

Christmas 1951

# *The Gryphon*



One Shilling



Tonight is lying on hay  
The Prince from Heaven.  
The Shepherds are praying in silence  
Soon all bells will ring.

Shepherds, let's run altogether  
To the stable of Bethlehem,  
Take ice-flowers from the windows  
Decorate it with the blossoms of frost.

Let's decorate his stable  
With our sorrows and with blossoms,  
Let's kneel down and pray—  
And our sins will be forgiven.

# THE GRYPHON



*Christmas*  
*1951*

JOURNAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

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FRONTISPIECE, TITLE-PAGE BLOCK AND ILLUSTRATION

by

*Gerald Robinson*

# EDITORIAL

*Bringing Ourselves Up for Flight* A few years ago we met a woman with two small children, not long fled from war and revolution in Hungary. We remarked how happy the children were despite the hazards and privations of their lives, and their mother, who had grown up in security herself, said philosophically that she had "brought them up for flight."

The man—or myth, or Master—whose birth is celebrated at Christmas had also to flee tyranny in infancy and grew up to teach of a life whose joys did not depend on great possessions but on right relationships between man and man, and man and God. Many of us are ignorant of his gospel because there is apathy in Christian congregations or because church practices do not meet our needs. Neither are these met by our secular education, which gives us something to live at, seldom anything to live by. (Too few university graduates would deserve a first for honours in the art of living a full life.) We may well pause at the winter solstice, lay preconceptions aside, and read the New Testament with an open mind—and in a modern translation. It can, we believe, show us something to live by. It can "bring us up for flight" not in the sense of running away from evils but in being prepared to overcome them. We need to study Christianity's deep and difficult truths if we are to succeed in the most urgent task of our generation; which is neither to create nor to destroy, but to reconcile.

*Vaguely* There is time and place for vagueness in expression but we are concerned to note its increase where sharp should be the word. Too many people speak of vaguely seeing things when we are sure they can actually see them well but are too lazy to say so, or to look at them properly. "Vaguely" is following those other blunt instruments "sort of" and "kind of" into the language and doing it no good. We foresee a time when Edwin will say to his adored: "I vaguely feel that I sort of love you in a kind of way." If he does we hope Angelina will answer him crisply with a sharp clip over the ear.

***The Gryphon and the Sphinx*** From the description of the scroll presented to H.R.H. the Princess Royal at her Installation as Chancellor of the University on November 9th :

*The vert and gules gryphon or griffin represents the student body of the university . . . the Greek sphinx sejant gules . . . is the crest of the University arms.*

From the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary :

*Sphinx: A thing . . . of an inscrutable or mysterious nature.*

From "Alice in Wonderland":

*The Gryphon sat up and rubbed its eyes: then it watched the Queen till she was out of sight: then it chuckled. "What fun!" said the Gryphon, half to itself, half to Alice. "What is the fun?" said Alice. "Why, she," said the Gryphon. "It's all her fancy, that: they never executes nobody, you know. Come on!" "Everybody says 'come on!' here," thought Alice, as she went slowly after it: "I never was so ordered about in all my life. never!"*

This *Gryphon*, too, sometimes says "What fun!" and puts a cat among the pigeons in the form of a controversial article, since our pages must be open to controversy on matters of general importance to students and the University at large. That is to provoke thought—to say, in effect, "Come on!" We never really executes nobody, you know. So come on!

*John Gardner***“BRIGHT LIGHTS IN THE SKY”**

CAPTAIN SWARBRICK SMILED at the new intake of recruits and the line of his mouth was carried earwards by the tendrils of his elegant cavalry moustache.

He had spoken for twenty minutes and the gist of his one-sided conversation with those before him was, in a word : “Toughness is all.”

The first signs of autumn showed on the surrounding vegetation. a strong and chilling wind blew into the bodies of the paraded unfortunates and Captain Swarbrick’s face glowed Rugby-Union-Football-Club-good-health. While his Sergeant-instructors stood rigidly and ruggedly to attention, the Captain intimated to three stalwart Lieutenants that the time had come for them to “carry on.” The three Sergeants leaped into the inevitable breach and marched off the subjects of their every whim.

In the marquee, which served twenty-seven men and three lance-corporals as hotel, casino, library and later, hospital, the scene was all activity. Men were coalesced into groups of mutual commiserators and evil prognosticators, when, in the midst of all entered a sergeant, followed by a juvenile lieutenant with the face of a young ape ; the “room” shunned and the pseudo-simian began his oration, his voice betraying evidence of a classical education at Uppingham, which had not merited his entry into the sixth-form but had obtained him a closed scholarship at Balliol.

“Now I want you all to be perfectly happy here,” a most delightful display of arrant disinterested hypocrisy, “If you have any complaints bring ’em straight to me. This is Sergeant Wilson—just do exactly what he says and no harm can come to you—that’s right isn’t it Sergeant ?”

Twenty-seven pairs of eyes moved to the uncomely face of Sergeant Wilson. A man of some thirty-five summers, he was revoltingly, not to say disgustingly, healthy—at his happiest



running backwards round a parade ground with an easterly gale blowing and a platoon of "The Less Fit" attempting to gain some measure of health and happiness by abortively chasing him.

The Lieutenant disappeared as Sergeant Wilson spoke in his concise town-bred accents: "Nah wot we're a going on wiv nah"—the eternal lecturers' gambit, remembered Private Smith, even though he had heard it last in rather a different dialect, though one hardly as imposing.

"Nah wot we're a going on wiv nah is just a little get togever so's we know who's who. As yer all know I'm Sergeant Wilson. Some of yer will 'ave 'eard of me before, just pass it rahnd and bear in mind everythink yer 'ear—it's orl true." A delicious smile, strangely reminiscent of that of an eight-month old baby, creased his rugged face and displayed a set of teeth in assorted sizes and colours. His smile faded as he regarded the faces of those around him, all of them too pale and ascetic for his personal taste. He started upon his introductory circuit with the usual method of name, occupation, interests, and a few well applauded jokes. He found a farm labourer, a steel worker, a shop-assistant, bar tender, librarian, leather worker: a misplaced son of toil from almost every industry and behold, the lowest of the low, Smith, an ex-student.

"Job."

"Er . . . I was a student."

"Oh yeah, what did you do for a living?"

"Well, I worked for the Post Office at Christmas."

"Yeah, I know, Chelsea Perishers, knit socks—I mean how did you get your money?"

"Well, I had a grant and a small allowance from home—"

"Oh, yer didn't ackcherly work then?"

"Well, yes, but—"

"Sounds to me like you was a spiv!"

"Well, hardly, you know we worked—"

"Yeah, yeah, I know, met your type before, any interests apart from being a student?"

“ Well, I was a member of the Chemical Society.”

“ Oh, the Chemical Society—playing with stinks, eh! Ha! Ha! Ha! ”

The ex-student joined in the general hilarity : any port in a storm—

“ You’ll find this ’ere a bit different from yer cushioned seats of learning.”

Sergeant Wilson passed on to the next man and so to the end, when he paused at the tent flap.

“ Right, reveille at 5-30 to-morrer and parade 6-15 for breakfast. That may be a bit early for some of yer but you’ll find that if yer splashes yer faces in nice cold water in the morning you’ll soon be wide awake ”—and with that he went.

The morning dawned misty and cold with a chilling breeze. Sergeant Wilson rolled heavily out of his bed and walked naked out of his tent, his large body a little stiff in its first release from sleep. Outside he breathed deeply in the dawn air, exercising his torso by the side of his tent where, he was afraid, no one could see him. With a powerful swing of one arm he raised a bucket of icy water and drenched himself. Sergeant Wilson was now very much awake. A quick towelling and a run round the parade ground put him into his usual lionish spirits and he dressed rapidly in his neatly pressed uniform to begin another day’s work.

The day for a recruit was one of discovery that he really was rusty in every bone, joint and muscle. Everyone suffered, and Smith especially found himself performing uncomfortably and not too well and becoming an easy target for Sergeant Wilson.

The days ached past and Sergeant Wilson drilled his men in toughness ; and of all of them “ Stinker Smith ” particularly became daily harder and more robust. Smith objected to his name, but his chemical associations clung closer than he would otherwise have liked until one day Sergeant Wilson caught him sneering in his reply.

“ Right, my boy—cook-house duties for you all this week, Smith.”

Only too well did he know what this meant—cleaning, scrubbing, and polishing the kitchen after a hard day's physical training; he groaned just at the thought.

As the week passed by Smith's heart hardened against Sergeant Wilson, and on Wednesday night as he returned across the frozen grass past Sergeant Wilson's tent to the marquee a plan began to form in his mind.

On Thursday evening he hurried to the cook-house and busied himself in the butcher's shop. He worked hard for some time and looking around him before he left he eased open a window.

Smith turned into bed at once when he got back to the tent but strangely made every effort to keep awake. At 1 a.m. he crept out of the marquee, crossed to the butcher's shop, slipped the window up and entered. A minute later he climbed out with a bundle under his arm. Quickly he carried it back across the grass, pausing for a moment at Sergeant Wilson's tent. Two minutes later he was in bed and sleeping the proverbial sleep of the just.

The morning dawned misty and cold with a biting wind. Sergeant Wilson rolled heavily out of his bed and walked naked out of his tent, his large body a little stiff in its first release from sleep. Outside he breathed deeply in the dawn air, expelling great gusts of vapour, and with a swing of his arm he raised his morning shower, glancing with self-approbation at the usual frozen film the water would break through.

Suddenly the sky was illuminated with a whole galaxy of stars—planets shot across his view and bright lights suffused his sight. With a look of shocked surprise Sergeant Wilson crumpled to his knees and collapsed heavily on his face over a large block of ice.

## Conway Broughton

### THE PARKINSON BUILDING

IT WAS A HEADMASTER who once remarked that end-of-term reports always told him less of his pupils than they did of his staff. So it is with criticism and, to be particular, with Mr. Evens' recent strictures of Mr. Lodge's architecture. For here we have an onslaught made in true battle-axe and bludgeon style, that tells us remarkably little about the buildings and remarkably much about Tim. We shall deal first with him and then with the object of his attack—the Parkinson and Brotherton buildings. You must forgive us if we spill more of our ink upon the latter—they are bigger, in every way.

First, Mr. Evens is potentially schizophrenic. He opens with a democratic appeal to all of us "vigorously and sensibly [to] criticise the buildings that we use" because "Architecture concerns every one of us"; but he closes with doubts and questions about our "state of visual education" and of the ability of university committees to have an "eye for good design," because they have apparently neither received the right kind of education nor had the leisure in later life to acquire it. Charming!

