Bard College
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BARDIAN

Vol. 2 No. 1 January 8, 1945

No man, for any considerable period, u wear one mask to himself, and nother to the multitude, without finly getting bewildered as to which ay be the true.
—Nathanial Hawthorne

THE BARDIAN

A Journal of Individual Expression

Everything in the world has its decisive moment; the crowning achievement of a good conduct of life is to know and pick out that moment.
—Cardinal de Retz

lume II, No. 1, New Series | BARD COLLEGE, ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, N. Y. | Monday, January 8, 1945

Skepticism

By H. S. THAYER

)ne of the many ways of becoming unpular in the modern world is to be labelled skeptic. The skeptic, as popularly conved, is that bothersome individual who, king any imagination, never believes anyng he is told and is the drab blanket to y pleasant conversation. There are, hower, two forms of skepticism, one of which a useless sort of game which even the ayer gets tired of. This is a refusal to lieve anything under any circumstances. his kind of skepticism usually ends up with e skeptic logically denying his own exisnce. The ending point is where the skeptic skeptical of his own skepticism and the me is over.

The other form of skepticism is a much ore serious enterprise and it is one which wish to advocate now. It is a philosophical epticism which refuses to accept propositons as they are asserted, without a display objectively observable evidence for their pport. It is this latter form of skepticism at has become the center of scientific think-g. The advocate of this kind of thinking is ot the constant disbeliever, but rather he efers to establish a certain amount of asurance for his belief in order to arrive at a rtainty of such a nature as he can honestly ll "truth."

However, skepticism of this sort, which we an term reasonable doubt, is often a difcult art to practice. It leads sometimes to onclusions that may startle the peace and omfort of the mind that slumbers under isapprehensions. It requires a certain discipline of desires and emotions which tend to nslave the mind, and, harder yet, it requires n honest, objective, and analytical attitude owards the prejudices and habits of thought hat all of us, to a certain degree, are guilty f having acquired throughout our lives.

The difficulties of this way of thinking re many, but not too many to be overcome. t is the misfortune not only of philosophy ut of the modern world that to a greater legree such thinking is not in use. There ertainly is great need of it in the confused ondition of the world today. For moments f confusion are moments that are ripe for he application of authoritarian methods by rganized groups and the establishment of a emporary order at the disastorous price of ictatorship.

For all those who believe in the desireability f democracy as a form of government, an appreciation, rather than an abhorrence, of the worth of reasonable skepticism should approach almost a religious exaltation. It would be wise to observe that, along with logical analysis, an attitude of reasonable doubt is the most hated enemy of all those who wish to impose or inflict their dogmas of belief and desire on others.

If such a spirit could be installed into a bewildered world, and even if held only by a majority of people, most of the false beliefs, foolish prejudices, doctrines of greed and dangerous propaganda would die out. With a skeptical attitude and a bare minimum of factual knowledge, the doctrines of Hitler and Mussolini would never have been able to have had such widespread success, and, instead of each country spending all its efforts on the promulgation of nationalistic propaganda, the economic and political factors that make for Fascism so easily would have been examined and improved. With such an attitude, the doctrines of racial superiority, the anti-Semitic, anti-Negroid prejudices, which are based on Fascist propaganda and which only the ill-informed could believe, would not be so widely held in the world and here at home.

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Editorial: Which Way Bard?

Looking back at Bard's first term of coeducation, it seems that the college had started off this phase of its existence with a rather loud bang. The introduction of women students had brought to light a number of heretofore dormant problems — problems which for the most part probably have always existed but of which not too many people were cognizant.

Today we have to a large extent lifted ourselves from this state of unawareness. This is apparent in the proportionately larger attendance at, and the more vigorous participation in, convocation meetings. Students are beginning to care a little more about Bard and its way of life, which in reality is our way of life.

This, as far as it goes, is good. But unfortunately it has not gone far enough. We have begun to think about Bard, but a large number of us have adopted the wrong method of thinking.

All the questions that we have discussed so far this term can be approached from one of two points of view. We can either look at them subjectively — how will this most benefit me? — as many of us tend to do, or we can be, or at least attempt to be, objective — how will this most benefit the school as a whole?

The problem would seem to resolve itself into this primary and basic question: Are we to think subjectively or objectively? This is a question much bigger than ourselves or Bard. It relates to our whole attitude toward life. However, for the moment let us limit our discussion to Bard in relation to us.

Bard essentially is what we make it. We can make it a country club (God forbid!) or we can make it what it should be, a center of learning in step with progressive or, if you wish, modern education. It is very important that we decide, and quickly, which of these two courses we wish to follow. The latter appears to me the more sensible of the two and the course which Bard was intended to take.

A great many people seem to have forgotten this—as witness the so-called "intervisitation" question. It took a long time for us to stop regarding it with a "What can this mean for me?" attitude and to begin to look upon it as the educational experiment that it is. It took too long for students to stop thinking only in terms of themselves and to begin to think objectively.

Bard College, whether or not we recognize the fact, is a great educational experiment. We must remember that it is different from any other school or community in the country. It has different standards and mores which must be determined and lived up to, and its success or failures rests squarely on its students. It is therefore up to us to see that it does not fail. No egocentric expressions of selfishness must hinder or obstruct the progress of this experiment.

Of course somebody will always point out that, since the Bard form of education puts the emphasis on the individual, he should act as an individual, and not let himself be limited by the crowd. To a certain extent this is true. The stress on the individual is one of the most important points of the Bard program. *But* the individual cannot advance so far ahead of the crowd as to do injury to it. What is best for all at all times must be the concern of the individual rather than what is best for him alone.

