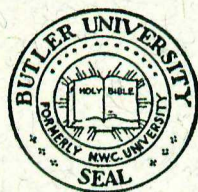


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CONTENTS

Upper Class Section

How Distant Now?, a poem.....	Robert Petty	5
Out of Winter, a poem.....	Robert Petty	6
Credo, a poem.....	Robert Petty	7
The Curious Duck.....	Jane Bachman	8
The Brass Key.....	Ron Schaffner	10
Abdication.....	Lucia Walton	14
The Individualist.....	Jean K. Rauch	15
The Visit.....	Norman Wilkins	18
A Woman Has Troubles.....	Timotheus Carson	20
The Guiding Hand.....	Patricia Anne Moriarity	21
The Tent.....	Jean F. Campbell	26

Freshman Section

My Responsibilities as a Twentieth-Century American.....	Tom E. Willey	28
A Legion of Morons.....	Judy Winslow	29
A Blue-sealed Envelope.....	Kermit Thomas	31
Loyalty.....	Jean Rees	33
How Hitler Came to Power.....	R. L. Bubenzner	34
If I Had My Life to Live Over.....	Joyce Mullery	35
Thought for the Day.....	Louise Haney	37
The Moral Responsibility of Man.....	Karen Wortley	37
Man Has the Power.....	Harold Modlin	39
A Woman I Shall Never Forget.....	Carol Fidler	40
The Last Obstacle.....	Kent Stewart	42
A Modern Breakfast.....	Robert Luker	43
Time and Death.....	Robert J. Schrenker	43
My First Concert.....	Janet L. Cox	44
My Definition of Intelligence.....	Joyce Skaggs	45
The Trembling Hand.....	Elizabeth Simpson	46
Taps.....	John Stokesberry	47

HOW DISTANT NOW?

“ . . . as always, where Dylan was, there were no tears . . . ”

J. M. Brinnin

I

So clear the notes which sang men on their way,
The broken tones of temperance and delay
Rang, and he heard, cursed that they should be
The anthem of man's immortality.
“Do not go gentle into that goodnight.”

Bright in the green dawn, child, be the father;
In the blinding light, chained, by the breaded water
He sandaled words which swung the knotted line
And stormed the very temple of the mind.
“Rage, rage against the dying of the light.”

II

How strangely now we sense
No music in his death,
No afternote legato to enhance;
Beauty breaks and falls with no illusion—
Memory is the only resonance.

Yet could it be at last he knows
What here we cannot understand,
A meaning almost caught in many things—
Death, a summer sidewalk
Green with voices, a Chinese
Windchime blowing in the rain.

III

The seawalls darken now. The claret wave,
Raging, mounts the breast of the mackerel sand;
O genesis, somewhere, child of another Christmas,
The lightning breaks at last from its cockled shell.

—ROBERT PETTY

OUT OF WINTER

Gathering now, April leads
Her thirsty armies to the spring,
While silver warriors with their beads
Steal quickly down the onward year.
Desperately we reach, for what?

Again to the blood which holds us here
Fast to the love and vanishing
Of dreams that are and those that were,
A language comes which has no name,
Asking, loud, in every man,
"What is the meaning of your name?"

But life is not to question life, here
Breathing dampness underneath the alders,
Where the young crow, lean and angry out of winter,
Finds itself reflected in the river,
Rises from the bottoms, swift and silent,
Black against the blooming of the year.

We grew too wise; goodbye, yet what is this—
A dying man, a cross and heart's slow turning,
That we should be reborn beneath the altars,
Startled by our image in blest waters,
Rising from and to, we know not what.
It is not life to mock this crucifix;

Nor is it easily our dreaming goes,
Hiding blood which sings the primal vein,
Here in the middle mist; for God denied
The one choice—to remain; and nature lies,
Speaking so beautifully in mud and feathers,
To us, knowing neither Christ nor crows.

The rivertowns are lonely
With music and regret;
Flood-water has the levee,
In June we will forget;

And who will write the ballad,
Nor make it less than prayer
To say drowned fields are hallowed
Because the lord is there?

As death would have it, we exchange our doubting,
In manner that is fashion for the day,
With all our wilderness of senses crowding
To some new growth, flowering in old clay,
That we, who would be public in our pain,
Might live for a moment in our march to die.

But listen, the deaf are ringing bells!

—ROBERT PETTY

* * * * *

CREDO

Nothing breaks that will not lend a whole,
And we are but a part of any day,
Knowing some wingless feather lay
Where once our childhood thought it to be all.

In your heart, your only priest,
Your only saviour, love,
Go to your communion with the least;
Dare their wing to be worth dreaming of.

—ROBERT PETTY

The Curious Duck

Jane Bachman

THERE was once a young duck who set out to search for the meaning of life, because, as he said, "I would like to be something more than a duck." Privately he thought that to be like all the rest of the ducks was quite humiliating.

"But how can I be other than a duck when I look so much like one?" he questioned.

The others only blinked and wondered why anyone would want to be anything else.

"Why am I a duck, and what am I supposed to do?" he wondered.

Henrik was his name, and he was not a very big duck so he knew right away he would have to be persistent. In Henrik's world, one had to make up for lack of size by knowing something—not a great deal—just enough to keep from being pecked.

He started his search one sunny June morning. The grass was growing splendidly, and the birds were joyous, so everything seemed right. Henrik knew that it would be difficult to make progress if the wind were blowing or the birds still.

The path was straight, but Henrik soon found the sun was warm, and he had to find an oak tree and rest awhile. Just as he was trying to make himself comfortable, he noticed an old dog sauntering down the path. The dog was getting grey, and Henrik supposed he was very wise. For if the old ones are not wise, what is to become of us?

"Am I on the right road?" asked the old dog before Henrik could speak.

"That all depends on where you're going," replied Henrik and fluffed up his wings ever so slightly.

"What has that to do with it?" asked the old dog.

"Why, everything." Henrik closed his bill with a snap.

"Are *you* on the right road?" The old dog tried to look straight ahead, but it was not much use for he had walked with his eyes on the path ever since he could remember.

"I'm not going anywhere in particular," said Henrik, "so it doesn't make any difference if I'm on the right road or not."

"Indeed," said the old dog. "Why, then it makes all the more difference. Otherwise you may get back where you started or you may take the wrong road."

"But how can there be a wrong road when I don't know where I'm going?" Henrik thought the dog very strange.

"I can't explain," sighed the other, "because I don't always know where I'm going either, but I'm sure there's a route laid out anyway. Am I on the right road?"

By this time, Henrik was becoming impatient and answered crossly, "I can see that you will not listen to reason, and so I am

going on. But first, do you know the meaning of life?"

"Nothing," sighed the old dog and yawned. "You'd better be on your way because I can see you have a lot to do."

"Yes," answered Henrik and started off again.

He had not gone far when he came to a little house set back from the road. The roof drooped at one corner, and one of the windows was cracked. Henrik wasn't sure if he should enter the gate, so he squeezed under it though it sagged horribly and ruffled up his feathers. Just as he was wiggling out, he heard a laugh, a high, tinkly laugh, and he looked around in astonishment. The laughter continued, and then Henrik saw a mouse rolling back and forth on the ground, holding its sides with its paws. Henrik stared. Soon the mouse sat up, wiped its eyes with a dandelion leaf which happened to be handy, and then, suppressing a chuckle, asked Henrik who he was.

Henrik drew himself up and explained, of course, that he was looking for the meaning of life, but that he could see he had come to the wrong place. This almost set the mouse off again but not quite. He stopped just in time and asked, "What makes you think you've come to the wrong place?"

"I didn't come to be laughed at," said Henrik. "I came to find an answer to my question. Do you know the answer or don't you?"

"I guess I don't." The mouse tittered and then added, "I hope you find it, but please, please push the gate open instead of trying to go under if you feel you must enter places like this, or I shall be hysterical. I know I shall."

Henrik did as he was told, but this was even funnier, and the last thing he heard as he waddled around a curve in the road was high, convulsive giggling.

By this time Henrik was shaken up a bit, so he made his way to a large, sparkling pond. But just before he got there, he saw a tiny sparrow lying on the ground, crying pitifully. Hovering round it was its mother.

"What is the matter?" asked Henrik.

"She is going to die," said the mother, "because her wings were broken when she foolishly tried to fight with a jay."

Henrik said nothing but stared at the little bird on the ground.

"Is there nothing you can do?" he asked at length.

"Nothing," said the mother, "except sing to her the most beautiful notes I know how to sing. The cardinal or the oriole could do it better, but she is my child, and because I love her I must sing."

"Do you know the meaning of life?" Henrik asked, not willing to waste any more time.

"Alas, no," said the sparrow, "I don't know the meaning of death either. I only know how to sing."

"Very well," said Henrik and went to squat on the edge of the pond in deep perplexity. Never in all his life had he been so confused.

"What is the matter," boomed a frog, "and how can you have the

audacity to sit on the bank of *my* pond without asking?"

"I'm looking for the meaning of life," Henrik said, "Can you help me?"

"Of course I can't." The frog rolled his eyes in indignation. "That's up to you, you silly duck."

"But I've searched and searched." Henrik was feeling rather sad. He soon found he was telling the story of his journey to the frog.

"Humph," commented the frog. "You've seen the answer to your questions."

"But I don't understand," wailed Henrik.

"Exactly. You lack one very important thing. Few ducks ever find it," the frog grumbled and disappeared beneath a lily pad.

Henrik sat on the edge of the pond and thought. A gold butterfly skimmed over his head and landed on a tall cattail.

"Do you . . .?" began Henrik and then stopped.

She was being pursued by a large blackbird who swooped and dived.

"Stop!" shouted Henrik to the bird. "Let her fly."

But the bird swallowed the gold butterfly and flew off, and only the slender cattail and Henrik knew what had happened.

Two large tears formed in Henrik's eyes, but he brushed them away with a wing—a grey, bedraggled wing by this time.

"It must be so. The frog was right." He started back down the path, a little slower this time, for he had found what he was looking for.

The Brass Key

Ron Schaffner

MILDRED WINSLOW slowly and with great effort trudged up the creaking stairway toward her third floor flat. The staircase was dimly lit, but the poor light did not hide the exposed lathe and bits of plaster that lay scattered about. The maroon stair carpet was frayed and showed worn threads over its entire length.

She reached her floor and paused to catch her breath. A few more steps, and she slipped the little brass key into the lock and entered. A flood of light from the bare windows seared her eyes, and she turned away quickly. Slipping out of a well-worn mink, she dropped into an old over-stuffed chair that freely displayed its insides.

"Is this me?" she thought. "I detested giving up the place on Sheridan Road . . . nothing else I could do." She closed her eyes to her, now, immodest surroundings and let her mind trickle back to that beautiful, lavishly furnished lake-front apartment. A life of wealth and luxury had slipped away and been replaced in its closing hours by one of strife and financial hardship. Bitterly, she remembered her husband's suicide and then the creditors and court

proceedings and legal fees and finally waking one morning to find herself nearly penniless. Dependent on a relief check, she had no choice but to rent a small, cheap apartment.

She shuddered when she thought of this dependency, but what disturbed her even more was the association with people whom she had so long considered her inferiors. She recalled the old days when she would have shied away from such people in downtown stores for fear of catching some malady from contact with them. She had always ignored them; and when they couldn't be ignored, she dismissed them, feeling herself as a song thrush in a world of squabbling wrens.

She looked around at her newly acquired wren house and tears appeared in her eyes. The bare windows, the shabby furniture, the thread-bare rug, the lamps with ragged shades, all seemed like another world. The rumble of the El passing outside rattled the dishes in the cabinets and set the little glass chandelier overhead into tingling, oscillating motion.

