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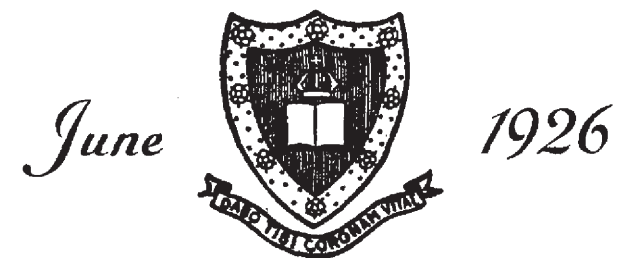
MESSENGER

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The
MESSENGER
ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE



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SHERWOOD ANDERSON

On Reading Keat's "Ode to a Grecian Urn."

O Muse—whose power bade great poets sing
Of Grecian urns with sculptor's magic art
Thereon impressed to vividly impart
To Fancy, flying on a blithesome wing,
Of Saturnalia and endless Spring,
Of Pleasure greatest while yet in the heart.
How came so sweet a song to get its start,
And then unfolding, leave us marvelling?
Thou peerless child of Beauty, never die,
But lift the turbid hearts of men to thee.
Then will they praise and joyfully decry
The thoughts that for a time they could not see.
O raise me also to that wished-for sky
Wherein the fountain of my joy shall be.

George V. Moser.

I HAVE been thinking about this fellow for several days and have come to no definite conclusions about him. Perhaps some of his inconsistent temperament has been imbedded in me. Perhaps the vein of uncertainty, of futility, running through all of his books, has taken hold of me. Perhaps, I, too, am endeavouring hopelessly to tell a story. At any rate I am in a deep muddle and in consequence I shall relate just those elements in the work of Mr. Anderson which have impressed me emotionally. Intellectually, as usual, I have conflicting content, but am formless.

The question of sex, of men and women, set forth in a prolific manner, has both impressed and depressed me. The feelings of adolescent youth, the aching desires accompanied with a nameless dread of what is to come are treated exhaustively. The sex impulse is broadcasted as a sin. It is but the *asserted brutality of the male against the female. No good comes of it.* We are conceived and born by sin, by sin only. And the young girl hearing this from her mother, runs madly out into the country, seeking to escape herself, everything.

It is rather difficult to convey to any extent the disjointed atmosphere of Mr. Anderson's ideas about sex. He reaches, in a frenzy, for some explanation, but always, it eludes him. He paints lurid pictures of men and women but cannot extricate them from the mire. He contradicts himself repeatedly in what few solutions of the sex question he demonstrates, but even these few are but a means to an unknown end. Unhappiness is the only consistent feature of sex in Mr. Anderson's novels. I feel strongly as I read them. I am duly struck by the ideas therein, but always I am convinced of something beyond which has yet to be reached by this passionate "hit and miss" system.

Anderson writes of the middle west; of the farming country; of the small factory towns; and of Chicago. He has no heroines or heroes in his stories. He never writes of "great people." He tries to express life as it is among the simple folk, who are products of the clod. He himself was such a product, having been born in the soil. The inroads of the industrial system which he depicts, are the inroads which he himself experienced. So these dull, uninteresting folk who make up the backbone of America, are his friends, his relatives, and sometimes the ramifications of himself.

He paints with telling strokes, the effects of the modern rush of civilization upon his people. The sordid surroundings of the factory workers, the grim ugliness of Chicago, the bleak, barren aspect of the villages are constant objects of his observation. Labor exists under the terrible monotony which drives men mad. The work is monotonous, the life is monotonous, all contains that sameness which makes animals of us all. The toiler characters of Anderson are silent. They see nothing but blackness ahead of them. Life is but a process of stagnation. All beauty has been ground out by the wheels of the machine, efficiency and smoke taking its place. I felt this almost as if it were happening to me. I saw the steady growth of despair and realized that it could not be stopped. The author offered no suggestion, because there is none, until a great change occurs in the character of America.

Mr. Anderson's "white collar" characters are in much the same condition as his workers. They see nothing ahead of them. They see themselves continuing in the same routine for life and it causes them to act in strange ways, to run off, to commit murder, anything to relieve the tediousness of existence. Most of them desire to express themselves in a nameless way. They write reams of "stuff" which other people regard as insane gibbering. They leave their wives and spend months, often years, in wandering about the country, seeking an explanation. Of course, they never find it because the writer himself has not found it. But the unrest, the lull before the storms in the lives of the civilized are truly depicted and I, impressionable as I am, felt as they, and put my hands before my face.

