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QUARTERLY

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VOLUME XII

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PERCEPTION

"GENTLEMEN," boomed Mr. Chewsbury in a tone which would have carried to the farthest corners of a large theatre no matter how imperfect the acoustics, "perception is the secret of success!" The gentlemen, both of them, assumed the respectful deference of subordinates, but were not so surprised nor so grateful as they should have been for this knowledge. The fact is that they had been informed of the importance of perception in the general scheme of things for so many years that it was no longer a secret. However, they had not worked under Mr. Chewsbury for nothing. It was their duty to become the supporting cast. They knew it, and time had made them "adequate in their role."

"From my earliest adolescent days," began the perception artist, "as far as I can recall," he added, skilfully checkmating by this phrase any derogatory remarks concerning his truthfulness, "I have trained myself to develop keen sensibilities. I read and reread those estimable tales of Sherlock Holmes and his trusty Watson, and delved with an absorbing interest into the mysteries of the Baffle Books. From pages such as these I gleaned the fundamentals of keen perception; the holding of the slightest, most infinitesimal article as evidence, the close scrutiny of every movement of the suspicious party, and the thoughtful meditation of every chance remark made in my vicinity. I trained myself by a hundred or more memory tests to be keenly observant, mentally alive and awake to all around me. Carefully I studied people, their reactions, their idiosyncrasies, and their weak spots, until I became proficient beyond my wildest hopes.

"When I entered the business world as a reporter for this paper which I now serve as an associate editor, I practiced my principles faithfully and was attended with astounding success. You can readily understand how capable I was for the job of reporter and how my training enabled me to extract more news from an incident or circumstance than could my fellow-reporters. I was soon sending scoops in almost

weekly. From then on it was only a few steps to my present position.

"Although I believe that long training is the most essential factor in developing perception, I also believe that you gentlemen could profit by a few words of wisdom concerning that state. My advice, therefore, is to keep alive; watch people for keys to their character! Note the things which please them, and those which irritate them. Never wonder at a strange remark. Ferret out the reason for it! Never sleep mentally! In short, gentlemen, read, watch, and think!" Mr. Chewsbury sat down, spread his arms in front of him on the desk, and surveyed the two gentlemen expectantly. His expectancy was rewarded.

"Thank you, Mr. Chewsbury," said the first gentleman, and

"Very nice of you, sir. I'm sure we shall benefit by your advice," said the second gentleman just as they had been saying every time they heard the lecture and would continue to answer to every future rendition.

Having received his applause, Mr. Chewsbury leaned back in his chair and placed his arms in back of his head.

"However," he continued, "it is not only in my business life that my perception has made me successful. My private life has been just as advantageous. Glorious success crowned my matrimonial efforts when the beautiful Ellen consented to become my wife. Ah, gentlemen, there is a woman beyond compare!" At this point the interest of the two supporters became less forced. No matter how many times they had previously heard the story, the part about his marriage always held a prick of interest for them. As though he had never told the story before, Mr. Chewsbury began:

"When the Brady family moved to this town and I saw those two fine twins, Ellen and Elsa, I perceived at once the subtle difference these girls and other town girls. Ellen was so beautiful with her golden hair, her changeable, somewhat stormy temperament, and her neat ways. Ellen was handsome with silky black hair. She was perhaps not as interesting as Ellen, although she was more docile. Upon further acquaintance I became more and more attracted to the fair Ellen. I perceived upon visiting her home that she would make an excellent housekeeper.

Her movements were quick and decisive. There was no slovenliness about her actions or her appearance. Of the other twin, Elsa of the black tresses, I saw comparatively little, although she was frequently around the house when I called and I had reason to believe that she favored me a good deal. I liked her very much but it was Ellen whom I desired in marriage. When I formally proposed marriage to Ellen I was surprised to hear her negative answer. She seemed very vehement about the refusal, too. Just one of woman's ruses, I guess, because in a few weeks when I again proffered my suit, she accepted and I perceived with delight that her manner was sweetly strange and her color high. I do not approve of this modern stifling of all emotion, gentlemen. I think it is fitting in a young girl to show excitement.