At last her pensive meditation was interrupted by a light knocking on the door.

She called, "Who's there?" Then, without waiting for an answer, she got to her feet and opened the door.

Before her, stood a small gray-haired woman in her fifties. She appeared a bit coarse. Her face was flushed yet healthy looking. She wore a cheap print dress, a pair of scuffed low-heeled shoes, no hose, and no make-up.

She smiled broadly and said, "Afternoon. I'm Dottie Wainwright. I live upstairs."

"Oh," Mildred replied, a little disturbed at this intrusion.

"You're new here, ain't ya?" she said with a slight accent. "Well, I think it's nice to have friendly neighbors. I always stop in to see everybody what's new in the building . . . I like to be a good neighbor . . . That's what I always tell Irene . . . She's my daughter . . . Irene is . . . 'Irene,' I say, 'Always be a good neighbor.' Don't you think it's nice if neighbors are good friends? Livin' close like this . . . I always figure people might as well be friends. Ain't that right?"

"Why, yes," she answered, repelled at the familiarity, but, nevertheless, intrigued by such audacity.

"Your name is Winslow, ain't it?" the intruder said.

"Yes, I'm Mildred Winslow. Won't you step in?" she finally asked reluctantly.

"No. Can't right now. Just wondered if you might like to come up to supper tonight. Won't be fancy, but you're welcome. You'll meet the family and we can start bein' good neighbors right away."

Trying to hide her surprise, she said, "Well—"

"You don't have any plans—I mean you're not doin' anything else, are you?"

"Oh, no," she answered and pondered a moment. "Why I'd love

to come."

"Good. Gotta go now. Take care of my clan . . . But come up anytime . . . apartment 4 B. Whenever you're ready. Bye."

"Goodbye," she said and slowly pushed the door shut.

Deep down she still abhorred the idea of associating with these people, but she felt a compelling attraction toward the woman.

She finished tidying herself up and decided to go upstairs for the feeble hospitality. In front of apartment 4 B she paused and then rapped lightly on the door, half hoping that there would be no answer.

The door opened quickly and there stood the flushed, cheerful face of Mrs. Wainwright. "Come in," she said, "You're just in time. Supper'll be ready in just a couple minutes."

"Thank you," she replied and stepped into the room.

"Come in and meet the clan."

She saw a very clean and neat room. It wasn't fancy, and scarcely a single ornament adorned the room. The necessities were there—modest as they were, they were there. Then she noticed a dozen or so oil paintings scattered about the walls. She could not help feeling the incongruity of this and wondering if there might not be some surreptitious explanation. She became concerned and nervous about it, but just then her hostess broke in.

"This is my son Robert and my daughter Irene. Kids, this is Mrs. Winslow. She just moved in downstairs."

As they exchanged greetings, Mildred's eyes wandered to an easel and a set of oil paints in one corner, and there was Robert in a wheel chair. She felt a little relieved at this explanation of the paintings. What a grand pastime for an invalid, she thought.

Examining one of them more closely, she said, "Robert, is this work yours? It's really quite good."

"Thank you," he replied. "That and reading are about all I can do . . . like this." His gaze dropped to his legs, but he was smiling.

Mrs. Wainwright called them all to dinner, and they sat down at a small table placed between the living room and the kitchen. It was covered with oil cloth. The dishes and silverware were of the Woolworth variety, but the food smelled good and looked delectable.

"It ain't fancy," she said, "but I hope you like it. Robert and Irene always liked this recipe . . . so did Frank. I fix it all the time."

"Oh, if it's as good as it smells, I'll have to give up my diet," Mildred said pleasantly.

They all laughed; and at Mrs. Wainwright's insistence, Mildred served herself first. The meal proceeded with some small talk and was topped off finally by orange jello dessert.

Her offer to help with the dishes was refused, so Mildred and Robert sat in the living room while Mrs. Wainwright and her daughter washed the dishes and cleaned up the kitchen.

"Your work is really very fine, Robert. Have you been paint-

ing long?"

"About seven years, I guess . . . Since I was sixteen and got laid up."

"Have you tried to sell any of your paintings?" she asked.

"Oh, no. Without these to look at, I would feel sorta lost . . . like all this time was wasted. The money doesn't mean anything. I love paintings. Even when I was little, Mom says I liked to color and draw. We can't afford anything like that so I just make my own enjoyment, I guess. I'd like to do a portait of you sometime."

"I'd like that very much. You said you read a lot, too."

"Yes, sometimes I get tired of painting, and it's kind of a strain to sit here and work. I read books that Mom and Irene bring from the library."

"That's fine. You must have quite an education on your own."

"Oh," he said, "I don't look at it that way. I just try to enjoy myself and make life mean a little something."

Mrs. Wainwright had finished the dishes now, and she and Irene joined them. "I can't stay too long," she said, "I have to go to work pretty soon."

"Oh, do you work nights?" Mildred questioned.

"Yes," she replied, "I clean up the offices in a building down in the Loop. Between that and Irene's job after school, we get by pretty good. I been workin' there near fifteen years now."

They talked for a little while longer, and Mildred learned that Mr. Wainwright had been dead nearly sixteen years. He had died in an accident at work soon after Irene was born. They talked, but Mildred always steered the conversation away from herself as much as possible. For the first time in her life, she began to feel a little ashamed of her opulent background.

Mrs. Wainwright finally excused herself and left for work, but at the children's request Mildred stayed on and talked to them.

A knock came at the door, and Irene answered it. She admitted a sharp-featured, good looking Italian boy about her own age.

"Mrs. Winslow, this is Tony."

"Hi . . . er . . . ah . . . pleased to meet ya, ma'am," he said causing a smile to come to Mildred's face.

After a few minutes, Irene asked her brother and Mrs. Winslow if they would mind if she and Tony left them and took a short walk.

"Of course not," she answered noticing the elation on the girl's face in the presence of her young suitor.

When they had gone, Robert said, "Irene is quite in love with him or so she thinks."

"Oh, I'm sure she really is. That look in her eyes when he's here could be for no other reason."

It was nearly eleven o'clock when she finally said that she must be leaving and left Robert and Irene and Tony. She thanked them and asked them to thank their mother. They exchanged "Good nights," and she pulled the door shut behind her.

Descending the stairs, she thought of the young girl in love, the invalid boy devoted to his painting, and the mother who loved her children and worked hard to provide for them.

She glanced around her. The stairway no longer seemed gloomy and dismal. Everything smelled fresh and clean. Before the door to her flat, she paused. Her bitterness had subsided, and she no longer feared herself and the emptiness of the room beyond. She looked down, and the key in her hand had become pure gold.

Abdication

Lucia Walton

"**Y**OU let me alone!" Susie whispered angrily, rubbing the stinging spot behind one ear where a long, glossy braid began.

Hurling a venomous glare at the fat, freckled boy behind her, she tossed her head and bent it over her arithmetic book. The boy pulled hard on her other braid; she drew them both over her shoulders and retied the blue bows at the ends.

"Teacher's pet's got pigtails! Teacher's pet's got pigtails!" Her face burned at the low singsong taunt. They're just jealous, she thought. Mother said so. I can't help it if they're dumb and don't get good report cards.

A gong sounded in the hall. Susie automatically reached inside her desk for her spelling book, then stopped as she remembered what day it was. Thursday! On Thursday there was always a spelling bee, and Susie always won. The unpleasant memory of the previous Thursday came back to her. She had spelled "encyclopedia" and won, and all the way home from school at noon they had pulled her hair and yelled "Teacher's pet" at her, and the fat boy had shouted words which sounded nasty, though she didn't know what they meant. She had wanted to ask her mother, but her mother would have wanted to know where she had heard them. Susie never told her mother how the other children teased her.

"Line up for the spelling bee, children," called Miss Phillips. Susie went to her place, thankful that the fat boy was on the opposite side of the room. She spelled steadily, mechanically, when her turns came, trying not to giggle or look scornful when other children missed words like "their." One by one the others misspelled and took their seats until only Susie and a boy across the room were left standing. The boy was nice. He didn't tease her, and he was always second in the spelling bees. Looking hard at the boy, Susie felt the resentful eyes of the other children staring at her.

"Beggur," said Miss Phillips. Susie spelled it quickly, and the teacher turned to the boy.

"Beggur," he pronounced. "B—e—g—" he stopped, confused. Susie held her breath as he began again, then released it in a long sigh when he finished it correctly.

"Encyclopedia." Susie did not hesitate. "E-n-c-y-c-l-o-p-i-d-e-a."

"Repeat that, please." Miss Phillips gave Susie a puzzled look. Susie repeated it defiantly, exactly as she had spelled it the first time. The teacher looked at her sharply. "That is incorrect, Susie. You may take your seat."

Susie went to her desk, avoiding a foot thrust into the aisle in front of her. The dirty-faced girl who sat beside her snickered behind her hand, then exploded into a giggle, and the whole class laughed.

"Ha, ha," whispered the fat boy. "Teacher's pet ain't as smart as she thinks!" Susie regarded the inkwell in the corner of her desk intensely, wishing the bell would ring. It did, after a few minutes that seemed years to Susie. The class lined up at the door, filed out of the room and down the stairs. She would be safe as far as the corner; a big girl from the sixth grade whose mother was the Scout troop leader walked that far with her. Maybe they wouldn't, this time. Maybe just once they'd leave her alone. She turned the corner slowly.

"Ha, ha, Susie missed!"

"Teacher's pet missed a word!"

"Teacher's pet's a dummy! Teacher's pet's a dummy!" The fat boy jerked off one of her blue bows and threw it into a puddle. A big red-haired one pulled her sash untied. Susie walked on as fast as she could, trying to shut their jeers out of her mind, trying not to let them see that she could scarcely keep back the tears. When at last she reached the corner of her own yard, she ran around to the back door, so they couldn't see her crying. Her mother was in the kitchen. Susie tried to slip up the back stairs, but her mother heard a sniffle and called her back.

"Why, Susie, what's the matter? Come tell mother about it." Sobbing with great trembling gasps, Susie burrowed into her mother.

"I—I spelled a word wrong!" she howled, crying harder.

"Is that all! Heavens, child, everyone makes mistakes! What was the word?"

"Encyclopedia."

"Why, Susie, you know how to spell that. I expect you were nervous; it can happen to anyone. You mustn't feel so bad about a little thing like that."

The Individualist

Jean K. Rauch

THE word *individualist* is derived from the Latin word *individuus*, which means 'indivisible.' The suffix *ist* indicates that an individualist is 'one who is' indivisible. The word's meaning has been gradually expanded and enriched until now it suggests one whose way of life is determined by a certain philosophy known as individualism.

The individualist of today is a man who thinks for himself and

acts upon what he believes is right. His conscience is his sternest critic. To live up to his name, he must be honest and have an objective outlook upon all he sees. He feels it his duty to be forever searching, inquiring, and thinking. Since these attributes often set him apart from his fellow men, it usually follows that he must be a courageous man if he is to remain uncontrolled, unrestricted, and uncoerced by the multitudes of conformists around him who believe that he should adhere, as they do, to the prevalent outlook of the day.

It is not impossible for the outward actions of a conformist and an individualist to be regarded as identical, yet this judgment is superficial, since the motives behind their behavior are entirely different. The conformist believes and acts as he does, because he has been told to do so or because he is mimicking others; the individualist believes and acts as he does, because he has weighed all possible facts available to him and has come to independent decisions. He holds the same sentiments as did the author of this poem:

Truth: be thou more precious than possessions without end;
Wisdom: be thou more sacred than the pleasing of a friend;
Courage: be thou our strength to gain the distant goal;
Beauty: send thou a cleansing wonder to the soul.

