liked to lie. I was afraid to go very close to the barn. But I couldn’t find a single feather; so at last I told Mother I guessed there weren’t any. She said she hoped not, and that she and I must teach Gyp better. I wondered how we’d do it, but I didn’t bother to ask because I didn’t feel so happy anymore as I stood with my nose and chin pressed against the screen, waiting.

Then although I really wasn’t looking that way I saw Father coming alone. He was walking awful straight and sort of heavy and slow. He looked even bigger and taller than usual and he didn’t seem to see anything around him. Then I saw he was carrying a big stick. My heart felt heavy as lead, for I knew in a second that the feathers must have been down by the barn.

I think Gyp knew what was coming, because he backed way into the corner behind the chair and quivered all over, like he did when he saw a strange dog —only somehow he looked different. I wanted to hide, too, so I went and stood behind the cupboard. Mother was washing the milk pails that Ned had brought in when Father stepped on the porch and told Gyp to come. I saw Mother start, saw her free hand go to her throat. It must have hurt her and I guess I knew why because mine hurt me, too. Then Mother started washing the pails again just as though nothing had happened, just as though she hadn’t heard or seen Father outside. In a minute more I heard Gyp’s toenails scrape along the porch.

I put my hands over my ears tight; but I could still hear, so I dug my fingers into them and shut my eyes, although I couldn’t have seen from where I was, anyway. I couldn’t hear so much then. Poor Gyp. He didn’t know, we’d never bothered to teach him.

Once, I don’t know why, I took my fingers out, but I put them back quick. I thought of running away, but then someway I didn’t really seem to want to. Mother still washed the milk pails.
Frontier and Midland

It seemed a long time before I saw Father’s shadow stretching past me through the door. He came in slowly as if he were tired. I took my hands down then and went back to straightening knives and forks on the table. My face felt all hot and burny and I moved very quietly.

“Supper ready, Mother?” Father sat down heavily, and his voice sounded tired. The loose arm on the chair squeaked more than usual. “We had a lovely day, didn’t we, Mother?”

“Yes, Jim, it was lovely.” I knew she meant that it had been. “As soon as the boys come in. I think I hear them now.”

She started to take up the bacon and potatoes. They had smelled so good before. Ned came in first. He pumped some water into the tin bowl at the sink and started to wash his hands and face. Harry stood still close by the door. He looked so pale I wondered for a second if he had seen Gyp. He made lots of Gyp, sort of took Phil’s place, I knew.

“Well boys, we won’t see much of you next week, will we?” Father’s voice still sounded strange. “A little vacation will do you both good, and by gad you’ve earned it, at that.” I wished I was going to the fair. The fishing was all over now. “How much milk was there tonight, boys? That fresh heifer’s milk going in made quite a difference, eh? With the price of milk going up every day it’s getting so that every bit counts. Not much like the eighty or ninety cents a hundred we got a year or so back. We can lay aside something for those coming college days at this rate, can’t we? How much more did you say we had?”

Ned emptied the water into the pail under the sink. I wondered why he was so slow about answering, because Father always liked us to speak right up.

“O-oh, about the same, Dad.”

“About the same,” snapped Father. “How come? Milk from a heifer out of one of our best cows is likely to leave it the same!”

Harry stopped leaning against the door and his face got whiter still. I wondered if he was going to faint. He shoved his hands deep into his pockets then, and I saw him swallow. Ned spoke up first, but Harry cut in, jerkily.

“This is my job, Ned. You keep out.” Turning toward Father he went on. “Father, I milked her. She was nervous, I guess, and kicked over the pail. I lost almost all of it.”

“Did you put chains on her?”

“No, I didn’t think that she would be so.”

“You don’t need to think. I think for you. Obey, that’s all I ask.”

“I’m sorry, Father.”

“Sorry!” Father’s face, which had been so red, was white, too. His voice sounded cold and far away, and he looked as though he didn’t know any of us. Looked as though something inside him wouldn’t stay there. It made me feel queer inside. And shivery. I sat down by the table and hugged my knees. They didn’t shake so much that way. Mother came and sat beside me and put her head on her arms, and I noticed that the knuckles on her hands were white.

Father had risen, was standing in front of his chair; Ned by the sink. Ned’s lips moved, but I couldn’t hear if he said anything. Harry looked awful small. Because Ned and Father were so big, I thought.
“Come here, you.”

I felt Mother start and then sink back in her chair. Harry moved forward, his feet dragging as though someone were pushing him, and he didn’t want to go. His frock, I could see, moved jerkily over his chest. I put my head down on my knees and held on tighter.

“Don’t strike him, Father!” It was Ned’s voice, sharp, almost shrill. Not at all like I had ever heard it. I looked up.

“You, too, eh?”

I saw Father’s arm shoot out. I shut my eyes again hard. There was an awful crash and I heard Mother groan. I wanted to cry. I was afraid to look. Then all was quiet.


I looked up. Father was rising from the floor. He didn’t even look at Ned, nor at anyone; only bent down, slowly, and picked up the chair. The arm that squeaked was broken. For several moments Father stood and stared straight at Ned. But whatever it was that had been inside him seemed gone. He rubbed his hand across his forehead, turned awful slow, and went out. No one spoke. After what seemed a long time Father went upstairs. And then I remembered Father, as he looked at Ned, I cried still harder. The day had been so lovely. We had had such a good time fishing.

I must have been there quite a while, must have slept, because the moon was shining bright when I opened my eyes. And everything was white and cool and still. For a minute I wondered how I got there, but then I remembered. I shivered. Gyp lay so still I was afraid to touch him. I did, though, and felt better. Then I whispered to him that he’d feel better, too, in a day or so; and that I would fry him a nice, big fish tomorrow. I patted him very gently and told him I’d come out early in the morning to see him. My eyes felt achy.

At the corner of the house I stood for a second looking at the glistening birches that seemed like hooded ghosts in the moonlight. I noticed that one of the trunks appeared darker than the others, and watching, I saw a dark shadow slip downward and lie there, on the ground.

I heard a slight groan. Father! It couldn’t be; but it was. I wondered if he was ill; yet I couldn’t go to him. Through the white stillness I heard muffled words. “Phil, now Ned. Oh God, not him, too.”

The porch screen opened. Mother, a light shawl about her shoulders, stood there watching, hesitating. Then she walked slowly to where Father lay huddled by the birch tree. My heart
was beating so fast it hurt. I felt my achy eyes blur again. I was so sorry for Mother, for Ned, and Harry, and Phil. For Gyp, too. I saw Mother sit down and lay her hand on the dark shadow that was Father. The tears came flooding then, and I knew that this time they were for Father. Quickly I tiptoed away and left them there together.

BLACK CROSSES

JANE MORRILL

How can she love these earthly days who dreamed a gay tomorrow, hearing old women always talk of death and sorrow?

She bears no magic swift enough to reach beyond her fear, or know how those who crave a cross hold their grief dear.

How shall a startled girl believe, while sewing lawn and lace, that women, building a house of pain, cherish the place?
RILEY ON THE GLORY ROAD

II. RILEY SPENDS HIM A NIGHT IN JAIL

Because I had no place to sleep
I got put in the county jail.
I was locked in infernal gloom.
I was chained to a pillar of dark
Because I had no place
To lay me down.

They slammed the door and let me be.
They turned the key and left me alone
In a rotten black and dungeon room
Because I had no place to sleep.

Sleep ye there, you wandering Riley.
Eat your bread in the smell of dark;
Relax your bones in this darkness, Riley.
Here is your place to sleep.

Because I had no place to lay my head,
Because I had no pillow at all
They locked me up without goodnight
And took the keys away.

O that place was dark as hell,
And full of evil, doom and strife.
The ghosts were thick as bats in a cave
And flew around like a crowd insane.
They perched on my ears and flew in my eyes.
They clung to my uncombed hair.

O the dark was green with a heavy smell
That floated around like sea weeds do
Above the rocks on a deadened shore.

Evil is something the heart can’t like,
So Riley turned him away.

I’ll clean me a cot to rest myself on.
I’ll purge me a place of my own.
I’ve got to have light and plenty of God
Or I’ll be gone when the morning’s bloomed.
There are prisons of darkness everywhere
But there are places down in the gloom
Where a man can breathe and wash his face
And walk around and light his fire
And warm his heart in the flames of despair.

I'll put up bastions for a fortress here.
I'll blot out the ink of this night.

Though she-ghosts scream over dark desires,
And he-ghosts groan and crawl around
I'll say goodbye to despair.

Farewell to all despair, to darkness
And to unhappy melancholy.
Farewell to care that cloaks the soul.
Farewell to all the poverty of mind
That chokes all loveliness to tears.
Farewell to all those haunted halls
Where the ilk of banshees moan all day;
Let madness go. Let the evil sight
Be culled like a leg of cold gangrene.

But the spirits arose within the jail
And Riley's sleep was the sleep of hell.
Fancy burst all her windy sails
To stretch the canvas of his dreams.
Error spread her stormy seas,
And Evil anchored his cold heart down.

All forsaken in the county jail,
All forsaken in the turgid gloom,
Riley sat him down to sing.

To believe that your dark could deny me,
To believe that your jail could close my mouth,
To believe that your poisons could touch me
Is the folly of chattering birds.

Forsake me, ye who will,
Forsake me, ye who must,
But I'll sit on my cot and sing.
Where no heart can live again,
Where no song can be lifted,
Where no word can break the silence
I lift a song and a cry that is still:
No thing is forsaken of God.

In regions where no prayers are chanted,
In depths the darkness cannot reach,
In heights the light cannot illumine
I hear the thunderous echoes:
Nothing is God forsaken.

Fling forth the rainbow of delight.
Tear down the banners of the sky.
I raise the flame that was never quenched.
I raise the light that will never die:
Nothing is God forsaken.

Higher than the hounds have tracked denials,
Lower than the birds that rest in defeat,
Deeper than the time that has no ending
The high flood breaks the bounds:
Nothing is God forsaken.

But prison thoughts are dust in the lungs
When only the half-man coughs.
Get to your quiet breathing.
Get out on the road
Where the whole man walks.

I got out of the county jail
And found my way in the broad daylight.

I cast from out my heart the stain
Of the prison and its darkness.
I left behind the bruise of its thought,
And I'm moving on forever.
I'll never let the sunset down
Upon another evil day.

I'd rather never sleep again
Than spend one night in the county jail.
URING the long years of his apprenticeship Dennett had held himself rigidly aloof from all organizations of writers; but now that a measure of success had come to him he felt that a continuance of this attitude could only appear as arrogance; and he allowed himself to be enrolled as a member of the local group that called itself, in gallant deprecation, *The Scribblers*.

At his first dinner meeting it came to him that his fellow members might offer as material what they failed to yield as stimulus. He regarded with a craftsman’s eye the four or five elderly ladies and gentlemen at the head of the table, who had produced volumes at the turn of the century and who seemed to have cornered the whole editions, to judge from their generosity with presentation copies that bore inscriptions referring to the passing on of the torch.

Beside him at table was a Mrs. Gilmore. She was a small dark woman in the early forties, with keen dark eyes that could soften to admiration or sharpen to profound thoughtfulness. Her knowledge of Dennett’s writings was warming. “You lucky man!” was the burden of her talk. Women were so handicapped, she reported; and when he put in a word about his own overcome obstacles she tossed off, “Oh, men have chances—and women have babies.”

He had heard a similar sentiment expressed by ladies of the most maidenly habits; and he also knew that the title of Mrs. was often acquired in some brief and early interlude that left no further encumbrance; but as they said good-night Mrs. Gilmore clung to his hand and begged, “I wish you would come to see us. My husband would be so glad to know you. When you see how I live,” she added, “you won’t wonder that I accomplish so little.”

When the invitation came later in a more definite form Dennett accepted. After all, here was another aspect of the amusing spectacle called life.

The Gilmores lived far out in a suburb. Children rolled and shrieked on the lawn where he drew up to the curb. When Mrs. Gilmore came to the porch to greet him the first thing she said was, “Thank goodness, they aren’t all mine!”