A second dichotomy in his reasoning can be detected in his constant appeals to the Greek and the Good, and his equally frequent reference to the Useful and the Practical. As so much of the art of architecture derives from a living reconciliation of form with use, we must not blame Mr. Evens too much; but this irresolution is a peculiar trait; the device of a sly skirmisher who shifts his ground from one canon of criticism to another, the more subtly to throw his darts.

Careful study of this article may excuse us for assessing Mr. Evens as a critic in much the same terms as he has assessed Mr. Lodge as a designer of lanterns:

"Surely the *critic* is here far gone in inflammation of the *judicial* faculties. His *logic* reads like nothing on earth."

### The Parkinson Building.

Mr. Thomas Lodge has the advantage of Mr. Evens in that, being a practising architect, he possesses a piece of knowledge that is, I am told, rarely acquired until one has left the lecture-room far behind. It is the fact that buildings have to stand on something. This something is called L-A-N-D. It is (for Mr. Evens' information) rarely level, and in towns is generally circumscribed by other buildings, by roads, and—as one builds up—by the demands of light, air and silhouette. These are sometimes referred to collectively as the Problems of the Site. With these in mind may I ask you—in lieu of the usual “point-to-point” race over the ground that Mr. Evens has covered—this would be a very slow business because of the mud—may I ask you to perform a very simple exercise? Look at the Parkinson and then at the Civic Hall. You will find each in an angle of roads and on a slope that demands a bold front downhill. Then read the description of the March Hare's House in “Alice in Wonderland” (with its gables like two ears). Then think of the hundreds of rooms in each building, all demanding fresh air and a view; and remember how thousands of freshers climb Woodhouse Lane for the first view of a goal that has lain ahead of them for a long, long time. Then do it all again by night. “Thin neck,” was that how he described that tower?

Within the Parkinson there is a problem and a challenge. Mr. Evens states this clearly: “if this place was or is to be a meeting-place, why no provision for refreshments? and why no furniture?” Ignoring Mr. Evens' *petitio principii* of: “there *can* be no furniture” and taking up the challenge which in his headlong course he has left unanswered, I would say that this Central Court could, and should, be all that its founder desired and its architect planned. But first three fresh conditions must be fulfilled. That this is so implies no fault in Mr. Lodge because to achieve this end we now require architecture of a different sort than that which deals with mortar, metal and stone.

To fill any room with people in the course of a working day—be they students, young or old, office staffs or workpeople—

a threefold provision of Food, Furniture and Friendship is required. Let us call them the three F's of sociality. Coffee and tea bays surrounded by a periphery of light chairs and tables should form the basis of the physical provision. More important than that would be the custom to which staff and students must contribute, which will bring the Court into its proper use. "Competition with the Union?" you ask. No. The Union is much too crowded. Friendships grow in intimacy not in crowds. It is outside the scope of this article to detail the moves—which after all, should be allowed spontaneous growth. This generation has the chance to create a fine tradition if, instead of abusing those who provided the environment, it has the imagination to use the opportunities which this environment gives. At present these lie locked up within the spontaneity of each one of us; and only we can turn the key.

### The Brotherton.

Libraries can be "open" or "closed." The closed library is one where all the books are ordered on slips of paper and brought by attendants. They are rectangular affairs with storerooms, lifts and long corridors. In them the association of shelf and reading desk is incidental. An open shelf library, such as the Brotherton, is based on two simple needs—quick access to the catalogue and a short distance from catalogue to book. Here I must tell Mr. Evens yet another secret that architects learn only when they begin to practise. It is the astounding fact that *every* part of a circumference is equidistant from its centre. If you, or he, ponder upon this, preferably leaning over a rail in the upper gallery of the Brotherton, the question of "why a round library?" answers itself. The more complicated question of "rational expansion" will doubtless be solved much as Oxford solved that of the expansion of the old Bodleian to the Radcliffe Camera: and thence to the New Bodleian. By the time these matters are urgent a closed-shelf library for research literature will enable the Brotherton, still open-shelved and still convenient, to continue to serve the day-to-day needs of the ordinary student.

At this point I become traitor. The "brown and dingy

green and dirty gilt" do not disturb me—I like *things* to be unobtrusive when I am with my books. But I find myself unable to disagree with anything Mr. Evens says about that lantern. I would even add a further criticism. Things in libraries should not, as I said, obtrude. I always read there in the fear lest the Brotherton lantern should drop. Jolly good so far as the lantern is concerned; but think of the catalogue and the clocks!

There is another point that Mr. Evens has overlooked. Just as Greek groves acquired a *genius loci*, so has the Brotherton. Her name is announced as we enter. We are bidden to perform grave rites to serve her nice demands. She is (I say it with awe) the Heating System. And this is MUCH TOO HOT. Slumber is not unknown in university libraries but need the authorities go out of their way to induce it? It has long been my conviction that were the temperature to fall by ten degrees, the pass list would rise by as many points per cent.

The Parkinson and Brotherton buildings are part of a much larger plan. We have seen this plan and know its splendid extent. These buildings are the portals and entrances to a University which is the highest thing in Leeds and, in every way, deserves to be so. Because the future parts are not yet built they look out of proportion and pretentious. So did the stripling walls of Rome to Remus. He jumped over them in much the same spirit of bravado as Mr. Evens has sought to leap over the first phases of Mr. Lodge's larger scheme. Yet I feel that neither the architect nor any others of us will worry much nor love Mr. Evens the less; because we all carry a strand of sympathy for Remus. Remus *did* have a sense of fun and, even if one cannot be logical or consistent or in any sense an architect one can, like Remus and Mr. Evens, keep fit and alive by being mischievous and gay at heart.

(Mr. EVENS writes: "Now that readers have been shown several sides of the question it is for them to form their own opinions. If my article has helped people to think about architecture, its complexity and its implications, then its "onslaught" will have been worthwhile."—ED.)

## TO THE EDITOR OF "THE GRYPHON"

Dear Sir,

Mr. Evens' sweeping attack on the University's new buildings provokes reply on many points.

It is not surprising that a building designed 25 years ago should reflect the trend of its times. At a period when "modern" architecture was experimental, forbiddingly functional, and often ugly, the architect was justified in choosing a style which had tested values: even so he has incorporated much of the smoothness of modern designs into his plans, thus combining a feeling of adventure with his use of the traditional.

My second point is one which your critic admits before brushing it aside. Sunshine on Portland stone is very pleasant and that is a very good reason for using it as a facing material, even though cost may make it impracticable to use on all sides. And although the façade may not square up to standards of absolute honesty, it is dramatic in its effect. Mr. Evens is worried by the lack of a pediment over the main entrance, but its absence is compensated for by the climax of the tower. Mr. Evens thinks the Parkinson lacks adventure but doesn't like this tower. Surely it is adventurous to be the highest thing in Leeds?

Your contributor next goes to town in his condemnation of the Central Court. It is true that this is a luxury and that there is little to be said for it from a utilitarian point of view. But everything else would have been an anti-climax after the promise of the façade, nor will the court be out of proportion to the size of the completed range of buildings—Mr. Evens seems to forget that final assessment cannot yet be made. As for the Brotherton, a round library with a dome on it seems to me fair enough. The dome gives a spacious and lofty effect where the building could so easily have been squat and depressing. And are the light oak reading desks really so impossible to work at comfortably? Mr. Evens' knees must be very awkward ones indeed. Nor is the lantern the anachronism that Mr. Evens thinks. Because the Greeks did not have electric light is no reason for denying us a lantern that is both functional and



decorative. Surely an architect can combine the virtues of both classical and modern design, so that each can profit from the other?

I think Mr. Lodge has done a very good job in difficult circumstances—hardly mentioned by your contributor. He had to cope with the changing needs of the University as reflected in the modifications put forward by his clients, the University authorities, during construction. Mr. Evens, in his comments, seems to have been overcome by the exuberance of his own verbosity on the subject. He certainly has not made that sensible critical assessment of this architecture which, he tells us, is so necessary.

Yours, etc.,

JOAN BARBER.

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### THE FEBRUARY "GRYPHON"

Copy will go to the printers on

MONDAY, 21st JANUARY

—will contributors please keep the date before them at the beginning of next term? All copy, and particularly that linked with unfamiliar names, goes into the *Gryphon* box in the Union hallway.

## CHRISTMAS FARE

### (1) INGREDIENTS FOR A GREAT CAKE

*(from a Cornish cookery book dated 1763)*

Five pounds of Butter, brought to a Cream

Five pounds of Floure

Three pounds of White Sugar

Seven pounds of Currants

Two shillings and sixpence worth in Perfume

Peel of two Oranges

One pint Good Canary

One half pint of Rosewater

Forty-three Eggs (half ye whites)

One pound of Citron

Keep ye Cake one Twelve Month.

### (2) RECEIPT FOR METHEGLIN (dated 1727).

To every quart of honey put a gallon of water, boyled about an hour before you put in ye Honey, then boyle both together an hour more, and scum it clean, then put in a bag, Ginger, Nutmeg, Cloves, Mace, and Cinamon, sufficient for this quantity. When 'tis cold enough you may put two spoonfuls of new Yest and put into ye vessel to work a little. To be sure 'tis strong enough trye it when ye Honey is melted, if 'twill bear an egg. If not, add more Honey, put ye bagge of Spice into ye vessel to remain tyed to a string to hang about ye middle of ye barrel with a stone to keep it from Swimming.

*Patricia Ball*  
DUMB SHOW

"I'M GOING OUT." "All right dear." Their words were engulfed in the silent space between them. Only his care in making his departure careless crossed it, shouting retreat.

Anyway, she would realise he was retreating, making an escape. She always did.

Now that the house was behind him, he could admit the thoughts, let them fall into step with him. It was only when sitting with her that he felt like a sulky child if he let them come. Why should she make him feel like that?

He got on a 'bus and swung upstairs on the crest of his surging independence. A sudden jerk sent him lurching into a seat with his overcoat rucked underneath him, and self pity uncoiled itself again. He stared with a blank 'bus stare at the heads in front of him, felt the eyes behind him, and hated them because he had not even kept the dignity of a stranger. To them he was the man who lost his balance and sat down in an untidy heap.

Back on the defensive, his grievances swelled. He could perhaps regain his true height if he saw himself in the mirror of justification. The threepenny piece in his hand turned its blunt edges and became a part of his mood. She let those silences form. Let them close around and between them like fogs. How could he—well—get through to her when that happened?

Pleased by his own metaphors he discovered that the man in front of him had oddly-shaped ears.

He settled himself more comfortably; he'd make an effort perhaps. After all, she might not think he was still interested in what was going on. He'd show her then—ask questions—encourage her.