Somehow, it seems to me, Mr. Anderson turns to simplicity itself as the road to happiness. He writes of the negro who is "kinder to boys, I don't know why" and often attributes to him more humane qualities than to the white. In his soul the black turns away from the material things. Clothes and food are his only needs. He has that love of boys and of horses which elevates a man above his fellows. He croons in the glow of the sunset, lying in the fragrant hay, and is happy. Often there is the mysterious element, particularly in the laughter of the negro. He is shown as coming from a different and more natural civilization than ours, where "the things that count, count," and in his dark laughter shows his laughing contempt for a superior race which refuses to obey the dictates of nature. It seems to me that the negro and more particularly the small boy, is symbolic to Anderson. I think that these two, in their carefree rounds, are meant to indicate to us the paths we ought to follow. The little fellows see the beauty of life. A lump comes into their collective throats at the sight of a thoroughbred. They know which horse is going to win the race, but they don't care about capitalizing their information. In fine, boy and negro express that emotional life which it is murderous to stifle. WE in our pseudo-intellectual course, construct masks with which to cover ourselves and refuse to let the emotions play their part. WE are afraid of what people will say. It is an overdevelopment of the mental, to the great detriment of the emotional, the spiritual, phase. At any rate, my stricken conscience reaped such an idea from "The Egg."

What brings these things so strongly home is the constant autobiographical element in Anderson's stories. WE feel that he is telling his own experiences, or those of his friends. The element of fiction is consequently forgotten and reality presents itself in full force. These tales are the echo of the millions of voices which they describe.

Mr. Anderson is original in his style in so far as he has cast literary tradition to the winds. He describes the lives of men exactly as they happen. He is true in that respect. But the daily actions of most men in detail are apt to be very uninteresting, and so it is with these stories. A list of the true succession of occurrences is always dull. It is only the artificial construction of events which holds the eye. That is why plays "don't happen." I am not decrying the work of Mr. Anderson. I am only relating a personal reaction.

There is a certain virtue in the inclusion of every act from dusk 'til dawn and vice versa, because there is no logical reason why such things should be omitted. Outside of that there is no pressing need for discoursing on the "po po." WE all know it is there, and it is fairly certain that

there is no great uplift to be brought about by describing it. Of course with the intricacies of sex, detail might aid in solving the problem.

Anderson has a passion for interpreting life as it is in America, also a passion for detail. I do not think that he will succeed in the former undertaking because he seems to lack that propensity for remembering and tranquilly relating his experiences. *His emotions fill his writing and as they are never inconstant so is his writing inconstant.* I have felt the same way myself, filled up to the brim with something which I could not express until I had cooled off and had time to think.

What I consider to be some of the best portions of Mr. Anderson's stories are his word pictures. For me they are the only things that kept me reading the "Story Teller's Story." There is a beauty in them which impressed me deeply. At times the use of words is remarkable. These two facts are original so far as I am concerned. I know nothing of literary criticism. All I know is whether or not I feel a beauty in things, or whether the thoughts contained appeal to me. Structural and picknick criticism are beyond my pale. I am told that Mr. Anderson's style is very poor, but I am in no position to agree or disagree.

There are other elements which, I suppose, ought to be considered here. However, I shall not go into them. I do not intend to force myself into intellectuality. I am merely trying to express the effect of these books on my emotions. After all that is why they were written. Any book written with a purpose has to be such, else the majority would not act on the purpose.

In fine, although confused, I feel that the perusal of these books has been worthwhile. Beneath the jumble of conflicting words and word pictures I feel that there is something good, which someday will be brought out, probably not by Anderson, perhaps by myself or some other. In that case the stories were worthwhile, because they gave an impulse which in the end may bring about some good among the bad.

Paul Titus, '26.



Metals and Shears

Mona is a lily gold
On a slender stalk,
Swaying with the gentlest breeze
And dancing in the sun.

Raquel is a gleaming blade,
O, so cold to touch!
Tempered with a fire gone out—
That yet may flicker once.

Ada is a tawdry wench
All in cloth and gold,
Nails and voice both manicured
To hide her claws.

Barbara is a panther
Gliding silently . . .
She yawns and stretches, spots her prey—
Then alert, she purrs.

Mercine is adorable,
Frankincense and myrrh—
As honey-bees to linden trees,
Men are drawn to her.

Samson is a conqueror,
Fights the world alone;
Let one of these but cross his path—
His hair is shorn.

E. N. V.

THE LEGEND OF THE P. G. C.

THE deification of the Pea-Green Codfish came to pass with interesting attendant circumstances.

The Kingdom was in dire straits. War threatened on all the borders and there was nowhere to turn for assistance. The Paladin had been slain recently on some far quest, and without the Paladin the Royal Army was decidedly second rate. The Magician had just become interested in spiritualism and refused to be bothered. The obvious alternative, of course, was to consult the Oracle, but the Kingdom boasted no oracle.

Something had to be done and all looked to the Counsellor for advice as to what it should be. The Counsellor had never failed them, nor did he do so this time. With his usual astuteness he did the only thing which could possibly save the situation: that very night he beheld a vision.

THE VISION

(As related by the Counsellor.)

And while I wander in the place of dreams,
There sounds close by my ear a voice which seems
To whisper: "The Pea-Green Codfish alone
Can save the Kingdom and the Royal Throne."