It took her a few minutes to disentangle those that were from those that weren’t; then she presented a Mildred, a John, and a Lloyd. As they went whooping down the hall to clean up, she said to Dennett, “I have private names for them. Thinking of my literary hopes I named my children, in the order of their appearance, Menace, Jeopardy, and Utter Destruction.” It came so glibly that he knew she had said it very often.

The only begetter of these impediments stood waiting in the middle of the living-room, with his newspaper crumpled nervously. Mr. Gilmore was a tall slender man, already somewhat stooped and growing bald, with shy and friendly eyes. “It was very good of you to come,” he told Dennett, and it was clear that he meant just that.

Dinner was one long attempt to keep the children out of the foreground of consciousness. Mrs. Gilmore early explained her belief that children, after all, were human beings, with the human need of unimpeded growth. This, if
Dennett had been more familiar with home life, might have prepared him for what was to come.

"Lloyd, you must eat those carrots!"

"I don't want to."

"That doesn't matter. You've got to eat them."

His elders' attention, passing from him a while, was soon called back by Mildred's high laugh. "Look at Lloyd, Mama!"

His cheeks were widely bulged and still he continued to thrust bits of carrot through his precariously opened lips.

"He's eating 'em," Mildred explained gleefully; "but he won't swallow."

For a moment they all watched the child go on unabashed with the plying of his spoon. Then they laughed; and he joined in the laughter, with disastrous results.

"Lloyd!" his father said. "Leave the table!"

"No! He hasn't finished his dinner."

"He ought to have a good whipping."

"He won't do it again, will you, Lloyd?"

Once or twice when a brief mention of books or writing was made, Mrs. Gilmore's manner grew casual and remote, as if this were hardly the place. Twice during dinner she said to Dennett, "Mr. Gilmore is a chemist, you know," in a tone that gently set him outside the communion of the choicer spirits.

After dinner it was announced that the children were about to retire. They were ranged before the visitor to say their good-nights. "They'll remember this when they grow up," the mother told Dennett proudly. He thought that he would remember it for a long time too.

She faced back from the door to call out, "I hope you two will find something to talk about." Dennett felt very sure that she knew their talk would be of her.

He liked Mr. Gilmore and he felt now, in the man's rather childlike warm and sudden unbending, that his liking was felt and appreciated. His host had probably looked forward with some dread to his coming and now felt grateful to him for not being another of those oracular and self-important poseurs whom his wife triumphantly brought home.

"That club is a great thing for her," he began quietly when their cigars were lighted. "It's about the only chance she has of being with the kind of people she likes. I feel sorry that she doesn't have as much time as she'd like for that sort of thing."

"Her life does seem crowded," Dennett murmured obligingly.

"Yes. She has a lot to do." He paused as if mustering his facts. "This girl we have now isn't a great deal of help. And of course Lloyd's too young for school yet. There's a lot more to do around a house than a man can understand."

"I suppose so."

Mr. Gilmore nodded gravely. "Yes, there's no question about it: a man has an easier time in life than a woman."

His timid smile begged for approval. "I'd like to make it just as easy as I can for her, because I'm—I'm proud of her."

"She's an unusual woman," Dennett offered, and found himself hoping so.

Mr. Gilmore leaned eagerly forward, with his glance turned toward a stack
of papers on the bookshelves. "You've seen some of her poetry, have you?"

"Of course!" Dennett said quickly. "We have readings at the club."

Mr. Gilmore sank back satisfied. "I wish she had time to write more of it. But she has to have quiet—quiet to think in, you understand—even when she isn't writing." He smiled at the ashen tip of his cigar. "Don't mention this to her, please, but if I can manage it, I'm going to give her a trip sometime. Let her get away for a few months. Away from all this here."

He was beaming happily and shyly across at Dennett when his wife returned to them. "Now," she announced brightly, "we'll have some talk!" She tapped her cigarette vigorously and leaned forward to Dennett's match with an air of dedication.

Her topic was the combining of words in the patterns of verse and prose. Quickly her husband grew sleepy. He seemed embarrassed when Dennett tried to draw him into the talk; and his wife smiled tolerantly at his mumbled responses. Dennett mentioned as early as he could the long distance back to town.

A week or so later, on one of his aimless rambles, he encountered Mr. Gilmore on a downtown street at noon. Despite the man's obvious reluctance he got him into a quiet little side-street eating place. They were scarcely seated at the counter when Mr. Gilmore brought from his inner coat pocket a carefully folded newspaper clipping. "Maybe you haven't seen this," he said, and handed it over proudly.

The four or five stanzas of verse, under the name of Isabel Wrenn Gilmore, referred to the fact that it was Spring again and that certain enlivening phenomena were occurring in Nature. The verses were set in a frame of conventionalized leaves and flowers that ran in a loose and intricate pattern.

Mr. Gilmore mentioned the name of a newspaper in some town that Dennett had never heard of. "They must have liked it a lot," he said, "to print it that way, with all those flowers and things around it."

He drew his coat widely open to return the scrap of paper without crumpling. "I said something to her about that trip," he reported with a boyish grin. "She was getting so sort of nervous and impatient that I told her what I was planning. She thought maybe taking a long trip somewhere would help more than just going to a quiet place to write. She said it was stimulation she needed. I guess you'd understand that."

Dennett, crumbling the ends of piecrust with his fork, wanted to say: My dear man, with a trip to the moon for stimulation and then a thousand years of solitude in a quiet courtyard with nothing to disturb her but the murmur of fountains, your wife would never write a line worth reading; she's just one of those thousands with nothing to say but with a devastating desire to keep repeating in pale phrases all the commonplace sentences of current thought. But what he remarked was, "Well, I hope for your sake that you'll be able to manage it."

As he bunched his napkin Mr. Gilmore reminded him, "It would be a great thing for her work."

That night the Gilmares came to Dennett's mind as the people of a story. For a long while he held them back from his typewriter, but they came crowding insistently closer.
Every week or so now he and Mr. Gilmore met for lunch together. The man clearly enjoyed this opportunity to talk of his plans for his wife; and to Dennett he was more and more interesting as an object for study. With the over-firmness of a timid nature he insisted that there should be no host and guest at these meetings, but that each should take care of his own lunch-check. And Dennett noticed how he limited himself to a very meager fare. "I don't mind telling you," he said one day, "that I'm watching things pretty closely. Every little bit helps, you know. And if our lady is to have her chance..." His spread hands indicated that there was no limit to what he himself might do without. But still he had very little progress to report in his hopes. During these months he began to look very tired and much older.

But Mrs. Gilmore, seen at the monthly meetings of The Scribblers, was her same vivid self. "You know," she said to him once brightly, "I think we artists are the only people who keep young. There's that fire in us that simply won't let us get set and lifeless like the others."

An amused look always came into her eyes when she spoke of his friendship with her husband. "Why, you two are getting to be regular old cronies!" And she once added, appreciatively, "He feels very flattered by your friendship."

"Lord, that's a funny way to look at it!" Dennett rejoined. "Why, I'm proud to know a man like that."

She stared at him as if she didn't quite understand; then her glance softened into gratitude, accepting this strange statement as a generosity toward herself.

When Dennett at last allowed himself to begin writing about them, the Mrs. Bretherton of his story was a much more ruthless person than her prototype, the husband a more pathetic figure than Mr. Gilmore. The woman of the fiction, in her drive toward a literary achievement wholly beyond her powers, brought her family from one disaster to another and was left at last, in the utter ruin of their happiness, still clamoring for "her chance."

The whole thing was such a gross exaggeration of the actual facts that Dennett felt no compunction; the originals could certainly never recognize themselves in this.

But when the story had been accepted and he was reading the proofs he began to feel qualms. He didn't like to think of hurting Mr. Gilmore. There had been a childlike quality in the man's appeal to his sympathetic understanding. And one day, when the publication date was near, he sought him out for lunch and did his best with an explanation that might stave off hurt.

"By the way," he remarked casually toward the end of the meal, "I've got a story coming along in the next Symposium. It happens to be about a woman who's a writer; and I was just thinking the other day: I hope Mrs. Gilmore doesn't get it into her head that I meant her."

Mr. Gilmore's eyes were on him steadily. Dennett managed a laugh. "Of course there's no real likeness at all. The woman in the story is absolutely ruthless, really a terrible creature." He laughed again. "And of course we know Mrs. Gilmore isn't that!"

The accusation was deepening in Mr. Gilmore's steady gaze. "It would be
very unkind,' he said, 'if you've done anything to make her unhappy about her work.'

Dennett was beginning to feel vexed. 'She's not at all likely,' he said shortly, 'to see anything of herself in such a disagreeable creature.'

But his qualms increased as the day came near. When the issue was on the stands he took a copy to his rooms to read it in complete isolation.

After the pleasure of finding the thing an even better piece of work than he remembered came a growing discomfort. Lord, he had made that woman a bad one! He felt a moist warmth creep over his skin. If she should see herself, here...!

He was startled when his telephone rang. His hand was shaking when he took it up.

It was Mrs. Gilmore. Her voice was shrill and excited. 'Mr. Dennett! Am I disturbing you at your work?'

Did he imagine an ironic quality? He tried to make his voice cool and steady.

"Well, to tell the truth, I was writing." But she would not be stayed. Her words came streaming on. 'I've just read your story. They told me it was coming and I was watching for it.' There was a deep pause into which Dennett felt himself sinking. Then the voice came exuberantly, 'And oh, I want to tell you how very happy that story made me!'

"I'm... I'm very glad you liked it," Dennett murmured weakly.

"Why, it's my justification! This woman—I won't say it's myself; that would be claiming too much—but at least she's like me, and you've shown how strong and imperative that longing is, and how fine it is, and... and..."

Her emotions quite overcame her. Dennett heard a few short sobs of joy. "Oh, you do understand! You dear, dear man!" she breathed, and the 'phone clicked sharply.

Dennett, as he restored the receiver to its place, hung rather limply over his little table.

ARID

GLENN PEELMAN

Even a delicate cactus bloom
holds one in a desert until life's noon
and far thereafter.
Even a dry clay loam
draws its moisture of the moon
forever after.

Even a gray sagebrush
keeps alive the slow sly blush
of youth and laughter.
THE FALLEN FRUIT
RALPH FRIEDRICH

Now let the bitter fruit forsake
The laden bough, and fall
Unwept upon the waiting earth.
The unbeheld and small

Denouement of maturity
Must call for no regret
That startled hares must hurry by
And squirrels soon forget

The fallen fruit and how it hung
To tempt them days ago.
Now they disdain it, seeing where
The intricate and slow

Corruption moves beneath the skin.
They seek a firmer fruit
That glows upon a higher bough,
More distant from the root.

MIDLAND NIGHTFALL
COURTLAND MATTHEWS

The barn vane dims; a noiseless bat flits by it.
Above the calm corn hangs the evening star.
The wind-deserted cottonwood grows quiet.
The deep dust cools. The fireflies glimmer far.

Unseen, a whippoorwill begins its grieving.
The tinklings of the cow-bells dwindle, cease.
The crickets in the dew-fresh fields are weaving
A veil of sound across the prairie peace.
TWO POEMS
Carrow De Vries

I. LIFE

There are
Fleeting moments of ecstasy
Made exquisitely poignant
By fleeting seconds of pain
Made terribly intense
By fleeting . . .
Against a landscape of drab pain.

II. DAUGHTERS

She reads the menu to him.
That is her way of getting dinner—
Oh, you daughters of pioneer women.

YOUNG WRITERS

In this section will appear the writing of undergraduate students in Northwest colleges and universities. Contributions must be sent only through some designated instructor of creative writing.

PLAINSMAN

Marie Thayer
(University of Wyoming)

The trail across these sagebrush plains is long—
Too long for some who tried before you here.
You may awake to hear a weird war song
That seems to freeze your very heart with fear.
Your eyes will dream of lands you left behind.
The Eldorado that they told you of
You may not see. Your bones may cleave the kind
Calm prairie that you did not love.
But though your goal may never greet your eyes,
Your weary journey will not be in vain,
For other days, beneath these western skies,
Proud lips will praise the land you helped to gain.