The security of the 'bus ride was taking effect: he felt safely suspended above everything. Like time off from a job. Time to look on your own life as you patronisingly gazed on the weaving, threading pavements down below.

Yes, he'd been a fool. When he got back, he'd admit it. The whole scene took shape in his mind; his eyes settled on the brown trilby in front of him; he heard himself saying it all. "These silences must be as uncomfortable for you as for me. Shouldn't happen. Don't think I haven't felt them. Bad to talk for the sake of talking, of course. But we can manage better than this, you know."

He felt as relieved as if he had already said it, and expanded in his seat. It would be all right. Really, the way he'd left the house had been a bit childish. Poor old Louie. Couldn't blame her for thinking him a fool sometimes.

"Fares, please," thrust sharply into this meditation; to his annoyance he jumped and dropped his threepenny piece. His hat tipped over one ear as he grovelled for it. He had to ask the man in front to move his feet, while the conductor stood, in command and safe behind his uniform.

Setting his hat straight again he knew he did not believe the little scene he had just constructed. He could never say it; never launch himself into such a naked speech. The knowledge was hard; like having the dream of a cushion snatched away, leaving the elusive impression of an impossible comfort. Oh well. Perhaps there might be another way.

He got off the 'bus drearily. "Afternoon, Mr. Braithwaite."

"How d'ye do," he said. Who on earth was the woman?

"Wife all right?"

"Yes, thanks." That was it, some friend of Louie's. He remembered vaguely. Then he had an inspiration. "You must come round and see her. Us." It came out in a rush. "Your husband as well." He only hoped she was married.

"Er—thank you." Apparently she was.

"Louie's often said she wished you'd come," he elaborated, the excitement of his idea carrying him on.

"Has she? Oh—How nice."

"Come as soon as you can." He almost shouted at her, and read her bewilderment as pleased surprise.

Now he would go back home. Whatever it was he had come out for could wait. Anyway, he could not really remember

any reason ; it had been flight. But now it was all right. He thought of the little scene he had tried to live through on the 'bus. That wasn't the way to tackle things at all. Here was the tactful, satisfying answer. He gazed through the blank uninterest of glass windows as he worked it out, moving from one to another with the shopping baskets around him.

Louie, he'd say as soon as he shut the front door, guess who I saw this afternoon. She wouldn't be able to, of course. Then he'd tell her what he'd done. Invited one of her friends for an evening. Without prompting and pushing. Just done it. I thought you'd like it, you see—that's how he'd finish up. And she'd know he was apologising for these silences, at least she would when she got over the first surprise at his doing such a thing. But then, he fastened on to another point, wouldn't her surprise make her realise even more that he'd been worried, that he wanted to ease this strained atmosphere. Now that he had worked himself, in his new hope and excitement, beyond the fringe of his feelings, he knew just how much he did hate the situation. This must put it right. It would. He knew it would.

A bright haze settled over him as he went home. Louie and himself all right again. All right was the only way to describe it. There was so much to it ; but he did not mean harmony after discord, understanding after disagreement. He meant all right. That was enough. It made him feel comfortable in his coat and at ease in his pockets.

Shutting the gate behind him, savouring the moment before he went in, he saw someone going by on the other side of the road. The impression was vague—a moving figure—until his eye and his memory clapped together. It was the same woman. Louie's "friend." Question marks jostled in his head, and suddenly faded out again, leaving him looking at his hand gripping the wood of the gate. His eyes, as he remembered, were tracing the pattern of the graining, and resting on the bit that was peeling off.

She lived further down the road. She used to call for their savings money during the war, and chat to Louie for

a few minutes on the doorstep. Like a dying leaf Louie's casual voice sank into his drooping mind. "I wonder if that little woman who used to come here for the money is still about."

Well, he could tell her she was. He could make a whole sentence about it. Then he could tell her he had hailed her as an old friend. What was the use? He watched his feet walking up the path. He couldn't even remember who her friends were, that's what she'd say. And she was right. Fool. Why did he think he could do anything to put things right?

He turned his key in the lock and kicked aside the corpse of his buoyant mood as he banged the door. All right. What did the words mean anyway?

Louie heard the key and the door bang. There he was at last. Where the man went to she couldn't imagine. Perhaps this once he'd come back different. And everything would be all right again.

She looked at him on the peak of this thought, and turned away wearily. What was the use? If he'd only *try* to do something. It wouldn't matter what. But he never did.

*P. H. Beahan*

TIN IN LOVE

A sheet of cheap tin,  
    To clatter the street  
    To make the raindrops wince  
    To give a cheap-tin shine  
                            in the sun

Were my wishes.  
    To curl to a can  
    Keep a peach from the rot  
    Peach and I for the table  
                            of the gods

Are my needs.  
My final rusting  
    In a mud of stalks  
I'd endure  
    For my need to have been  
                            the keeping fresh  
Of the food of gods.

## Ronald Balaam

### ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS

A MEMBER OF AN UNIMPORTANT family in Ostia. Claudius Timarchus Polybius, known later to his church as Saint Walaric, led an uneventful life until he was thirty-seven, when, having no work to do to keep himself occupied, he was discovered in a plot against a local magnate, and forced to fly. Forcibly broken out of a provincial life he found he greatly enjoyed travel, but he was possessed of few commercial abilities, and away for the first time from his own familiar part of the country he was hard put to it to live. So he offered himself to the Christians, whom he'd joined at thirty-one, as a missionary, and set out on some carefree and pleasantly successful expeditions. He had, he learned, a flair for languages which made him valuable, and he was easy to get on with.

Travelling near the northern frontier of Italy he heard of a somewhat mysterious tribe which kept itself *to* itself, and was locally regarded as being of the elect. In spite of this, the surrounding tribes were growing resentful of the methods used in maintaining this supposed superiority. What he learned of it made Walaric perfect himself in a dialect that this tribe of Gepids would understand, and set out in some pomp (he was now a bishop) to convert them.

He found that part of their reputation came from their inaccessibility, secure as they were between mountains and swamps, and part from a superb backwardness in matters social and religious—they kept to traditions which had lapsed centuries before in the world around them, and when word of this leaked out it touched some chord of memory in the peoples around who felt that something ancient and therefore effective was being practised.

The Gepids were quite satisfied with their own religion—they worshipped a grove of oak trees. When the time came to make an important decision which would affect the whole



tribe they would raid into their neighbours' lands and return with half-a-dozen men or so—since they had a very good reason for preferring the strongest, their raiding-parties went in unnecessary strength, and would even then wait until they could cut off a single man—the Gepids had never had a great reputation as fighters. Returned with their victims they bound each one with his face to an oak, and all the men of the tribe filed round the group and gave each a lash with a leather thong. Those who survived one such circuit were then rewarded for their endurance by similar treatment in the second, the Gepids' object being of course to discover who had the greatest staying power. The one who *didn't* die was taken aside, and, although carefully guarded, made much of. His wounds were healed: he became an honorary member of the priesthood, and as such was entitled to a certain deference from the people of the tribe.

When he was quite better and in full health he was taken back to his same tree and tied again, this time facing outwards. He was then carefully disembowelled, and the augury for the Gepids' next move read in the still living entrails. As they were clumsy surgeons the Gepids had gone to the trouble mentioned above of finding a strong man, but even so the sacrifice would often die before the priests had made their reading. Sometimes all the men would die under the lashing, or the survivor refuse to get better, and this is why the Gepids were so long in making a great many important decisions as to have gained a reputation for being ultra-conservative.

Walaric was intrigued when he learned of this archaic procedure. They had been so impressed by his appearance and retinue, if not by his doctrine, that they'd done him the honour of putting the decision to their gods in their time-honoured way, and Walaric saw a means of making his point in line with local tradition. One of his followers was a converted barbarian with immense strength and fortitude in his small enough body—he had been tracker and hunter in Africa, and him Walaric offered to the oak grove in a competition with any two men of their own religion. It was unusual for the Gepids themselves to be set to augury, but the chieftain agreed and selected

two to uphold the established faith, and all three men were placed in position. Walaric himself with the chieftain led the long line of zealous thongers, and he was justified in his gamble when the second Gepid expired during the fourth circuit—which was completed at Walaric's request to show that his side had an ample margin.

Matters were thus in abeyance until the man was fully healed, a lengthy enough process. It was unfortunate that the local priests were conservatives of the conservative, and they were, alas, so little adept at the subsequent disembowelling that the fellow was distracted from crying out in the local tongue the convincing testament which had been carefully taught him. The bishop took it on himself to translate appropriately what his man had been saying in his own language: this the priests queried because of the tone of the utterances. They held that the augury had been firmly on the side of the trees: this the bishop queried, though with less effectiveness, on the grounds that a man from a far part of the world was differently constituted within.

Again, a deadlock, with local feeling hardening against the strangers. Fortunately, Walaric had found in the chieftain's consort a ready ear, and was able to put to her the less spectacular but more logical aspect of his case as he'd been trained to, with its emphases on a future security. She learned incidentally a great deal about secular Rome, which helped her decide for the new faith. She worked on her man for a while until he turned too, and the whole tribe was informed that it was enlightened and progressive beyond its forefathers, and had therefore adopted the outlanders' new creed. On learning that the (slight) risks of the raids after sacrifice-victims were ended they were well pleased, and any doubts they may have kept were dispelled when they saw the oaks calmly supporting the bodies of the former priesthood which had raised some objection. There was no absolute break, anyway—the church was built of the once sacred oak, the scourging of Our Lord in His Passion was seized upon with a respectful nostalgia, and various annual feasts were moved a day or so to fall on calendar feast-days. All was well, and envoys were sent to Rome.

Unfortunately, the Gepids' reform made no difference to the hatred their neighbours had for them. It had been growing for some time, and a traditional hostility had now been sunk so that several "kingdoms" joined together to exterminate the Gepids. In the first encounter of heathen and Christian Walaric received a mortal wound. As he lay in the forest to which the tribe had fled on the loss of its township his mind was inspired for the salvation of his people, and for an hour he talked to the chieftain, foretelling his future might and, more immediately important, outlining his strategy. During that hour he was possessed of a military science unknown to his world: he talked of ambushes, mock retreats, offensive and defensive coalitions. Then he died, and the sorrow of the Gepids, who had liked him, was tempered by the excitement of the great things they were to do.

