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RAINY DAY PAGES

Martha Storek '37

THURSDAY, MARCH 21:

The first day of Spring. The calendar says it is so, the papers all say it is so—I say it is not. For it is raining. The fog slides in from the river. The dampness slips down people's necks and into their chests. This is not Spring. Spring is gay and kind and promising.

FRIDAY, MARCH 22:

Lenten services in the evening. Why must we always sing sorrowful hymns during the Lenten season? Why must everything be clothed in black and silver? We should not mourn, for that deadens hope—hope is the gift of Lent. Is it that we are to be thoughtful? Would the brightness of the Easter morning be somewhat dimmed if there were no deep, dark Lenten days? I am too unwise and foolish to say more about this.

SUNDAY, MARCH 24:

Truly sincere services. Cool, white calla-lilies and fragrant red flowers on the black clothed altar. Choir sang well—really very well. Even our strongest soprano singer who almost always sings flats instead of sharps didn't do so today. The Amen especially well sung. Ludwig's solo was simple and so beautiful. Happy pricks always creep up and down my spine when I hear something so lovely. Sunday dinner—the kind one reads about in stories, happy stories, where all live happily ever after—the dinner. Quiet afternoon.. Got out all of the papers I've been hoarding for months. Cut out pictures of authors whom I like. Pictures and bits about actors of the stage, and so on. I suppose when I dig these all out of my scrapbook a year or

even six months from now, they will mean nothing to me. But then—life is so. We hoard and live for this or that, but it is not long before the brightness of it is gone and only the glimmer is there; this, too, soon dies. Then we find some other thing—until at last we, too, flicker out.

MONDAY, MARCH 25:

Shop windows—unhappy and stolid on a Monday morning. Easter is coming. Has it become a tradition that new clothes must be paraded for that day! I wonder if the anxiety and excitement of making our outer selves all crisp and new does not sometimes make us forget to do away with the graying hue of our inner selves. But here—I am not a philosopher. I am to have a new suit with pockets just like any gentleman's—flaps, plaits, and all. It is to be a chocolate brown shade. There is something very reassuring about chocolate brown. Those 'who know' frown on this shade. 'It isn't being worn' they say. I cannot understand them. If I wear it, it is surely being worn, or do they mean that hundreds of folk have to wear it before it can be truly said that brown is being worn? I don't know—nor do I care. After all, I alone wear these clothes, not the ones 'who know'. I am myself. I must continue to be myself. No amount of wearing of clothes that 'are being worn' will make me anyone else. They can make me only grotesque. Therefore is it not right that what I wear should be pleasing to myself?

WHY I DON'T AGREE WITH TOLSTOY

Doris Merchant '35

ACCORDING TO TOLSTOY, art must have feeling, unity, sincerity, a criterion of religious perception and must be like an organism—i. e.—each part of any form of art must have a relation to the other parts, such as exists in the human body. This theory sounds well, as we first read it, but when Tolstoy applies it to art itself we discover many flaws in his reasoning.

The first form of art to be discussed is the opera. Tolstoy does not approve of the opera because it is a mixture of two arts: namely, the drama and music. The drama is art only when it portrays emotions felt by the author. These emotions must be understood and felt by the audience. In music, the same thing is true. If the music does not give to the listener a sense of the composer's emotions, and those emotions are not universally experienced, then it is not art.

In illustrating his theory, Tolstoy chooses Wagner as an example of one who created counterfeit art. The series of operas entitled the *Nibelungen Ring* is not real art because the subject matter is fanciful and the music, if played without the words to accompany it, impossible to comprehend. The reason for this, says Tolstoy, is that Wagner wrote music to portray character—a few bars for each person. Because the composer strung these various *motifs* together to make one perfect whole, the words and the action are required to understand the music.

I wonder what Tolstoy would think of our Sunday afternoon concerts on the radio, or the weekly Saturday afternoon broadcasts from the Metropolitan. In the case of the first the words are seldom sung with the selections

from various opera scores, and in the case of the second only the words and the music can be enjoyed, without the benefit of the action. Yet how many people will say, today, that the radio is not a blessing because it gives so much fine music to the world? And what music do we hear most frequently? Why, nearly all of Wagner's operas. The overture to *Lohengrin* can sometimes be heard three times a week. The love music of *Tristram and Isolde* is demanded by the public. In the past two months I have heard three whole symphony concerts devoted to Wagnerian music. And in the past I have heard a tremendous audience at the Radio City Music Hall applaud thunderously many of Wagner's overtures.

Where is all this argument leading? It is leading up to the proof I wish to establish that Tolstoy was led astray when he condemned Wagner and all like him to the realm of counterfeit art. For, you see, Tolstoy said in his thesis that art to be true art must appeal to the general public and must arouse the finer emotions in the majority of people. If Wagner appealed only to the more cultured groups, and if the appreciation of his music necessitated a great deal of training, it might be possible to agree with Tolstoy. But this is not true.

Last summer I heard *Lohengrin* sung at the Hippodrome in New York City. The opera company was playing to audiences that paid popular prices (no ticket over a dollar) for the privilege of hearing all the best operas. The audience that night was as mixed as any subway crowd. All nationalities and colors were represented. *They* made the season a success. Could such a project have succeeded if the enjoyment of opera is, as Tolstoy says, only possible to the upper classes? How much musical education did that audience have? Perhaps a very good one, gained, not through long study, but through the loud speaker of the

radio and popular concerts. Is it not necessary to admit that Tolstoy was wrong? If Wagner's music is counterfeit art then the emotions that are aroused in the millions who hear it must be counterfeit. No one is willing to grant that our emotions are ever counterfeit. Psychologists insist that emotion is the result of some kind of stimulation. We can be over-stimulated and allow our emotions to get the best of us, but we cannot prevent any stimulation from arousing our emotions. Thus it seems to me that I have shown quite clearly that Wagner is true art.

Tolstoy makes another point about operas. At the end of Chapter XVII Tolstoy writes: "if one only remembers all the filthy operas and operettas, songs and ballads, with which our world teems, involuntarily it seems as though existing art had but one definite aim—to disseminate vice as widely as possible." Why does Tolstoy make this statement? What operas are filthy? Perhaps I have been spared, by careful guidance, the contamination of filthy operas. Perhaps some exist that have never been sung but once. Where then does the dissemination of vice occur? It must be admitted that some operas are based on immoral themes. *Carmen* is an example of an opera which has a courtezan for a heroine, and seduction of the hero for a plot. How does the opera end? The curtain is lowered after the downfall of the guilty ones and Carmen's death. I do not think that an audience hearing *Carmen* sung would feel inspired to go out and do likewise. Those who are going to lead immoral lives will do so without suggestion from the opera. As Tolstoy himself says in a later chapter, art follows science, and not until science attempts and succeeds in wiping out immorality will the gain of prostitution be halted. Art is supposed to portray life. Tolstoy admits that. The operas seldom end with the wrong triumphant. Why then call operas filthy?

It can be seen from the above that I am willing to accept Tolstoy's definition of art. I agree with all the points he makes, and feel that they are adequate and all-embracing. But I cannot agree with his application of them to works of art that have been accepted as such for generations before Tolstoy ever existed.