The individualist has high regard for the mind of man. He studies its finest works and attempts to model his life after the lives he deems to have been well lived, but he does not believe that all goodness, virtue, and greatness lie in the past. He believes that there will be progress and that men, now and in the future, are, and will be, responsible for that progress. He will not be blind to new ideas because they suggest change, but will be open-minded and objective, without undue emotionality and sentimentality. Therefore, when he encounters a new idea which does not seem to him worthy of his fealty, he will respect it as he would wish his own ideas to be respected, and even though he cannot support this novel view, unless it threatens his very existence he will give over to time the duty of destroying it. Inherent in the nature of any man who believes in the individual is the desire to give every man the right to think and the right to speak.

Unfortunately, in America today, conformity is very much the fashion. Although the rights of the individualist are protected by our Constitution, social and economic pressures are sometimes brought to bear against him. A television program, which was recently produced by the Department of Education of New York State, illustrates how these pressures operate in modern businesses. The purpose of the program was to demonstrate the usefulness of psychological tests in selecting prospective candidates for executive positions in industry. Here are a group of questions and answers which summarize the program's content. (The employee is asking the questions; the proponent of the tests is giving the answers.)

Question: What is the purpose of this test?

Answer: To indicate how you will fit into this organization as a member of the management.

Question: By what standard will I be judged?

Answer: By whether or not you are a conformist. The norm is considered perfect.

Question: How do you know that I will not "cheat?"

Answer: We know that you will "cheat," either consciously or unconsciously. All people do. This will be taken into consideration in grading the tests.

Question: But, by being unethical, I could give you an entirely false impression of my personality. I do wish to be accepted for this job, you know.

Answer: Yes, we realize this, but if you are intelligent enough to fool us, then the chances are that you are intelligent enough to be a useful employee.

Question: Therefore, if I realize that I am a non-conformist, my only chance to be accepted for an executive position is to be dishonest. Is that what you are saying?

Answer: Well, let's put it this way: you must be clever.

Question: May I ask how you rate a person who ranks high aesthetically on your tests?

Answer: Many companies have adopted the standard that any person showing an aesthetic preference more than seven percent of the time is automatically eliminated.

Question: Could you explain what you mean by "a person who shows an aesthetic preference?"

Answer: He would be one who prefers music and good books to, say, football and social functions.

Question: Has this method been used in picking our industrial leaders of today?

Answer: Well, that is an interesting thing; as a matter of fact, no. The presidents of thirteen of the most important companies in the country were asked to take this test. They were told to be absolutely honest. Mind you, they are all top-notch in their fields, but they all flunked miserably; they all were individualists. But I have no doubt that if those men were in this room right now, applying for a job, they would pass with flying colors. You see, what one has to do is to be a "conformist in public and an individualist in private."

Is such hypocrisy really essential and desirable in our country today? Are tolerance and understanding to be twisted into a ve-

neer of comradeship? Must the sensitivity and the kindness of tact be degenerated into out and out dishonesty in order to preserve one's right to earn a living? Neither business, nor government, nor church, nor private citizen can force the falseness of unnatural conformity without first destroying the integrity of the individual. Imposing conformity as a prerequisite for leadership is unrealistic, unhealthy, and unworkable. We would be wiser if we sought to develop an atmosphere of appreciation for those who are capable of original thinking. They have shown the way in the development of our civilization to its present peak, and their distinguishing characteristic—the uniqueness of their own individuality—is still our most valuable possession. Without it, the widening flow of our culture would dry up in rivulets of bigotry and stagnate in ignorance and intolerance.

The Visit

Norman Wilkins

THERE was a funny odor in the house, like the time I was sick and the doctor had given me that awful tasting stuff. Daddy was no longer in his bed where he had been for so many months, and I couldn't find him anywhere. The door to the hall downstairs was closed, but I could hear people coming and going most of the day. Mama didn't say a thing, and I was kept upstairs until Mom Newton came to take me to her farm.

* * *

The spring on the screen door needed oiling, for it clearly announced when someone came out the back door of the farm house. Quickly I dried my tears and scooped deeper into the black earth surrounding the blooming honeysuckle bush. If I were very still, Mom Newton might not see me, with my eyes red. It wasn't her fault that I felt lonely.

Shuffling steps rounded the corner and stopped in front of my diggings. All I could see was legs and shoes. Her legs were covered with heavy, brown stockings, and her black shoes could scarcely hold her feet. In fact, there were parts of the shoes cut away. The holes showed bumps on the side of her feet which seemed to be forming extra toes. I looked down at my own shoes. They were caked with dirt, but they didn't have the openings in them like Mom Newton's. I would have to clean my shoes before I went home this afternoon. It wouldn't be appreciated if I tracked in dirt at home, but Mom Newton never seemed to mind. At least, she never said anything.

"Why, Charles, I didn't know you were playing in here." I rolled out from under the bush, brushing myself as I came. "Next time I'll give you an old spoon so you won't have to use that old tin can to dig with. You might hurt yourself on a sharp edge." Study-

ing each blade of grass, I walked slowly over to the fence that divided the woods from the yard and flipped the can to the opposite side. "Let's take a look at the baby chicks," she said.

The chicken coop stood like a giant piece of white cake with green mint icing on top, and was surrounded by a lacy frill of chicken wire. It had just been built, and the smell of pine was very strong when we came closer. What a contrast to the old chicken coop that sat at the other end of the barnyard and seemed to lean in all directions at the same time. Only a few of the older chickens lived there; I guess they couldn't get used to the new surroundings.

I didn't care to visit the chicken coop by myself, for there was a mean rooster that delighted in chasing and pecking me everytime I came near. Quickly I closed the gap between myself and Mom Newton; and when she pushed open the wooden gate of the chicken pen, I was smothered in her long, faded print dress. The gate closed behind us, and I stopped to make sure that the rusty iron that was the counter-weight was not tangled—just in case I might have to get away quickly.

Mom Newton had already reached the door to the coop and was turning the piece of wood that held the door shut. As the door opened, a blur of yellow met our eyes. I was so busy watching the chicks scurry away that I hadn't noticed that there were three lying very still in the corner of the coop. Mom Newton reached down and put them in her apron pocket. She continued feeding and watering the rest of the chicks, and when she finished, the coop was locked and we left the barnyard.

Mom Newton didn't say a word all the way to the house. She must have known that I was interested in the chicks, but she didn't say anything. She went into the house alone, and in a few minutes returned, carrying an empty shoe box. She handed me the chicks, and told me to put them into the box. It was the first time that I had ever held anything so still. They were cold and stiff, and one side of their fuzzy bodies was matted and moist. Their eyes were tightly closed or, at least, they seemed to be.

We dug a hole in the earth on the shady side of the house, placed the box inside, and covered the hole. We stood there for a few minutes trying to reach each other with words, but there didn't seem to be anything to say. For the first time I realized the meaning of death.

A sudden honking of an automobile horn coming from the front yard told me that my visit on my grandparent's farm was about over. As I ran to the car, I turned to look back. Mom Newton was carrying the shovel to the shed, and there was a smile on her face.

A Woman Has Troubles

Timotheus Carson

SHE was listening for the sputter of her husband's old Ford truck coming up the bumpy lane. She waited and waited, occasionally putting a stick of wood in the old cook stove to keep his peas, hamhock, and blackberry pie warm. She sat by the window to watch for headlights, and after an hour she felt fear around her heart.

She tried thoughts. "He's probably stopping over at Brother Albert's house. No. Not Lonzo. You never catch Lonzo puttin' up with the kind of life that rascal Albert lives. Not Reverend Lonzo Johnson. Could be he had a wreck on that old haunted highway runnin' through the mire banks? Is he layin' somewhere near them ugly mounds, bleedin' and dyin'? God, control! God, *please* control! Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

The clock ticked away long and solemnly into the night. Stillness irritated her. God, control. *God*, control. "Could be some harlot draped in the sheep clothes of righteousness makin' love to my man? My Lonzo a-trottin' round in secrecy doin' things I don't know about? Them friendly church-folks, this decent home, that raise in salary last Sunday—all them blessings and Lonzo would do a thing like that?"

Adah waited, stretched and yawned. Something bad was slithering about in the pit of her stomach. Her head felt light and her eyelids felt weighted. She got up and slumped into the huge bed. She assumed for a second she was saying her prayers, and finally she passed into sleep.

Some hours later when she changed sides she touched a warm body and angered into wakefulness.

"Lonzo!"

"Yes, Adah," the burly form answered.

"Where you been all this night? You worried me crazy stayin' out like that."

"Why, Adah," Lonzo pleaded in his solemn but gentle voice. "Don't you remember me askin' you to take the truck to Mayberry's yesterday for a tank of gas?"

Adah remembered. Lonzo had gone with Deacon Clint yesterday morning to arrange the pall-bearing service for Old Man Grant, and when he came back he was in a rush to get his tomatoes and strawberries ready for the market.

"The gas-dial is broken off complete. You know how that is, Adah. I thought you had the tank filled. I didn't ask you this mornin' because I was hurryin' to get those strawberries off my hands."

Adah remembered. She had meant to send one of the boys to get the tank filled, but it had slipped her mind.

"Well, I run out of gas twelve miles out from the McConnell's and I walked the rest of the way here. Lord, I'm tired." He sighed heavily and fell asleep.

Adah felt the bottom of her heart give way. Her ears burned with shame as she went over the thoughts that had come to her while she was watching for headlights at the window. She felt that she stood before a solemn judge who looked coldly at her nakedness and waited for her to speak.

"A woman's got troubles all her own," she said. "Men-folks don't know." She settled herself comfortably for the night.

The Guiding Hand

Patricia Anne Moriarity

I

"**D**O YOU know any nice Jewish boys for my Deborah?" whined Miriam Klein into the phone. "I swear, Mrs. Chahevsky, it's enough to give a mother grey hair, worrying about an only daughter. She's twenty-two now, you know, and hasn't given a thought to getting married some day. I'm telling you it's like pulling teeth to get her to go out even. I tell her, 'Debbie, why don't you go out with that nice Epstein boy?' and she says to me, 'Oh Mom, I don't like him,' and I say to her, 'You might like him if you'd give him a chance.' But she just sits home every night and watches television. You'd think nice Jewish boys grew on trees the way she talks.

"I was telling Jake just the other day, 'Jake,' I said to him, 'Jake, are there any nice Jewish boys down at the store for Deborah?' But Jake, he won't do anything. Anything to be done around this house, I do, like always. Jake always says, 'Let Deborah be. She'll find a nice boy when she's ready.' Just like she had all the time in the world, or something.

"You say Mrs. Shapiro's nephew is coming soon? Good! Maybe Deborah would like him. I'll call up Mrs. Shapiro this afternoon and have them all come over to dinner when he comes. Deborah will appreciate what a thoughtful mother she has one of these days."

Later that afternoon, Deborah came home from her job as assistant in the downtown library. She walked into the kitchen and began setting the table for dinner. As she arranged the three plates on the checkered tablecloth, her mother bustled in and hurried to the stove to put the finishing touches on dinner.

"Debbie, Mrs. Shapiro's sister's son is coming to visit her next month, and I invited them to dinner so you two can get acquainted."

Deborah breathed a weary sigh. "Mom, why don't you give up. I'll get married when I'm ready. Your continual matchmaking doesn't do anything but embarrass me and the poor sucker that gets roped into coming."

