

was an antonym of words with which I had thought it synonymous. Others seemed to have developed several spellings, any of which appeared to be as good as any other. Noun suffixes lost their distinction; pronoun cases had no significance; "garrulous" and "gregarious" became twins in my mind.

I read paragraphs which conveyed no definite meaning. I know vaguely that they contained information of importance about Aristotle, pluralism, Queen Isabella, and 273° Centigrade, but I could not discover the relationship between these words and the question below. When I closed my eyes to try and think more clearly, a mass of small squares containing crosses, loomed before me.

All this I could have endured had the matter ended with the taking of the test. But no! I was presented with a card giving me an appointment at the psychological clinic, to learn what score I had made. As I set out for home, I composed, with what was left of my brain, a riddle: Why is a college aptitude test like the wearing of a green cap? The answer is obvious: It is a scheme by which the freshman is made to realize that he must cast aside the feeling of superiority which he has enjoyed for the last year as a high school senior, and once more admit his inferiority as a human being.

## rhythm in ●

### prose literature

by  
betty davenport

One of my greatest ambitions is to learn to write prose literature which will have the strong sure swing of poetry. There are some (lamentably few) authors whose prose creates the same impression as fine music. That

is the sort of writer I would strive to be should I ever gain the distinction of being a real author.

It is quite probable that my reason for so much enjoying rhythm in prose is because I am rather musical. Whether this quality is innate, or was introduced by my years of training in music and dancing, I do not know. The fact remains, however, that my favorite authors are those whose prose is rhythmical and flowing.

This quality does not seem to be so prevalent in American literature as in that of other countries. For instance, our two great women novelists do not write in particularly smooth sentences. Edith Wharton is usually too interested in her characters themselves to try especially for rhythm, although her style is always adequate and dignified. Willa Cather's books are not on the whole very musical though the reader is conscious of some such disposition in "Death Comes for the Archbishop," and "Shadows on the Rocks." For a while in modern American literature, there was a tendency to write about grotesque, disturbing situations in broken, jerky sentences—a tendency, by the way, much less evident in the very new books. Two of the better known and more successful exponents of this system are Ernest Hemingway and John Dos Passos. Although one could never call Hemingway's style smooth or flowing, there are especially in "Farewell to Arms," certain passages where the short staccato beat of his phrases produces a definite cadence.

Continental literature, even in translation, abounds in rhythm. My French teacher once read to us a paragraph of Anatole France's "Le Livre de Mon Ami," and though I did not understand the meaning, I was conscious of the smooth, even flow of words and sentences. Even in the much older "Aucassin and Nicolette," the prose passages are introduced by the translator's quaint, rhythmical, "Thus speak they, say they, tell they the tale,"

which must have had its musical counterpart in the original.

One of the oldest and greatest books ever written is also one of the most musical, and I have often felt that the inspiration some people receive from hearing Bible passages read aloud may be due in part to the measured rise and fall of their sentences.

To return to modern literature, Lafcadio Hearn writes beautiful prose. Some of his essays sound like poetry apart from their descriptive significance they are invariably rhythmical. I should like to conclude this paper with a short passage from one of his books, in the hope that it will linger with the reader, and perhaps illustrate my point as no amount of explanation could do. I quote from "Chita:"

"Year by year that rustling strip of green land grows narrower; the sand spreads and sinks, shuddering and wrinkling like a living brown skin; and the last standing corpses of the oaks, ever clinging with naked, dead feet to the sliding beach, lean more and more out of the perpendicular."

## in favor of the ogopogo

by  
grace ferguson

Three things have lately come to my attention. They are from three different fields of knowledge, but they insist upon mingling in my mind. I cannot disassociate them. When, during the long day, I come upon something which suggests one of these facts to me, the other two bob up; and my imagination immediately begins building a complex structure of thought upon the three. My conclu-

sions may be wrong, but it amuses me to play with these ideas.

I have been reading "Beowulf." In it there are monsters, sea-wolves, and dragons. In some ways they are not very realistic: they belch forth fire; they are not described in detail: and one of them lives under the sea. On the other hand, helped along by a dark night and a lonely house, these monsters are not without power to frighten. They fail to stir the imaginations of only insensible people. In nearly all legends, giants and horrible monsters play a large part. (Remember "Jack the Giant-Killer" and "Jack and the Bean-Stalk"? Horrible stories! The illustrations of these in my childhood fairy-tale books will never cease to haunt me.) Why did all these have monsters playing the role of villain? Is the answer that the monster is the natural personification of horror in man's imagination, or is there another reason?

I have been reading history of the time of Christopher Columbus. That name always brings back into my mind a mental picture of my first history books. The authors always went into great detail about how dark the Dark Ages were: they gave the impression that all learning ceased, that the people were all fools. One page particularly comes to my mind. On it there was a drawing which showed a crude boat with sailors using oars to fight off a huge, worm-like sea snake, which was lifting itself out of the churning water. Now, according to my old books, these monsters existed merely in the minds of the sailors. The "silly, superstitious" sailors were too ignorant to know that there were no such things. Since I read my history books, I have learned that they were wrong about the complete ignorance of the Middle Ages. We have few manuscripts from the period, so we know little about it. The histories were wrong about many things; were they wrong about the sea-monsters?