Therefore, how can we act so as to make our outlook truly objective and pull ourselves away from the pitfall of subjectivity? First, we must do everything possible to approach each subject with a completely open mind, without having formed a definite opinion before hearing all the facts and arguments.

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The Conflict of Thomas Buddenbrooks

By PATRICIA VOLK

Thomas Mann's story of the distintegration and steady decline of the Buddenbroks family may be said to be the treatment of the conflict of bourgeois conventionalism and bohemian non-conformity. But to reduce *Buddenbrooks* to such black and white simplicity would be to presuppose some ultimate resolution of this problem which the author had not included in his work.

The reader is won by neither one side nor the other, a reaction resulting, apparently, from Mann's own irresolution and suspended judgment. The bourgeois's lack of imagination, his confined vision, his preoccupation with money-making, his ruthlessness, are described with censorious clarity. Yet at the same time his healthy, vigorous tenacity of purpose, equally as characteristic as nineteenth century middle-class narrowness, appears admirable in comparison with the perpetual indecision and uncertainty of the artist — or rather of the near-artist as represented by Thomas, Christian and, more especially, by Hanno.

Christian, Thomas's weak brother, would represent many of the qualities existing in the older man but for Thomas's stronger will to resist his anti-bourgeois tendencies which he regards with distrust. In a sense, Christian serves simultaneously as a threat and as a support to this resistance. The miserable, ineffectual flutterings of Christian increases his brother's fear of a similar fate. Yet Thomas is also weakened by Christian's presence, as he admits in his fight with him. Thomas is well aware that Christian is the embodiment of the potentialities existing within himself.

In his early youth, Thomas exhibits those characteristics of bohemianism which he fights all his life to repress. He leads a somewhat idle existence. He reads widely and enjoys books that are stimulating to his intellect. He displays an interest in Catholicism which exemplifies his need for an emotional outlet, his desire to escape the limitations imposed upon him by his environment. During his life he maintains this passive interest, but finally realizes that it offers no panacea, because the source of his conflict comes from within.

The mere fact that he chooses the exotic, "morbidly beautiful" Gerda for his wife is but a further evidence of that subtle, probably unconscious, motivation. In Gerda, and in Gerda's impenetrable aloofness, he satisfies that craving for strangeness, for beauty, and his love of genuine artistry, while at the same time his zealous concern for the firm, the family, their prestige, the second of his dual impulses, is satisfied by the ample dowry and the glory which she lends to the Buddenbrooks.

During his initial years in control of their grain business, Thomas throws himself unreservedly into his work, even delighting in his ability to wield a charming personality to financial advantage. He takes profitable chances and the firm flourishes under his direction. Yet it is not a lasting condition. Thomas again is bothered by a vague rest-

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The Mystic

By CHRISTINE FRERICHS

The mystic is the scientist or artist of the spiritual life. He has the abilities necessary for exploring a field of consciousness either underdeveloped or unrealized in the lives of most men. He proceeds, after long years of preparation, to experience reality without the aid of his senses.

I shall not try to prove or disprove the existence of a spiritual world. (I doubt if either can be done.) I shall introduce you to the mystic's nature and his methods and then try to justify his right to interpret the world as he sees it.

Everyone, at some time in his life, develops a passion for the thing he calls Truth. The permanency of said passion depends upon the man, of course. But there is a personality, constantly reproduced in the human race, that finds this love essential to his very existence. He is impelled by everything in him to seek the ultimate reasons for the existence of the universe, God, as he finally calls it. He desires not only knowledge of God (in fact he usually considers the merely reasoned, the conceptual, as rather meaningless) but also unity with God! This is where the line is drawn between the mystic and other seekers of reality. The mystic demands *experience* for his satisfaction. This attitude is well expressed in Walt Whitman's poem,

"When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures were ranged in columns before me,
When I was show the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself
In the mystical moist night air, and from time to time,
Looked up in perfect silence at the stars."

This demand for immediacy is one of the essential elements in the disposition of a mystic. Another element is his romanticism, his trust in his emotions and his imagination which are usually very intense and vivid.

The mystic must have the capacity for extreme concentration, a high moral emotion, and the nervous organization of the artist.

The amateur mystic begins by a longing for something other than this world. Sensual desires and delights wane, and even actual disgust sets in. However, his unhappiness, sometimes terribly acute, is undetermined. He goes into the second phase when he realizes what he is seeking is the eternal, the infinite, God, and he develops his profound love and longing for unision with Him. It should be noted that this passion is not selfish. The mystic is consumed with a desire for service and sacrifice to he beloved. He utters the passionate cry, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Furthermore, he earnestly subjugates his bodily desires in order to purify himself before he can be worthy of meeting his God. This asceticism means the giving up of physical pleasures and comforts that is inconceivable to many men. To the ascetic it is almost a pleasure to do so. This is a perfectly normal reaction found in all people. The desire to give one's self for the sake of something conceived to be higher or greater, whether a work of art or a heroic deed, is an essential emotion in everyone's life.

Contemporaneous with this negative stage is a more positive one of meditation. He begins, in long periods of quiet contemplation, to tell himself of God's presence. This exercise of meditation is no easy matter. It

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The Bardian

Published every month by the students of Bard College, at Annandale-on-Hudson, N. Y.

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5c per copy $2.00 per year

Vol. II, New Series, No. 1 Monday, January 8, 1945

Those of us who knew Norman Siegel were shocked to hear of his death on the Western front. Dr. Wolff, his friend and teacher, wrote the following few words to express our grief.