Then there was great rejoicing and everybody seemed to consider the matter settled. There was one question, however, which the Jester wanted to ask, but he decided not to do so until the feast which was to be held that evening in honor of the Counsellor was an assured fact. When the banquet was over, the Jester stood up. "Where," he asked pointedly, "does the Pea-Green Codfish dwell?"

Just as consternation was about to reign, the Counsellor arose and drew the Magician's book of addresses from his pocket. "I thought it well to send for this," was his prefatory remark. "Now hear this:

WHERE THE FURTHEST SEA ABIDES
THERE THE P. G. C. RESIDES.

"Please don't ask me which is the Furthest Sea," he continued, "because I don't know any more about it than you do, but it stands to reason that one of them must be."

This sounded logical even to the Astrologer, and so it was decided that the P. G. C. should be paged in each of the seven seas. In matters of this sort there is no use taking chances.

The experiences of the six who went to the hither seas are interesting but unfortunately irrelevant here and therefore this is the only reference to them that shall be made. Our hopes and fears are naturally concentrated around the person of the *Seventh Adventurer, he who found the object of his search.*

THE GESTE OF THE SEVENTH ADVENTURER

(As related by the Troubador.)

The Seventh, (a valiant hero he)
For that he loved his King and God,

Adventured to the Furthest sea
To seek aid from the Pea-Green Cod.

He rode there on his swift, white horse
Which bore the name of Nonchalant
Because it could run night and day
And never a pant a single pant.

And his good sword he quickly ran,
With sure and cool intent to slay,
Through each foolhardy beast and man
That tried to bar his onward way.

The silver sea
. orange
. piscatorial . . .
.

(One will regret to learn that the manuscript is imperfect at this point and that this entire stanza, therefore, is indecipherable.)

And high above the water's swish
A yell so loud and long he blared—
"What ho, the Pea-Green Codfish!"—
That the moon turned 'round and stared

When It drew near to him he said:
"Oh, Codfish of a light green hue,
Extermination threatens us,
What you think we'd better do?"

The codfish hemmed and hawed a while,
And then it gave a knowing wink—
"I'll tell you what will cramp the style
Of those that threaten you, I think.

"Just teach them Christianity,
And they will never want to fight.
I hate gratitude, young fellow,
So please don't mention it; good-night."

As a matter of fact no one knows to this day whether the suggested panacea would have been effective or not, although nobody in the Kingdom doubted it for an instant. The infallibility of the Counsellor's visions are a tradition.

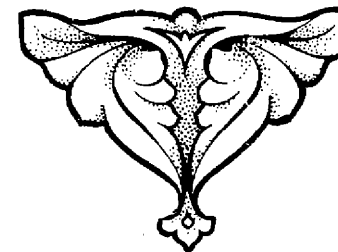
You see when the Seventh Adventurer returned, His Majesty was so pleased with him that he made him Paladin, and that, of course, restored the morale of the Royal Army. Indeed, their esprit de corps was rejuvenated to such an extent that they promptly vanquished all the opposing armies.

After the Big Celebration the first royal act was to deify the Pea-Green Codfish. Its advice had done them no good, but that, they argued logically enough, was not his fault; they hadn't followed it. Then, too, if

there had been no such animal, the Seventh Adventurer would not have won the right to be Paladin, and without the Paladin—oh their reasoning was unanswerable. Besides, they placed implicit faith in the Counsellor's visions.

In view of all they owed to the P. G. C., it was rightly held to be indelicate to eat codfish, an act of deference which most people would have considered sufficient in itself. But not so His Majesty's subjects. Half-way measures do not satisfy them. A law was passed which made it illegal to serve *any* species of fish at any table within the borders. And that, no doubt, is one of the reasons why They of the Kingdom are so happy.

John M. Myers, '28.



VERGIL AND HIS ROME

IF I were to ask you college students what pained you most in your studies, I am certain a majority would say Virgil and his Aeneid. The college man is too near to his first agonies over a cruel Latin vocabulary and a complicated syntax to appreciate fully the worth and importance of Vergil's poetry. He reads it like so much punishment and is moved only to irritation that it should ever have been written. He thinks of Vergil as a fiend who delighted in creating a perfect instrument of torture and confusion. He condemns the divine poet as he stumbles through his translation and robs both himself and the poetry of a richness and pleasure which are unequalled in the world of literature. He fails to see in the book an interpretation of a man like himself who thought, and worked, and failed, and triumphed.

My intention in addressing you tonight, is primarily to present a humanistic viewpoint of Vergil and his work in advancing Roman unity and strength. If I can succeed in drawing your attention to the purpose of the poet, perhaps you will think of him as a man and a fighter, more like yourself than like a marble bust.

Vergil is one of the most intensely interesting specimens of the weakness and strength of a human being that has ever existed. He was born on a farm and always loved farming with more than the ordinary passion. He looked like a farmer—tall, gaunt, awkward, and blundering. He talked like a farmer in a stuttering and confused voice. His fellow-Romans laughed at his unurbane appearance and figure. And yet, with all these qualifications, he never made a successful farmer. He could sing the beauties of the Italian countryside in its changes of foliage and birds and skies and declare these the simple joys of his heart. He could tell accurately how to plant trees and vines and how to breed and raise cows and bees. But we have no record that he devoted much time to agriculture and its dirty work, except as a summer's pastime.