"We had planned on having Elsa as a bridesmaid, but the night before the wedding, she went out of town on the eleven o'clock train and has never been heard of since. Poor Elsa! I often think of her and wish that I had not held such an attraction for her. I would have enjoyed seeing her as happy as we were."

The first gentleman now spoke up, it being his turn to do so.

"How long have you been married, Mr. Chewsbury, sir?"

Mr. Chewsbury thought a while, stroked his chin, and said, "Well, it's four years ago today, and in that time we never have had one disagreement. It amuses me when I remember how argumentative Ellen used to be with me before we were married. Elsa always was the one to agree with me, but Ellen always had her own point of view, bless her heart! But, gentlemen, it is getting late, and I must get home. We are going to celebrate tonight by dining with friends. I'll say good night, gentlemen."

Mr. Chewsbury closed up his desk, placed his hat carefully on his head, and took a last look around to perceive that everything was all right. What was that strange bump near the safe? He investigated. Just as he had deduced, the safe was not properly closed and the lever was projecting out to one side. Mr. Chewsbury fixed it, said good night again to the two gentlemen and went out. The two gentlemen merged into the outer office.

Mr. Chewsbury let himself into his respectable brick house and shut the door quietly but firmly in back of him. The living room was devoid of Ellen, as were also the dining room and kitchen. He perceived a little dust heap near the table. He frowned. This was not at all like the neat Ellen. It was also unlike her to be late. She had promised him that she would be ready and waiting for him downstairs. He called up, "Ellen, are you almost ready?"

"Coming in a minute, darling," said the hidden voice. Mrs. Chewsbury had not meant to be late. She had been all dressed and waiting when she had happened to glance in the mirror above the mantelpiece in the dining room and noticed that a little black hair had begun to show at the left side of her coiffure. She had had to go upstairs and remedy the defect. Now she corked the peroxide bottle, straightened the dresser, gave a little pat to her golden hair and came downstairs.

EDITH STANFIELD, '36



SIR GAWAINE

*" . . . and gaily,
As always, Sir Gawaine from Camelot."*

ROBINSON.

Gawaine,—there is a pathos in the sound
Of your name, though your lightness has been sung
Through many centuries. Always you found
Gay words of love; always your careless tongue
Bestowed them, whether doubted or believed,—
It mattered not. Your fluency could hide
Love unreturned; although you may have grieved,
You turned the thoughts of bitterness aside.
Gawaine, you moved among proud-hearted knights
Whose high austerity did not unbend
Between the quests, the honor-challenged fights;
But you were blithe,—they could not comprehend.
You saw the great futility;—reviled,
You had the depths for lightness, and you smiled.

ALMA BENNETT, '33

TODAY'S PETITION

IT was hot and sultry in the small throne room of the palace San Souci at Potsdam. The air hung thick and oppressive weighing down the already heavy velvet folds about the throne. Nothing moved. My very breath seemed a violation of the dead glamour and grandeur that had once been alive. I stood by a window which opened out into the famous orangerie of a German Emperor who knew about gardens and statues. I turned to look back at the throne with a subconscious hope of recapturing for a moment the life and glory that it had once owned. Then it happened.

The throne was occupied. A gentleman—the Emperor, no doubt—sat there deep in thought, turning over and over a large signet ring on his forefinger. He looked toward the two great in-swinging doors, a bit impatiently, I thought, and then nervously settled the lace cuffs at his wrists more comfortably. He was an incongruous looking person, somehow not fitting in with the majesty of the room, with his monocle, his bright yellow hair, and his carefully trimmed beard. His blue eyes grew ever more sultry as he twisted the signet ring more and more quickly with the passing of each successive moment.

The lackeys dressed in blue satin and powdered wigs, their feet moving in perfect rhythm, opened the two doors simultaneously, soundlessly. A tall lady entered, her body lost amid the billowing folds of costly silk. Her dark hair was piled high and she carried her head with a proud graciousness. She moved swiftly, yet she seemed unhurried. She stopped for a moment in the center of the room, allowing two long mirrors to reproduce her image. Then her bejeweled hands plucked daintily at her skirts and she bobbed in a deep curtsy. The emperor rose and said, "You are late," but his voice was glad. The lady answered insincerely, "I'm sorry." Her eyebrows curved archly and her dark eyes twinkled inelegantly. "I have a petition today," she said, and her voice was low and clear.