Walaric's plan succeeded, and the secretive, unaggressive, inept Gepids became masters from the Danube to the Albis. Rome was doubly interested. There had been only the one message from Walaric, and in view of this rapid triumph they must send to him a congratulatory envoy. This found the king of the new Gepid domains in his new capital, still a Christian in name, but with only two Romans in minor orders to advise him. They were grieved to hear of Walaric's death, and immediately assumed proper control of the spiritual life of the kingdom, which had been hovering about the old, the new, and various incidental religions belonging to the conquered tribes. Deeply impressed by the king's strenuous praise of Walaric's acumen they heard of the way in which he had spread the faith so widely. The king, who had been learning about Roman ways from his two clerics, seeing that the major power would soon be seeking an alliance with him, was not above securing himself some immediate kudos. He affirmed that Walaric's remains had been borne into battle with them, and that at the critical moment the dead hand had flung a dagger into a man about to strike down the king. These relics were kept at the old capital where Walaric had first come to them, but could be brought if the visitors wished. They did so wish, and a small troop was sent to recover the body.

It failed to identify it, but the men wanted to go on living themselves, and so brought a featureless corpse back to the court, preserved in a plain oaken casket (later it was elaborately carved with scenes from Walaric's life). The due testimony of the Gepids sent the envoys back to Rome with a case for beatification—the Gepids had indisputably carried the faith far afield, and swore that it was Walaric who had guided them living and dead, and the application was approved.

The relics of Saint Walaric were kept for a few centuries—a temporary ascendancy of Eastern tribes saw them desecrated and scattered, but as they hadn't been authentic no great harm was done.

Almost none of this story is of an ennobling nature. Although I've stressed rather the parts that seem most alien to us to-day, there wasn't a great deal that *would* gratify the modern devout. But the thing of burning importance is, that from the calm, civilised centre, the Word was going out about to the world. This clumsy, bloodthirsty, accidental history of Walaric's had brought a large part of Europe under the touch of all that is greatest in man. It was to be long before Rome could fully assert herself—or even prevent herself from being corrupted by the outsiders—but the pattern of truth had extended itself a little further, and had gained in richness as in strength. And yet people disagree that the end justifies the means.



## *Robinetta Armfelt*

### AUNT AND ELECTRICITY

WHEN I FIRST KNEW Great-aunt Harriet she was a normal, spry old lady of seventy, living by herself in a small modern house in a quiet part of Hastings. In her youth she had been one of those bright and daring young things who smoked cigarettes when it was still not quite *done*, and shamelessly admitted to modelling for impecunious young artists. As she grew older she kept her brave outlook and the desire to be modern at all costs, but unfortunately lost her ability to grasp new ideas ; consequently, she lived in what seemed to her a dangerous and tiring world, where anything might explode any minute. Her house reflected her own confusion of spirit : its furniture, its pictures, its atmosphere and even its smell were heavily Edwardian : so was the yapping little sleeve-peke, Napoleon, with eyes like wet black marbles, expressing nothing. It was rather a shock to find a streamlined cream telephone, Hollywood style, balanced on a wobbling whatnot ; or to see Aunt approaching her pressure-cooker with stealth, her arms covered by bulky sleevelets made from several ovencloths.

The only really odd thing about Aunt was her complete failure to understand the simplest facts about electricity. James Thurber's grandmother had a weird idea that poisonous electricity would leak from an empty socket if the wall switch were left on, but this was nothing compared to Aunt's idiosyncrasies. Two facts had managed to penetrate the barrier of eager obtuseness which she had set up, and all her dealings with electricity were conditioned by them : rubber insulates, and electricity can sometimes give one shocks.

Aunt took no chances. Every time we took a trolley-bus to reach the shops along the promenade, we had to wear rubber galoshes. Not even Napoleon was exempt : he had little rubber booties which closely resembled the ferrules on invalids' walking sticks. At first I found it faintly amusing, but the

novelty soon wore off when the weather began to get hotter, and I came to feel decidedly foolish in such highly unsuitable flapping footwear. Nothing I said could persuade Aunt that there was no need to insulate herself from trolley-'buses, nor could I prevent her holding the telephone receiver at least six inches from her ear (in case she received a shock). This made 'phone conversations very difficult, particularly as Aunt blamed everything either on the 'phone or on the caller.

Visits to the hairdresser were a nightmare for both of us ; for Aunt, because she was terrified of the drier, and for me because I was afraid of offending Aunt by having a fit of giggles. I just sat there trying to concentrate on a women's magazine, all the time shaking with suppressed hysterical laughter. For Aunt was certainly an amusing sight. She sat rigidly on the edge of her chair, her head hardly under the drier, her fingers in her ears, and her eyes tight shut. Occasionally, she appeared to be muttering some incantation, but the noise of the drier made it quite inaudible. I could only presume that she was reciting some form of poem to distract her mind from the dangerous machine at whose mercy she was, and it was several months before I found out what it was.

We had made an appointment for four-fifteen on a dreary day in March. It was bitterly cold, with a strong east wind that dried the sea-spray almost as soon as it was splashed up on to the parapet. Aunt was in a difficult mood, as there had been a power-cut most of the morning and she had had a cold lunch. When we arrived at Simone's, she began ordering the assistant around and treating her like an inferior sort of lady's maid—calling her "girl," and sometimes even "my good girl."

However, the shampoo was completed without mishap : and soon Aunt was safely under the drier (not that she would have called it "safe"), muttering away as usual. She had hardly been under ten minutes when there was a sudden power-cut, and every drier in the establishment went quite dead. I gazed at Aunt, fascinated. With her eyes closed and her ears blocked, she had apparently noticed nothing, and her

clear voice was chanting, from under the silent machine: "alpha, beta, gamma, delta, epsilon, zeta, eta, theta . . ." over and over again. There was nothing I could do about it short of shaking her, and I did not dare try. So I sat and listened as the conversation from the other cubicles slowly faded away into surprised silence. Soon, a bunch of curious women with coiffures in various stages of incompleteness gathered in the doorway of our cubicles, looking at Aunt's trance-like face in alarm. She must have sensed a disturbance, for she opened her eyes, realised the drier was no longer working, and after one brief look of joy and relief, which she quickly concealed, she shouted for the manageress and demanded that an electrician should be fetched immediately. In vain we tried to explain the power-cut. Aunt had decided the machine had gone wrong—perhaps dangerously so—and that was that. The other women had now been coaxed back to their own cubicles, and the manageress, fearing unpleasantness, decided that for the good of the establishment she had better humour this undoubtedly mad woman and send one of her minions for an electrician.

An electrician soon arrived. His face, which was pale and pitted from cholera, showed apprehension, and he crept round the door as if he expected the madwoman to fly at him any minute. Aunt took to him at once. Here at last was a man who approached these dreadful machines with suitable caution and respect. She was charming to him, and he rapidly forgot she was a lunatic. Soon, with infinite patience, he was describing power-cuts and hair driers in language which even Aunt could understand. She confessed her dislike of hairdressers to him, and he assured her that he could fix up one of those little hand driers for her so that she could wash her own hair at home. Aunt was captivated by both the idea and its originator. "Jenny," she said, "this gentleman is coming home to tea with us."

A year later, when I was passing through Hastings, and I called on Aunt, I was surprised at the changed appearance of the garden, for instead of a neat, gay little plot, it was a



wild desolation of weeds, wires and wireless aerials. Aunt, too, was changed. When she answered the door she had a pencil stuck behind her delicately-shaped ear, and was wearing a canvas apron, with a huge pocket full of spanners and screw-drivers. "Hello," she murmured, vaguely, "I'm afraid we're in rather a mess. Jem's just fixing my new footwarmer with me." From somewhere in the kitchen direction the electrician advanced, carrying a queer, stool-like contraption with wires sticking out in all directions, typical of the chaos which seemed to have seized the whole house. There was dirt and dust everywhere and the rooms were cluttered with plugs, wires, tools, wirelesses and Heath Robinson inventions. Clearly Aunt had gone *quite* mad, and her madness manifested itself in a passion for electrical inventions. I only stayed half an hour. Both Aunt and Jem were obviously quite wrapped up in their own concerns, and my presence was only a hindrance, so I shook the dust from my coat and left them to their fans and footwarmers.

I never saw Aunt again. She broke her neck falling from a ladder when trying to put up a new form of light fixture, only about a month after I saw her. I was present at the reading of her will. She had left everything to Jem.

### *Charles Kingham*

## THE GREGORY FELLOWSHIPS

A GREAT MANY undergraduates of this University do not appear to know that such Fellowships exist; it might be as well, therefore, to say a word about them. In 1949, Mr. E. C. Gregory gave to the University a capital sum, which is to be drawn on to provide the Fellows' stipends until it is exhausted—and this, unfortunately, will probably be sooner than was originally expected, because of the devaluation of the pound soon after the gift was first made.

Mr. Gregory, who is a member of the publishing firm of Lund Humphries, was concerned with two things : first, to enable selected young artists to concentrate on important creative work by saving them, for a year or two, from the necessity of hack-work to make a living ; second, to help to swell a too-small artistic community in a city which has not normally harboured artists (with one notable exception) for long. In pursuance of the second aim it was decided that there should not be one single Fellowship held at one time, but that they should be of different durations and should overlap. At the present time, therefore, we have two Fellows : Mr. James Kirkup, the Gregory Fellow of Poetry, and Mr. Martin Froy, who holds a Fellowship in Painting. Mr. Kirkup came in 1950, and has published since he came a long poem, "The Creation," and a collection of poems, "The Submerged Village." Both these works are in themselves tributes to the value of the scheme, in that they would probably not have been completed had not Mr. Kirkup been able to devote all his working time to them. Mr. Froy joined us in October of this year.

Candidates for Fellowships are selected by a committee consisting of Mr. Gregory himself ; the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor and the Professor of English Literature, for the University ; and, as independent advisers, Mr. T. S. Eliot, Mr. Henry Moore, and Mr. Herbert Read. To this committee, and in particular to Mr. Gregory for his very generous gift, we owe our thanks for enabling the University, and to a lesser degree the people of Leeds, to become acquainted with the work and the personalities of some of our younger English artists.

*Turner Odell*  
THE MOMENT

Let us make the most of the day of grace ;  
let us redeem the time that is lost, for perhaps  
we have but little left. Death follows us close ;  
let us be well prepared for it ; for we die but once,  
and a miscarriage *then* is irretrievable.

—BROTHER LAWRENCE.

**I**T WAS THE LONELY TIME of twilight in the City. In the steep, profound canyons of the streets and avenues hung the dust and smoke of the spent day. From the river on the west a breeze crept along the street, close to the pavement, swirling the idle papers, the candy wrappers, and the cigarette butts, disturbing the lower layer of that haze which, immobile above, filled the spaces between the towering buildings like muddy water in a lake after the turmoil of a storm. The far vistas down the canyons of glass and stone were becoming obscured beyond the yellow dust, lost in the deepening gloom.