He was lured away from his father's farm and all its delights to the great and expanding city of Rome—then the mistress of the world.

We think of Rome too much as a city, superabounding in severe white marble columns and inartistic statuary, like a modern cemetery, and overpopulated by bald headed men in white togas who were always busy in killing their relatives or writing naughty verses for the perennial discomfort of college athletes. We forget that Rome was as lively, as colorful, as deliciously wicked, as provincial, as gay, and even as drab, as our New York. It had, perhaps, more allurements for the young man who wanted to go wrong and more ways for the proverbial butter and egg man to waste his easily and quickly gained fortune than our own funny metropolis. It had all the awkwardness of a city which had grown too suddenly. Rome had become the dominating power in the world. But she was like a great mother who had both indulged and abused her own children. She needed some means of uniting a divided family and healing its many wounds. The period preceding Vergil and Augustus had been one of constant warfare and bloodshed, at home and abroad. She had weathered almost disastrous internal affairs. Slaves and freemen, soldiers and senators,

had risen in revolt and killed each other as easily as undesirable vermin. Her citizens had eagerly conquered a world and were intoxicated with victory. They needed some adjustment to peace times—something to keep their minds and hands away from blood and swords. They had forgotten the virtues which *had made them strong. They had lost much of their national morality, and were behaving like spoiled children. They had abandoned their simplicity of living and adopted every absurd fashion which they saw. They ate too much, drank too much, and played too much. They did not remember that their grandfathers had ploughed fields and planted vineyards and raised pigs, when they now sat in expensive clothes at golden tables and cried to their crowds of slaves for "More and then "More."* Rome was losing her ardent patriotism, her love for the city, her whole-some devotion to duty and religion, her high standards of honor, and "all that was meant by Roman virtue." Once, Romans died rather than sacrifice a principle and now they were wasting away in wanton jests.

"The Roman world had been racked and was bleeding to death. There was a material and moral bankruptcy. The task was to save all that was possible out of the general wreckage."

Augustus had succeeded in making himself head of a precarious empire. He was weak in many ways, perhaps a little dull at times, and somewhat fickle and childish. He played to the mob and boasted like a strutting boy. Yet he had a strong personality and could see that largely within himself lay the possibilities of directing Rome and Italy, and thereby saving the world. He believed with all his soul in the strength of money and armies in creating nations; but he knew that sometimes men needed something even more powerful than these to lead them. They needed an inner strength and a sword of the spirit.

Vergil was Augustus' friend and to him the Emperor, consciously or unconsciously, gave the task of building a nation and redeeming a people by the vigor of his poetry. Poets sometimes advance publicity and create empires far more successfully than all the rotarians, and capitalists, and even college students in the world. They can understand with a god-like power what goes on in the hearts and souls of men. They can see what moves them to victory. They can draw out the meanings and powers from chaos. They can guide a world to progress and achievement by their idealism.

Vergil had already shown in his poems, "The Eclogues" and, "The Georgics" that he loved Italy. Like a true farmer, he never fully recovered from his dislike of the city and its manners. It is amusing and perplexing to think of a man who was in many ways alien to a great city and perhaps always a little afraid of it, exerting an uncanny influence, quietly and persuasively, to lead its men as he might lead cows into the pastures of peace. A movement had begun on the part of Augustus and other intelligent Romans to entice the soldiers and peasantry away from their urban luxury. By soft living and by *questionable pleasures they were growing weak. They were losing the hardiness of that rugged life which had helped more than anything else to make Rome supreme. Italy, which had once been a garden, was turned into a desert.*

Vergil labored with all his energy to picture the delights of the Italian countryside and to contrast it with the monotony and insincerity of the city. He told of the joys of farming, and forestry, and vine-raising, and bee-keeping, the contentment and enjoyment of an outdoor life, the dignity and manliness of labor. In addition, he presented a scientific guide for getting

the best results from the worst soil and the other difficult jobs of the hard working farmer. The difference in modern sentiment towards poetry might incline us to laugh at the boldness of this endeavor. But Vergil succeeded in increasing the morale of the Romans, in giving them a new trust and confidence in themselves, in emphasizing things they had forgotten. He had already awakened them to a consciousness of the wealth of Italy and her possibilities.

Vergil had won for himself the name of being the greatest of living poets. He was destined by a greater work to place himself in the highest ranks of all poetry for all times—a prophet and a leader and an interpreter of an empire's greatness. He was to inspire men to build on an old foundation the firmest structure that mankind has ever made—the force of which has impressed itself on, and molded to its shape, all western civilization.

