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KETTLES

The violinist there—
the boy who needs a haircut, the boy who wears
horn-rimmed glasses because he has ruined his eyes
making sounds out of black dots and empty circles
sprouting tails and flagpoles—he is a born musician;
you can tell it by the deft swoop of his arm and the
boneless race and quiver of his fingers. Wood—
twisted gut—strands of horsehair—boneless fingers—
something more.

Take a look at the boy who pounds the copper kettles.
I wonder if you know—he is a musician too.
He can play the Ride of the Valkyries on the three
notes of his copper kettles.

Boom—boom—boom, rumble, thump and boom;
maybe you think you could play Lohengrin on the
tympani—maybe you think a copper kettle's got no soul.

He told me once that kettle drumming's just like
marrying three wives; you've got to pet and humor
them—you've got to tune them up and tone them
down—they grumble when it's cold and scream because
it's hot—you've got to know just how to handle
them. He showed me one and said its head was good—
it came from a big city. He showed me one that you
could kick to tame it down.

But something he forgot—you've got to beat a drum to
make it talk—I knew a man who beat his wife to
keep her still.

If you had three wives—had them in a mob—could you
make them talk at the right time and say just what
you wanted them to say? Could you do it with the
one you've got—or would have if you had one?

If you had three big copper kettles, could you play
the Prelude to the Meistersingers of Nuremburg?

—Dorothy L. Anderson.

AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE

By Audred Arnold

OLIVIA: Just think what I've discovered, Jay:
Today has not been lived before by anyone.

JAY: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, it has. Be logical, Olivia.
I have invited logic from your lips before.

OLIVIA: By whom save those in lands where sunlight
Glistens in the breakfast room a few hours earlier?
And that has something intricate to do
With latitude and longitude,
And I am not concerned with anything but here and now.

JAY: And toast and jam, and cream and sugar, if you please.
Those are my most immediate concerns,
If it is not indelicate to mention them.

OLIVIA: *(As Shirley, a pink peony of a girl of about eighteen enters, her peony-appearance due to the flush of sleepiness.)*
Ah, Shirley, there you are.
Whatever time did you get in last night?

SHIRLEY: *(Fluting her mouth into an apologetic kiss which she divides sparingly between her parents.)*
Not any time last night:
I came at three o'clock this morning.

JAY: Your mother was, just now,
Inveigling me with one of her ideas.

SHIRLEY: *(Logically.)*
Mommie, is there something that you want:
A coat, the car to use, avocados out of season,
That you are eloquent at breakfast time?

OLIVIA: *(Her strong-featured, highly-colored face drooping in resignation as her almost jointless fingers flow from her sleeves like shadows.)*
You are your father's child.
I might have known his ally was in you.
The day I gave you birth
You whimpered for his arms to take you.
You hated me for all the cold and cruel and usual things
I had to do for you.
You loved him for his seldomness,
His knack of celebrating you.

SHIRLEY: How can you say whose ally I may be
When I have heard not either argument or question?

OLIVIA: The question—such a simple one—is this:
Today has not been lived before by anyone.

JAY: Yes, Shirley, you have seen more of this day
Than either of your parents.
Tell us how hermetic is it?
How unapproachable from either side?

SHIRLEY: It is not unapproachable.
It is not truly new.
Each day is but the echo of tomorrow,
And the shadow of yesterday.
We color our tomorrows with our hopes,
If we are hopeful.
Or stain them with the fall of tears,
If we despair.

JAY: *(Disapprovingly.)*
You talk like one mumbling from a book,
Its pages written between dark covers.

SHIRLEY: *(Sensitively.)*
I don't remember what I read,
But I was reading.
I read from twelve to two last night
While waiting for the train.
I bought a periodical of stories,
But all I could decipher were my own thoughts.

OLIVIA: Your thoughts, my dear?
Your curly-petaled, brown-eyed Susan thoughts?

SHIRLEY: If you want to call them such.
But really, Mommie, they struck me more
As evil wasps within these flowers.

JAY: Have your breakfast, child. Do sit down. *(The servant appears with half a grapefruit.)*

SHIRLEY: You won't believe it, Mommie,
But your thought was my thought also.
At three o'clock this morning,
While I was riding home alone,
It came.

OLIVIA: What thought, my dear? Have we ever in your eighteen years
Shared a single thought?

SHIRLEY: We have not, and we have.
At times we've shared the universal, earthly thoughts
That even leaves and mold must think.

JAY: No wonder you came home alone,
And on the train.
In all my eight and forty years
I have not known a single youth
Who would consent to listen to such nonsense from a girl.

SHIRLEY: Emmett didn't listen.
Emmett left before today began,
For I was thinking
Of what use was Emmett
With his purple-lacquered hair,
And his purple-turnip mind.
And I was thinking of today,
Unlived before by anyone,
Save by those few who must live out in dread
All coming days,
And re-live in regret all days gone by.

JAY: I wish you'd eat your toast
And give up thinking things.
You'll spoil the brief composure of your face.

OLIVIA: Did he break your heart, my girl?
This Emmett-one?

SHIRLEY: What if he did?
I have forgotten it.

JAY: *(The telephone rings.)*
Shirley, it is for you.

OLIVIA: *(As Shirley departs.)*
Emmett, no doubt.

SHIRLEY: *(Returning, the peony-flush intensified.)*
You're right. It was.
I'm going to a matinee this afternoon
To make up for the musicale
I missed last night.

OLIVIA: You have forgiven him?

SHIRLEY: He has forgiven me.

JAY: *(Recapitulating.)*
I see. Today has not been lived before by anyone,
Save by those fools, ourselves, when we were young.
(He sends a reminiscent glance to Olivia as the curtain falls.)

CYNICAL SID

By EMMAJEAN STEPHENS

SIDNEY dropped his books on the soft sofa and sank dejectedly into the depths of the big blue chair before the fireplace. With his chin resting on his hand, his bulging blue eyes stared blankly at the crackling flames. It had been a hectic day, a humiliating day. The first thing in the morning he had punished a child for starting a fight on the playground and consequently had wasted a complete forenoon in trying to explain the reason for such action on his part to an angered, contemptuous mother. In an address that afternoon to the parents of the high-school students, he had somehow wandered into a lengthy harangue for which he could find no suitable ending, and once he had been almost completely overcome by one of his curious and not infrequent attacks of stuttering. He had filled in the embarrassing pause with a helpless waving of his arms in the air until his mouth had finally enunciated the words his mind had been too rapidly forming. He had detected the amusement in the eyes of many in the audience, and his ears still burned from mortification.

He was destined a failure. At eighteen he had dreamed dreams, had seen himself holding the keys to that door against which his imprisoned Self forever thundered. But all success had been deferred—the todays had worn no glamor; he never was, he was going to be; and suddenly he had awakened to find himself disgracefully swindled—a school teacher and uncomfortably poor. He remembered the time he had aspired to be a writer, a poet. He had read all the poets from Shakespeare to Kipling, lingering long on the romantic figure of Byron, somehow allured by his vagrant, unhappy life. During the anguish of his first amour, which had lasted less than a week, he had made a scrapbook filled with every poem he could find on the subject of love, decorating the margins with rather poor and sketchy drawings of girls with slender figures, blue eyes, long lashes and blonde locks. Then in a moment of disgust he had tried philosophy—Plato, Socrates, Bacon, Spinoza, Voltaire, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche — and the study had left him thoughtful and serious.

Following college, a year of inaction in France during the war working on telephone lines, an almost fatal attack of influenza and lingering convalescence, he had finally concluded that youth was the most interesting thing in the world and had become a school teacher. In search of a companion, he

had married a quiet but pretty little high-school girl only to find himself still very much alone. Now at thirty-two he was tired of living. He had found a poem scribbled in the corner of one of his student's notebooks entitled "World - Weariness" and dedicated to himself.

"He hates to seek repose at night
Beneath the snowy spread
Because he hates to lift his feet
And put them in the bed."

An amusing viewpoint, but after all, why live? Men were counterfeit. They went through life hoping that their true selves should never be discovered, optimists because they dared be nothing else, living in ruts, and when they scented danger, like the turtle they drew in their heads and called it humility. He was the same as other men. They were all alike.

A spark from the fire fell on the rug at his feet. He hastily picked it up and threw it into the fire, painfully burning his fingers.

"It's time to get ready for dinner," called a feminine voice from the kitchen. So he went to his room, washed his hands and combed his hair, parting it in the middle, brushing the colorless locks back into place. He carefully filed his fingernails. He cared for his hands meticulously; they were white with long slender fingers, and he was proud of them. He surveyed himself in the mirror—a tall body with shoulders stooped, his frame curiously bent, as though he had received a terrific blow in the stomach and had failed to straighten completely. For the thousandth time he noticed the shine of his blue serge suit.

"Dinner's ready."

The food on the table looked so tempting he even gave his wife a kiss on the cheek before he sat down. The steak proved to be unusually good, and he used both knife and fork to bestow it safely in his mouth. After all, life was life and he couldn't do much about it. What he needed he seemed to get, and if he didn't get it, it was probably because he didn't need it. He smiled at his wife across the table.

TOPSY-TURVY

All through her house the restless, jigging chairs
Pursued themselves. Even the pictures on
The walls wrangled; the curtains glowered like bears;
The grand piano scolded and upon

Its shoulders of mahogany a shawl
Of thick chenille upheld. The chiming clock
Pronounced a guffaw. Rugs both large and small
Scurried to and fro. A butter-crock

Held flowers. I found her home, a timid thing—
Embarrassment and haste were in her tread.
She dried her hands (still panting at my ring)
Upon her apron hem, and looked with dread

At me, as if she wondered who alive
Would interrupt her work so near to five.

—Audred Arnold.

A POINTLESS PARABLE

By Bert Evans

NOW I am aware that there **is** no such thing as a pointless parable, for it is the **point** that makes a parable a parable; but, nevertheless, **this** is a pointless parable because it is a parable **without** any point, and it **can't** be anything else.

It was very near to midnight. In his room, a student sat alone, silent and motionless; all was silent about the house, and all was silent in the blackness of night that pressed against the window of his room.

He was hunched over his desk. Papers were sprawled before him—papers smeared with ink and black with pencil marks. An open book at his right hand displayed a problem— a problem in mathematics.

It is needless to say that this problem was difficult. There is no need to explain the nature of the problem; it should suffice to suggest that it was difficult, incomprehensible—in the same way that Emerson in Greek would be incomprehensible to an illiterate Eskimo.

For a long while he had sat at his desk, scribbling, but half-heartedly; figuring, but without any hope and without any expectation of working the problem. He had had, at the start, even, no intention ever of finishing the thing. Yet, he reflected and realized, it must be handed in, completed and corrected, tomorrow. But tomorrow he would explain, as he had a hundred times before, that he had been unable, positively and absolutely unable, to get the thing, though he had worked at it diligently. And that reason would pass; it was all that was necessary, and all that he worked for.

"I give up. I can't get the thing."

He threw down his pencil, and pushed the jumble of papers off his desk so that they fell to the floor with a thump, a dull thump—like lead.

"I'm through. Who cares about the bloomin' thing, anyhow?"

And then, as he sat there, he began to wonder just why he could not get the problem. Was it stupidity? Was he incapable of doing it?

"No. I can't be stupid. It isn't that"

He leaned back in his chair to stretch his arms. By some chance he jarred the desk, and a book slid down and sprawled to the floor. He picked it up and looked at it. It was a biography of Tolstoi. He gazed at it, and slowly the dullness in his eyes was replaced by a brightness of understanding.

"Ah! I know now. I understand it all, now." He opened the book and looked at a picture of Tolstoi. "This old boy here couldn't work this problem. He would go mad. He wouldn't try, though, in the first place.

"Furthermore—why, look at Emerson. I'll bet old Emerson couldn't work this problem if he studied mathematics for forty years. Look at any of them —all of them—men with minds. A man with a mind could never get this thing; that has been proved by men with minds ever since there have been minds. Yes. That is why I can't work this. It is useless, senseless, for me to try."

He put Tolstoi back on the shelf, and thumped with his finger at the book of mathematics—on the horribly glaring problem on its page.

"Problem, I am done with you. You are low. You are of no consequence. You are a trifle—a small matter. My mind is too great—far too great ever to think any more about you. You shall remain un-worked and you shall **not** worry me."

Pleased, relieved, at this explanation —which he considered the only logical

one—he relaxed, and let his head fall upon the open book. For a moment he closed his eyes; for only a moment, he was thinking, and then he would go to bed.

He heard a harsh knock at the door. Without opening his eyes or raising his head, mechanically, he called, "Come in."

He heard the squeak of the door as it opened, and then the fall of a heavy, slow foot behind his chair. He heard the door shut with a slight click behind the newcomer.