The Emperor looked at her gravely and repeated, "A petition?"

He came closer to her, took her hand, and looked down at her from his greater height. She smiled at that and they moved toward the great doors together and again they were noiselessly opened by the tireless lackeys. So harmoniously did the Emperor and his lady move together that they might have been dancing the last few steps of the minuet. I saw them go out and watched the last wave of her many skirts follow after. She was saying, "Today's petition . . . " and her voice trailed off into nothingness. Once again the air was still and dead. I turned back to the window and far down the path of the orangerie I heard the low rumbling voice of the German guide say, "Herren und Damen" and his words also trailed off into nothingness. The air was hot and sultry and now my thoughts, too, were dead.

GLORIA K. BELSKY, '35



THE SCHOOL OF PEACE

I CAN still remember the pungent smell of the boxwood that hedged one end of Grandfather's garden. The garden was on the slope of a knoll beside the farm, and ran down toward the lake, where it finally straggled off into uncultivated woodland. Grandfather was no ardent botanist, no weed-hating enthusiast, no grower of prize peonies; rather, he was an indulgent lover of flowers. The flowers just grew—there was no set arrangement in the garden, no sorting of varieties or colors, and even the weeds were not harshly treated, but poked up their rowdy heads among the aristocrats.

It was generally late in the afternoon when Grandfather went out to his garden. He would putter about, stocky in blue overalls and old straw hat, pulling a weed here, watering a plant there, clipping off a faded blossom. He was very fastidious about his hands, and always wore a pair of light cotton gloves to protect them from the soil. When I

went with him, as I very often did, I liked to crumble the earth between bare fingers, feeling the rich brown soil that was still warm from the sun. And there were so many intriguing little creatures in a lump of earth—Grandfather would chuckle indulgently when I picked them out to exclaim over.

When we had cultivated a bit, and watered the flowers, we would sit in the middle of the garden, on an old stone seat there, and talk. Grandfather would recite bits of verse, sometimes, lovely lines on flowers and gardens and the intimacy of nature. Or he would just sit there thinking, and I would sit silent, too, trying to think. But I really never did anything but watch what was going on about me. By this time the sun would be setting, and shadows would dusk the glow of the poppies and the yellow of the daisies; the misty blue of the delphinium and the airy whiteness of the baby's breath would merge into nothingness. The box-wood down at one end would give off its indescribable scent—a mixture of pine and old-fashioned flowers. A puff-bellied robin would run up the path, where some unwary worm was taking an evening airing; the cricket who lived under the pansy patch would chirp; and, if it were very quiet, one could hear the pickerel leaping for gnats down in the lake below.

Suddenly Grandmother's voice would shatter the exquisite silence, reminding us that supper was almost ready, and that we had better go in and "wash up." So Grandfather would smile at me regretfully, and we would start for the house, always picking a bit of a nosegay for Grandmother. She liked poppies and bachelor buttons together, with perhaps a spray of love-in-the-mist tucked in. As we strolled towards the house Grandfather would repeat, softly, in his gruffly-sweet old voice:

"A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
 Rose plot,
 Fringed pool,
 Fern'd grot—
 The veriest school
 Of peace; and yet the fool
 Contends that God is not—
 Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
 Nay, but I have a sign;
 'Tis very sure that God walks in mine."

ANN D. CROCKER, '34

DR. PRIMROSE AND "MY UNCLE TOBY"—

A Comparison and Contrast

I SUPPOSE one of the most appealing figures in drama, literature, or life is the figure of a kindly old gentleman whose benevolence and good-will bubbles over. An old gentleman, be he ever so cantankerous and crabbed, is always interesting. A kindly old gentleman brings a spark of sympathy and love to the most hardened eye. And straight from the pages of eighteenth century literature step two of the kindest and most interesting old gentlemen who ever graced footlights—Goldsmith's beloved Vicar of Wakefield and Sterne's gentle "Uncle Toby."