When Vergil walked in the streets of Rome and went in and out of the temples, the markets, the forum, and the circus, he saw every indication of her weakness and strength. The motley population, the grandeur of public buildings, its splendor, the squalor, the sordidness of a city which drew men of all nations to her, declared that Rome was a mother and Rome was a seducer. It seemed to represent in its vast organization the extremities of human virtue and human vice. Glorious Rome, the Alma Mater, had been deified in the loving praises of her great men. She could conquer the world by her armies, control it by her religion, dominate its culture by her language, and bind its allegiance by her laws. Her power seemed to stretch beyond men's imaginations. And yet side by side with her tremendous forces were the utmost depravity and sensuality, greed, and selfishness, and lust. They began to believe that humanity could be exploited and bled for the delight of preying parasites and the emptiness of a cheap orgy.

Vergil loved his Romans too dearly to ignore the true state of things. Their vices and their foolishness afflicted the sensitive soul of the poet who had in himself the potentialities of a philosopher and a great moral leader. "The tears of things" saddened him. The high purpose of Rome to lead the world in progress and humanitarianism was being obscured. He was grieved to see that his countrymen who had unnumbered possibilities in developing their strength should have been weakened by material success and turned into ways of dissolution and sudden decline. They were the heirs of a glorious civilization. They had descended from a race of gods and heroes. Rome had been much in the past and might be even more in the future. She was too noble and too worthy to be wasted by a forgetful and foolish generation. Every true Roman was proud of her history—the long fight for liberty and the republic and the extension of her prowess over all nations. If only the people might be recalled to a pride in that past and a confidence in the future, Rome and Italy could be strengthened into an invincible nation and the empire would last for centuries. If the old ideals of devotion to duty and religion might be reawakened, perhaps in a new form, Rome would have nothing to fear from internal or external enemies. She could carry on in her magnificence and sustain herself in her glory.

Vergil set himself to the high purpose of saving Rome. He wanted to call her back to the ideals which had brought her from a little hillside fortification to the seat of a world empire. A great epic poem would accomplish this.

He spent many years in drawing his plans for the epic so that it might stand as an interpretation of the inner life of man and show forth a man who combined in himself the ideal hero, the patten in war and peace, the king, the warrior, the priest, the son and the father. He must personify the best in Roman idealism—"pietas"—devotion to duty and religion at whatever personal cost. This poem must unite Rome and Italy and strengthen the bonds of a growing nation. It must connect Roman and Greek civilization. The Roman patriot resented the idea that all that was good in Rome has been transplanted from Greece. He was, of course, entirely right. The ideals and the civilization of Rome were distinct from the Greek and had in matters of government and law developed far beyond the sister country. The poem must celebrate victories, and conquests and feats of heroes to arouse the justifiable pride of the present generation in an unexcelled past. Romance and love and the tender virtues must also be introduced. It must connect its men and women with larger issues, the laws of nature and fate, and the decrees of Providence. It must exalt the new regime of Augustus and lend color to his ideals of peace, justice, reconstruction, ordered liberty, and beneficent rule. It must show the ideal rule—the father of his nation and king of his own people. And all must be tinged and interpreted with religion and philosophy—"opening windows into the invisible world and kindling a pilot light for the future."

Aeneas is made, from the very beginning of the epic, the personification of *pietas*. The hero embodies within himself the spirit of Rome—Rome, a civilizer of mankind, a beneficent power, source of a strong but wise government, the mother of great men and great movements. Aeneas must contend against hostile gods, unprincipled enemies, and uncontrollable natural elements. Within himself he must battle with a constant recurrence of sadness, despair, and doubt. But these are all overcome so long as he remains true to *pietas*. He must be alone, the noble king, the brave warrior, the faithful priest, the loyal son, and the wise parent. He must be ready in war to lead his men to victory—and in peace to teach and guide them in reconstructive pursuits. Throughout his long and arduous life, Aeneas displayed the devotion to duty and religion, the necessity of moderation, the awfulness of rebellion and violence, the blessings of peace, and the wicked insanities of war.

I need not repeat to you the details of the poem since many of you know them only too well. A few more words and I shall have finished.

Vergil knew that he had done much in "The Aeneid" for Rome. If Romans were to achieve their full greatness, they must be willing to serve humanity rather than themselves. They must learn justice and peace and ordered liberty and prove themselves true sons of the gods.

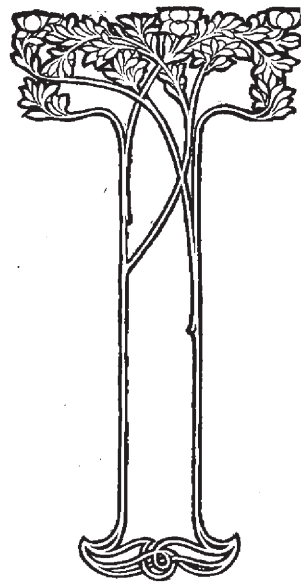
Vergil did succeed in arousing the national virtue and helped more than any one force in making Augustus' reign a golden age of peace and prosperity. Romans were revived to a new feeling of patriotism and received a new impetus to achievement. Rome was strengthened and Italy united into an empire which endured for centuries. She has left her impress on the world in the institutions of law and government, religion and language, art and culture. She proved herself equal to the call of her divine poet.