Walking, the man raised his head. Out beyond the Times building was the first faint glimmer of the evening star. Up Seventh Avenue a heavy truck whined in high gear along a path of green traffic signals. Around the side of the building in front of him the moving band of lights was spelling out the latest news. The Kaesong truce talks were still discontinued, the fighting was getting heavier. A blank space, a pause, as the huge letters swept over the winking lights, chasing around the corner of the building. Across thirty-sixth street ; it was looming up black, huge, monstrous, hurtling down the vacant avenue ; thirty-seventh street, thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth. Then there began something about an eclipse. Of the sun. To be the next morning, at dawn. A natural phenomenon, over this artificial island of concrete and steel and glass. His attention was arrested, fixed on the moving letters as he stepped off the curb. Forty-first, forty-second ; darkness itself, coming

fast, out of the gloom with a scream of braking tyres ripping at the black asphalt. It was as if a huge hand had struck him from behind, pressuring him forward, then down, as his face and skull went into the pavement.

When he stepped from the street on to the opposite sidewalk it was still twilight, and he felt incredibly lonely. When she moved toward him from the deeper shadow of the building he was glad to see her, as he would have been to see anyone in this obscurity and this silence. He said :

“ You are the one ? ”

“ Yes. But it is late.”

“ But—which one ? ”

“ Come. It is late. I will show you the way.”

When she touched his arm with her hand, there came with the loneliness a feeling of regret, an echo from down the canyons of time, dim, calling to him of things done and things not done. He could not quite remember. A growing sense of misery began. But there was no terror, yet.

She led him to the steps in the sidewalk and they went down. A train was already at the edge of the platform when they emerged from the passageway into the cavern of the station. It was unlike any subway he had been in before, and he was puzzled. Just how it was different, he could not quite tell. Again something stood between his mind and the past, baffling his memory. But the lights were not the same, that he could tell. There were no bulbs along the walls or hanging from the ceiling. The only illumination seemed to come from beneath the train itself, suffusing up through the steel cars so that throughout the large room, which was not really a room but a kind of cave, there was a kind of intermittent, freakish glow.

She guided him on. As they approached the open door of the nearest car, he tried to read the departure and destination signs hung in a window. Words were there and apparently numbers, too. But they had no significance, meant nothing to him. There was only a faint remembrance that he once might have known how to read them. They were not in a language

that was new to him, but in one whose alphabet and symbols he had long ago forgotten. And not so much forgotten, perhaps, as abandoned, cast out of his experience.

They entered the car, sat down, and immediately the train began to move. Whether there was anyone else with him in the car, he could not tell. It wasn't that he could not see them or listen for their voices. He just did not know. He was baffled, like a man who is approaching a mystery and feels within himself a lack of the equipment to solve it. The train went faster, plunged along the track, down the tunnel, into darkness, while the unearthly illumination flickered around them.

Then there was a slight jar. The train began to slow, with a hard grinding that shook the car as if it were slowing, braking against its will. It stopped, and the door across the car from them slid open. They waited. The car, the train, the whole earth and universe itself seemed absolutely still, without motion, hung in suspension.

Abruptly, he was there. The girl became tense, seizing his arm tightly, almost painfully, and drew in her breath with a sharp whistling sound between her teeth. He had not walked into their view, the man was sure of that, for they had been looking at the empty doorway all the time. He just appeared there, a little, dwarfish being, almost lost in his clothing which, except for his hands and face, enfolded him entirely. From his shrivelled countenance he looked out at them through a pair of eyes penetrating and intense. About his whole person there was an indescribable atmosphere of questioning, as if he were asking them to recognise who he was. The girl sat rigid with her grip tightening on his arm as the misshapen thing limped across the entrance to a seat just opposite them and sat down. Immediately the door slid closed. The train lurched into motion and shot down into the tunnel, furiously this time, almost frantically. Into the man's consciousness there came, as from a long distance and through ages of time, slowly, vaguely, the feeling that he knew the creature, or had known him. There was something in his mind, but he could not grasp it. Whatever it was had happened too long ago, too far away. The grip on his arm held him, like an iron shackle.

The train sped on its mad career. The flickering light grew dimmer, flashed less often, and then darkness was complete. The train began to slow again, but quietly now, softly. It stopped. They moved to where the faint sound of the door, sliding back, indicated the opening. As they stepped out, the man tried to look around for the dwarf. Whether he was still with them, or whether he had already vanished as he had appeared, he could not tell. The woman was beside him, pressing him onward.

Immediately before them was a building. It was impossible to determine its shape or its size, for the black substance of which it was constructed seemed to extend upward and away on all sides to become one with the darkness itself around them. Building and atmosphere merged, fused, partook of the same quality and the same nature. It was as if he were going to enter a building that he was already inside. With this sensation there came the first whisper of terror, faint, but whose barely perceptible voice spoke of a finality, hidden yet and terrible.

They moved into the building, and at once they were inside a room : a large one it seemed at first, and then he was not sure. The walls, which he could not see, pulsed, and at one moment he felt as if he were alone in all the vast emptiness of space, beyond the margin of the earth, beyond the sun, beyond the gleam of the farthest star, condemned to walk down the shades of night, alone and forever. The next instant, as if with the downrush of a great black wing, and him caught beneath it, squeezed against the flank of utter darkness, he felt so compressed and stifled that he choked and his limbs went rigid against the pressure. And suddenly, before him there was a sign, and the bright yellow letters running over the electric bulbs flew across from dark to dark : THIS IS THE HOUSE OF DEATH, OF DEATH. The last words repeated themselves endlessly : OF DEATH, OF DEATH. He moved his head and looked at the woman beside him. Where there had been a face, was now an empty skull, glimmering with the reflection of the flashing bulbs. Then the entire skeleton slipped, fell apart, and crashed to the floor. The sound of each bone as it

struck began to echo, and the reverberations came back to him, loud and ceaseless. He tried to scream, but had no voice, so he shut his eyes and put his hands over his ears, tightly. At once there was silence, and when he opened his eyes again there was nothing in front of him except a small sphere of light and in it, the dwarf.

He was on his knees, with his hands thrown out in a gesture of supplication. As the man stood looking down, in the sudden hush and with the sign of doom and its flickering lights for the moment gone, there came again, stronger than before, the feeling that he knew this being, or had known him, or should have known him. And suddenly the memory was there, clear and vivid.

It was a wild, stormy night, a long, long time ago, and the rain slashed viciously against the windshield as he drove the automobile along the parkway, plunging through the Connecticut fields toward the teem of the City. The beam of the headlights had picked it out of the gloom and the blur of rain : a small, shapeless heap by the roadside, just showing above the top of the grass. He looked in the rear-view mirror and saw the lights of several cars coming along far down the road behind him. Surely one of them would stop. Besides, it was probably nothing but an old piece of canvas torn from the back of a speeding truck. For a moment he heard the drumming of the rain on the car's body and the shriek of wind outside. Within an hour he would be in the City, inside the tall apartment building, in the warm glow of the electric lights, and in his familiar room, quiet, enclosed, and insulated. This thing out here, whatever it was, beside the highway, in the crying wind and rain, was no concern of his. One had one's own work, one's own affairs to attend to ; one was not involved here. All one had to do was to drive on, keep going. A blast of wind shook the automobile, the rain seemed to come down harder, and with the slight, rocking motion of the car an uneasiness stirred at the back of his consciousness. This in itself did not overcome the inertia of riding on into the night, and it was an effort of the will that finally moved his foot from the accelerator

to the brake pedal. He ran up on to the turf by the edge of the road, stopped the car, pulled his coat collar up around his neck, and with his torch in one hand stepped out into the storm. It was quite a way back to where he had seen the thing, and before he reached the spot, the lights of the cars following flashed past him and away down the concrete pavement. He walked on and presently the thin ray of the torch found it on the grass. He recalled how the boy, his back broken by the blow of the speeding car, had died long before he could wave down the next driver that came along the wet highway. But as he had first bent over the inert form and stretched out his hand to turn it over, the boy had lifted his head from the ground. Out of the loneliness of the wild night and the storm, in the small circle of light, just before the shadow of death began to pass over his face, there came an expression of recognition, of gratitude, and, at last, of peace.

All this he saw mirrored in the face of the dwarf, kneeling before him in the strange little sphere of light. As before he had been the only one to help the boy, called from the night to be with him at the hour of death, so he now knew it was only he who could help this being, for it was only to him that the strange creature was calling. And as he slowly stretched out his hand toward the face of the dwarf, the change began to come.

(Somewhere else, now, it was the lonely time of twilight, and a huge, black truck had halted, while people were running out into the street: "God, how horrible!—His head, crushed right into the pavement.—The fool, couldn't he see where he was going?—That driver, going much too fast." While above, through the haze and murky gloom of the dying day, the yellow lights of the moving sign winked around the corner of the building, and, farther yet, while the three great bodies, earth, moon and sun swung through space to their appointed accord, out farther yet, glimmered brighter the evening star.)

But here, now, see, the change! While his hand moves to help toward the shrunken face, it grows, fills, and the circle of light with it. Within the man hung between doom and life



it begins too, and now—see how it goes!—  
out,

out,

*out* of the final ember, the last efforting spark of his will, flares, bursts, and rends the encroaching night with fire terrible, terrific, bright, brighter, incandescing the gloom of final dark itself with, afar, the call of trumpets from beyond an east of dawn-dark hills comes a hope, a promise, a help, a hand-not-human, lifting from the mind, the heart, the groin, the vitals, and carrying with the seared speed of zig-zag lightning in one all-inhaled breath (never forgotten the swiftness, the power) to the final, ever-sounding note. pure and clear and fine, to the cool fire, to peace—to touch the face of Radiance Itself.

### *James Kirkup*

## PEACE IS THE WORD

Put away opinions, for they are proud,  
And pride is a creeping sickness of the mind.  
Judge not. Self-righteousness becomes the loud  
Anger that makes men and nations blind.

Do not be led. But go your way in faith.  
Trusting the new words that your heart will give you.  
With acts of love describe the means of truth!  
Peace is the word. And peace be with you.

*David Marno*

## LAMENT FOR ICARUS

*With acknowledgments to Robert Holmes, whose poem "Icarus" first interested me in this theme.*

Tricked in the sun's hot web  
He pioneers no more.  
His waxen wings sun-riddled  
Droop anaemically at low ebb,  
And make him victim to the seas' reduction rite.

Now his scant wings furl him in a bud  
That never opens to the deep refracted light,  
And sea-wracks' thin fronds  
Leach to his unguarded loins,  
And fondle his amorphous thighs.

