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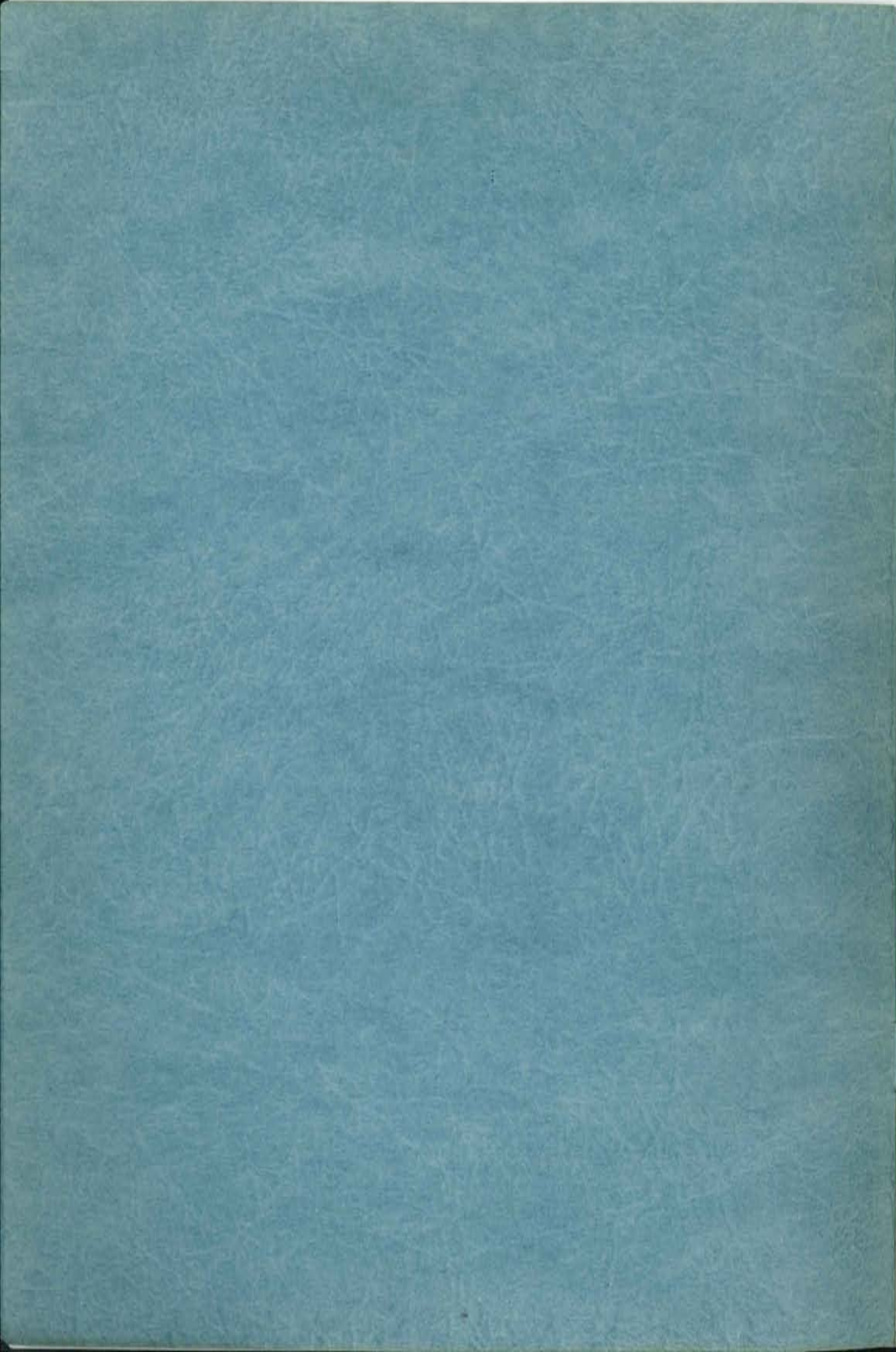
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MANUSCRIPT

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F O R E W O R D

It is with a deep sense of satisfaction and pleasure that the editors of *Manuscript* present this issue for publication. At a time when the whole world is involved in a great conflict, we feel that there is a special need for the continuation of a project such as this.

We wish to express our thanks to all those who have made contributions to the magazine, and to Miss Mirah Mills for her valuable aid and inspiration.

Freedom

We have been invaded by a superior force. The quietly intellectual way of life has been interrupted by marching khaki-clad men. From the large, rain-flecked window above my desk I stare fascinated each hour at these military displays.

What does it all mean? Why is this extreme regimentation so distasteful to us? In the answers we must give lie the reasons for our participation in the conflict. Those men marching so precisely down below are fighting for me in my study. They are learning physics and mathematics to preserve the freedom which makes it possible for all of the rest of us to study culture and beauty.

After many years the question still remains, "What is freedom?" Many words have been spoken, written, and sung about it, but what is it essentially? In the same way that I cannot tell you much about God although I know of Him, I cannot tell you of freedom. But I can show you the evidence of it.

A tall white-haired man wrote in a large, old-fashioned front room about "cabbages and kings." His two best liked subjects were his atheistic beliefs, and the social emancipation of women. He wrote in the late 90's, era of rigid conventionality, and in a stern Calvinistic community.

In a typically crowded dormitory room a dark-haired, sensuous girl writes of love, passion, beauty, dreams while always striving for the ultimate ideal—the expression of the idea in such a way that it can be communicated exactly to another mind. Everything she experiences is calculated to aid her in reaching this ideal. She will always go on toward this ideal, for perfection is not the attaining of the ultimate, but the constant striving after it, with better and better results.

A daughter of practical Dutch farmers is planning a life in the professional theatre. Every day she works inspired by the fascination of it. The human soul can be expressed in many ways—painting, sculpture, literature. But to the blonde daughter of peasantry play direction is ideal self-expression—the translation of the idea into a succession of pictures which live and breathe.