His mother wrote: "You were his 'Psych. Prof.,' he 'talked' to you."—I also 'talked' to him. I lost a friend.

He died in France, on November 25th, a member of the brave 80th Division in the gallant Third Army.

Thinking of his friends at Bard, he wrote four days before his death: "The immanence of danger gives a quiet calmness to the spirit. I continue as I was, moderately cheerful and hoping for the best in the future." — He called himself a Greek in spirit and taught himself the Greek language; he fulfilled the Greek idea: 'Whom the Gods love dies in youth.'

The words on the tombstones of the Spartans are also made for him:

Stranger if you passest here by
And comest to Sparta
Tell them you sawest us lying here,
Faithful to the country
And faithful to the law.

Which Way Bard?

(Continued from Page 1,

Second, to this end we must discuss — not argue, discuss — the problem as often as possible and with as many people as possible. This will have a two-fold purpose, that of clarifying our own thoughts and also of making others look objectively and thus clearing their views. Of course, once we have come to any sort of half conclusion, we must see that our conversations are not only with those who think our way; they must for the most part be with those of other opinions so as to get a general exchange of ideas and a more objective outlook by all.

The importance of frank, open discussion with faculty members cannot be overemphasized. More mature, experienced points of view, whether or not we accept them, are an important part of the ultimate formulation of our own opinions. On the other hand, the faculty members must open their minds to expression of student ideas. Student-faculty discussion groups meeting as often as possible would greatly facilitate this exchange of opinion.

If we can thus take an unbiased view of our problems, no matter how large or small, looking at them objectively — and seeing — we can remain confident that they will find easy solutions. Bard is *our* school. It will be for us what *we* make it. How do we want it?

—STANLEY L. FALK

Au Secours!

"A MORE MODEST and practical aim for an educational program can be stated as the attempt to bring people into some degree of thoughtful relation to the world they live in. . . .

"The isolation (of Bard College), however, might lead to an unhealthful withdrawal from the pressures, inspirations, appeals and attractions of a larger society. . . .

"Every effort must be made to provide the moral equivalents for the forces which in a more complex society would be at work upon young people. . . . and the government under which all its members live should be used imaginatively and continuously for education in the principles, rights, and *responsibilities of a democracy.*" *

Au secours! — we have fallen down, students and faculty. We have vent our spleen on every problem except the War, the paramount problem of our existence as a school. We have very ably discarded the problems of a successful war effort with volumes of sonorous rhetoric instead of the needed practical thought and *action.*

What has the Bard community actually done to abet the war effort of the country? A Community Chest is organized and passed off by the students as a nuisance. Instead of the community serving as impetus for a successful drive, their lathargic manner made it a mediocrity.

Colleges throughout the country have organized committees for the Red Cross. The women of the college have incepted bandage rolling clubs working a few days a week to turn out medicinal supplies for use in the war effort. Both the men and the women have volunteered to give blood every two months and have made it their business to reach other students to perform the same.

Here at Bard our problem is simplified by the proximity of one student to the next and of the faculty to each student and to each other. The diminutiveness of the community should make our task all the simpler and yet we have fallen down miserably.

Those committees that have been organized for raising funds have been unable to do so successfully owing to a lack of co-operation on the part of the community.

We must take cognizance of this situation and alleviate its presence at once. Realization of the fact that we are not isolated and are an integral part of this country, and therefore bound to the same obligations as other people, will go a long way in helping us solve this problem.

"What is Bard doing for the War Effort," as so many people have asked, tends to make or break our reputation as a college, aside from the moral aspect of the problem.

Au secours! — before it is too late.

*From the Bulletin of Bard College, July, 1944.

Progressive Teachers

A SCHOOL for those who intend to teach at at progressive institutes should be set up. They should be taught how to be understanding of philosophical, psychological, economic, scientific, and abstract problems. They must be taught to discuss politics, women, and family troubles. They must be vital, daring, and conservative. They must never discourage a radical and must be willing to talk communism in an eager tone. In short, they must be educated to assimilate all the psychic verbiage and conflicts that are thrown at them in order to prove to the student that he must write a paper for tomorrow's lesson. For without this primary bit of training the progressive teacher can never hope to gain any reasonable cooperation from his students who, because they are progressive, necessarily place so many problems upon his lap.

The Store

THE STORE is the meeting ground for lost students. Whenever you feel blue, or sad, or disgusted, or even happy, you go there to relieve your mind. Someone will always join you for a few minutes in a cup of coffee and a cigarette. When the store is congested you know it is siesta time, and when it is empty you know it is class time. The store is the oasis in the intellectual desert, and it never turns away a friend.

Committees

OH what is so fair as a Committee that will allow the rest of us politicians to sit back while they argue for a decision. It is the grandest of all sports and no politics should be initiated without first setting up a reasonable amount of men to whom the buck can be passed in case any one topic is causing too much discussion or thinking. These committee's are like the back rooms at Joe's where men are men and the talk never lets up. At Washington or at Bard the same idea persists and the only difference is that Washington's committeemen are bald-headed while ours are not far behind.

Looking At Books

By ADDISON BRAY

NIKOLAI GOGOL, by VLADIMIR NABOKOV, 1944, $1.50; 170 pages (indexed).