For those who use the bridge across the stream
Must pause to honor him who had the dream.
SARAH stood in the doorway of the doctor's office watching a small whirl of dust fade into nothing. It was late summer and a hazy air hung close to the ground and hid the mountains from view. Sarah thought with dramatic intentness that she would never see another late summer in Montana. The doctor had just told her she might live until Christmas. It was a pleasant prospect, she thought, and yanked at her corset. The damn thing wouldn't stay down where it belonged.

She stared at the familiar street, seeing it with new eyes. There was the huge Travelers Haven hotel whose rambling hulk never housed more than five guests at a time; next to that a beer parlor, a garage and shoe shop; then another beer parlor. Sarah had never realized before that there were five beer parlors to take care of the thirst of the 800 townspeople. She would have to write the governor about it, she thought, as she plodded home.

She opened the door of the beauty shop just in time to see a white apron trailed by a thin stream of smoke round the corner of a screen.

"Marie," she yelled. "How many times do I have to tell you that there's to be no smoking in this shop? If I catch you once more . . ." The rest of the sentence was lost as she rumbled through the door leading into the back part of the house where she lived.

Marie winked at one of the customers. "Poor Sarah, she's just got to yell at someone. You should hear her when Ed's home—the air's so blue you can't see yourself."

Sarah had been a Malley before her marriage. The Malleys were of a distinguished family—distinguished for their ability to pick up things that didn't belong to them, and to hold up more than their end in an altercation. Born on the wrong side of the track, she had disregarded the boundary line, and had made herself not only felt but wanted on the right side. At the time when beauty shops were scarce she had established and run for twenty years a successful one. She had made only one great mistake—she had married Ed.

At that moment, Ed was explaining to Sarah how it was that he happened to buy the large police dog that was stretched out on the davenport. The beast had dragged the furniture halfway across the room to sniff at Sarah's feet.

"Sarah, I brought you something." Ed felt hopeless. When Sarah got that look in her eyes, he always felt that way. "Ed Turner, where's your pay check?" Her voice was icy.

Ed tried to bluff his way through: "I've got it here in my pocket. What do you think of the dog?"

"How much did you lose this time?"

He rubbed his hand over his bald head, and looked at the dog. Maybe he should have bought it after he told Sarah about the check, but it was too late now.

"Well?"

"Oh, thirty dollars or so."

Sarah felt suddenly tired. What was the use of quibbling about thirty dollars when a million couldn't keep her on earth longer than six months? Ed was an engineer on the railroad and while
he made good money, he also lost a great deal in gambling. When she was gone there would be no one to keep him from losing his money; why should she spend her time trying to squeeze the pennies? She dropped into a chair and sat staring at the dog.

"Ain't you feeling well, Sarah?" There was concern in Ed's voice.

"I'm all right," she said gruffly and leaned over to pat the dog. "Nice dog," she muttered.

The dog closed his teeth on her hand but when she did not draw it away, he licked it apologetically. Sarah fell on her knees and buried her face in his hair. "Oh Ed, save me," she sobbed. "I don't want to die."

"What in the hell are you talking about, Sarah? Who said you were going to die? He didn't bite you." Ed seized her hand and searched it for teeth marks.

Sarah sat up and wiped her eyes on her underskirt. "You fool, who said he did?"

"Well, what do you mean saying you're going to die—scaring a guy?"

"It's my heart. It's just going to stop."

Ed stared at her in disbelief. "Who said so?" he faltered.

"Doc. Phaley."

"Why him? Why didn't you go to Doc. Bentam?"

"Oh, he's so old, he wouldn't know if there was anything wrong."

Sarah felt uncomfortable about Dr. Bentam. He had been her doctor for thirty years, and he was as good as most doctors, but this young man had come to town, and it stood to reason that he would know more than Bentam.

There was false confidence in Ed's voice when he spoke. "Sure, all our hearts are going to stop someday. What does that young chump know about hearts?"

Much as Sarah didn't want to die, she did want to enjoy the full drama of the moment. "I suppose you think my heart isn't bad?" she roared. "I suppose you think I have dizzy spells 'cause I enjoy 'em?"

She heaved her three hundred pounds off the floor, but Ed was out of the door before she could raise her arm. The dog licked her cheek. Sarah pulled his ears before she pushed him down.

"You are a nice dog," she said.

She wandered restlessly around the room, picking up objects and putting them down again, stood for a moment with her hand on the knob of the door leading into the beauty shop and withdrew it. She didn't want to see people yet, least of all Marie, with her everlasting cigarette. Through the window she could see Ed sitting on the porch swing with his head in his hands. She opened the door.

"Come in here, you fool." Her voice was as soft as it could be. "You'll catch cold."

Ed mumbled something and made no move. Sarah crossed over to the swing and dropped her arm around his shoulders. "Snap out of it, honey. I don't think the young scamp knows what he's talking about either."

Sarah sat rocking the swing gently with her foot and remembering how many times before she had comforted Ed when things hadn't gone just right. The time he had run the car off the road trying to avoid a child she had stayed up four nights keeping his crushed arm propped on a pillow and getting cloths for his fevered head. The other times had escaped her mind, but she was sure there were others. Ed was always getting into trouble.
“It ought to be me moaning, not you. I ought to be in bed right now.” Ed sniffed and put his arm around her waist. Sarah slid down and put her head on his shoulder. It was one of their few tender moments. She had almost forgotten what his shoulder felt like.

She stayed there only a short time. “I’m going to bed. You can get your own supper. There’s a couple of cans on the kitchen shelf, or you can go down to the chow house. Suit yourself.”

In the bedroom Sarah stood in front of the mirror and looked at herself. She saw a woman of sixty years, beautiful white hair badly waved, startling black eyes and coarse dark skin. It was a pity, she thought, that even though she knew all the secrets of beauty, she had never got around to using them on herself. She dropped heavily onto the bed and looked at her feet.

Ed came in and stood leaning against the frame of the door. “Is there anything you want, Sarah?”

“No—yes, bring me those Christian Scientist magazines. They’re under the sofa.”

Sarah always read the magazines when she was sick, but during other times her religion was apt to wander. Her sympathy was with the Roman Catholics one year and the Seventh Day Adventists the next.

“Shall I drive over and get your sister to do the housework?”

“No, after she goes, I always find all my stuff at her house. Let the house get dirty,” she snapped. She twisted around until she faced him. “Why don’t you go and eat? I’m not going to die tonight.”

“I’m not hungry.”

“Well, I am.” Sarah shoved the magazines aside and got out of bed. “If you won’t eat by yourself, I’ll eat with you.” She was into her clothes again before he could remonstrate with her.

That completed Sarah’s sick-bed experience, for a number of things occurred that took her mind off her own troubles. In the first place, one of her babies made up his little mind that this world possessed too many problems for him, and he swallowed a safety pin. Not a few of the young married people in the town had Sarah to thank for their existence during the years of depression. It had been she who had driven down the alley leaving groceries on their back porches and who had made the entrance of several members of the modern generation unencumbered financially. Little Jackie Collins should have known that he could not leave life without a fight from his benefactress. Sarah arrived at the Collins home exactly five minutes after the accident. The doctor made a cursory examination and shook his head.

“God, I don’t know what to do, Sarah. I haven’t got the instruments it takes.” He didn’t know why telling Sarah his helplessness made him feel better.

“Well, don’t stand there. We’ll drive him to Butte.” Sarah was half-way to the car before she finished her sentence.

She sat her teeth, swung the car around the corner on two wheels and drove the thirty miles to Butte in as many minutes. The following hours when she grunted and panted down the hospital corridors with Bessie Collins remained a nightmare. Only the black-and-blue spots on her arm where Bessie had grasped it served as a reminder.

The doctor drove the car home, talking over his shoulder to Sarah stretched out on the back seat. “One more scene like today and you’re a goner. You’ve got to avoid excitement.”
Frontier and Midland

Sarah groaned. "'Yah, if I had minded my own business I would have been minus a godchild. You're one hell of a doctor.'"

Dr. Phaley laughed. "Don't tell anyone, Sarah. It's a secret."

As soon as Jackie decided that he would try life for a little while longer, a young man was so indiscreet as to walk on the wrong side of the road. Sarah did not know the man, but she did know that his widow and three children needed help. She arrived at the bewildered woman's doorstep with household supplies and candy for the children. It was she who saw that a long line of cars followed the hearse to the cemetery and that the young man did not have his resting-place in Potter's field.

Fall came, bringing with it the high winds that always make people remark about Montana being God's forgotten country. Dust hid buildings for days at a time and piled tumbleweeds against fences until the land was scraped clean of surface dirt and vegetation.

One morning when the wind was raging at fifty miles an hour, the thin eerie voice of the fire whistle sent its moaning cry above the roar. Sarah turned over and nudged Ed.

"You'd better get up and see what that is. It's probably only a shed but in this wind it might spread."

Ed sat up and groped around for his shoes. He raised the blind and squinted in the early morning light, trying to distinguish smoke from the dust. Off to the right, only a short distance away, the sky was stained crimson.

"It looks like the hotel." His voice was tense with excitement and the dread that one always feels when there is a fire in a small town.

"Let me see." Sarah was out of bed and pushing him away from the window. "It's up in that direction. Get into your clothes and see if you can help."

When Ed emerged from the house he met other men running toward Main Street.

Sarah yelled at him from the door. "Ed, don't do anything heroic. Do you hear me?"

"I won't. Go back to bed," he flung over his shoulder, and started to run.

Main Street was a pit of excitement. Far down at one end the fire engine was speeding along at the rate that offered little hope of its arrival before the hotel burned to the ground. Several men had already formed a bucket line and were flinging pails of water on the blaze.

There seemed to be little chance of saving the building. The wind had whipped a harmless spark into an angry spectre. With a low rumble, the roof collapsed, sending a shower of flaming wood into the air. The men nearest the building flung their arms before their heads and retreated to the opposite side of the street and watched the flames licking out of the windows.

The fire engine pulled up with a puff. It was work of a few minutes to attach the two hoses and direct their streams on the blaze. The wind flung the water back at them.

"We can't save the hotel," Ed shouted. "Turn the hose on the beer joint."

A lively little fire had already started on its roof and the men hastily turned the hose onto it. Ed, with two or three other men, scaled the side of the garage and each, with a bucket of water, started to put out the small fires that dotted the tar paper. Occasionally they were forced
to dodge burning pieces of wood from the hotel. Ed noticed with a frown that Sarah’s beauty shop was in the direst path of the wind-whipped sparks and wood. He hoped that she hadn’t taken his advice and gone back to bed.

Through the din made by the shouting men and the howling wind one could hear the pop of plateglass windows. There were ugly cracks across the windows of the stores on the opposite side of the street and glass lay on the sidewalks in little pieces, looking like uncut diamonds in the red glow.

Sarah had taken Ed’s advice and returned to bed. With the covers over her head to shut out the whining whistle, she had gone to sleep. Through a half-consciousness she felt a tug at the blankets and awoke to find the dog tearing off the covers and barking furiously. There was a slight acrid smell in the room and the faint crackling of wood. She stumbled to her feet, the dog dancing around her barking and whining.

Slipping a kimona over her nightdress, she went outside. A small fire was just starting to lick the house shingles. For a moment she debated running the two blocks to get Ed, but dismissed the thought. She lumbered to the woodshed and dragged a ladder back to the house. After attaching the garden hose she scrambled up to the roof.

It took only a short time to put out the fire, but pieces of burning wood kept constantly dropping here and there. Sarah sat on the chimney where she could get a good view of the entire roof and turned the hose where it was needed. The wind tore at her clothes and flung her kimona over her head. In disgust she took it off and sat on it. Her perch afforded her a ringside seat on the main fire. She saw the huge explosion when the garage blew up.

She closed her eyes and turned her face heavenward. “Oh God,” she prayed. “Keep Ed safe and don’t let him get too close.” In her imagination she could see him stretched out on the ground, badly burned and crushed by the impact of the explosion.

The collapse of the garage sent a fresh batch of wood and sparks flying through the air. Sarah ran frantically to pick each stick up and throw it off before it did any damage. It was impossible for her to get her breath between spurts. She sucked in great gasps of air and felt the dirt grit between her teeth. Her hands turned black and blisters formed on them so that every time the hose rubbed against them she winced.