This then is freedom, not America "Über Alles" but the free mind over all. The human intelligence working freely can produce

miracles of beauty or science. But even if it were not producing that which is worth while, the fact that the mind is free to do as it pleases is an end in itself. After this war is over, it will no longer be the "everlastin' teamwork of every bloomin' soul" but the soul itself which will be all-important. As I think of these things, my soul wells up within me in a sense of well being. The marching rhythms outside blend into the indistinguishable noises of the quiet community and there is left only the certainty that soon, very soon, man all over the world may again view freely beauty and the dream.

—Joan Elsinga, '45.

Why Didn't I?

Why didn't I say
Come back, we can figure it out?
Why didn't I laugh
When you made that remark?
Why didn't I go
When you wanted me there?
Why didn't I—
Yes, but I didn't; and now—
There's no time to tell
You just why I refused
Your last kiss;
To laugh when you say
I'm not pretty;
To come as your wife
When you call.
I didn't. You're gone.
It's too late.

—Eleanor Thorpe, '43.

Soldier's Baptism

Creeping over all objects, infiltrating into every crevice open to atmosphere, light began its gradual conquering of the darkness. Against a horizon of clearness emerging from the cloudiness of night, the jagged edges of a forest began to assume a definite shape, and blurred images to blend no longer with the gloom. The air was crisp. It touched living flesh which tingled and stiffened as its cells were penetrated by the coolness. It was the beginning of a dawn broadly hinting of such things as for the fowl of the air to wing to warmer climes while the ground was yet free from frost and snow.

In spite of the fresh vividness of a new day, there was one who, to the very inmost nook of his soul, dreaded the approach of the slightest tinge of light. He clutched in his gloved hand a splendid rifle. Not with pride of care or possession, but with unwilling resignation, much as one, barehanded, might clutch the cold, frosty, steel handle of a shovel with which a ditch had to be dug. God, how he hated the thing so murderous in his hand. The very thought of the hole which its bullet or bayonet could gouge through a body made him shiver, and he felt an urge to give the weapon a fling and run on and on. He thought of all the shells which would be tearing at him soon through space, intent upon killing or disabling him. Their signal was dawn.

"God, how I hate this!" he muttered aloud, and jumped, quivering, at the sound of his own voice alone in the commotion of a waking war-world. A world waking to begin its business of murdering. At the break of the day he was supposed to be all set to fall in behind the tanks. Those mechanic monsters were already beginning to choke and cough their resentment against the coldness which was trying to prevent their "innards" from being loose and limber. The nearest man-made leviathan for destruction was only one hundred yards away. Between it and him were several men staggered at irregular intervals. Some of them would come back from the day's job. Some would not. He wondered—and watched a lieutenant moving from place to place readying the "non-com" officers. Passing close, he paused and whispered, "All set, kid?"

The kid's mouth opened, but he could utter no audible sound ex-

cept a quivering sigh, as if he had held his breath and released it suddenly.

"You'll feel better when we get going," the lieutenant smiled, and hurried on. The kid could not believe it. When the firing began, the bullets would be after him. He could not even dodge nor duck as he had when boxing. An unseen enemy was to threaten his life from where he knew not.

The tanks were beginning to roar, and immediately the enemy sent shells of exploratory nature whistling through the air above him. He dropped prone from his kneeling position and hugged the ground. From behind him now, deafening crashes began to sound as the tank busters returned their eighty millimeter shells screaming toward the enemy. Then too he heard the command yell, and he jerked upright, grabbed his rifle, and lurched forward.

The tanks and tank busters flashed before him through a haze, and he seemed as if alone, lurching along through a deafening forest toward destruction. The whistles of shells ended more abruptly and closer at hand. As in a dream he saw a tank spitting crescendos of noise, suddenly groan and rise off the ground after an explosion, settling low and crumpling when it returned to earth. It smoked and was quiet.

A shell struck close. He felt himself pushed as if by a huge pillow, and he watched the ground come up to meet him. He got to his knees, stumbling upward and onward. Suddenly he realized how insignificant a part of nature he really was. It flashed through him like a shock.

He had but to fill his place. He was not alone. He saw himself like a cog in a grinding gear. If he slipped out he would be replaced, but until he slipped out he must not let his cog slip. Perhaps God would need him for future use; perhaps not. He would cease trying to decide that. The haze was clearing, and he looked around alive and seeing. To one side, his hand tightly gripping the shattered calf of his left leg, the lieutenant lay. The kid swerved automatically the other way but quickly pulled back toward the injured man. Shaking his head, the lieutenant smiled grimly and yelled, "Carry on, kid!!"

He remembered the cog, and with a fervent, courageous, "Yes, Sir!" he waved his rifle proudly, and smilingly moved on toward his destiny.

—Pvt. George Holcomb.

New Snow

I am the first who has passed this way,
For there are no marks upon the snow,
No print of child's foot,
Or sagging, oldish arch.

I will go as I have come,
And if I once look back
'Twill be a stolen glance,
Which comforts not.

At times my path joins others,
And we walk a spell together.
'Tis for the nonce,
The ways diverge.

Ahead is unbroken crystal,
Cold, still, as far as eye can see.
When I am over it,
What will I tread?

—Pvt. Jack Howe.

Betwixt Dawn and Dusk

It was about a quarter to nine when Dr. Peebles emerged on the Challanders' front porch and took his way over the cracked concrete walk to his car. What the doctor was expecting happened. Before he could even step inside his grey coupe, Mrs. Higgins, her presence having been previously denoted by the fluttering of a lace curtain in her front window, flung open the door of her adjoining house and bore down upon him much as a hawk does upon its defenseless prey.