This is the latest of the New Directions "Makers of Modern Literature" series, and it is a sketchy sampling of Gogol's life and an impressionist interpretation of his art. His art was the play and the novel, and his life was chaotic. But the shortness of the book prohibits exhaustiveness just as the chaos of Gogol's life is exciting bait for varied impressions of it. Mr. Nabokov's work is well written and it is enthusiastic. It is fuel for a brief and intriguing excursion into early nineteenth century Romanticism.

As you open the book you are immediately plunged into Gogol's death scene. Gogol died in his forties which was old age when compared with some of his Romantic contemporaries in England. His death was horrible. He had ever been panic stricken at the sight or thought of anything round, smooth or snakelike. Gogol was dying of starvation (and of who knows what other diseases of infection and deterioration) while the doctors did only one thing—they attached six plump black leeches to the end of his nose. They dangled into his mouth which opened fitfully and impulsively to emit voiceless tearing screams.

The reader sees tantalizing glimpses of Gogol as he fled fantastically from everyone who might get to know him well enough to criticize him. He never really settled anywhere, his life was a constant escape. He spent much of his time in Italy and Germany. His was an art of strange suggestive impressions and they were impossible without the perspective of movement and distance.

The critical analysis is contained in three basic chapter: one on **The Government Inspector,** another on **Dead Souls,** the last on **The Overcoat.** All three chapters are careful topical analysis of each of these most important of Gogol's works: a three present Gogol as a prose poet of the order of Ducasse, Baudelaire or Laforgue.

The Government Inspector, according to Mr. Nabokov, is the best play in all Russian literature. Its outstanding Gogolian characteristic is found in its background of seemingly irrelevant characters. These "secondary" characters in our author's eyes, are the play itself. They constitute its holding atmosphere, its reality which is analagous to a Romantic and irrational universe, full of extraneous unexplainable things, its human appeal, its universality — as wide as life, and an easy going humor of asides. All make for high comedy.

Dead Souls and **The Overcoat** are prose narratives and are saturated with an imagery shifting, fantastic and peculiar to Gogol. It is imagery that could not grow into a drama but in prose it now came forth and distinguished Gogol a supreme artist — an artist who did not calculate but sensed with his nose, whose brain was slave to his fancy. Such an artist . . . "appeals to that secret depth of the human soul where the shadows of other worlds pass like the shadows of nameless and soundless ships."

Biography of this sort makes fascinating reading. This is beyond doubt. But I sometimes wonder at critical studies that for the most part say what, but have very little of why and wherefore. As an artist and especially as Gogol, he was probably quite unaware of much that was going on in the world around him. But the world of his time made him what he was and more of it I would like to see — with Gogol in the midst of it.

In Tune

By RICHARD GAYNOR

For two and one-half years preceding November, 1944, no new orchestral recordings were made by the two large recording companies here in the United States. A third company, which records popular and light classical music exclusively, came to terms with Mr. Petrillo's union in 1943. During this period, the only new releases were those records that were recorded before July 31, 1942. When we look back at this period, we can see that the classical-record buying public lost nothing because of it.

At the time that Petrillo began his war on the manufacturer's of "canned music," record production was very limited due to two factors. First, due to its use in war industries, there was a critical shortage of shelac, one of the principle ingredients in phonograph records, and second, there was a shortage of labor. Even if we had no Petrillo, it is doubtful whether there would have been any more new releases.

The fact of the matter is that during this period both of the manufacturers of classical records offered the public fewer of the "old war-horses" and in their place substituted works that were not so familiar. For example, the November releases for R.C.A. Victor featured **Belchazar's Feast** by the contempory British composer William Walton. I think that most will agree that to release a work such as this is far better than another performance of Beethoven's **Fifth.**

Another outstanding release was Giovanni Gabrieli's **Ceremonial and Processional Music,** for chorus, organ, and brass. Here is an example of great music that had all but died. Gabrieli was born in 1553 in Rome. His uncle, Andrea (1507-1586) was one of the contempories of Palestrina. He was organist at St. Marks and upon his death, his nephew took this position. Giovanni Gabrieli wrote much music for the church and, among this, critics agree that the **Ceremonial and Processional Music** is among his most representative works. The performance is first-rate. E. Power Biggs is the organist with the Harvard Glee Club and the Brass choir of the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of G. Wallace Woodworth.

New European recordings were imported to supplement those that were on hand here in America. The above work by William Walton is an example. Haydn's **Symphony No. 103, "Drum Roll,"** and Schostakovitch's **Piano Concerto** were also imported. Columbia released some of Sir Thomas Beecham's last recordings with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Both of these met instant approval from the public. One of them was the **Piano Concerto No. 12** by Mozart with Louis Kentner playing the solo part.

This brings me to a point that I wanted to make, namely that recorded music in recent years has had a profound influence on the choice of concert programs. One of the best examples I think is that of the **Symphony in G Minor** by Kalinnikov. When in 1941, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra signed a recording contract, they chose as their first album release this unknown work by a lesser nineteenth century Russian composer. Fabien Sevitzsky, the enterprising young conductor of this orchestra, had played the work at a regular subscription concert and discovered that the audience really liked it. He decided that this work would be a good one on which to start a recording career. Soon after the albums, release in the latter part of 1941, music-lovers noticed the name of Basi Sergeivich Kalinnikov's **First Symphony in G Minor** appearing on their concert programs. Last season, Arturo Toscanini played the work on one of his regular Sunday afternoon broadcasts with much success. This is only one example. There are many others.

But returning to what I said earlier. Petrillo's ban if nothing else did prove one point. Record manufacturers know that the public will buy other works besides those of Tchaikowsky. Perhaps now that they have resumed recording we will see the fruits of this point.