The curly sea-shell at his fragile ear  
Whispers reminiscences, or hollow lies,  
And twitching dolphins' fins  
Winnow his limp hair,  
And fan it out among the rocks.

His tattered nerves unwind upon the tides  
As they unflesh him,  
As they reduce him  
To a singing rib,  
That glitters on the crusted reef.

He, a green sprig of joy,  
Is amputated from our vital tree,  
Yet all is not loss  
With loss of lovely boy,  
For Icarus is ever part of me.

## *Charles Kingham*

### PRO PATRIA

He is dead, and a hero.  
 Who, living, would face no problems ;  
 Shunned the hard road ; sought always to avoid  
 The lizard coldness of the inward eye.  
 A rootless extrovert, throwing his life,  
 Its tension unresolved, on to the board  
 In one foolhardy wager, forfeited his stake.

For his death they chant  
 Who called themselves his friends, his kin,  
 Yet could not come to terms with his necessity,  
 Saw not in him indecision's shadow  
 Lowering behind his every decision.  
 They dismissed his dilemma and were glad  
 To shelve responsibility for him : "A good thing  
 He's joined the Army—make a man of him."  
 But it killed him first.

None the less, they were right in a way ;  
 He learnt, although too late, his lesson.  
 Having committed himself once, and irrevocably.  
 He glimpsed the possibilities of resolution ;  
 Not to accept others' valuations, not to hedge,  
 To be, at whatever cost, himself. With his feet  
 Scraping the cold pavements of his world's end  
 He learned to live ; but hadn't any time  
 To put his knowledge into practice.

## Wilfred Childe

### MYTHUS

The Unicorn has sea-cold nacreous eyes,  
 Green-glinting, and his subtly spiral horn  
 Is carven out of twisted ivory ;  
 Most marvellous is this regal Unicorn,  
 And he is free at heart, however long  
 The earth folk bind him in chains dumbly strong.

His silver curling mane flashes out fire,  
 His archèd neck flies on superbly fierce,  
 His wingèd feet rush forth in proud desire  
 As with the impetuous fury of flung spears ;  
 Terrible he stalks under the ghostly stars,  
 Or races serene beneath dawn's rosy bars.

He is the Soul-trammel his flight how long,  
 Ye slaves of Time, serving this sordid world,  
 He shall hear again the aboriginal song,  
 And out of your nets like a thunderbolt be hurled.  
 And be away, away, along the bright  
 Long level sands dazzling with crystal light,

Lost in the passionate exquisite delight  
 Of his remote airy resounding flight  
 Through desert wildernesses and the blue  
 Savannahs trembling with the last faint dew,  
 As it disperses in the kisses of the sun,  
 As arrows from the bow so shall he run

Through the arena of the opening morn,  
 This unvexed wind-swift imperious Unicorn,  
 While round him in the untainted auroral hour  
 The pearl-veined mountains open like a flower,  
 And the dawn turns to gold his milk-white horn—  
 O blessèd freedom of the Unicorn !

*Richard Courtney*

## PAINTING THE PROFESSOR

PAINTING IS A BAD HABIT—at least others think it is. If you paint things as they look, you'll be told that you have no imagination, while if you paint things imaginatively you will be told that is not how things are. What's a chappie to do? All I hope is that Picasso has more resistance than I have—or that he has a better hole into which he can crawl.

You may ask how this all started—and quite rightly. Let us begin at the beginning.

While I was in my first year at the University, I had attended some of the lectures given by one particular Professor. A brainy bird, he was also a queer fish, with moods that could match a Persian carpet. Anyway, going through my lecture notes one day, I came across the many drawings I had done of him. There and then I decided to paint the old boy.

I went round to his rooms, that were to be found in a dusty old house, quaintly reminiscent of a mausoleum.

"Come in," he said, with scarcely a word of introduction. "Glad you're here. Get your stuff ready. I'll be back in a minute." He squeezed past a bookcase, and hurtled down the landing.

By the time I had put the easel up, taken out brushes, paints, oils, palette, smoked two pipes, and watched two little boys pounding hell out of each other in the street, he was back.

"Ha!" he said, "now how shall I sit? What about full-face." He sat down and began to read without another murmur. What could I say? Resignedly I picked up a brush.

"Ha!" he said, "I'll get my secretary, and you can paint while I dictate."

I put down the brush as he went to the telephone, and picked it up as he sat down again. It is the only brush I've got. My young brother used the others to clean the dog's teeth. I'll punch his head in, one day.

A few minutes more and the secretary appeared—somewhat

in the same manner as Aladdin's genii did. In other words, she burst, rather than entered. With a bang she was in, the door had rattled on its hinges and she was sprawled across an arm-chair that filled one wall.

"Ha! Take a letter!" said the Professor. As if I could paint the back of his head.

"To Colonel Poppett, etc., etc." Ah, well! the back was as good as nothing.

So the paint flowed amongst statements by the Professor, re-readings by the secretary, his corrections, her corrections, my hair—that was coming out in tufts, his complaints that she was not concentrating, her complaints that my beard distracted her, and my complaints that she should not cross her legs like that.

A crash on the landing, and two persons were in a room that was already overcrowded. They were obviously the Professor's assistants.

"Good heavens," cried the tall one, "He's having his picture took." Then they both doubled up in laughter. The bending of the walls indicated approaching calamity, and the picture was quite bad enough already.

"Ha!" said the Professor, "don't know who he is—probably represents a left-wing newspaper—he looks like an anarchist."

The little one grovelled on the floor in mirth. I had not much hair left by this time, but what there was was spread about the community.

"D'you know," gulped the little one from the corner into which he had rolled, "I think that's damn funny!" and he went into a paroxysm, clutching vainly at the tall one's trousers, who was by now clawing the air. The secretary wiped her eyes, the Professor twiddled his moustache, and I leant heavily against the bookcase—and I'm a pretty heavy person.

"But," said the tall one, with his head over the easel, "by the dog, it's both sideways and frontwards."

"I should think so, too," I stamped, "if you *will* make him move his head."

The tall one wrapped himself round the umbrella-stand, quite helpless, and the secretary disappeared under the arm-chair with a gurgle. Behind them, the legs of the little one waved faintly from under the carpet.

Gathering my stuff under my arm, and clapping my trilby on my head, I fled through the door, and landed with a crash on the landing.

Take my advice. If you want to paint, paint still-life.

## APPEAL

*The Gryphon* files have suffered years of neglect, and when we need to trace the pattern of rapid change which has been caused by the war and its after-effects we are met by these critical gaps. We appeal therefore to our readers—if you have and can spare any of the issues listed below you would do *The Gryphon* present and future a very great service if you send them to :

THE EDITOR,

*The Gryphon*,

THE UNIVERSITY UNION,

LEEDS. 2.

### COPIES WE LACK

SESSION		SESSION	
1940-41	all issues.	1941-42	all issues.
1942-43	all issues.	1943-44	all issues.
1944-45	all issues.	1945-46	all issues.
1946-47	all issues.	1947-48	all issues.
1948-49	December '48 ; March '49 ; April '49.		
1949-50	February '50 ; April '50.		

*W. A. Hodges*

## THE AMATEUR THEATRE AND THE UNIVERSITY THEATRE GROUP

**T**HE RAPID, SPONTANEOUS INCREASE in amateur dramatic activity throughout this country which took place during the half-century which has just passed was principally remarkable for the fact that, through it, a group cultural activity which was for many centuries the exclusive province of a bored court and aristocracy which resorted to the production of jigs and masques as a means of combating its own ennui, became an activity in which all sections of the population could indulge. There may be many fascinating psychological theories which might be invoked by sociologists in order to explain the situation. With them this article is not concerned. The important thing is that there is now in this country a very widespread interest in amateur acting and play production; an interest not to be found to anything like the same extent in most other European countries. In Germany, for instance, where the actor is regarded as very much a specialist, it is most unusual to find a non-professional group outside the Universities, and even in the Universities those groups which may be found will inevitably consist mainly of people with some future professional end to serve—students of Drama, intending professional producers, or other serious aspirants to some kind of a career in the professional theatre.

Now the British have been traditionally regarded as a nation of amateurs, and with a good deal of justification. And it is a weakness of the amateur that once his particular kind of pursuit has become generally established within his own particular community, he tends to take it very much for granted. In such a taking for granted there is a very real danger for any cultural or artistic activity. It leads to a state of mind biased in favour of accepted standards, and an accompanying tendency towards a certain uniformity of artistic



approach. Once this happens the situation is created in which the activity itself becomes the forcing-bed for the seeds of its own cultural and artistic decay.

There is another factor, too, which must be taken into consideration with reference to amateur theatre in particular. With the increased awareness of the Drama as an art-form which develops in a nation devoted to amateur theatricals as a spare-time activity comes an increasing tendency to go and see professional productions, and then to aspire to "do likewise." Superficially, this might be regarded as a helpful thing to do. But the commercial theatre, precisely because it is commercial, suffers even more than does the amateur theatre from a tendency to destroy its own soul. And since great artists are as rare in the professional theatre as they are elsewhere—they being the only members of their profession who could, perhaps, afford to approach every part in an original or an imaginative way—the amateur, in choosing the "standard" professional theatre as his teacher, is hastening still further the decay of his own amateurism, and consequently of all the very special cultural and artistic influences which only he can afford to bring to bear upon the Drama, as part of the common artistic heritage.

The strength of the professional, after all, does not lie in any real enthusiasm for his part—after a longish run it may easily bore him to death—but in his great experience: an experience which enables him to continue playing, night after night, to a *technical* standard satisfactory to his audience, however stale, however bored, however oppressed with emotional, financial, or other personal problems he may happen simultaneously to be. A polished technique of this kind cannot be acquired, even by the most gifted mimic among amateurs, simply by a slavish copying of the gestures and mannerisms of the skilled professional. It can only be acquired after hard experience in the professional theatre itself, a hard experience which may, as often as not, have included as many years at "R.A.D.A.," or at some similar institution, as most students spend in reading for a degree, several ill-paid years in provincial repertory companies, or second-rate touring shows.

and even, possibly, months of unemployment spent in haunting the offices of bored theatrical agents—an activity calculated to kick every trace of artistic enthusiasm out of all but the rare, rare genius, or the most sublimely stage-struck. The amateur who cannot bring himself to face this fact is unlikely to be very much use to any amateur group which really cares about its artistic standards.