"Morning, Doctor Peebles," she cackled triumphantly, her beak-like nose, slightly out of proportion to the rest of her wizened features, twitching mechanically, "is something wrong at the Challanders'?" She might as well have added, "Is old Nat drunk again?" thought the doctor, for the implication spoke through every syllable of her question.

"Nat took a drink of some medicine which was intended for external use only," said the doctor as he slid into the car seat and closed the door. He turned on the ignition and started the engine. "He could have killed himself, but he only took a small dose. He'll be up and around in a few hours." He shifted gears, stepped on the accelerator, and rolled away.

For a moment, Mrs. Higgins, arms akimbo, watched the fleeing roadster and the billowing clouds of dust which swirled upward from the street and fell again in powdery profusion, then she stalked back into the house, turned the flame low under the tomatoes she was preparing for canning, and strode across the vacant lot to the corner house.

"Maude," called Mrs. Higgins as she opened the back screen door and entered the rear hall.

"In the kitchen," replied a small voice accompanied by a chirping canary and the rhythmic slap-slap-slap of a wooden spoon beating cake batter.

Mrs. Higgins turning through a side door, entered the cheerful kitchen. Perched on a high stool near the window, Maude, some fifty pounds overweight and with a more or less cherubic countenance flayed the devil's food with a stroke that would have done credit to a tennis player.

Not even waiting for formalities, Mrs. Higgins plunged into her subject. "My dear, did you hear about Nat Challander?"

"No." Maude's beating slowed perceptibly. "Is he in jail again?"

"Not this time. He almost went to a harder place to get out of than a jail." Mrs. Higgins chuckled at her jest and her audience joined her out of politeness. The beating stopped and the batter lay neglected.

"Well"—Mrs. Higgins had found by long experience that this was a comfortable way to introduce a tale—"it seems as how old Nat Challander almost killed himself!"

"Killed himself!" cried Maude in a squeal composed of equal portions of horror and delight.

"Yes, my dear." Mrs. Higgins was well satisfied with the effect of her words. "Early this morning, while he was reaching for a bottle of whiskey, he accidentally grabbed a bottle of poison and took a drink of that. Young Nat wrestled with him and got it away, and Dr. Peebles says he'll be on his feet after a bit."

For a few minutes longer the two women chatted and then the messenger, remembering her tomatoes and the other neighbors, still living their lives in ignorance, took her leave.

For a considerable time after Mrs. Higgins' departure, the green-and-yellow kitchen was deserted. On a table, forsaken, sat the devil's food batter. Even the canary ceased his chirping and cocked his head attentively as if listening to the sounds emitting from the adjoining room. Two jerky impatient rings were followed closely by Maude squealing, "Central . . . Central, give me 321." A fly alighted in the cake bowl and was presently joined by a comrade. "Is that you, Helen? Oh . . . Well, call Miss Helen to the phone, Lily." The canary contemplated a bath, decided against it, and took a few pecks from his food instead. "Helen? This is Maude. Helen, have you heard about Nat Challander? . . . Prepare yourself for a shock! Old Nat nigh killed himself!" The Dutch wall clock in the kitchen chimed ten softly, and the captive bird, its attention arrested, eyed it speculatively. "Well, of course, the doctor says it wasn't but then you know Doc Peebles. If you ask me it was an out-and-out attempted suicide. It's really a pity for his family that he had to bungle the job." A brindled cat paced into the kitchen from the rear hall, glanced at bird and table, chose the latter, and leaped

upon it. "Yes, I suppose you are right. But how Mrs. Challander and the children can love an old sot like that is beyond me. If I were in her place, I'd give him a gun and send him out to the barn, where nothing would distract him and make him miss." The cat licked the edge of the mixing bowl, while the flies, feeling their rights had been usurped, buzzed noisily overhead. "Well, I have to go now, Helen. I'm mixing a cake for the church sale, and I can just get it done by one. Good-bye."

Across the village, Grandpa Winters listened intently at his telephone, his deafened ears trying to catch part of the conversation. Finally, mild clicks told him the parties were hanging up. That first one would be Maude and the second one would be Helen. That would be Mrs. Hedgeley, the wife of the creamery man, and that other one, a full ten seconds after the others had hung up, would be the Matthews sisters. They still thought that by hanging up so late no one knew they were listening in. Grandpa put his own receiver back on the hook, and whistled to himself. It was an unsteady, tuneless whistle, clear in spots and in others resembling the moaning of an autumn wind on the Minnesota prairies, the kind of whistle that is the peculiar property of young boys just learning to purse their lips and old gentlemen no longer able to control their breaths. Thus, to the accompaniment of what he imagined to be "My Wild Irish Rose," Grandpa Winters attempted to reconstruct what he had heard. The truth of the matter was that the only words he had caught were "Nate Challander," "suicide," "gun," and "barn," but that was enough to envision what had happened, and besides, as he had learned when recounting his Civil War experiences, if one added a little here and there, it did not really hurt anything.

Shortly before three o'clock, Nat Challander felt well enough to get up. After all, it was Saturday afternoon, and a man could not lie abed on Saturday, what with farmers coming into town from miles around, and the whole place as busy as a beehive.

Making no more noise than was absolutely necessary, Nat tip-toed into the kitchen, and, after making sure that no one was near, took a cracked blue pitcher from a shelf over the stove. He tipped it and poured the contents—a dollar bill and some coins—into his hand. After stuffing the bill into his pocket and dumping the coins

back into the container, he set the household "safe" back in its identical position, and went through the creaking screen door onto the back porch.

But he had no sooner set foot outside the door than Molly and Lucinda, two of the younger girls, came running toward him, each grabbing for a pant-leg while they chanted in imperfect unison, "Daddy gotta tell us story before we let go." With a little dicker-ing, however, Nat managed to bribe them off with a stick of gum which he found in his pocket, and, as he turned down the walk, the shrill tones of their voices followed him as they argued as to which should have the larger piece, the gum having broken unevenly.