"Well." It was a very deep voice that spoke—something that echoed and reverberated, as a word does when it is spoken in some gigantic, empty hall.

The student raised his head and turned about. He started back, rubbed his eyes, and thrust his head forward again toward the man who stood behind his chair.

"Good heavens! What's this?"

The man was large. But he was strange in appearance! So strange he was, indeed, the student reflected, that he could not qualify as a real character even in a dream—let alone here in actual life. An apparition even for a dream! He was grotesque: his face was broad,— carved rather than made of flesh; his features looked like some kind of stone, or some kind of metal; his eyelids were stretched down as if they were plastered—they looked like closed eyes of a doll—but what a horrible-looking doll he would make!

"Well." There was as much stone in his voice as in his features. "Well. Do you know who I am?"

The student stood up and peered with curiosity that he made no attempt to hide, into the stranger's face. Odd as faces are, he had never seen one so peculiar as this one!

"Heavens, no! Why don't you open your eyes?"

"Who do you think I am?"

"I have no idea. I don't know whether you are a man at all or not."

"Guess three times; then I will tell you."

The student stared. He had not been in such a situation before. He hardly knew what to do. An idea came to him. After all, why should not be have some fun?

"All right. Moses?" He grinned; but the stranger did not grin back. The student was not dismayed; certainly, the man could not grin; his face would crack like clay. The stranger shook his head slowly.

"Edgar Allen Poe?" The student chuckled, proud of his ability to be clever. Still the stranger stood quietly, and shook his head slowly. The student became a bit disgusted; he had thought to have a better reception granted his sense of humor.

"Oh, I give up! Your name probably is Jones. What do you want?"

The student sat down rather as if all the essence of the unusual he had been expecting had gone out of this and the stranger's presence. The stranger was speaking.

"No. You have not guessed correctly. I—am Socrates."

"What!"

"Socrates."

For a moment the student was astounded. He tapped himself on the forehead, trying vainly to realize the meaning of this strange presence. Almost immediately he understood the situation, and said to himself:

"Horrors! The man is mad! He is gone insane. I must stall for time, and thus perhaps get to the telephone after a while and call the army. Let me humor him, or perhaps he will pounce upon me and tear me limb from limb; or perhaps he will try to feed me some poison hemlock."

The student leaped up from his chair and seized Socrates' hand and attempted to shake it. It was cold, the hand, like stone. He dropped it quickly, and it fell with a grating sound against Socrates' leg.

"Of course. I agree with you perfectly. How very stupid of me not to know you, Soc! I swear I should have known you—from your pictures and the busts of you I have seen. But really, you know, I was so astounded I didn't realize. I thought you were dead! I thought they poisoned you with a cup of hemlock. Didn't it kill you, for Heaven's sake?"

"It had no effect upon me whatsoever. I threw it up."

"Oh! That explains it all, and I understand perfectly. But please, Mr. Socrates, why did you choose to call upon me— and at this unusual hour?"

"I was passing by on the street, a little while ago, and I heard you moaning as though you were in great distress. I came in to see what was wrong. Are you in difficulty?"

"I was, but I'm not in it now. You see, I was trying to work this problem. But I quit."

"Why did you quit?"

The student, his fingers pointing at the problem for Socrates to see, suddenly became possessed of a new idea. Here, he thought, was a madman. Surely it would not hurt anything to try out his new conviction on him. "And," thought the student, "if a madman thinks I am crazy, it is certain I must never tell a sane person. I shall try him out, and see whether he thinks I am justified in believing myself too far superior to meddle with such trifles as mathematics." With sincerity in his tone, and with great intentness and eagerness, he addressed Socrates.

"Socrates, I am a person of great mentality—indeed, of such supreme intellect, such immense philosophy, that my mind cannot concern itself with such trifles, such miserable trifles, as this problem. I realize that. I realize it most fully when I tried to work the problem. It is for that reason, Socrates, I know, that I have been unable to work the problem, and that, therefore, I have given up trying. For all the great men of the world, Socrates, those who were possessed of, and famous for, great power of mind, have been unable to—but wait! Why, I had forgotten! You, Socrates! Here; can you work this problem? Please forgive me. I had quite forgotten that you were—are —a philosopher."

The student leaned up and made the poor demented fellow take the chair. Socrates looked quietly at the problem; one short and blunt finger traced slowly the lines across the page.

"Now," thought the student, "perhaps now I should run to the telephone, while he is moping over that. Undoubtedly that problem will make him have a fit, and perhaps he will strangle me."

But it was at that moment, as he stood behind the chair in which sat the sage Socrates, that he realized suddenly his great mistake. He made no move to run to the telephone, then, but stood transfixed, muttering to himself.

"My God! This is no madman. This is no mortal man! Not even a madman could have a head like that: it is so large; it is so grizzled! Good Lord, am I mad? That neck!—and that beard! —and those eyes—shut tight. This is Socrates! But what, in Heaven's name?"

The student was astounded and unable to believe as true this presence of Socrates. "But," he thought, "Socrates is here: why should not I make the best of this opportunity. This is going to be a real, true test—a proof. Socrates is trying to work this problem; and in a minute, I am positive, he will give up in a rage and swear that the thing amounts to nothing and is, therefore, not worthy of his—and therefore, our—time. Ah, how fortunate I am!—better, truer than from any other I shall learn from him."

Socrates began to write with a pencil in the margin of the book. The student made haste to gather up a sheet of paper from the floor and to present

it; Socrates, however, paid no attention to it. He merely placed a very few figures alongside the printed problem.

And now the student began to be possessed of a cold fear—a vague uneasiness. What if Socrates worked the problem? Would it show that, after all, it was not a matter of greatness of intellect that prevented him, the student, from getting it? He began to pray that Socrates would give up in disgust and would hurl the book away from him. But at that instant, Socrates ceased writing, and stood up.

"There is your problem." Socrates strode to the door and out, grating like stone on stone as he went.

The student snatched up the book and peered at the figures. There was the answer, with but one or two figures above it that Socrates had used in calculating. Hastily he searched in a notebook for the answer that had been given him the day before as correct, and which answer he was supposed to derive by the correct system of figuring. He found the answer. It, and the one Socrates had found, were exactly the same!

At the bottom of the page, he espied some writing that had not been there before. Socrates, he reflected, must have put it there. He deciphered it. "Do not attribute your failure to unworthiness of the matter which is your subject," it said. "You are lazy; you are stupid. But it is not too late." The feeling of uneasiness deepened.

Needless to say, the student awoke, and was quite happy to wake, for he would not have known what to do if he hadn't awaked. There was cold sweat upon him from his forehead to his toes, and he was trembling. Never hesitating for an instant, he seized his pencil and gathered up the scattered papers from the floor.

For three hours he sat at his desk; and at the end of that time he had developed an answer that corresponded exactly with the correct one.

Happy — far happier than he had been in the ill-conceived thought he had before when he had decided the problem was not worthy of his attention—he placed his book carefully on the shelf; and the paper, with the correct answer and all the figuring on it, he placed neatly folded, in the drawer of his desk.

Weary, but with no deep-sunken dread, and no worry and unrest, he turned out the light and went to bed, though it was nearly daybreak.

FABRIC

The cherry tree is a bride today,
White with blossoms and warm with rain.
The tall, gold-booted wind came by,
And there was a wedding in the lane.

He had brown hands and a star-studded cape,
She had clear eyes and a silken heart.
Her mouth was fragrant with breathing April,
And that is the story, except this part:

She swayed against his star-studded cape,
She laughed with her white satin heart, but oh
Tomorrow he'll go his gold-booted way
And her heart will be green calico.

—Ardyth Kennelly.

ABSENCE D'ESPRIT

By Kathryn E. Joehnke

DAY-DREAMING, feeling neglected because she hasn't received a rather particular letter for two days, waiting for the postman, she flops on a wardrobe trunk in front of the window and tucks an infinitesimal pillow between her back and the sharp edge of the window casing. It is an old window, drawn upward by a high, old-fashioned ceiling, and a wide window—the frame of many passing pictures. It has many counterparts, of the exact dimensions, peering from ivy-draped brick walls like neat rows of bright pins in a tomato pincushion. Yes, it is a hall for girls on a coeducational campus; it is spring; there isn't any incentive to study; and there's nothing much to look at either.

A strip of road, arched like a segment of a rainbow, curves across the window picture. A gangling young man, looking like her twelve-year-old brother in his summer underwear, bounces by, elbows and knees bent at sharp angles like the folding rule a carpenter uses. The track season has begun.

Cutting across the grass are two college men, their jumpingjack arms and legs swinging together in perfect unison. There, one stops to scratch his nose and then falls into step again, like a rest in music that doesn't break the rhythm.

A red jitney lumbers by, and a pair of youngsters on a bicycle trundle hurriedly out of the way. A green roadster cuts the corner, flashing a ray of sunshine from its windshield as from the depths of an aquamarine. Some girl's "suppressed desire" hunches past the window, his arms running races with each other—neither one winning.

A great white building, a cross between a medieval castle and a sugared jelly-roll, stretches its length across the window picture. It is an armory, where young boys submit to a training that makes of them real men. Along its white sides runs a tiny youngster, decked out in blue overalls and red sweater, topped with an engulfing straw hat which all but hides his ecstatic smile as he does a hop-skip-jump out to the ball field.

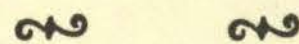
An antiquated Ford, painted red like an old woman with rouged wrinkles, is reflected in the red sweater of the boy across the street and the hair that lies beneath that small green cap with its pie-shaped segments. A brave color—red!

Like a frog, an animated bit of crumpled paper hops up and down the sidewalk—a plaything of the wind.

Two men stroll toward the ball ground. One is tall and lank, with a head resembling a palm-fringed desert, his long thin legs encased in scant golf knickers of a rich mustard hue; the other is shorter—so short, in fact, that one suspects him of affecting long trousers like a small boy in a hurry to grow up. The red jitney passes again as faithful as a Rhode Island setting hen.

Sunshine, spring clothes, ice-cream cones, rumble seats, strolling couples, and all of the colors of the spectrum flicker across that narrow window.

A smart roadster wheels to a stop with a flash of gay red wheels, and a uniformed figure alights—the postman! Gone the idle speculation and listlessness—the mail is in!



What you get for what you spend
Matters very little:
Iron bars cost half as much
As china that is brittle.

—Dorothy L. Anderson.

THE MANUSCRIPT

A literary magazine published by the English department from material originating for the most part in composition courses and designed to afford laboratory material for students in these courses

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MORTALITY

Silence tingles and vibrates over me,
And roosting dust is not asleep.
I am suspended in an eternity,
And in an age or two each grain of sand,
Made silver-tongued, shall speak.

I shall forget the plunge and chill of water,
And I shall not remember foam or flame.
I shall be lost, and lost I shall be seeking
A name I lost along the way I came.

Silence tingles and vibrates over me,
And roosting dust is not asleep.

What is my breath that I fight for its warmth so fiercely,
And at the thought of losing it kneel down and weep?

—Audred Arnold.

TEN MINUTES

By Margaret E. Holmes

I WANTED to go home. I wanted it more fiercely than I had every before wanted anything. I did not ask myself the reason, for the mood was not new to me; it was a familiar phenomenon of my private chemistry, faithful as the equinox, disturbing as a new moon. And yet, urgent as was my need for home, I stood within the portico of a red brick college building, rich with the ten-minute interval allowed us for recovering from attacks of homesickness, or marshalling our reluctant bodies and minds in a transition from one field of research to another, and managed to appreciate the respite.

Oregon rain guzzled down upon the walks with an inevitable quality about its determined precipitation which taunted me with the fact that it was going home. Somewhere in the clouded west the half-human "Hooooo-Hoo" of a train told me that others were going home, too.

A few students were jostling and chatting under the protection of the building's entrance, reluctant to take the first step or two into the downpour which they would hardly notice once they entered it, their native element. They stood there, bobbing, milling, hesitating like a pack of circus seals learning new tricks in winter quarters.

"Pah-muh!" exclaimed one of the pack, bunting me down one step into the wet. As I replaced myself with a quick backward movement I watched his reckless scurry. Arms thrust into gaping pockets, shoulders hunched high to secure a bulky folder wedged under his right arm, he slithered among the crowd. His head was tilted into the rain, and I imagined the squint of his eyes and the disarray of his mouth as the drops wet them. At the end of the block he bumped into a girl, blindly, with the unguided haste of an amoeba seen through a microscope, and the rebound carried him out of my sight.

I watched a new specimen, a bulky one. She plodded thoughtfully, deliberately, toward me under a purple umbrella, eyes raised to the level of the drops which trickled perpetually to the ends of the amber ribs. Sandwiched between the eyes, a nose of putty dropped toward a thin line of mouth. Her head, draped in a straight black cap of hair, looked small atop the bulk of the rest of her. She was amusingly spheroid, and proudly so, I guessed, for a narrow brown belt traced the exact equator.