"That's gratitude for you, I'm telling you. You give your whole life to your children and what do you get back but a slap in the face. 'Leave me alone Mom, I don't want to Mom, you embarrass me Mom' that's all I ever get from you. It's a curse to be a mother—a curse. Nobody ever appreciates a mother."

Mrs. Klein continued raving, but by this time Deborah had drawn herself in, only half listening to the familiar speech. When her mother showed no signs of stopping, Debbie slowed her down: "All right, Mother, whatever you say."

II

Since Deborah had to work until eight the next night, she didn't go to the library until ten. As she was hanging up her coat, the librarian walked in and stood before the cloak-room mirror, casually smoothing her hair. "That young soldier was in here again this morning looking for you."

Deborah glanced at her from the corner of her eye, trying to look unconcerned. "Oh, really? I wonder what he wanted?"

The librarian moistened her lips and evened up her lipstick with her little finger. "He didn't say. You been dating him?"

"Occasionally," Deborah answered, wondering why she was so interested in her all of a sudden. "He's not exactly the nice Jewish boy that my mother is always talking about, you know."

The librarian laughed. "You can say that again. A more Irish face you wouldn't find on St. Patrick himself. What a scream if you two ended up together. Some combination!" She laughed all the way out to her desk.

"Yeah," Deborah mocked, "a real scream." She turned off the cloak-room light and walked out to her desk.

At exactly ten minutes to eight Glenn Conner walked in the library. Deborah was filing cards in the catalog and looked up just in time to see him walk over to the current magazine table and sit down. She glanced hurriedly at the loan desk to see if the librarian had noticed, but apparently she had been engrossed in telling a patron of the evils of overdue books. She'd see him before eight o'clock, however.

"This has to stop," Deborah thought nervously. "I refuse to go sneaking around like a criminal any more. I'll have to do something tonight."

At 8:05 the librarian gave the couple the sly look of one who thinks she's in on a secret and walked off in the opposite direction. They walked along silently, heading for the little coffee shop where they always went after Deborah got off work, and when Glenn could get away from camp. Deborah hadn't exactly been truthful with the librarian about the frequency of her dates with Glenn. For several months they had tried to keep their dates quiet, but now it was public knowledge that the little Jewish girl, Deborah Klein, was going with an Irish soldier from the nearby army camp.

When they reached the coffee shop, they went straight to their favorite table back in the far corner and ordered two cups of black coffee. Both remained quiet for some time. Finally, Glenn took out two cigarettes, lit them both, and handed one to Debbie. Aware of the tension that was building up between them, she took it and smiled, grateful for the momentary relief it brought.

The waitress brought the coffee. Glenn emptied a package of sugar in his and began to stir. Deborah sat staring at her cup, as though looking for courage. Without raising her eyes, she broke the silence. "Glenn, I don't want to see you any more."

He showed no reaction. He seemed to be unaware that he was still stirring his coffee. Still staring at her cup, she continued softly. "I can't stand this sneaking around any more. Everybody in town knows we've been seeing each other, so my mother's bound to find out."

"Let her find out. I'm all for it." He suddenly stopped stirring. "I was never in favor of this undercover operation. I haven't done anything to be ashamed of, and I don't see any reason to hide. I'm going to your mother tomorrow and talk to her myself."

"Oh no, you can't do that!" She looked up quickly. "You don't understand. She probably wouldn't even see you, and even if she did, she'd make a terrible scene. She'd call you names and me names and have hysterics, and it would go on for days. You see, Mom has my future practically mapped out, and it doesn't include you or anyone like you. I have been destined to marry some nice Jewish boy and live unhappily ever after, and there's nothing that either you or I can do to change her mind."

Glenn looked at her intently. "Debbie," he said quietly, "how long are you going to let your mother run your life?"

"Oh, Glenn, it isn't a question of my letting her run my life. She just wants what's best for me. And besides, I hate to argue with her. She gets so excited, and her heart trouble . . ."

"Heart trouble my foot! That old woman's got a heart as strong as an ox. Haven't you ever noticed that her heart only bothers her when you cause her trouble? Any time she doesn't get her own way—bang! comes a heart attack."

"Now you won't even listen to reason." Her eyes glistened.

"Anything that's going to break us up is not reasonable," he shot back.

She dropped her eyes. "I'm sorry, Glenn. That's the way it has to be."

He stood up, fumbled in his pocket for a dime for the coffee, and flipped it on the table. He gazed down at her with a pitying expression. "Give me a call when you grow up." He turned and walked out of the shop.

III

A week passed. Her mother showed no indication of knowing

about the meeting. That is, not until the day she came storming in from a shopping trip. As soon as she had reached the front door—"Deborah! Jake! Come in here!"

Debbie cringed, knowing what was coming, and walked in to face her mother. Jake entered the parlor with an open newspaper in one hand and his reading glasses in the other. His houseslippers scuffed across the floor. "What is it, Dear?"

Deborah noticed how old he suddenly looked.

"Deborah, Mrs. Abrams told me today she had heard you've been seeing a soldier from the army camp behind my back, and that he's Catholic and an Irishman. I told Mrs. Abrams, I said, 'People should have their mouths washed out with soap for spreading such lies!' They are lies, aren't they, Debbie?"

Deborah took a deep breath. Here it comes, she thought to herself. She looked straight at her mother. "No, Mom, it's true."

Miriam Klein looked as if someone had slapped her across the face. She stared in disbelief at her daughter. "What is this you're saying? You stand there and tell me you've been seeing this . . . this . . . Irishman, sneaking out and meeting him behind my back?"

"Don't call him an Irishman. He's third generation. And I didn't want to do it behind your back, but you're so unreasonable about things."

"I'm unreasonable!" Miriam screamed. "I'm unreasonable. My only daughter brings disgrace upon our house and when I have shame for her I'm unreasonable."

"Now, Mother . . ."

"Don't you 'now Mother' me, you sneaky little—"

"Mom, I haven't done anything to be ashamed of. Glenn and I love each other. I didn't start out to do this. I didn't want it. But it happened."

Miriam turned to Jake. "Jake, did you hear? Your only daughter has brought shame to our house. You see how good at managing her own affairs she is? 'Leave her alone' you always said. 'She'll be all right.' Well, now you see how all right she is. I tried to tell you that all along, but, no, you wouldn't listen. Nobody ever listens!" Jake stared with pleading eyes at his daughter.

"Oh, for Heaven's sake," Deborah interrupted. "This is all past history now. I haven't seen Glenn for over a week, and I doubt if he'll ever want to see me again."

This statement abruptly halted Miriam's ravings. "You mean you won't see him any more?"

"Oh no, I'd see him in a minute, make no mistake about that. But he won't want to see me. He's being shipped out in a few days anyway, so I'll probably never see him again."

Mrs. Klein breathed a sigh of relief. Then, remembering, she slumped down in the nearest comfortable chair, panting. "Oh, my poor old heart. What a strain it goes through."

Jake padded out and brought her back a glass of water. She

drank it, then leaned back, lightly fanning herself with her handkerchief.

"Oh, dear," she sighed. "Sometimes I don't think living is worth all the trouble it takes."

IV

The family had gone to bed early that night, right after the TV news. The light in Deborah's room was still on when she heard a pounding on the front door downstairs. She heard her mother padding past her room on her way to answer, with Mr. Klein shuffling along behind her.

When Mrs. Klein turned on the front room light and opened the door, she faced an excited soldier. She knew instinctively who it was.

"Is Debbie in? I know it's late, Mrs. Klein, but it's very important."

"What do you want here," she whispered. "Go away. Deborah doesn't want to see you."

"Please, Mrs. Klein." Glenn was almost begging. "Try to understand."

"Miriam, let the boy come in. He has the right to see Deborah if he wishes."

She turned on Jake, trembling with rage. As she turned, Glenn stepped into the room. She wheeled back to Glenn.

"Get out of here!" she shrieked. "We don't want you. You'll bring us nothing but trouble."

Then a soft voice behind Miriam said, "It's all right, Mother. I want to see him."

As the couple stood facing each other, Miriam felt her grasp on the family slip. Neither she nor Jake made any move to leave the room.

Deborah broke the silence. "How have you been, Glenn?" She realized as soon as she had spoken how ridiculous it sounded. Glenn stood stiffly with his arms at his sides, conscious of their eyes on him.

"Debbie . . . I'm being shipped out. I don't know where. I've got twenty-four hours before I have to report. Twenty-four hours that we could spend together. I waited for you to call. I told myself the first move would have to be yours. But I can't wait any longer. Time's run out. Please, Debbie. Come with me."

Deborah showed no emotion. Her parents stared intently, waiting to see what she'd say.

"Just a minute. I'll get dressed."

Her mother paled. "Deborah, what are you thinking? You mean you'd walk out of here in the middle of the night with this . . . this . . ."

"I'm going Mother. Don't try to stop me." Deborah spoke not in anger but with a quiet determination. Her mother couldn't believe her ears.

"Am I dreaming? Is this my little girl speaking so to me? Don't you care about us anymore?"

"Good God, Mother, I'm twenty-two years old. When are you going to let me make my own decisions? You've run my life up to now. Now, I'm going to take over."

"Dear God, help me," moaned Miriam. She fell back into the chair and leaned back, gasping for breath. She felt sick. Her head was burning, but she was cold all over.

Jake rushed over to her. "Miriam, are you all right? What's the matter?"

She just sat there, moaning, gasping for air.

"Deborah!" Jake screamed. "Call the doctor! I'm afraid it's her heart."

Deborah was confused. She didn't know what to do. She had always thought her mother was faking before. She looked to Glenn for help.

"Debbie, call the doctor, then leave with me now. If you don't, you'll never get away."

She was helpless. "Glenn, what if she really is sick? I brought it on. I can't leave now. Glenn, she's my mother!"

Glenn's face was dark. He stared at her for a moment, then turned and stalked out.

"Glenn, wait!" she called. But it was too late. He was gone.

V

Several months passed before Deborah heard anything more about Glenn. Then she received a letter from a buddy in his outfit. "Dear Debbie—Glenn talked about you so much that I feel I know you. He would have wanted me to write to let you know of his accident. It was over quickly. I doubt—"

Debbie leaned back in the chair. She was conscious of her mother chattering on the phone in the other room. After a while, her mother came in.

"Deborah, Mrs. Kuhn and her son are coming over for dinner tonight. Be sure and wear your pretty blue dress. I'm sure you'll like Harold. He's such a sweet boy. And it's time you met some nice Jewish boy and settled down."

"All right, Mother," Debbie said. "Whatever you say."

The Tent

Jean F. Campbell

A BRIGHT slice of sun cut the sleep out of Johnny's eyes and he sat straight up in bed. The house was quiet. That meant it was early—or else Saturday. Janie slept hunched on her hands and knees in her baby bed across the room. He started to sing one of his nameless tunes to waken her but he stopped in the first breath. Something was special about today. What was it?

Oh—the tent! He slid down the side of his bed and plat-plattered to the door, dragging his tattered pink blanket along behind him. It caught a teddy bear and a book left over from yesterday's play and scooted them quietly over the linoleum rug into the hall. Softly he closed the door to his bedroom.

Just to make sure, he went into the other bedroom. Mother and Daddy were still asleep. He closed their door, too. Carefully he dressed, sliding off his pajama pants, pulling up the underpants and then the red denim shorts he found on the bathroom floor. Careful to get the fronts on frontwards. It would be harder when summer was over. Buttons and shoes and socks would be terribly hard. Mother said boys in kindergarten always dressed themselves. He bet they didn't.