A few minutes later found Nat approaching Main Street. Up ahead, he could see the red brick building which housed Meri-wether's General Store, and now he could hear the murmuring voices of the men sitting on the bench in front of the show-window. Every small town has such groups of men. In the summertime, they sit on benches, either in the park or in some other convenient place, comment on passers-by, and litter the street with chips from their whittling; in winter, they move indoors, preferably into some general store, toast their feet against iron stoves, and slip occasional crackers from the barrel. Right now, apparently, Grandpa Winters held the floor, or perhaps, one could more accurately say "held the side-walk," and by this time, Nat, practically at the corner, could hear his words, as they drifted toward him from the unseen speaker.

"Yep, I'd never a-believed that Old Nat Challander had the nerve—", Nat halted abruptly, "—excepting as how I heard it firsthand from a good source. It seems as how he just went out to the barn, aimed his gun and pulled the trigger. I guess no one's very broke up about it. In fact, it will be a good thing for his family."

"Right you are, Brother Winters, he's been nothin' but a burden upon his poor wife for the past twenty years." That was the Deacon.

"When I told Mr. Peabody about it," continued Grandpa, "he said that now that Old Nat was dead and couldn't be an evil influence no longer, he was willing to put Young Nat through a trade school and let him make something out of himself."

"Of course, the Odd Fellows will take care of the funeral expenses," vouchsafed another member of the bench. Nat remembered vaguely that, years ago, he had belonged to the Odd Fellows.

"I suppose his widdler can git county aid now that she ain't got no husband to support," laughingly declared the local wit. The others joined in the mirth, and Nat, his mind in a whirl, turned mechanically and stumbled homeward.

It was while Mrs. Higgins was tightening the top of the last jar of tomato juice that a loud explosion, the report of a gun, perhaps, shattered the drowsy quietude of early evening. Mrs. Higgins, tugging at her apron strings, rushed to the kitchen door.

"I'd have sworn that came from Challanders' barn," she mused. "Now what on earth do you suppose could have happened?"

The hall clock tolled six.

—Pvt. Jack Howe.

The Skeptic

With dismal tread my sorrow stalks my mind;
Its presence beats a rhythm on my heart;
To you I do not mean to be unkind,
But grief has made of me a thing apart.
These hours in solitude are best endured;
I may not share my agony with you.
Although your heart is genuinely stirred,
And what you say to me may still be true,
Your murmured sympathies are hard to bear
In moments filled with bitterness and pain;
And always in the midst of my despair
The hollow phrase beats on my throbbing brain.
The echo of those words will haunt me still—
Is there condolence in "It is God's will"?

—Florence Coss, '43.

Blackie

What makes some dogs so much like human beings and some human beings so much like dogs, is a question that used to rise in my mind rather frequently as a boy. I was quite sure that certain dogs possessed definite human qualities. Of this one thing I was absolutely certain—my own little dog Blackie was human. He had a disposition, and a temperament, and a character all his own. At different intervals, he could be as gentle and sweet as old bespectacled Aunt Mary, or as mischievous as the neighbor's two-year-old son. He possessed every commendable human characteristic, with only a minimum of bad habits.

Whenever a job had to be done, Blackie was first on hand, eager and willing to help. For each armful of wood carried in, he would contribute one stick immediately afterward. In each basket of cider-apples picked up from under our trees, there were usually at least two small apples that Blackie had brought with an enormous display of tail-wagging and pride. He fairly shouted, "Am I not a very remarkable fellow?" and there was no question in anyone's mind but that he should be praised highly for his accomplishment.

No person could have been more considerate of the feelings of others. He would not think of rushing headlong into the kitchen with his muddy feet. Instead he yapped patiently for admittance, then walked (not ran) to his own little blanket only three feet from the door. There he sat, eagerly and expectantly, until it was acknowledged that his feet were dry, and permission was granted to proceed farther.

Always aware of the comforts of others, Blackie had no sooner watched Dad sit down to remove his work shoes than he would appear on the scene, laboriously dragging a bedroom slipper, equally as long as himself. After depositing it at Dad's feet, he would dash back after the remaining one; then he would stand close by, tail fanning his posterior into a frenzy, to receive (not at all modestly) the plaudits and acclaim of the household.

This was Blackie, friendly, jovial, vivacious; a companion, a gentleman, and a scholar. Was he less than human? It would be difficult to convince me of that. But was he not a dumb animal? Not in the least. Human speech is only one form of expression. Blackie's

liquid eyes and perpetually bobbing tail could express far more eloquently than words his delight, his disappointment, his sorrow, his disgust, his sarcasm, his hunger, or his fatigue. This was Blackie—my dog, my friend. I could ask no finer.

—Ivan Gossoo, '43.

On Taking a Bath

One of the besetting sins of our culture is the failure to appreciate the joy of performing some of the functions necessary for comfortable living. So many things which could be enjoyable are looked upon as uninteresting and unavoidable "duties." I look with compassion upon all those who have not discovered the infinite pleasure involved in taking a bath. I wonder how anyone can escape the feeling of delight, unless he does not know how to bathe properly.

Bathing is not often considered seriously because it is a habit into which most people, fortunately, have fallen, but the various methods and manners involved are seldom thought about. However, the art of taking a bath is one which, when fully appreciated, may never be considered lightly.