It is necessary to say one more thing about Tolstoy's theory before I go on. All the way through the work, he refutes the idea that art schools are good. The reason for his belief is that artists are born and not made, and that they will express themselves more freely if they are not influenced by others. It is impossible for me to understand this, for I cannot see how any artist can express himself, whether in words or music or painting, without having first learned the rudiments of the medium through which he wishes to express himself. How can an artist draw in perspective if he has never known of such a thing; how can a composer put notes on paper if he has never learned the system; and how can a writer produce beautiful prose or poetry if he has never learned his mother-tongue? I agree that no amount of schooling will produce an artist, but I do not think an artist can work independent of schooling.

Shakespeare is our first ranking poet and dramatist. Tolstoy thinks *Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello,* and all the rest belong to the category of counterfeit art. Why? Because Shakespeare's plays contain the four elements characteristic of so-called counterfeit. The characteristics of bad art, according to Tolstoy, are as follows: (1) Borrowing—the habit of using devices previously used. Shakespeare wrote *Midsummer's Night's Dream.* He had fairies and supernatural beings in the play. Therefore his play is counterfeit. In *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* a ghost is one of the leading characters. As a result both of these plays are counterfeit. (2) Imitation—the habit of portraying scenes and characters

with minute detail. All of Shakespeare's plays do this. (3) Action—The habit of employing striking scenes for contrast. Shakespeare is guilty of having battles, love scenes and comedy contrasted for effect. (4) Interest—the use of an intricate plot. Many of Shakespeare's plays are intricate.

None of the above is actually pointed out by Tolstoy, but that is what he meant when he called Shakespeare's works counterfeit art. I do not agree with Tolstoy in his opinion of Shakespeare. I do not even think that the four characteristics he gives to bad art, apply solely to bad art. If a work contains only the four traits and nothing else, then it would be counterfeit. But Shakespeare's plays have a great deal more to them than borrowing, imitation, action and interest. We all know that they have philosophy, beauty of poetry, understanding of human nature, and humor. Beside, all of his plays agree with Tolstoy's definition of art. They have unity, sincerity, a certain amount of religious perception, and a great deal of feeling which the reader or audience understands and admires.

Tolstoy would also criticize Shakespeare because he rewrote plays. In this instance I can agree with Tolstoy because the themes for the plays did not come from Shakespeare's own experience and emotions. But the result of the writing is something else again, for Shakespeare put into the borrowed plays so much more than had been there before that the lessons he teaches us will always remain universal in appeal and truth.

Tolstoy also forgot to notice that Shakespeare was a born poet. Nobody taught him how to write iambic pentameter. Nobody gave him an extensive course in dramatic writing. Shakespeare was a self-made dramatist. True, he wrote for the pleasure of the Elizabethan audiences and was often baudy in his humor. But always he was the true artist with a living message.

It is now difficult to understand how Tolstoy could have ever thought Shakespeare's works counterfeit. In fact, it is difficult to reconcile his two opposing theories of true and counterfeit art. But, like many theories, it is necessary to select that which is good from that which is bad.

It is good for Tolstoy to have an ideal in art. How fine it would be if there could be more art which would completely fulfill all that Tolstoy's definition requires. But let us not destroy, as false, really great art which happens to also possess one or more of the four characteristics of counterfeit art. Let us see the underlying theme of any work of art, and forget the structure which surrounds it. The one point Tolstoy forgot to mention in connection with fine art is *truth*. Without that element, no work is art, and with that element many unimposing works become giants. Be it comedy, parody, irony, melodrama, drama, poetry, music, painting, or any other form of expression, let the underlying truth be the standard.

ONE-EIGHTY-FOUR

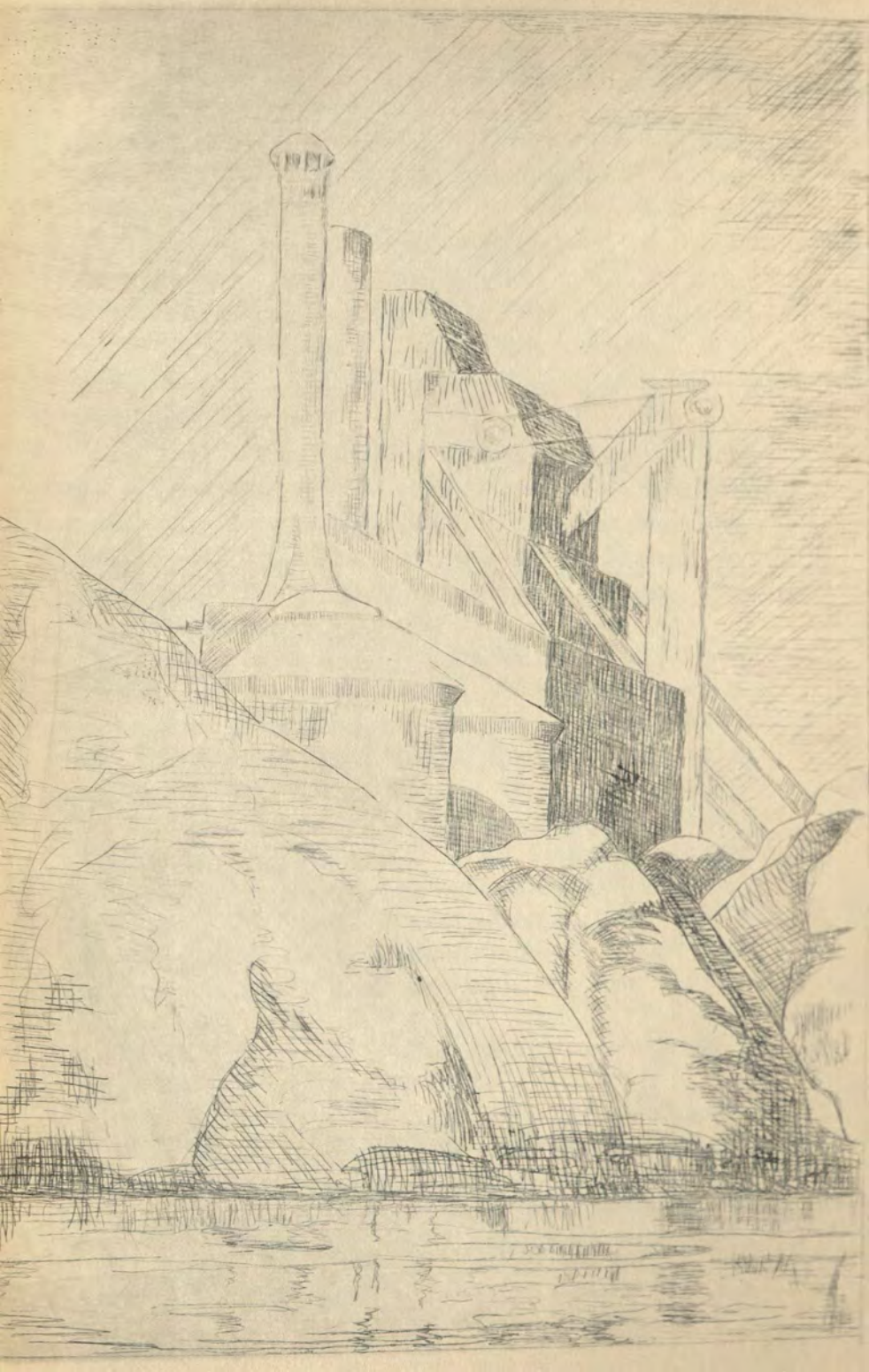
Martha Storek '37

WHITE, CHILLY FOG—lighted windows, like yellow blurs in the grey gloom of the early morning; the slamming of a door and a man's voice cracks the sullen stillness. A rooster crows off-key, the hens stir crossly on their perches. Somewhere a hound cries in his dozing.