A neat, weasel-like person in capable rain clothes patted a moist way from a neighboring building to ours. Alert for possible acquaintances in our midst, she nodded and cocked a wise little head as she came up the steps. I saw that her eyes were a deep moss green, and the crisp red tendrils curling under her hat held tiny beads of moisture like a rich tropical growth near a waterfall. Here was one creature born to compensate disgruntled humanity for rainy days, I thought, as she passed inside.

A man of authority hurried toward our building to teach a class. He didn't mind the rain. Less than that, he was not even aware of it. Some preoccupation or other sat upon his shoulders and held a protecting umbrella of oblivion over him. The man, indeed, was hardly damp. The strong lines of his features were familiar to me—thin wide mouth about which there seemed always to be lines of rigidly controlled muscles, aquiline nose with two deep, curved lines at each side, lines which deepened when the man smiled, as he did now, blue-gray eyes a-twinkle in recognition. I smiled, too. When he greeted me he disclosed big, strong

teeth, and then drew the firm lips down over them again, and I saw a tiny motion of a jaw whose power I had had occasion to appreciate before.

A sad, blonde wisp drifted toward us. One gained an impression of wide, brown eyes under a Raphaelite halo of misty gold, and beneath them a slim stem which moved without bothering about legs or feet. Or perhaps it was that one's eyes couldn't leave the halo long enough to investigate means of locomotion. I knew that if I remained watching her approach she would pause beside me to say, "Ah, my friend, I, too, am held here against my will. I, too, have experienced those heights of rebellion, the depth of loneliness—." Almost I caught her eye, and then some one in a window above me whistled, and the bright glance she cast in the direction of the sound dispelled the illusion.

Miscellaneous smiles scurried conscientiously past lest they be late for the warden's last-minute scrutiny. One fellow dropped a folder on the muddied walk, and I gloried meanly when his groping fingers scrubbed it forward a foot before they could raise it, brown and sodden.

A long moan from the direction of the giant smoke stack at the edge of the campus told me that my respite was at an end. The pack of seals had taken the plunge and gained the shelter of other buildings a minute or more ago, and only I and a lone member of some other pack remained. Recognizing an acquaintance in him, I waited, warmed by his evident distaste for the stream of water trickling from one temple, down a lean brown cheek and a sturdy column of neck into a reluctant collar. He bared his teeth in recognition as he took the steps two at a time, and stood at the top looking as if he would like to shake himself like a heavy dog.

As we mounted the stairs within the building the smell of his wet suit was doggy, and the tap of the steel plates on his heels as he pranced up the steps beside me was like the click of a Great Dane's toe-nails.

"Isn't this hell?" he wanted to know. And as the door of his classroom closed behind him my own feet squashed down the hall to my destination less moodily. I was not alone in my detestation of Oregon served swimming in cold, thin gravy.

ON NOMENCLATURE

By Alfred Jacquot

I TALK of freedom and live in a free country. I speak vaguely of democracy; I respect the right to vote as I choose, to smoke my favorite tobacco, to drink a preferred brand of coffee; I expect a certain amount of unrestricted rights in choosing my wife. I object to anyone's prescribing the type of haircut I should get or the clothes that I should wear or the church that I should attend. I would do violence to anyone that attempted to force me to play bridge or golf. In demanding these things, I, ignorant fellow, thought that I had freedom. I would laugh at my delusion if the situation were less serious, and if I were the only victim of such delusions, the matter would be of little importance, but the truth is that, paradoxical as it may seem on the surface, freedom-loving man is a slave and a product of a self-imposed dominating influence. I am not a fatalist; I do not believe in luck; and I know that there is no Easter bunny, yet of this I am certain—my fate was preordained before I was able to fall out of my cradle. Though I should roast in the infernal coals for so doing, I shall shackle my children with the same bonds of servitude before they can offer one whit of resistance to the cruelty of their father. I shall name one Gwendolia, one Celes-

tia, one Max, one Algernon, and another Evangalynia—curses which they must bear with them all their lives—sentences I imposed in a minute of mental discord — environments that will always be present, moulding them —one a sentimentalist, one a bully, another a docile seamstress—and subtly shaping their likes and dislikes as mine have been shaped.

Let no shallow-minded skeptic shrug off the grim fact by scoffing, "There's nothing in a name." Call a child Percival in his first hour, and Percival he will be at thirty years; call him Mack, and he will play on the college football team. Ten consonant agnomens (minimum) are prerequisites for artists and philosophers. The sport world requires a snappy name, and an attempt to become a prominent golfer with anything more complicated than Tommy Armour is as hopeless as an attempt to become a screen idol when obsessed with a tongue-twisting appellation.

It seems to me that it is evident that some attempt should be made to check this greatest crime wave ever launched. A successful campaign is possible. The Fates have been thwarted, and men have changed their destinies by changing their names. Boxers, writers, and screen stars, variegate their names and have offered a very possible solution for the removal of the increasingly serious handicap of names given by excited parents in irrational moments, and borne for the remainder of the offspring's lifetime. I believe to be more efficient and effective in the matter of reform, and to remove the necessity of changing names, that this dangerous and unjust practice of christening the individual without any consideration of his desires or preferences should be postponed until the person reaches such an age that he could intelligently choose a name with which he could live contented the rest of his life, a name that he would not be ashamed of when read in public.

Each state could maintain a department much like the motor vehicle department to take care of the designation of individuals by numbers until they reach the age of fifteen, at which time they would be allowed to select a name. The advantages are numerous and weighty. The burden of the teachers would be extensively reduced; parents would be saved the brain-racking ordeal at the arrival of the new member of the family; and the most important advantage is that everyone may freely choose a companionable name instead of having a repugnant one crammed down his throat.

GUARANTEED

By Galen O. Belden

STANDING with one foot on the other, my chin in my hands, peering over the oilcloth-covered table, I have watched Dad write down the cases of ginger snaps, dried peaches, prunes, rods of fencing, and gallons of paint, without the least blink of an eye. It was different, however, when he thumbed the pages of the well-worn mail order catalogue, and neared the section allotted to boots and shoes. My heart missed a beat. It more than doubled its normal activity when he actually halted at the page so familiar to me. Here in the brightest of colors a pair of red-topped boots with copper toes made themselves conspicuous, and a defiant green and white guarantee stretched itself across the rest of the page.

The uppermost foot became the down trodden, my eyes blinked a little, and a lump came and went in my throat. Those were breathless moments. Dad surely did ask Mother the number of my boots, with their five-dollar-bill-like guarantee the most outstanding part of the page. Why did he not ask me? Number, picture, color, size, and guar-

antee were all companions of mine. I knew each by heart. Perhaps some one would make a mistake. If I had dared to speak—but it was hours past my bed time.

Many long days dragged by, so many that the garden lizard regenerated another tail. (I had pinched off the one of his inheritance). The little turtle that fed on beetles in our wind-swept back yard was now fully grown. The big red ants in the corral stored away a winter's provisions, and a pet chicken of mine grew to frying proportions. Change of season was approaching, but in those days I noticed only the lengthening of the noon shadows, and that the sun was farther to the southward. Time did pass so slowly, and "Mail Order" must live a long, long way from home. The postman's coming was the great moment of each day, from the time the yellow order envelope was carried away until the isinglassed letter of order arrival was received.

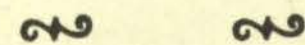
The odor of fresh packing is still pleasing to me; it brings memories of boxes filled with excelsior and mysterious looking bundles, also memories of digging into these same boxes and searching for boots among the odd-shaped packages. At last these boots were found — the living likeness of their picture. The crumpled guarantee was extracted from one toe and fondled with love, admiration, and defiance. I was told what to do, and what not to do with it, and how to guard against its loss. Ah! How little even the kindest parents may remember of their own childhood emotions.

After many struggles and much pulling at the striped straps I held these red tops and copper toes at my mercy. The old barn door with its squeaking hinges was the first thing I kicked, then tin cans, rocks, trees, and no one knows what else, but I know that security and satisfaction recorded themselves with each mighty exertion. Early autumn saw the battering of the copper toes and the brightening of hopes for a new pair of boots. Those I had were to be severely tested. Old "Mail Order" was going to lose money for once in his life, for perhaps he had failed to consider the defiance a green-and-white guarantee would arouse in the breast of a resolute boy. Besides was I not to get a new pair of boots if I untimely wore these out?

Winter found the red tops fading and becoming streaked from the rain and snow. Winter also found fading hopes, and a secretly doubted triumph. The old boots were going to last after all. Spring came. The copper remained as thin, battered strips of shining gold over the ragged toes; the red tops were much wrinkled, and a washed-out pink color; the soles, still somewhat hard and unbending, were showing thin spots in the center. There was still some hope.

But "Mail Order" must have been an unusually cruel man to destroy this one last chance of prematurely wearing out the boots. Who was he who could so rudely shatter this boyhood hope? What right had he to deprive a boy of the long cherished desire of being too much for a green-and-white guarantee? Surely this man will not pass unnoticed.

The boots may some day be forgotten, but from the time they assumed their dignified position on the order blank, written over the oil-clothed-covered table, even until the little pet turtle is bleached with age, a green-and-white guarantee will be a challenge carrying a feeling of inevitable defeat.



If the camel breaks his back
Going thru the needle's eye,
Waste no tears upon his luck—
No one said he had to try!

—Dorothy L. Anderson.

UNBURIED BONES

By Harry Forse

FIVE years after the birth of the twentieth century Yuen Sing established his humble residence in the small British Columbia mining town of Cumberland. Newly arrived from the Orient and the first of his race to venture into that sparsely-settled district, Yuen wished to emulate, as nearly as possible, the customs of his white neighbors. He discarded his flimsy dress, his clumsy block-shoes, and his braided pigtail, but he coud not bring himself to exchange the simplicity of his beloved wooden rice-bowl and chopsticks for the intricacies of the knife and fork. On the outskirts of the town he built a shake-shack, furnished it simply, and settled down to enjoy, instead of the life of squalor he had lived aboard his smelly junk that had wallowed through the muddy waters of the Yang-tse-kiang, the terrestrial comforts afforded him by this new environment.

Before long other Chinese drifted into Cumberland. Unlike Yuen they did not all come alone. Some brought families, large families, arranged in methodical regularity from the tottering bow-legged, chubby-faced tot whose single burden was a small, carved, Chinese doll, to the energetic lad in his early teens who shared with his father the major burden of the family's household. About Yuen's shack they built others similar in structure but enlarged to include a home-made crib for the tiny tot and several generous bunks for the remainder of the family. Because of his experience these newcomers sought Yuen's advice concerning family, political, and religious matters. Acting as teacher, lawyer, priest, and, for milder ailments, doctor, he became the "Emperor" of "Little China."

The passing of a score of years found Yuen's kingdom slightly enlarged, but otherwise unchanged. There had been no serious loss of life through plague or accident. But in the spring of 1928 a terrific explosion in the rich-veined No. 4 mine crushed the life from twenty-eight of Yuen's subjects. Their loss was deeply mourned, but, strangely enough, their burial was surprisingly simple. The mangled bodies were merely cramped into large packing boxes, lowered into holes, not graves, just deep enough to smother all obnoxious odors, and left there until the molds, worms, and maggots had literally licked from the bones every vestige of useless clay. In time the bleached remains were exhumed and entrusted to Yuen Sing for safekeeping until the sailing of a trans-Pacific vessel would allow them to be shipped to China for interment there. Yuen bundled these bones into some burlap sacks, carefully labeled them, and stored them in his woodshed.

Tony Marnelli must have possessed the same spirit of adventure that had coursed through the blood of his former countryman, Christopher Columbus. There is no other reason why a lad of six should be found prowling through Chinatown, the forbidden territory, in search of anything movable and having a cash value. Ultimately he penetrated the sanctity of Yuen's temporary morgue. He regarded the irregularly shaped sacks with a critical eye; perhaps they contained beer bottles, and beer bottles brought thirty cents a dozen from Pete Bolagno, the local bootlegger. It was but the work of a minute to open the sacks, with the aid of Yuen's axe, and strew their contents about the earthen floor. Tony was not old enough to experience any ghostly qualms at the sight of human bones; instead, his only expression was one of disappointment. But with the

air of one making the best of an extremely poor situation, he tucked a grinning skull beneath his arm, crept steadily out of the woodshed, ran to the end of a dark alley, and crossed into a vacant field where he was joined by a number of companions of about the same age.

"Happy," a little red-headed fellow with a persistent freckled smile, on seeing the skull, suggested a game of football. The game had not been in progress for many minutes before it was discovered that bare feet did not have any appreciable effect upon the "ball." Moreover, limping players gave vociferous evidence of its unyielding qualities. However, it was found that by placing a big toe in one of the eye sockets of the skull, an unbelievable degree of control and lift could be obtained. Still this was not satisfactory, and Tony's ingenuity came to the rescue again. He disappeared only to return a few minutes later staggering under a burden of assorted rib, arm, and leg bones.