But the message of Vergil and his idealism, his insistence on *pietas*, his perfect understanding of men and their emotions, his strong and benign philosophy, his faith in humanity and his trust in Providence, have not been confined to any one nation or empire. Vergil has endured

through the centuries as a prophet and a teacher, an interpreter and a guide for all men.

Mackail says, "We stand now, as Vergil stood, among the wreckage of a world ;he can give light and guidance to us in the foundation of a new world Fpon its ruins. Mankind is above all human. What it needs above all not in education only but in the whole conduct of life is humanism; consciousness of its own past, faith in its own future."

George A. Shrigley.



The Ethical Shakespeare

CONTRARY to those critics who ardently believe that there are no moral and ethical implications in the works of Shakespeare, we would offer such evidences which should prove that a subtle philosophy pervades and undermines all his works.

Shakespeare can readily be numbered among the greatest ethical teachers, because of the tremendous impressions which can be drawn from his works. This ethical spirit cannot fail to find an answering response in man's heart, because one can feel that in showing life, the great bard had not a set purpose of teaching morals, except as our daily life, with its mortal love and hate, showed them. To the student, the overwhelming ethical consequence of Shakespeare cannot be evident. Of course it is recognized that the famous poet thought first of his art, and that the moral and ethical significances, if any, are subject to that art.

Of his feeling towards religion, we can safely say that the man disregarded all dogmas of religious doctrine. With the exception of a few jests made upon Puritanism, and upon other faiths, there is no trace of ridicule, or even revolt. Although not an agnostic, he limits our knowledge of God, who is revealed in and through human nature, and he likewise claims absolutely nothing for the life beyond.

We must not, however, in our examination of the characters be too harsh and exacting, for then how can we call King Henry anything but blasphemous, when he says to Falstaff with almost spiritual emotion, "I know thee not"! We must recognize this general trend towards a morality made up solely of nature and of reason: a not inexorable Fate: and a spontaneous human liberty.

Motives, or rather, the points of view from which conduct can be approved or disapproved, may first be surveyed.

Love and Pity are admitted as mighty impulses. They are not merely recognized as forces of ordinary and extra-ordinary life, but they are to be thought of as incitements to service, and as restraints upon passion and selfishness. The character of Isabella in "Measure for Measure" best illustrates this point. Isabella suffers, and even denies her own being. In the full moral connotation of the word, she is a saint, who writhes in the war of the will. Driven on by love for her brother, she accomplishes a magnificent service for him. In this case, however, it is necessary to define Honor, for should Honor have not restrained her from such impulsive acts? If we take the words of Falstaff, she is exonerated in that memorable explanation given in Henry IV, "Honor has no practical worth, and belongs to the dead rather than to the living." Orlando, too, in "As You Like It", forgets his rank with noble heartedness, and makes others forget it, solely through his human love, and passion. Another instance of the feeling of selflessness is Antonio. Although the Dauphin of the Court of France does tell the King, "self love, my liege, is not so vile a sin as self neglecting," yet we find Antonio in the "Merchant of Venice" offering himself completely in the place of Bassanio, love in this case being the driving power to heroic sacrifice, complete and generous.

In transcendentalism, in the scale of exalted excellence, and sublimated degrees of superiority, transcending the sphere of knowledge acquired by experience, we find:

Reason, as in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," is the power of correctly estimating values. Lysander in his discourse with Helena reflects that the "will of man is by his Reason swayed, and Reason says that you are the worthier maid." Here we have two alternatives presented, which are assigned relative worth by Reason. Again, we may note the injunction of Conrade in "Much Ado About Nothing." "It is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest." Frame in this case is interpreted to mean in order, by the Reason.

Loyalty, likewise, is expressed by Lysander in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," when he observes, "and then end life, when I end loyalty." One of the fine discourses on loyalty is given in "Richard II," when Mowbray indicts Bolingbroke in a fiery speech, concluding with the thought, "by the grace of God, and this mine arm, to prove him, in defending of myself, a traitor to my God, my King, and me!"

A very real conscience is felt. King Richard, tormented by his thoughts, cries out in his agony, "Have mercy, Jesu! soft! I did but dream a coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!" In fact, the whole outpouring of Richard reeks with self denunciation, culminating in, "I myself, find in myself no pity to myself. Methought the souls of all that I murdered came to my tent," and later, "the great King of kings hath in the tables of His law commanded that thou shalt do no murder." Could there be any stronger evidence that conscience was felt, and that it could rule the lives of men?

In "Henry V," we have Falstaff's full and complete repentance, when the former Mistress Quickly describes the death scene of the slowly sinking old reprobate, making "a finer end, and going away as it had been any Christom child." Certainly, a knave without malice, and a liar without deceit could not have left this world in such a manner without a stricken conscience.