Who is not familiar with the good Vicar, to whom the most horrible string of calamities ever likely to befall a pious clergyman were as mere scratches on a coat of mail? What with the loss of his fortune and parish, the frustration of all his plans for his son and heir, the seduction of his daughter, the burning of his house, his sojourn in debtors' prison, and his witnessing of his heir's arrest for attempted murder, the poor man has certainly—to put it mildly—had a bad time of it before the eyes of sympathetic posterity. His Christian forgiveness and general benevolence are matters of ageless marvel.

And as for Uncle Toby, did ever a more lovable character walk the pages of any book or the boards of any stage? Uncle Toby, to whom energy words are as foreign as Swedish to an Arab, who forgives before the word is spoken, who is perturbed at the tribulations of a fly, who is as innocent in his courtship of the wily widow as a babe unborn? Dear Uncle Toby with his fortifications, his painful infirmity, and his beaming smile! Few are the readers of "Tristram Shandy" who will ever forget him.

Certainly here Goldsmith and Sterne have struck at similar chords in human emotion, and their manners of striking are so different that they can scarce escape comment. For if the essence of these two characters may be called kindness, benevolence, or good-will, the manifestations of that essence are remarkably in contrast.

Dr. Primrose is assuredly kindly, benevolent, and loving, but his expression is found in response to a dire conglomeration of mishaps that is rather astounding. Dr. Primrose, I fear, is a bit inclined to be angelic. He blesses too much. And he goes about the business of forgiving in the sense of a stern and rigid duty to be fulfilled and done away with as speedily as possible. He has superhuman courage, but he is devoid of a sense of humour; he is very much the clergyman, and very little the man. He sternly forgives the man who swindles him. He righteously sees through and attempts to correct his daughter's skirmishes with vanity in the form of "face lotions" and desires to go to London. He balks the seducer of his daughter in his attempt at a second marriage, not because he hates him, but because it is his duty. When it ceases to be his duty, he removes his objections. He moralizes and sermonizes lengthily in the midst of his anguish in prison. He freely forgives the villainous squire. At almost the only point where he is humanly weak he cries, "Avoid my sight, thou reptile,"—an exclamation a bit too righteous to be directly appealing.

All in all, in spite of the opinion of posterity, I think the good Vicar is inclined to grow rather painful. Perhaps I do not appreciate a truly righteous Christian gentleman. But to continue—Dr. Primrose is exceedingly long-winded. His discourses on politics, religious dogma, etc. are most virtuous and complete. They are too bad; they lack utterly the humour, eccentricity, and charm of a dear old gentleman's ramblings; they are thorough and self-satisfied. However, the estimable Doctor does go so far as to bemoan his fate on one or two occasions—there are a few natural outbursts of feeling.

His simple and pastoral life is a bit overdone. He is too conscious of the fact that he is being simple and pastoral to be very appealing. And somewhere I get the impression that all of his harrowing experiences are to be rejoiced over, since they give him an opportunity to display his virtue and courage. In fact, although the idea behind the book is undoubtedly fine, the worthy Dr. Primrose will remain stamped forever upon my memory as a self-righteous, superhuman shadow—motivated by dogmatic precision, rather than love, by stiff adherence to form,

rather than gentleness, and by the marvel of his own ability to preach, rather than his ability as a man.

But "my Uncle Toby" is a real person. I picture Uncle Toby in his utter simplicity—and the adverse meaning of that word is the greatest and most affectionate tribute I can pay him. Uncle Toby moves in a world intended to be strange and unreal, but in so doing he moves in a world more real to me than that of the good Vicar, with his seductions, duels, fires, and jails. Uncle Toby was meant to be a farcical character. There is no moral behind him; there is not even a serious attitude. He is a gentle monomaniac, living in a world of maniacs—a world whose madness has been traced cleverly and exaggerated beautifully from the supposedly sane every-day world. There is no moralizing in Uncle Toby—no dogmatic parson's cloth to show him what he should be. His life is humorous and uneventful. It needs no fire and brimstone to bring out his character. Eccentric and simple, he wanders through some of the most veiledly filthy pages ever written and emerges innocent and real.