Sunday Morning

By JEANNE ROSENBERG

Annie swept a wisp of blond hair ut of her eyes with her slim fore- rm; she wiped her sudsy hands on he mended apron and reached into s deep pocket.

"Here, Joe, go on down to Dugan's nd get a big head of cabbage and alf a pound of coffee and fifteen ents of hot dogs." She handed the hange carefully to the little boy vho was standing by the kitchen vindow, staring at the other tene- nent houses. "It's forty-seven cents, o be careful," she warned, turning uickly back to the wash-tubfull of lothes so that she wouldn't have to vatch Joe make his way carefully down the dark rickety steps, while nolding tight to the splintery ban- nister as he limped down.

"Do I hafta be back right away?" he asked, opening the door.

"No, go ahead, take your time, baby," Annie answered, scrubbing determinedly at the worn knees of Joe's overalls.

As she knew he would, Joe went step by step, his left foot dragging slightly. He held the rail firmly, ignoring the orange peels and empty milk bottles outside the O'Malleys' door, on the floor below. Once he stopped to sniff curiously at the brown bottle, lying on its side by Mr. Franconi's door.

Puffing a little, Joe pushed the thick old door open and stepped out into the morning sun. Up and down the city street it was quiet; one brown and white mongrel lay sigh- ing, asleep, in the middle of the gutter; a skinny cat picked its Sun- day morning way, pausing now and then at the brimming garbage cans. Joe squinted his eyes and held the forty-seven cents tighter in his small palm. The sun warmed his bare head, shining blond and straw-like. On the bridge of his nose three freckles capered, and the cherub dimple at the corner of his mouth dented as he chewed the precious stick of gum he had been saving since the day before.

He walked slowly, counting his steps, stepping over the cracks on the sidewalk.

"Twenny-four, twenny-five, twen- ny-six," he whispered, his little figure making enormous shadows on the pavement. A glittering red con- vertible coupe slashed its way by and Joe's head came up quickly. He caught sight of the shiny golf clubs poking up in the back and he opened his eyes wide at the speckless white- walled tires. "Gosh!" he exhaled. Suddenly Joe was at the wheel zip- ping along a broad white highway; beside him lay a huge box of base- balls, maybe fifty; one the red leather seat in back was a Catcher's Mitt, autographed by Big Joe him- self.

Joe came to the corner, stopped and looked carefully to see if any cars were coming; Annie always cautioned him about crossing the street alone. But the city streets were blank, bored and lazy from the warmth of the sun. No one walked busily along and the shades on the old brownstones were drawn de- fensively. Joe crossed and stopped to pick up an old tennis ball, resting by the stained stoop of the corner house. He tried to bounce it, but the bounce was gone and it rolled dismally away. He went on.

Next to Dugan's was the stationery store where Annie bought "The News." He paused to look in the narrow window; sometimes old Mr. Goldfarb put new toys out for dis- play. Pressing his scooped-up nose against the dirty glass, he peered in. There was that wooden locomotive with movable wheels—the red trac- tor with real rubber treads—the model plane all put together—in the corner still stood the Daisy gun. Suddenly his wistful eyes riveted themselves upon the front corner of the window—a Catcher's Mitt! The smooth tan leather turned up, the thick padded thumb almost beck- oning him—Joe caught his lower lip in a longing gasp.

As in a dream, he limped into the store. Pudgy Mr. Golfarb was seated behind the tiny counter, reading his Sunday paper. He put it down when he heard Joe come in.

"Hallo, Joe boy," he smilled, "how's mama?" Mr. Goldfarb liked Annie. "Did she get a letter from Michael yet?" He handed Joe a hard stick of gum from behind the counter.

"No, she thinks he might get a furlough," Joe said, smiling at the present. "Mister Goldfarb," he said very low," "could I. . . could I see that Catchersmitt?" the magic words came out in one breath.

"Sure thing; ain't it a fine one, Joe?" Mr. Goldfarb handed him the mitt. The pliant leather slid butter-like onto Joe's small hand. Put- ting the forty-seven cents into his picket, first making sure there was no hole for the hard-earned change to slip through, he held the mitted hand up at arm's length. A beam of sunlight rayed through the nar- row door and struck the mitt; it glowed like an old burnished boot.

As he ran his right hand along the outside, feeling the stitching, turning his other hand back and forth in hushed admiration, a little white price tag suddenly slipped from the inside of the Mitt and dangled be- fore his eyes — ninety-four cents! Drawing the Mitt slowly off, he put it carefully on the counter. Mr. Goldfarb watched him, his tired blue eyes deep and wise behind their glasses misting sympathetically.

"Maybe for Christmas, Joe," he said understanding. Joe nodded, gulping down a lump. He watched Mr. Goldfarb put it back in the window, and then he turned to go.

"I'll come for the paper on the way back from Dugan's," he said, a catch in his throat. Mr. Goldfarb returned to his stool.

Last Words To A Fallen Airman

By H. S. THAYER

We have watched her stand
Before windows and in mirrors filled with sunlight,
The steady whisper of the comb through golden hair
Held our eyes in dazed brightness;
Combing into sun, and autumn fragrance, and blue skies.

Now the skies have changed
The rose farewell
Fades upon the flesh of autumn.
And there will be no more for awhile
Of warm winds scraping a fist of stars
Through the pale and gleaming sockets of meadow walls.

Now my eyes grasp to reach
The bright and flashing pivots of your wings
Lifting the sunset into the wind:
Your eyes rest half locked
Among those altitudes of dream: and flame.

