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CONTEST MATERIAL

Each spring the department conducts a contest in creative writing among the students in the university. Following are the contributions which received first place in the short story and poetry divisions.

FREE WILL

Louis J. Foerderer

Alone in my closet by a full-length mirror
 I slowly stripped all the trappings away
 I willed myself an Olympian god
 Lifted my chin, tightened an arm, breathed in,
 For a moment Apollo posed for me.
 The animal portion next I willed to see
 And furry goat legs formed—
 A leaf from Eden trembled down.
 Flippantly then I willed my soul;
 I waited, "My Soul" I cried aloud.
 No change appeared in limb or leaf.
 Feverishly I traced over in the glass
 Each muscle, hair, pulsing artery.
 Peered deeply into shallow eyes
 Reflecting a shadowed face by mine
 That quickly stirred then darted away.
 I dressed anew but could not escape
 That distant face or those shallow eyes,
 I search yet, wonderingly, in my glass;
 I cannot lock my closet door.

THE CONNECTING FILE

Louis J. Foerderer

The path was endless to the peak,
And broken stones were sharp
Through army soles to dusty feet
That burning, stole the tint

From multi-colored mountain flowers
And hid the noon-seared grass.
A company left the base at dawn,
And then in file, six men,

And I, the fourth of these. Behind
Came other companies
That weary climbed the rocky height
Then passed to valley paths.

But now I trailed one dusty back,
Far ahead and bowed,
But plodding on; I knew I led
The way for one behind—

I did not turn to check. My life
Was he ahead—and dust;
And those who went before and those
Who followed ceased to be.

He raised a tired arm; I dropped
Beside the path to sleep—
To dream of endless files of men
Who marched although I fell.

I woke; the slope was washed in gold;
Both fir and cone were ore;
And all was gilded in the light
That blinded as it flowed.

And then with one convulsive leap
The setting sun had plunged
Below the peak, and twilight fell—
A shadow waved me on.