The game took a different form. Armed with these makeshift hockey sticks, the miscreants gave one of the weirdest exhibitions of a modified hockey game ever witnessed in that section of the world. The hills resounded with boyish shouts of glee that came with the clack of bone on bone, or echoed howls of pain that resulted from the unintentional thud of bone on flesh. The earnest efforts of the players sent the skull wobbling eccentrically, like an egg on an inclined plane, over tufts of grass, through mud holes, or at each glancing blow, spinning like a top. For a very short length of time it would come to rest with crinkled blades of dried grass caught comically between its teeth, or at an odd angle with one eye cocked daringly above the lip of a rut in the ground, and a smear of mud spread sneeringly along the mouth corner. An over-ambitious forward, armed with a tibia, had dealt the jaw a mightly blow, twisting it sideways so that a quick glance might discover its likeness to a cow chewing her cud.

A group of miners, begrimed and sweat-streaked from back-breaking toil in the dripping underground passages, trudged wearily into the outskirts of the town. They were tired, dog tired; they walked with shoulders slouched forward, eyes following the wheelruts in the road. As they came adjacent to the field on which the "battle of bones" waged furiously, they paused for a moment, and with an apparent effort lifted their eyes to the direction of the sound. The teams were just "facing off." Shinny one! Shinny two! Shinny three! Whack! click-clack! and the skull became the center of a murderous horde of urchins. The miners' eyes brightened; they forgot their fatigue, and mingled hearty guffaws with the shrill, exciting shrieks of the juveniles. The added noise attracted still more of the town's populace until the field became lined two deep with an enthusiastic audience.

On the outer fringe of the absorbed watchers Yuen Sing tried vainly to peer between the broad shoulders of the miners. Failing in this he elbowed and shouldered through the howling crowd until, literally, he had fought his way to a ringside position. Had any of the spectators been interested in anything but the game they would have noticed the strange expression creep over the usually stoical features of the Chinaman. His slant eyes became almost round with wonderment at the spectacle, but as he identified the tools of the players his eyes narrowed again, and a dreaded suspicion seemed to burn him inwardly. He turned like a startled pigeon in flight, scrambled and crawled back through the crowd, darted down the alley, and almost tore the door from its flimsy leather hinges in his wild haste to get in. There his worst fears were confirmed, for lying around in

wild confusion were the unappropriated remains of his former countrymen.

The battle of bones, inaptly termed a hockey game, had progressed well into the third and last period, and the play was centered around the southern goal. Suddenly, at the north end of the field appeared Yuen Sing, his arms waving like windmills, while he emitted a shrill "kieying" string of epithets (at least it is presumed they were epithets). At the first premonition of approaching danger, Tony paused with an upraised femur just about to smite the battle-scarred skull. Yuen's gesticulations were decidedly unfriendly, and his flow of words, though unintelligible, resembled anything but a lullaby. Tony dropped the femur and hastily departed in a general southerly direction with his playmates panting at his heels.

Yuen did not pursue the boys, for such exertion was useless; he halted at the southern goal, gazed dejectedly, almost tearfully, around, and then started to retrieve the implements which had been so actively employed just a few minutes before. The Chinese populace was horrified on realizing how thoroughly their traditions had been degraded. Yuen's thoughts were anything but cheerful, for his countrymen had lost their faith in him even though it was unintentionally that he had betrayed their trust. Miserable, wretched, and sick at heart Yuen stumbled back through the garbage-strewn alley with his retrieved charges. In his own mind no punishment was too great for him; he might even return to his rattan-sailed junk, purchase a wife, and live the rest of his days a martyr.

ELIMINATE ENGLISH

By Eugene Larrowe

THE study of English should be eliminated from the requirements for graduation from college. It is wasteful in time, money, and nervous exertion. It is laborious, and it leaves no permanent results. To the average student, English is a bogy which keeps him awake at night, afraid to go to sleep.

The study of English is wasteful in time because it calls for so much rewriting and revision. Who ever heard of a mathematics problem which had to be revised? One simply uses the correct method, takes the data offered, adds, subtracts, multiplies, divides, extracts roots, or finds a few derivatives, writes down a few figures, and has his answer. He can check it backward, forward, up and down. He is either right or wrong. On the other hand, imagine the same person writing a theme. One chooses a subject—for instance, "Are women people?" He thinks of facts, and perhaps of something else. "A council of the church, held in 400 A. D. at the town of Canai in Asia Minor, decided by a majority of one vote that women have souls. It seems to me that they should have adopted the two-thirds rule." Then he remembers that the subject has been written on. He stops and begins again. Already he has wasted time. He chooses a new subject. But he has no success. He feels like a dog who is accustomed to wearing a muzzle, when the muzzle is removed. He feels that there is no object in biting again, that there will always be something in the way. He wastes some more time. Finally, he decides to get down to business. He scribbles off something dull and commonplace. He does not like it. He revises it. He likes it better. Still, it is not what he wants. He throws it into

the waste basket. More time is gone. He starts over again. This time he writes something even worse. He looks at his watch, looks at the theme, checks it for errors, revises it a little, copies it, and hands it in. The total time lost in this way, if measured, would probably be enough to allow him to regain his lost sleep, if he could use it by sleeping.

The collegiate subject of English is wasteful in money. Paper, it is unnecessary to prove, costs money. The average student would probably find, if he added up the number of sheets he used, that more than ten cents' worth of paper goes into the theme room (or worse, into the waste basket). Pencils, too, cost money. An estimated one pencil a term is used by the typical student in his pursuit of the Muse of Shakespeare. Perhaps some one may raise an objection. What of the student who uses no pencil? The student who uses no pencil uses ink, and ink is more expensive than pencil. Another objection might be raised. What of the student who uses his roommate's pencil? Here we have an obstacle that has hindered more than one earnest statistician in his search for truth. The answer is simple. The roommate is above the average. The man who uses his pencil is below it. We have now arrived at the item of ink. Ink is used for final copies of themes. The hunter of facts is forced to confess that exact figures on the subject of ink are unavailable. The typewriter has superseded the pen. However, an assumption may be made that the cost of ink, or that of wear and tear on the typewriter, would amount to at least one cent a term. The grand total is sixteen cents. This amount, if divided into the proper channels, would purchase one package of cigarettes and one box of matches. Instead, the youthful mind is trained in the habits of extravagance.

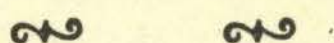
The study of English is the cause of a waste of nervous exertion. There are college students who can win on a pair of jacks against a full house, kings high,and dream peacefully, but who can not write a theme without breaking out into a cold sweat, and swearing in their sleep. A pitiable spectacle is afforded by a strong man who can not find a subject. He beseeches the callous onlooker to give him an idea. He implores. He pleads. He begs. He stays awake through the long, still, silent watches of the night. Finally he writes. The next day he loses on a straight to a bob-tail flush. If he had not wasted his nervous strength on English, he undoubtedly would at least have called.

The study of English is laborious. Mr. John C. French, when he wrote his text, did not know, perhaps, that his name would be held in execration by future generations, yet so it is. His book, while it is lucid, is far too full of facts. The average student does not like to dig out facts about an abstraction. The Century Handbook is an excellent manual, and yet, for some reason, very few people enjoy the thought of studying it. Anything which one does not enjoy, and yet must do, is work, and all work is laborious.

All students in this institution are required to study English for at least one year, but it does not seem to improve their use of the vernacular. The other day, when I was walking across the campus, two varsity basketball players were behind me. "I shoulda sunk that long one," said the first. "We never get no breaks," answered the other. This is not an isolated example, and "dumb athletes" are not the only offenders. Take the Barometer of February 4, and look at the left column on the front page. "Refereeing an intercollegiate basketball game is no bed of roses, but there are plenty of men who can do it." "If such a job can be called fairness at all, he was as fair to one team as another." We assume that the writer who gets the best spot in the paper is the best writer. If English is

not retained by two such varying, and yet representative, groups as athletes and reporters, we may safely assume that it is not retained at all. Why teach it?

To the average student, English is a bogy which keeps him awake all night. He wastes his time and his money. He thinks of the pleasures of sleep. Then he thinks of English. He stays awake worrying about a theme. Then he can't even hold his cards straight, and bets on a pair of deuces, and byes on four aces. He works and works and works on French and Loomis. Then he forgets it all. He wearily grinds out a long, dull eight-hundred word theme. Then he gets an F. "There ain't no justice."



"THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME"

By William Kennell

It is Saturday night. I have put in another week of classes at school. I have tolerated the restrictions of a small college town for another week. I have smoked cigarette after cigarette, bit my fingernails to bits, and listlessly played numerous hands of poker with my fellow sufferers while riding the S.P. train from Corvallis to Portland. Not once, save for a brief stop in Monmouth, has anything occurred to detract my attention from the restless state of ennui in which I have found myself. Incidentally, I am inclined to think that "S. P." stands for "snail's pace" rather than "Southern Pacific." Be that as it may, I bound up the front steps in spite of my weary condition, anticipating a quiet week-end at home with the family.

"Oh, did you come home, Billy?" comes my mother's voice as she rushes up to greet me at the door. Evidently she wishes me to verify her optical calculations, so I reply in the affirmative.

"You wrote that you went to your house dance last Saturday. Is that right?" comes the next question. I am tempted to remark, "No, I was drunk when I wrote that," or "No, I'm a liar," but again my good nature prevails, and again I nod in the affirmative.

Amid numerous apologies for the family's having already eaten dinner, my mother sets about getting together what leftovers there are for me to eat. In the meantime I am inveigled into a game of chess by my father, who wonders if he can still beat me in spite of my college learning. After he has satisfied his curiosity in this respect, and after I have "got some grub behind my belt," I settle down beside the radio for a few dreamy waltz ballads. Again my mother's voice comes floating in from the kitchen:

"Oh, Billy, if you don't mind, tune in on KGW. Your father and I haven't missed an "Amos 'n Andy" program for three weeks." I heave a sigh of dismay and reluctantly turn the dials to KGW, at the same time lighting a cigarette.

"I wish you'd smoke your pipe instead of those vile cigarettes," comes my father's next contribution. I rise, shrug my shoulders, and decide to put away the contents of my suitcase, which my little sister has rifled in an effort to find pictures of girls, personal letters, or other incriminating items of my college life.

The evening wears on, and I see no alternative but to go to bed. Accordingly I repair to my room, and precisely as I get my clothes off, my little sister bursts in to tell me that all my pajamas are in the wash, but that mother says I will find a nightgown in the bottom drawer of my bureau. When I am thoroughly relaxed in the arms of Morpheus I am suddenly

brought back to life by a soft voice at the foot of my bed:

"Have you got enough covers over you, Billy?"

My reply is evidently immaterial, for whether I answer that I have or have not enough covers over me, the result is invariably the same. I feel against my face a current of air caused by the descent of additional quilts and blankets upon my bed, and I sneeze as the fringe on the end of the bedspread tickles my nose. This is a sure sign that I am taking cold, and that I need more covers.

I usually arise in time for the Sunday dinner, during which I hear the morning church sermon rehashed by my mother. When the meal is over, I suddenly remember that I have to leave for Corvallis early, in order to do some important schoolwork which I left, and I throw my things together in an affected frenzy. Amid superfluous advice not to study too hard, and to write home often, I break away from the family circle for another week of classes and confinement to the restrictions of a small college town.

WILL'S PLACE

By Melvin J. Kofoid

WILL'S place had no name, but it did have a barber pole, a gaunt, sad looking pole whose bright red and white stripes had long since faded before the savage attacks of whirling sand in summer and snow and sleet in winter. Will's barber pole was as attractive as a piece of driftwood, but Will didn't care; it is doubtful if he even noticed that the pole was still standing. In fact he was hardly aware of his environment. Years past he had been one of Prairie Town's best "whisker butchers." But those were the old days; now Will was a middle-aged and scrawny representative of a western town which had aged prematurely, a town that had blown up — and out. Unlike city barbers who consider their calling an art and use their own heads as display rooms, Will's long stiff hair was always in a state of civil strife. Straggly and a little thin in spots, it still epitomized Will's nervous, energetic and aimless character. His nose, which was thin and long, with a Roman curve, provided a resting place for a pair of enormous gold-rimmed spectacles. Will's facial expression was like an automatic sign-board. When he was thinking over matters of grave importance, his face wrinkled and reddened like the face of a puny baby about to cry. When he was shaving a customer, his face was as empty and alert as the face of Jocco, the ventriloquist's doll. Will wore no shirt, his suspenders dangled at his side, and he moved with a jerky shuffle, almost but not quite losing his slippers with every step.