But how to obtain a freedom of conscience? Only by truth, for in the words of Mowbray, "truth has a quiet breast." Freedom of conscience, then, is an absence of untruth.

The freedom of Man is limited, for once having willed, it is too late to retract. It is a combination of the choice of reason, and of action. "What I will not, that I cannot do." So Angelo tells Isabella, after her brother has been sentenced. Having willed and sentenced, it is too late to retract.

Happiness, it seems, is an absence of care, and as explained by Gratiano in the "Merchant of Venice," "you have too much respect upon the world: they lose it who but do it with much care." This absence of care, however, is not a lack of interest so much as an element of chance. Gratiano says later that "let my liver rather heat with wine than my heart cool with mortifying groans. Why should a man, whose blood is warm within, sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?" A care free, gambling, interest in life, and in the ambitions of life, constitutes real happiness.

Virtue is more difficult of explanation. Sir John of Gaunt in "Richard II," says that there "is no virtue like necessity." The steward in "All's Well That Ends Well" tells the Countess that "we wound our modesty, and make foul the clearness of our deserving when of ourselves we publish them." An excellent motto for the twentieth century!

The honour of Woman is found in "All's Well That Ends Well," where we find "the honour of a maid is her name: and no legacy is so rich as honesty." And then, as now, the admonition to girls was "beware of them: their promises, enticements, oaths, tokens and all those engines of lust." The eighteenth century "jelly bean!"

All moral judgements have their source in ideals of welfare; conduct, only in its relation to others is an object of morality. That is the grist of Shakespeare's mill of right and wrong.

"Every fault's condemned ere it be done." This thought from "Measure for Measure" sums up the idea of wrong doing. Lying where it is harmless is not a fault. This is brought out in "All's Well That Ends Well," when Helena disclaims any knowledge of Count Rousillon. Her denial is condoned because the situation could not very well allow admission without embarrassments, and perhaps, danger to the plot of the play. Truthlessness, where it is not dangerous or harmful to others, is thus excused. In like manner, we find in "Measure for Measure" the fraud practiced on Angelo excused by "the doubleness of the benefit defends the deceit."

Pity and mercy is linked up with justice. In "Measure for Measure," in answer to Isabella's plea, "yet show some mercy," Angelo replies, "I show it most of all when I show justice." And anyone not offering mercy has little chance of expecting merciful judgements in return, as the Duke tells "how shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?" And Shylock's statements, "what judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?" except that of being merciful!

It is decidedly wrong to interfere with the State, or with the authority of the State. After the attempt at the suicide of "King Henry V," the would be assassins are executed with the sentence "touching our person seek we no revenge, but we of our kingdom's safety must be so tender."

In the diverse nature of the "good," many things were sought after. Some seek Fame. "Let Fame, that all hunt after in their lives" as spoken by the King of Navarre in the opening lines of "Love's Labor Lost." Some seek after a good reputation. In "Henry IV," Mowbray describes the unattainable good as "the purest treasure moral times afford is spotless reputation: that away, men are but gilded loam, or painted clay."

The chief aim, it would seem then, is to stand well with those about us, enjoying a spotless reputation, and great fame, or renown. These things are valued as ends in themselves with a possible overlooking of the entire good.

A man's own standards are not necessarily the sole ultimate standard in determining his good. This is illustrated in Troilus and Cressida, with the words, "value dwells not in the particular will." "What's ought, but as 'tis valued?" That explains why Helen was kept. To persist in keeping her, extenuates not the wrong, but rather makes it more heavy. Hector in this case is truthful in that he could return her, but the Trojans, placing fame before character.

And there are also some who plead for self-sacrifice. "O, spare my guiltless wife and my poor children! Yet execute thy wrath on me alone" the Duke of Clairmont begs. But this would seem rather to be due to the pricks of conscience rather than to any concrete desire to do a positive good in the form of sacrifice.

Whatever we make it, King Richard beautifully solves the problem of the good when he says, "the apprehension of the good is but the greatest feeling to the worse."

What does Shakespeare teach about the nature of the ultimate reality? This is the most serious and most difficult question. Truly it can this time be quoted "to be, or not to be, that is the question." What is the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns? Because Shakespeare never indulges in a wholesale abuse of any sect of men, and never attacks any theological beliefs through their adherents, it is difficult to imagine just what the poet thought of the problem of the ultimate reality. He does exhibit beliefs by the best and wisest of his characters, from which we can deduce a vague outline of what he must have thought and meant.

In Prince Hal, possibly the most outstanding hero of the plays, we have devotion combined with a joyful trust in God. Evidently Shakespeare was convinced of the fundamentals of Christian theology and selected Hal from the Chronicles, transforming his character at the same time. And yet we have the Duke of Vienna, doubting and disbelieving in God, prepare Claudio for death with the prospect that it is only a deliverance from the evils of this life. Death was only a release, and no one knew what awaited on the other side. Think on Angelo's words of repentance, if such they can be called, when he says, "I crave death more willingly than mercy; this my deserving, and I do entreat it."