The morning sun laid soothing fingers on the wind and gave the men the lull they needed. With renewed vigor they sent the water lashing over the flames and doubled the bucket lines.

Sarah, seeing there was no longer danger, climbed wearily down from the roof and lay on the grass to catch her breath. The dog licked her face affectionately, until she recovered strength to push him away. Finally she plodded into the house and smeared baking soda on her hands.

Toward the middle of the morning the weary men stumbled home for a cup of coffee, leaving a smouldering block of ruins in the care of a few firemen.

Sarah slumped into a kitchen chair and rested her head in her hands. Now and then she rubbed her eyes as though to clear them of a mist before she stared out of the window. Finally she saw with relief that Ed was coming up the path.

As he crawled up the steps she opened the door. “Are you all right?”

“Tired but safe and sound.” Ed’s blackened lips parted in a grin, but
Sarah did not see it, for she lay in a crumpled heap by the door. Ed didn’t know from where he drew the strength to half-carry, half-drag Sarah into the bedroom. Nor did he remember phoning the doctor, but suddenly there was old Dr. Bentam bandaging her burned hands and talking to her in soothing tones.

Sarah opened her eyes and looked at Ed. “Am I dying?” she asked in a low tone that had an undercurrent of fear.

The old doctor chuckled and patted her hand. “Sarah, when you came to me thirty years ago I gave you six months to live. But at the rate you’re going now you’ll be still waltzing around when I’m gone and forgotten.”

Sarah stared at the ceiling for a little while, then she smiled, “Just wait until I get my hands on that young scamp—just wait.”

POEM

ALAN SWALLOW

(University of Wyoming)

Leisurely the frozen earth gives over
to the mellow. Although the thaw is now
as deep as plows run, the furrows grow
too slowly on the hill.

With patience long as spring, the farmer moves
up the fold of the hill to the crest and over

turning the yellow under, sowing
green harvest with his tread.

Though the warmer wind has come
it will be days before the pulsing birds
return this way, before we cultivate
the growth of seed with mirth.

And harvest is beyond the western far horizon, beyond the sight of hawk.
The roll of earth was never timed
to beat of man’s desire.

O comrade, now that we are in the time
of spring, must we pursue the plow
thus slowly toward our harvest
in still October?
HISTORICAL SECTION

Old letters, diaries, journals, and other materials relating to the Old West will be welcomed. They will be carefully handled and, if desired, returned. Accepted material cannot be paid for.

REMINISCENCES OF AN INDIAN MASSACRE.

FRED C. SPANNUTH

EDITED BY BESSIE Y. MARBLE

(Introductory Note: The document here printed was written in 1936 by Fred C. Spannuth of Conner, Montana. While it is not always absolutely accurate in details, as is true of most narratives written so long after the occurrence, it does give added light on some phases of this very noted Indian uprising. No attempts have been made to revise the manuscript, but a few obvious slips have been corrected. However, attention is called in a few instances to parallel accounts which check with this narrative.)

On the morning of September 2, 1862, a boy six years old was playing in the yard of his parents' home about sixteen miles from New Ulm, Minnesota. When he saw his grandmother, who lived with his uncle about three-fourths of a mile away, coming across a plowed field, apparently trying to run, and frequently falling down, this seemed funny to him, and he went into the house to tell his mother. The mother, of course, did not find it amusing, and quickly went to meet her mother. They exchanged a few words, and then both came hurriedly back to the house with the news that the Indians had gone on the war path (Sioux and Winnebago tribes, I believe), and were supposed to be within eight miles of us, killing [people] and burning homes as they went through.

Our oxen—very few people had horses—were out on the prairies, and father and I went out to find them. We were fortunate in locating them near home. On returning to the house, we found the wagon loaded with every imaginable article a woman could think of, and ready to go. However, my father was rather a methodical and phlegmatic man, so he asked if dinner were not ready. Mother answered, “Are you going to sit down and eat, and get us all killed?”

To this, dad’s answer was, “If we don’t eat, we’ll die anyway,” so dad and the boy had some lunch while mother and the girls had a cry.

My father now opened the hogpen—the

1 Mr. Spannuth, in response to a request for a short sketch of his life wrote the following: "My parents were born in the Weser Valley in Germany; left there in the spring of 1853, took ship at Bremen, and landed in Baltimore after only six weeks’ sailing; went from there to Chicago, and settled on a little farm, fifteen miles out, at Addison, DuPage County, Illinois, where my mother and I were born.

In the fall of 1860, we left there for Minnesota, making the trip partly by rail, and partly on the Mississippi River.

My father had bought forty acres of land out there on the frontier; had made a small down payment, and trusted to the Lord and good luck. Their entire capital was $80.00 when they got there. It was there we went through the harrowing experience described in my story.

In June, 1864, my father was drafted, and had to leave the family for the front, and was dead in September. There were six children from six months to ten years of age.

At sixteen years of age I left Minnesota for Nebraska; in April, 1872, went to work on a farm in Burt County, near the Missouri River; bought land on the installment payments that same year, and paid for it with my wages at twenty dollars a month. Married in 1878, and moved to the western part of Nebraska to do some more pioneering. Later, moved to the Gulf Coast in Texas and raised cotton. I heard about the famous Flathead Valley, and landed in Kalispell in February, 1898; farmed there on quite a large scale, raising as much as thirteen thousand bushels of grain besides a lot of peas. I farmed most of the time, but the same year, and paid for it with my wages at twenty dollars a month. Married in 1878, and moved to the western part of Nebraska to do some more pioneering. Later, moved to the Gulf Coast in Texas and raised cotton. I heard about the famous Flathead Valley, and landed in Kalispell in February, 1898; farmed there on quite a large scale, raising as much as thirteen thousand bushels of grain besides a lot of peas. I farmed most of the time, but in 1916, I worked under Professor M. L. Wilson, holding Farmers' Institute meetings in the Extension Service.

I am now in my eighty-first year and am done with pioneering. Everything now is in retrospect; yet if I heard of a new part of the country just being opened up, I would get uneasy, and want to go there. I get around about as spry as most men at sixty in spite of the fact that I was in the harvest field at nine years of age. Idleness kills more people than work.

2 Mr. Spannuth is slightly in error here as the trouble at New Ulm took place from the 19th to the 25th August, an error he, gives.

3 New Ulm, a Cincinnati German town, had been located in 1855, through the efforts of two colonization societies, The Chicago Land Verein, and the Colonization Society of North America of Cincinnati, according to Alexander Berghold in "The Indians’ Revenge; or, Days of Horror," 8-39 (San Francisco, 1891.) It was seventy-five miles up the river from Mankato. Theodore E. Potter in "Minnesota Experiences" (Minnesota Historical Bulletin, Vol. I, p 430) says that there was only one native American in this town of fifteen hundred people in 1857. He was a very patriotic old Mexican War soldier.

4 These Indians were of the Sioux tribe and doubtless Winnebago Indians were with them as their reservation was but a few miles from New Ulm.
cows were not at home—and we got under way. About a mile from home, a Mrs. Hoeper came out of a side road, and asked my father “for God’s sake” to take her and her baby along, as her drunken husband would not leave. We picked them up, and continued on our way.

At Neighbor Musman’s, conditions were the reverse from our home. Mrs. Musman had a baking of bread in the oven, and refused to budge an inch until it was baked to take along. This made [them] late, but he had a very smart pair of black oxen and he overtook us, turned out and passed on a trot, for he was very much excited. I don’t know how the old blacks held out.

About three miles out from New Ulm, we met a load of men in a basket rack, very much under the influence of spirits, weaving guns, and promising to go out and turn the Indians back. I don’t know how the old blacks held out.

When we got in, the little city was full of people. There had already been a brush with the Reds, but they had concluded to go up and wipe out Fort Ridgley first. However, General [Sibley] had some light artillery, and the red men did not fancy that. So they gathered all their forces, and came back to New Ulm.

In the meanwhile, the people had done the best they could to barricade the main part of the town, but unfortunately there was no one with military experience to give advice, so there were a great many outlying buildings that later afforded the Indians good cover, and no doubt caused the loss of quite [an] additional number of lives.

The next morning the Indians appeared in immense numbers, and the siege commenced in dead earnest. They charged from all sides, firing as they came, and they were far better armed than the white defenders, many of whom had no guns at all. Thanks to unscrupulous traders, and also confederate agents who hoped to hamper the Federal Government, the Indians nearly all had rifles.

The brave settlers never gave at any point, and repulsed charge after charge with considerable loss on both sides. The women were packed away in large basements out of harm’s way, and here conditions were not any too good. Here also they carried the dead and wounded. Surgical care for the latter was not sufficient for the need, but the women helped out bravely to the best of their ability, often washing and dressing the wounds of their loved ones without any anaesthetics.

In the afternoon of that awful day the Indians gained possession of a public building on the outskirts of the town—a school house or a church—and were thus enabled to rake the main part of the town with their fire. This could not be endured so the old county judge called for volunteers to drive them out. He selected a well-armed band; they got as close as possible; and then spread out and charged. Some went down, but when the rest got to that building, Indians boiled out of every opening, and some never moved again, while others dropped on their way back to cover. They were never allowed again to gain possession of that building.

Thus the day wore on, and merciful darkness set in, and while careful watch was maintained many of the brave defenders were able to get rest and sleep while many of their neighbors and friends were sleeping their last sleep with their wives and children keeping heart-broken vigil.

During this never to be forgotten day, a minor tragedy was also being enacted with some of us youngsters as victims. I had a chum about my own age, named Louie, and with all the trouble on hand, we were left pretty much to our own devices. We heard the shouting and the shooting, and boy fashion, we wanted badly to see what was going on. There was a stairway leading up under

1 Fort Ridgley was on the Sioux Reservation, eighteen miles farther on up the Minnesota River.
2 Henry H. Sibley was manager of the American Fur Company from 1834 at Mendota, Minnesota, until the company sold out to the firm of Pierre Chouteau in 1842. Sibley became delegate to Congress from Minnesota in 1843. Later he was governor of the state, and still later a general in the army and in charge of the movement against the Sioux in Minnesota.
3 Potter (op. cit.) reported light artillery at Fort Ridgley. He also reported that the Indians thought that some of this artillery had been brought from Fort Ridgley to New Ulm, but such was not the case.
4 Potter (op. cit.) says that “the Indian agents were nearly all openly opposed to the war and threw their hats in joy at any reverse to our arms.”
5 This county judge of whom Mr. Spannuth speaks must refer to Colonel Charles E. Flandrau, a noted lawyer, who arrived on the afternoon of the nineteenth of August and who took charge of the fighting forces in New Ulm. Dictionary of American Biography (Scribners) Volume I p 465.
the sidewalk, with a trapdoor over it, and as no one seemed to pay any attention to us, we concluded to get out and take a look. We quietly went up and started to lift the door. But at that instant, a vice seemed to clamp onto my ankle, and I was yanked down. I was turned face down, and a hand like a picnic ham was applied to my then upper side, accompanied by a deluge of Norwegian words. She then reached up and got Louie, and dealt him his. From some of the pantomine we gathered that a repetition of the attempt was inadvisable. Louie and I talked it over, and passed a standing resolution that we did not like the Norwegians. But we concluded not to complain to our mothers of the outrage that had been committed on our bodies.

Fortunately the Indian believes that if he kills in the dark, he will be forever in the dark in the Happy Hunting Grounds. Consequently they will never attack in the night unless certain of a complete surprise. But when morning dawned, things looked gloomy indeed for all of us, for it was discovered that there was but little ammunition left. The attack was resumed with great fierceness, for the savages, having suffered considerable loss themselves, were determined upon a bloody revenge.

Then about ten o'clock in the morning, a shout went up from a lookout posted on a point of vantage, and it did not sound like a cry of alarm. The lookout had seen the sun glistening on the arms of men coming from the direction of Mankato. Soon the Indians discovered them and began to concentrate to meet them. It was a troop of about 800 militia, and they had some "six-pounders" with them, which they began to use. This was not at all to the taste of the Red men, and they began to leave with the defenders of New Ulm helping them on their way with the last of their ammunition.