He looked to see what book he'd pulled out of his room. "Indian Tribes." Just right! He picked up Charley Bear and the book and a ragged corner of his blanket and trailed through the house into the kitchen. There were two big bakery cookies on the table. That meant it was Saturday—no telling when Mother and Daddy would get up. Mother always thought he gave Janie a cooky. Sometimes he gave her a little piece so Mother would find crumbs in her bed. Not today, though!

Out the back door into the world. He could see the sun peeking at him through the tree. All the houses on the street in back were quiet. Some birds were singing and some bees were humming around. Helen came springing around the corner of the garage and purred against his leg.

There it was! The bright yellow tent, waiting for him. Its plastic roof looked slippery in the sun this morning, like spilled milk on the kitchen floor.

The grass was wet on his toes. He crawled into the tent and spread the blanket for him and Charley Bear and Helen to sit on. He gave Helen a piece of cooky. She didn't like it so he ate it. He ate Charley Bear's cooky too. He opened "Indian Tribes" and began to read the pictures to Charley Bear and Helen, about how Indians had lived right here the year before he was born.

He read all the pictures in the book. It took a very long time, and then he heard Mother in the kitchen. Helen went to sit by the back door. But he would hide! He sat very still. Very softly he told Charley Bear about the real bears in the forest where there were so many trees you couldn't see the sky. "When I get big, I'll take you there and we'll live in a big tree full of honey up high where the wolves can't get us," he whispered.

Janie's voice came through the kitchen window asking for breakfast in her strange private language. He wanted his orange juice. They must think he was still in bed. He'd wait, though.

He whispered to Charley Bear what he expected to have for breakfast. He sang a quiet song about forests and bears and Indians to the tune of "Waltz of the Flowers" without making a sound,

rocking back and forth and twisting the end of his blanket. It took a long time because he knew the whole tune. He would hit Janie if she touched his record player today.

"Here's your bib, Janie. Up you go," Mother said.

He stopped rocking and listened. Maybe they would call the police to help find him.

"Bill, will you go get Johnny out of the tent and bring him in to eat?" Mother said.

Slowly, he gathered up his blanket and Charley Bear. He could hardly wait to get in to breakfast. He hated the tent.

My Responsibilities as a Twentieth-Century American

Tom E. Willey

INDIVIDUAL responsibility in twentieth-century America is a challenging proposition. It is a concept that can encompass every aspect of our lives. A staggering list of explicit duties could be compiled in order to define responsibility in this sense. However, one cannot possibly pursue every opportunity which may exist within the structure of modern society. I, for one, would not attempt to serve as precinct chairman for my political party, organize a Community Chest canvass, bake cookies for the church social, read to disabled veterans on Saturdays, and circulate a petition for the Parent-Teacher's Association. I would not attempt all these activities in the span of a year, nor perhaps in the span of my life. Such a dilution of individual energy would not contribute to the total welfare of any one group. How, then, can a twentieth-century American fulfill his responsibility as a citizen without becoming frustrated by the innumerable vehicles that can serve this purpose?

Home base is the nucleus of any operation. In business, home base is the main plant. For the spider, home base is his web. The spider fulfills his role by maintaining a sturdy and intricately woven web. His opportunities are grasped within the scope of his web. He does not run after every beetle that comes trundling by. Human beings also spin webs. These human webs may be composed of many different materials, but they are effective only when composed of integrity, objectivity, intellectual curiosity, and humility. The human web is personality. I am my own home base. The breadth, depth, and texture of my personality determine the quantity and quality of opportunities that fall within my scope. In examining the natures of my acquaintances who can be classified as "good citizens," I find that they possess most of the materials necessary for an effective web. Being primarily involved in living sound, ordered lives, these people almost unconsciously perform the duties of citizenship without tub-thumping or Chauvinistic patriotism. These people keep their own back yards clean and do not self-righteously peer

over the neighbor's fence to check on the condition of his affairs.

My responsibility as a twentieth-century American is not something I can frantically grab at. It is something I must prepare for. A girder of structural steel plays its role in the framework of a large building only if it has been properly poured, tempered, and secured. Therefore, my responsibility is to pour, temper, and secure myself as a component part of modern society. In my particular case, this can be enhanced by stimulating my intellectual capacities, by developing my spiritual depth and discipline, and by pursuing my life's work with imagination and dedication. The facilities for such a program are at my fingertips, as they are for most Americans. All I have to do is avail myself of them. By expanding these three dimensions of my life, I will increase the scope and quality of my personal web. Then the tangible means of pursuing social responsibility will fall within my province and I will be able to give them more than hollow "do-gooder" noises and nervous energy.

My responsibilities as a twentieth-century American are the same as those of an Early Egyptian or Late Empire Roman. Basically, this concept is fulfilled by being responsible for myself. Though I am but a pinch of flesh in the cosmos, a machine is only as strong as its weakest component part.

A Legion of Morons

Judy Winslow

IN William Allen White's essay "Good Newspapers and Bad," he states that "the moron's name is Legion." By such a statement, Mr. White professes his belief in the idea that our society harbors many individuals who may be classified as morons. Mr. White does not mean morons in the strictest psychological sense of the word, however. He does not use the definition of a moron as being a person who is mentally deficient to the extent that his mental capacity can reach only that of a twelve-year-old child. Mr. White's reference to morons is one pertaining to those persons who have slightly less than average intelligence and who have failed to develop that intelligence to the point where they have a clear conception of right and wrong. These persons, according to Mr. White, are not the illiterate minority as one might expect, but they are the people who make up a large and prominent part of our society. One reason which Mr. White gives for the increasing prominence of this group is public and compulsory education.

I agree with Mr. White's statement, "The moron's name is Legion." The great number of these mentally and morally mediocre people is evident to anyone who cares to observe humanity. These people are often referred to as the mass or the mob. They are a closely knit society, a fact which accounts for their strength; for, if they are not strong in intellect, they make up for this deficiency in unity. In this moronic mass the "herd instinct" is the dominating

force. There are no individuals as such, and there is no individual thought or enterprise. Because of their great numbers and their unanimity of thought, these people are able to exert great pressure on the remaining parts of American society. Several more intelligent and less moral men, realizing the potential power of the moronic mass, seek to lead this group in order to procure their own selfish and often diabolic ends. The consequences of such actions of a few men lead to a regression of society in general and cause further retardation of the Legion.

Examples of the great size and power of the legion of morons are recognizable in many ways. The individual moron is relatively harmless. He is the person who retards, in some small way, the educational process of the schools across our country. He is the individual who writes "crank" letters and follows fire trucks and ambulances to satisfy his own morbid curiosity. It is he who is constantly stating biased and unfounded opinions which tend to confuse the thought processes of other more intelligent individuals. As one of many moronic persons grouped together, the moron is much more of a threat. Combined with a group of similar individuals, he can completely clog up the entire educational system. As a member of a group of several morons, he can foster widespread "hate" campaigns against certain races or religions. He can completely eradicate all advances made by intelligent individuals toward clearer, more concise thinking.

Those people who recognize the presence of such a legion of morons in our society and who pander to this group are even more of a threat to America than is the moronic group itself. These people are intelligent enough to recognize the herd waiting to be led to social slaughter. Newspapers often resort to such tactics when their editors become more interested in quantity of readers than in quality of copy. They emphasize the morbid and the sensational, which appeal to the legion of morons. They print highly opinionated articles and rely on headlines wrought with emotional words. The morons are led easily by such methods of journalism because of their inability and unwillingness to think rationally. The tabloids and the "bad" newspapers owe their tremendous success to such a group in our society. They do not care about the consequences which may result from such policies; their main goal is to make money. In this way "bad" newspapers can exert an amazing and frightening amount of influence. Because the few really outstanding newspapers in our country are read by a minority of the public and because this minority is made up of individuals rather than a mass, little is done to stem the overwhelming tide of misconceived ideas and misguided opinions formulated by the morons in our society. It is the latter group who could run rampant and unchecked, causing devastation of our country and of our society, if poor mediums of communication such as "bad" newspapers could ever completely gain control of this legion of morons.

"The moron's name is Legion." This is a fact which cannot be denied by the more intellectual part of our society; nor can the possibilities of this group be denied. But there is some hope for the improvement of this situation. Just as compulsory education has partially brought about this condition, it can also help to alleviate it. Perhaps it is too much to ask that the morons be changed by the schools into intellectually superior persons. However, those people with potentialities for leadership can be educated by the schools, and their potentialities can be channelled into beneficial activities. The more intelligent individuals can be taught to recognize the morons and their demagogic leaders. These malevolent leaders can be controlled and replaced by new and better men whose aim is to raise the level of the legion. Good leaders can raise the standards of the moronic mass. Without support from poor leaders and consequently from the mass, such harbingers of evil as "bad" newspapers can no longer exist. This solution is easy to state but difficult to enact; however, even an awareness of the problem is a step in the right direction. Although there will always be a legion, it need not be one of morons; instead, it can be a legion of average, thinking individuals working together to achieve mutual good.

A Blue-sealed Envelope

Kermit Thomas

ALL he heard was the rustle of his own clothing as he walked purposefully down the dimly lit hall. He felt the dry forced-air heat hit him in the face when he passed each vent in the wall. This heat was the life-saver to the populace deep inside this forsaken, burnt out planet. Glancing now and then at door numbers, he suddenly realized what a distance he had walked in such a short time. The last door number was 1347. He had ascended eight levels in less than ten minutes. He was glad that the ascenders began here on the thirteenth level so that he could ride the rest of the way.

He reached the end of the hall and palmed the silver sphere by the door marked "A." Immediately, the door slid open and he stepped into the ascendor. As he sat down on the padded cushion of the seat, the door closed and four spheres appeared in front of him. Each was of a different color—silver for Communications, red for Transport, blue for Military, and gold for Government. He smiled as he calmly touched the gold sphere. The ascendor rose instantly and stopped before he could exhale the air he had inhaled thirty-eight levels below. The door beside him opened and he stepped into the very luxurious government level. He walked over to the level-directory and scanned the lettered board until he saw the title "Grand Marshal." Beside it was GOV 5100. He absorbed this information and began to walk slowly down the hall. His one worry was the blue of his Military Security uniform, which he

thought very conspicuous among the glittering gold uniforms of the government guards. He felt that he was being glared at by every guard he passed. His only consolations were his quiet, purposeful look and the low-frequency pistol on the cord under his tunic. He walked for what seemed like hours down the winding governmental hall. Suddenly he was confronted with a dead end. He looked at the entrance numbers, and there it was: GOV 5100. He stopped and took a deep breath as he reached for the door. It flew open, and the red of Transport loomed into view. He stepped back briskly, giving a stiff shoulder salute as the Marshal of Transport and his guards filed out. He went into the office and stood before the secretary's desk. The secretary looked up at him and asked his intentions; he answered that he was on official business from the Marshal of Security, Military Division. The secretary gave him a pass through the guards stationed at the inner office doors.

As he stood before the doors, he thought how the emblazoned plaque of the Grand Marshal would look robed in the black of death. He almost laughed aloud when the two guards asked for his pass. Giving it to them, he entered. The doors whirled shut behind him as he stepped into the magnificently adorned office. The wealth and furnishings were breathtakingly beautiful, but still well suited to use. The short, stocky middle-aged man who sat behind the massive desk looked up and cleared his throat. The harsh voice of the Grand Marshal quickly banished all thought of grandeur. He walked casually over to the desk and handed the Grand Marshal the large envelope bearing the Blue Seal of the Military. The Grand Marshal opened the envelope and looked up in surprise when he found nothing. By this time, the pistol was out and the deadly missile had found its mark. The Grand Marshal stood up, his face full of agonizing pain. Blood welled from his mouth as he slowly crumpled to the floor. The missile had shattered his rib cage. It was quick and soundless, just as it had been carefully planned. Things were going too well for them to go wrong now. He opened the door and exited quietly. The secretary glanced up at him as he went past the desk and through the door.