The sound of back-doors opening—perhaps a hundred or more heavy, tired footsteps crunching down on the cinderwalks. Street lights glimmer on dark hulks moving along with clinking dinner-pails. The hulks meet other hulks along the road—a whole long line of them is moving —moving with rhythmic clump of heavy shoes. The gray river mists rise slowly in the half light of a new morning.

The mill voices are pressing through the mists. Always they sound the same to those silent marchers; they do not hear the music that poets tell us is there. They march single file through the high iron gates, stopping for a moment at the payhouse to leave their names in exchange for a number.

So they go in—as other numbers file out to reclaim their names. The furnaces bellow in red rage, hungry for the tasteless pig-iron that is thrown into their wide, black mouths. The cranes shriek in agony as they swing their giant loads. The numbers, like black pygmies, running—hauling—pushing—straining—lifting. The furnaces roar in derision at their efforts; the cranes swing dangerously near a huddle of them. The rollers groan under the burning weight of silver, liquid steel poured from huge, dripping ladles. The smoking slag is piled on over-loaded, screeching dump cars that waddle unevenly down the long mill track. The clean steel is carefully slid away to cool before huge saws that cut it into squares like fudge.



The numbers are no longer sullenly silent; they make noises—laughing—singing—swearing—yelling — all loud noises. Among themselves they are still 'Pete', 'Steve', and 'Joe', but they must be silent numbers when the 'super' comes through. Like the ancient children of Israel they must strain and bend and twist their naked, glistening backs to the dirty, hungry work before them while the 'super' cracks his voice as harshly as any Egyptian his whip—in condemning anger.

Wait! Scores of men are running together over there, they are yelling—swearing. 'Steve! — Steve! My God! yank that roller switch. Steve—' Someone has finally wrenched it. No need for it now. Steve will never be a name again. Men are gibbering in unholy whispers while foremen are calling, commanding.

The pale-faced 'super' rushes into the chief's inner sanctum. His secretary shudders, because steel-heat has not yet dried his whole heart. The chief swears in choleric rage. He feels his blood-pressure mounting—such things are not good for him. —Why, oh, why! can't men learn how to handle machinery. Another machine to the bad. Work delayed. Time wasted. This damnable matter of Steve. Something's to be done—the insurance—the widow —children—The 'super's' whine breaks in, "But chief, I tell you the roller was no good—defective." "Stop!" roars the chief, "we're insured for accidents, not defective machines! Get it?"

"Yeah, I know, chief. But the men aren't gonna let that go—they've got the dope on us!"

"Get out of here. You fool! those men won't talk— we've got that fixed. I guess their jobs look mighty good to them. Say, by the way, are you forgetting about that lift in your pocket-money? I didn't think so. Well, get

those reports fixed up ready for the big shots from the Insurance. Check up on one-eighty-four."

"Okeh, chief"—So the 'super' leaves the inner sanctum. Well, he had done all he could for one-eighty-four. He tried to make the chief see that it wasn't Steve's fault, and that the cylinder pin had been defective. But who wants to argue with a man when he gets that way. Jobs like his own aren't easy to find. He has his own family to look after. Great Scott! family, children, widow—his wife, a widow—his children, fatherless—he shudders. Better get to work on those reports; too much thinking isn't healthy.

The two o'clock shift comes on, the five o'clock shift goes out. Hoarse whispers about Steve pass between them.

The hot, heavy, dust-filled mill air is almost motionless this afternoon. Instead of the usual harsh sound of voices there is an ominous undertone. Those men straining their muscles to a hard load of pig-iron are muttering about one-eighty-four. The 'super' is watching them, stalks over to them. All right, come on, get that load piled!

Other numbers creep around to hear as the burly giant brother-in-law to Steve with the sinewy tattooed arms dares to advance upon the 'super'. Yeah—what have you ever done! Not too much, I reckon—All the ominous tenseness is focused on those two figures—Israelite and Egyptian. The 'super' thinks quickly—laughs shortly, nervously, turns away—giving orders as he goes.

The men shuffle off after a few moments. One or two laugh bitterly, the rest merely shrug their shoulders. So the afternoon grinds itself off into evening. The mill-lights glare down upon the pigmy numbers moving about in the red heat of the steel furnaces.

The whistles whine—the gong clangs. The second night shift comes on, the first goes out. Silently, rhythmically they file through the high iron gates. Out to breathe

air that is not clogged with bits of steel—out where they can be men again in name for a few short hours. The night is filled with shadows—and the stars stare with contempt at the sullen, silent creatures—all weary, and black, and bent.

EMPTIED TEACUPS

Margaret Thoman '36

I HAVE A SECRET from all of you. As you drink your tea and talk lightly, you could never guess what I am planing, and I would never tell you. Later tonight, when we have finished drinking tea and talking, when you have gone to some noisy place to dance, and I am willingly here alone, I am going to write. If I were to say as I dropped the lemon in your cup that I could not wait for you to leave, if I were to tell you (you John particularly whom I have never told) you would laugh and crush my happiness as easily as you crush that lemon. There would be biting remarks made about the "lady in the creative atmosphere". And you, Helen, would light your cigarette and blow out quotations from *Ulysses,* which you do not understand. Perhaps Phillip would know what it means to have this secret. Yes, Phillip, as I look at you, I think you would be kinder than the rest, perhaps because I remember how silent you were when the snow fell this evening. Still I would never tell any of you, for I am going to write about you. Already I am forming phrases to clothe you as you go on with your sophisticated chatter.

You would probably hate me if you knew what I am putting under your name, John,—"graceless". You have what I once thought was a strong chin, now I know that it is only antagonistic. You cannot listen to another person talk; even now you are interrupting my thought with a bored remark about the stupidity of drinking tea. The tea is the color of your eyes, but I like the contentedness of tea and I cannot face the dissension in your eyes. Now you smear your hand across Helen's mouth and tell her that her lipstick is too bright and that Phillip holds his cup like a Buddha. You crush your cigarette beneath your

heel and go over to the piano. You know that you can play skillfully, you can do everything with clever ease—but your touch is vicious. I wish that you would go now; I can almost feel you divining my half-formed phrases. I turn away from you with relief to Helen.

Helen was hurt by your cruelty as we have all been hurt at some time. She has remade her lips in child-like defiance. You *are* a child, Helen. I shall not write of you as of a beautiful woman, you are not even pretty. Rather your face is astonishing, its symmetry of feature centered in blatant lips. John is right about your lips, but he scorns your longing to cover your little-girlishness with the veneer of sophistication. That is why you talk about James Joyce and smoke so many cigarettes. That is why you think you are in love with John who is bored by your conversation. Shall I write of you tonight as Helen of Troy or as Iphigenia at Tauris? Or shall I merely call you a child who will grow up to a better man than John? I will be able to think better when your ingenuous eyes are not inquiring over the rim of that absurdly small teacup.