You may imagine the rejoicing of all those who had not lost any of their loved ones so far. But many a mother sat in dumb despair, amid her fatherless children. Their plight was indeed pitiful. Left, far from the old home, with no provider, and, in many instances, the new home burned to the ground.

The uprising did not last long after this, for additional militia and citizens' companies arrived from other places east of us, and the Indians were soon completely beaten and surrendered, and it was safe for us to return to our homes.

Though but six years old, I can well remember the trip back to our home. When within a mile or two from our home, we saw something moving along the side of the road. Upon coming closer, it turned out to be Neighbor Hoeper, whose wife and son my father had taken with him, and Grandfather Ruhe who had also refused to go away. The Indians had missed our settlement, and when these two old topers considered it safe, they proceeded to visit the deserted homes in quest of whiskey. Its being threshing time, there would be a jug in almost every home, for it would have been considered very mean among those people—mostly foreigners—not to have whiskey to treat the crew. Those two old boys had sampled it freely, and to make sure of not running out, they had taken a jug along, but had dropped it on a flat rock, and were now down on their faces licking it up to save it. There we left them.

Upon arriving home, we proceeded to pen the hogs again, and to hunt up and corral our cows, although they were practically dry for that lactation period. Our mother's first concern was for her garden. Although seventy-four years have passed over my head, I can still see my good mother's face as she

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10The Theodore E. Potter before mentioned was one of these volunteers.
11Dodge, Col. R. I. Thirty-Three Years Among Our Wild Indians p 181. Here Colonel Dodge bears out this statement that the Indian will not attack after dark unless he is absolutely sure of success, for in case of defeat he is relegated to the dark regions in the next life.
12Mankato was twenty-eight miles below New Ulm.
13Paxson, in his Last American Frontiers, pp 235-237 (Macmillan Co. N. Y.) says that New Ulm had been increasing its defenses, as it had not been molested since Wednesday, and this was Saturday when Little Crow and his Indians again attacked New Ulm.
14Many accounts have been written in regard to these stirring days. "Judge Flandreau in the Defense of New Ulm during the Sioux Outbreak of 1862" in Minnesota Historical Collections 16: 783-815 (part 2) by Major Salmon A. Buell, a member of the advance guard sent out by Flandreau on the nineteenth, and appointed by Flandreau as provost marshal and chief of staff on the twentieth, gives a very vivid account of the events of those exciting days.
15Paxson (op. cit.) on pages 235-237 says: "All day on the eighteenth of August, massacres occurred along the St. Peter's and New Ulm to the Yellow Medicine River. The incidents of Indian warfare were all there, in surprise, slaughter of women and children, mutilation and torture." He then tells graphically the heroic efforts of the small number of people in New Ulm to combat Little Crow's 1500 warriors.
beheld the destruction wrought there among the vegetables that she had worked so hard to produce, for they were their principal living during the winter. It is the nature of a hog to destroy more than [he] eats, where there is plenty, and this had been done here. However [mother] still remembered the scenes in New Ulm, and was thankful that all of her loved ones were still alive.

Now to return to the Indians. What had caused the uprising? For there was always a reason, and generally it was bad faith on the part of our government or its representatives in carrying out of treaty obligations. It was so in this case. Although the Indians had a treaty that gave them so many pounds of flour and meat (each) month, and also a certain payment in money, this crooked agent withheld supplies as long as possible then he would give them flour full of worms, and beef so rotten that an Indian’s dog could scarcely eat it. He made money payments in paper bills on private banks that were often worthless when they got it.

The feeling among the Indians was getting more hostile all the time, and the head men had made many complaints but to no avail. Had they been properly advised, they would have carried their grievances to Washington and no doubt would have got redress. Instead the young men got out of hand and disaster to both red and white people was the result. The uprising is supposed to have caused the death of over three hundred white people, and no telling how many Indians.

The crooked agent of course got his precious body out of that section of the country. The Indians were rounded up and trials were held before the Civil Courts. Three hundred of them were found guilty of murder, and sentenced to death. At this juncture President Lincoln intervened and would not permit a wholesale execution like that. So it was reduced to thirty of the leaders of the revolt. Those thirty were hanged on one scaffold, and they walked up to the scaffold chanting their death song.

If proper justice had been done that crooked Indian agent would have graced the center of the string, but as far as I know he was never punished. And thus ended one of the bloodiest Indian uprisings of that
time. [Note.] The foregoing narrative gives a fair idea of what pioneering in those days was like, and it makes us old-timers smile when we read of the hardships of the government managed and financed pioneers of the Matanuska Valley in Alaska, F. C. S.

**A WESTERN BOOKSHELF**

Edited by V. L. O. Chittick, Reed College

**American Dream.** By Michael Foster. Morrow. $3.

**The Laurels Are Cut Down.** By Archie Binns. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

For some time past those of us interested in such things have been observing with a steadily steeled-up confidence the dawn signs of a really distinguished northwest fiction. The appearance and immediate success of these two novels in a single publishing season would seem to indicate that the long expected day has at last broken. In each of them, at any rate, there is far more than exciting promise: there is brilliant and satisfying performance. Mr. Foster's book, as its title perhaps suggests, is the more poetical and wider flung in its scope; Mr. Binns', as its title certainly does not suggest, is the more realistic and the more strictly regional. But both belong indubitably to the contemporary actuality of the locale which has nurtured their young authors.

American Dream is a thoroughly modern piece of writing in its defiance of conventional notions of how a story should be told. All but the merest hints of the means by which this chronology-ignoring search of a past time and disjointed account of the present are supposed to be fused into a convincing narrative are omitted. But the novel is well-knit for all that. And there is no lack of organic unity in its structure. What the nature of Mr. Foster's dream for his country is must be left to his readers to learn. But there is no question that he has one, or that he believes it to be undying. Whether it should be called American, however, is possibly open to debate. But then, what have we, in the way of ideals, that is strictly indigenous? If Mr. Foster derives his vision from the varied assortment of our immigrant idealisms, as he does, that probably stamps it as sufficiently American to pass muster as genuinely home grown. Assuredly in the process of his gathering together its content he shows himself capable of exploring and recreating our history with a touch that is at once both expert and discriminating. His enthusiasms whether for or against Yankee Clippers and the seven seas they sailed, frontier Indian fighters and scouts, travelling mountebank shows, newspaper composing rooms and editorial offices, political racketeers and thick-skinned stupidity, wartime phobias and color-line antagonisms, or women—a strange lot, all of them, but made to live vividly—are equally well-informed and fair-mindedly sustained. Only in his prejudice against our Puritan heritage do his emotions sweep him into an unreasoning attitude. And as for that, if Mr. Foster's name reveals anything of his racial origin, he comes by his anti-New England feelings honestly enough.

Mr. Binns in The Laurels Are Cut Down follows, on the whole, the customary methods of ordering the sequence of the events he narrates. The first part of his book is devoted to the nostalgic recalling of living conditions in the northwest which have passed, in any sense save imaginatively, utterly beyond recalling. More sensitive or more efficient writing than he employs in memorializing the vanished scenes of the primeval forest that once grew along the shores of Puget Sound, or in recreating the self-supporting Spartan life of the first settlers on the clearings later carved out of that same forest, would be hard to match in the work of any of his fellow novelists of today. Through the last two-thirds of his chronicle the action swings into a strenuous and futile gold-mining venture in Alaska, follows the fortunes of the American Expeditionary Force in Siberia, and returns to the post-war scene and situation of the region in which it began—all in ironic contrast to the much happier, if more primitive, existence that had formerly prevailed there. That there is a love story upon the course of which the various incidents are threaded goes without saying, but the interest of the novel lies neither in the development of the love theme, nor, with one exception, in its characters. Its interest lies above everything else in its settings honestly enough.

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Frontier and Midland

all she will be concerned to save from the wreck will be her own selfish hide. That she will save it, there isn’t a doubt.

V. L. O. Chittick

Young Robert. By George Albee. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

Both the Irish and San Francisco have long been the victims of legends. It is doubtful whether any race or city has suffered more at the hands of romanticizers. Today in Ireland practically every book of the last decade which attempts to deal with the realities of Irish life has fallen under the ban of censorship. If any writer should have the hardihood to bring out a volume exploding the myths about San Francisco, probably censorship would not be considered sufficiently emphatic a condemnation: it is likely we should witness the first book-burning in the United States, and the native vigilantes would doubtless lynch the author into the bargain.

It is to George Albee’s considerable credit that he has combined these two fabulous elements of fiction into a story of persuasive plausibility—a story that is as different as possible from, let us say, a Kathleen Norris concoction of the same ingredients. In spite of an almost inescapable threat of incredibility, he manages to make the Limewright family fairly believable human beings. And he has this to say about those perversions which, in San Francisco, pass for human dwellings: “The houses in the better part of San Francisco, in those days, were all alike and so ugly it was a wonder even their owners did not know it. . . . All of them rose straight from the sidewalks; there were no lawns, and no trees. . . . We were the moderately rich, and nothing was too bad for us.”

Young Robert Limewright, whose boyhood and adolescence the author, in the character of Avery Gibson, chronicles with puzzled and adolescent the author, in the character of Avery Gibson, chronicles with puzzled

interpretations of such a vast social experiment are likely to be controversial. This applies to the volume before us, which is written with considerable feeling throughout. Perhaps the most controversial point made by Mr. Brady is his conclusion, stated early in his book, that the Nazi regime is a “dictatorship of monopoly capitalism. Its ‘fascism’ is that of business enterprise organized on a monopoly basis, and in full command of all the military, police, legal, organized on a monopoly basis, and in full command of all the military, police, legal, and propaganda power of the state.” This view is reiterated frequently in various forms throughout the book. Nevertheless, some would certainly question whether the tail wags the dog as completely as is implied. Such a view would make the military a negligible quantity in affairs of state. It would minimize, perhaps unduly, the influence of the high-powered Nazi ideology, which emphasizes the supremacy of common national interests over private interests. It would also deny the existence and capacity of a “power group,” partly, at least, separate from and above the selfish business inter-
ests, though not above its own selfish interests.

Though the "leadership" principle, which runs throughout the system, lends itself admittedly to "control from above," Mr. Brady believes that the business man control the controller. Yet one wonders whether the business man is sitting unchallenged on the top of the heap, and whether he too, in large measure, is not "coordinated" and regimented, and subordinated to a "power group" which is not exclusively the expression of monopoly capitalism.

Whether or not his interpretation is correct in all its details, Mr. Brady has recognized the universal elements in German Nazism, and appropriately reminded us for ourselves are not immune to the virus; indeed, that symptoms of comparable developments are not lacking in our own body politic.

G. Bernard Noble

The Bible Designed to Be Read as Living Literature. Arranged and Edited by Ernest Sutherland Bates. Simon and Schuster. $3.75.

Unlike other holy books, the Bible is not merely a repository of religious and ethical teachings. It is primarily that of course, but it is much else also; it is folklore, history, law and above all powerful and beautiful literature. Piety has unwittingly done this unique masterpiece a great disservice. It has resisted as sacrilege any reorganization of this encyclopedic farrago and thus delayed the moment when the letter would no longer obscure the spirit. It has insisted that all portions are of equal authenticity and of unquestionable value and that not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the text. It has insisted also that this gospel of triumph and joy should be encased in the deep black of mourning.

Doubtless all of Dr. Bates' readers will be grateful to him. Doubtless, too, all will find something to cavil at. No one will regret that the King James version has, in the main, been followed, but it may be wondered whether the deviation from this course in the taking of four books of the Old Testament from the Revised Version has not entailed greater loss than gain. For the Song of Songs Jastrow's translation would seem to many a safer guide than Moulton's. Brief introductions to each book present the latest historical and exegetical conclusions of the erudites. Considering the fact that Dr. Bates' primary aim has been to make his version readable as living literature, one has reason to be surprised that no helpful suggestions of an aesthetic nature are included in the introductory notes. Cross references to chapters in the unabridged Bible would be useful and might surely have been inserted in such a way as not to mar seriously the beauty of the page.

But these matters are after all of little significance when weighed against the fact that here we have a Bible which includes all the unquestionably significant and beautiful portions of the greatest of all books and may be read from cover to cover with no diminution in reverence and a vast increase in delight and understanding. It will win new readers and hearten the old.