He exhaled loudly, and quickly began to walk down the hall. He felt uplifted and happy. He knew that this regime would finally crumble with its leader dead, and upon his death all slaves held by that regime would be emancipated. He had just freed millions from a parasitic tyranny which controlled almost half the universe. He had seen thousands murdered just for the satisfaction of a whim. The uniform he wore represented the dreaded Security Police, instigated by the Grand Marshal himself for his own protection and to do all his dirty work. It made him feel filthy.

He stopped suddenly as an alarm began to hum. He rounded a corner, and the ascendor door loomed in front of him. He rushed for it and frantically pressed the silver sphere. An orange light

above the door started to blink. The alarm had stopped the ascenders! He whirled around to look for another avenue of escape. There was a door across the lounge marked "Air Heating and Purification." The door slid open at his touch. He stepped through the door and it closed behind him. A translucent disc glowed on the ceiling, affording the only light. He stepped between two large filtering systems to hide for a moment and to catch his breath. He knew now that his only means of escaping death was to leave the planet.

He heard strange sounds behind him and when he turned around, the sight stunned him. There were two creatures, humanoid in form, but plant in characteristic. Then it came to him that these were a Venusian species used for air purification because of the huge amount of oxygen they produced. They spoke to him. One asked his trust; the other offered him freedom. He was appalled. They said they knew what he had done via the ventilation system and were going to repay him for their freedom. He was too dumbfounded to say anything. The creatures started along a small inner corridor with him. There was a sharp clang of metal on metal as guards came surging through the door at the other end. His leafy friends pushed him into a small freight ascendor and sent him to the planet's north cap. Three hundred forty levels and a few seconds later he was taken and put aboard a ship bound for a far solar system. He was finally safe from the Grand Marshal's followers.

He soon became accustomed to his new home and rose quickly to high position. He treated his servants very kindly and died at the ripe old age of four hundred seventy-five when, at his office one day, an aide by pure mistake gave him an empty, blue-sealed envelope. The sight was terrifying. When the aide came stumbling out of the office, he tried to explain the mysterious death of the leader. Physicians attributed the death to an extreme shock causing heart failure. But who could have known what he had really seen in the blue-sealed envelope?

Loyalty

Jean Rees

LOYALTY is a subject which is almost too intangible to define in a concrete word, sentence, or paragraph. One may easily compare loyalty to a symphony orchestra. In order to have a harmonious, melodious, and rhythmic symphony, each musician must participate with the intention of producing a beautiful masterpiece. Without a capable conductor, a symphony cannot hope to achieve unity. In the same way, a person without sound morals and beliefs cannot successfully conduct his life in a meaningful manner so as to finally produce a rich, wholesome existence. In order to maintain this type of life, one should develop fidelity, friendliness, and

veracity. All of these traits are included in the abstract definition of loyalty.

The stringed instruments of an orchestra may be compared to the ties that bind people into lasting friendship. Perhaps this strong bond may show the importance of loyalty to friends. As the stringed instruments of an orchestra symbolize friendship, the brass section of a symphony may be thought to symbolize the patriotism one feels for one's country. When one hears trumpets and horns resound, one's emotions are aroused and he is reminded of the men who lost their lives in battle because of the loyalty which they held for their country. This exemplifies the importance of patriotic loyalty.

The drums and cymbals, which give an orchestra rhythm and depth, can be compared to man's fundamental beliefs. Before a man can achieve high standards, he must have a feeling of worthiness; he must know that he has been faithful, truthful, and reliable according to what he believes to be right.

As a conductor of a symphony orchestra should be proud of the beautiful and harmonious sound which he evokes, so should a man be proud of a beautiful and harmonious soul, consisting in part of loyalty. In order for a conductor to have a feeling of accomplishment, he must first have an understanding of the meaning and interpretation of music. Before a man may have the feeling of a worthy soul filled with loyalty to his friends, to his family, and to his country, he must understand the meaning of loyalty and its importance in his life. To show loyalty and to accept its responsibilities are to know and accept the responsibilities of life itself.

How Hitler Came to Power

R. L. Bubenzer

THE men had gathered in a warehouse of the industrial district of Frankfurt. They had come in their work clothes, with their shirt collars open. They had come to a meeting of the new National Socialist German Workers Party which they had heard about. Ever since the war had been lost in 1918, things had worsened in Germany. The defeat not only had affected the armed forces, but also had deeply uprooted the economic structure of the nation and the moral thinking of the people. The men who had come to this meeting had been without a job for months and years; almost daily more factories were closing their gates. The inflation four years before had rendered all their small savings accounts worthless. To be without a job meant going hungry. Hunger bred discontent, restlessness, and disease. The last silver spoon had been pawned a long time ago, and the eyes of the children never lost their hungry stare. Out of a total population of sixty-five million, seven million workers were unemployed. The men had heard about the program of this new party, a program which was designed to help the workingman to regain his job, to rehabilitate his national

pride which had suffered so much humiliation after the treaty of Versailles was signed. They had gone to this meeting with idle curiosity. They had nothing else to do, and they grabbed for everything which appeared to offer a way out of their plight.

The admission to this rally was free. The workingmen were impressed by the orderliness with which the ushering was conducted. Men in brown uniform shirts led them to their seats. There were many of these brown-shirted storm troopers, as they were called. They appeared to be very well disciplined, and their vigilant eyes wandered continuously over the crowd. The walls were decorated with great red flags in the middle of which was a black swastika on a white circular field. The atmosphere was loaded with expectation because the leader of this new party, a certain Adolph Hitler, was scheduled to speak. Suddenly the brass band struck up a catchy marching tune, the storm troopers took positions along both sides of the center aisle, and a group of men, all clad in the same brown uniforms, marched down the aisle toward the speaker's rostrum. After some introduction, Hitler had the floor and began to speak with his well-sounding voice and compelling manner. "He is one of our kind," the men thought. "He speaks our language; during the war he was just a corporal as we were; he understands our problems." The speaker developed very appealing ideas, and was frequently interrupted by long applause. He promised to bring the workers back to their jobs; he promised to stop the French from taking away more than half of the coal production of the Ruhr Valley; he promised to restore order and security in the disorganized economy. He appealed to the pride, the self-respect, and the patriotism of the audience. Before the speaker finished, the men who had come with idle curiosity were very enthusiastic about Hitler's ideas; they were ready to follow the invitation to support the party; they were certainly willing to vote for Hitler in the next election.

This is an example of the countless rallies and meetings which were held from the very beginning of the National Socialist German Workers Party until Hitler's victory in January, 1933. The excellent oratorical abilities of Hitler and his helpers persuaded and convinced the masses of desperate, humiliated, and hungry Germans to follow his banner. He offered a better and more compelling program than other political adventurers, reactionaries, and opportunists did. The masses, however, did not know how Hitler would react once he got into power.

If I Had My Life to Live Over

Joyce Mullery

FAR be it from me to say that I dislike the life of a human being; I love it. However, if I were told that I might live my life in a non-human form, my choice would be simple. I would want to be the sea. For some the sea holds no beauty; it is a thing to

fear, lest it upset their systems or drown them. I, more fortunate than these people, see the oceans as the most beautiful and forceful parts of nature; they offer everything.

No longer would I have to keep my emotions locked inside me; my every thought could be tossed freely about and exposed to the world, without a soul suspecting its nature. I would be able to view man in his pitiful attempts to conquer nature in one of her most powerful forces, and laugh silently at man's inadequacies, for he cannot hope ever to completely control the sea. There are some men who realize the strength of a great body of water and travel on it humbly, knowing they are at its mercy. These men I would cradle in my arms, as protective as a mother with her first-born. Those who showed their respect for me, I would respect in return.

If I had occasion to be angry, I would be free to release my anger through physical demonstrations, letting the foam rise on the crests of great waves just before they broke upon jagged boulders. Never again would I be restricted by the social conformities of man's society; my ulcer-giving anxieties would be unchained as I banded them about from the peak of a wave down to the depths of its valley. Then, if I were to fall into a mood of contentment, I could lie peacefully back, allowing my undercurrents to subside until my surface became placid and serene, and my swirling waves smooth once again. Should I be amused at something, I could let my laughter be visible to all who watched, as I playfully slapped the bottom of a schooner and gaily splashed my spray over the bow of a skiff. Happily I could frolic, without any concern for what people would think of my actions. Though human life is enjoyable, its limitations are often exasperating and keep one's inhibitions at a high level. If I were the sea, no one would care how I behaved; I would be blamed for nothing.

A human being can be beautiful; his features may be perfect and his body may be strong, but there is no beauty similar to that of the sea; its every mood is a work of art. The grace of its rolling waves as it moves happily under the skies, the fearsome violence of its anger, the lovely serenity of its calm moments are all part of its beauty. As a human being, could I be more beautiful? I think not, for its beauty cannot be surpassed. Nature cannot be equaled by man, and the sea is one of nature's most glorious forms.

Would that I could, but I cannot. It is merely a dream that shall never come true, but there is compensation. Just to be able to sit close to the sea by the hour, watching it as it stages its great dramas, is reward enough. This in itself can help me better to understand the forces of nature. It brings me to the realization that I am just a minute part of the world, surrounded by many more powerful things than I, over which I have no control. Let me be able to watch the sea in its full majesty and not only shall I be content, but I shall come away a wiser person.

Thought for the Day

Louise Haney

THE small man waited nervously at the front of the bank. I would have passed any other man in that same location, but this man caught my attention. His face was pock-marked and carried bluish scars across the left cheek, forehead, and jaw. The right portion of his face was normal except for a slight disfiguration which pulled the lips down until the skin was taut.

The busy people of the city pushed by as he stood. The few who looked at him quickly averted their gazes and hurried by. Every time someone looked in his direction, the small man made an effort to speak, but the few words uttered were lost in the noise of taxi horns, shuffling feet, automobile engines, and growling city busses. As I approached, he bowed his head and muttered, audibly but to himself, "I must tell someone. I must tell someone. Someone must listen."

Out of pity, compassion, and curiosity, I asked the man if I could help him. With a grimace intended for a smile, he quickly nodded and launched into his speech. "Yes, do listen to me. It was horrible. They dropped it on us and we died in three stages. First we died instantly, then slowly; then the living died mentally."

Seeing my questioning look, he hurried on. "I am from Hiroshima. These scars will be with me for the rest of my life. My legs are crippled and will never move me again. I want nothing for myself. We were victims of fate. If the first atomic bomb had not fallen on our city, it would have destroyed another. You must listen to me, not for my sake but for the sake of others. Tell your people to use this power constructively. Don't take the lives of people."

The man's shoulders sagged; he bowed his head and waved me away. I turned, and my footsteps mingled with the others hurrying along the sidewalk.

The Moral Responsibility of Man

Karen Wortley

EACH of us has been endowed by our Creator with certain privileges which in turn provide certain responsibilities. By using these privileges, we may become one of two types of people. We may become a person who belongs to that class of society which prides itself in doing as little as possible in order to exist, or one may become a person who chooses to use his privileges and also to uphold them by accepting his responsibilities. When God created the amoeba, He formed an animal without a voice, without a mobile body, without an adaptable structure, and without an intelligence quotient comparable to that of a human being. As God advanced in

His plan of the universe, He created man, and to him He gave the ability to speak, to move about, to adapt to various climates, and to think. The amoeba has little, if any, moral responsibility; whereas man has been given many responsibilities. Our responsibilities depend upon our endowments. Thus it follows that those more richly endowed should have a greater number of responsibilities.