You slant your plane silver downward
Cutting the wind and glide of lost distances;
Yet out of this wide and blue absence, with agile prophecy
A few swallows fly homeward.
O of the earth forever, and of love, and your flight
And your bright movement across my eyes of stone,
That rolls the year into a fist of tears
Flinging all but a few bright petals
Plucked and scattered across Europe's wounds.

The Caterpillar

By ANNYS BAXTER

She sat at the open window; the sun shone in, warm and kind. The air was soft. The day was too per- fect to waste in fretting about any- thing — no trivial worry could touch her. She stretched out luxuriously and opened the thin red volume of poetry which lay on her knees.

Where the slow river
Meets the tide,
A red swan lifts red wings
And darker beak,
And underneath the purple down
Of his soft breast
Uncurls his coral feet.

Through the deep purple
Of the dying heat
Of sun and mist,
The level ray of sun-beam
Has caressed
The lily with dark breast,
And flecked with richer gold
Its golden crest. . . .

She read and smiled to herself, a happy, secret smile. She closed her eyes, reveling in the warmth. Dreams, plans, fancies wandered through her mind; before her closed eyes. She smiled again.

But there! What was that odd little sound? The wind blowing those bright, dry leaves? She opened her eyes with a jerk. Outside the window, on the ledge, the leaves were piled inches deep. They were rustling slightly, but she knew, somehow, that that was not the sound which had attracted her at- tention. Ah! There it was. Struggling through the brown-gold and red pile, about a foot from her window, was a small, furry shape, scarcely two inches long. One of those fuzzy black and liver-coloured caterpillars.

"Funny little thing," she thought idly, relaxed again, "what a hard job it is for you!" With stolid de- termination the caterpillar fought his way on toward the window.

"Oh ho!" she exclaimed, "So you would come in? But you aren't go- ing to. No indeed, no caterpillars." Obviously undeterred by this warn- ing, he crept closer, until, with a violent lurch, he got himself half up on the window sill.

"No, no, no!" she murmured and, gently, with a shiny, blue pencil which was lying near her on the sill, she lifted him up and tossed him back out among the leaves.

"How can anyone kill those little creatures? They are so human, somehow. No, not human exactly, but like a dog or a cat with their funny brown and black fur." She smiled at herself, amused at the in- terest she was taking in it.

She looked up then, and — it was coming again. . . When he reached the window, she caught him on the pencil again and tossed him into the leaves.

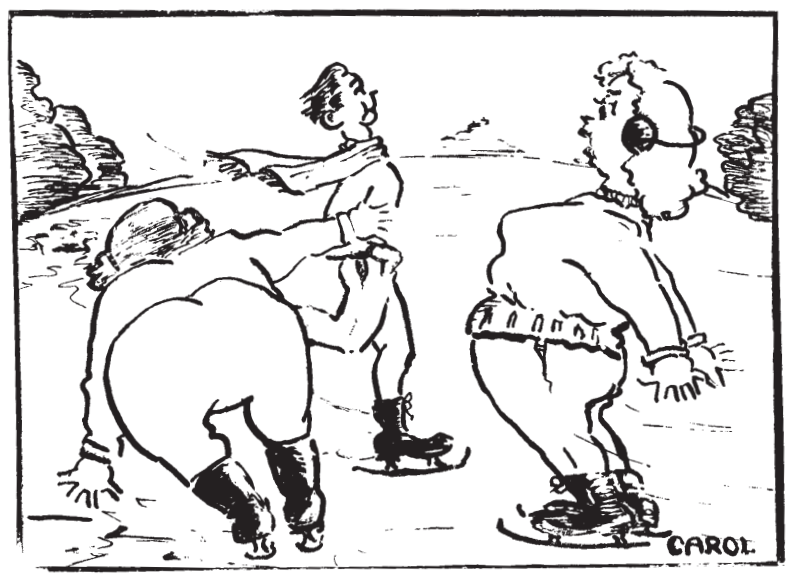
"You funny little tyke," she thought, "why should this window seem so much more alluring than those lovely leaves?"

She picked up her book once more and started to read, but, looking up again, without quite knowing why, she saw the small creature projecting himself towards the window sill. This time a slight frown crossed her forehead, and, a little less gently, she once more sent him back.

"How long" she wondered, "will it take for him to understand? He should know by now that I won't let him come in." With satisfaction she now noted that he seemed to have learned, for he was heading off at last, parallel to the window.

She settled down to read once more, when suddenly she became aware of a faint scratching on the papers just back of her shoulder on the sill. She caught her breath sharply. Yes, he was back. She found herself feeling intensely ir- ritated. He was in the room now! With a firm stroke of the pencil, she drove the small body, which in- stinctively curled itself into a tight little ball, out the window again. She leaned back and discovered that her palms were damp and cold and that her whole body was shaking. This was really too silly! All over a caterpillar. All over a caterpillar. A caterpillar all over — no, no, no, what was the matter with her? But there! That damnable rustling on the papers again! She turned, face blazing, lips compressed, and with a swift, decisive swing of her arm brought the slim, bright book of poetry down on the ledge and on the small furry creature, who, till that moment, had been regarding her with black, beadlike eyes. A wave of nausea shook her. Those eyes — or were they eyes? — did caterpillars have eyes? Hands trembling, she retrieved the book and, without once looking at it, threw it out of the window with all her strength. Then the shiny blue pencil catching her eye, (she was careful not to see the greenish-brown smudge on the ledge) she seized it and, with a kind of frenzy, hurled it out also — as far as it would go. With a sick feeling in her stomach she crossed the room and fell on the day-bed, still shaking.