Barry Gerl


Eric T. Bell's new book establishes a new class of which it is the only member. It is not a history of mathematics and it is much more than a series of sketches of mathema-
Mathematicians, because the author's own fertile mathematical mind has made clear the evolution of mathematical ideas in his accounts of successive men. In the development of the mathematics of the infinite, of probability, of groups, of invariance, of the non-Euclidean geometries, of relativity, of number theory, of imaginary numbers, of symbolic reasoning, and of calculus there is a necessary order. One man's work begins where the work of predecessors leaves off. In Men of Mathematics this evolution of ideas is sketched in bold, clear strokes. And in the account there are suggested awe-inspiring glimpses of the paths which lead through mathematics to science and the development of the machine age. Cookery and simple tools may antedate mathematics, but before scientific chemistry or machines could be developed, centuries of mathematical tradition had to accumulate. Navigation and modern war, modern science and modern industry could appear only after the work of mathematicians whose interest in pure mathematics developed the concepts which enter into the formulas of science and its practical application. England's naval supremacy depended on Newton's Principia.

Little space is given to ancient mathematicians. The nineteenth century, according to Bell, contributed five times as much as had preceded it. The three men whose accomplishments were beyond the range of all the others were Archimedes, Newton, and Gauss. But the list of men whose accomplishments may well be called great is much longer.

The author of the book was very evidently driven by a sincere desire to find out just what sorts of human beings these men of mathematics were. Their work is so far removed from the ordinary interests of other men and their accomplishments so far beyond the capacity of the rest of us that we tend to think of them as a separate species. This Bell finds not justified. Mathematicians have, along with their contributions to mathematics, taken a very active part in practical affairs, from military command and diplomacy to business and industry and wide general scholarship. But mathematics seemed to be in some way in their blood, and in many cases drove its "victims" to terrific and sustained effort from early youth to old age, and this in spite of obstacles and discouragement.

Mathematicians themselves have not held to the theory that mathematics is a very special "gift." "If others," says Gauss, "would but reflect on mathematical truths as deeply and as continuously as I have, they would make my discoveries." When Newton was asked how he made his discoveries, his answer was: "By always thinking about them." But Gauss when not yet three years old is said to have corrected his father's addition of a payroll, and many men of Bell's list had already become preeminent in mathematics by the time they had reached the age of twenty. Confinement in military prison, exhausting illness, even families of infants playing about a mathematician's knees, seemed to have no discouraging effect. If mathematics is not an ability that is 'in the blood,' it is at least a passionate interest for which we have no adequate explanation.

Bells' account of his mathematicians is clear, simple, and vivid. It can be read by anyone who took an interest in his high-school courses.

E. R. Guthrie


Colonel C. E. S. Wood is, apparently, a sort of literary Holger Danske. Silent these all too many years since Heavenly Discourse won for him a ranking place among writers of satirical prose, he now springs into print with a book which must have cried aloud to be written. Like Heavenly Discourse the new Wood offering is done in a series of dialogues and playlets, and like its parent volume Earthly Discourse is a bold frontal attack upon hypocrisy, intolerance, and reactionary forces which menace democratic institutions and ideals. One has to read but a few pages to be convinced that age has not rusted the Colonel's blade nor impaired the strength of his arm.

Verse was the first love of the book's author, and much of the dialogue in Earthly Discourse is sheer poetry. We doubt whether Maxwell Anderson could have done better the scenes in which Edward VIII defies Stanley Baldwin, Canterbury and Great Britain's parliament. Wood makes Edward seem a Prometheus bound by outworn traditions, torn by the vultures of public and press. Wallis Warfield Simpson states her own case well in the sequences in which she appears; Baldwin seems as noble and fatuous as one fears he might be in real life.

A sense of dramatic value, less pronounced in Heavenly Discourse, enriches the book throughout; most of the scenes would, one feels, play up admirably if staged. The scene in which Hitler, Goering, et al. discuss the extermination of the Jews has a macabre quality which holds one's attention until the playlet's surprising denouement. The brief drama in which a band of California vigilantes tar and feather Christ reveals Colonel Wood as a writer of genuine dramatic power.

A chapter in which William Randolph Hearst attempts to steal a mountain of gold from Satan presents the author in a broad satirical mood, as do farcical dialogues in which birth control, the D. A. R., the American Legion and censorship receive his critical attention. And no matter how you feel about Supreme Court reform, you will have diffi-
cully in repressing at least a modicum of laughter at the long chapter in which the nine justices solemnly wonder just how the heck they got their power anyway! Judging by the standards of this bit of writing, we believe that C. E. S. Wood closely approaches greatness. All in all, Earthly Discourse is warmly recommended to readers of all types; even Republicans and sinners should enjoy it. It is the sort of literary medicine that might even turn a stuffed shirt into a human being.

*Suns Go Down.* By Flannery Lewis. Macmillan. $2.

Old Mrs. Flannery went to Virginia City, Nevada, whose sides was a bride of sixteen, taking with her the ways and standards of her native New England. Today she is ninety and not by one jot or one tittle has she departed from the ideas of her girlhood; the impact of the wide open West in the days of the Big Bonanza was less than a flea bite to that little lady, except that she felt that men, those childish creatures, were even more erratic in Nevada than in New England and so needed her more. Altogether she emerges from the pages of this book as a charming anachronism, as stalwart in spirit as she is fragile in body.

There is a certain similiarity of feeling between this portrait of “Grandmother” and Clarence Day’s “Father.” By this I do not in any way suggest that Flannery Lewis has tried to imitate Day, but there is a tenderness and humor in each author’s attitude toward his subject that charms the reader and somehow makes the characters created come brightly alive, to stay alive long after the book in which they appear is laid aside.

For those who are interested in the history of the Comstock Lode and the more or less fantastic characters who swarmed over it in its gaudy days, this volume will be a savory morsel. Here the point of view of those famous and infamous men is wholly personal, seen through Grandmother’s eyes, and the events which went to make up the social life of Virginia City, such as ladies’ socials, the funerals, the parades are believable although we shall never see their like again. You can’t go wrong on *Suns Go Down* if you like people, and especially if you like grandmothers.

*No Pasaran!* A Story of the Battle of Madrid. By Upton Sinclair. Published by the Author. 25 cents.

A young German-American, the poor relation of a family of wealthy pickle manufacturers, Rudy is the usual college boy who hopes to “get ahead.” He chances to do a good turn for a pathetic little Jewish Socialist. Partly from curiosity and partly because he feels sorry for the little fellow, Rudy visits his home, goes to a Socialist meeting, becomes acquainted with other radicals including a Communist and an Anarchist. He is astonished to find what kindly, ordinary folk they are and how sensible their ideas sound.

Learning of his activities, his family is horrified, particularly cousin Ernie, who is an ardent Nazi. Ernie persuades his cousin to attend a Nazi gathering in hopes of saving him from radicalism. Unfortunately the fulminations of the Hitler-worshippers leave Rudy cold. He continues to associate with his radical friends, witnesses a raid on a dance hall by a uniformed band of Ernie’s Brownshirts, and becomes deeply interested in the war between the Spanish Democracy and the German, Italian, and Spanish Fascists. After long consideration, he cuts himself free from the narrow prejudices of his family and determines to take part himself in the Spanish civil war.

He and his radical friends sink their differences of opinion, forming a little “United Front” of their own. They go to Spain and join the battalion of American volunteers. With hundreds of other foreign sympathizers from all over the world they throw themselves into the defense of Madrid at a critical moment of the conflict.

*No Pasaran!* is a thrilling, well-told story, breathing something of the simple, straightforward, valorous spirit of the old tales of the Crusades. It is animated by a sincere fellow-feeling for all fighters against oppression, and an earnest desire to make the Spanish war a vivid reality in the eyes of its readers. This is accomplished, however, without ranting and with considerable humor. Altogether, this is an urbane and readable story, slightly crude in spots, but rising at the end to a climax of genuine emotion, where the Americans prove to the courageous, terrified, untrained Spanish fighters the possibility of realizing their heroic slogan, “They shall not pass!”

*Collected Poems.* By Florence Converse. Dutton. $2.50.

If one likes his verse well-patterned, and of socialized content, the brittle earnestness of the collected poems of Florence Converse should afford more than a passing satisfaction. The high seriousness of their approach to certain basic maladjustments of a world stridently out of key merits thoughtful attention—particularly from those who feel that the remedy for much obvious social injustice should lie in inner rather than outer change. The writer’s belief that individual, or spiritual, regeneration is the fundamental basis of a new social order charges their

Fountains of Youth. By Dormer Creston. Dutton. $3.

Released almost simultaneously by the same publisher, these two biographies of famous women stir the mind to comparison. In spite of the fact that neither the books nor the women are more than superficially alike, both Vida Scudder, who writes her own story, and Marie Bashkirtseff, whose biography is built up by Dormer Creston from the original diaries, were born in 1861; both were of aristocratic background and education; and both were early aware of talent and ambition in a world that was beginning to turn feminist. That is as far as the parallel goes, however. Essentialnoly, these women and their life-studies are no more to be compared than sunshine and lemon pie.

On Journey is like sunshine, glowing, vitalizing, concerned with growth and health. As many people know, Miss Scudder is a professor emeritus at Wellesley, now seventy-six years old, and this intimate record of her thinking life will, therefore, be a special treasure to her former students in English literature. There is much more to her than that, however. Think of the sort of person who, when she comes to set down her final pages, together with an admirable interest in the modern social evolution—or revolution, as a poem entitled "The Red Flag" would indicate. But perhaps it is the very intentness of the Utopian zeal for a millennium not of this earth that results in a certain wistful ignoring of the present scene of man's conflict. The awareness of the poignance of the human dilemma here and now is only theoretically present, the few people who walk through its pages are shadowy and thin-bodied, and earth itself fades to something seen "as though a glass, darkly, and not face to face." There does emerge, however, a body of crisp vignettes, rhymically worded, each bearing its appointed message of social propaganda toward a desirable millennium—remote from earth and its current shabby griefs.

Those who, like Milton, are content to have their poetry "simple, sensuous, impassioned" may be conscious of over-rhyming and a certain entangling net of form in this volume of verse—even of an over-weight of social theory. And those who, like many an obscure bard, find it hard to evade the moving spectacle of man's struggle here and now, may miss the presence of human figures from its pages, charged as they are with visions of a better world. Such will enjoy most keenly that first portion of the book called "Old World," and in this the opening poem, "The Happy Swan," perhaps sets the key for the pages that follow. In the poems called "Tintagel," "The Grail," "The Voices," the dominant contrast of modern social theory with archaic dress is again to be found, stated with clarity and charm. "The Sphinx and the Seraph" achieves a sonorous dignity stated with clarity and charm. "The Sphinx and the Seraph" achieves a sonorous dignity.

Down the rue de l'Odeon, they go,
Crashing and trumpeting through the night,
The Paris omnibuses,
The broad-beamed, lumbering motor-omni-
buses of Paris,
Like elephants amok.

Of the second group, captioned "At Home," among a number of poems expressed of subdued personal emotion, "Sonnet" is pleasingly concrete and fluid. The third section, "War and Brotherhood," is taken up with themes of social import. The longest and last offering, "A Masque of Sybils," in blank verse, though not absorbingly dramatic, and without the magic of a singing line, offers an intellectual contribution as to the failure of the pagan world in the progressive march of civilization toward an other-worldly perfection. The attractive formality of the book is thoroughly in keeping with an even distinction of content.
events. In fact, the final effect of the book is not that of an autobiography. Miss Scudder came so early to recognize social problems as the core and source of her life-work that her book has the flavor of a social treatise. To her, the teaching of Christ is communism in its truest meaning, and she became a socialist in those early days when such a stand endangered her job. She says now that she would ally herself with the communists if it weren't that while she does not feel intolerant of their atheism, they are intolerant of her religion.