Uncle Toby may wander on to his heart's delight with his military stratagems and sieges; he may be as stupid as he pleases; he may be as unconsciously filthy as even Sterne can conceive of; but Uncle Toby lives, and we love him. We have seen Uncle Tobys. Not so exaggerated—not so screamingly funny, but we have seen them, and we have smiled tenderly upon them. He is the gentle, doddering epitome of kindness and good-will, not because he ought to be, but because he is. He is simple and foolish. He is a dear.

It is interesting that two men should have struck at this same point with two different purposes, and that neither should have attained his end. Goldsmith wrote seriously of an ideal clergyman, and he wrote with the intention of establishing that ideal and pointing a moral. Sterne wrote to be clever. He wrote for humour and little of anything else. But in spite of his flippancy, filth, and cleverness, he created reality with unreality and pictured more of what Goldsmith intended than did Goldsmith himself. Sterne's "Uncle Toby" surpassed its author's idea. Goldsmith's idea is smothered in his Vicar.

ESTHER TYLER, '33

SPECULATION

I WAS waiting for the trolley when I saw the man. He was dressed in shabby black, his head was a trifle large for his body, his face was extremely pleasant—but a tinge of something pathetic quirked his smile. I saw him for but a moment, but my fancy was set to work. What if that other shabby-black little fellow with the over-sized head and gentle face should walk the streets of New London! Would he catch the spirit of New London as he had caught that of London? I feel sure that the gentle Elia, Charles Lamb, would enjoy writing about this dingy little city.

You might see him coming from the Crown Theatre, for surely, he was an inveterate theatre-goer, why not the movies? And he would have been sitting in the rickety balcony, where the toughies sit, where the small boys throw peanut shells, and where high school girls giggle over the bits of scandal. The Capitol or the Garde might have seen him in his richer moments, when he and Mary went out for a treat, an evening's refuge from poverty and fear.

How would he have looked into the shops? Would he have written a delightful essay about the squeaky-voiced man in the Boston Candy Kitchen, or would he have enjoyed characterizing the drabs in the "Five and Ten"? The old Court House, at the top of State Street would have been full of essay bits from him. That "matter-of-lie" little man could have treated those high ceilinged rooms, those smoky officers, the limping clerk, the hump-backed notary, the white-faced misdoers, with a facile pen. He could have brought a chuckle to the throat over the infant squabblers on the pavement outside, or he might have glistened the eye with a tear over the poor old woman who daily struggles about with a bulging suitcase full of weak fudge, with which she hopes to make enough to keep herself alive.

He wouldn't have kept to the prosperity of State Street for long, though. Elia would have sought the by-ways down near Bank Street, and in back of the Palace Restaurant, where the pawnshops, the dirty

grocery stores, and the weekly bankrupt businesses flourish thinly. He might have written whole themes about the little Jew man in the shoe shop, with his eloquent black eyes, and expressive gestures; or the blowsy sisters who run the candy store, where all the children buy horrible green and red candy with their sticky pennies; or even the doughty old seaman who sits alternately chewing and ejecting tobacco out in front of the rickety fruit shop.

What would the city-loving Charles have thought of Ocean Beach—in the blare of its summer radios and hawkers, or in the desolate loveliness of the winter? Could he have written about the sun dial at the lighthouse, with its “Time is a ship that never anchors,” as delicately as he did about the one in the Temple? Would the salt of New London air have tarnished the sparkle of his humor, would it have taken from the freshness of his sympathy?

One can indulge in many pleasant and fancy-tickling speculations concerning the transplanting of Charles Lamb from his native streets. We cannot decide what his “horse and carriage” mind would have thought of the whizz and snort of modern vehicles, of the telephone, or radio, and all the other conveniences that have developed since his time. What we really need, it seems, is a modern Charles Lamb, if one can apply that adjective to one so steeped in seventeenth century gleanings as he was, though he lived two hundred years later. We need some one to make us more observant and appreciative. Humor, pathos, comedy and tragedy, are ghosting about us and no one seems to have the genius to bring these shadows to life, and to clothe them with understanding. Please, little man, whom I saw the other day, come back, and let me tuck a pen into your hand, and a pad in front of you, just to see if Elia’s magic won’t be transmitted to the empty page. But no, maybe you can’t even write your own name. Maybe you would only make an ugly smudge on the page! Perhaps there is to be only one Charles Lamb, only one gentle Elia, after all.