ON THE VERTICAL — By Carol Steiner



Oh, Hortense! Wherever We Go You Always Bring Up In The Rear!

Case C-18

A Strange Story of Some Stranger People, by a Promising Young Author

By HOWARD MEUNIER

The orange juice was at the end of the fork next to the water with the pill, and the coffee was directly off the tip of the knife. The toast was baby brown and the eggs had eleven seconds more to boil. Bridgit Sugarbread knew from nineteen years experience that in one second it would be time to call her husband to breakfast. "Breakfast, Abel," she sang out in a young middle-aged voice. She turned off the stove and broke open her husband's two eggs. One of them had a chicken in it; so she gave it to the cat. It was one second to eight. The clock struck, Bridgit looked up, smiled brightly, and said "Good-morning, Abel face." He did not appear. Mrs. Sugarbread sat up very straight in her chair and wondered. "Well, what's the matter with him? This has been going on for nineteen years without a hitch. Where is he?" Never having had to deal with such a situation in the morning, she was at a complete loss. Should she call him again? Was the clock wrong? Was she dreaming? Was he dead perhaps? She rose and tiptoed to the bedroom.

Mrs. Sugarbread clutched her head. There he was on his knees peeking through the keyhole to the bathroom. "Abel, what are you doing? Do you know what time it is? You're not dressed and it's two minutes past eight." He did not move. "Abel, what is the matter?" There was still no answer. She went over to him. "Really Abel, I don't see what possesses you. If you're playing a trick on me, it's time to stop. I fail to see anything funny in a grown man's peeking through the keyhole of his own bathroom. Please get up and come to breakfast." She went back to the table and began to eat her egg. A loud crash sent her running back to the bedroom in time to see her husband swinging from the chandelier. "Abel!" Mrs. Sugarbread shrieked, "Are you bereft of brains? Have you gone berserk? Abel, come to me!" The unhappy wife tore her hair. "Herr Gott, what has happened to you, Abel?" Suddenly dropping to the floor he yelled "Cherchez la femme!" Bridgit was like stone as she watched him race through the hall and through the door with nothing on but the bunny boots she gave him for Christmas. She fainted.

When she revived, Mrs. Sugarbread could not remember what had happened. She looked at the clock which said nine. "Gabazonga!" she said jumping up, "I must have overslept. Where is Abel?" But when she went out and saw the table with half eaten food, everything came back to her. "What shall I do?" she asked herself over and over. She decided to call her husband's office. His secretary answered, "Sugarbread, Sugarbread, and Tinklepaugh. Good morning."

"May I speak to my husband, Miss Wildbrick, please?"

"Mr. Sugarbread is downtown with Mr. Tinklepaugh. Is there any message please?"

"Oh, no, I guess not" said Mrs. Sugarbread bewildered. "That is, I wanted to know — but then I guess you didn't or else you would have..."

"I'm afraid there must be a bad connection Mrs. Sugarbread. I don't seem to understand you."

"It's nothing. Thank you. Goodbye."

She sank back into her chair. She wondered if she had been dreaming. Was she losing her mind? Maybe she should see a psychiatrist. She had never gone to one and she did not know where to find a reliable man. She did not dare ask her friends about one, and so she looked in the telephone directory until she found one in a respectable part of town. She made an appointment for the afternoon.

As Mrs. Sugarbread entered the doctor's office, three women walked out on their hands. At any other time she would have been astonished, but her own plight made her tolerant. She was met by a very plump nurse who laughed excessively when she saw Mrs. Sugarbread and said, "Did you have an appointment with Dr. Goggin?" She said yes and gave her name. "Bridgit Sugarbread? Oh, yes," said the nurse laughing more, "I'll tell the doctor you are here. Just a minute please." She waddled through a door. "She certainly must be one of his patients herself" Mrs. Sugarbread thought. She waited, looking about the room. It was too sumptuous, infested with gewgaws and rococo lamps.

In the doctor's office, the nurse said, "There is that women out there who says her name is Bridgit Sugarbread. Obviously paranoic with hysterical tendencies." "Good" said the doctor, "send her in." The nurse went out and found Mrs. Sugarbread standing on the couch with a picture in her arms. "Oh, I'm so sorry. I was looking at this and it fell, that is, I wanted to see it more closely and . . ." "Oh, that's all right" said the nurse, "It always does that. I'll fix it. You just come in to Dr. Doggin." The nurse showed her in and, still laughing, left. "Why did that fool woman have to come in just then?" Mrs. Sugarbread said to herself. For a minute she waited for the doctor to speak and he waited for her to speak.

"I'm terrible sorry" she said finally "but the picture fell off the wall when I was looking at it. It was so clumsy." Dr. Goggin spoke with unctuous affected sympathy, "That's quite all right. No harm done at all. I must have it hung more securely." He paused for a time, then offered her a cigarette. Mrs. Sugarbread did not smoke but, without knowing why, she took one. He lighted a match which she blew out on the first puff. "So sorry" said the doctor. He lighted three others before she succeeded in getting a light. She did not want it but did not dare withdraw. After dropping the cigarette on the floor she said, "I'm afraid I'm not making a very good impression, but something terrible has happened to me. I didn't know

The author on his way to work

Esquire, Inc. 1945

what to do so I just took the telephone book and took your name because you were in a respectable part of town and then I called you up right away because I think if something isn't done soon, something horrible will happen and I don't know what I'm going to do about it so I just decided to look in the telephone book for someone who lived in a respectable part of town." Dr. Goggin could hardly catch the words as they flew out of her mouth. He wrote on his pad.