Will had a customer. Squeezed tightly into the barber chair, Mr. Soompe placidly awaited his monthly reconditioning. "Give me everything," he drawled with the slow scraping voice of a run-down phonograph record, "but, darn it, mind that you doan' get careless and slice me like you have done lately."

"All right, all right. I just polished these specs, and I wager I could shave a greased walrus with this here knife," cackled Will, slightly sarcastic.

Although he was nervous and moved in jerks as if mechanically operated, Will was nimble as a cat, and his skinny hands soon had Mr. Soompe nearly smothered under hot towels. Then, as he stropped his ancient razor with a rhythmic slip slop, slip slop, slip slop, he whistled "Turkey in the Straw," the musical composition which he admired.

"Gonna sit in at the game at Swede's tonight?" asked Mr. Soompe as the lather was rapidly applied to his whis-

kered jowls about as carefully as a paper hanger smears paste.

"Yer dern tootin'," shrilled Will, emphasizing his reply with a swing of his arm. Unfortunately a large "gob" of lather flew from the brush and landed "plop" in Mr. Soompe's right eye.

Mr. Soompe quivered, almost started, and the chair groaned. "S-s-say, your damn carelessness," he stuttered, blowing lather and endeavoring to mop out his eye with the whole of the barber's apron. Will jerked the apron from his customer's clumsy grasp and with a none too gentle rub removed the offending soap.

"Now hold still," he ordered, slapping the big man back into his chair. Will adjusted his spectacles, wrinkled his nose and then his forehead. Then with a flourish he poised his razor above Mr. Soompe and crowed, "Soap in your eye, good luck near by."

"Shut up," grunted Mr. Soompe almost viciously. He oozed slowly back in his chair resolved that before allowing this skinny Jumping Jack to shave him again he would drive to Boise, that is if Ma—slip slop, slip slop, slip slop—well, maybe he'd give Will another chance. After all, Will was his restaurant's best if not only customer. Will was shaving away industriously. His face was as satisfied as that of Jocco, the ventriloquist's doll—and just as empty.

"CACTUS" SEES COLLEGE

By OMAR M. LLOYD

BUD got invited down to the agricultural college, with a lot of other high school youngsters, to judge stock. I was Ford skinner for the bunch that went down. Y'see, it's my Ford.

Well, I let 'em out at the place where they put up—the Tah Beyta Yoopsilon house, they called it. Named after an Injun, I reckon. The boys never told me much about the outfit. It was either a secret organization or they never got the hang of it. As near as I could gather, it's where the young fellers there get together an' raise organized hell.

After unloadin' Bud an' his buddies at the Tah Beyta Yoopsilon place, I drove up on the campus to have me a looksee. It's a right neat place—big red an' white buildin's starin' at each other over little green parks. Well, I drove into a place where about fifty other autos was parked, an' got out.

It was as quiet there as it is out on the ranch—hardly a soul in sight. I couldn't quite dope it out, as I expected a-quite a crowd. Pretty soon I met a soldier, a-single-footin' along with a sort of dooty-bound look on his face. He looked like a Salvation Army tambourine, all trimmed up with nickle-plated knick-knacks. An' he wore a sort of little harness—a martingale over one shoulder an' hooked to his girth. He nods at me, cordial, so I up an' salutes him. I'm allus patriotic. I had it Uncle Sam kept soldiers between the collegians an' the innocent populace, but Bud later told me you have to join the army when you go to college.

Then along come as pretty a woman as I ever saw. Boys, gentlemens, she was dolled up as cute as a speckled pup under a red wagon. I tips my hat to her, an' she gives me one of them rare smiles that makes you feel like you have gas on the heart. She queenies by me as graceful as a three-year-old, disturbin' the air an' my hay fever with perfume.

Pretty soon the campus whistle blows, an' students begin pourin' out o' the buildin's. I was tickled to death to see 'em, 'cause I wondered how four thousan' kids at the narvous age could keep silent an' out of sight. Here they come, hun'erds of boys an' girls, rompin' along with a parcel o' books each.

Conspicuous by his lengthity was a chap with curly black hair an' yellowy black britches. He wore one of them rah-rah sweaters, with a big orange "O" on the stummick of it. He was all bone an' a yard wide, an' he stretched himself by as proud as kiss-m'-foot.

They was a-quite a number of young chaps with leetle green caps pasted onto their hair. I knowed 'em fer what they was, fer I've read about 'em in th' books. They're what the older hands call "frosh" — bein' the new-comers. They're a dang nice lot, fer when I snickered at one o' them leetle green caps, the young feller smiled at me an' says "hello." Boys, what I like about that college is that the students are so all-fired cordial. Seems like they "hello" each other every step. I took to greetin' folks, myself, an' especially the ladies. I got to talkin' to one feller, an' when he found out I was a stranger in town, he invited me into one o' the buildin's.

Well, I wanders around the halls, a-gettin' of myself good an' lost, an' not havin' such a skally-hootin' good time, either. Everything smelled like Bud's busted arm when he come home from the doctor's, that time. Bye-an'-bye I pokes my head into a door an' gets a whiff of what smells like the upset medicine kit of a horse doctor. A busified lookin' little man with a camel's hair mustache an' a black apron was meddlin' with a lot of glass dippers an' what-not. "Come on in," he challenges me, friendly-like. "Know anything about colloidal precipitates?"

"We had a colloidal precipitate," says I, "out on the ranch one year, but the dang thing up an' died."

He looks at me, doubtful. "That," says he, pointing, "is not a colloidal precipitate. That's a guinea pig."

Then he shows me a trussed-up affair which he tells me is an electric whichitator fer the anti-whicherizing of unprecipitated what-nots. I ain't had much education, but I see right off that they was a lot of truth in what he said, an' I told him so.

"In the light of my knowledge of Fords an' the workin's of alarm clocks," says I, "I kin readily understand that this is a marvelous piece of machinery. However, these scientific odors is givin' me a headache. Thankee kindly fer impregnifyin' my cranium with these scientific truths."

Yes, boys, I reckoned I learned more that day than anyone down there, unless it was Bud. 'Long about seven thirty, Bud rolls in, like he always done. When he was jest gettin' off to sleep a gang of the Independent Order of Fraternity Brothers (somethin' like the Klu Klux Klan), raises him outa bed an' gives him a cold bath. Then they take him out to a swell shin-dig, an' dance all night. Bud says he's sure glad they woke him up, fer they showed him a mighty good time an' treated him dandy. M'self, I had more fun than a county fair. Bud declared t' goodness he's goin' to college an', by grab, I wisht I was goin', too.

FISHING

I want a handful of wriggling stars,
To bait my line,
To catch my love—
Will she have them, or no?
If no, I'll put them back again,
In the same star-shapes I stole them
from,
Or if I forget and put them in wrong,
With the Little Bear's tail where his
head should be,—
Who's to care—when my love cares
not?

—Enelse Janzen.

PASSING RIVETS

By NELSON H. FOX

"HERE'S another," I shouted as I poked a white hot rivet through the ankle-high hole in the braces that formed the back wall of my prison on the tank tops.

I had said just that same thing for exactly fifty-eight rivets before that. I wasn't counting them, I was merely taking the word of the boilermaker for the fact; but I felt as if I had carried three hundred and fifty-eight hot rivets over to the little hole in the red-leaded plates. It wasn't so much the work of trotting forward and back over the two pieces of plank and the box forming my walk in the inch-deep oil as the ten hours' work preceding and the thick, heat-filled atmosphere of my little cubby hole.

The boilermakers were riveting a plate that had been straightened during the day in preparation for the ship's taking to the water at eight o'clock the next morning. The plate was just aft of the boilers and just above the tank tops, making it necessary for the rivet heater to fire his forge in the fire room. My task was that of carrying the searing rivets back from the baking oven of the fire room, between a boiler and the shell of the ship, to their humble mission of holding the ship together.

No sooner had the rattle and crash of the riveting gun ceased than there was the rivet heater thrusting another rivet at me, its white, conical head spitting out little sparks that burst in the air like miniature rockets and casting a bright halo of orange light into the murky gloom of my oppressive passage. I grasped it with my hot, short-handled tongs and trotted heavily over my improvised walk to the two inches of waiting steel fingers of the passer who, though beyond my sight on the other side of the wall, I knew was placing the little bits of almost molten steel in the rivet holes so that the boilermaker could "buck them up," or hold them in place with a heavy dolly bar while a man outside smashed the projecting ends down with an air gun. He snatched it neatly from my tongs and answered me, "Tell Elmer to send in three more short ones and then six long ones."

I started to repeat, "Three short ones, then six—," but the opening spat, spat, spat, of the rivet snap on the heavy plates smothered my words. Then the riveter "got on" the rivet and the racket made my already insensible ears ring as I made my way back to the opening into the fire room. When the clatter stopped, Elmer was waiting for me. I repeated my message and he acknowledged it with, "Guess they're gonna put in a liner." I took the waiting rivet from him and went through my formula for the seven hundred and twentieth time.

The three short rivets had been put into their respective holes. At last, a little rest. I sat back on a channel iron brace that formed a little shelf on the side of the ship and contemplated the asbestos-packed side of the boiler in front of me.. The fireman had turned off the burner under it before I had entered my prison, but instead of cooling, the boiler seemed to be getting hotter than ever. I stirred a little, trying to slide on my opportune resting place, but my trousers were stuck to the oily surface. "Oil everywhere," I thought, and sat on.

I could hear the white sheet of oil flame roaring under the other boiler that had been kept up for steam, its reflection flickering on the forward bulkhead as it shone through the little peep-hole in the furnace door. Of the four boilers in the bank, the one I was

working alongside had to be one of the two that had steam up.

Above the roar of the burner came the siren-like whine of the blower on the rivet forge as Elmer hurried two of the "six long ones" along.

Telegraphed to my resting place through the steel plates stole the tap, tap of a light hammer as the men outside fitted a liner into a joint, then a muffled "Stand back in there," seeped through other open rivet holes.

I stirred from my resting place and hurried over to an opening through the brace to watch the spreading stream of red and white sparks that shot into the gloom as the torch burned a new hole in the aligning wedge. The stream stopped with a snap. Another stream, of blue vapor this time, shot through the half burned rivet hole as the welder scraped the tip of his torch on the plates to clean it off. I heard a soft sput then, as the hydrogen lit up, and soon the fiery torrent was rushing in again—first a combination of blue and red, then another stream of molten and burned steel as the flame bit into the metal.

The burning stopped. "Tell Elmer to send in a long one," came to me and I slipped back to the fire room to wave my tongs at Elmer, burning my bare arm on a steam pipe as I did so. Elmer saw my signal and rushed over with a counter irritant in the form of a sparkling rivet. I went through my tricks for the nine hundredth time—no time for mere burns here.

Hours had passed. I now felt like a lame elephant. "Tell Elmer there's only three more," I heard with relief and hurried back to spread the good news. Elmer received the news with a grin at my too obvious pleasure and went back to pull some of his rivets out of the fire while I plodded again over my weary round. The job was finally finished.

I climbed from my prison and helped Elmer take rivets, bolts, and tongs out into the engine room where a greasy fireman set out tin cups which he filled with black coffee from an oil-browned electric percolator.

The rising vapor stirred my brain, and I glanced up at the clock above the engine room telegraph. It was twelve-thirty a. m. I had come down at eight p. m. I held my burning cup in one hand and wiped the sweat from my eyes and mouth. My eyes felt twice their normal size because of its stinging, but the salt on my lips was soon swallowed by the scalding coffee. It wasn't such a bad job after all, and the ship's company are invariably pretty good guys even if their names are usually Swenson or Olsen.

We finally downed our coffee, joked with the fireman, thanked him, and gathered up our tools. As we trooped up the narrow steel stairway and out into the darkness of a June midnight in Oregon we looked like a group of humpbacked apes. We packed our burdens, single file, over the swaying gang plank and down to the pier to meet our colleagues from the outside dragging a couple of coils of air hose, a riveting gun, and a sack of bolts, washers, and wrenches. We strode over to the tool shed and dumped our tools noisily on the floor, anxious to report to the waiting time keeper and hurry home to a bath, a lunch, and bed.

Poplars at night
Are ghosts of dead children
Laying their white faces
On the throat of the heavy wind—
Heavy with earth smell,
And cut flowers wilted
By the night of passing rain—
Choking with white faces
Low sobs in the throat
Of the wind.

Poplars at night
Like ghosts of dead children
Whisper little secrets
About morning.

—Enelse Janzen.