I have been aware of you, Phillip, as I have been making sentences. I can feel your imagination sporting with mine above the heads of these other two. I, who would live in Shelley's world, meet you in your would-be-world—of whom? That is what you do not know. Certainly not Michael Angelo, he is too monumental for your delicateness. Yesterday you were in a fervour about the beauty of Ingres' *La Source,* today you have brought with enthusiasm a copy of that phantasmagoria, *Nude Descending The Stairs.* Poor boy, you cannot breed romanticism with impressionism even though you have artistic quality to give. You have the hands and feel of an artist, but the life of your sensitivity will always be crushed by your instability of purpose. You will never be able to do

more than copy the masterpieces in the museums. I am glad that you are going now, for I am afraid that my pity might convey to you what I hope you will not realize too soon.

* * *

You have emptied your teacups and have left me at last. The door has closed. Now there is nothing to write but that John and Helen and Phillip were here for tea and have gone.

DAYDREAM

Edna Grubner '35

I wrapped my hopes in stardust
And sped them on their way
Where silver nights and silent heights
Conceive a mystic day,
When hopes and loves are mingled in whirring ecstasy
With degredation, sorrow, and hopeless fantasy.

My hopes toward goals undestined
Childlike pursued their flight,
While lordly chords led them towards
The birthplace of the light.

"MANY HAPPY RETURNS"

Nancy Burke '37

NEVER IN MY LIFE have I seen such cruelty! It is positively abusive for a supposedly thoughtful, considerate male to tear a girl away from a marvelous house-party and plant her, without further ceremony, in front of her cold, unresponsive dormitory. The emotional effect of transplanting a girl from a center of gayety and men to a den of study (?) and "did-you-have-a-grand-time" girls is disastrous. Something should be done about it!

To begin with, the house-partyee drags herself upstairs a bit pale and generally hazy, to be greeted with an avalanche of pertinent questions. "My dear, could he dance?" "Didn't you freeze at the game?" (Obviously she didn't, thinks the annoyed house-party-goer.) And from an ingenue, "Well, what did you do?"

Vainly she tries to answer the questions adequately. She mumbles incoherently about a brilliant forward pass and a startling foot-ball score; about an amusing inebriate who described her new tweed coat as having red and yellow freckles; about being positively soaked, tramping from house to house in the rain. She tries to give an intelligent account of a tricky new dance step she has learned. (She is too tired for demonstration.) Dreamily, she leans back in her chair, and, smoking languidly, goes into a semi-coma which her house-mates interpret for a state of complete bliss. Inconsiderately they fire more questions at her.

Actually the girl is feeling bitter and irritable. She thinks unhappily of the Logic assignment yet to be done. (Logic! Of all things after a house party!) She fairly groans at the thought of unpacking. Grumpily, she recalls dear Aunt Em's way of saying cheerily, "Well, good times always have an end, you know!" Aunt Em always an

example of a perfect pollyana. Inwardly the girl curses the French Poet she'd been studying who had the peculiar faculty of reminding one that "le souvenir de bonheur" is more realistic and more beautiful than the moment of happiness itself. She is thoroughly convinced that nothing can be more disheartening than returning to college after a wildly glorious week-end.

What, if anything, can be done to alleviate the mental sufferings of the house-party addicts? House-mates, demanding with actual interest, all the gory details of the week-end, are totally unconscious of the mental strain they are putting on the house-party-goer. Surely some of the discouraging aftermath of house-parties can be overcome. One of the answers is a thoughtful roommate.

Happy indeed is the girl who, returning from *the* big week-end, is greeted by her roommate with a convincing "I *know* you had a perfect time!" instead of the rhetorical, "*Did* you have a grand time?" The perfect roommate then goes on to say that her parents have just gone, leaving a chicken as a little memento of their visit. This of course appeals to the animal instinct of said house-party-goer who has a perfect mania for food of any description. With renewed enthusiasm she rushes to help her roommate pull the chicken from its box, and, with pen-knife, she begins to dissect it with zoological accuracy.

The roommate, between bites of chicken, remarks that she had a letter from Bob, with the glad news that he and Johnny ("You remember Johnny—he went to Andover") would arrive on Saturday for the dance. All this brightens things considerably for the disheartened house-party-goer.

Before she gets a chance to bemoan her Logic assignment, her roommate produces some excellent notes on the chapter, and announces, without the slightest tinge of regret, that, because the Chemistry professors decided to

go to a convention, there will be a two-hour cut in lab. The returned-from-the-house-party bounces gleefully at this point, thanking fortune that she doesn't have to work till tomorrow.

Finally, with a motherly touch, the roommate subtly suggests that the just-returned might as well get a hot bath and go to bed early. Of course the poor dear's tired. And while the poor dear's undressing, the roommate, the essence of considerateness and selfsacrifice, unpacks. Other means of making the depressed returned from the house-party girl feel more at home in her own dorm:

A few delicately arranged flowers on her desk—to appeal to her aesthetic sense; a "special"; and a copy of the latest *New Yorker*.

FACT

Edna Grubner '35

Levity and languor,
Life at rest,
Lengthening of shadows
With moonglow in the west,
Lend a whisper of enchantment—
Mystic jest!

For the leit motif is sorrow,
And the whisper is a groan,
There's no morrow,
Nought to borrow,
Only sorrow,
Wretched loan.

FANCY

Edna Grubner '35

Sweet daughter of May,
Whisper a song
Lilting and gay,
Teasing to play, and tempting to wrong.

"Gather ye rosebuds,"
So poets say,
And night rain dawn shows studs
Reddening rosebuds, ruined ere day.
Yet whisper a song,
Be tempting your day,
Live faster and strong
Err quicker not longer, daughter of May.

THIS MAN O'NEILL

Jeanette Shingle '37

IF EVER I ENJOYED an O'Neill play, at this moment I do not remember having done so. And I am one who does not long stay near that which does not give me pleasure and amusement, yet figuratively I trot patiently and devotedly at the heels of Eugene O'Neill. He—what is a stronger word than interests?—he fascinates me.

Being born the son of an actor dropped him into one of the most romantic and exciting of environments, which may be responsible for the restlessness in his blood. For seven years he was taken from one large city to another as his father's plays toured the country. Then he was sent to a succession of boarding schools. During his Freshman year at Princeton he was asked to leave because a beer bottle he was having fun with went through one of President Wilson's windows. He went to work but was not much more interested than he had been at college. The job melted away when his company went out of business. He married. A brief affair that was legally terminated within three years during which he had gone off on a gold prospecting trip to Honduras and been sent home without the gold but with a very serious case of tropical fever. By this time O'Neill had had a taste of all conventional activities and people and found the lot unsatisfactory, unstimulating. He went to sea, and there followed a period of wandering, extravagant adventures, wild drinking, disreputable people in exotic setting. He came to know life and men in the raw without their manners and masks. He learned about their minds and hearts and souls and passions. Drinking spectacularly, living wildly, he went on his wanderings. At one time he was a beach comber in Buenos

Aires. In New York he lived almost as elegantly for a while at Jimmy the Prist's, a filthy vermin riddled hell hole of a saloon. Then through his father he became manager of a theatrical road company. This job was followed by one as reporter on a New London newspaper.

Then his health, long taxed by irregular living and heavy indiscriminate drinking, broke down. He had tuberculosis. In a New England sanatorium, the restless, active O'Neill was forced to lie and think . . . He thought much about himself and he thought much about all he had done and seen, and he found he wanted to give expression to the wealth of impressions he had unconsciously collected and was now sorting. He was discharged as an arrested case. He started writing plays. He went to Harvard to study play writing. He kept on writing plays. The Provincetown Players put them on. He wrote more plays and they were seen on Broadway. He is still writing plays and today is America's leading dramatist.