But what myriads of sentiments are contained in Hotspur's words, "O' gentlemen, the time of life is short!" In that short span, take courage, brave death, since "for our consciences, the arms are fair, when the intent of bearing them is just." In this brief struggle, live life to the brim. Does it mean the Epicurean idea, debased: eat, live, and be merry, for tomorrow we die? The modern Epicureanism, NO, but idealism as taught and practiced by Epicurus, YES!

Otto Faerber, '27.



Some of the Shows

WE are not in a position to attempt a criticism of the recent theatrical season in New York; for, aside from other reasons, we have not seen nearly all the plays produced. But since a good many readers of the Messenger are apt to be in town shortly after the appearance of this issue, perhaps some of them will be interested in the tips we can give on shows that we have seen and that are still running. Wherefore we beg to announce, in the order of their current advertisements, the following:

The Last of Mrs. Cheyney—The plot is trivial and hackneyed enough, but it is written as brilliantly as anything we know, and so well acted that it is hard to believe the players are not extemporising.

The Great Temptations—What humor there is savors of a smoking car, and most of the music is quite ordinary; but the Shubert's lavish settings and gorgeous or negligible costumes are done with a completeness that should satisfy anyone who cares for that sort of thing.

The Importance of Being Earnest—This is not a particularly striking revival, but it gets better as the play progresses, and the play does not need much help. A very pleasant evening, recommended as an antidote to History 8.

The Wisdom Tooth—We thought it was terrible; but it is only fair to say that we have found only two supporters. It is about a clerk who couldn't call his soul his own until his little-boy self showed him how. Written by one of the authors of "Beggar on Horseback;" and if you feel that it was the right one, apparently you can have a fine time.

Craig's Wife—We didn't grumble when it got the Pulitzer Prize. A very keen study of an utterly selfish woman who "plays safe" at the expense of everybody, and finally of herself. Very well done.

At Mrs. Beams—We had almost as good a time seeing this play as the author did writing it. A most respectable London boarding house finds reason to believe that its newest lodgers are a Parisian blue-beard and his latest victim. You would have to go to a lot of other shows to see as many good "character" parts.

One of the Family—An Adams emancipates himself from his women-folks. The material is a bit grim for the treatment it receives. If you don't mind the inconsistency you can go away feeling that you have had your money's worth of laughs and something to think about thrown in.

Square Crooks—Perhaps the title gives you some idea of what it's like. Every old trick is used, and it is rather hard to realize that it is not a vaudeville stage. All the same, you can have a lot of fun.

Cradle Snatchers—Without the tremendous vitality of Mary Boland's acting this play would probably be the nastiest thing that has ever been produced. As it is, it's quite bad enough. Very funny if you have a strong stomach.

Laugh That Off—We find we have to be rather defiant about saying we liked it. Old stuff, but cleverly put together. And it is funny.

Iolanthe—At last! Gilbert and Sullivan as it should be done. To all those who have suffered under the Shubert revivals, this production comes as a complete and satisfactory reward. The voices are splendid, the players act as well as sing, and the fairies don't look like chorus girls.

The Patsy—The heroine buys a set of books telling how to be the life of the party. She has always been a Cinderella, you understand, but now—. Claiborne Foster is attractive enough to get away with it.

Love 'Em and Leave 'Em—Johnny Weaver collaborating with one of authors of "Iz Zat So?" A picture of the denizens of Ginsburgh's Department Store which misses little of either the humor or the wistful drama of their situation. Florence Johns gives a remarkable performance.

What Every Woman Knows—We felt the same way about Helen Hayes doing Barrie; but we take it all back. Her Maggie leaves nothing to be desired, and her supporting cast not much more. We also discovered that the play acts much better than it reads.

The Vagabond King—No matter how much you have heard the music, there is still a thrill when you get it in the original setting. And the acting and setting measure up to the songs.

Bride of the Lamb—Alice Brady in a play of sex and religion. It starts strongly, but we found the combination of a murder, the reappearance of a long-lost wife, and the mad scene from Ophelia in the last act rather excessive.

The Great God Brown—The use of masks is more effective than seems possible, and the play is certainly one of the most worth-while in years. O'Neill is simpler and deeper than ever before. Whether you are interested in the theatre as a technical art or a social laboratory, you cannot afford to miss it.

Louis M. Meyers.

FRANCOIS VILLON

Dead bards are used as ladders by live ones in quest of fame,
And so I indite this, Francois, as long as you're fair game.

I

The power and beauty of mind were his, the tenderness and mirth,
To make him of that princely few—the Masters of the earth.

II

Self-pity drove him to commit the one great hideous joke,
For he touched off his own godhead and sent it up in smoke.

III

He let each blow of fortune mar the brightness of his dream,
And was but a mighty figure who could have been supreme.

I hope you do not mind, Villon, for this I stoutly swear:
That I never would have done it if I'd thought that you would care.

John M. Myers, '28.

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