A SACK SEWER'S DAY

By Cecil T. Carroll

ALL morning long with twelve well-spaced stitches the sack sewer sealed the hairy lips of each wheat-stuffed sack as it rested clamped in the vice of his legs. Bronze wheat-kernels danced on the vibrating floor of the dog-house as with tortured arms he jigged each leaden bag, stretching its seams to a breaking point. Two bony knees bent and quivered under their burden as he performed the double duties of a sack-jig and sewer. Like coarse screen, the jeweled sweat glistened, then melting into briny rivulets, trickled down to salt his smarting eyes. The untempered sun of Eastern Washington sapped the remaining vitality from his feeble body. He cursed the missing sack jig. He was sick of it all—sick at heart—sick at mind—and sick of harvest.

Noon came but not the over-tardy sack jig. The thought of the afternoon's work of two men almost conquered him. He was in a stupor. As the clatter of the caterpillar's cleated hoofs and the thunder of the galloping herd harnessed in its sweltering engine again beat against his brain, everything seemed vague. All the long afternoon the thundering applause of the combine engine drummed at his breaking ear-drums. The constant scrunch, scrunch, scrunch of high speed chains seemed to slap and scrape at the sprockets of his brain.

Before him, gripping the levers, he noted the grimy-faced driver bobbing on the caterpillar's cushioned seat like a cork on the high seas. On the other side of the machine he saw the wheat, an advancing army of straw soldiers marching in review to the cadence of a commanding breeze. Fumes of the caterpillar's heated breath intoxicated him, and his head spun with the revolving reel which smote this wheaten enemy down as the shining teeth of the sickle gnawed into the invaders. Spears of wheat thrown against the header seemed to pierce his brain. The canvas tongue of the fleeing draper licked its victims into the jaws of the cylinder. How he wished he could shift places with them!

Then, through his stupor he saw the warm wheat pouring like molten copper from the sacker spouts, overflowing its burlap mould, and he awakened to the reality of his job. As he jerked the gorged sack from its hooks, bounding grains leaped into a hole in his worn overalls and trickled down to gore his feet. As on ball bearings, he then skated across the grain-carpeted floor. With needle and twine he formed two small ears on the bulging bag, his lance-headed needle stabbing his fingers until they bled. In self pity, he cursed himself again for ever having thought harvest. With a thud the sack crashed against the chute gate, shaking every counterpart of the combine, and the sack "seamster" leaped back to the filling sack on the sacker.

In the rear of the machine his motionless boss stood like a cigar-store Indian, maneuvering the leveling device. Four strings dangled from the grease-soaked boots which clamped his pants in two canvas balloons. His old rustic briar seemed animated as he dragged the smoke from it. Over the baking engine, piloting the listless header in a sea of gold, the "header puncher" appeared to sleep the whole day through.

With a click of the trigger, four sacks slid to their place in the even windrow stretching, an endless chain, across the stubble. Fallen straw from the dump striped the harvested field behind him in even rows like outing flannel. On his left, neighboring sec-

tions of summer fallow and grain, fenced by toothpicks, fashioned themselves on a series of washboard hills—an eccentric quilt, blocked before wind and sun.

The tiring legs of time crawled about the rotund features of his watch as he counted the hours in each minute. Through each lagging hour he cursed the jig. Two—three—four—each hour clung with tenacious tentacles to its predecessor. At the half mark he again peered through his watch crystal. "O God! Two hours more!" His shoulders sagged under the burden of each sack.

Something snapped! A chain flew into a tangle and dropped idle on its sprocket. The bull-like bellow of the boss halted the caterpillar in a jerk. Instantly the cigar-store Indian became a human dynamo, throwing off sparks of energy to which the "header puncher" responded with chain, hammer, wrench, and pliers. A minute after the sewer had tilted a scalding canteen to his lips the machine again became a scene of action.

With its mellow rays screened by the smoky horizon, the over-ripe sun submerged—a huge onyx ball. Again in deep intonations the combine took up its quarrel with the wheat on its last round homeward. The day was done.

In the barnyard a stranger waited.

"Lary, you old devil! My old sack jig! How in hell are you?"

"You son of a beggar; you sure look tough."

"Aw, go to hell! Come, let's eat; I'm hungrier than a flock of buzzards."

Arm in arm together they skip to the house—two urchins fresh from school.

A BOX CAR HOLDUP

By Ivan Nicholas

OUR summer work with the Forest Service was completed. We were tired, and most of us slouched along the streets of Spokane as if it were too much trouble to lift our corked boots off the sidewalk. Our clothes, stagged tin pants, tattered shirts, and stag coats or jackets, were bedraggled, cut by intimate contact with the brush, and besmirched with pitch. Our heads, which had not been touched by a comb, much less by soap and water and a barber's shears, were a disgrace to civilized man. I left my friends and went to a barber shop to have a fourteen-week beard and a fifteen-week-old hair cut moderated. The barber groaned as he saw me coming, but made the best of it. As I strolled along the streets with my corked boots giving off sparks at every step, a show-window displaying sporting goods attracted my attention. Sliding my calloused hand into the ragged pocket of my pants, I grasped my summer earnings. What were a few dollars after working all summer? With this thought I entered the store. When I emerged my inferiority complex had vanished, for I was wearing a new pair of boots, hiking pants, and a shirt.

As I needed all of my money to pay my college expenses, I decided to ride the freight to Seattle and see my girl friend before going south to college.

Hiking briskly along I went a short distance out of Spokane before stopping for a freight. Presently a freight came lumbering along, and watching my chance, I swung aboard a lumber car. I stayed there until the freight stopped at a water tank; then I jumped off and soon found an empty box car.

which had been left unlocked. I looked in, hoping to find it unoccupied, but was disappointed. A young, decent-appearing fellow crouched in one corner. Nodding to him I climbed in, partially closing the door behind me. But before we started to move, a 'bo with all the earmarks of a typical thug looked in, and then vaulted into the car.

I looked rather neat in my new outfit, all egotism aside, but fool that I was, I had my summer wages with me, consisting of about three hundred dollars. My gun, a neat little 32 automatic, but meant for business, lay safely in the breast pocket of my stag coat which I had thrown in the corner to use as a pillow.

The tramp watched us pretty closely for a moment, and then as the train started to move, he pulled a gat and growled, "Stick em up!"

The other fellow's hands went up like a shot, and I nearly did likewise, but managed to restrain myself. Slowly I rose, taking care to make no sudden movement.

"Stick 'em up," he again demanded!

"Oh," I replied, "I thought you said to stand up." My hands still remained at my sides.

"Say, what the devil do you want—a one-way ticket to hell?"

"Of course not," I meekly replied, still acting the part of the innocent.

I was furiously striving to think out some plan of saving my summer earnings. If I lost that, there would be no need of going to Seattle to see Esther, nor for that matter of returning a little later to resume my college studies in forestry. In the former case there would be a mighty sweet girl disappointed, and in the latter a wonderful mother would have to postpone her plans for seeing her son graduate—and I wouldn't disappoint either for the world.

Only two paths lay open. One was to get hold of my gun, the other was to disarm him. Both paths were blocked!

His gun, which in the beginning had wavered between the boy in the corner and me, was now pointed directly at my body. I didn't like the looks of it. There was no help from the corner. The poor kid was too much afraid even to move. The tough, beginning to get a little restless, took a step towards me. "What do you want?" I asked, being as nonchalant as was possible under the circumstances.

"I want your roll. What do you think I want?"

"You mean my money? Why, I haven't enough to buy you an all-day sucker."

"No?" he responded with a sneer. "You seem to be decked out pretty swell to be broke."

"Yes? That is just the reason why I am broke. If I hadn't let one of those Spokane storekeepers talk me out of my money for this darn outfit, when I only went in to buy a pair of socks, I would still have a little money and wouldn't be taking the freight home."

"That's so?" he replied, beginning to get a little off guard. "Where do you live?"

"Seattle," I replied," Have you ever been there?"

"Nope," he said.

Just then the freight went around a sharp curve, and taking advantage of the swerve of the car, I slipped and fell into my corner, landing just in front of my stag coat.

"Ouch! My back!" And reaching around to feel of my supposedly hurt back I reached into my stag coat pocket and pulled out my gun, keeping it behind my back.

The thug's pistol was pointed at the floor as he started to come forward to see how badly I was hurt. Suddenly I jerked my arm out and covered him.

"Drop it!" I demanded, casting off my seeming innocence. He looked startled, started to raise his pistol; then

seeing my finger tighten around the trigger, he realized that he had been bested and dropped the gun.

"Now," I said, "get off here and don't let me see you again."

The train was nearing the top of a hill, and taking one look at the ground to judge the speed of the train, the tough jumped off and went rolling down the embankment. Picking up his gun I tossed it to the fellow in the opposite corner, who was now beginning to regain his composure.

"It belongs to you and not to me," he said in a shaking voice. "You took it from him."

"Sorry," I replied, "but one gun is enough for me, and that gun is too heavy for me to pack."

"Do you know," he said, "I have more than fifty dollars with me?"

"No!" I said, "Do you know, kid, that is bad business carrying so much money with you, especially when you are riding a freight?"

"I've learned my lesson," he sobbed, beginning to break under the strain that he had just passed through, "I will never do it again."

PORTRAIT OF A LADY IN CHURCH

By Elwood A. McKnight

AUNT Fanny Morrison flowed down the worn green carpet of the church aisle, and, noting the spots where the face of the carpet was worn down to the brown cord backing, mentally resolved to say something about it at the next meeting of the Ladies' Aid. She oozed into a seat in the fourth row and leaned forward to puff greetings into the ear of the woman who sat in front of her. She bulged all over her cheerful body. Enormously fat, she reminded one of a toy balloon full of water, which, if held firm in one spot, swells out in another. Griefs and worries never troubled Aunt Fanny. She was filled with an abiding optimism which seemed to repel sorrows, and which never failed to comfort the many confidants who came to pour their miseries into her ever-willing ears. Of course some things irritated her. When the service started she sat in her chair with a faint feeling of discomfort. She supposed it was just her luck to have unknowingly chosen a seat near Myra Todd. Myra swooped through the songs with a brazen vocal insistence which seemed almost too masculine to Aunt Fanny. Her private opinion was that hymns should be delicate chants, and that Myra was altogether too vigorous. When the minister started his sermon, a faint vertical line creased Aunt Fanny's otherwise placid forehead, but not from a critical attitude toward the preacher. She was wondering whether she had been wise to leave the goose which was roasting in the oven to the care of her sister's irresponsible son. He'd probably go off hunting robins with his sling-shot and forget to baste it at the proper intervals. Oh, well, it was a small matter. She rather enjoyed having the red-headed, freckle-faced young devil around even if he was always getting into mischief. She didn't get much contact with the young folks since her own boys and girls had grown up and moved away. She focused her attention on the minister, only to be distracted by the buzzing of a fly somewhere up near the ceiling. They were getting pretty thick since the warm weather started. She sighed and gently fanned herself with the lesson leaf. The flowers around the pulpit were certainly pretty, and they smelled nice too. Flowers made a church cheerful and pleasant. Aunt Fanny loved flowers and a good many of these came from her own garden. Her seeming lack of attention to the sermon was not due to any irreverence—far from it. She had lived for fifty years in blissful con-

viction of the goodness of God. The nearest she had ever come to doubting was on a certain occasion several years before, when a missionary woman from Portuguese East Africa had visited the church. Aunt Fanny doted on little missionaries, perhaps on account of her own huge proportions. She liked to fuss over them and make much of their adventures in far lands. So it was only natural that she had positively insisted on keeping the little missionary in her home during the visit. She was greatly disconcerted to find that this little missionary was a tall, gaunt, angular woman overtopping her at least six inches—an ungainly woman who wore flat-heeled brogues on large feet and pince nez glasses on a bony nose, to say nothing of twisting her stringy gray hair into a tight knot at the back of her scrawny neck. But the dear old lady had borne up under the shock with her usual buoyancy.

The service ended, and two strong men helped Aunt Fanny to her feet. It was necessary, for she never could have risen alone. When she sat down in the church seats, she filled every crevice and cranny of them, and for the life of her she couldn't understand why it was so hard to squeeze out when she slid in so easily. She poured herself up the aisle, quaking and jiggling as though she must surely spill all over the floor if her tender skin should burst. She shook hands with the minister, and automatically replied to his mechanical greetings, eager to get away and anxiously wondering if that rascally young nephew had let the goose dry out.

HALF A MILE FROM DIRK

By Caroline de la Saux

A VAGABOND road passes in front of my home on the outskirts of Dirk. Far to the north it wanders, slipping luxuriously under a dark, green blanket of fir and pine trees, whose tops edge the grey sky with their lacy, jagged branches. In the fall, threatening, ashen-colored clouds, pregnant with the promise of more rain, are driven swiftly southward by the biting, early winter wind. Brilliant shades of yellow, red, orange, and the more subdued wine hues, tint the leaves of the giant maple trees which guard my house from the scrutinizing public. The leaves unwillingly drift to the rain-soaked ground. Their mood then changes, and they race across the yard in a rapturous sense of freedom to nestle down in the drift of leaves under the edge of the front porch. When the sun's cold, clear rays shine from behind the clouds, drops of rain can be seen engaged in a sparkling dance on the whispering telephone wires, never silent until the late winter blasts of air sweep from the far north, snap the unresisting poles, and then heap cold, mushy snow over them.