O'Neill came into this position on a wave and as the leader of a revolt against the artificial restrictions of conventional drama. He wished to find forms of greater flexibility that would not restrict or prohibit the expression of a theme but would actually have a definite part in putting it across. This movement, or rather, O'Neill, breathed the first life into American drama. Before we had produced nothing of more than local and momentary merit. Now O'Neill has gained wide international recognition and fame, and it is reasonable to expect his plays to last. The settings and the times have no bearing on the themes. They would have the same significance in other settings and they will have the same significance in other times. These themes evolve out of O'Neill's effort to find the relationship of man and God. He writes not of men pitted against men, but of men struggling and torn by their passions.

He writes also with an unfailing innate sense of dramatic effectiveness, and he has a technical skill in writing that enables him to handle well the new devices and forms that appear in his plays. Even more noteworthy than his skill of execution is his power of execution. He dares to make his tragedies stark, unalleviated by any comedy, unrelieved by lightness, dares to make them grim without a touch of softness. Out of these plays of starkness, somberness, and grimness, arise his poor drab characters in awful grandeur. And around his plays and people he somehow keeps a solemn dignity. O'Neill works with such sincerity, passion, and unswerving faith in the importance of what he is trying to do that it is impossible not to give serious thought and attention even to his failures. His worst is above another's best.

But my admiration for O'Neill does not blind me to his limitations. His plays are sordid, morbid, and heavy. Once asked if he would write on lighter themes he answered,

"Sure, I'll write about happiness if I can happen to meet up with that luxury, and find it sufficiently dramatic and in harmony with any deep rhythm in life. But happiness is a word. What does it mean? Exaltation; an intensified feeling of the significant worth of man's being and becoming? Well, if it means that—and not a mere smirking contentment with one's lot—I know there is more of it in one real tragedy than in all the happy ending plays ever written. It's mere present day judgment to think of tragedy as unhappy! The Greeks and Elizabethans knew better. They felt the tremendous lift to it. It roused them spiritually to a deeper understanding of life. Through it they found release from the petty considerations of everyday existence. They saw their lives ennobled by it. A work of art is always happy; all else is unhappy—I don't love life because it's pretty. Prettiness is only clothes deep.

I am a truer lover than that. I love it naked. There is beauty to me even in its ugliness."

And where he finds it naked is in the slums, on the sea, and on unproductive barren farms; these are the scenes of most of his plays. His people not only have not been surrounded by the luxuries of life, but in most cases they have been denied life itself. Their lives have been barren existences pointed by one consuming desire which they never fulfill. His stories are tragedies of frustration, and the agents are the characters themselves. It is gruesome to watch a struggling being destroy himself. Remember Abbie, the orphan girl of *Desire Under The Elms* who wanted only something of her own. Courageously she stepped out after it, but each step she took: marriage to seventy-five year old Ephraim, befriending Eben, the plan to have a child, the child, all lead nowhere but straight to her own destruction. Nina of *Strange Interlude* wanted to save her soul that was dying because of lost love. Becoming a nurse, deciding to marry, the choice of the husband, the impossibility of having a child by her husband, the doctor's child, everything she undertook to help herself was an irrevocable false step. These are tragedies not only of man-made suffering, but of self-propelled destruction which is the most hopeless and unhappy of all. There is not the consolation of laying the blame at another's door nor of feeling a victim of the fates. Degradation and disintegration of character are singularly bleak and unrelieved tragedy. The protagonists never go down in the blaze of glory they merited in their strong fight. O'Neill's tragedy destroys spirit as well as body. There is no peak of nobility, no flash of beauty, no triumph. To me that is an O'Neill fault.

Another fault is that his characters are symbolic puppets instead of flesh and blood people. This is because he is more interested in his ideas than his people. Clark says

that in *Welded* he missed "the breath of life". He sought men and women and found only animated abstractions. In *The Hairy Ape,* Yank is "a symbol of man, who has lost all harmony with nature, the harmony which he used to have as an animal and has not yet acquired in a spiritual way".

About *Gold* Clark makes a similar criticism: "The play seems to be the dramatization of an idea, not of living organisms. Instead of allowing the characters to go their own way and make their own situations, O'Neill guided and directed them, and in default of that white heat which welds together such emotions as O'Neill has imagined, he resorts to the feeble expedient of explanation. Time and again his characters stop to tell us what they are doing and why, instead of going ahead and doing it."

In *The First Man* "There is far too much discussion of abstract ideas. O'Neill will not allow his people to be, they must constantly talk over the why and wherefore. He had not quite the courage or skill to let his characters develop themselves."

This talkativeness has grown on O'Neill. He said too much in *Marco's Millions* and in *The Fountain.* The last three acts of *Strange Interlude* are spoiled by too much talking, and *Lazarus Laughed* is far too long.

But, for whatever reason, this lack of poignant characterization is deplorable, because plays live solely because of human appeal. A play should be an emotional experience and a dramatist's job is to sweep his audience along. O'Neill at times forgets this and becomes intellectual. He then, with his many obtrusive words, tries to persuade and convince his audience, and it is no good trying. During these intellectual sprees he has tried his hand at being a thinker, a philosopher, a prophet, a psychologist, and a pathologist.

These things: his awkwardness with characters, his intellectual lectures, his divergences I have called faults because O'Neill is writing drama; but if O'Neill should turn to another vehicle of expression these things would no longer be stumbling blocks. It seems to me O'Neill ought to write novels. His head is too full of ideas on a subject to sift down to that singleness that is necessary in a play. As we have said, O'Neill is too talkative. He has to be. The scope of what he is portraying is so much beyond the experience of his audience that we do not get it by suggestion. We must be told. Yet in a play a thing must be put over by suggestion. Consider the ending of *The Great God Brown*. In the action of the play Brown embraces the cross and dies. O'Neill writes about the ending, "Only the masque of his face lies where his head had been at the foot of the cross, like a cured cripple's testimonial offering at a shrine."

The second gives you a beauty and an understanding of the working out of the play that seeing it would not. O'Neill is a genius. Most of his ideas and efforts baffle us, but I think he could so easily explain what he feels and thinks.

The reason above all for my thinking that O'Neill should abandon his chosen field for another is ineptitude with dialogue. Dialogue is a play and with dialogue O'Neill does very badly. "It does not have that felicity of expression with which one is startled by its aptness and inevitability and which is the unmistakable mark of creative genius."

So often "his words strike us as false, but I suspect that they are more accurately described as inadequate."

Because of this handicap he relies too much on shades of acting, symbols, or new forms. He leaves too much to the "actor, director, and the carpenter." For instance in

the last act of *Welded*: "Cape: Good-by. (he sits in anguish in tortured restraint. Suddenly he can stand it no longer, he leaps to his feet and jumps toward the door with a pleading cry) Nelly! (he stands fixed as he sees her before the door as if he had expected to find her gone.)"

The emotions Cape is going through are very significant to the play, and yet O'Neill has left to the actor the important job of conveying them. Nowhere does the dialogue reveal what Cape is feeling at that moment.