The book ends with a particularly satisfying ray of sunshine which reveals the author in her Wellesley home where she still meets an occasional seminar group in her "attic study," where her thoughts dwell more and more with her beloved St. Francis and her Companions of the Holy Cross. She says, "I am an old woman; and at present my most helpful form of self-examination is scrutiny of my interests to ascertain which among them would survive bodily death. Fearfully few! I dearly love to be alive. I can at last thank God with all my heart for my young Russian girl, who died of consumption at the age of twenty-four, when her ability as a painter was barely beginning to be recognized. And enveloping billows of fluff surround her in the bickering and ineffectual family (Russian nobility in the time of the Czar) and the artificial nothings of the social whirl of Nice, Rome and Paris. Marie Bashkirtseff is known chiefly for her voluminous diaries, which appeared first in France a few years after her death (1884). The first American edition came out in 1919 and was, on the whole, a fairer and more satisfactory way of portraying this unhappy personality than is the present attempt on the part of Dormer Creston. It seems a sad miscarriage, this effort on the part of an apparently sympathetic biographer to vivify a rare and artistic girl. After Gladstone read her diary he called her "a genius, one of those abnormal beings who seem to be born once or twice in a generation." Probably it would be an impossible job for any biographer to convey unspoiled the peculiar intimacies and idiosyncracies of this unusual girl. The brightest spot in the book is the Maupassant-Bashkirtseff correspondence, and the most satisfactory characterization is in the description of the last tragic love affair between Marie and the dying artist Bastien-Lepage.

Ruth Collier

Frontier and Midland

The Enchanted Glass. The Elizabethan Mind in Literature. By Hardin Craig. Oxford University Press. $2.50.

The Great Tom Fuller. By Dean B. Lyman. University of California Press. $2.25.

The reading of Hardin Craig's The Enchanted Glass and Dean Lyman's The Great Tom Fuller again brings to mind that the English Renaissance did not break off sharply with the rise of Puritanism. (Indeed Craig himself draws on Milton's prose and poetry to illustrate the spirit of the Renaissance). In Fuller we discover the same appetite for life, the same belief in women's intellectual inferiority to men, the same acceptance of "physiognomic theories," and the same faith in "correspondences between mind and matter" that govern the thinking of the Elizabethan age. Though Fuller wrote almost two generations after Elizabeth's death and though more given to compromise than men of the late sixteenth century, yet he inherited much in thought and feeling from the previous age.

Lyman's study is a scholarly and readable account of Fuller's life. The author does not deal with Fuller's literary achievement and reputation. Instead he studied the relevant biographical facts and sifted and "winnowed them of chaff, until a definite conception of a personality emerged."

Hardin Craig presents a panorama of the mental, moral, and spiritual life of the Renaissance. He asks what went on in the minds of Elizabethan writers. What went their notions of human personality? What educational training shaped their thinking? What were their preoccupations and preconceptions? Did contemporary theories solve the immediate problems of life and art? To these and many other questions Craig offers illuminating but not final answers. He is never dogmatic but always exploratory. He suggests for instance that the Renaissance writer was more immediately associated with the facts of existence than we. As he had no instruments with which to acquire knowledge of reality, he relied on observation and developed "intimacy with detail that the modern man lacks."

Illuminating as such passages are, Craig's greatest achievement lies in his synthesis of the varied aspects of the Elizabethan age. Yet here is no easy generalization. Every conclusion, however tentative, is carefully documented and established with a wealth of information.

Perhaps because Craig is primarily concerned with the general aspects of Renaissance culture his style is often abstract and sometimes turgid. He speaks of "tools of fabrication" and "world-wide disputational inclusiveness," and writes: "Inanimate na-
Frontier and Midland

ture does not, as already stated, manifest much operative detail, so that as an explanation of what is to be seen, the hypothesis of the four elements with the doctrine of com-mixtion formed an obvious but entirely in-
adquate hypothesis."

Such infelicities, though they mar the book, do not destroy its merit. It will for many years remain indispensable to the student and invaluable to the general reader, who desires better acquaintance with the English Renaissance.

Rudolf H. Ernst


Every student of Medieval and Renaissance literatures will want a copy of this book. In eleven chapters Professor Farnham gives us fully and for the first time close analyses and interpretations of significant tragic materials, non-dramatic and dramatic, in that development, or progression, known loosely but generally as "The Genesis of English drama." In these several chapters we study the Gothic spirit as it transcends ascetic philosophies and moralizings and all sorts of medieval and Senecan conventions in form, manner, and phrasings; we follow Fortune with her wheel in autocratic and fickle rule of sublunary events, Fortune and the stars under God as ministers of his divine will, or Fortune, wheel, and stars philosophically discredited in a more rational world but still useful poetically or as poetic adornment; and we see Gothic tragedy in the hands of Shakespeare. The various themes are fasci-nating in themselves; in one way or another the world has always found them so, and these studies will awaken old interests and stimulate new thought. Each chapter offers a pleasurable experience.

It is only when we try to integrate the whole in the light of its general title that we falter, and try to tell ourselves that Gothic elements in Shakespeare have been shown to be legitimate descendents of medieval religious musings. Actually the title itself is a kind of paradox, and the point of view is confused.

And so, under the purely subjective and arbitrary method, our merely logical natures are not too happy. Oscillations, exceptions, variations, gaps, and interpretations are troublesome. Like the music we go round and round; like Fortune's wheel, now up, now down; like Falstaff, now praying, now pursetaking. But we are apt to feel oftener better, and these studies will awaken old interests and stimulate new thought. Each chapter offers a pleasurable experience.

Frontier and Midland

Across the Plains and Among the Diggings. By Alonzo Delano. Wilson-Erickson. $4.50.

Alonzo Delano (distantly related to Franklin Delano Roosevelt) first published, eighty-four years ago, this account of crossing the plains to California. His day-to-day de-scriptions of the country through which he passed, together with his observations of conditions in California in '49, remain as one of the best versions of that gold mad era. Early travelers coming to the Pacific Coast used Delano's work as a guidebook and au-thority. It is still considered, by many, the best work of that author.

Leaving St. Joseph, Missouri, during the closing days of April, 1849, Delano journeyed for almost five months before he reached what is now Shasta County, California. Like so many others, his quest was health and gold. What he experienced on his travels was typical of the trek westward. Broad expanses of plains and rivers gave way, in turn, to mountains, deserts and valleys. Cold, heat, bad weather, hunger, thirst, sickness and death were only a few of the hardships which the emigrants found as they plodded their way slowly along. Only the kindnesses and consideration of an all too few seemed to lessen the tortures of those struggling peo-ple whose major hope was to reach their far-off destination. Thousands never reached the goal.

Once California was reached, the immigrant did not find, always, what he had antici-pated. Destitution, disease, broken con-tracts, separation, theft and disappointment tagged him. Hand in hand with the gold seekers. Speculation, gambling, high prices and dissipa-tion, as only a lust-mad people can know, were commonplace incidents of life. Mur-der, too, with quick justice, found their places. Those conditions Delano pictured, along with the prospects of California's future. He realized, as did so few, that Cali-fornia's wealth lay, not only in mineral wealth, but in good government, climate, till-able lands, rich soil, agricultural productions, water power, timber, health, and the rapid increase of population.

The 1936 edition of Across the Plains and Among the Diggings is worthy of those published earlier. Delano's words are reproduced faithfully and in a readable manner in print and binding of more than ordinary merit. For the usual reader, in fact, the new edition is an improvement over the first publi-cations of the book, for two reasons: the addition of photographs showing the actual country and landmarks made familiar to us by Delano; and the inclusion of an account picturing California's gold country today. The photographs, of which there are some fifty-five, reproductions of those taken by Louis Palenske, alone make this edition a welcome newcomer to one's book shelf. The
dimensions of the book, being large, have allowed for an enlargement of the photographs; and the shades and perspectives are excellent.

The epilogue, written by Rufus Rockwell Wilson, has done what so few appendages to books of an historical nature do; it has tied up the past to the present. This account of the Mother Lode country of California, in 1936, shows what has become of the land through which the thousands struggled in their quest for gold. Old buildings line well-worn forgotten streets, in some instances; other mining habitations find themselves upon the modern highways of today; while only graveyards, covered with brush, mark the sites of once prosperous settlements of the boom days. Those towns and buildings, together with the scars left by the miners of '49, will never be erased totally, but will remain as historical monuments to the glamor and excitement of the rush to California.

Such is the story of Across the Plains and Among the Diggings, as presented in its 1936 edition. Followers of the history of the westward migration and California in the early American period will find in this reproduction a worth-while addition to their libraries. Collectors, scholars and the public in general will find in this work a story retold in a manner, better, if possible, than that of the original.

V. Aubrey Neasham


The Wreck of the Active, by F. V. Morley, is a book that should appeal to Pacific Northwest readers primarily because it's a rattling good adventure yarn and incidentally because a portion of its setting is laid in our own section back at the beginning of the eighteenth century. There may be some historical basis for the story, but this reviewer frankly admits that he does not know what it is. This much at least is true: there were innumerable vessels like the Active, there were countless devil-may-care skippers like Captain Perry, and there were plenty of voyages that took men away from the established comforts of life in quest of fame and fortune in the little known waters of the Pacific. Indeed, we suspect that author Morley had much less to go on, in the writing of this tale, than had Gilbert Gabriel in the grinding out of I, James Lewis. Nevertheless, it's rough-and-tumble adventure in the best of that splendid tradition. The action starts in London—and this also is traditional—where Captain Perry is engaged in negotiating a loan for barter goods to be traded for furs. Complications thicken the plot almost immediately. A stranger in a blue coat leaps from a dock-side window with his smoking revolver still in his hand. There are hired thugs out to "get him," but their efforts are thwarted by Captain Perry and his man, Kinsey. They are acting, it appears, under the orders of Turketine, Perry's banker, when they save this blue-coated stranger from certain death. They are also acting under orders when they hustle him off to a nearby farm, nurse him back to health, and eventually take him aboard the Active. Why all this? Well, my friends, that's an intimate part of the story—that plus the fact that the mysterious stranger turns out to be "somebody" on the pages that follow. The cruise of the Active follows the well-established trade lines of those days—around the Horn, eastward to the Hawaiian Islands and then westward to our own Vancouver Island. Off the shores of Nootka momentous events take place, and near Bella Coolas a sinister fate is prepared for the doughty Captain Perry. His sailor, as it turns out, is an enterprising Indian girl, a glorified cross between Pocahontas and Saecajwaa. That frankly, is all of the story that a review has any business imparting. The rest remains for your pleasure, and pleasure is exactly what you will derive from a reading of The Wreck of the Active. In a troubled world of sex novels and "stream of consciousness" outbursts, Mr. Morley's yarn is as welcome as the air waves after a national election!

Richard G. Montgomery


Told With a Drum. By Edward Heth. Houghten, Mifflin. $2.

The Ups of Suffolk Street. By Wilma Pollock. Dutton. $2.50.

Out of This Nettle. By Mary Gates. Crowell. $2.

Still Is the Summer Night. By August Derleth. $2.50.

Frankau's book is a collection of stories which might be cited as good examples of the advantages of the short mystery story, each the right size for a single sitting, and cleverer than the run-of-the-mill puzzle-thriller. Mr. Frankau is no dullard, and has a gratifying acquaintance with strange "continental" places and some information about diplomatic intrigue, and the ways of blackmailers, forgers, jewel thieves, female impersonators, Indian princes, and blundering English school-boys "thrilled to the back teeth" by events. The moral, if any, of the events, is of the "beware of the rabbit in a rage" genre. There is practically no gore for the morbid, and not enough puzzle for the experienced in these matters. The rather furtive English (?) humor is funny when it is un-
familiar. For instance, "even Mr. Porteous' grog blossoms went pale," a phrase over which we chose rather to puzzle with more interest than it warrants. That people are English is indicated by the omission of letters and the apostrophe. This is not amusin'.

The protagonists of Told with a Drum are German. This is indicated by a thick sprinkling of German phrases. The story is about a highly respected and loved German patriarch in this country who is broken by the war. It is told from the point of view of his very young grandson; perhaps for this reason the old man does not seem to have any great reality in his own right. And the complications and hatreds engendered by the war in an American city seem pretty unsubstantial since their connection with the actual conflict is oblique or not obvious. Mr. Heth recrudes rather well a series of repulsive and pathetic incidents.