Concerning bathing there are four schools of thought. The first includes those who swear by the admittedly more modern method of the shower. Most people who go in for this game indulge in the morning immediately upon jumping out of bed. The water, if one is to be really sporting, should be cold. I am forever barred from this group because I have never been known to "jump" out of bed in the morning, and when I do arise, a shower is unthought of. The thought foremost is to get my eyes open, my teeth clean, and the approved amount of clothing on my back. And cold water! I shudder at the thought. Enthusiasts for this method of bathing insist upon its invigorating effect as well as its superiority in the matter of keeping clean. In my opinion, the early-morning-cold-showerers are missing the good things in life. The idea of becoming invigorated early in the morning is one which I fail to appreciate, and if a shower does this, I can not help but look upon it with repulsion.

A second class of bathers even more to be shunned includes people who consider that taking a bath has only one purpose—cleansing

the body. These are the duty-bound people who run the water into the tub methodically and as a regular part of the routine of preparing for bed. There is no feeling of anticipation of the act; taking a bath is merely the thing one does before retiring. This, of course, is highly desirable in view of sanitation and personal attractiveness, but to refuse to consider the pleasure in store in the process is to lose much of the real merit in bathing. In this classification, however, are the working men and women who realize that at least a "once-over-lightly" is a necessity in order to maintain a certain degree of respectability. These people know that it is impossible to follow the path of least resistance after a really strenuous day and to fall into bed on aching limbs. I do not blame them for looking upon the nightly bath as a mild curse on weary bodies instead of a blessing. However, most of the regular bathers do not fall into this class. And to these I look with pity.

The third school is rapidly losing ground, and it is hoped that the enrollment may continue to decline. These are the few in whose mind bathing and Saturday night are forever linked. The first objection to this group is the obvious one that their cleanliness is questionable. In the second place, an act which is performed only once a week can not be fully appreciated, or it would take place more often. One redeeming feature of this habit, I have been told, is that the Saturday night bathers may get more thoroughly clean because they are more serious in the process—naturally they would if this bath were to be the only one for seven days!! Perhaps this is true, but why limit thoroughness to one night a week?

The fault of the first three groups lies in the fallacious notion that the sole purpose of the bath is to maintain a state of cleanliness. This is, no doubt, the primary function of bathing, but if this were its only claim to "popularity," I am one of those who might be tempted to lose interest. Taking a bath is like sitting in a comfortable chair with a cold drink on a hot day, or relaxing with a good book after work; it is a method of attaining a state of comfort and is an aid to deep thought in the midst of confusion; or merely as an end in itself, it is one of the welcome products of the modern age.

However, to reach the heights of comfort and relaxation which a bath affords, the process must be a serious one and the conditions must be ideal. The first requirement for enjoyable bathing is a warm

room—not so hot as to be uncomfortable, but one in which the bather is not struck down by a rush of cold air as he leisurely emerges from the tub. An even more important part of the operation is a tank-full of really hot water. Enough for a good-sized tub three-fourths full will not suffice if one is to get all the possible pleasure from the act. As it is almost physically impossible to step into a tub of very hot water, the temperature must be moderate in the first stage. As soon as the bather is comfortably settled in the tub the next move is to turn on the hot water with his toe—in any self-respecting bath-tub this is possible—and relax and heave a blissful sigh as the warmth envelopes him. As an added attraction, an interesting piece of reading matter may be held carefully above the water-line and perused indolently. However, if the bath is partly a means of escape from daily drudgery, the hands are free to relax quietly in the gentle, soothing liquid which serves as an opiate to dull, unpleasant, and troubled thoughts.

The length of time spent is one of the most attractive aspects of this sort of bath. There must be no feeling of hurry—the bath is the all-important thing. The extent of the rite is decided in the tub and is purely a matter of personal taste. When one has reached the saturation point—in comfort and lethargy—that is the time to begin to think about bringing the bath to an end. Before this happens, the enthusiastic bather has added much more hot water until he is all but floating. This is a desirable state from which it is difficult to emerge, but by that time, a considerable period of time has elapsed and the more mundane affairs must be considered, so, with an admirable show of will-power, the weak and wrinkled bather lets the water out, and this process necessitates either getting out of the tub or remaining sitting there without any reason—or water. After a brisk rubbing with a large towel, he is ready for anything.

The obvious question now is, "When does one get clean?" That is unimportant, because that was not the real purpose of the bath. A consideration of the practical side of bathing is out of place here.

—Florence Coss, '43.

The Triangle

Anthony Pinch, a bag of gold, and Sin
Stonily sat together in a room.
Strange that these three, staunch friends for years,
Should sit surrounded by a wall of bitter gloom!

None of them spoke. The man was dead.
Killed by his own hand, and with no regret.
The bag of gold stared coldly at the floor,
And Sin lighted a cigarette.

Anthony's soul leaned on the windowpane,
Shivered a bit, and looked into the blue;
And being a starving soul, and thinly clad,
It scarcely ruffled the curtains passing through.

—Ruth Lynch, '44.

To a Light Bulb

You cannot mend a light bulb when it burns
Its filament to nothing. Let it pass.
The most persistent mechanic learns
The absolute futility of glass.

You cannot mend a love whose ebbing fire
Proclaims its life of incandescence done;
Even a poet, commonly a liar,
Will say go out and get a better one.

—Ruth Lynch, '44.

A Letter for Janet

October 20, 1942.

Dear Janet:

If you were only ten again, you would be out in the yard today building a wonderful house of leaves. It would be one of the first dream houses that you had ever planned and so I would be sitting near the window in order to watch your sturdy little body bustle about in an effort to carry out the commands of your busy imagination as fast as it could furnish them. When you gave a final loving pat to an undefined heap of golden leaves that was to you a plump red sofa and tossed back one long smooth braid with a satisfied air, I would know that I must lay aside my work and prepare to follow you into your charming house of leaves; for you soon would come skipping in to beg me to pretend that I was your sister just arriving from Omaha for a visit. Never able to resist your entreaties, I would "make-believe" with you in a yard full of leaves that through the magic of your imagination had become a home for a day.