The next speech in the same play, followed by this comment by its writer ends with the words "Elanor: It must be nearly dawn. I'll say good-night instead of good-by. (They stare into each other's eyes. It is as if now by a sudden flash from within they recognize themselves, shorn of all ideas, attitudes, cheating gestures which constitute the vanity of personality. Everything, for the second, becomes simple for them; serenely unquestionable. It becomes impossible that they should ever deny Life through each other again."

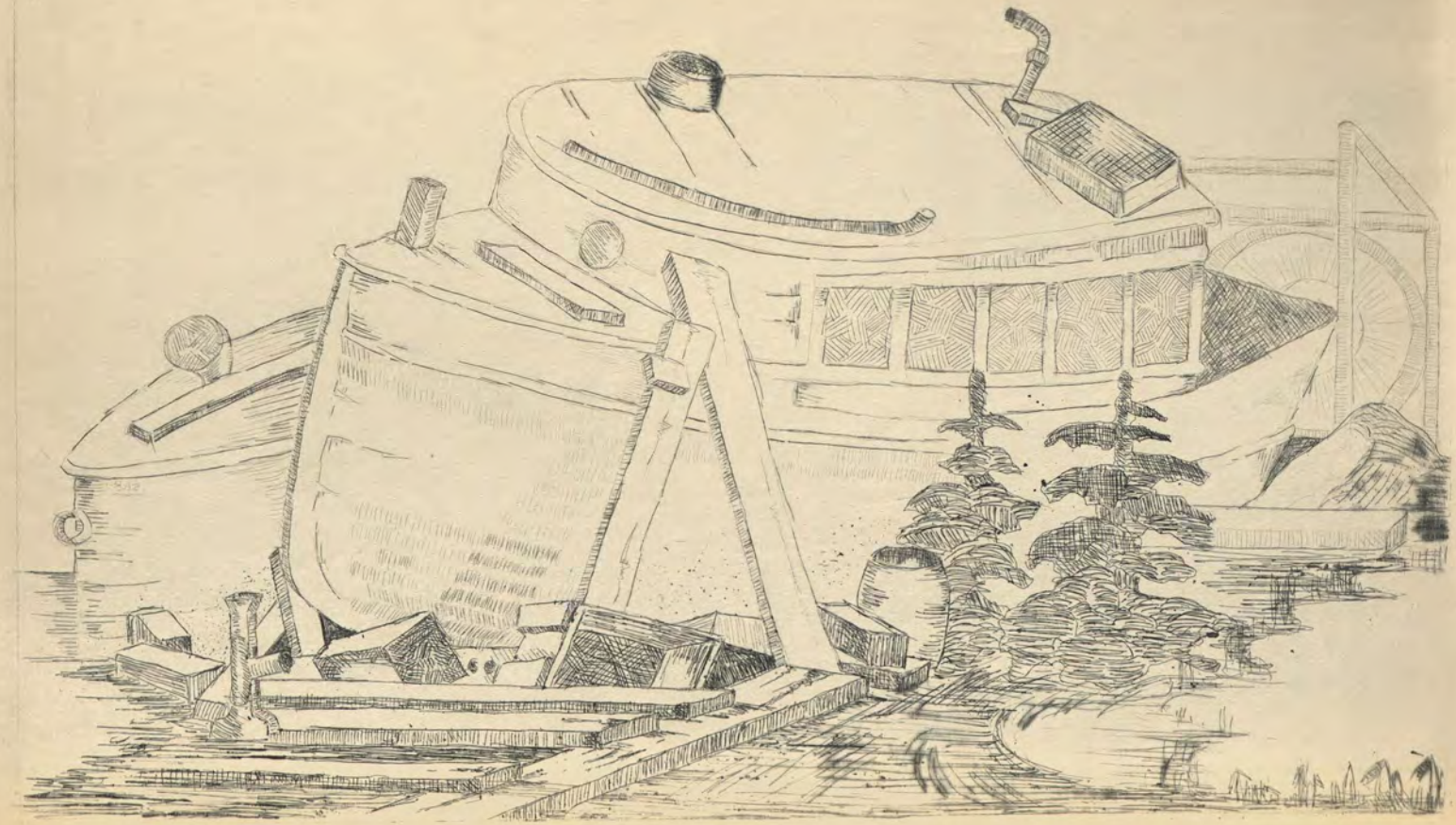
This is the climax of the play and this O'Neill entrusts to a look passing between two actors. I wonder how many who see the play get all that he is trying to put over.

The point of *Moon of the Caribees* is the beauty of the sea in a setting of tropical night: it is this that makes significant the pathetic figure of Smithy and the carousing of his shipmates; yet creating the beauty of the sea is left to the carpenter. There is none of it in the play. *Lazarus Laughed,* a pageant with music, masks, crowds, and choruses, is entirely dependent on directing and staging for success and effect.

Bad dialogue interrupts a flow essential to a play. It robs it of a spontaneity, making it labored, stiff, cold. O'Neill has tried tricks to produce a continuing sweep in his plays. In *Beyond the Horizon* the scenes are alternating

indoors and outdoors to suggest the tide-like pulse of the sea. The fountain in the play of that name is used to suggest the life ever running. These devices are not satisfactory substitutes for dialogue, and most of O'Neill's plays do not move along easily, naturally as they should.

O'Neill has led a life of independence, adventure, variety, danger and success that would interest anyone in the man who had led it, but the fascinating thing about him is that you feel he has hardly struck his stride yet, that his most powerful and most significant work is yet to be done.



QUEENSTOWN

Alys E. Griswold '36

For hours the ship has been sailing up the Irish coast, and we have seen miles of sunny green fields, rising and falling gently in little hills, almost bare of human habitation, except for a few scattered cottages whose chimneys send up long and delicate spirals of gray smoke into the bright blue sky. Now the ship is motionless, her great engines have ceased their throbbing for the first time in eight days, and we are lying quietly, the blue and tranquil waters spreading out all around us. But suddenly the calm is shattered, and a small tender comes toward us, coming out from Queenstown, ruffling up the water, making a "chugging" noise. Soon she is secured to our side, and immediately all is hurry and bustle. While the mail and luggage are taken off, many natives of Cobh come on board and besiege us. Brown, wrinkled old women, wearing voluminous skirts and huge shawls, bring exquisite Irish linen and lace. Equally brown and wrinkled old men bring shillalaghs, as dark and as knotted and gnarled as themselves. All are wreathed in utterly delightful, disarming smiles. All are chattering in a rich brogue and we purchase a great many useless objects because of our inability, or rather unwillingness, to resist them. The deck stewards stand at one side, aloof, and a little disdainful—they have seen so very many passengers outwitted by these same simple folk of Ireland. Finally, a whistle blows. The Queenstown passengers, mostly Roman Catholic priests, so kind and gentle, and at the same time so worldly and jolly, are on the tender, and the peasants hastily gather up their now depleted baskets, and with a last "God bless you", hurry below to board the tender. Another whistle blows, ropes are cast off, and we hang over the side of the ship, watching as the tender becomes smaller and

smaller. The ship trembles, the engines start, we are moving once again, going away from Ireland, going to England. We relax our vigil at the rail, and seek rest after the recent excitement, for we, too, must disembark on a tender—and that at a very early hour tomorrow morning.

CONNECTICUT

Edna Grubner '35

The sunrise on the river
And sunset on the wood,
Melting snows aquiver
Where in Spring the tulips stood.