This is not to say that the amateur cannot learn anything of value in watching the average professional, but it is certainly to say that for the *average* amateur to model himself upon the *average* professional is to choose to play, quite deliberately, from weakness. The strength of the average professional, as has been said, is a *technical* rather than an imaginative strength. He is, after all, working in the theatre for his living. Acting is his job. It is not to be expected that he will be prepared to place his own imaginative conceptions—already deadened, anyway, by long familiarity with, and confidence in a technique which will steer him, even if he lacks all trace of an imaginative approach to his part, through any stage situation within reason, without risk to his salary cheque—before the wishes of the producer (himself “playing safe” in most cases) upon whom his job depends. For both commercial producer and commercial actor are playing to a commercial-theatre audience; an audience which is quite prepared to put up with a normal, standard, conventional production, provided that the general technical level does not fall below that point at which it begins to wonder whether it has wasted its ticket-money. It does not go to the theatre, after all, regularly looking for brilliant, imaginative, artistic productions, or for new and adventurous approaches to old plays. It goes simply to see a play, and if that play is produced well enough technically to pass muster, normally it is satisfied. If it *does* get something better it will be startled, and, perhaps, enthusiastic, but it does not *insist* upon more than the average amount of value for its money. There is, then, clearly, no incentive for the usual kind of commercial company to strive for anything better. That would be too much like hard work, and if a normal, standard,

conventional production is satisfactory to the customers, they might argue, they are not the men to quarrel with their bread and butter. Much more sensible to leave the artistic stuff to the struggling "Sunday-night" companies, and to the amateurs, who do not have to depend exclusively upon the theatre for their living.

Thus, the amateur, whilst he cannot hope to compete with the professional upon his own ground, has, at least, complete freedom both to experiment and to concentrate his energies upon the production of plays, old or new, which, whilst they are not good commercial propositions, have great value to the Drama itself considered as an art-form, and to be as adventurous and as imaginative as he wants to be in his approach to the established classics of the theatre. No art-form can remain a dynamic influence in the cultural life of a community unless it passes through that continuous process of self-propagation and rebirth which only constant fresh inseminations of vital, creative, adventurous imagination can maintain. And it is the free imagination of the amateur far more than all the efforts of the small, struggling, semi-professional, "Sunday-night" group, which can, in the long run, bring about the cultural situation in which such fresh inseminations can take place. What the imaginative amateur thinks about theatre to-day, since the amateur, too, is a member of the commercial-theatre audience, the professional theatre will inevitably have to think to-morrow, or, at all events, perhaps the day after to-morrow. It is always the small, imaginatively-creative minority from which any urge to progress comes.

At the same time the amateur has technical limitations which he cannot completely overcome, that is, all the while he remains an amateur. It is a truism in art that if one wishes to rise above one's own artistic limitations, the only chance of success lies in first recognising the limitations of one's artistic means, as well as their potentialities, and, having once recognised them, to strive for perfection within them. Any attempt to work on a larger, more pretentious scale, made, whether through sheer insensitivity, through wilful blindness,

or through plain, unabashed arrogance, in defiance of the inherent limitations, is doomed from the outset to a failure as grotesque as it will be ridiculous. Yet in the amateur theatre, all too often, it is precisely in attempts of this kind that most of the spare time, the energy, and the enthusiasm of the group are wasted. All too often, with only a poor second- or third-hand copy of the professional's technique, with little or no use of creative imagination, with a fear of that very freedom to exercise artistic originality which is the amateur's greatest strength, and an inadequate amount of backstage skill, amateur groups launch out into attempts to revive the stale successes of the commercial theatre.

An amateur group runs the least risk of artistic dishonesty, and therefore of an insincere and unconvincing production, when it is clear-sighted enough to know both its own weaknesses and its own strength, and is thereafter intelligent enough to strive for its own particular kind of perfection, within its own limitations, by concentrating its energies only upon those kinds of theatre which exploit the amateur's own, very special artistic possibilities.

It could, perhaps, be argued that the foregoing takes no account of the fact that for most amateur companies, whilst it is not essential that their productions should show an actual profit, it is none-the-less essential that the receipts from them should cover production expenses. This is, of course, quite true. All the same, it remains a fact that there *are* many amateur companies which *do* attempt to compromise, and which produce "box-office" plays for part of the year in order to subsidise, in advance, the more adventurous, "prestige" productions which they feel, rightly, to be the most important part of their work.

The amateur group which happens also to be a University group is in a very special position with regard to all the foregoing. It may be in as bad a way financially as is the outside group—although if it *is* this is a reflection rather upon the University as a whole than upon the group—but for it there can be no possibility of the kind of compromise which

may be reached by the outside group. Its very nature is rooted in the nature of the University itself. The right of a University to exist and to be recognised as such depends exclusively upon its acceptance of the prime obligation to recognise, to know, and to disseminate all that was artistically, culturally, or intellectually good in the old, and, out of its experience in this work, to develop that kind of mature, informed, and, above all, unprejudiced critical faculty which will enable it to recognise, to know, and to disseminate all that is valuable, artistically, culturally, or intellectually, in the new. And this obligation is one which no single group, department, or society, of all those which go to make up the University, may reject. Where the whole is dedicated, the parts which go to make up the whole cannot but be dedicated.

At the same time, the University group *is* an amateur group. Like any other amateur group it wilfully endangers its own function and nature if it directs its activities towards aping the professional theatre. In any case it has no right to enter into any kind of competition with the commercial theatre, or otherwise to risk those high critical standards which, as a member group of a University, it cannot choose but uphold. If it needs to cover its expenses, and in order to do so, decides to produce an established classic from the current school examination syllabus for the sake of the "block-bookings" which this will bring from the schools in its area, it still has no right to "play down" to the standards of appreciation which it assumes to be those of its relatively inexperienced schoolchild audience, at the expense of adult standards of production. Its productions should be chosen *with reference only to the fulfilment of its share in the general obligation*, and, consequently, the only standard by which it has any right to judge the claim to production of any given play, must be a cultural and an artistic standard. There is no possibility of compromise. No policy which is not firmly based upon such a standard can be anything else but a policy of irresponsibility, and a denial of the very function of the group itself, both as an amateur group, and as a constituent part of a University.

*John England*  
**STAR MATTER**

**I**T WAS ON A SUMMER'S MORNING of the year 2030 that the alien space-ship landed on the Earth—a unique event in the history of the World, unless indeed, at one time countless ages ago, perhaps before the evolution of life, there had been a predecessor, which is not really likely. Anyway, this was the first one in *recorded* history, and it was a big event, and a strange one, for Man. Its approach was heralded by a thunderstorm, the most violent for years, in the part of the country where it landed, and great winds drawing the air upwards and blowing down fencing and boardings.

Stan Levan was the first to see it, on his way home on the outskirts of Burkville, a small Canadian town of about 20,000 inhabitants—a great black globe-shape, slightly flattened and elongated at two ends, and falling, it seemed, quite gently, one end downwards—a black dot against the sky and the lightning, only about a mile up. There were no flames, no rockets, no lightning swoop, as he might have expected from the futuristic movies of the day—just a steady descent from the sky. But he was not to be disappointed. It *was* a space-ship, as soon all the world was to know.

It landed about three miles from the town, and Stan hurried over in its direction with some anticipation.

“*Could* it be a space-ship?” he thought.

It certainly didn't look like a meteor, or a balloon, or anything man-made. “One of these antigravitic space-ships the S.F. Mags talk about, perhaps?” he wondered. He'd soon see. He saw it land; gently as a bird it seemed, floating slowly to the ground, and landing end-downwards. Imagine his surprise then, when the solid rock seemed to give way like sand beneath it—there was a terrific screeching of rocks grinding together and being crushed, a shrieking, rending sound like a myriad nails being scratched down a window-pane, as it sank deeply beneath the ground, which quaked and shuddered

violently, as if a battleship had fallen on it from out of the blue. He stared. The thing was about 150 ft. in diameter, half in and half out of the ground. It was in a pit about 75 feet deep, the rock all split and shattered round the perimeter—solid rock you could have built a skyscraper on! Suddenly he caught a message his senses had been telling him for several seconds—although he was a hundred yards away the thing was pulling him towards it! Not very powerfully, but quite perceptibly it was exerting an attraction upon him.

He couldn't understand it. Was it magnetic?—No, he had nothing metallic on his person, except the coins in his pocket, and—but it *couldn't* be—the iron in his blood! The naif thought struck him, but even as it did so he had his doubts—a magnet strong enough for *that* . . . ! He began to approach still closer to the space-ship, stealthily, and very slowly, tensing his body against the ever-increasing attraction all the time—it felt like moving to the perimeter of a revolving disc. The pull became stronger, and yet he was still a considerable distance away. Stan Levan had only a *very* limited knowledge of physics, and yet he knew, from the force which the thing exerted upon him at such a distance, and the fact that it was almost certainly governed by a universal inverse square law, that an enormous attraction would be exerted on anything only a few *feet* away from the thing—that if he moved just a few feet nearer he would be unable to resist its pull. What then?—he would go slithering towards it, across the ground, faster and faster, until his bones crushed and his body collapsed against it, and the very atoms of his being were spread in a thin layer over its black surface. He ran . . . He didn't stop until he was back at the town, and telling the authorities of his discovery. This was news, indeed! Here at last, was something for Burkville to talk about till the end of Time—if it survived.

By the next morning, the investigation of the space-ship—from a respectable distance—was well under way. There were some government scientists, press photographers, one or two politicians and a host of spectators. A metal fence was hastily

being put round it, and police were there to see all but the scientists kept outside it. The latter quite soon found out a great deal. The attraction that Stan had noticed was not magnetic—it was gravitational! They worked out the mass of the space-ship on the assumption that the gravity associated with it was not artificial, but solely due to its mass, and the answer was in millions of millions of tons! Their assumption was, of course, not entirely justified; from Stan's description of the space-ship's descent and from the absence of any visible rockets or other means of propulsion, it could only be assumed, as Stan had brightly suggested, that some anti-gravitic device was involved. And if a machine could *counteract* gravity it seemed probable that it could also *produce* it. The gravitational attraction, however, was found to be perfectly constant, and not even the very slightest variation in it could be detected, which was an argument in favour of the "true mass" theory. The space-ship was emitting rays—mainly gamma rays, cosmic rays and neutrons—but their intensity was slight, and would only be dangerous, the scientists estimated, at a distance of about 50 feet, which was far beyond the limit a human being could approach safely, anyway, owing to the force of attraction.

Soon, the reporters had managed to grasp some of the more spectacular facts and theories from the scientists, and the evening papers were full of the most astounding tales about the space-ship. Speculation as to the nature and origin of the occupants was rife—further speculation was as to why the occupants had not yet shown themselves. Perhaps the landing had killed them or damaged the controls, perhaps, some imaginative reporter suggested, to everyone's distress, the occupants already knew in some strange way all they wanted to know about Earth and were preparing to depart "without a word."