One of the basic responsibilities in life is of a moral nature. Moral responsibility is the feeling of an obligation to do right rather than wrong. Each human being has a moral responsibility, but there are some among our race whose moral attitudes are of more importance than are those of others. In this class fall our nation's businessmen, educators, public servants, script-writers, and newspaper editors. A newspaper editor may choose to accept or reject his responsibility, and in so doing may affect hundreds or even thousands of other people. By this one person's attitude, many others can either strengthen or weaken their own moral values. So it is also with radio and television script-writers. By their use of words and their actions, they may influence thousands around them. Of what consequence is this? The answer is dependent upon the type of person under consideration. If he is one of high moral standards, it will not be a matter of concern to many whether or not he is influencing others. Normally, little notice is taken of such a person. However, the consequences of a person whose standards are morally low in an influential position could prove disastrous.

In the case of the newspaper editor, for example, each of the people who reads his paper will be influenced by it. If he continually permits his newspaper to play up the dramatic aspects of the news, the sex misdemeanors, and the lurid details of events, the readers of the paper will in turn become accustomed to such and will demand it. The bold headlines which a child is told to shout on the street corners in order to sell a paper are many times not the type that should be echoed through our streets at all, but especially not by a child. The American home is a major factor in the development of our children, and any piece of literature which enters that home is of great importance to all the members of the home. If the parents of a small child read a good newspaper, which reports accurately without emphasizing the sordid details, the children are likely to unconsciously assume the same habit. If, however, the parents read a cheap newspaper, they are likely to cause their children to do the same. Since our nation's youth is its strength, is it not important for the question of morals to be dealt with properly?

The same moral responsibility holds true in the fields of radio, television, motion pictures, and advertising. By these various media, we allow many types of ideas to enter our homes and our minds. An adult mind, if keen enough, can separate and distinguish the good from the bad. An immature mind cannot, and thus many tolerate off-color movies, programs, or advertising. If none of the people working in these various fields felt any moral responsibility

for what he produced to show to our children and adults, our nation would soon degenerate morally. The downfalls of many other nations have come as outgrowths of a lack of moral responsibility. It is time we benefited from their mistakes.

When we were given the privileges of freedom of the press and of freedom of speech, we were also given an unwritten responsibility to keep those freedoms clean and just. The same principle is involved in receiving those freedoms as was involved in accepting our privileges granted by God, for any advantage carries a responsibility. We are an advanced class of animals, and because we are such, we have certain important responsibilities. If we assume them, we are only doing our part. If we do not assume them, we are shirking our duty and indicating to those around us that we do not care about our freedoms or privileges. I believe that our newspaper editors, our advertisers, and our radio and television producers should definitely accept the moral obligation which they have obviously neglected to recognize during the past decade. If we allow them to continue this neglect of their moral responsibilities, we shall be showing our indifference to our own.

Man Has the Power

Harold Modlin

IN this age of hydrogen bombs and intercontinental missiles, thinking people are wondering if another war would mean the end of civilization. There is fear that man's inventive genius may lead him to commit universal suicide, blasting life from the face of the earth.

Man has within himself the power to build or to destroy. He has devised ways to overcome his physical environment, protecting his thin-skinned body from the wind, rain, sun, and snow. But with all his electric blankets and air conditioning, with all his contrivances for his own comfort and convenience, man has not yet been able or willing to share the benefits of his civilization with all other men. While one race may flourish in wealth and abundance, another race in a less-favored part of the world may be in bitter want.

It is to be expected that those who do not possess the comforts of civilized life will be envious and resentful of those who do, while those whose way of life is more pleasant will jealously guard what they have, to prevent its loss. So it was in the distant past when men killed one another in disputes over the best hunting grounds, and so it is today. The weapons, the methods of warfare are new, but the basic cause of strife remains the same. Call it greed or selfishness if you wish, or a lack of good will for others. It stems from the natural human reluctance to share the good things of life with other humans.

Small wonder men tremble for fear of what disaster may overwhelm their civilization in the atomic age. From the most learned

scientist to the most poorly educated man on the street, all men have become aware of mankind's power to destroy on a mass-production basis.

And yet there is hope. Great thinkers of our time—men such as Albert Einstein and Kirtley F. Mather—have caught the gleam. Their writings on the future of mankind furnish us with the evidence that hope still exists. These men speak in terms of faith, honesty, and good will. So long as the leaders of men's thinking see the need of these fundamental spiritual concepts, there is hope.

Long before Hiroshima's atomic blast, long before a man flew faster than the speed of sound, columnist Arthur Brisbane commented on mankind's ability in these words: "What men can imagine, they can do." Perhaps we may adapt this phrase to the atomic age. If modern man, who can create instruments of wholesale destruction, still has the power to think in terms of faith, honesty, and good will, he also has the power to achieve a way of living and sharing that will be in the best interests of all mankind.

A Woman I Shall Never Forget

Carol Fidler

ONE Saturday evening last winter, I was sitting in the waiting room of a downtown parking garage feeling very weary and disappointed after a long, futile search for last-minute Christmas gifts. To occupy my mind while I waited for the car, I gazed through the large plate-glass window across the room, absently observing the activity outside. Suddenly my attention was focused upon a woman whose face I shall never forget. She was an exact replica of a witch from a children's fairy tale. Her face was wrinkled like a prune, and her long, beak-like nose accentuated the thinness of her drawn, toothless mouth and the hollowness of her cheeks. In spite of the cold wind, her face was devoid of color. To add to her witch-like appearance, her head was bare, showing a scraggy mat of straight gray hair which was blown in all directions by the merciless wind. She was thin beyond belief, and I was certain that the strong, cold wind would soon carry her off her feet. Her clothing was also pitiful. In places, the irregular hem of her cheap print dress hung below her straight black coat, which was very ragged and weather-stained. On her feet were a pair of broken black shoes which looked as antique as her wrinkled face. Tightly against her chest she was clutching a battered old purse as if she were afraid someone might try to seize it. When I saw her eyes, I was very sorry to have compared her to a witch, for in her eyes was mirrored a life of hardship and misery. Those pale blue eyes were filled with defeat and loneliness.

As she came closer, I realized that she was searching for something. Her steps were hesitant as she passed the door to the waiting room. After looking inside and seeing that I was the only per-

son in the room, she turned back to the door. As she stretched one clawlike hand toward the door knob, a look of indecision crossed her face; she drew her hand back, seeming to be unsure whether it was all right for her to enter. She glanced at me questioningly; when I smiled, she carefully opened the door, entered, and quietly closed it behind her. Seeking a place to rest, she looked very apologetic as she sat down beside me, as if she thought she were being offensive. After she had settled comfortably, she reached into the torn pocket of her coat and drew out something wrapped in a piece of newspaper. In the paper were two little, crumpled cupcakes which, I supposed, were to serve as her supper. Gently, even tenderly, she lifted one to her mouth and started to take a bite; instead, she put her hand down again and looked at the little cake for a moment as if it were the only thing she would have to eat for a long while. She again lifted it to her lips, and this time she took a very small bite. It must have taken her five minutes to eat that one small cupcake. When she had finished, she looked at the other cake in her lap. I could sense the struggle within her. Should she eat the other cake now and go hungry in the morning, or should she save the cake until morning and suffer hunger pains during the night? The woman finally gained control of her desire to eat the other cake, folded it carefully in the newspaper, and put it tenderly back in her pocket. For perhaps a minute she leaned her head back on the couch and closed her eyes, enjoying the quiet and warmth of the room. Then, squaring her lean shoulders, she picked up her purse, slowly got up, and walked to the door. When again outside, she took one last look into the warmth of the bright room and then vanished into the darkness in an almost magical way.

On Christmas Eve, as I gaily opened my gifts, my thoughts once again centered on the desperate old woman whom I had seen in the parking garage. I wondered where she had gone that night. What was she doing now? Was she celebrating Christmas tonight, or did she even have a warm place in which to spend the night? All these thoughts suddenly made me realize how very fortunate I was. They also made me realize that there were people in this world, some of them very near to me, who were actually wondering where their next meal would come from, while I was selfishly wondering whether or not I would receive the alpaca coat I had asked for. This realization made me feel very shallow and ashamed. I only wished that I might share part of my Christmas joy with those who had no occasion to celebrate, those who thought of Christmas as just another long, cold night to be spent in the darkness.

The Last Obstacle

Kent Stewart

I WAS a high school football player and, like most of them, I had some experiences on the gridiron which I am sure I shall never forget. The most memorable of these was the final game of my senior year.

One could sense the tension in the dressing room as Howe prepared to meet arch-rival Tech in the opening game of the 1955 season, our senior year. When the game was over and Howe had won, we knew that this was going to be our year. Gradually, the season progressed, and Howe continued to grind out victory after victory. Finally, early in November, there remained only one hurdle blocking the way to the city championship.

The opposition was Washington High. It was a cold night, and the field was frozen. For three quarters the game was at a standstill; both sides threatened, but neither could muster enough force to push over a touchdown. Then, with only seconds remaining in the fourth quarter, it happened. From my defensive halfback spot I saw, as Washington lined up to run a play, the opposing halfback glance quickly to his right and very slightly point his feet in that direction. Even before the ball was snapped, I began to move. I knew the play was going to be an end run to the right, and I was going to stop it for a loss. I put every ounce of my remaining strength into that mad dash. I was almost upon the little halfback when, suddenly, he stopped. In an instant I realized what had happened. I glanced downfield about thirty yards at the waiting end who had cut across behind me. The forward pass, a lethal weapon in football, had completely slipped my mind.

My mind saw many things as I watched the ball float lazily through the air. I saw a muddy practice field where, day after day for four years, sweat-soaked bodies had crashed together, pointing for the moment when the city title would be theirs. I saw the bloody noses, the split lips, and the twisted ankles suffered by my teammates in preparation for this victory. I remembered the practices in the snow, the wind, the rain. I remembered the skull sessions and the summer workouts. As I watched the Washington end gather in the ball on the goal line, my heart dropped into the pit of my stomach. For the first time in the game I felt tired, for the first time I felt the stinging cold of the November night, for the first time I felt the bumps and the bruises, the aches and the pains, the sickening bitter taste of defeat and failure.

A Modern Breakfast

Robert Luker

As I awoke this morning to the melodious strains of music from my clock-radio and the aroma of freshly brewed coffee in the electric coffee pot attached to the radio, I thought about you, Mr. Thoreau, and how you would feel if you could come and have breakfast with me. It would be a simple, easy-to-prepare meal. First there will be orange juice—take the can out of the freezer, add water, and it is finished. Now, we'll put the ham and eggs in the electric skillet and set the dial; the dial will regulate the heat. This will give us enough time to put two pieces of bread—"the staff of life"—into the toaster, not the oven. Now all there is to be done is to pour the coffee and juice, take the ham and eggs out of the skillet, and we are ready to eat. Yes, that is breakfast today, Mr. Thoreau. By the way, I appreciate your sense of economical values, so I am presenting you with an itemized bill for our "simple" breakfast.

1 can frozen orange juice	\$.20
4 eggs at 60c per dozen	.20
2 slices of ham	1.00
4 slices of bread	.04
4 pats of butter	.10
Total	<hr/> \$1.54

Although this sum might have fed you for weeks at Walden, in our modern age it is considered quite an inexpensive meal.