When your braids were cut and your hair was styled to suit a "junior miss," I visited no more charming leaf houses. Expression for all your dreams was found in a notebook entitled, "House Planning." As I carefully turned the pages with you, I learned why my copies of *The American Home* and *The House Beautiful* had been cut up and torn beyond recognition; for there in gleaming splendor were pictures of rambling colonial houses with huge white pillars, winding staircases with rich velvet carpeting, and luxuriant guest rooms with beruffled canopies over the four-poster beds. Never had a more elaborate house been built than the one which you assembled in your cherished notebook.

I remember still the enthusiasm with which you kept your plans alive in your notebook; even so, keep your dreams alive in your heart by means of your hope and faith in tomorrow. Do not let your dreams die today because war does not allow for planning or realization of plans. Even as the wind sent your house of leaves swirling away into the neighbor's yard, so the war is sweeping all plans away into the future. But remember, Janet, that as a little girl you always had the courage to gather up the scattered leaves and build again some calmer day; so do not be afraid to gather in

your dreams and be ready to realize them in the peace and security that a tomorrow will surely bring.

Your loving mother.

—Marjorie Foster, '44.

The Conqueror

The fog sweeps in conquering the land in its dictatorial grasp. There is no struggle. How can there be? One cannot fight this thing which unseen, unheard, overpowers man's keenest weapons. The fog covers the land with his dripping hands, till even the shape of things has changed. The deep abyss is level with the hilltop. The golden leaves are camouflaged to gray.

No escape is possible. His soldiers lurk in every spot with always more in the hidden corners where man might flee.

The darkness presses down. An incredible dimness comes over the brightest lights. Narrow arrows pierce lights on the street. Gray fingers reach within the house to surround the glowing bulbs. Only the leaping grate-flames are strong enough to hold off the usurper.

Darkness and silence—man's most dread enemies reign. The sharp wail of the whistle becomes the low wail of a ghost. The street-car's clang is a low jangle. The city's murmuring protest is smothered.

Slowly but steadily the last spark of light dies. Man's eyes are glazed and wide. His lips move witlessly. His mind is halted. Doggedly he plods about his work as the fog's whip lashes. Blindly his hands grope for life. Steadily his days pass by.

The conqueror is unrelenting. There is no outcry, only deep resignation. But finally man's mind begins to stir. A band of light steals around the edge of the gray. The flame leaps up, till all is glaring bright and man is free once more.

—Eleanor Thorpe, '43.

Storm

'Twas a bright and busy morning;
My gay spirits bounded high.
In all the world there was, that hour,
None happier than I.

In the golden glow of mid-day
While the world was happy still,
The blackest cloud I ever saw
Came up behind the hill.

Through the silver hush of twilight,
The storm raged wild and fierce,
Your words like arrows flying by
Sought out my heart to pierce.

At the blackest hour—at midnight,
No refuge could I find,
No thoughts for consolation then
To ease my troubled mind.

But the faint pink flush of dawning
When the long black night was o'er,
Brought to my soul a restful peace
I had not known before.

—Mary Ellen Snyder, '44.

Return

Judith watched the familiar farm lands blur past her window as the Evening Passenger drew close to Daleton. Memories welled up with the lump in her throat and she shrugged vainly as if to push them back. It had taken three years to get courage to face these memories, and somehow, even yet, she was afraid. It wasn't the town, with its memories of her parents, or the house, that must still be alive with the activities of the suddenly scattered Marshalls; it was the memory of Kern. As the weathered gray of the railroad siding slid slowly past the train, she grimaced slightly. Daleton meant Kern. She knew now, as she remembered the town, that every street corner, every shaded walk, and a million and one hallowed spots would bring Kern back to her. When she had thought of coming home these past three years, it had always meant coming home to Kern.

Coming home was a crazy idea, she told herself as she stepped down from the train. It had been Pete's idea. "Go home for a week. Get the small town American's reaction to the war before you leave for London," thus he had closed his announcement of her first foreign assignment. Excitement bred in the thought of being in London under fire, of coming home for the first time in three years, of possibly seeing Kern, had carried her through the swift hours, until now. Fear gripped her quickly as she turned up Main Street. Dreaming pipe dreams, that's what you've been doing, she thought sharply, steadying herself. For three years you've been telling yourself that Kern wasn't the man, that you didn't want him, and here you are, wanting, almost praying that you'll see him, and still afraid, that when you do you'll find that all the memories, and the dreams of reconciliation that you have built on those memories are shattered.

As her high heels ticked off her walk down Main Street, and her eyes wandered at will to familiar places, the memories of Kern came rushing back: Kern, bronze in a white jersey, smiling down at her in Timmy's; Kern, grim and determined, as the deadline at the *Press* neared and the linotype jumbled threateningly; Kern, cocksure with a hint of Bourbon on his breath, saying, "What's the matter, Judy," the long, silent battle of bitterness; Kern, with his sharp, cutting "This is goodbye then, Judy," and then, just sitting there on the steps alone.

As suddenly as that he had changed from a man into a memory. Her abrupt departure to Aunt Kathy's, the absorbing job on the *Chronicle*, and the almost miraculous climb from cub to special reporter had aided the transformation. The past three years had been so swift, so fast moving that there had been little time to do more than glance back, no time to go back to salve old wounds. Kern was just a memory, but a crying, aching memory that had haunted her as she watched the dusk fall over city parks, and had made every man she met a reminder of himself. Yes, Kern was a memory, but, she told herself softly as she unlocked the door at home, he's a memory that might be transformed once more into a man.