ANN D. CROCKER, '34

JOSEPHINE

OF all the things that had been said of David Fuller during his none too easy lifetime, he most valued the assertion that at any time he was above all else a gentleman. That face proved something to Dave. But he had a hard time remembering it whenever Miss D came in with that queer look in her eye and announced, "Miss Grey to see you, sir." Dave enjoyed being kind, as a general thing. When he didn't enjoy it he forced himself into it. And there were two times when he had something of a struggle—when Josephine came to see him at the office was both of them.

She came rustling in now, and before he so much as looked at her Dave knew what he would see. First and foremost that hat—that awful hat, resembling a manhole-cover mounted with antiquated shrubbery and held in place by studded spikes driven firmly in at intervals. Dave did not happen to remember that he had once—some twenty years ago, during his courtship—considered his own wife absolutely ravishing in that hat. He had no way of knowing that Anne had been cleaning the attic the last time Josephine had come to call.

It was really silly to see a face like Josephine's under such a monument. Round and merry was Josephine. Her face sparkled like the face of one who has risen early and walked miles before breakfast. There were no wrinkles to belie her seventy-odd years. Just here and there—about her eyes and mouth—little laughing creases. Only the whiteness of Jo's primly arranged hair conveyed to you the information that you were not regarding an infant "dressing up." Her eyes gave you the odd feeling that everyone was old and wicked, compared to her. As Dave's younger daughter took a delight in saying, Jo's eyes looked as if no one had ever told her disillusioning things about the Easter bunny.

Even the long, rusty folds of her skirt twinkled. The twinkle somehow personified Josephine, although Dave, in his more critical moments, was well aware of the fact that it was due to her skirt's unintentioned length of service. Josephine's gloves were black cotton, shabby, and very neatly darned. And matching them perfectly was the awful old thing she

carried for a handbag. If, Dave reflected rapidly, Jo ever dropped that bag she would have no trouble at all in finding it a month later right where she dropped it. Dave would ask Anne to do something about a handbag for Josephine.

Dave was a gentleman above all else. He rose quickly now and walked toward his caller with outstretched hand, mentally praying that nobody had been in the waiting room when she came in. He also reminded himself sternly that she was the oldest friend of Anne's family and had been a perfect angel when Anne's mother was sick.

"Why, Josephine," he began cheerily, "of all people to come visiting a lawyer! *You* aren't looking for a divorce, are you?" Josephine was most thoroughly a spinster, and Dave sincerely hoped that he was being funny.

Her eyes crinkled into a jolly and absolute beam, which set Dave to wondering what she could constantly find to beam at when she didn't possess the common, ordinary—"Worse than that, young man," stated Josephine in the gentle, far-away voice of a very old lady, "I have come to make my will."

Her will! Not an uncracked dish in her house. Not a piece of unpatched carpet. And she had come to make her will!

"Josephine, you're getting pessimistic. Won't you sit down. You know I never thought *you* would weaken into such a vicious practice."

"Merely a matter of business, child. Merely business." When she spoke in that tone Dave always remembered that Jo had the power of making his hair stand on end when she chose to cross Times Square with or without his assistance. Seventy-odd years in New York City. That same antiquated flat in down-town New York. And here she was in his office in a hat that would have sent a Philistine warrior into convulsions of fear.

"That's right, Jo. Well, you win. Here we go! Who gets the spoons?"

Some hour later David Fuller rose with a deferential air to open the door for Josephine. His eyes somehow looked just a bit poppy, and his mouth would have been much more charming had he seen fit to close it.

"Now, David, you will see that Anne opens a joint account for that amount. You are right. There ought to be cash on hand in case anything should happen to me. And, David," with sudden shrewdness, "you'd better consider keeping your income in a deposit box. Banks fail, you know."

"Yes," said Dave bewilderedly. "You've forgotten your pocketbook, Josephine."