Across our road stands the once-white house of our nearest neighbor whom I have always known as "Uncle George." He can be seen almost any time during the day working in the fields; a middle-aged man, who will always be young. The dog cart in which he rides is always drawn by a powerful, yet gracefully built white stallion. If I happen to see him pass the house on his way to town, I glue my nose to the window, and watch the beautiful, high-strung horse until it becomes a small, white dot far down the highway.

The village is approximately half a mile from our home. On the east, it is

hemmed in by lofty, peaceful hills, whose aroma of pine, spruce, and newly turned sod scents the whole length and breadth of the valley. The low, flat pasture-lands stretch in monotonous beauty miles to the north. The upraised bed, on which lie the blue steel railroad tracks, hems in these lands on the east, and the forests guard them on the west. The town sleeps at the foot of the hills and opens its dust-laden eyes only for a few short hours when its stores serve the farmers. In the mornings the wobbly hitching-rack, which extends along one side of the corner grocery, is lined with dull-eyed horses who stand patiently in the dirty mud holes dug in the ground by the impatient iron-clad hoofs of more spirited horses. The store porch is always host to several battered bread-boxes which serve as resting places for the retired gentlemen of the village. If the weather is not too severe, these old cronies slowly gather here early each morning. They gossip and smoke their aged pipes. But promptly at noon, they quickly leave for their various homes, where they are waited upon by over-worked women whose hands are rough and swollen.

In the afternoon, not knowing what else to do, these same men wander back to their familiar rendezvous, and form a group around the tin stove which stands in the back of the store. From here they can see the depot, which is painted a bright, mustard yellow, and is trimmed with bands of scarlet paint. As the train comes roaring in and stops with a violent jerk, there is an unhurried exodus from the store. By the time the group reaches the depot, the black, greasy, iron engine has slowly started with much hissing as the steam gushes out between the wheels. It gains momentum, and rushes on its way, vanishing behind the hills to the north, and only a faint, elusive, wraith-like trail of smoke is left to remind the town that trains are not infrequent visitors. With a deliberateness bred by the idleness of many years, the old men trudge slowly across the tracks to the village inn and post-office. Here they wait for an hour while the peg-legged postmaster laboriously sorts the mail, and places it in boxes from which most of the glass has been broken. As soon as the daily paper is delivered, they become unconscious of everything other than the news it holds, and, trying to read and walk simultaneously, they stumble toward their homes.

The clear tones of the school bell ring at this time. The streets become active with shouting, fighting, and laughing children. Some of them pass by the store, turn to the right, and continue up the same street until they reach the blacksmith shop. For several minutes they stop to listen to the familiar notes the blacksmith rhythmically strikes on the anvil. From here the children turn either to the right or continue on down the graveled road. Sometimes they follow the course of the tiny, shallow creek which flows back of the blacksmith shop and on through the rich farm lands. This way the beauty is found on every side, but if they take the road to the right there is nothing of loveliness to be seen. Along the street are clustered a number of dirty houses, coated with cracked and stained paint, which is slowly peeling off like the chapped skin on the faces of men who have lived and fought the harder elements for too many years. The church is the most unkempt building. Weeds and tall, rain-drenched grass grow in the yard, and clamor for admittance to the very church. An abandoned house, weatherbeaten and windowless, gapes pitifully at the barren ground which extends for several hundred yards on every side. Giggles and muffled screams of fright are often heard coming from the attic of this house, and I know that highly entertaining ghost

stories are being told by youngsters who seek this place as the most desolate and therefore most appropriate in which to express their love of mystery.

The one other street leads past the hitching-racks and several more neatly kept homes. On this same street stands the school house, gloomy in its hiding place behind the tall, heavily clothed fir trees. Rope swings, limply dangling from the strong branches, seem to be pushed slowly back and forth by fairy children who come here toward dusk as the more gentle evening breezes begin to rustle the leaves, and cause the branches to creak as they rub against each other. I never tarry here, but hurry along the lonely country road. The scattered homes seem to hoard the dim rays of light which occasionally wink at me from across the broad, shadowed fields; lively beacons which make me unafraid of the shadows lurking in the brush-clogged fence rows. Then, as the lonely honking of geese is heard overhead, and the long, V-shaped, swiftly moving line becomes only a sweetly poignant memory, a dread sense of isolation rudely awakens me to the gathering darkness and to drops of rain which are beginning to ripple the mud puddles in the roadway. As I draw nearer to the light in my home, I hear the bawling cows, squealing pigs, and shouting farm hands, and I break into a run. Panting for breath, I make a last dash for the kitchen door from which waft savory odors of frying sausage, spiced with sage, freshly baked bread, and newly ground coffee. I sink down on an old, raw-hide-bottom chair, thankful for the homely things of life: the cleanly scrubbed, worn floor, the oilcloth-covered table, the warmth which exudes from the old stove, and above all the love which enfolds me in homespun shawls and downy feather beds.

Dirk is a very small town. It can not claim even one "Babbitt," for there are no thriving commercial enterprises to be carried on here. In its own fastness of fertile fields and green-clad hills, it rests satisfied and safe in unquestioning routine.

A SPARROW

By Elwood A. McKnight

NOBODY knew whence he had come—this man whose husk we returned to the earth. Like many another homeless wanderer, he died friendless, unknown. The constable of the little northern Saskatchewan town of Imre had found him unconscious, wedged in between an ash-can and a telephone pole, against a blank brick alley wall, where he had crept to seek shelter from the snow-filled prairie wind. A few hours later he died in a warm hospital bed, without waking to sense its comfort.

Around his neck the nurse found a tiny cross on a fragile gold chain. That was all there was to identify him. His pockets yielded nothing—not even a nickle watch, not even a jack-knife, nor even a broken match or a shred of tobacco.

So there we were--four men gathered on a chill November day to do the last kindness for a fellow. We were bundled up in heavy overcoats and mufflers, but we shivered as the biting wind that moaned over the bleak prairie nipped at half-exposed bits of flesh. Four of us — Father Sheehan, my undertaker uncle, the grave-digger, and myself. With cold-clumsy hands we gruntingly carried the coffin over to that open black scar and set it down upon the prepared straps of the lowering device, our panting breaths making a frosty silvering on the cheap cloth-covered box.

We took off our hats, and Father Sheehan spoke a short prayer while the casket slowly sank to the bottom of the grave. He tossed in a few hard-

frozen bits of earth that struck the coffin with a hollow thud and rattled with a brittle metallic sound against the frosty walls. He turned away to his car, and the grave-digger, who had been waiting impatiently, beating his arms across his chest, grabbed his shovel and ruffled a quick tattoo of clods on the hollow wooden drum.

My uncle and I lit cigarettes and stamped about to start the circulation in our feet, while waiting for the grave-digger to finish. At last he tossed in the final shovelful of frozen earth, and we drove back home, while the leaden sky grew blacker with the approaching night, with the almost springless hearse lurching drunkenly over the hard, rutty road.

TWO WOMEN

By Ruth Rounsefell

Mrs. Girard was always right. Her rigid posture was correct, her sensible shoes were healthful, her long skirts were irreproachably modest. When she swept across the room, her ample bosom undulating rhythmically, her head stiffly erect, she was as imposing as a full-rigged schooner dipping into port. Seated comfortably but correctly in one of the sturdy mission chairs with which she had furnished her home, she breathed deeply, removed her eye-glasses to polish an imaginary fleck of dust, and replaced them firmly on her well-built nose. After clearing her throat, she opened her lips and began to speak, letting her well-modulated syllables fall slowly and impressively on her listeners, allowing them to appreciate both her impeccable New England accent and her sound judgment on all matters.

I can see her now, her plump hands resting on her plumper hips, swaying lightly to the music. When the phonograph started her favorite tarantelle, a memory of her eight children and her many pounds was forgotten, and she was again a girl in Naples, twirling swiftly with the music, snapping her fingers and tapping her toes. The little gold rings in her ears bobbed furiously up and down, and the floor squeaked its protest. Beads of perspiration broke out on her broad face and trickled down the laughter wrinkles at the corners of her mouth and eyes. She beamed happily on her applauding children, and shyly flirted with her husband, her dark eyes smiling at him as if these were still the days of his courtship.

THE MYSTERY FOOD

By George Hanselman

HASH—the mystery food of the age! Even chefs refuse to divulge the nature of all its component parts. My father is a chef, but the most I, his own son, have been able to worm out of him through long years of persistent questioning is just that it contains "potatoes, and meat, and onions, and bread, and sage, and other things." When I would insistently ask what the other things were, a gruff denial of all further knowledge was all the answer I would receive; and I am sure that either the knowledge of the real nature of the "other things" was actually lacking, or their identity was being jealously preserved, a terrible secret, among the brotherhood of chefs. Consider what these other ingredients might be. The thrifty nature of hash as a staple food is well known. Think, then, of the old pie-crust, the potato peelings, the fudge that went to sugar, the cream that soured, the lettuce that wilted, the broken cookies, the aged and otherwise infirm eggs, the cake that fell, the left-over spinach, the off-flavor pineapple, the "runny" icing,

the unwanted limburger cheese, the used but still re-usable tea leaves, and the hundred and one other little items of culinary waste whose loss the chef might strive to obviate by using them in the hash! As an indication of the sinister public opinion which exists in regard to the possible and probable ingredients of the mystery food, ponder this tale—a true one, by the way. In one of the men's houses on this campus the blessing is led by the head of the table and begins, "Lord, bless this food to our use—." When, therefore, the house dog was found missing one morning, and when hash was served that night, and when the head of the table began the blessing with, "Lord, bless this dog to our use!" you may easily judge as to the prevalence of the opinion. Indeed, whenever I find myself face to face with the mystery food, I murmur a gentle prayer and repeat to myself the words of that old boarding-house diner who said, "I don't mind hash when we have it every day; but when we have it once a week, I'm skeered!"

A SUMMER IN THE SOUTH

By AL KIRCHER

THE house itself was big and white with large pillars in front that seemed to me to reach the sky and help Atlas in his eternal task. From the spacious front porch, I could watch the Cumberland for an Indian attack while I sucked the ice from my grandfather's julep glass. It was there that I heard, as I strove to sit upright and quiet in a spindly chair, of the War and its ravages on Butternut place and the country 'round about, or perhaps of the first of the clan who had fought the Indians away from his cabin down near the spring. The sides of the house were covered with Virginia creeper and Dorothy Perkins that rustled me to sleep at night and welcomed me in the morning. From one window of my room, I could see an oriole's nest just out of reach in the branches of the big butternut tree. Through the other window, the sun stole each day to wake me up long before the rest of the household was stirring. Sitting up in bed, I could hear negroes talking and singing back of the house in the quarters, which were hidden by the immense butternut trees that shaded the place.

On the walls of the hall and dining room hung many paintings of men of the family in uniform, with here and there one in somber black, a minister. Across from my seat at the dinner table, one of the ministers, a most fearful man, had his eyes on me every time I looked up. He seemed to know when I had been bad, and on those days had an especially forbidding look. Next to him hung a rollicking young blade in the uniform of the Royal American regiment. This one, always laughing, had a sly twinkle in his eyes. He seemed to be immensely pleased whenever I angered his brother, the minister. It was he who consoled me when I was whipped for stealing a chicken during an Indian raid, and when I was confined to barracks for building a fire in a rowboat to bury a viking in state. There were others, too, in that silent but seemingly judicial array: the stout old gentleman in the Confederate uniform, who always seemed to be on the point of sneezing; the first settler, with such a prodigious mustache that I longed to hear him talk to see if it would wave in his breath; and then the man in the helmet and breastplate,

who looked so jolly with his red face and redder nose that I knew that he would have given me the helmet if I had asked him.

My days were all spent with ol' Adam, who was my guardian and companion as he had been my father's before me. He had gone to war with father and had carried him off the field at San Juan with a shattered knee. He had been born on the place and had a deep and abiding loyalty for anyone in the family. It was Adam who took me fishing in the Cumberland and made me willow whistles while waiting for the fish to bite. After he had caught a fine mess of catfish that looked for all the world like pompous aldermen with bushy sideburns, we would fry some of the small ones and have a grand feast. It was ol' Adam who told me the matchless tales of Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox, and about the Indians who had once infested this region. He made me dozens of guns and swords and was in turn Indian, white man, Britisher, damned Yankee, or Spaniard. He listened patiently to my efforts to tell the tales of the Iliad and the sagas of the vikings. It was Adam and I who withstood a fierce siege in the old cabin by the spring, in which all our men were killed and our stores and water exhausted, but we managed to hold out till the dinner gong. Adam and I stole away to watch a negro baptising in the river and to eat big steaks at a catfish fry. He taught me to ride on "Father Time," an old horse that did not belie his name. Adam related the history of Butternut place and the deeds of my ancestors, and took me down to the quarters to hear the singing on Sunday nights. In short, ol' Adam was the companion, guide, and counselor of my little universe for one glorious summer.

