

the crickets seem to invite me. It's not too cold; I'll throw my robe about me. The moor smells good tonight with fresh wind blowing the air clean; the staccato note of the crickets is almost cheerful tonight; they seem to be chatting among themselves about some huge secret. The wind is chilly; here's a niche in the moor protected from the breezes; the grass is soft and deep here. I can rest here while the wind blows over me; I can listen to the crickets, and dream — of a mariner steering toward this spot, standing at the helm of his ship with wind blowing through his whiskers and, what is more important, against his sails — of gypsies traveling hurriedly across the moor

toward the city, stopping at night to camp in this sheltered place, circling their wagons about the campfire; dancing, singing, telling mystic tales; then leaving the embers to die alone, all vanishing into the wagons leaving the wind to whip around the horses and dogs about the fire — of vanquished kings and leaders who sought refuge here with their ladies before fleeing the country — of knights, and tournaments in this very spot — of high romances in this windy place, so cool and refreshing; oh, so cool, so soft, so sleepy.

Still cool, and breezy, and melodious, the night flows on; dark, enchanting, mysterious, and wonderful.

## THE FEEL OF THE SOIL

NORMA JACKSON

When we arose, the sun had not yet begun to send its warmth through the rich brown earth of this southern Indiana farm. However, we were to plant potatoes and had a big day ahead. Soon the equipment was ready, and off I ran beside the horses, loving every particle of soft, red dust that played between the toes of my bare, brown feet. The road to the field was covered with this powdery, fine dust. It was my childhood obsession to make footprints, handprints, and pictures in it. Across the field we went, my grandfather and I. Sometimes I ran; sometimes I rode. Through the green pasture, across a clear, small stream, through a lovely wood full of wild roses and waking birds, then at last we came to the newly plowed field.

Even the smell of freshly turned earth made my nostrils tingle and my heart beat a little faster. I was quite shocked to learn that we were not to sow potato seeds but were to place halves of potatoes face down in the furrows. Thus, I spent my day crawling on my knees beside the furrows.

Never have I had such an experience. The feel of that cool, damp earth between my fingers, sinking into it with my knees, the good, clean smell of it simply awed my young mind. Something akin to reverence struck me as I helped there in my childish way. Something of the power possessed by the soil, the richness contained therein quieted my usually wild spirit. All day I stayed by Grandpa's side. Running for the water jug, opening lunches, and keeping the horses out of a neighboring field were all a part of my job.

When our work for the day was finished, and I had watched this splendid soil which was my heritage cover the potato, I felt strangely light hearted. I knew that from that soil my people made their living. That wonderful, powerful earth had made my existence possible. Something greater than man was a part of this. Homeward bound in the twilight, hand in hand with Grandpa, dirt-covered, exhausted, but extremely happy, went I.