The house was dark and dusty. Her parents had closed it several months ago to escape the loneliness without the young Marshalls. As she set her bag down in the front hall and turned on the lights, she almost dreaded the week she was to spend here. The house was lonely, and for a moment she regretted the assignment that had brought her home. Her room was much the same as she remembered it, with the east window looking down on the curving walk and the concrete steps leading to the dimly-lit street. Further down the block, the lights of Main Street blinked in flashing replica of city advertising. She unpacked slowly, thinking of Pete and the new assignment, of Kern and the times she had told him good night on these concrete steps. She smiled as she thought of the long hours they had spent on the *Press*, putting it to bed about this time of night, wandering over to Timmy's for coffee and a dance, then coming home to sink quietly onto the steps in silence. Those quiet understanding silences had marked the serenity of their relationship.

Judy changed from her traveling costume into a sweater and plaid skirt, letting her hair fall softly to her shoulders. She looked as completely like a high school girl as the snapshot of her and Kern that still clung to the mirror border. The sweater was the color of rich cream, and her hair lay almost like chocolate topping. Judy became conscious that she was hungry. The kitchen would be empty for sure. Perhaps Timmy's was open.

Timmy remembered her.

"Coffee, Judy?" It was almost as if she were still a steady customer. Timmy's hadn't changed. There was still the long, narrow

counter, the row of worn stools, the tiny tables with their immaculate covers, crowded into the small room; and through the archway, she caught the reflection of the nickelodeon on the dancefloor.

"Yes, coffee, Timmy." She wound her legs casually about the stool. How is everything? War bothering you much?"

"No, the war isn't bad on business at all. Sorta tough on help, though." Timmy slid the cup of coffee across the geometric patterns of the counter topping. Judy sipped it thoughtfully. The war shouldn't bother Timmy's help: Young Tim usually was all the help he needed.

"How about Young Tim?"

"He's in the Air Corps. It's the popular branch of the service here. Most of the youngsters have gone." Youngsters: the word hit Judy. She and Kern and Young Tim were youngsters to Timmy. They always had been. Perhaps Kern was gone, too. It seemed as though her heart would never stop sinking. She groped for words.

"How about Kern?" But Timmy was smiling warmly.

"Still thinking about him, eh, Judy?" Timmy's hand across hers was fatherly. She nodded mutely, and Timmy went on. "Folks around here have been saying that you'd probably have found another man in Chicago. I kinda hoped not. You know, Judy, you and Kern, well, I sorta hoped."

"Me, too, Timmy." Timmy was still Father Confessor. Things hadn't changed a lot.

"Then why did you run out on him that way? Honest, Judy, he was pretty nigh washed up there for a while." Timmy poured himself a cup of coffee. "The *Press* almost went to pot, people were getting pretty fed up, and then he snapped out of it."

"Out of what, Timmy?" She knew what, but she hoped apprehensively that she was wrong.

"You know, the bottle. Every Sheean has to hit the raw edge of a bottle before he straightens up. His father, all his family, has done it that way. Don't think he's touched a drop for a long time, though. The *Press* is the best paper in this corner of the state."

"Who's helping at the *Press* now?" Judy could almost imagine. It would be one of the Laird girls with their cheap, trite newspaper

phrases; or male-minded Peggy Quimby. From her mother's last letter, they seemed to be the only girls left in town. Kern would enjoy having them at the *Press*, she tortured herself.

Timmy would have answered, but as she asked her question, the shop door opened. She swung around on the stool to follow Tim's gaze. Too stunned to be sure, she watched the lank form of the new customer settle onto a stool. Before she was certain, she caught the familiar words, "Supper for a tired printer, Timmy?" It was Kern then. The light in the shop was dim, and she hadn't been sure. Kern! It seemed as though she couldn't breathe; her heart was pounding so fast. She wanted to look at him, to touch him, to feel the taut, strong shoulders under her hands. If only it were a real homecoming and Kern were there to welcome her. But it wasn't. She could hear that same voice saying "This is goodbye then, Judy." And she couldn't help remembering how completely it was goodbye.

Timmy was talking gaily, mischievously. "There's a girl here asking about a job at the *Press*." But he's mistaken, Judy told herself excitedly, I'm not home to stay. He must understand that. Then like a dawn, she realized what Timmy was doing! Timmy, who could mend anything.

Kern had turned toward her, as Judy slid off her stool and moved to the front of the shop. "Judy!" His voice was rich and eager. Judy's heart sang.

"About the job on the *Press*?" she continued to play Timmy's game. Her voice was cool, impersonal, completely-stranger. "Do you need someone?" Oh, oh, wrong card to play, she warned herself, as she watched the smile fade from Kern's face. It was all gone. He was business, hard and sharp.

"You know, Miss Marshall, you're almost blacklisted at the *Press*." Judy stiffened hotly. "Your abrupt departure some time ago," he offered in cool explanation. "Besides, I don't think we need reforming." So things really hadn't changed. Kern was still ranking under that last bitter quarrel. Well, Miss Marshall, she clipped the words off angrily in her mind, that settles any hopes you may have had. Please have the kindness to get out before you make a fool of yourself. Already tears started in her eyes. She searched her purse for a dime for the coffee, and slid it across the counter trying not to meet Timmy's eyes.

"G'night, Timmy." She bit her lips as she faced Kern. "I'm not reforming printers these days, Mr. Sheean." The words were cold, cutting, and as she turned toward home, she hated herself for saying them. Tears brimmed over onto her cheeks, and she made no attempt to dry them. "Fool, fool, stupid, miserable fool!" The words rang over and over again in her mind. You build a lot of hopes like a silly school girl, and then behave like one to boot.

The house was high and grim atop the gently curving terrace. It would be lonely, and dark, and still, and Judy felt she couldn't stand loneliness, or darkness, or stillness. So she sat down where the evergreens made a deep shadow on the concrete steps, and as her tears dried, stared morosely at the dim circle of the street light. "Back on the same old steps. I don't seem to have gone far in the world," she murmured to herself and to the steps.