One day ol' Adam took me down to the miserable shanty where the fishman lived. Our fishman, I mean the one who sold fish to the negroes on the place, was a little, shrivelled wisp of a man who had the biggest feet I have ever seen. It seemed as if he had all melted and run down into his shoes. His hands were thin and claw-like, always smelling fishy; in fact, he was surrounded by an impenetrable wall of catfish odor that announced his coming as surely as did his voice. He had kinky grey hair and a thin scraggly beard that looked like the wind-swept bushes on a rocky hill. His eyes, dull and lifeless, regarded one with a stare as expressionless as those of his catfish. When he opened his mouth he looked as much like a fish as a man can. A huge yellow cat accompained him on his rounds, keeping constantly within the wide circle of fishy odor that emanated from him. The fur of the animal was as sparse and ragged as the negro's beard. The cat had only one good eye, the other having been lost defending her right to remain within smell of the man. His shack was right on the bank of the river and seemed to be built mainly of kerosene cans. The front door commanded a view of the river bank and the fishing lines. Here I saw the cat, perched where she could watch the lines while the fishman sat down in the meagre shade of the shanty. Whenever there was a bite, she set up an unholy howling that brought the negro out on the run, or as near a run as he could manage with those feet. He pulled out the fish, rebaited the hook, and rewarded the cat by kicking it away from the catch. Then he brought the fish in and skinned it, throwing the skin to the cat. He cut a few pieces from the fish and hung the rest of it up so that the flies could get at it from all sides. As he shuffled around the tiny shack cooking the fish for us, I watched him, expecting him to knock something down with those feet. While we were eating, he produced a banjo and picked such a catching tune from it with those talon-like hands that he soon had ol' Adam singing. The im-

promptu concert might have lasted all afternoon had the cat not yowled. While our host went dragging out to pull in the fish we went back home.

Though I can never go back, the taste of fried catfish, the smell of the old earth-floored cabin, and the singing of the negroes will linger in my memory forever.

GOOD JUDGMENT

By JOHN H. PINKERTON

ONE more day and the harvest season would be over. Thirty acres more of very steep ground and I would finish my first season as a combine skinner. The thirty acres left consisted of a bowl-shaped canyon, whose sides were almost perpendicular. Because of its unusual shape and steep sides we called it the pot-hole.

As we started out that last morning, my uncle, owner of the outfit, came over to the machine and called to me.

"Remember, you have cut several bad hills this season, and have made it fine, but today you are going to cut the worst hill in this part of the country. If anything should happen, and the machine starts to tip, don't jump, ride the seat down, and it will throw you clear."

"Don't worry," I answered, "I'll make it all right." I was seventeen years old, driving thirty-two head of mules to a twenty-foot Oregon Special, and felt my importance.

We arrived at the pot-hole, pulled down the center of it and started rimming it out, much the same as if you would put your finger in the bottom of a cup, and start moving it in a circle until it reached the top. Round and round we went until we had completed six rounds; then I stopped to let the mules rest.

"This'll make you chew your tobaccer fine," yelled the sack-jig.

"I wish this day was over," I answered.

After a short pause I started that swaying, sweating mass of mules again, with the machine chugging and roaring behind like a thousand demons. Up the side of the bowl we crawled, made the upper turn and started back. We were now on the steepest part. If we made this round without trouble we would finish with ease. My thoughts were interrupted by a loud crack that sounded like the report of a gun. I cast one swift glance at the machine behind me, and saw the crew scrambling off, like rats deserting a sinking ship. I realized at once what had happened. The leveling device, which held the machine horizontal, had broken. Fear seized me. I wanted to jump, but that driver's seat perched upon a fourteen-foot ladder seemed to me as if it were a hundred feet in the air. To my right was the header, whose sharped-toothed sickle would cut a man into a dozen pieces if he fell in its way. In front of we were the mules. The machine would tip to the left. The only thing to do was ride the seat down, as my uncle had told me. All meditation was brought to a close by another loud report, then the seat seemed to shoot upward, then over. Panic-stricken, I jumped. After what seemed hours I heard voices that sounded faint and far away. I could feel water trickling over my face and down my neck.

"What happened?" I asked getting up.

"You jumped on the last mule, then bounced off on your head," the sack-jig informed me.

"You certainly were cool and deliberate in picking a place to jump," remarked the machine man. "Your good judgment saved you from becoming a member of the Harp Players' Union. You can see where you would have been if you had ridden the seat down."

I looked at the machine. Unrecognizable beneath it was the seat I had oc-

cupied a few minutes before. The breaking of the leveler had thrown the weight to one side, causing the hitch to break, which explained the second loud report I heard. Freed from the pull of the hitch the front of the machine had swung down the hill, throwing the seat underneath the tipping monster.

"We had better round up the mules first," I said walking off. I wanted to get out of the sight of that twisted mass of wreckage that I would have been a part of had good judgment ruled me instead of fear.

WHO'S WHO ON THE BUS

By Lois Mathews

THE nervous driver darted in and out of the bus, taking tickets and checking suitcases, small wrinkles appearing on his perspiring brow like careless pencil marks as he answered endless wheres, hows, and whens. Everything about him was inconspicuously brown from his tight-fitting uniform to his face and meek brown eyes, as if he had been sprayed with suntan powder. Observing his face reflected in the mirror as the bus got under way, one felt that when he smiled his whole face would be a network of tiny wrinkles appearing from the corner of his ears, eyes, and thin-lipped mouth.

The nervous old lady at the left kept peering over her horn-rimmed glasses with faded blue eyes at her neighbor's magazine. When she opened her mouth to speak the flashing evenness of her white, artificial teeth contrasted weirdly with her puckered lips and deeply wrinkled face and chin, which blossomed with a luxuriant growth of stiff, white whiskers. From her high-set hat to the worn hands, carefully carrying a spineless bouquet of thirsty tulips, it was obvious that she was merely a nice old lady getting a huge thrill out of a bus ride and an Easter dinner with her relatives in Salem.

Across the aisle a bright red young thing smelled sickeningly of perfume. Her light yellow hair was pinned back with countless bobby pins into a hopeful knot, and her face was like a blank sheet of white paper on which had been painted feverish round spots for cheeks, a Cupid's bow mouth, and eyebrows and eyelashes almost (but not quite) concealing innocent blue eyes. The restless hands with long, bright pink nails were perpetually busy, either turning the pages of a True Story magazine or plastering more powder on the calcimined nose.

Occupying the greater part of two seats was apparently a cattle-man who was successful in a big way, judging by the large diamond on his hammy, freckled finger and the broad-brimmed hat set forward to his bristling eyebrows. A large, shining bald spot was thus exposed at the back of his head, bounded on the south by a narrow rim of grizzly hair. A two-days' growth of whiskers on his face proclaimed his

FREE REIN

Come: let's run
The length of this old street
And listen to our shoes
Clonk, clonk upon the pavement,
And the old town clock
Strike twelve
From the courthouse tower.
Let's stretch our necks and run—
No, not in the way
Race horses gallop in a race,
But only in the way
Work horses canter in the pasture
After work hours.
Come, come:
More speed there, ambling Dobbin—
Only be sure
Your heart flies ahead of your heels.

—Enelse Janzen.

contempt for the masculine razor-slaves, and piercing black eyes challenged any one to criticise him as he emitted blasting coughs at too-frequent intervals.

No trip is complete without at least one specimen of the female broadcasting station, who invariably has a high, thin nose, accusing eyes behind pinched-nose glasses, and a mouth drawn into a straight, righteous line. In the midst of a story one is acutely conscious of a high, jarring voice confiding, "I told her—I could hardly believe it. However—Of course I trust you won't tell who told you, but—Did she tell you that story? Why, I knew her when——" and so on and on and on until every occupant of the bus is a nervous wreck from having some one else's troubles heaped on his head. At last when our loud friend reaches her destination a universal sigh of relief goes up as she is left by the side of the road telling her unwilling friend of the brutality of her first three husbands.

AFTER

Some night after I am dead
I shall stir softly and stretch up my
hands.
My fingers will make queer little paths
In the soft brown dirt.

Up—up—till my fingers are above
The grass. (Were you to see
You would not be frightened.
Maybe you would stoop to touch
My poor, hungry fingers—.)

I would fill them full of starshine,
I would cup them gently, gently
To hold the perfume of night.
And then I would bring them down
again
Softly, softly—
And fold them over my still heart
Where dead hands belong.

—Ardyth Kennelly.

LOST IN THE HILLS

By N. W. Hunter

FAR away in the distance a scarlet streak of flaming intensity hung low down on the horizon. The sun had disappeared, but its lingering rays still flung their darts at the cold, blue mantle that was slowly settling upon the hills; and the hills, ghastly in the twilight, seemed to rise up to meet its embrace. Sagebrush crowning the tops of the immediate hills painted grotesque silhouettes against the sky. And I, standing alone in the center of the Wind River country, was lost.

I had been walking all day, and I was completely discouraged and no little worried over my plight. The sinking sun had fascinated me with its parting salute, but with its complete disappearance I began to be alarmed. The cold night air partly quenched my terrible thirst, but in no way did it dampen my mounting terror; in fact the darkness brought back all those childish fears I had always associated with it. During the day I had been cheered by each succeeding hill I had mounted. The distant crest of each one always seemed to promise me a view of familiar landmarks ahead. But now, the darkness hemmed me in and seemed to isolate me. I was afraid.

That night in the hills seemed spent in another world. The brush fire, sizzling and spitting, the coyotes, howling and crying, and those dark shadows, quivering and changing in the moonlight, all are vivid in my mind. The eerie silence all around crushed me in its spell, and the twinkling stars that soon appeared were far away and lent me no cheer. The vastness of the night dwarfed me in its immensity. My exhaustion and weakness finally conquered my fears, however, and so I slumped under a bunch of sage and soon fell asleep.

I awoke with the sun in my face and

its warm comforting glow spreading over me. Everything seemed different now; the hills, the sky, and even my plight dwindled to a mere inconvenience. Picking up my rifle and hat, I took a tug at my pants and started out to find water and eventually the Big Horn camp. My thirst and weariness being abated by the sleep I had had, I felt sure of success in my quest. Climbing a jutting ledge close by, I determined my direction by the sun and fixed on a distant valley as my objective. I had heard that by following the natural slope of the ground one would soon come to a river and eventually a town. To the best of my knowledge I was somewhere on the upper watershed of the Big Horn River, and so the first stream I would come to should be the Big Horn itself, or one of its tributaries.

With a light step, I started out and soon noticed that I was following my shadow. Here was a guide that would lead me unerringly straight ahead, and as long as it led downhill I followed. I followed that shadow for hours; its movements fascinated me and caused me to forget all else but it. Slowly it grew smaller, and as it shrank it moved slower and slower. And then it was gone. I stopped and threw myself on the ground. The sun was directly overhead, and I had walked since sunrise without rest, or food, or water. With the realization came the knowledge of just how thirsty and tired I was. My physical discomforts rushed back upon me with renewed vigor. My mouth was dry and seemed foreign to me in its movements; my whole body ached with a fierceness that frightened me, but the thought of spending another night alone in the open forced me to get up and start out again. The "cut" or valley I had seen in the morning was close ahead, and at the end of an hour's time I was descending the steep slopes towards the rushing strip of water that foamed at the bottom.

I was lying on the bank of the river with my toes dangling in the water. I had drunk all the water I could hold and was enjoying the restful feeling to the utmost. Everything seemed different! I had found a river; all that I needed to do was to follow it down to a town, go to a hotel, eat and sleep, and then awaken with only a memory of the past two days.

"Hello, Bud."

I sat up with a start, The speaker, a dark, lean fellow wearing chaps and a sombrero, sat astride his horse, which was busy drinking at the water's edge. I had been so occupied with my dreams that I had had no warning of his approach.

"Hello," I managed to answer. "I thought I was all alone in this part of the country."

He looked puzzled for a moment and then said, "Wal, now, that's funny. I reckon you don't know this country very well."

I smiled to myself and anticipated his surprise. "No, I don't," I said. "I left the Laramie Construction Camp over on the Big Horn two days ago and I've been walking ever since."

His head jerked up and he eyed me in surprise; then he relaxed and very slow and concerned he drawled out, "Yes, sir, Bud, you sure have traveled; the Laramie Camp must be all of a half-mile down river from here."