The clouds of dusky opal,
Dark surprise of evergreen,
The freshness and the youth
Of seventeen.

Quiet crags concealing
The nests of mating birds
Salty whitecaps breaking
Creating unheard words.

The song of falling water,
Bring remembrance, and depart,
Leaving laughter ever after
In my heart.

JACK SPRATT

Barbara Stiles '37

"Jack Spratt would eat no fat,
His wife would eat no lean."

It was only ten-thirty when they came in from the movie. The mediocre and rather disconnected story and the walk through the threatening, dank fog had made both of them restless, a little irritated and disappointed

"Want something to eat?" Peter asked, disappearing into the kitchenette.

"Think not," Anne replied. Her eyes rested on the red cover of the book she had been reading that afternoon. It was a good book and she could finish it in fifteen minutes. Of course, it was against her principles to read when Peter was at home, because he said his eyes got tired . . . Of course Peter never had read very much, even before they were married, not the way she had read, always snooping through other peoples' libraries, eagerly, almost ferociously. Still, it would be quieting to sit and rest for a few minutes.

"I think I'll finish my book, darling. Do you mind?" She sat down.

Peter appeared at the dining-room door.

"Of course not, sweet. Go ahead!" He watched her as she wriggled comfortably into the depths of the chair, and then went back to the kitchenette. A momentary silence ensued.

"Sure you don't want anything to eat?" he called cheerfully.

Anne roused herself out of the book and said "No thanks, dear," almost to herself. He came into the living room again and wandered idly about, looking at the advertisements which had come in the morning mail. Then he

came over and moved the reading lamp so that it shone on her book.

"You'll ruin your eyes," he said. "Are you sure you're comfortable?" She smiled up at him, sweetly, but a bit absently. "Um-hm." He picked up the evening paper, rattling it violently, and then sank heavily into the chair across from her. Again there was a short silence.

"Hey, darling," he questioned, "what's a four letter word for 'uncouth'?"

"I don't know, I'm sure, darling," she murmured after a pause. She tried to return to her story, but by now she had lost track of it completely.

"Rude," she announced suddenly.

"Oh," he replied and printed meticulously.

She put her book down carefully, and said to him, "Dear, do you remember about Jack Spratt?"

"Jack who?" He was all smiles and rapt attention now.

"Jack Spratt, in the nursery rhyme."

"Oh yes. Something about he wouldn't eat fat and his wife wouldn't eat lean. What a funny thing to think of! Is it in your book?" He glanced jealously at the red cover.

"No, darling, it isn't in the book. Come over and turn out this light. It's in my eyes."

He came over and turned out the light. Then he stopped and kissed her hand. She ran her fingers through his hair, lightly, and kissed the blue vein on his temple.

"I wonder how that nursery rhyme ended," she mused, still stroking his head.

"Oh, between them they managed to clean the cupboard bare, or something. You know, you look awfully pretty tonight, Anne. Sort of far away."

She kissed him lightly again. "They cleaned the cupboard bare did they?" she said almost to herself. "I wonder

if they ever missed the fun of eating fat together? Or lean together? Maybe not." She looked at him. "We have to get up in the morning, darling. Come on, let's go to bed."

SWEET DECEPTION

Edna Grubner '35

Words seem so sweet in the morning,
Sweet with sincerity,
But they melt in the fire of the noonday
With startling disparity.

They are spoke with a voice that is golden,
A nightingale note, if we knew;
With a shriek that is harsh in its splendor
They are burst midst the flames that ensue.

Like a Phoenix they come back at dawning—
Still sincere in their sweet, gentle tone.
And the heart of the one who has heard them
Is mournful, lamenting, alone.

The two genuine etchings inserted in this copy of Quarterly are work of Sally Jumper.

BOOKS
OLD and NEW

GOING ABROAD

Rose Macauley

HARPER'S $2.50

Here is a thoroughly delightful book. The author, in her dedication, classifies it as "a novel of unredeemed levity". Amusing characters, a highly interesting plot, and clever expression effect superb entertainment.

Widely diverse characters are brought together at a summer resort hotel on the Basque sea coast. A British missionary Bishop and his scholarly wife; a British ex-diplomat and his son; the Josefs, owners of an international chain of beauty shops; an English woman whose face and fortune have been ruined by the Josef treatment; a British colonel with wife, son, and daughter; and several Oxford Groupers, trying to convert everyone they meet to their hearty, hilarious religion—these are the ingredients of this spicy dessert. The high point of the plot is their kidnapping by Basque psuedo-brigands when they are all out on a bus trip, and their week's enforced stay at the rude mountain home of the parents of M. Josef. The peak is reached when the students convince the mean, fraudulent Madame Josef of her sins, and she becomes "Changed".

Many native characters enter the story from time to time, bringing with them color and humor. There is, for instance, the

mountain priest, Father Ignacio, whom the captive Englishmen try to persuade to remonstrate with their kidnappers. There is some difficulty about what language to use, and the English finally conclude that Latin is the only one with which both the priest and they are familiar. When the Bishop begins to speak various words selected with care from the Latin in the prayer-book, the priest beamingly recites to his dismayed audience the whole of the morning service.

The Oxford Group team may or may not be an invention of Miss Macauley's, but it sounds plausible enough in this modern world. These enthusiastic university students are Changed; they now "face up to" all their sins (such as calling one's sister mean names for wearing one's most expensive stockings), and, practising Total Recall, "share" all their sins with those sinned against, and anyone else interested. By this unique method, they root up all causes of mistrust and friction, and thus make for happy relationships founded on Love. Before they were Changed, they had all found religious people gloomy, but now they no longer suffer under this misapprehension. Since the activity of the Groupers is the means of solving the plot complication, we conclude that Miss Macauley does not disdain such a movement, although of course it offers a ready target for the darts of the less groupy-minded vacationers.

The author is to be commended for her excellent character portrayal. Each individual remains consistently himself throughout the novel, and no speech or attitude is ever out of character. Although Hero Buckley, the beautiful-girl-with-the-blighted-life of twenty-one, seems to change under the Group influence, at the end she illustrates that heredity and environment always win.

This novel does not necessarily pierce one's philosophic stratum, but if one is so inclined, it offers subjects for reflection. There is a very exciting argument between young Buckley and his mother on Liberalism vs. Regimentation as guides to human behavior. The son, representative of the philosophy which has produced Fascism and Nazi-ism, faces his mother, brought up in the Victorian liberal tradition, across a gulf too deep for understanding.

I doubt if this can be called a satire on Britons abroad, for the author is too sympathetic. Underneath her ironic comments, we feel a great affection, and perhaps a trace of pride, in these characters. Her cleverness, of which one never grows weary, makes this highly refreshing entertainment. A. F. '35

ROAD OF AGES

Robert Nathan

KNOPF $2.50

Following his popular "One More Spring", Robert Nathan steps 'neath new laurels with the offering of "Road of Ages". It is a fantasy fraught with realism, a story of the Jewish people which is universal in its comprehension of the inevitable and eternal in man. The narrative presupposes the exile of the Jews, driven from the western world to the deserts of China, and concerns the march of this horde across Austria, Poland, Russia, and past the Volga into Asia. The misery, the destitution, the quarrels, the pettiness, and the hopes of the individuals in the moving mass make up the story.