Remembering Kern as he had looked when they had talked here on the steps, Judy regretted her recent behavior. Kern had hated pretense, sham sophistication. Why hadn't she been sincere when she talked to him at Timmy's? She could see Kern in her mind as he used to be here in the shadows with her, his face a woodcut of black shadows and gold-tinted highlights, his shirt, white, catching the light from the street, and his voice, low, eager, and swift moving. Judy bent her face down and felt the harsh weave of the plaid on her cheek. She was a silly, stupid fool for quarreling with Kern, for coming back, for everything. Yet the words ran over and over in her mind, "I still want him." Still want him: the lanky figure, relaxed on the restaurant stool, the strong, taut shoulders, the bronzed arms with the fingers that bit into her arms as he kissed her, the blue eyes with their outline of black lashes that looked down with a love that matched her own, the laugh that came like an "all clear" signal at the end of a quarrel. Yes, she wanted him. "Oh, Kern!" she said despairingly aloud.

"What, Judy?" She drew her head up quickly. It couldn't be Kern! But it was. He stood at the bottom of the steps, outlined against the street light. She hadn't heard him coming; her thoughts had been too absorbing. But Kern was here.

"Kern, oh Kern!" His arms were around her as if he would never let her go, and her breath came with difficulty, but it was Kern, and he was kissing her. Everything was gone. There were not three years

without him, there were not bitterness and quarreling, there was just Kern.

The night was lovelier than Judy had thought, with the moon tracing silver and black patterns across the lawn, and the crickets keeping the night in tune. They made a rhythmic background for Kern's voice as he was saying: "Timmy told me to come up. I thought when you asked me about a job you were just taunting. You know, big shot comes home. I thought I'd give it right back to you. I'm sorry, Judy, honest." Then there were just the crickets, until Judy heard her own voice.

"I'm sorry, too, Kern. All the things I said, the way I ran out on you, on the job rather. I didn't mean to reform you, it was just that . . ." The right word wouldn't come. Then Kern helped.

"Just that Sheeans and whiskey shouldn't mix, don't you mean?" He was grinning. "I know it, but a Sheean has to almost drown himself in the stuff before he's sure. You know an Irishman never believes anyone but himself."

"What are you believing about yourself these days, then?"

"Just, Sheeans and whiskey shouldn't mix. And, what's more, I believe myself." His eyes were a sparkly, blarney-Irish as the street light caught them. As he tilted her chin to kiss her, he was just like he had always been, laughing, gay, affectionate.

"How about the *Press*? How is it?" Kern looked sober for an instant.

"I've just finished my affairs with the *Press* for a while. I'm going into something else."

"But, Kern, we promised each other we'd publish the *Press* together. You can't quit!" Kern couldn't leave their plans to run the *Press* as a model small town weekly. They were once so complete in detail, so full of the dreams of a partnership. But those plans were made three years ago, maybe it was different now. Maybe he didn't remember the plans.

"I'm not quitting, Judy, I've just got something, that is, a big story to cover." But that sounded so far from plausible that Judy knew her doubt was obvious. "Okay, Sis, if you want it right on the chin, Mr. Sheean is going to war. Navy Air Corps.

"Air corps?" Her voice sounded hazy. "But the *Press*?"

"A kid who was with me at the University is coming up to work on it 'til I get back. Unless you want the job."

Judy almost regretted the London assignment. The *Press* would be a part of Kern to hold to. The war, not seeing him, knowing he was in constant danger would be demoralizing, disconcerting. But to be in Daleton, with just memories to walk with, would be unbearable now. "I'm covering your same big story, Kern. The *Chronicle* finally gave me a London assignment."

"London! Gee whiz. Wish you'd represent the *Press* there, too." As his soft laugh passed, the silence was thought-filled.

"Kern, those three years. I hate to think how they were wasted," she ventured.

"I know it, Judy. I've only got four days before I go. I'd hate to waste them, too." He drew her closer to him, and the crickets seemed to step the tempo up. Her cheek brushed against the soft jersey of his shirt, and her lungs ached with breath that didn't come fast enough. Four days together after three years. No, they weren't to be wasted.

"Judy, about the *Press*." His voice came through a maze of cricket sounds. "It's going to need somebody besides me after the war. That is, if we put our plans into action. Want the job?"

"Yes, Kern." Judy's heart sang: Just like before, the linotype jumbling threateningly, putting the *Press* to bed, coffee and dancing at Timmy's, sitting here on the steps, after the war.

"But Judy, there's a new requirement for the job. Something a little more permanent than that verbal contract we had before."

"Such as?" That wasn't like Kern to require a contract from her.

"Well, I'd sort of like a marriage license." Kern twisted a brown curl around his finger, then bent to kiss her. It was like a dream, like the dreams that crying, aching memory of Kern had brought to her as dusk fell in a city park, and only when Judy heard her own voice saying, "Yes, Kern," was the dream a reality.

—Mary Jean Logan, '45.

It's Spring

Why do young maids dress more sightly?
Why do young lads whistle lightly?
Why do old folks walk more sprightly?
I know—it's spring.

Why do stars now twinkle nightly,
And the old moon shine more brightly?
Why do couples hold hands tightly?
I know—it's spring.

—Mary Ellen Snyder, '44.

A Rondeau

Pull up a chair and sit a while
And reminisce with me. We'll smile
At joys we knew once long ago;
We'll talk of friendly folks we know,
And thus the lonely hours beguile.

Remember when we trudged a mile
To visit friends? Now we just dial
And say, "Hello." Oh, please don't go;
Pull up a chair.

We'll talk about the modern style
Of life, and of our private trial.
We'll talk of children—how they grow,
And why it is we love them so.
We'll bring out thoughts we've had on file;
Pull up a chair.

—Mary Ellen Snyder, '44.