"I understand you perfectly" he said. "Just take your time and relax. What seems to be the trouble?" She told him all that had happened in the morning.

"You say you were on the bed when you woke up and he was gone?"

"Yes, but the trouble is I don't know what to think. Did it happen or was it all a dream?"

The doctor thought for a while. "Have you any idea yourself if anything has been troubling your husband. Is his health all right?"

"No" said Mrs. Sugarbread, "That's just it, he has been just the same all these nineteen years. If he had ever done anything like this before I would not be so worried, but I know everything he does. He does exactly the same thing every day. He's just not the type to swing on chandeliers. Oh, Dr. Goggin, what shall I do? I'm desperate."

Dr. Goggin took her hand. "I know how you feel and I know just how to help you. You need a complete rest. Go to the mountains."

"But Dr. Goggin," said the startled woman, "I'm perfectly all right. It's my husband I'm worried about."

Dr. Goggin smiled faintly. "Obviously you're very much disturbed. Everything will be taken care of. I know just the place. You are a very sick woman."

Mrs. Sugarbread jumped up. "But I'm perfectly all right! You're completely mistaken. It's my husband. What has happened to him?"

"Try to be calm, Mrs. Sugarbread, everything will be taken care of. I'll get in touch with your husband. Even a few hours delay may mean a complete breakdown. Just leave everything to me."

Mrs. Sugarbread grabbed hold of Dr. Goggin and shook him. "Can't you understand, you idiot, I'm all right. What are you trying to do to me?" The nurse oozed silently into the room. She went over to Mrs. Sugarbread and held her arms gently but firmly. "Just come with me, I'll take care of you." Mrs. Sugarbread whirled around and shrieked, "You take your hands off me!" She looked at the two faces which were staring at her. "Help, help," she yelled, running from the room. Dr. Goggin saw her going down the street, and stopped by a policeman. He rushed out and explained that she was his patient. "I shall have to take her to my place in the mountains," he said, calling a taxi. "Apparently she has delusions that men are pursuing her."

Tired

By RALPH A. BALDA

We are tired and we are young. We have travelled many lands and crossed many bodies and thought many ideas. And we are tired.

We have seen our elders and they are tired. We have seen all the corruption of lying and hate. We have smelled all the stenches of latrines and foxholes. We have seen the blood and the bones. We have seen the guts and the legs. We have seen all the harlots and pimps. We have seen all the niggers and coons. We have seen all the slums and drunks. We have seen all the breasts and wombs. We have seen the tears and prayers. We have seen hunger and sorrow. We have seen the bomb and the crater. We have seen the gun and the corpse.

Yes, we have seen everything that rots. We are not kidding ourselves. It's all there and always will be. We are tired of those who tell us different. We are tired of clean words and clean living. We are tired of teas and ladies. We are tired of flags and speeches. We are tired of statesmen and diplomats. We are tired of compromises and handshaking. We are tired of the make-believe we are fighting for. We are tired of America and Germany, of Russia and Britain. We are tired of the production figures and sweating pores. We are tired of the "How are you?" conversations. We are tired of the endless tasks and the endless sleeps.

Is there no other way?

Will we always be tired? Will we always be full of hates and lies and hypocrisy and make-believe? Will we always eat the dirt from under our boots. . . . Always swim in the sweat of our bodies. . . . Always struggle in the mud?

Yes, we have to admit that we are tired, for it is a part of our mess called life. And the sooner we see it, God Damm it, the better off we'll all be.

Is Nature Evolution?

By PHILIP K. ISAACS

Throughout the history of the world there have been those who advocated changes in the general mode of living, radicals, while opposed to these were the conservatives, or status quo proponents. Through the combination of these forces has come about a steady evolution of ideals and methods which constitute what we call progress. One may stop to consider what would occur if there were no element tending to retard the revolutionists; "unlimited advances in all fields" says the radical. This would undoubtedly be true, although in my opinion, all present entities would be outmoded the next instant, resulting in complete chaos. The question then seems to be where to exert the controls of conservatism. Thus a graph of progress when a radical step is taken would be an easy slope, then a sharp incline, followed by an almost level portion. An evolutionary process, when plotted, is a series of steps so small that a straight, sloping line results. When one is superimposed on the other we usually find that both the beginning and end are coincident.

The first may be compared, in its effects, to a block-buster exploding while digging a haphazard crater in the process of devastating a large area. The conservative method may be symbolized by workmen digging the pit exactly to specifications, that is, accomplishing the same task better, without the undesirable by-products of the first. Of course the advantage of speed may be brought out; however, stronger forces of conservatism must be employed to check the over-accelerated "progress" of the radical system.

A modern classic example of violation of natural evolution is the accelerated college program. The four-year system had evolved over a period of many years through the process of trial and error, and had become a stable institution agreed upon by all. When the world conflagration came upon us there resulted a sudden demand, that is, a temporary request, for a radical change in the fundamental of progress — education. Thus a non-evolutionary change for reasons other than that for the benefit of education itself was considered by all acquainted with it to be a failure.

We must realize that this world is no more than what its constituent—the people—make it. If these individuals are all given a liberal education embodying all points of view in terms of their own present standards, they will perceive both the object and methods of their desires; hence progress will take its natural course. In such a community, where educational policies are determined by altruistic motives alone, artificial progress or radicalism, will be, and is, comparable to trying to speed up a train by pushing on the seat in front of you.