The gigantic theme has no parallel in history—the great trek of a people united by nothing but an enforced destination, and the defense against the persecutions of the Gentile. There are no bonds of language, for they are drawn from every country; nor religion, for they range violently between the orthodox and the liberal; nor aims, for the struggles between the Communists, Socialists, and Capitalists over the economic structure of their new land culminate in a fierce riot on the plains of Asia. The whole is treated in the light of benign irony against the unpleasantness of life and the plight of all of us.

It is sad and rather wistful to think that they are, in the words of the young poet, "taking their quarrels with them as well as their hopes" into a land which might have been remodelled in an enlightened and more idealistic manner. But the mood is philosophical despite the burden of sorrow. There is no cause for tears, and the story leaves no feeling of despair and depression. Perhaps it is Nathan's unique quality of humane humor, or the fact that the people are so realistically portrayed that we are no longer disturbed by their bickering and frustated hopes, that saves it from sorrow.

This moving microcosm of life embraces every character and class from the Parisian banker, Perey, to the New York delicatessen owner, Cohen; from the masters of science left without laboratory to the great composer-director Kampf, who holds an open-air concert on the plains; from the Parisian lady in her limousine, who dreams of her abandoned boudoir, to the aged ladies who face their new

home from their buckboard seats with mixed expectancy and regret; from the British industrialist to the precocious child prodigy; from the Gentile Amanda, who tries to be at home among her husband's people, to the rabbi's daughter Leah.

The whole span of life is dramatically enacted on the journey. On the steppes of Russia, a son is born to Mrs. Cohen. Death prevents the old Mrs. Blumenthal from accompanying her friends, leaving her in the unfriendly loneliness of the Carpathians An absorbing young love between the banker's son and the Lithuanian rabbi's daughter results in a roadside marriage, after the characteristic arrangements through a marriage broker. The struggle with starvation, cold, superstition, class consciousness, and family strife—all are the elements that are embodied in this simple story of the core of life.

The characters are carefully selected, and are not lacking in fullness, as might be expected from such summary treatment. There is nothing strikingly thrilling. The fantasy is easily adjusted in one's mind by the commonplace events. The characters simply talk, muse, and act. And with it all they are delicately drawn—free from the bold strokes of a caricaturist. The author's skill in the use of cadence and his exquisite workmanship will, I think, bring him the distinction of permanence.

But the strength of this novel lies in its vigorous appeal to the imagination and in its richness of implication. What would the future hold for these settlers in the reclamation of the desert? What would be the effect of this sudden drain from the rest of the world? Would predjudice continue? These are among the thought-provoking effects of Nathan's economy of means in handling this fanciful conception.

Perhaps some feel that the author has attempted too grand a theme in this short novel, which could fill volumes, but I do not. More detail would be limiting. To carry the story farther, or to start earlier in the sequence would be to dogmatically settle many questions well left to social and economic treatises. In its subtlety, I think, lies its power.

F. W. '37

MOUNT PEACOCK

Marie Mauron

MACMILLAN CO., $1.75

It was with real regret that I closed the cover on the final page of this charming tale. I would have said "fairy tale", for the atmosphere of this story is not familiar or humdrum, but I then thought perhaps many towns like this do really exist, and only lack a sensitive chronicler to make them known.

Mount Peacock is a rapid-motion picture of a village in Provence, Mont-Paon, and its one hundred and twenty inhabitants. The camera is fixed in the musty office of the Secretary to the Mayor. Through the governmental activities of this newly-arrived official, we become acquainted with the life of the commune—with the public "servants" there—M. le Maire, Liffran, Pascal, and Theophile; with the Inspection of Remounts, and other official visits of representatives of the national government; with the games of the school children; and above all, with the blue and yellow and pink and green government blanks to be filled out by the possessors of everything anyone ever possessed. The office of the Secretary is at frequent intervals quite submerged under a landslide of these governmental statistics-gatherers, which are rapidly converted by uninterested citizens into gay paper hats for the children. The Mont-Paonians never seem to quite see the importance of it all.

Individual personalities are sketched against a background of the general character of Midi people. Their desire for freedom and self-management, their casual contempt of outsiders, and their genuine industry and concern in their work are apparent in the comings and goings of every person. Incidents and characters are carefully chosen for presentation so that we may see a general unity behind individual diversity.

This is a fascinating story, ably told. From the very first page, we live with these people. Vivid pictures, significant details, and careful description combine to make the style so effective that the reader scarcely recognizes that these thoughts are not his own. The story is told subjectively, but with an even counter-balance of objectivity. The beautifully simple language is well adapted to the nature of the people.

One of the most outstanding things about this book is its atmosphere of enchantment, of fantasy and other-worldliness. This is produced, not by describing weird people engaged in extraordinary activities, but by presenting people so simple in tastes that they are quite foreign to our modern "efficient" mind. Here characters that we have often met are doing more or less familiar things—but in a different way, with different attitudes. These people instinctively refuse to sell their souls for "progress"—a rare thing today. Whether or no we agree with them that modern mechanical improvements are not worth the price one must pay for them, this is a challenge to us to overhaul our scale of values.

Without a trace of sentimentality, Mont-Paon is heart-warming. In its simplicity, its sturdiness, and its undisguised scorn of official fussing and red tape, we find a mode of thinking which has almost vanished. I cannot say if this is an accurate representation of a Midi commune. I only know it is what I would hope to find if I went there.

A. F. '35

THE WORLD WENT MAD

John Brophy

MacMillan Co., $2.50

This novel is as unusual as its title is suggestive. It gives, in a series of snapshots unconnected for the most part, a cross-section of British life during the four years of the World War. Government officials, society girls, Army captains, factory workers, prostitutes, and peasants all have a place in this vivid panorama. Scenes shift quickly back and forth from the trenches to London, to French villages, to the battlefields of Mesopotamia, to America, to army stations in Egypt, and back finally to the Armistice celebration in London. Only one group of characters is seen consistently through the story—the elderly Bartholomew Crellin, his daughter and her husband, and his adolescent son. These represent the typical, or average, business man, war-wife-and-widow, captain of the army, and schoolboy.

The idea behind this novel is so tremendous that one wonders that the author was able to contain it in a novel of the usual size. Its breadth is breath-taking. Here we see all aspects of life, quickened by the tempo of the war. The kaleidoscopic presentation of scene after scene, and character after character, portrays excellently the universal confusion, unrest, and uncertainty of the war years. The author's conception and construction of the novel are completely in tune with the subject.

There is no doubt that this is a strong piece of writing, or that it will produce a strong reaction in the reader. Each scene is so vivid that, if it were a painting, it would be done in brilliant yellows, reds, and purples. It would be striking, but it would hurt the eyes. The glare would drive the observer away before he had time to see what the picture was about. I am afraid this book will have a similar effect in the world of writings. There is scarcely a touch of delicacy in it; only the coarser side of living, supersaturated with sex, is thoroughly shown.

While this latter is accepted as essential to accurately represent the time, such violence as Mr. Brophy's hints at youthful rawness. His gigantic theme is bitterly unfolded; he pities rather than feels with his characters. His style is clear, forceful, and realistic—but unrestrained. One might justifiably say that mellowness and restraint have no place in an undertaking of this sort, and one can scarcely criticize Mr. Brophy for not doing what he did not set out to do, but as it is, the book seems objectionably one-sided, with the weight on the more unpleasant side.

A. F. '35

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