The scientists themselves were fairly certain that the material of the space-ship was neutron-matter and that the occupants, if there were any, must almost certainly be from a cold star, a "white dwarf" with a density of the order of



millions of tons per cubic centimetre—hence the intense gravitic attraction. What the occupants would actually *look* like was a highly interesting question, and such questions as this the scientists debated amongst themselves. But the days passed by and still no creatures showed themselves to satisfy the curiosity of the waiting world. The magnitude of the crowds of spectators each day waxed and waned. Theories grew increasingly in numbers and improbability. “Aliens Attack Earth with Death-Rays” was one slogan pounced upon through a misunderstanding of the nature of the radiation emitted by the space-ship, and widely believed. In vain the scientists tried to enlighten the public, for at the same time they were arguing amongst themselves.

The days lengthened into weeks and still no movement. The world grew impatient and slightly annoyed. “The thing is ridiculous!” said the more typical politicians. “Why can’t the scientists *do* something about it?” But the scientists, having no wish to be made into uni-molecular films, were in no hurry to investigate the space-ship except from a safe distance. It seemed, in any case, to have no visible exit, and even if there were it would certainly be impossible to force one open with any means at man’s disposal.

One evening towards the end of the third week after the space-ship’s arrival, however, a scientist came with some excitement to report his latest investigations to the committee appointed to study the machine. It was thought, from the most probable conjectures, that if alien beings existed they would be unable to hear, taste, smell or see. There could be no atmosphere or water or any other molecular substance upon a cold star. There could be nothing transparent to constitute the lenses of eyes. Their senses, and they must necessarily possess some, in order to be intelligent, must be entirely different from those of man. Nor would the aliens eat “food” as we know it; if they needed energy with which to move their bodies or carry out body-processes, it could only come from atomic (and not molecular) processes—from the energy of radioactive disintegrations. Now, the scientist pointed out.

radioactive processes differ from chemical ones in being slow, often *enormously* slow. Here he produced some rough calculations, giving an approximation to the rate of the body-processes of the aliens and, consequently, to their rate of motion. They were astonishing! Although they could not pretend to be accurate, they seemed to indicate that what to our senses would be of the order of years, to them would be of the order of *hours*. In other words, although the aliens might be making their exit from the ship as quickly as possible they might not appear for what, in our time-scale, would be a period of years. With this concept in mind, the scientist had taken some careful photographs of the ship's exterior and compared them in detail with some taken shortly after its arrival. And there, on its surface, an elliptic portion was seen to have become slightly more elevated than the rest—a door! An exit from which the aliens would not fully emerge until perhaps many years had passed by!

There was almost a riot then, amongst the scientists' audience, as they saw his photographs and appreciated the significance of his findings. They were presented with the apparently insurmountable problem of communicating with beings more alien to Man than any he had previously imagined. What would they look like to Man—beings without limbs or bodily organs as we know them, beings with mysterious means of locomotion, moving more slowly than the slowest earthly creatures, beings with minds of unimaginable structure locked somehow amongst the neutrons and the quanta of energy. And what, in their turn, would the Earthmen and their world look like to the aliens—phantoms who flitted about swifter than thought in a world with the consistency of soap-suds and gossamer, a world spinning in the twilight of a dizzily revolving ball of flame, the sun?

## PEEPS AT THE ENGINEERS

**T**HE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, if rumour can be trusted, is anxious to inform the rest of the College that they do not approve of red College caps. We hope that the owners of such ornaments will keep them for display at the proper season and place, and not continue to offend the eyes of their brother workers.

Judging from appearances, C. N. M-b-rly is working at a dynamo in the lab. If you chance to see a student with his coat off and sleeves rolled up, between 12-30 and 2 o'clock, you may safely guess he is at a little job of his own. Let us hope he will get the machine completed before the end of the summer term. Appearances are sometimes most misleading.

Most people would think that F. L. W--d was moderately honest ; however, we hear that he was lately accused of stealing a book from Ilkley railway station. We have it on excellent authority that the bookseller actually followed him out of the station, and accused him of theft. F. L. escaped by telling ———, or rather, by saying the book in his hand was his own property. What can we expect from a non-subscriber to *The Gryphon*? While talking of this gentlemen, we may add that Sunday breakfast is his heartiest meal of the week!

When working a shaping machine, or similar tool, it is always well to fasten the job firmly. If the job tilts during the cut, the result is often disastrous ; and is most annoying to the operator, if he has retired some distance from his work to show his complete confidence in his setting of the job. We offer our sincere sympathy to Tr-bie M--re.

Another most annoying experience in the life of a student is to get a series of absolutely correct results, and later to discover that the stop watch which was used was not keeping correct time.

Of course the results were genuinely obtained in the first case ; if you do not believe so apply to St-dd-rd for further information and definite proof.

Since Mr. L. Wilson's paper, we hear that J-n-s has devoted his spare hours to an exhaustive search for lost electricity from the electric cars.

Is the rumour concerning J. D. D-v-s true ?

Everyone agrees that he has declared his intention of going on the stage ; some assert he has already had his portrait taken in the rôle of Samson ; others declare he is about to join the " Midsummer Night's Dream " company, and has been promised a leading part.

Why should the rest of our staff not follow Mr. Cl-rk's example ? This gentleman has changed his name to H. A. de Cl-rk. Surely A. de Morlie and Henri de Mières would sound rather well ; Jean de Bonhomme would certainly be very fine.

## THE MEDICAL "SMOKER"

"THE FINEST SMOKER we've ever had." This was the universally expressed opinion of those who were fortunate enough to be present at the Victoria Hotel on the evening of November 14th. The Committee were fortunate in securing the services of Mr. W. H. Brown as Chairman, and it was a case of the right man being in the right place, for although he assumed ignorance of his duties at first, Mr. Brown (ably seconded by Messrs. Sykes and Young) kept us going splendidly all night. His first act was to send cigars round the room, and his second was to make a speech of which the present scribe has only slight recollection, being in such a miserable blue funk at having to sing early on in the evening. Mr. Brown said he had only attended one Smoking Concert in his life before, and had not a very clear memory as to what took place; in reply to the sarcastic cheers, the Chairman denied the implied insinuation, and proceeded to tell us how he had once been a village organist, with fair eyes and blue hair, and how a cruel curate had dismissed him for playing a selection from the "Bohemian Girl" slowly (what a debt the world of Surgery owes to that curate!). Having made an end of speaking, Mr. Brown called upon "his friend" Mr. Tomlin to sing a song. The latter nervously endeavoured to comply, and drawled out a song about having lost a cat. Mr. Swanson followed with "The Old Brigade," and his masseteric action was much enjoyed. If Mr. Sugden were not so learned in medicine as he is, he would, we are sure, be a rival of Wilson Barrett. His oratorical effort on "Tratle Sop," which was the next item on the programme, was delivered with such effect that he was recalled, and recited "The Wreck of the Dover Express." Mr. Reed warbled with wild and sympathetic action, shrugging his shoulders and looking upwards out of his eye-corners in a "chase me" kind of way, on a subject of universal interest, *viz.*, "Girls." Mr. Ball, our worthy host, next helped us with some sketches and songs. It would be quite out of place to congratulate him on his huge successes, but we must thank him in print for his great efforts to entertain us. Our old

friend. Mr. Wilkinson, then treated us to some new and original sketches of the staff. His chef d'œuvre was a dinner scene introducing Professors Barrs, Trevelyan, and Griffith. A few sentences linger in our memory : " Ah, Barrs, old man, and you Trev., old boy, come, let us eat, drink, and be merry ! " " I say, do you know what made the barmaid champagne ? You don't ! well, you ought to ! " " Waiter, bring us some multilocular cysts on toast ! " " Medical students never forget to order champagne in large doses, coch. mag. quant. suff. ter in horis ; " " Now then, ———, there are thirteen steps and the last one is at the periphery. " This last quotation is extremely deep and needs explanation.

## CHEMMY LAB. NOTES

**N**EWSPAPERS IN THIS DEPARTMENT is very scarce. The summer term is not the best for lab. work. One very hot afternoon lately we were visited by a most dejected-looking canine, which roused great excitement. It objected strongly to the wash-bottles with which several prominent members of the lab. chased him.

We heard the other day of a very guileless first year man asking a " demon " for information regarding the '51 schol. He remarked in a patronising tone of voice, " You got it, didn't you, Dr. D—ws—n ? I am thinking of trying for it myself. " He was gently but firmly advised to wait a year or two.

An interesting research on the acceleration of gravity has been proceeding in the Org. Lab. The chief experiment consisted in dropping a dessicator down the Lab. stairs. The investigator, Mr. Cr—sf—l, collected the multifarious results at the bottom.

A certain chemist, last year's senior prizeman to wit, has a mission. He has spent a week or two in advocating the

pronunciation Don Quiôte for Don Quixotê. He may possibly be right, but he has been greatly discouraged by being met everywhere with the remark, "Any donkeyoughter know better." (A joke here. It's as well to label them.)

Chemists want to know :—

Will the ventilation of the big Lab. ever be improved ?

Might not Dr. C—h—n's research on dispelling fogs, be extended to the clearance of the permanent nebulosity of the aforesaid Lab. ?

If the Department have not paid their Water Rate, as, if that is the case, it may account for the  $H_2O$  being so frequently cut off.

Has S. H. C. Br—ggs got his retort-stand back, and did he get a very bad wiggig ?

If the Professor's allusion to " Bikeoyl " was not much appreciated by the Hons. B. people ?

Re the Professorial Picnic.—Have all the ladies got over the loss of their machines ? And doesn't C—x—n tell 'em beautifully.

#### PHENOL PHTHALEIN.

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What you have read on pages 58–62 was first printed in *The Gryphon*, the journal of The Yorkshire College, for December, 1901 (you see we're older than the University). The notes concern various faculties, and we invite the writers' successors to match them, bearing in mind the changes in *The Gryphon's* character over the past half-century.—EDS.

“ THE GRYPHON ” STAFF, 1951-52

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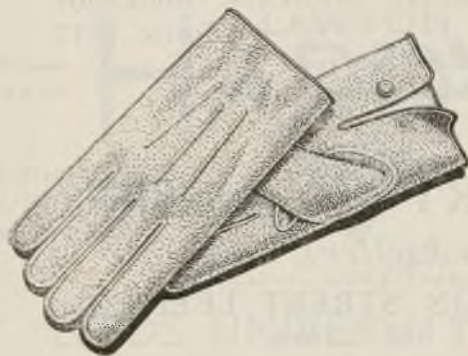


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