Time and Death

Robert J. Schrenker

THE time and place were August 24, 1955, and the military reservation of the First Armored Division, site of simulated combat exercises. I was a green private fresh from basic training, participating in preparatory exercise "Whirlwind," forerunner to gigantic "Exercise Sagebrush." That night a soldier was killed, ignominiously crushed into the dirt by a tank. He was a member of my company who had breathed, thought, cursed, and sweated just a moment before, but his life was snuffed out in an instant. The tank stopped, the company slowed, but the division moved on, absorbing the pause with its gelatin-like flexibility. The body was methodically removed from the field and evacuated to the rear. The tank shifted gears and the company resumed speed. In a few moments the formation was intact, with only an inert corpse in the rear to prove that it had ever been impaired. I do not even remember the name of the soldier, although we talked about him that night and again the following day. We thought of him often in the next week. We mentioned his name now and then. In a month he was

forgotten by the military, with only a tombstone and a dusty personnel folder to prove that he had ever existed. He will linger on in the hearts of those who loved him most as a resurgent agony. In time, this agony will petrify into a cold numbness which only death can bring. He will be enshrined in the hearts of his friends, but even as a shrine becomes tarnished and tattered when it is exposed to the elements, so will a shrine in the hearts of people when exposed to the vicissitudes of life. He was a cog that had been broken and replaced. Even if he had been a general, he would have been replaced with relative ease.

Is anyone so indispensable that he cannot be replaced? I think not. Rich or poor, powerful or picayune, loved or unloved, a man will surely die, and he will most assuredly be forgotten.

My First Concert

Janet L. Cox

ON March 29, 1954, I gathered up my long black skirt in one hand, grasped my horn with the other, and hesitantly made my way down the long corridor of Caleb Mills Hall. As I neared the warm-up room, the beautiful, impromptu concerto of symphonic instruments tuning up for a concert greeted my ears. Flute and clarinet players played sweeping runs, trumpets rapidly tongued technical exercises, and trombones sonorously announced their presence. Above all this, I could hear the golden melted-butter tone of the French horns. My heart gave a great leap as I realized that tonight I was playing with an orchestra made up of college students and professional musicians—all infinitely better players than I, a high school sophomore. My weak knees swayed a little as I took my horn from its case and began running over passages from the selections we were to play for the concert. As I played, the polished, bell-like tones emitted from my teacher's horn reached my ears, and the black ink spots blurred as I realized my inadequacy among these musicians. However, my teacher sensed this and smiled encouragement to me as we filed onto the stage.

The house lights dimmed before the conductor walked briskly on stage and stepped up to the podium. With a wave of his baton, the first soft strains of the violins sounded, and we were off to the glorious land of "Les Preludes." Gradually, as the music rose and swelled around us, my fear vanished; I became just another musician lost in the trance of helping to create ethereal sounds. The music swelled to a soul-searching climax. Then, as I stood with the other orchestra members to take my bow, the ink spots, the conductor, and the audience again became blurred. My teacher's dark eyes sparkled as he looked at me with understanding. He knew that I had just realized that I belonged in that orchestra, even though my experience was less than that of my fellow musicians.

My Definition of Intelligence

Joyce Skaggs

INTELLIGENCE is made up of many different parts. Under the definition of intelligence, one may write: the ability to see the relationship between ideas; clear, logical thinking that enables one to arrive at the best conclusions; the ability to adapt oneself to society and to realize that one has a responsibility to society to fulfill; and the ability to apply what one has learned to life.

In order to understand more fully what one means by defining intelligence as the ability to see the relationship between ideas, one may consider an example of the difference between a monkey and a man—the monkey representing the unintelligent, and the man representing the intelligent. A bowl of food is placed in such a way that the monkey is not able to reach it. A stick is also placed near the monkey. The monkey does not have the intelligence to realize that by using the stick he may turn the bowl of food over, or draw it toward him so as to obtain the food. The man, however, when placed in the identical position, will be able to see a relationship between the stick and the bowl. He may obtain the food with the help of the stick. This does not mean that because man is able to see this relationship, all men are intelligent. There are different degrees of intelligence, of course, but in order to be considered what society has termed intelligent, one must meet the specifications that have been listed.

Another of these specifications, the ability to arrive at the best conclusions by clear, logical thinking, can be shown by an illustration used in the essay "Moronia." The characters, Flora and Chuck, were asked the standard example in arithmetic which every fourteen-year-old is supposed to be able to solve: if two pencils cost five cents, how many can you get for fifty cents? Flora's answer was twenty-five, because two into fifty was twenty-five. Chuck answered ten, because "You get two for five, and two times five is ten." Both of them could see a relationship of ideas in the problem, but neither could arrive at a logical conclusion.

One can easily see that, without the ability to arrive at correct decisions, a person cannot adapt himself to society. This ability to adapt oneself to society is defined as the individual's abiding by the rules and regulations that society has established. This definition means that one must not only refrain from breaking the law, but must also meet all his financial obligations, family obligations, and the social obligation of getting along well with people. This adaptation by itself, however, is not enough. A truly intelligent person is a person who realizes that he has a responsibility to society to fulfill—that he has, in some way, a talent to use or a job to do that will benefit mankind. This realization, moreover, is yet not enough, for what good is realizing one's responsibility if one does not fulfill

that responsibility? An intelligent person, then, is one who adapts himself to society by abiding by the rules and regulations society has set forth and by fulfilling his responsibility to society.

Fulfilling one's responsibility calls for preparation, certainly. Therefore, an intelligent person is one who prepares himself for his life's work. Likewise, an intelligent person learns all the other requisites: how to adapt himself to society, how to think clearly and logically, and how to distinguish the relationships between ideas. With the learning of these, then, only one requisite of an intelligent person remains—the final one. An intelligent person will apply what he learns to his own life.

The Trembling Hand

Elizabeth Simpson

A MOST vivid and descriptive expression, to me, appeared in the short story "The Egg." The sentence described the deformed chickens which die soon after birth, and stated, "They go quickly back to the hand of their Maker that has for a moment trembled." An interesting parallel may be drawn between these creatures and humans who are deformed at birth, humans in whose making the hand of God has trembled.

An acquaintance of mine had been married for twenty years. Her life, as well as that of her husband, was busy and seemingly happy, but both wished for children which they never had had. Finally, after many years, when the couple had entirely exhausted their hopes, the doctor gave them the news for which they had waited so long—the news that they would have a child before the year was ended. Husband and wife both began immediately to buy baby clothes, furniture, and books. They remodeled their basement, which was already beautiful, for a time in the future when their still unborn child would want to have parties. All available medical care was lavished on the wife, and for nine months her only tasks were to shop for the baby and to take care of herself. At last she entered the hospital, and the next day the happy father announced, amid cigars and hearty toasts, the birth of a boy. Until almost the end of the first year, the baby appeared to be normal, but then to the parents it became obvious that something was abnormal about the baby. He responded to nothing; he was uninterested in the activities going on around him; he engaged in no physical exertion such as crawling or walking. His worried parents took him to several pediatricians who pronounced the same verdict: the baby was a Mongolian idiot. The first reaction of the husband and wife was to keep the child and to hope that the love which they gave so whole-heartedly would make the child as happy as was possible under the circumstances. As the child grew older, however, they realized that this arrangement would never be successful, that the child must have more than just love, that he should be placed with other chil-

dren of his own kind with whom doctors had learned the best methods of care. Consequently, the boy was sent to an institution which specialized in the care of mentally deficient children, where his parents visit him occasionally. They say that almost always the child recognizes them, and they seem to realize that their decision was best for the welfare of the boy.

And so, a life has been smothered, not by death as yet, but by the trembling hand of the Maker; thus, one is prompted to ask the question of why God did such a thing to a couple who could and would have provided a child with everything he could possibly desire. But because humans are hardly in a position to question the actions of God, it is expected that they accept His actions as just and right. To the man and his wife, God's judgment was difficult to accept, but they showed their true faith in many ways. Because they were wealthy, they contributed generously to the home where their child was placed, as well as to a national fund to provide for others like him. To outsiders, it seems that they have drawn more closely together in their desire to aid each other in bearing the knowledge that their long-awaited baby will never bring them the joy for which they had hoped. They plan parties for teenagers which are held in their remodeled basement, and are always ready to help these young people with advice or with just a listening ear. I cannot believe that a normal child would have brought about these far-reaching consequences. Just as the grotesque chickens in "The Egg" brought out a kind of ignorant sympathy in the desire of the father to preserve them, so the mentally deficient child brought about a sympathy and compassion never before present in the parents. The hand of the Maker never trembles; it only pauses so that He may consider how best He may make stronger the people involved in what seems to be a tragedy of His own creation.

Taps

John Stokesberry

THE old sergeant slumped in his chair as if the troubles of the world were on his shoulders. His hazy brown eyes were recessed far back into his head as though they had seen enough and were seeking a place in which to hide; dark clouds of worry hovered about them. A network of capillaries covered the tired, sullen, worried face. Above the wrinkled forehead lay a mass of gray hair, neat but lifeless, like last year's crop of clover hay. Fourteen rows of "hash marks," representing forty-two years of devoted military service, ran up and down the right sleeve of his olive-drab uniform. On the front of the coat, one-half inch above the right pocket, were four rows of campaign ribbons which included two silver stars, one bronze star, and a purple heart.

The orderly room was shrouded in hushed silence. The desk behind which the sergeant sat was cleared of its usual multitude of

papers, files, and orders. Only one paper remained, and it lay in the center. As the old war horse sat there, his eyes fixed on the paper and his teeth clenched tightly together, tiny tears found their way out of the corners of his eyes and down his cheeks. His lips trembled. The paper read, "Master Sergeant William James Staley to report to Headquarters' Company for processing and separation from the United States Army."

Master Sergeant Staley had known this day would come, but he had failed to prepare himself for it. He was neither physically nor mentally prepared to face the world outside the army, for army life and civilian life are two separate and distinct worlds. He knew much about the army, but he knew nothing about civilian life. His life had been regimented twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, year after year, for forty-two years. His home had been Fort Gordon, Fort Monmouth, Fort Sheridan, Camp Riley, London, Aisne, Noyon-Montdidier, Chateau-Thierry, the banks of the Meuse River, the Argonne Forest, Hawaii, the Midway Islands, and the Philippine Islands. He had marched or crawled over one quarter of the way around the world, from the trenches of France during World War I to the hot, stinking jungles of the South Pacific in World War II. How would he enter this thing that is called "civilian life" or "the outside"? Should he walk, run, or crawl? Would this gallant soldier, who fought in two world wars and who trained green troops for the war in Korea, find a home among the civilians? Would these greedy, nervous, flighty people who drive about in cars with three hundred horsepower engines and who live in twenty-five thousand dollar homes with twenty-four thousand dollar mortgages move over just a little to make room for Mr. William James Staley? There was nothing written in any of the training manuals which he had read that would prepare a soldier for the invasion of civilian life. He wondered where he would attempt to establish a beachhead. Where would be the least line of resistance? Suddenly the stillness was broken by a knocking at the orderly room door. The moment had arrived. He gritted his teeth and choked back the tears.

He spent the remainder of the day in the usual army fashion of "hurry up and wait." He was familiar with the process of separation from the army, for he had been through it many times, only to return for re-enlistment in a day or two. There would, however, be no returning this time. There is no room in the army for a man sixty years old.

As the day grew old and the separation process came to a close, there also came to a close the career and life of Sergeant William James Staley, United States Army. With his money belt filled with separation pay, soldier's savings, and a few dollars that he had won in a poker game the night before, he boarded a big yellow bus marked "Somewhere, U. S. A." As it roared away in a cloud of blue Diesel smoke, taps could be heard in the distance. A cannon fired. The day had come to an end.