Two more or less sure-fire humorous angles intersect in Wilma Pollock's The Upps of Suffolk Street. A Yiddish family goes into the mail-order marriage agency business. Dialect and word perversion, as we have already implied, when used for humorous purposes, must be ranked lower than the pun, and are here somewhat overworked. The possibilities in magazines concerned with the bringing together of heart "pardners" has been less explored. Poppa Upps moves his family from a tenement in the Bronx, about which the most said is that it is pretty hot, to a Connecticut hamlet (to beard the Yankee in his native habitat) and makes profitable his risky publishing venture. The country slickers are foiled and Poppa is otherwise successful, particularly as he manages to marry off a couple of his own children.

Out of this Nettle discusses one of these present day youths in rebellion in a slightly different manner. This one is a girl who is a rider in a small-time circus. She is very unhappy and pines for peace and a happy home life. From the fact that she chooses a lion cub as a companion in the settling-down process, we may infer complications.

We had been led to believe that love affairs in the Middle-Western 1880's were dominated by the rigidity of the social code in such matters. If the code was broken, it was either slyly or with bravado; it was never ignored. The existence of the code seems to have had as much influence as the fact of love itself. This may partly explain the flaw in August Derleth's novel. His characters apparently have no knowledge of any such code. But the book otherwise is a fine one. Two brothers, the wife of one of them, and their father, move in their appointed pattern across an extremely interesting background, through an extremely interesting period. This seems clearly the best of the books here noticed.

-*Paula Smith*

**Brimming Chalice.** By Archibald Rutledge. Harrison. $2.

**Morningshore Children.** By Sarahbeth Leslie. Harrison. $2.

**Flame on the Hills.** Edited by Mrs. L. Worthington Smith. Harrison. $2.

**Highland Moon.** By Oscar S. Erlandson. Dorrance. $1.

**Songs Against the Dark.** By Jeannette Slocomb Edwards. The Driftwind Press. $1.50.

These sad little books have a very slight interest. The sum of that interest is that they illustrate one specialized kind of commercial writing. Literate readers must have an ironic awareness of the offenses committed by Edgar Guest. Don Blanding fools nobody. The pleasant nonsense of Dorothy Parker and Ogden Nash can be accepted at its own evaluation.

But the peculiar vice of this rhyming is that it pretends to be something it is not. It is the considered, if mistaken, conviction of countless verse readers that poetry consists largely of flowery references to the "argent moon," or the expansion of various emotional growing pains. This material is broken up into lines. Rhymes are tacked on to the ends of the lines. The whole is stuffed into the unwilling bounds of a conventional form. The finished product resembles a poorly packed trunk more than it does a poem.

It is the offensive vacuousness of these people's work which has given poetry such a bad name among the potentially literate. This same vacuousness has developed the wretched notion held by the mass of readers that poetry is a sort of recreational marshmallow.

*Burt McCabe*

**Animals of the Seashore.** By Muriel Lewin Guberlet. Metropolitan Press. $2.50.

Most people walking along an ocean beach, skirting mud flats, or climbing over rocks in some sheltered bay are curious about all they see and would like to call the animals by name, but as a rule their knowledge is limited to starfish, anemones, and a few others. Mrs. Guberlet's little book is well adapted for such amateur naturalists. Beach animals of all types are represented, those found in the sand, among rocks, in mud flats, in tide pools, and similar habitats. Excellent pictures and short clear descriptions enable the reader to identify his finds quickly and easily. The technical description is cut to a minimum so that the book would be an admirable one for use in a boys' or girls' camp. As the wife of a professor of zoology, at the
University of Washington, Mrs. Guberlet has had ample opportunity in frequent field trips to acquaint herself at first hand with the sea creatures of which she writes.

*Daniel T. Helms*

**The Sisters. By Myron Brinig.** Farrar and Rhinehart. $2.50.

Michael, the writer son in the Singermann family, is the narrator of Myron Brinig’s latest novel. He introduces himself in a brief prologue and bows himself out in a somewhat longer epilogue. But not before 550 pages have intervened, describing the lives and loves of the Elliott girls, Louise, Grace, and Helen, daughters of Ned Elliott, the old-fashioned, plodding druggist of Silver Bow (Butte), Montana. The setting is the early nineteen hundreds, when the automobile was beginning to chug and run (sometimes) at the amazing speed of twenty or more miles per hour, while the women passengers, enveloped in billowing veils, giggled or shrieked in response to jolts or temperament.

First comes the home life of the Elliotts, finely drawn in its intimacy of mother and daughters. The sisters are growing their feathers in readiness for flight, all except Grace, who, heavy of body and mind, plumps down close to home as the bride of the son of the local banker, whom she has captured on the rebound. Her older sister, Louise, has thrown him over for a more romantic elopement which whirls her off to San Francisco.

The narrative is divided carefully into books (two to each sister), a device which is partially concealed by excellent characterization and lively incident. Especially well told are Louise’s adventures, including as they do a thrilling account of the San Francisco earthquake. A Brinig fan may recall a somewhat similar setting in an earlier book, *This Man Is My Brother* (1932), where several chapters are given over to Southern California. He will be struck with Mr. Brinig’s growth in assurance and power. Some of the best writing in the book is found in these earlier chapters descriptive of the eldest daughter.

Effective work is done, likewise, in the presentation of Sam Johnson, the millionaire copper-king husband of Helen. Fat, soft, and kind-hearted, he is content to adore even though his goddess is a tinsel-queen as shallow as her beauty compact. Like a man at a musical revue, for him the spectacle is sufficient. Saratoga Springs with its prodigal riff-raff, its mad hurrah of the race-course, merged with over-drinking, snuffs Sam out to a quick ending. All this excitement keeps the reader turning pages expectantly.

The epilogue finds Louise bearing her years most gracefully; Grace is frowzy; Helen still flashingly beautiful but tired around the eyes. The close is a little too neatly done. Here the artifice obtrudes.

*The Sisters* is a good story. But it lacks somehow the freshness and verve of Brinig’s earlier narrative, *Singermann* (1929). Its larger canvas, its skilful building up of scene and character do not quite compensate for the more intimate detail and loving delineation of the noisy family on East Park Street. The Singermans were Brinig’s own people. Butte was his home town.

*Rufus A. Coleman*

**Editor’s Notes:** Story writers are often advised to “study” the contents of magazines before submitting material. Probably that is sound advice only for rough determination of the general nature of a magazine. A delicate analysis of an introverted person would be foolishly sent to a detective story magazine, obviously; and “study” of magazines that eliminates such unnecessary expenditure of postage is right and good. But editors of magazines other than those devoted to distinctive types are open to almost any kind of story, provided it is written with skill and interest and fits in with current needs. Little or experimental magazines or those like *Frontier and Midland* that are devoted simply to excellent portrayal of the experiences of life should never be “studied” for discovery of the type of stories used, for the reason that they desire many types.

My experience has been that whenever Mr. O’Brien or Mr. Hansen has chosen stories from our magazine for inclusion in their annual collections I suffer floods of stories like them. All editors have similar experience, I am sure. The result is that the very mediums which try to hold themselves open for all kinds of material and expression have to struggle, and usually do not succeed, against becoming stereotyped. They soon discover that when they wished to encourage the fresh seeing of the million aspects of life molded freshly and freshly expressed they are becoming a “magazine of a certain type.” Their contributors by “studying” what the magazines have printed force them into a
stereotype. In defence they sometimes accept inferior stories in order to gain variety.

Just now FRONTIER AND MIDLAND is inundated with stories stressing inner strife of more or less delicate nature, or of super-sensitive persons failing to adjust themselves to life. These tales have little if any plot, slight if any climactic interest, and tend to become mere glimpses where full view would be better. Our editors do not wish to taboo that type of tale, but they do desire other kinds of stories—robust (and that does not mean dirty) tales of extroverts, dramatic stories, plotted tales which grow to crisis. There is a vast deal to be said about people in every walk of life doing every kind of thing.

FRONTIER AND MIDLAND has suffered a flood of stories about farmers and their wives and their degenerate "help," probably because, being avowedly regional, writers think that the magazine is interested only in rural life. Regionalism exists in towns and cities as well as in the country. Our editors wish to publish as nearly a cross-section of Western life as is possible.

Writers, don't study what we have published, but let us see any material that you have which is fresh, honestly seen, well shaped and, in your best judgment, interestingly expressed.

LITERARY NEWS

Continued from page iv

announces the winner of the $2,500 prize in the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Award Contest for the best manuscript dealing with a major aspect of America and American life, to be Dean Alfange, 39, lawyer and resident of NYC, born in Constantinople of Greek parentage, and brought to this country at the age of three.

Alice Rogers Hager, only woman special feature correspondent on aviation in the world, spent the summer at a Martinsdale, Mont., dude ranch, taking assignments from that place for her work on the Washington, (D. C.) Star. She is the author of a pictorial juvenile-for-all-the-family in the Macmillan series, dealing with the history and present life of western cowboys. Many of the photographs are from the "Pitchfork" Belden ranch of Wyoming.

Charles Morrow Wilson is the author of 6000 Acres and a Microscope appearing in the September Scribner's, an article whose thesis is that today's rancher is part farmer, part breeder, part banker, and that Con Kohrs Warren of Montana is showing cattlemen that a test tube is more important than a six-shooter.
THE STORY WRITERS—Dolores Waldorf Bryant, a California writer who appears with her second story to this magazine, catches the humor of everyday men and women. James Still has recently returned to the Kentucky hills where he is “glad to be again,” after eager and profitable attendance as a publishers’ fellow at the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference in Vermont. Stories by him are to appear soon in Yale Review, Story, Virginia Quarterly, and Atlantic Monthly.

Warren Beck, Appleton, Wis., is a new writer to FRONTIER AND MIDLAND, as is Lillian Korupp, Cortland, N. Y. Both, though in very different ways, have penetrated below the show of things in their people’s actions and thought. Roland Hartley, So. Pasadena, whose stories have been in Harpers and other magazines, is a steady contributor to this magazine.

The Montana Guide Book is about ready for press. It is the product of the Federal Writers’ Project, which was begun under the direction of H. G. Merriam in October 1935, with Horace Chadbourne and Grace Stone Coates assistant directors. Byron Crane is now acting director and John Stahlberg editor.

THE POETS—Michigan is represented by three poets, all new to FRONTIER AND MIDLAND: Joseph Cherwinski, whose poetry has recently been in the Saturday Review of Literature, Elizabeth Allen, of Ann Arbor, and Carrow de Vries, Wyandotte. From Oregon also come three poets: Cortland Matthews, long known to our readers, Pat Morissette, who for two years was our book review editor and who is now living in Stevenson, Wash., and Clark Emsley, Corvallis, a welcome newcomer. California and Washington each has two: the former, Eleanor Lennen, Los Angeles, a lyricist whose poems have given pleasure to our readers for some years, and Irene Welch, a San Francisco poet of wide reputation; the latter, George Sherman, Mt. Vernon, and Marion Hutton, Port Townsend. Three poets live in Mississippi: Jane Morrill, a newcomer, and John Stahlberg and Dennis Murphy, author of Boy With a Silver Plow, both known to our readers. Opal Shannon is now working on the WPA Guide Book for Iowa; Glen Pearman teaches English in a Montana high school; and Ted Olson, a newspaper man in Laramie, Wyo., is widely admired as a poet. Ralph Friedrich lives in Cincinnati.

THE YOUNG WRITERS—Miss Thayer and Mr. Swallow contributed to the Summer FRONTIER AND MIDLAND. Miss Maeda Rector lives in Three Forks, Mont. Bessie Mabre has for years been a county superintendent of schools in Montana.

The Virginia Quarterly Review

A National Journal of Literature and Discussion

ANNOUNCES FOR THE AUTUMN NUMBER

European Possibilities, by John W. Wheeler-Bennett
The Novel and the Simple Soul, by Walter L. Myers
New Heroes for America, by George Soule
Huxley and Lawrence, by John Hawley Roberts
Democracy and Human Purpose, by W. G. Peck
Wedding in Holland. A story, by David Cornell DeJong
So Large a Thing as Seven. A story, by James Still
Criticism, Inc., by John Crow Ransom
Poetry and Book Discussions

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