"Thank you. That's another thing. I always carry this when I have valuable papers. It's better than insurance. Good-bye, young man. Tell Anne I shall call shortly."

Dave stood and stared at the door for some time. Two hundred thousand cold! Two hundred thou—And that hat! And his mother-in-law's old clothes! Standing there Dave got a glimpse of the things that pushed jolly creases into Josephine's face. Mystery, daring, excitement. The sense of power and superiority. Dramatic instinct, humor, devil-may-care. And sinking into his chair Dave reflected that he had been going to ask Anne to do something about that handbag."

ESTHER TYLER, '33



NEW RUSSIA

Stout tractors, in formation, leave a wake
Of furrowed, chemically fertile earth.
At Dneiprostroy steel fences bend and break
A river's strength. New turbines of a girth
Unparalleled speed iron feet and hands,
Where things, not men, make things efficiently.
The miles are tied in shorter with steel bands
And dredges join the Volga to the sea.
You freed a nation with a single wrench
And cut away the rotting at its roots.
You make an altar of a workman's bench,
But men have theater tickets, bread and boots.
Better to watch you while you test your tools
Before we cry that Socialists are fools.

MARJORIE SEYMOUR, '33

FOG

THE fog is a woman with a huge, softly-glowing body; deeply reluctant is her fair, smooth skin, quietly luminous gleams her silvered hair. Purple-gray are the kind, near-sighted eyes that slowly, thoroughly, scan the bleak, unyielding outlines of adamantine houses and harsh, awkward trees; a little resentfully, they rest a moment on the bullying, egotistic figure of the sallow smoke-stack.

A thousand folds there are to the flowing gown she affects; its cut is old-fashioned; its once stiff weave is crumpled, kneaded by the pressing, seeking fingers of countless searchers, into a friendly, threadbare garment. She cannot discard it, this outmoded, worn thing; all those many hands stretch out to feel its gentleness; more to come, expectant of the impersonal comfort it imparts, must know the solace of its softness. Its color is restfully sombre, indeterminate, sadly streaked and faded from many rainy tramps. The trailing edges are muddied and torn where they dragged across the soggy fields or caught against the jagged rise of a church spire.

Barefoot our lady glides along the earth, her fragrant hair straining from the high, fine brow as she presses on against the wind, her arms outstretched to break its heavy impact. Silently, majestically, she moves; graciously, slowly, she lifts her strong, earth-spattered feet over the wistful grass.

She tenderly strokes the forehead of the fretting sea; between her firm, capable hands she lifts the river's sullen face and smooths away his wrinkles. A moment she rests the hot, flushed cheek of the lamplight against her own hard, cool one, then passes on, leaving the light softly fused in misty delight by the comfort of the feel of her.

She gathers the stiff body of the house upon the hill into the depth and fragrance of her embrace. Gently, she lays his stubborn old head against her full, soft breast and whispers in his gabled ears. He's left behind, too, but docile now, and pleasant; the once sharp outline of his

solid form is blurred; every lighted window of his lonely soul gleams with a translucent aureola.

Bending down, she kisses good-night to each drowsy hill, ready for slumber beneath his cold, wet army blanket. Over each, she breathes a prayer and speaks of comfort through the frightening dark.

As the fog, a woman, beautiful still, though ages pile about her feet, goes past, the contemptuous smoke-stack, watching with his bold eyes, sticks out a foot and catches the hem of her loose robe. Unperturbed, serene, she disentangles it and steps along across the field. But, turning, she smiles at the monster and sighs a good-night as to all the rest. A bit abashed, yet warmed by her friendliness, he also draws a mist about him and settles to sonorous sleep and dreams of her next passage.

To me, she bends her tranquil gaze, and smiles, and laughs a cheery greeting. Seeing me sad, she stops awhile and chats, puts her arm about my shoulder, rubs her hair against my eyes. Reassuringly, she pats my face, touches barely my lips with hers. Sadness departs, and leaves instead a companionly warmth, a less self-centered attitude. She continues on along the path toward her far, faint home beyond the horizon.

The fog, a woman with a huge body, goes walking of an evening, comforting, cheering in her own inimitable manner, one unknown, and yet familiar, the way of all the world's kind women.

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